

# Addresses, reminiscences, etc. of General John Bidwell. Compiled by C.C. Royce

John Bidwell

Under the Palm—Gen. and Mrs. Bidwell

**JOHN BIDWELL**

**Pioneer, Statesman, Philanthropist**

**A Biographical Sketch**

BY C. C. ROYCE

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THE discovery and the appropriation of the American continent were characterized by a series of movements or migrations more or less distinctive in character.

Following the Columbian discovery came an era in which the world's imagination, stirred to its profoundest depths by the romantic adventures of the Spanish corsairs in the Caribbean seas, the bloody trail of Cortez through the halls of the Montezumas and the dazzling romances of the gold and silver mountains of Peru, stimulated men of daring everywhere into action. The minds of men were filled with and reveled in marvelous stories. It was an age of romanticism and hallucination which filled the first century of American discovery and exploration. Following this came an era of settlement and slowly expanding occupation of the territory bordering the Atlantic Coast. The Cavalier of Virginia, the Puritan of New England, the Dutchman of Manhattan and the Quaker of Pennsylvania, in quick succession established, maintained and expanded their

respective settlements during more than a century without getting beyond the towering summits of the Appalachians.

Then came the American Revolution, and with the resultant birth of a new and expectant nation, its officers and soldiers of seven years campaigning found themselves without an occupation and full of the restless zeal of adventure and exploration. Like an army of industrious ants they climbed the ridges of the Alleghanies, poured down their western slopes, fought back the hordes of angered savages, and within sixty years had accomplished the conquest and assumed possession of the territory to the banks of the Missouri River.

Here the movement was temporarily halted by the deterrent influences of numberless savage tribes and the wind and drouth-swept desolation of what, in the imagination of historians and geographers, comprised the Great American Desert. So thoroughly was that vast territory given over in the public mind to the perpetual occupancy of wild beasts and wild men, that in 1825, shortly after the establishment of the frontier military post at Fort Leavenworth, in what is now the State of Kansas, the commanding officer, in his official report to the War Department, asserted that the extreme western limit at which even garden vegetables could be raised was forty miles west of that post.

But adventurous spirits with restless feet and eager curiosity, stimulated still further by the prospects and possibilities of profitable trade with the Spanish-Mexican population of the Southwest, pioneered a road across the desert to the ancient town of Santa Fe, which became known to commerce as "The Santa Fe Trail." Percolating through the experiences of this Santa Fe traffic, as well as through the gilded narratives of returned trappers and adventurers, gradually the settlers of the American border became apprised of the alleged charms of soil, climate and out-door life of the far distant Mexican province of Alta California. In the fall of 1840 these alluring tales took on a phase of deeper reality to the pioneers of the Missouri border, through the appearance among them of a French trader of the Santa Fe route, whose description of the distant paradise was so charged with enthusiasm and fervor as to cause widespread interest and longing among the ever-restless spirits of that frontier community. Among the then recent arrivals in that vicinity was a young man named John Bidwell. He became one of the most enthusiastic promoters of the organization of an

emigrant party to cross the plains and mountains to California, and his efforts were crowned with success.

Thus, in the spring of 1841, sixty-five years ago, the first emigrant train started on its long and weary journey. With that band was John Bidwell, then a youth of twenty-one and destined to become one of the most distinguished and historic characters of the State.

The motives that prompted the journey, the courage that marked its execution and the philosophic persistence with which its perils, sufferings and uncertainties were endured, were characteristics that have made his name a leading one in the development of the great State of California. The incidents and experiences of this historic and most remarkable migration have been depicted with great simplicity and interest by him in the following narrative, published some fifteen years since in the *Century Magazine*:

### **THE FIRST EMIGRANT TRAIN TO CALIFORNIA.**

By JOHN BIDWELL (Pioneer of '41).

In the spring of 1839,—living at the time in the western part of Ohio,—being then in my twentieth year, I conceived a desire to see the great prairies of the West, especially those most frequently spoken of, in Illinois, Iowa, and Missouri. Emigration from the East was tending westward, and settlers had already begun to invade those rich fields.

Starting on foot to Cincinnati, ninety miles distant, I fortunately got a chance to ride most of the way on a wagon loaded with farm produce. My outfit consisted of about \$75, the clothes I wore, and a few others in a knapsack which I carried in the usual way strapped upon my shoulders, for in those days travelers did not have valises or trunks. Though traveling was considered dangerous, I had no weapon more formidable than a pocket knife. From Cincinnati I went down the Ohio River by steamboat to the Mississippi, up the Mississippi to St. Louis, and thence to Burlington, in what was then the Territory of Iowa. Those were bustling days on the western rivers, which were

## The Commission as Quartermaster

10 then the chief highways of travel. The scenes at the wood landings I recall as particularly lively and picturesque. Many passengers would save a little by helping to “wood the boat,” i. e., by carrying wood down the bank and throwing it on the boat, a special ticket being issued on that condition. It was very interesting to see the long lines of passengers coming up the gang-plank, each with two or three sticks of wood on his shoulders. An anecdote is told of an Irishman who boarded a western steamer and wanted to know the fare to St. Louis, and, being told, asked, “What do you charge for 150 pounds of freight?” Upon learning the price, a small amount, he announced that he would go as freight. “All right,” said the captain; “put him down in the hold and lay some flour barrels on him to keep him down.”

In 1839 Burlington had perhaps not over two hundred inhabitants, though it was the capital of Iowa Territory. After consultation with the governor, Robert Lucas, of Ohio, I concluded to go into the interior and select a tract of land on the Iowa River. In those days one was permitted to take up 160 acres, and where practicable it was usual to take part timber and part prairie. After working awhile in putting up a log house—until all the people in the neighborhood became ill with fever and ague—I concluded to move on and strike out to the south and southwest into Missouri. I traveled across country, sometimes by the sun, without road or trail. There were houses and settlements, but they were scattered; sometimes one would have to go twenty miles to find a place to stay at night. The principal game seen was the prairie hen (*Tetraonidae cupido*); the prairie wolf (*Canis latrans*) also abounded. Continuing southwest and passing through Huntsville I struck the Missouri River near Keytesville in Chariton County. Thence I continued up the north side of the river till the westernmost settlement in Missouri was reached; this was in Platte County. The Platte Purchase, as it was called, had been recently bought from the Indians, and was newly but thickly settled, on account of its proximity to navigation, its fine timber, good water, and unsurpassed fertility.

On the route I traveled I cannot recall seeing an emigrant wagon in Missouri. The western movement, which subsequently filled Missouri and other Western States and overflowed into the adjoining Territories, had then hardly begun, except as to Platte County. The contest in Congress

over the Platte Purchase, which by increasing the area of Missouri gave more territory to slavery, called wide attention to that charming region. The anti-slavery sentiment even at that date ran quite high. This was, I believe, the first addition to slave territory after the Missouri Compromise. But slavery won. The rush that followed in the space of one or two years filled the most desirable part of the purchase to overflowing. The imagination could not conceive a finer country—lovely, rolling, fertile, wonderfully productive, beautifully arranged for settlement, part prairie and part timber. The land was unsurveyed. Every settler had aimed to locate a half mile from his neighbor, and there was as yet no conflict. Peace and contentment reigned. Nearly every place seemed to have a beautiful spring of clear cold water. The hills and prairies and the level places were alike covered with a black and fertile soil. I can not recall seeing an acre of 11 poor land in Platte County. Of course there was intense longing on the part of the people of Missouri to have the Indians removed, and a corresponding desire, as soon as the purchase was consummated, to get possession of the beautiful land. It was in some sense perhaps a kind of Oklahoma movement. Another feature was the abundance of wild honey-bees. Every tree that had a hollow in it seemed to be a bee-tree, and every hollow was full of rich golden honey. A singular fact which I learned from old hunters was that the honey-bee was never found more than seventy or eighty miles in advance of the white settlements on the frontier. On this attractive land I set my affections, intending to make it my home.

On my arrival, my money being all spent, I was obliged to accept the first thing that offered, and began teaching school in the country about five miles from the town of Weston, which was located on the north side of the Missouri River and about four miles above Fort Leavenworth in Kansas Territory. Possibly some may suppose it did not take much education to teach a country school at that period in Missouri. The rapid settlement of that new region had brought together people of all classes and conditions, and had thrown into juxtaposition almost every phase of intelligence as well as of illiteracy. But there was no lack of self-reliance or native shrewdness in any class, and I must say that I learned to have a high esteem for the people, among whom I found warm and lifelong friends.

But even in Missouri there were drawbacks. Rattlesnakes and copperheads were abundant. One man, it was said, found a place to suit him, but on alighting from his horse heard so many snakes that he concluded to go farther. At his second attempt, finding more snakes instead of fewer, he left the country altogether. I taught school there in all about a year. My arrival was in June, 1839, and in the fall of that year the surveyors came on to lay out the country; the lines ran every way, sometimes through a man's house, sometimes through his barn, so that there was much confusion and trouble about boundaries, etc. By the favor of certain men, and by paying a small amount for a little piece of fence here and a small clearing there, I got a claim, and purposed to make it my home, and to have my father remove there from Ohio.

In the following summer, 1840, the weather was very hot, so that during the vacation I could do but little work on my place, and needing some supplies,—books, clothes, etc.,—I concluded to take a trip to St. Louis, which I did by way of the Missouri River. The distance was six hundred miles by water; the down trip occupied two days, and was one of the most delightful experiences of my life. But returning, the river being low and full of snags, and the steamboat heavily laden,—the boats were generally light going down,—we were continually getting on sand bars, and were delayed nearly a month. This trip proved to be the turning-point in my life, for while I was gone a man had jumped my land. Generally in such cases public sentiment was against the jumper, and it was decidedly so in my case. But that scoundrel held on. He was a bully—had killed a man in Callaway County—and everybody seemed afraid of him. Influential friends of mine tried to

John Bidwell's Cattle Brand—1848

13 persuade him to let me have eighty acres, half of the claim. But he was stubborn, and said that all he wanted was just what the law allowed him. Unfortunately for me, he had the legal advantage. I had worked some now and then on the place, but had not actually lived on it. The law required a certain residence, and that the preemptor should be twenty-one years of age or a man of family. I was neither, and could do nothing. Nearly all I had earned had been spent upon the land, and when that was taken I lost about everything I had. There being no possibility of getting another claim to suit me, I resolved to go elsewhere when spring should open.

In November or December of 1840, while still teaching school in Platte County, I came across a Frenchman named Roubideaux, who said he had been to California. He had been a trader in New Mexico, and had followed the road traveled by traders from the frontier of Missouri to Santa Fe. He had probably gone through what is now New Mexico and Arizona into California by the Gila River trail used by the Mexicans. His description of California was in the superlative degree favorable, so much so that I resolved if possible to see that wonderful land, and with others helped to get up a meeting at Weston and invited him to make a statement before it in regard to the country. At that time when a man moved West, as soon as he was fairly settled he wanted to move again, and naturally every question imaginable was asked in regard to this wonderful country. Roubideaux described it as one of perennial spring and boundless fertility, and laid stress on the countless thousands of wild horses and cattle. He told about oranges, and hence must have been at Los Angeles, or the mission of San Gabriel, a few miles from it. Every conceivable question that we could ask him was answered favorably. Generally the first question which a Missourian asked about a country was whether there was any fever and ague. I remember his answer distinctly. He said there was but one man in California that had ever had a chill there, and it was a matter of so much wonderment to the people of Monterey that they went eighteen miles into the country to see him shake. Nothing could have been more satisfactory on the score of health. He said that the Spanish authorities were most friendly, and that the people were the most hospitable on the globe; that you could travel all over California and it would cost you nothing for horses or food. Even the Indians were friendly. His description of the country made it seem like a Paradise.

The result was that we appointed a corresponding secretary, and a committed to report a plan of organization. A pledge was drawn up in which every signer agreed to purchase a suitable outfit, and to rendezvous at Sapling Grove in what is now the State of Kansas, on the 9th of the following May, armed and equipped to cross the Rocky Mountains to California. We called ourselves the Western Emigration Society, and as soon as the pledge was drawn up every one who was agreed to come signed his name to it, and it took like wildfire. In a short time, I think within a month, we had about five hundred names; we also had correspondence on the subject with people all over Missouri, and even as far east as Illinois and Kentucky, and as far south as Arkansas. 14 As soon

as the movement was announced in the papers we had many letters of inquiry, and we expected people in considerable numbers to join us. About that time we heard of a man living in Jackson County, Missouri, who had received a letter from a person in California named Dr. Marsh, speaking favorably of the country, and a copy of this letter was published.

Our ignorance of the route was complete. We knew that California lay west, and that was the extent of our knowledge. Some of the maps consulted, supposed of course to be correct, showed a lake in the vicinity of where Salt Lake now is; it was represented as a long lake, three or four hundred miles in extent, narrow and with two outlets, both running into the Pacific Ocean, either apparently larger than the Mississippi River. An intelligent man with whom I boarded—Elam Brown, who till recently lived in California, dying when over ninety years of age—possessed a map that showed these rivers to be large, and he advised me to take tools along to make canoes, so that if we found the country so rough that we could not get along with our wagons we could descend one of those rivers to the Pacific. Even Fremont knew nothing about Salt Lake until 1843, when for the first time he explored it and mapped it correctly, his report being first printed, I think, in 1845.

This being the first movement to cross the Rocky Mountains to California, it is not surprising that it suffered reverses before we were fairly started. One of these was the publication of a letter in a New York newspaper giving a depressing view of the country for which we were all so confidently longing. It seems that in 1837 or 1838 a man by the name of Farnham, a lawyer, went from New York City into the Rocky Mountains for his health. He was an invalid, hopelessly gone with consumption it was thought, and as a last resort he went into the mountains, traveled with the trappers, lived in the open air as the trappers lived, eating only meat as they did, and in two or three years he entirely regained his health; but instead of returning east by way of St. Louis, as he had gone, he went down the Columbia River and took a vessel to Monterey and thence to San Blas, making his way through Mexico to New York. Upon his return—in February or March, 1841—he published the letter mentioned. His bad opinion of California was based wholly on his unfortunate experience in Monterey, which I will recount.



In 1840 there lived in California an old Rocky Mountaineer by the name of Isaac Graham. He was injudicious in his talk, and by boasting that the United States or Texas would some day take California, he excited the hostility and jealousy of the people. In those day's Americans were held in disfavor by the native Californians on account of the war made by Americans in Texas to wrest Texas from Mexico. The number of Americans in California at this time was very small. When I went to California in 1841 all the foreigners—and all were foreigners except Indians and Mexicans—did not, I think, exceed one hundred; nor was the character of all of them the most prepossessing. Some had been trappers in the Rocky Mountains who had not seen civilization for a quarter of a century; others were men who had found their way into California, as Roubideaux had done, by way of Mexico; others still had gone down the Columbia River to Oregon and joined trapping parties in the service of the Hudson Bay Company going from Oregon to California—men who would let their beards grow down to their knees, and wear buckskin garments made and fringed like those of the Indians, and who considered it a compliment to be told “I took ye for an Injin.” Another class of men from the Rocky Mountains were in the habit of making their way by the Mojave Desert south of the Sierra Nevada into California to steal horses, sometimes driving off four or five hundred at a time. The other Americans, most numerous perhaps, were sailors who had run away from vessels and remained in the country. With few exceptions this was the character of the American population when I came to California, and they were not generally a class calculated to gain much favor with the people. Farnham happened to come into the bay of Monterey when this fellow Graham and his confederates, and all others whom the Californians suspected, were under arrest in irons on board a vessel, ready for transportation to San Blas in Mexico, whither indeed they were taken, and where some of them died in irons. I am not sure that at this time the English had a consul in California; but the United States had none, and there was no one there to take the part of the Americans. Farnham, being a lawyer, doubtless knew that the proceeding was illegal. He went ashore and protested against it, but without effect, as he was only a private individual. Probably he was there on a burning hot day, and saw only the dreary sandhills to the east of the old town of Monterey. On arriving in New York he published the letter referred to, describing how Americans were oppressed by the native Californians, and how dangerous it was for Americans to go there. The merchants of Platte County had all along protested against our going, and had tried

from the beginning to discourage and break up the movement, saying it was the most unheard of, foolish, wild-goose chase that ever entered into the brain of man for five hundred people to pull up stakes, leave that beautiful country, and go away out to a region that we knew nothing of. But they made little headway until this letter of Farnham's appeared. They republished it in a paper in the town of Liberty in Clay County,—there being no paper published in Platte County,— and sent it broadcast all over the surrounding region. The result was that as the people began to think more seriously about the scheme the membership of the society began dropping off, and so it happened at last that of all the five hundred that signed the pledge I was the only one that got ready; and even I had hard work to do so, for I had barely means to buy a wagon, a gun, and provisions. Indeed, the man who was going with me, and who was to furnish the horses, backed out, and there I was with my wagon!

During the winter, to keep the project alive, I had made two or three trips into Jackson County, Missouri, crossing the Missouri River, always dangerous in winter when ice was running, by the ferry at Westport Landing, now Kansas City. Sometimes I had to go ten

John Bidwell in 1850

17 miles farther down—sixty miles from Weston—to a safer ferry at Independence Landing in order to get into Jackson County, to see men who were talking of going to California, and to get information.

At the last moment before the time to start for the rendezvous at Sapling Grove—it seemed almost providential—along came a man named George Henshaw, an invalid, from Illinois, I think. He was pretty well-dressed, was riding a fine black horse, and had ten or fifteen dollars. I persuaded him to let me take his horse and trade him for a yoke of steers to pull the wagon and a sorry-looking, one-eyed mule for him to ride. We went via Weston to lay in some supplies. One wagon and four or five persons here joined us. On leaving Weston, where there had been so much opposition, we were six or seven in number, and nearly half the town followed us for a mile, and some for five or six miles, to bid us good-by, showing the deep interest felt in our journey. All expressed good wishes and desired to hear from us. When we reached Sapling Grove, the place of rendezvous,

in May, 1841, there was but one wagon ahead of us. For the next few days one or two wagons would come each day, and among the recruits were three families from Arkansas. We organized by electing as captain of the company a man named Bartleson from Jackson County, Missouri. He was not the best man for the position, but we were given to understand that if he was not elected captain he would not go; and as he had seven or eight men with him, and we did not want the party diminished, he was chosen. Every one furnished his own supplies. The party consisted of sixty-nine, including men, women and children. Our teams were of oxen, mules and horses. We had no cows, as the later emigrants usually had, and the lack of milk was a great deprivation to the children. It was understood that every one should have not less than a barrel of flour with sugar and so forth to suit; but I laid in one hundred pounds of flour more than the usual quantity, besides other things. This I did because we were told that when we got into the mountains we probably would get out of bread and have to live on meat alone, which I thought would kill me even if it did not others. My gun was an old flint-lock rifle, but a good one. Old hunters told me to have nothing to do with cap or percussion locks, that they were unreliable, and that if I got my caps or percussion wet I could not shoot, while if I lost my flint I could pick up another on the plains. I doubt whether there was one hundred dollars in money in the whole party, but all were enthusiastic and anxious to go.

In five days after my arrival we were ready to start, but no one knew where to go, not even the captain. Finally a man came up, one of the last to arrive, and announced that a company of Catholic missionaries were on their way from St. Louis to the Flathead nation of Indians with an old Rocky Mountaineer for a guide, and that if we would wait another day they would be up with us. At first we were independent, and thought we could not afford to wait for a slow missionary party. But when we found that no one knew which way to go, we sobered down and waited for them to come up; and it was well we did, for otherwise probably not one of us would ever have reached California, because of our inexperience. Afterwards when we came in contact with Indians our people were so easily excited that if we had not had with us an old mountaineer the result would certainly have been disastrous. The name of the guide was Captain Fitzpatrick; he had been at the head of trapping parties in the Rocky Mountains for many years. He and the missionary party went with us as far as Soda Springs, now in Idaho Territory, whence they turned north to the Flathead

nation. The party consisted of three Roman Catholic priests—Father De Smet, Father Pont, Father Mengarini—and ten or eleven French Canadians, and accompanying them were an old mountaineer named John Gray and a young Englishman named Romaine, and also a man named Baker. They seemed glad to have us with them, and we certainly were glad to have their company. Father De Smet had been to the Flathead nation before. He had gone out with a trapping party, and on his return had traveled with only a guide by another route, farther to the north and through hostile tribes. He was genial, of fine presence, and one of the saintliest men I have ever known, and I cannot wonder that the Indians were made to believe him divinely protected. He was a man of great kindness and great affability under all circumstances; nothing seemed to disturb his temper. The Canadians had mules and Red River carts, instead of wagons and horses,—two mules to each cart, five or six of them,—and in case of steep hills they would hitch three or four of the animals to one cart, always working them tandem. Sometimes a cart would go over, breaking everything to pieces; and at such times Father De Smet would be just the same—beaming with good humor.

In general our route lay from near Westport, where Kansas City now is, northwesterly over the prairie, crossing several streams, till we struck the Platte River. Then we followed along the south side of the Platte to and a day's journey or so along the South Fork. Here the features of the country became more bold and interesting. Then crossing the South Fork of the Platte, and following up the north side for a day, or so, we went over to the North Fork and camped at Ash Hollow; thence up the north side of that fork, passing those noted landmarks known as the Court House Rocks, Chimney Rock, Scott's Bluffs, etc., till we came to Fort Laramie, a trading post of the American Fur Company, near which was Lupton's Fort. belonging, as I understand, to some rival company. Thence after several days we came to another noted landmark called Independence Rock, on a branch of the North Platte called the Sweetwater, which we followed up to the head, soon after striking the Little Sandy, and then the Big Sandy, which empties into Green River. Next we crossed Green River to Black Fork, which we followed up till we came to Ham's Fork, at the head of which we crossed the divide between Green and Bear rivers. Then we followed Bear River down to Soda Springs. The waters of Bear Lake discharged through that river, which we continued to follow

down on the west side till we came to Salt Lake. Then we went around the north side of the lake and struck out to the west and southwest.

For a time, until we reached the Platte River, one day was much like another. We set forth every morning and camped every night, 19 detailing men to stand guard. Captain Fitzpatrick and the missionary party would generally take the lead and we would follow. Fitzpatrick knew all about the Indian tribes, and when there was any danger we kept in a more compact body, to protect one another. At other times we would be scattered along, sometimes for half a mile or more. We were generally together, because there was often work to be done to avoid delay. We had to make the road, frequently digging down steep banks, filling gulches, removing stones, etc. In such cases everybody would take a spade or do something to help make the road passable. When we camped at night we usually drew the wagons and carts together in a hollow square and picketed our animals inside in the corral. The wagons were common ones and of no special pattern, and some of them were covered. The tongue of one would be fastened to the back of another. To lessen the danger from Indians, we usually had no fires at night and did our cooking in the daytime.

The first incident was a scare that we had from a party of Cheyenne Indians just before we reached the Platte River, about two weeks after we set out. One of our men, who chanced to be out hunting, some distance from the company and behind us, suddenly appeared without mule, gun or pistol, and lacking most of his clothes, and in great excitement reported that he had been surrounded by thousands of Indians. The company, too, became excited, and Captain Fitzpatrick tried, but with little effect, to control and pacify them. Every man started his team into a run, till the oxen, like the mules and horses, were in a full gallop. Captain Fitzpatrick went ahead and directed them to follow, and as fast as they came to the bank of the river he put the wagons in the form of a hollow square, and had all the animals securely picketed within. After a while the Indians came in sight. There were only forty of them, but they were well mounted on horses, and were evidently a war party, for they had no women except one, a medicine woman. They came up and camped within a hundred yards of us on the river below. Fitzpatrick told us that they would not have come in that way if they were hostile. Our hunter in his excitement said that there were thousands of them, and that they had robbed him of his gun, mule and pistol. When the Indians had put up their lodges, Fitzpatrick

and John Gray, the old hunter mentioned, went out to them and by signs were made to understand that the Indians did not intend to hurt the man or to take his mule or gun, but that he was so excited when he saw them that they had to disarm him to keep him from shooting them; they did not know what had become of his pistol or of his clothes, which he said they had torn off. They surrendered the mule and the gun, thus showing that they were friendly. They proved to be Cheyenne Indians. Ever afterwards that man went by the name of Cheyenne Dawson.

As soon as we struck the buffalo country we found a new source of interest. Before reaching the Platte we had seen an abundance of antelope and elk, prairie wolves and villages of prairie dogs, but only an occasional buffalo. We now began to kill buffaloes for food, and at the suggestion of John Gray, and following the practice of Rocky Mountain white hunters, our people began to kill them just to get the

John Bidwell Distributing Goods to the Indians in 1852 at Rancho Chico

21 tongues and the marrow bones, leaving all the rest of the meat on the plains for the wolves to eat. But the Cheyennes, who traveled ahead of us for two or three days, set us a better example. At their camps we noticed that when they killed buffaloes they took all the meat, everything but the bones. Indians were never wasteful of the buffalo except in winter for the sake of the robes, and then only in order to get the whisky which traders offered them in exchange. There is no better beef in the world than that of the buffalo; it is also very good jerked, i.e., cut into strings and thoroughly dried. It was an easy matter to kill buffaloes after we got to where they were numerous, by keeping out of sight and to the leeward of them. I think I can truly say that I saw in that region in one day more buffaloes than I have seen of cattle in all my life. I have seen the plain black with them for several days' journey as far as the eye could reach. They seemed to be coming northward continually from the distant plains to the Platte to get water, and would plunge in and swim across by thousands—so numerous were they that they changed not only the color of the water, but its taste, until it was unfit to drink; but we had to use it. One night when we were encamped on the South Fork of the Platte they came in such droves that we had to sit up and fire guns and make what fires we could to keep them from running over us and trampling us into the dust. We were obliged to go out some distance from+ camp to turn them; Captain Fitzpatrick told us that if we did not do this the buffaloes in

front could not turn aside for the pressure of those behind. We could hear them thundering all night long; the ground fairly trembled with vast approaching bands; and if they had not been diverted, wagons, animals, and emigrants would have been trodden under their feet. One cannot nowadays describe the rush and wildness of the thing. A strange feature was that when old oxen, tired and foot-sore, got among a buffalo herd, as they sometimes would in the night, they would soon become as wild as the wildest buffalo; and if ever recovered it was because they could not run so fast as the buffaloes or one's horse. The ground over which the herds trampled was left rather barren, but buffalo-grass being short and curling, in traveling over it they did not cut it up as much as they would other kinds.

On the Platte River, on the afternoon of one of the hottest days we experienced on the plains, we had a taste of a cyclone; first came a terrific shower, followed by a fall of hail to the depth of four inches, some of the stones being as large as turkeys' eggs; and the next day a waterspout—an angry, huge, whirling cloud column, which seemed to draw its water from the Platte River—passed within a quarter of a mile behind us. We stopped and braced ourselves against our wagons to keep them from being overturned. Had it struck us it doubtless would have demolished us.

Above the junction of the forks of the Platte we continued to pass notable natural formations—first o'Fallon's Bluffs, then Court House Rocks, a group of fantastic shapes to which some of our party started to go. After they had gone what seemed fifteen or twenty miles the huge pile looked just as far off as when they started, and so they turned and came back—so deceptive are distances in the clear atmosphere of the Rocky Mountains. A noted landmark on the North Fork, which we sighted fifty miles away, was Chimney Rock. It was then nearly square, and I think it must have been fifty feet higher than now, though after we passed it a portion of it fell off. Scott's Bluffs are known to emigrants for their picturesqueness. These formations, like those first mentioned, are composed of indurated yellow clay or soft sand rock; they are washed and broken into all sorts of fantastic forms by the rains and storms of ages, and have the appearance of an immense city of towers and castles. They are quite difficult to explore, as I learned by experience in an effort to pursue and kill

mountain sheep or bighorn. These were seen in great numbers, but we failed to kill any, as they inhabit places almost inaccessible and are exceedingly wild.

As we ascended the Platte buffaloes became scarcer, and on the Sweetwater none were to be seen. Now appeared in the distance to the north of west, gleaming under its mantle of perpetual snow, that lofty range known as the Wind River Mountains. It was the first time I had seen snow in summer; some of the peaks were very precipitous, and the view was altogether most impressive. Guided by Fitzpatrick, we crossed the Rockies at or near the South Pass, where the mountains were apparently low. Some years before a man named William Subletts, an Indian fur trader, went to the Rocky Mountains with goods in wagons, and those were the only wagons that had ever been there before us; sometimes we came across the tracks, but generally they were obliterated, and thus were of no service. Approaching Green River in the Rocky Mountains, it was found that some of the wagons, including Captain Bartleson's, had alcohol on board, and that the owners wanted to find trappers in the Rocky Mountains to whom they might sell it. This was a surprise to many, of us, as there had been no drinking on the way. John Gray was sent ahead to see if he could find a trapping party, and he was instructed, if successful, to have them come to a certain place on Green River. He struck a trail, and overtook a party on their way to the buffalo region to lay in provisions, i. e., buffalo meat, and they returned, and came and camped on Green River very soon after our arrival, buying the greater part, if not all, of the alcohol, it first having been diluted so as to make what they called whisky—three or four gallons of water to a gallon of alcohol. Years afterwards we heard of the fate of that party: they were attacked by Indians the very first night after they left us and several of them killed, including the captain of the trapping party, whose name was Frapp. The whisky was probably the cause.

Several years ago when I was going down Weber Canyon, approaching Salt Lake, swiftly borne along on an observation car amid cliffs and over rushing streams, something said that night at the camp-fire on Green River was forcibly recalled to mind. We had in our party an illiterate fellow named Bill Overton, who in the evening at one of the camp-fires loudly declared that nothing in his life had ever surprised him. Of course that raised a dispute. “Never surprised in your life?” “No, I never was surprised.” And, moreover, <sup>23</sup> he swore that nothing ever could surprise him. “I



should not be surprised,” said he, “if I were to see a steamboat come plowing over these mountains this minute.” In rattling down the canyon of Weber River it occurred to me that the reality was almost equal to Bill Overton's extravaganza, and I could but wonder what he would have said had he suddenly came upon this modern scene.

As I have said, at Soda Springs—at the northernmost bend of Bear River—our party separated. It was a bright and lovely place. The abundance of soda water, including the intermittent gushing so-called Steamboat Spring; the beautiful fir and cedar covered hills; the huge piles of red or brown sinter, the result of fountains once active but then dry—all these, together with the river, lent a charm to its wild beauty and made the spot a notable one. Here the missionary party were to turn north and go into the Flathead nation. Fort Hall, about forty miles distant on Snake River, lay on their route. There was no road; but something like a trail, doubtless used by the trappers, led in that direction. From Fort Hall there was also a trail down in Snake River, by which trapping parties reached the Columbia River and Fort Vancouver, the headquarters of the Hudson Bay Company.

Our party, originally sixty-nine, including women and children, had become lessened to sixty-four in number. One had accidentally shot and killed himself at the forks of the Platte. Another of our party, named Simpson, had left us at Fort Laramie. Three had turned back from Green River, intending to make their way to Fort Bridger and await an opportunity to return home. Their names were Peyton, Rodgers, and Amos E. Frye. Thirty-two of our party, becoming discouraged, decided not to venture without path or guide into the unknown and trackless region toward California, but concluded to go with the missionary party to Fort Hall and thence find their way down Snake and Columbia rivers into Oregon. The rest of us—also thirty-two in number, including Benjamin Kelsey, his wife and little daughter—remained firm, refusing to be diverted from our original purpose of going direct to California. After getting all the information we could from Captain Fitzpatrick, we regretfully bade good-bye to our fellow emigrants and to Father De Smet and his party.

We were now thrown entirely upon our own resources. All the country beyond was to us a veritable terra incognita, and we only knew that California lay to the west. Captain Fitzpatrick was not much

better informed, but he had heard that parties had penetrated the country to the southwest and west of Salt Lake to trap for beaver; and by his advice four of our men went with the parties to Fort Hall to consult Captain Grant, who was in charge there, and to gain information. Meanwhile our depleted party slowly made its way down the west side of Bear River.

Our separation at Soda Springs recalls an incident. The days were usually very hot, the nights almost freezing. The first day our little company went only about ten miles and camped on Bear River. In company with a man named James John—always called “Jimmy John”—I wandered a mile or two down the river fishing. Seeing snow on a high mountain to the west we longed to reach it, for

Rancho Chico Building in 1854

25 the heat where we were was intense. So, without losing time to get our guns or coats or to give notice at the camp, we started direct for the snow, with the impression that we could go and return by sundown. But there intervened a range of low mountains, a certain peak of which seemed almost to touch the snow. Both of us were fleet of foot and made haste, but we only gained the summit of the peak about sundown, the distance must have been twelve or fifteen miles. A valley intervened and the snow lay on a higher mountain beyond. I proposed to camp. But Jimmy gave me a disdainful look, as much as to say, “You are afraid to go,” and quickened his gait into a run down the mountain toward the snow. I called to him to stop, but he would not even look back. A firm resolve seized me—to overtake him, but not again to ask him to return. We crossed the valley in the night, saw many Indian campfires, and gained a sharp ridge leading up to the snow. This was first brushy and then rough and rocky. The brush had no paths except those made by wild animals; the rocks were sharp, and soon cut through our moccasins, and made our feet bleed. But up and up we went until long after midnight, and until a cloud covered the mountain. We were above the timber line, excepting a few stunted fir trees, under one of which we crawled to wait for day, for it was too dark to see. Day soon dawned, but we were almost frozen. Our fir-tree nest had been the lair of grizzly bears that had wallowed there and shed quantities of shaggy hair. The snow was still beyond, and we had lost both sight and direction. But in an hour or two we reached it. It was nearly as hard as ice. Filling a large handkerchief, without taking time to admire the scenery,

we started toward the camp by a new route, for our feet were too sore to go by way of the rocky ridge by which we had come. But the new way led into trouble. There were thickets so dense as to exclude the sun, and roaring little streams in deep, dark chasms; we had to crawl through paths which looked untrodden except by grizzlies; in one place a large bear had passed evidently only a few minutes before, crossing the deep gorge, plunging through the wild, dashing water, and wetting the steep bank as he went up. We carried our drawn butcher knives in our hands, for they were our only weapons. At last we emerged into the valley. Apparently numerous Indians had left that very morning, as shown by the tracks of lodge-poles drawn on the ground. Making haste, we soon gained the hills, and at about 2 p.m. sighted our wagons, already two or three miles on the march. When our friends saw us they stopped, and all who could ran to welcome us. They had given us up for lost, supposing that we had been killed by the hostile Blackfeet, who, as Captain Fitzpatrick had warned us, sometimes roamed through that region. The company had barricaded the camp at night as best they could, and every man had spent a sleepless night on guard. Next morning they passed several hours in scouring the country. Their first questions were: "Where have you been?" "Where have you been?" I was able to answer triumphantly, "We have been up to the snow!" and to demonstrate the fact by showing all the snow I had left, which was now reduced to a ball about the size of my fist.

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In about ten days our four men returned from Fort Hall, during which time we had advanced something over one hundred miles toward Salt Lake. They brought the information that we must strike out west of Salt Lake,—as it was even then called by the trappers,—being careful not to go too far south, lest we should get into a waterless country without grass. They also said we must be careful not to go too far north, lest we should get into a broken country and steep canyons, and wander about, as trapping parties had been known to do, and become bewildered and perish.

September had come before we reached Salt Lake, which we struck at its northern extremity. Part of the time we had purposely traveled slowly to enable the men from Fort Hall the sooner to overtake us. But unavoidable delays were frequent: daily, often hourly, the road had to be made passable for our wagons by digging down steep banks, filling gulches, etc. Indian fires obscured mountains and

valleys in a dense, smoky atmosphere, so that we could not see any considerable distance in order to avoid obstacles. The principal growth, on plain and hill alike, was the interminable sage-brush (*Artemisia*), and often it was difficult, for miles at a time, to break a road through it, and sometimes a lightly laden wagon would be overturned. Its monotonous dull color and scraggy appearance gave a most dreary aspect to the landscape. But it was not wholly useless: where large enough it made excellent fuel, and it was the home and shelter of the hare—generally known as the “jack-rabbit”—and of the sage-hen. Trees were almost a sure sign of water in that region. But the mirage was most deceptive, magnifying stunted sage-brush on diminutive hillocks into trees and groves. Thus misled, we traveled all day without water, and at midnight found ourselves in a plain, level as a floor, incrustated with salt, and as white as snow. Crusts of salt broken up by our wagons, and driven by the chilly night wind like ice on the surface of a frozen pond, was to me a most striking counterfeit of a winter scene. This plain became softer and softer until our poor, almost famished animals could not pull our wagons. In fact, we were going direct to Salt Lake and did not know it. So, in search of water, we turned from a southerly to an easterly, course, and went about ten miles, and soon after daylight arrived at Bear River. So near to Salt Lake were we that the water in the river was too salt for us or our animals to use, but we had to rise it; it would not quench thirst, but it did save life. The grass looked most luxuriant, and sparkled as if covered with frost. But it was salt; our hungry, jaded animals refused to eat it, and we had to lie by a whole day, to rest them before we could travel.

Leaving this camp and bearing northwest we crossed our tracks on the salt plain, having thus described a triangle of several miles in dimensions. One of the most serious of our troubles was to find water where we could camp at night. So soon came another hot day, and hard travel all day and all night without water! From a westerly course we turned directly north, and, guided by antelope trails, came in a few miles to an abundance of grass and good water. The condition of our animals compelled us to rest here nearly a week. <sup>27</sup> Meanwhile two of the men who had been to Fort Hall went ahead to explore. Provisions were becoming scarce, and we saw that we must avoid unnecessary delay. The two men were gone about five days. Under their lead we set forth, bearing west, then southwest, around Salt Lake, then again west. After two or three fatiguing days,—one

day and night without water,—the first notice we had of approach to any considerable mountain was the sight of crags, dimly seen through the smoke, many hundred feet above our heads. Here was plenty of good grass and water. Nearly all now said, “Let us leave our wagons, otherwise the snows will overtake us before we get to California.” So we stopped one day and threw away everything we could not carry, made pack saddles, and packed the oxen, mules, and horses, and started.

On Green River we had seen the style of pack-saddles used by the trapping party, and had learned a little about how to make them. Packing is an art, and something that only an experienced mountaineer can do well so as to save his animal and keep his pack from falling off. We were unaccustomed to it, and the difficulties we had at first were simply indescribable. It is much more difficult to fasten a pack on an ox than on a mule or a horse. The trouble began the very first day. But we started—most of us on foot, for nearly all the animals, including several of the oxen, had to carry packs. It was but a few minutes before the packs began to turn; horses became scared, mules kicked, oxen jumped and bellowed, and articles were scattered in all directions. We took more pains, fixed things, made a new start, and did better, though packs continued occasionally to fall off and delay us.

Those that had better pack-saddles and had tied their loads securely were ahead, while the others were obliged to lag behind, because they had to repack, and sometimes things would be strewn all along the route. The first night I happened to be among those that kept pretty well back, because the horses out-traveled the oxen. The foremost came to a place and stopped where there was no water or grass, and built a fire so that we could see it and come up to them. We got there about midnight, but some of our oxen that had packs on had not come up and among them were my two. So I had to return the next morning and find them. Cheyenne Dawson along volunteering to go with me. One man had brought along about a quart of water, which was carefully doled out before we started, each receiving a little canister-cover full—less than half a gill; but as Dawson and I had to go for the oxen, we were given a double portion. This was all the water I had until the next day. It was a burning hot day. We could not find the trail of the oxen for a long time, and Dawson refused to go any farther, saying that there were plenty of cattle in California; but I had to do it, for the oxen

were carrying our provisions and other things. Afterwards I struck the trail, and found that the oxen instead of going west had gone north, and I followed them until nearly, sundown. They had gone into grassy country, which showed that they were nearing water. Seeing Indian tracks on their trail following them. I felt there was imminent danger, and at once examined my gun and pistols to see that they were primed and ready. But I soon found

#### Map of U.S. Survey of Rancho Chico—1859

29 my oxen lying down in tall grass by the side of the trail. Seeing no Indians, I hastened to fasten the packs and make my way to overtake the company. They had promised to stop when they came to water and wait for me. I traveled all night, and at early dawn came to where there was plenty of water and where the company had taken their dinner the day before, but they had failed to stop for me according to promise. I was much perplexed, because I had seen many fires in the night, which I took to be Indian fires, so I fastened my oxen to a scraggy willow and began to make circles around to see which way the company had gone. The ground was so hard that the animals made no impression, which bewildered me. Finally, while making a circle of about three miles away off to the south, I saw two men coming on horseback. In the glare of the mirage, which distorted everything, I could not tell whether they were Indians or white men, but I supposed them to be Indians, feeling sure our party would go west and not south. In a mirage a man on horseback looks as tall as a tree, and I could only tell by the motion that they were mounted. I made a bee-line to my oxen, to make breastworks of them. In doing this I came to a small stream resembling running water, into which I urged my horse, whereupon he went down in a quagmire, over head and ears, out of sight. My gun also went under the mire. I got hold of something on the bank, threw out my gun, which was full of mud and water, and holding to the rope attached to my horse, by dint of hard pulling I succeeded in getting him out—a sorry sight, his ears and eyes full of mud, his body covered with it. At last, just in time, I was able to move and get behind the oxen. My gun was in no condition to shoot. However, putting dry powder in the pan I determined to do my best in case the supposed Indians should come up; but lo! they were two of our party coming to meet me, bringing water and provisions. It was a great relief. I felt indignant that the party had not stopped for me—not the less so when I learned that Captain Bartleson had said, when they started back to find me,

that they “would be in better business to go ahead and look for a road.” He had not forgotten certain comments of mine on his qualities as a student of Indian character. An instance of this I will relate.

One morning, just as we were packing up, a party of about ninety Indians, on horseback, a regular war party, were descried coming up. Some of us begged the captain to send men out to prevent them from coming to us while we were in the confusion of packing. But he said, “Boys, you must not show any sign of hostility; if you go out there with guns the Indians will think us hostile, and may get mad and hurt us.” However, five or six of us took our guns and went out, and by signs made them halt. They did not prove to be hostile, but they had carbines, and if we had been careless and had let them come near they might, and probably would, have killed us. At last we got packed up and started, and the Indians traveled along three or four hundred yards one side or the other of us or behind us all day. They appeared anxious to trade, and offered a buckskin, well dressed, worth two or three dollars, for three or four charges of powder and three or four balls. This showed that they were in want of ammunition. The carbines indicated that they had had communication with some 30 trading-post belonging to the Hudson's Bay Company. They had buffalo-robcs also, which showed that they were a roving hunting party, as there were no buffaloes within three or four hundred miles. At this time I had spoken my mind pretty freely concerning Captain Bartleson's lack of judgment, as one could scarcely help doing under the circumstances.

We now got into a country where there was no grass nor water, and then we began to catechize the men who had gone to Fort Hall. They repeated, “If you go too far south you will get into a desert country and your animals will perish; there will be no water nor grass.” We were evidently too far south. We could not go west, and the formation of the country was such that we had to turn and go north across a range of mountains. Having struck a small stream we camped upon it all night, and next day continued down its banks, crossing from side to side, most of the time following Indian paths or paths made by antelope and deer. In the afternoon we entered a canyon the walls of which were precipitous and several hundred feet high. Finally the pleasant bcrmy banks gave out entirely, and we could travel only in the dry bed of what in the wet season was a raging river. It became a solid mass of stones and huge boulders, and the animals became tenderfooted and sore so that they could hardly stand up, and as we continued the way became worse and worse. There was no

place for us to lie down and sleep, nor could our animals lie down; the water had given out, and the prospect was indeed gloomy—the canyon had been leading us directly north. All agreed that the animals were too jaded and worn to go back. Then we called the men: “What did they tell you at Fort Hall about the northern region?” They repeated, “You must not go too far north; if you do you will get into difficult canyons that lead towards the Columbia River, where you may become bewildered and wander about and perish.” This canyon was going nearly north; in fact it seemed a little east of north. We sent some men to see if they could reach the top of the mountain by scaling the precipice somewhere and get a view, and they came back about ten or eleven o'clock saying the country looked better three or four miles farther ahead. So we were encouraged. Even the animals seemed to take courage, and we got along much better than had been thought possible, and by one o'clock that day came out on what is now known as the Humboldt River. It was not until four years later (1845) that General Fremont first saw this river and named it Humboldt.

Our course was first westward and then southward, following this river for many days, till we came to its Sink, near which we saw a solitary horse, an indication that trappers had sometime been in that vicinity. We tried to catch him but failed; he had been there long enough to become very wild. We saw many Indians on the Humboldt, especially toward the Sink. There were many tule marshes. The tule is a rush, large, but here not very tall. It was generally completely covered with honeydew, and this in turn was wholly covered with a pediculous-looking insect which fed upon it. The Indians gathered quantities of the honey and pressed it into balls about the size of one's fist, having the appearance of wet bran. At first we greatly relished this Indian food, but when we saw what it was made of— 31 that the insects pressed into the mass were the main ingredient—we lost our appetites and bought no more of it.

From the time we left our wagons many had to walk, and more and more as we advanced. Going down the Humboldt at least half were on foot. Provisions had given out: except a little coarse green grass among the willows along the river the country was dry, bare and desolate; we saw no game except antelope, and they were scarce and hard to kill; and walking was very fatiguing. Tobacco lovers would surrender their animals for anyone to ride who would furnish them with an ounce or two to chew during the day. One day one of these devotees lost his tobacco and went back for it, but



failed to find it. An Indian in a friendly manner overtook us bringing the piece of tobacco which he had found on our trail or at our latest camp and surrendered it. The owner instead of being thankful, accused the Indian of having stolen it—an impossibility, as we had seen no Indians or Indian signs for some days. Perhaps the Indian did not know what it was, else he might have kept it for smoking. But I think otherwise, for, patting his breast, he said, “Shoshone, Shoshone,” which was the Indian way of showing he was friendly. The Shoshones were known as always friendly to the whites, and it is not difficult to see how other and distant tribes might claim to be Shoshones as a passport to favor.

On the Humboldt we had a further division of our ranks. In going down the river we went sometimes on one side and sometimes on the other, but mostly on the north side, till we were nearing what are now known as the Humboldt mountains. We were getting tired, and some were in favor of leaving the oxen, of which we then had only about seven or eight, and rushing on into California. They said there was plenty of beef in California. But some of us said “No, our oxen are now our only supply of food. We are doing well, making eighteen or twenty miles a day.” One morning when it was my turn at driving the oxen, the captain traveled so fast that I could not keep up, and was left far behind. When night came I had to leave the trail and go over a rocky declivity for a mile and a half into a gloomy, damp bottom, and unpack the oxen and turn them out to eat, sleeping myself without blankets. I got up the next morning, hunted the oxen out of the willow thicket, and repacked them. Not having had supper or breakfast, and having to travel nine miles before I overtook the party, perhaps I was not in the best humor. They were waiting, and for the very good reason that they could have nothing to eat till I came up with the oxen and one could be killed. I felt badly treated, and I let the captain know it plainly: but, much to my surprise, he made no reply, and none of his men said a word. We killed an ox, ate our breakfast, and got ready to start about one or two o'clock in the afternoon. When nearly ready to go, the captain and one or two of his mess came to us and said: “Boys, our animals are better than yours, and we always get out of meat before any of the rest of you. Let us have the most of the meat this time, and we will pay you back the next ox we kill.” We gladly let them have all they wished. But as soon as they had taken it, and were mounted ready to start, the captain in a loud voice exclaimed: “Now we have been found

fault with long enough, and we are going to California. If you can keep up with us, all right; if you cannot you may go to——”;

The Commission of Brigadier General John Bidwell

33 and away they started, the captain and eight men. One of the men would not go with the captain; he said, “The captain is wrong, and I will stay with you, boys.”

In a short time they were out of sight. We followed their trail for two or three days, but after they had crossed over to the south side of the Humboldt and turned south we came into a sandy waste where the wind had entirely obliterated their tracks. We were then thrown entirely upon our own resources. It was our desire to make as great speed as possible westward, deviating only when obstacles interposed, and in such case bearing south instead of north, so as to be found in a lower latitude in the event that winter should overtake us in the mountains. But, diverted by following our fugitive captain and party across the Humboldt, we thereby missed the luxuriant Truckee meadows lying but a short distance to the west, a resting place well and favorably known to the later emigrants. So, perforce, we followed down to the sink of the Humboldt and were obliged to drink its water, which in the fall of the year becomes stagnant and of the color of lye, and not fit to drink or use unless boiled. Here we camped. Leaving the Sink of the Humboldt, we crossed a considerable stream which must have been Carson River, and came to another stream which must have been Walker River, and followed it up to where it came out of the mountains, which proved to be the Sierra Nevadas. We did not know the name of the mountains. Neither had these rivers then been named; nor had they been seen by Kit Carson or Joe Walker, for whom they were named, nor were they seen until 1845 by Fremont, who named them.

We were now camped on Walker River, at the very eastern base of the Sierra Nevada, and had only two oxen left. We sent men ahead to see if it would be possible to scale the mountains, while we killed the better of the two oxen and dried the meat in preparation for the ascent. The men returned, toward evening and reported that they thought it would be possible to ascend the mountains, though very difficult. We had eaten our supper, and were ready for the climb in the morning. Looking back on the plains we saw something coming, which we decided to be Indians. They traveled

very slowly, and it was difficult to understand their movements. To make a long story short, it was the eight men that had left us nine days before. They had gone farther south than we and had come to a lake, probably Carson Lake, and there had found Indians, who supplied them plentifully with fish and pine nuts. Fish caught in such water are not fit to eat at any time, much less in the fall of the year. The men had eaten heartily of fish and pine nuts, and had got something akin to cholera morbus. We were glad to see them although they had deserted us. We ran out to meet them and shook hands, and put our frying pans on and gave them the best supper we could. Captain Bartleson, who when we started from Missouri was a portly man, was reduced to half his former girth. He said: "Boys, if ever I get back to Missouri I will never leave that country. I would gladly eat out of the troughs with my dogs." He seemed to be heartily sick of his late experience, but that did not prevent him from leaving us twice after that.

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We were now in what is at present Nevada, and probably within forty miles of the present boundary of California. We ascended the mountain on the north side of Walker River to the summit, and then struck a stream running west which proved to be the extreme source of the Stanislaus River. We followed it down for several days and finally came to where a branch ran into it, each forming a canyon. The main river flowed in a precipitous gorge in places apparently a mile deep, and the gorge that came into it was but little less formidable. At night we found ourselves on the extreme point of the promontory between the two, very tired, and with neither grass nor water. We had to stay there that night. Early the next morning two men went down to see if it would be possible to get through down the smaller canyon. I was one of them, Jimmy John the other. Benjamin Kelsey, who had shown himself expert in finding the way, was now, without any election still recognized as leader, as he had been during the absence of Bartleson. A party also went back to see how far we should have to go around before we could pass over the tributary canyon. The understanding was, that when we went down the canyon if it was practicable to get through we were to fire a gun so that all could follow: but if not, we were not to fire, even if we saw game. When Jimmy and I got down about three-quarters of a mile I came to the conclusion that it was impossible to get through, and said to him, "Jimmy, we might as well go back; we can't go here." "Yes. we can,"

said he: and insisting that we could, he pulled out a pistol and fired. It was an old dragoon pistol, and reverberated like a cannon. I hurried back to tell the company not to come down, but before I reached them the captain and his party had started. I explained, and warned them that they could not get down; but they went on as far as they could go, and then were obliged to stay all day and night to rest the animals, and had to go about among the rocks and pick a little grass for them, and go down to the stream through a terrible place in the canyon to bring water up in cups and camp kettles, and some of the men in their boots, to pour down the animals' throats in order to keep them from perishing. Finally, four of them pulling and four of them pushing a mule, they managed to get them up one by one, and then carried all the things up again on their backs—not an easy job for exhausted men.

In some way, nobody knows how, Jimmy got through that canyon and into the Sacramento Valley. He had a horse with him—an Indian horse that was bought in the Rocky Mountains, and which could come as near climbing a tree as any horse I ever knew. Jimmy was a character. Of all men I have ever known I think he was the most fearless: he had the bravery of a bulldog. He was not seen for two months until he was found at Sutter's, afterwards known as Sutter's Fort, now Sacramento City.

We went on, traveling west as near as we could. When we killed our last ox we shot and ate crows or anything we could kill, and one man shot a wildcat. We could eat anything. One day in the morning I went ahead, on foot of course, to see if I could kill something, it being understood that the company would keep on as near west as possible and find a practicable road. I followed an Indian trail down into the canyon, meeting many Indians on the way up. They did not molest me, but I did not quite like their looks. I went about ten miles down the canyon, and then began to think it time to strike north to intersect the trail of the company going west. A most difficult time I had scaling the precipice. Once I threw my gun ahead of me, being unable to hold it and climb, and then was in despair lest I could not get up where it was, but finally I did barely manage to do so, and made my way north. As the darkness came on I was obliged to look down and feel with my feet lest I should pass over the trail of the party without seeing it. Just at dark I came to an enormous fallen tree and tried to go around the top, but the place was too brushy, so I went around the butt,

which seemed to me to be about twenty or twenty-five feet above my head. This I suppose to have been one of the fallen trees in the Calaveras Grove of *Sequoia gigantea* or mammoth trees, as I have since been there, and to my own satisfaction identified the lay of the land and the tree. Hence I concluded that I must have been the first white man who ever saw the *Sequoia gigantea*, of which I told Fremont when he came to California in 1844. Of course sleep was impossible, for I had neither blanket nor coat, and burned or frozen alternately as I turned from one side to the other before the small fire which I had built, until morning, when I started eastward to intersect the trail, thinking the company had turned north. But I traveled until noon and found no trail; then striking south, I came to the camp which I had left the previous morning. The party had gone, but not where they had said they would go; for they had taken the same trail I followed, into the canyon, and had gone up the south side, which they had found so steep that many of the poor animals could not climb it and had to be left. When I arrived the Indians were there cutting the horses to pieces and carrying off the meat. My situation, along among strange Indians killing our poor horses, was by no means comfortable. Afterwards we found that these Indians were always at war with the Californians. They were known as the Horse Thief Indians, and lived chiefly on horse flesh; they had been in the habit of raiding the ranches even to the very coast, driving away horses by the hundreds into the mountains to eat. That night after dark I overtook the party in camp.

A day or two later we came to a place where there was a great quantity of horse bones, and we did not know what it meant; we thought that an army must have perished there. They were of course horses that the Indians had driven in there and slaughtered. A few nights later, fearing depredations, we concluded to stand guard—all but one man, who would not. So we let his two horses roam where they pleased. In the morning they could not be found. A few miles away we came to a village; the Indians had fled, but we found the horses killed and some of the meat roasting on a fire.

We were now on the edge of the San Joaquin Valley, but we did not even know that we were in California. We could see a range of mountains lying to the west,—the Coast Range,—but we could see no valley. The evening of the day we started down into the valley we were very tired, and when night came our party was strung along for three or four miles, and every man slept right where

darkness overtook him. He would take off his saddle for a pillow and turn his horse or mule loose, if he had one. His animal would be too poor to walk away,

Sir Joseph Hooker Oak—Rancho Chico

37 and in the morning he would find him, usually within fifty feet. The jaded horses nearly perished with hunger and fatigue. When we overtook the foremost of the party the next morning we found they had come to a pond of water, and one of them had killed a fat coyote; when I came up it was all eaten except the lights and the windpipe, on which I made my breakfast. From that camp we saw timber to the north of us, evidently bordering a stream running west. It turned out to be the stream that we had followed down in the mountains—the Stanislaus River. As soon as we came in sight of the bottom land of the stream we saw an abundance of antelopes and sandhill cranes. We killed two of each the first evening. Wild grapes also abounded. The next day we killed thirteen deer and antelopes, jerked the meat and got ready to go on, all except the captain's mess of seven or eight, who decided to stay there and lay in meat enough to last them into California. We were really almost down to tidewater, but did not know it. Some thought it was five hundred miles yet to California. But all thought we had to cross at least that range of mountains in sight to the west before entering the promised land, and how many more beyond no one could tell. Nearly all thought it best to press on lest the snows might overtake us in the mountains before us, as they had already nearly done on the mountains behind us (the Sierra Nevada). It was now about the first of November. Our party set forth bearing northwest, aiming for a seeming gap north of a high mountain in the chain to the west of us. That mountain we found to be Mount Diablo. At night the Indians attacked the captain's camp and stole all their animals, which were the best in the company, and the next day the men had to overtake us with just what they could carry in their hands.

The next day, judging by the timber we saw, we concluded there was a river to the west. So two men went ahead to see if they could find a trail or a crossing. The timber proved to be along what is now known as the San Joaquin River. We sent two men on ahead to spy out the country. At night one of them returned, saying they had come across an Indian on horseback without a saddle who wore a cloth jacket but no other clothing. From what they could understand the Indian knew Dr. Marsh and had offered to guide them to his place. He plainly said “Marsh,” and of course we

supposed it was the Dr. Marsh before referred to who had written the letter to a friend in Jackson county, Missouri, and so it proved. One man went with the Indian to Marsh's ranch and the other came back to tell us what he had done, with the suggestion that we should go on and cross the river (San Joaquin) at the place to which the trail was leading. In that way we found ourselves two days later at Dr. Marsh's ranch, and there we learned that we were really in California and our journey at an end. After six months we had now arrived at the first settlement in California, November 4, 1841.

The account of our reception and of my own experiences in California in the pastoral period before the gold discovery, I must reserve for another paper.

JOHN BIDWELL.

38

The arrival of this little band of emigrants marked an epoch in the history of the Pacific Coast. The trail thus blazed stimulated a rapid and continuously flowing stream of emigration, destined to change the ownership of a vast territory and the nationality of a people. This was the dawn of fate that gate to us the shores of a second great ocean; that protected us from foreign encroachment and that has made us the world powers of today. When these "Pilgrims of the West" arrived they found a century-old civilization already in a decadent condition. Prior to our great struggle for independence, the Mission Fathers of Old Spain had pushed their way into the beautiful valleys of these golden shores and had established a social structure consistent with the religious feudalism of their nativity. With a fortitude and skill bordering on the marvelous, they had gathered together the wild natives, brought them under the combined influences of fear and reverence, and by the labor of their hands erected a series of buildings whose ruins to-day are the wonder and admiration of the present generation.

Time had wrought its changes, and when the subject of this sketch and his party arrived upon the scene, Spanish domination had yielded to the success of Mexican independence. The Missions had been secularized and their power largely broken up. There had grown up the system of great

private ranches, gifts of the Mexican Government to prominent families of Mexican nativity. These ranches were vast in extent, utilized almost exclusively as stock ranges, and were the creators of a life of ease, indolence and gayety not to be found elsewhere outside of the tropics. The Indian peons did most of the work; hides and tallow were the chief articles of commerce and were used in the purchase of such foreign luxuries as were needed; the skies were bright; the sun's face was rarely masked; the icy hand of winter could not reach beyond the mountain peaks; no artificial shelter was demanded for the protection of the large and increasing herds, and amidst a kind and bounteous nature the "soft-eyed, low-voiced Castilian" dreamed away his life without a thought for the morrow or an ambition for a change. Into the tranquillity of such a life had come the first emigrant train with its American restlessness, activity and push, sowing the seeds which produced a later harvest of political unrest, conflict and conquest.

The population of California at this period, aside from the Indians, was composed mostly of descendants of Spanish and Mexican families who had followed the enterprise of the Mission Fathers and who had been granted lands in abundance. They were a simple people; light-hearted and sociable; fond of amusements; living for the present, and 39 oblivious of the future. It was the "dreamy Spanish time," such as the world nowhere else could duplicate. Their houses were built of adobe, being warm in winter and cool in summer, and the roofs were of tile. The favorite amusements were horse racing and bear and bull fighting, while the violin and guitar afforded the necessary music for the ever-recurring fandango. They, had no stoves, but cooked in large earthen or stone ovens in the yard, such as would encase a whole sheepcarcass at one cooking. Tea and coffee were practically unknown, but delicious chocolate from Mexico was on every table and at the service of the transient guest. The proud but courteous and hospitable proprietor of a rancho was at home in the saddle and inspected his flocks and herds on the broad, rolling foot-hills where the succulent wild grasses in teeming abundance fattened their sleek sides and increased his revenue. Here was a land of peaceful homes and the world's strifes and strenuousness were viewed only through the softening haze of the purple distance. The warm sunshine, the soft and tempering breezes from the ever restless Pacific; the hoary headed Sierras with their scarred and terraced sides; the teeming flocks and herds feeding in the broad valleys; the robin and the lark filling the



morning air with joyous refrain;—such was the California that greeted the longing eyes of the first “Gringo” invaders.

Having arrived in the “Promised Land,” the first thing that concerned young Bidwell was to find employment. Hearing that a man named Sutter had founded a settlement about one hundred miles to the north, he proceeded thither, arriving there the last of November.

Sutter was of Swiss parentage but a native of Baden, who, after a more or less romantic career in Europe, came to America, first settling in Indiana, afterwards making his way to St. Louis, where he engaged in the Santa Fe trade, but being unsuccessful, returned from Santa Fe and joined a party of Rocky Mountain trappers and found his way down the Columbia River to Fort Vancouver. There he formed plans for reaching the coast of California for the purpose of establishing a colony.

In pursuance of these plans, he took passage in a vessel for Honolulu, whence there being no direct line of vessels for California, he sailed to Sitka in the English bark *Clementine*, thence in the same vessel reaching San Francisco harbor on the 1st of July, 1839. He secured a grant of land from the Mexican Government and two years prior to the arrival of Bidwell and his companions, had established a settlement on the present site of the City of Sacramento.

Early in 1841 he had purchased of the Russian-American Fur Co., at Bodega and Fort Ross, all the property they were unable to remove when they retired from the country and it was due to this fact that

Oak Grove on Rancho Chico

41 Bidwell, shortly after his arrival at Sutter's, received his first employment, for Sutter engaged him to proceed to Bodega and take charge of the transfer of the Russian property from thence to Sutter's settlement.

From January, 1842 to March, 1843, Bidwell was employed in this mission, which consisted in demolishing the houses at Fort Ross and shipping the lumber up the Sacramento River; also sending everything in the shape of personal property, including plows, yokes, carts, house-furniture, cannon,

muskets and live stock. Having completed this work, Bidwell started to return to Sutter's Fort on horseback, but at the present site of Vacaville, lost his horses. Borrowing fresh animals from Vaca, he continued to a point opposite Sutter's where he picketed them and crossed in a canoe to the Fort. On his recrossing the river he found these animals had been stolen. Hastily taking a relay of new animals from Sutter's, he started to search the valley for them. His search was unsuccessful, but he learned that a party bound for Oregon had recently passed up the valley and he hastened to overtake them, though they had a week's start.

He was accompanied by the noted pioneer, Peter Lassen, who was desirous of finding a place to locate a ranch. In this trip he went as far as the present site of Red Bluff, where he recovered the animals and made his first exploration of the Sacramento Valley, during which he named all the streams coming into the Sacramento from the east between Butte Creek and Red Bluff. He also made a map of the valley from his observations on horseback, which served as the standard map of that country until the actual surveys were made in later years. Thus, two years before Fremont's first explorations, did Bidwell traverse and explore the primeval wilderness of Northern California at a time when there was not a white settler north of Sacramento.

Immediately on his return from this trip, Bidwell assumed charge of Sutter's Hock Farm, which was located west of Feather River and] south of the Butte Mountains, in the present limits of Sutter County, where he remained for a year. The primitive character of farming operations in California in those day, especially the picturesque method of harvesting. is worthy of description. The work was done almost entirely by Indians, of whom Sutter had several hundred in his employ at that season of the year. Some were armed with sickles, some with butcher-knives, some with pieces of hoop-iron roughly fashioned into sickle-shape, while many attacked the dry and brittle stalks of grain with their naked hands.

After the completion of this slow and painful process of cutting the grain, it was piled in a huge mound in the center of a large, round corral. Thereupon three or four hundred wild horses were turned 42 in to thresh it, the Indians whooping and yelling to make them run faster. Suddenly they would dash in before the band at full speed, when the motion became reversed, with the effect

of plowing up the trampled straw to the very bottom. In an hour the grain would be thoroughly threshed and the dry straw broken almost into chaff. Following this came the winnowing, which would sometimes take a month. It could only be done when the wind was blowing, by throwing high into the air shovelfuls of grain, straw and chaff, the lighter materials being wafted to one side, while the grain, comparatively clear, would fall in a heap by itself.

The spring and summer of 1844 were spent by Bidwell in various exploring trips, searching for a saw-mill site for Sutter and finding suitable locations for land grants for various parties.

The policy of granting lands in large bodies to Mexican citizens had prevailed in California for a number of years. Sutter, in 1841, in order to secure the grant of New Helvetia, had become a naturalized Mexican citizen, and in 1844 the very liberal land policy of Governor Micheltorena induced many of the newly arrived Americans to pursue the same course. Bidwell accompanied Sutter on a trip to Monterey in October, 1844, in regard to land matters, and while there was granted letters of Mexican citizenship and the ranch known as Ulpinos, on the lower Sacramento, within the limits of the present Solano County. On this grant in 1846 he attempted to found a town, but after a disastrous time, the would-be settlers abandoned it and the place gained the name of "Holo-chemuk," or "Nothing to Eat." This was on the site of the present town of Rio Vista.

These and other grants to quondam American citizens excited the prejudice and distrust of many of the native Californians and it was upon this trip to Monterey that Bidwell and Sutter learned of a contemplated insurrection by two of the native chiefs, Castro and Alvarado, of which they informed the Governor. The insurrection soon developed into what became known as the Micheltorena War. Sutter and Bidwell, with a party of Americans and Indians, joined "forces with the Governor and pursued the insurrectionary forces to Cahuenga, twelve miles north of Los Angeles, where a battle was fought. Governor Micheltorena was defeated and made prisoner, together with Sutter and Bidwell. The two latter were soon released and returned to Sutter's Fort on horseback through the San Joaquin Valley.

In March, 1845, Bidwell received a grant of two square leagues of land known as the Colus grant, on the present site of Colusa, which he sold in 1849 to Colonel Semple.

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Speaking of these grants and their relation to the Micheltorena War, as heretofore mentioned, it may be interesting to state that in early times under Mexican rule, a citizen would petition the Governor for a grant of land; the Governor would refer it to the Secretary of State, who would attach his recommendation and send it to the nearest Alcalde for information as to whether the land was vacant. When, in 1844, the revolution spoken of broke out against Governor Micheltorena, General Sutter and the Americans at or near Sutter's Fort were favorable to the Governor and were willing to assist him against the revolutionists, and in order to assure those who had applied for grants of land that he would carry out his verbal promise as to perfecting their title, the Governor issued a document known as "the General land title," in the name of the Mexican Nation, granting and confirming to the said applicants the lands petitioned for, provided they received the favorable report of General Sutter. In passing upon the validity of these grants in later years, the United States Government refused to recognize this "general title" as of any value.

In December, 1845, General Fremont arrived in California on his second exploring expedition, reaching Sutter's Fort, where, in the absence of Sutter, Bidwell was in command. Proceeding southward through the Santa Clara, Pajaro and Salinas Valleys, he was warned by General Castro to leave the country. After some hesitation, and greatly irritated, Fremont retreated northward and passed Sutter's Fort on his way to Oregon. He was overtaken a few weeks later at Klamath Lake by Lieutenant Gillespie with a message from Washington, the purport of which seems to have been that in case of war with Mexico, he (Fremont) was to take possession of California, to prevent by force of arms, if necessary, any occupation by a European power, but meanwhile to conciliate, by every possible means, the good will of the natives, with a view that the occupation, in case of war, might be without opposition. Returning immediately to Sutter's Fort, Fremont proceeded to violate the spirit of his instructions by seizing a band of horses belonging to the Mexican Government and intended for the use of General Castro. In justification of this action, he caused rumors to be

circulated among the immigrant settlers that Castro was about to drive them all from the country. The fears and distrust of the settlers having thus been invoked, a party was organized, known to history as the Bear Flag party, who proceeded to violent measures by capturing Sonoma and bringing General Vallejo and other Mexican officials at that point to Sutter's Fort as prisoners. All this was nearly a month before Fremont or any one else on the Coast had knowledge that a state of war existed between Mexico and the United States.

The Bidwell "Mansion"

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Sutter and Bidwell both regarded Fremont's action as unjustifiable, but history was being made rapidly in those days, and the news of a declaration of war with Mexico following so soon, all differences of opinion between Americans disappeared and a united front was presented to the common foe.

Immediately upon receipt of the news of the Bear Flag episode at Sutter's Fort, Bidwell led a reconnoissance in the direction of Castro's supposed movements and a few days later proceeded to Sonoma, where, as one of a committee to draft a plan of organization, he prepared a paper for signature to the effect that: "The undersigned hereby agree to organize and to remain in service as long as necessary for the purpose of gaining and maintaining the independence of California." This was on the 4th of July, 1846, and on the 11th of the same month he was present at the raising of the American flag over Sutter's Fort, as a result of the news that Commodore Sloat had, in the name of the United States, officially performed the same act at Monterey.

From this time until the close of the struggle with Mexico, Bidwell was in active service in various capacities, holding successively the rank of Lieutenant, Captain and Quartermaster with the rank of Major. He was also appointed by Fremont, Alcalde at the Mission of San Luis Rey, and commanded that post at the time of the Flores revolt in the fall of 1846, during which he had some thrilling and hazardous experiences.

The year following the close of the war was full of activities along various lines for young Bidwell. He took the first census of that portion of the Sacramento Valley north of the Marysville Buttes and reported the result to Captain Sutter under date of December 21, 1847, showing the actual white population to be 82 and the estimated Indian population 19,500. He was again for a time in the service of Sutter and drew up a contract between Sutter and Marshall for the erection of the saw-mill where subsequently the latter made his alluring and momentous discovery of gold. He was engaged in surveying and locating for the grantees, various grants of land made to them through the generous munificence of Governor Micheltorena during his brief and turbulent administration. He established a home for himself on the banks of Little Butte Creek, within the limits of the Farwell grant, of which he was part owner, built a log cabin and planted vines and fruit trees.

In February, 1848, while at Sutter's Fort on his way to San Rafael for more trees and vines, he learned of the discovery of gold and carried the first authentic news of the circumstance to San Francisco.

In March, 1848, he made a trip to Coloma to satisfy himself of the extent and importance of the gold discovery, and made the first weights 46 and scales for Sam Brannan, the noted Mormon leader, for use in the weighing of gold dust at his store in Sacramento. Returning to his home from this trip to Coloma, his mind fraught with the influences and possibilities of this golden revelation, he tarried by the way to test the sands of Feather River and found sufficient indications of the yellow metal to justify the organization of a party, including four of his neighbors, who proceeded to prospect the North Fork of Feather River in the spring of 1848, but with such indifferent success as to discourage a portion of the company, and they all returned home. Soon after, however, with two of his previous companions, Bidwell again took up the search and at a place since known as Bidwell's Bar, on Feather River, found abundant reward for his labor and perseverance. Two seasons' continuance amidst the feverish bustle, excitement and turbulence of a community of gold diggers was sufficient to satisfy his cupidity and he returned with ardent zeal to the development of his farm. Purchasing the property known as Rancho Chico, —originally granted to William Dickey, one of his mining companions,—he erected a log house thereon in the summer of 1849.

The years immediately following the gold discovery were pregnant with vitality and development, both financial and political, and in most of these events John Bidwell was a potent and prominent factor. He was a member of the Constitutional Convention (though unable to attend its sessions), and a member representing the Sacramento district,—which then comprised all of the State north of Sacramento,—in the first State Senate. During this session of the first Legislature he was a member of the Committee on Counties and County Boundaries, and was assigned the duty of recommending to the Committee the names for the counties about to be organized and the names of those counties not having a Spanish significance or origin were in large measure selected and recommended by him. He was one of the Commissioners appointed by Governor Burnett in 1850 to bear to the National Capital the block of gold-bearing quartz, destined as the tribute of California to “mark her interest in the fame and glory of the Father of his Country and her desire to perpetuate his great name and virtues as far as earthly monuments can accomplish that object.”

It was during this trip to Washington City that the question of the admission of California as a State was pending before Congress. Two Senators (Gwin and Fremont) and a member of Congress (Gilbert) had been elected and were awaiting the act of admission before taking their seats in the National Legislative. They were also in Washington and the united effort of all Californians of influence was being brought to bear upon Congress for favorable action. The main opposition to admission came from the pro-slavery element of the South.

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To admit California as a free State would destroy the equilibrium of free and slave territory. Hence the opposition of the South was most bitter and determined. Even the representatives from the North were not unanimous. Daniel Webster reiterated his previously expressed opinion that we had territory enough; that we should follow the Spartan maxim,—“Improve, adorn what you have, seek no further,” and it was understood that others were much of the same mind. In this connection it is related that at a certain stage of the proceedings the Californians had become much discouraged at the outlook in Congress, and Bidwell was preparing to return home on an early steamer. He had been commissioned, when he left California, by a friend, Mr. E. C. Crosby, to escort the latter's

wife and daughter back from New York to San Francisco. In an interview with Mrs. Crosby he gave voice to the discouraging situation, mentioning that if the support and influence of Senator Seward could be secured, their cause would be likely to triumph. Mrs. Crosby, who had been a classmate of Seward at school, invited the Senator to a farewell dinner before her departure for California, at which function Bidwell had opportunity to present to him the cogent reasons existing for California's admission, and these reasons were made so plain and so convincing that in the final struggle in the Senate Seward not only supported the claims of California by his vote, but in a speech eloquently appealed to his colleagues to support the measure, saying: "Let California come in. California, that comes from the clime where the west dies away into the rising east. California, which bounds at once the empire and the continent. California, the youthful Queen of the Pacific, in the robes of freedom gorgeously inlaid with gold is doubly welcome. She stands justified for all the irregularities in the method of coming."

On the 12th day of August, 1850, the bill for admission passed the Senate; on the 7th day of September following, was concurred in by the house of Representatives, and on the 9th was approved by President Fillmore. Bidwell sailed on the earliest steamer for San Francisco, arriving from Panama on the Oregon on the 18th of October, and bringing to Californians the first news of completed Statehood.

During the decade that followed, Bidwell devoted himself with earnest enthusiasm to the development of his magnificent landed estate, where in 1852 he built a large two-story adobe, which served both as a residence and a house of entertainment for travelers along the Oregon road, pausing only at infrequent intervals to perform the honorary, political duties thrust upon him by his appreciative neighbors. Thus, in 1851, he was a delegate to the Democratic State Convention: in 1854, was Vice-President of the Democratic State Convention; in 1855, was a candidate for the State Senate and in 1860 the

The Avenue Leading from Bidwell Mansion

49 Democratic State Convention selected him to head the list of delegates to the National Democratic Convention at Charleston, South Carolina.



When the clash came between the North and the South, and the seceding States formed the Southern Confederacy, John Bidwell cast all party allegiance aside and dedicated every impulse of his loyal heart to the support of his country's cause.

In June, 1861, he made the following remarks before the Douglass County Convention of Butte County:

“Our meeting on this occasion has been under circumstances of more than usual importance. I cordially endorse the Union sentiments we have just heard so eloquently expressed and yield to no man in devotion to our common country. In the present crisis there can be but one issue—our Government must be sustained or it will go down. There can be no middle ground. He who is not for it is against it. Such was our progress in all the attributes of national greatness and power, that no statesman, however wise, no human sagacity, however profound, could have formed the least conception of the high position we were destined to hold among the powers of the globe. Must all this be lost to us and to the world? Shall we aid the madness and folly that now seeks the destruction of the greatest and best government ever devised by human wisdom? No loyal citizen can give but one response. The laws must be executed and the Government sustained at every hazard—no matter by whom administered. It is now twenty years since I crossed the parched and trackless waste which then separated the Atlantic from the Pacific slope of the continent. I have learned to appreciate the advantages of a free and efficient government and I feel in this hour of peril more determined than ever before in my devotion to my country.”

In 1863 he was appointed Brigadier General of the California Militia, and to his intense loyalty, military alertness and efficiency on the one hand, coupled with the unrivaled and convincing eloquence of Rev. Thos. Starr King, is due, more than to any other individual influences, the decision of California to remain loyal to the Union, despite the desperate efforts of the powerful Southern element led by Gwin, Terry and others.

As the candidate of the Union party, he was elected to the Thirty-ninth Congress, and the same year was a delegate to the National Convention at Baltimore, which renominated Abraham Lincoln for President.

In 1866, he was tendered a renomination for Congress, and in 1867, the nomination for Governor, both of which he declined.

In 1875 he was a candidate of the Independent or Anti-Monopoly party for Governor.

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In 1890 he was the standard-bearer of the Prohibition party for the same office, and two years later was honored by the same party as its nominee for President of the United States. This was his last appearance as a candidate for any political office.

In his political life and expressions, General Bidwell was ever a man of deep and positive convictions. Whenever it seemed to him that the political party with whom he was allied was following after strange gods, he hesitated not a moment to denounce its course. No call of expediency fell upon his approving ear; no fear of party discipline or of personal disadvantage closed his lips. To him politics meant good government; "government of the people, by the people, for the people." It meant a purpose single and constant for the rights of each individual and for the welfare of the public. It meant hatred of bossism, monopoly and graft in all their multifarious and insidious forms. It meant a high standard of morality, a cleanliness of conscience, a clear discernment of public duty and an intense and lofty patriotism that was bounded only by the two great oceans.

Though holding such positive views, he was ever patient and tolerant of the honest convictions of others. Though a large employer of labor, no man in his employ, however humble, was ever made to feel that his employment depended in any sense upon his political views and opinions, and he had no patience with a man whose sense of responsibility and patriotism failed to stimulate him to the proper exercise of his rights of franchise.

He ever led the advance guard for public improvements. In his annual address before the Northern District Agricultural Society in 1865, he said: "Of all things necessary to promote the progress of the Pacific Coast, none will compare with the completion of a railway across the continent. Our hopes and prayers should be centered upon its earliest possible completion. With this great enterprise accomplished, our destiny, in spite of wicked men, would be inseparably connected with the Union."

While in Congress, he introduced and fathered a bill for the construction of the California and Oregon Railroad, accompanied by a liberal grant of public lands, and when the road came to be constructed, granted it a free right of way for four miles across the most fertile portion of his ranch.

But while he was thus favorable to public improvements, he was one of the first to see and sound a note of warning against the oppression of a monopoly. In a carefully prepared address before the State Agricultural Society at Sacramento in 1867, he said: "Our great hope is centered on the completion of the Pacific Railroad, but if possible to avoid it, we ought not to be obliged to wait for that event, or be 51 entirely dependent upon it when it shall be completed. The difficulty lies in this, that all the principal channels of travel are in the hands of monopolies and are likely to continue to be so. We know that monopolies are always onerous and dangerous to the best interests of a people. They may be less dangerous, perhaps, in a free country like ours, where exorbitant charges will in most cases diminish patronage, beget opposition, curtail resources and thus wound, in the most vital part, soulless corporations. Excessive prosperity may produce extravagance, extravagance beget indebtedness and indebtedness dissolution, but the prosperity of a State—a great country like ours—ought not to be dependent on these fortuitous or capricious remedies. I believe there is a remedy if the people will it—a legal remedy—within the just scope and meaning of our national organic law. I do not pretend to be a constitutional expounder. I have no claim to legal learning and consequently no reputation, as a lawyer, to lose. I profess simply to feel in common with other citizens a deep and abiding interest in all that concerns the prosperity of the commonwealth. That remedy is the clause in the Constitution which gives Congress the power to regulate commerce with foreign nations and among the several States. The prosperity of agriculture, of mining, of

manufactures, in a word, of all interests, hinges upon the proper regulation of commerce among the several States. This question does not concern California alone; the States upon the Atlantic Slope will soon demand it. Just and liberal encouragement ought to be given to laudable enterprises and investments of capital. It is necessary, every one will admit, that there should be accumulations of capital. I am in favor of them; we are all in favor of them. Without them no great undertakings could be begun and executed. But we cannot favor the building up at the expense of the people and the prosperity of the whole country, monstrous moneyed oligarchies, powerful enough to control conventions, Legislatures, and even Congress, and contaminating our whole political system.”

Though uttered nearly forty years ago, how prophetic these words seem, and how very like a reformer's speech in the halls of legislation in this year of our Lord, 1906.

Acting upon these principles, when the extortions and tyranny of the transportation system became unbearable to himself and his neighbors, General Bidwell sought to relieve the latter as well as himself by placing upon the Sacramento River a steamboat for transporting grain and other freight to market at reasonable rates. But after expending many thousands of dollars in the unequal contest with the immense power and capital of the transportation company, coupled with the lack of co-operation and support of the community at large, he was

Gen. Jno. Bidwell in 1895

53 compelled to relinquish the fight along that line. But politically, in every public act and expression, in every county and State convention, his voice was raised against the extortion and monopoly. It was on this issue that he became the Independent candidate for Governor in 1875, during which canvass he was maligned and slandered by corrupt and professional politicians who left no stone unturned to secure his defeat.

When the National Prohibition Convention met at Cincinnati in July, 1892, the name of General Bidwell was presented as a candidate for the Presidential nomination. He was nominated on the first ballot, receiving 583 votes as against 184 for his highest competitor. A prominent Prohibition paper, speaking of the nomination the following day, said: “From the very outset his name had a charm for

Prohibitionists, and as the campaign advanced, the call became general, until during the last week preceding the convention it became the watchword of the party, culminating in his nomination. General Bidwell's name is a tower of strength. His honorable record, public spirit and well-known views upon the grave questions of the time, all tend to attract voters toward his cause.”

Even such of his political enemies as cared for fairness and honesty of statement, had a kindly word to speak of him. The *Wine and Spirit Review*, the liquor organ of the Pacific Coast, the week following his nomination, observed, “General Bidwell is as good a choice as could have been made. He is a wealthy rancher, a bright man and is head and shoulders above his party as a liberal, broad-minded man. His only failing is his belief that prohibition can be accomplished by legal measures.”

In his letter of acceptance, General Bidwell discussed fully all the leading questions of the day, including equal suffrage—of which he was an ardent advocate,—capital and labor, immigration and naturalization, the laws concerning which, in his belief, needed radical revision,—the tariff, the income tax, popular education, the Christian Sabbath, arbitration, pools and trusts, qualifications for citizenship and the liquor traffic.

On this latter topic he observed: “The liquor traffic is an enormous incubus upon the nation, amounting in cost and consequences to the annual sum of not less than two billions of dollars. It is a standing curse, a danger to public health, the prolific source of untold political corruption, crimes, diseases, degradation and death; a public nuisance and a public immorality; an unmitigated and measureless evil without a redeeming feature. The liquor power leads, corrupts and dominates both the old political parties. If these charges are true have we not a 54 right to ask, ‘How can any good man consistently support the infamous saloon business by longer clinging to the destinies of those parties?’”

In discussing the qualifications for citizenship he said: “In 1776 we needed immigration, but times have changed. All the world has been and still is coming to us. But we must now begin to close the doors of self-defense. We do not want the world faster than we can Americanize it. We have already quite enough of imported nihilism, anarchism and pauperism. We do not ask foreigners

coming to this country to change their faith, but we do insist that they shall not destroy our liberties by any attempt to foreignize or anarchize us or our government; that as a condition of citizenship they should learn to speak our national language and to read and write it fairly well.”

When the votes were counted in November it was found that General Bidwell had received the largest vote ever cast for a prohibition candidate, nor has his vote been equaled by any candidate of the party since that date.

But the political and military career and services of General Bidwell were no more honorable, no more illustrious, no more useful than his contributions and labors in the fields of agriculture, horticulture and forestry. He was a passionate lover of nature in all its varied and beautiful forms. He was among the earliest to appreciate the fact that the future prosperity of the State lay in the development of her agricultural resources, rather than in her mineral wealth. He realized that agriculture is the prolific mother of wealth. That without it man soon exhausts nature and exhausts himself. The earth breeds savages. Agriculture breeds enlightened nations. The state of husbandry in any country is the test of its enlightenment. The thermometer of civilization rises and falls as drives the plow. Well cultivated farms grow true patriots. When monarchs increase in power, it is the growth of tyranny. Not so with the farmer. His tyranny is over the barrenness. He smites the earth and it brings forth in abundance; he brings his enemies to the faggot and the stake, but they are the thorn, the thistle and the briar. He overruns and subdues the territory of his foes; but they are the swamp, the fen and the quagmire; the earth is his slave, but it is the slavery of love. Agriculture forms character. No man can be a good farmer who is not an industrious man and the accumulations of his industry make him a careful guardian of his own as well as a respecter and defender of his neighbor's possessions.

And thus it came about, holding these views, that when in 1852 a movement was inaugurated for the formation of a State Agricultural and Horticultural Society, John Bidwell became a pioneer in the new movement, as he had been a pioneer in the first overland movement to Americanize California.

At frequent intervals between 1860 and 1881 he delivered, upon invitation of the Society, the principal address at its annual gatherings.

As already noted, as early as 1847 he had planted vines and fruit trees upon his rancho. These plantings were increased from year to year until, at the time of his death, he had over eighteen hundred acres in fruit. Every species and every variety that had a possibility of coming to perfection in either a temperate or semi-tropic clime was tested and the results carefully noted.

A sample or experimental orchard near his house contained at least one specimen tree of over four hundred varieties of fruit.

He was one of the earliest to discover the adaptability of soil and climate for raisin-growing in California, as he also was of the very first to make them in commercial quantity.

He was a pioneer in the manufacture of olive oil, and in a test made some years ago his oil was officially declared to be the best in quality of any in the State, and absolutely pure.

He began the cultivation of wheat and other grains with his first year's ranching. He tested the virtue and adaptability, through long years of experiment, of every kind and variety and freely gave to the public the benefit of his experience.

Many thousands of dollars were thus expended by him in an unselfish effort for the public good. Gold medals were awarded him at both the Paris and New Orleans expositions for his incomparable display of grains.

He erected and operated the first water-power grist-mill in his section of the State, and though several times destroyed by fire, it was rebuilt each time on the same spot with increased capacity and improved power and machinery.

At this mill and on Rancho Chico in 1877, as related by the editor of a local paper, the following feat was successfully carried out: "At a quarter to five o'clock, the usual time for the hands

commencing work, the hands were in the field, two miles and a half from the mill, and at five minutes to five the first header wagon brought a load of wheat to the threshing machine, which was put through and sacked. The first two sacks were placed in a buggy and carried to the mill where it was put through the cleaning process and ground into flour. At half-past six o'clock we received a portion of the flour and at a quarter before seven we sat down to our breakfast to eat nice biscuits

#### Almond Orchard in Blossom—Rancho Chico

57 made from the flour.” It was from this mill also that the celebrated bag of “Sanitary flour” came which during the Civil War was sold and resold at Austin and various other points in Nevada, and elsewhere, and which eventually produced after being taken to the great Sanitary Fair at St. Louis a fund of about one million dollars for the benefit of the United States Sanitary Commission.

While he experienced a deep fascination for the development of all these commercial commodities, his love for the beautiful and ornamental was no less marked. From the portico of his stately mansion more than ninety varieties of trees and shrubs could be counted, many of them of foreign origin, and whose adaptability to the soil and climate of California were here tested and made manifest for the first time.

Twenty years ago he carved a tract of thirty acres out of his great ranch and presented it to the State as a Forestry Station for the planting and testing of tree seeds and tree growth. Of all his public benefactions this was the only one concerning which General Bidwell was ever known to express disappointment or regret. At the time of the gift a State Forestry Commission existed for which the Legislature was accustomed to make a bi-ennial appropriation of thirty thousand dollars. As with many another public body, the appropriation came to be principally absorbed in the salaries, traveling expenses, etc., of the Commission and its employees, and very little found its way into the supposed objects and purposes of the law creating the Commission, at least so far as the Chico Forestry Station was concerned.

So far from being made a medium for testing the adaptability of new trees and shrubs to the soil and climate of California, very little was planted not already familiarly growing in the nurseries



and elsewhere in the State, and that little was for years so neglected and became so choked with weeds as to jeopardize its healthful and legitimate growth as well as to become a menace to the surrounding lands of Rancho Chico, in the dissemination of noxious seeds.

In recent years, however, the Station has been under the care and management of the State University and while the appropriations available have been very meagre, some of the more offensive features of its management have been eliminated.

The great forests of the Sierras were ever a subject for the admiration and solicitude of General Bidwell. He had reverently viewed their grandeur and enthusiastically explored their depths. To his mind, experience and observation proved that no country can long maintain a high degree of prosperous fertility without forest trees and shrubbery. Besides the salubrity to which they conduce and the 58 protection they afford from the extremes of climatic influences, no springs or streams, large or small, can be counted upon as permanent, if these first principles of a country's resources are ignored.

It was his belief that the ruthless cutting of timber from the slopes of the Sierras decreased the annual rainfall, and paradoxical though it may seem, increased the destructiveness of floods, because with the sheltering shade of the trees removed the snow on the hillsides melted more rapidly and the water was permitted a less leisurely course to the streams below.

General Bidwell has been the friend and companion and his home the resort of many of the most distinguished naturalists, including Sir Joseph Hooker, Professor Asa Gray, John Muir and Dr. Parry, all of whom wandered with him through the great forests of the Sierras in pursuit of science.

The deep interest he took in all branches of natural history made his society agreeable to men of learning.

A profound concern in and devotion to schools and churches marked his whole career. Memories of the difficulties and hardships that encompassed his efforts to secure an education made him a passionate partisan of the public school.

He was determined that every child should have opportunity for educational development and was a firm advocate of a law for compulsory school attendance. When the State Legislature made appropriation for a State Normal School and Chico became an applicant for its location, General Bidwell, although then absent in the East, wired his consent to take any portion of his ranch for a site, except his door-yard, and a site of eight acres, valued at fifteen thousand dollars was selected adjoining the city limits.

When he laid out the town of Chico on a portion of his land, a plot of ground was donated to every church organization, in addition to large cash contributions for the erection of the Presbyterian Church, of which denomination he was a leading and consistent member until his death.

Physically, General Bidwell was a stalwart. Standing full six feet in height, erect and straight as a pine of the Sierras, his figure was one to command attention. Accustomed to and infatuated with outdoor exercise, he rejoiced in exploring the canyons and climbing the rugged mountain steeps. Only two years before his death, when seventy-eight years of age, he climbed to the very pinnacle of Lassen's Peak, an altitude of ten thousand five hundred feet. He was a man of dauntless pluck and determination, as is evidenced by the incident related of himself, that when a boy his father removed from the 59 "Western Reserve" to the wilderness of Southwestern Ohio. There were no school privileges in his new home and he was determined to have an education. With a pack on his back containing the few clothes he possessed, he walked a distance of three hundred miles to attend Kingsville Academy. But the very essence of determination was manifest in the act of setting forth upon a journey through two thousand miles of unexplored wilderness, inhabited only by wild animals and savage men, to reach a land about which only the vaguest and most fanciful information was current.

Like Hampden, "he was a man in whom virtue showed itself in its mildest and least austere form. With the morals of a Puritan, he had the manners of a courtier. He had a natural cheerfulness and vivacity and above all a flowing courtesy to all men. He had a cool temper, calm judgment, generous impulses and perfect rectitude of intention." In entertaining his many visitors and friends;

in riding, reading and attending to his varied farm interests, he passed his later years in comfort and enjoyment.

A student of nature, as well as of books, the broad path of progress and development was a highway he loved to travel and its beauties and benefits were absorbed with eager interest and profit. If a new and prolific variety of grain was offered, he was ready to test, and if found worthy, to adopt it. Could he hear of a curious or promising development in fruits or melons, he did not rest until the soil and climate of his beloved Rancho Chico had verified or refuted their value. When the people needed an outlet for their produce, he constructed, largely at his own expense, a wagon-road for seventy miles across the rugged Sierras. Thus his public spirit found an abiding place in the front rank of progress. His investigating mind threw new light upon the farmer's duty and office. He recognized that the science of the last half century had raised the culture of the soil into the most noble of the arts to which man can devote himself. To plant a grain of wheat and see it bring forth twenty or thirty fold seemed a very simple thing, but study the relations of one wheat blade to the forces and laws of nature and see what begins to open before you. It will be impossible to master it without peering into the central mysteries of chemistry; without comprehending the most intricate balances of meteorology; without fathoming the beautiful and complicate marvels of light; without understanding the beneficence of the season's changes and the dependence of the earth upon the royal favor of the sun.

In closing an address before the State Agricultural Society in 1860, General Bidwell said: "Having witnessed the past and ventured to look forward toward a hopeful future, I beg to say that it is with pleasure and with pride that I now behold, not the nucleus of the new

#### Fruit Drying—Rancho Chico

61 and sparsely settled colony, where the germ of civilization is just beginning to bud,—not merely the center of a rude population of ten or fifteen years' growth, but the apparent center of an empire,—the center of a great and flourishing State, having all the signs of wealth, commerce, refinement and a vigorous and cultivated growth, displaying almost every product which industry can earn, or refinement enjoy,—not regressive or stationary, but in a state of healthy and permanent

advancement. And to what shall we ascribe the cause of all this change? What has changed the tumultuous scenes of 1849,—the gambling hells that made night hideous in almost every town or public place—from a moral chaos to order, the abodes of virtue, refinement and civilization? Certainly not the temporary multitude who rushed in by hundreds of thousands to grasp our golden treasures and go away, but to the permanent citizens, the families, and the arts, the sciences and institutions which these have caused to be established here. And finally, of all our institutions, none has greater claims for usefulness and on the gratitude of the people and none portrays with more certainty the energy, the genius, the skill, the industry and the intelligence of our people, than this noble temple erected to the genius of agriculture.”

In this spirit, and with these views, did General Bidwell devote himself to the evolution of his great estate, which from plain and foothill cattle range was transformed into the most beautiful, productive and famous ranch in California.

When General Bidwell came into possession of Rancho Chico and the lands on which the City of Chico now stands, a rancheria or village of Indians was located along the south bank of Chico Creek. He thus describes them in 1847: “When I came to survey this and other ranchos in this part of California, the Indians were almost as wild as deer and wholly unclad, save that the women always wore a skirt-like covering, divided at the side, made of tule, a kind of rush, which was fastened to a belt or to handles thrust under the belt. When I began surveying, not having enough white men, I had to use Indians. In clearing away brush and brambles it became necessary to furnish them something in the way of clothing, including shoes, pantaloons and shirts, which were often removed by them as soon as the work was done and carried home to their village in their hands, to be brought back in the morning and worn while at work, and for many years afterward in stormy, weather they took off their shoes, wearing them only while at work under shelter. But they soon learned to wear the clothes day and night until worn out.”

Thus at variance with the usual frontier white man's method of seeking the violent expulsion or extermination of the Indian, General 62 Bidwell substituted kind treatment, lucrative employment and comfortable subsistence. From that day to this, the Indians of Rancho Chico have been a factor

in its industrial development. They have been taught “to plow, to sow, to reap and to mow,” and on many occasions when the shortage of other help foreboded disaster, their labor has been the supplemental aid in securing the threatened harvests.

He set apart for them and removed them to a tract of land about half a mile northwest of his house, aided and encouraged them to substitute frame houses for their native earthen huts and afforded them protection from the intrusion and outrage of lawless whites.

He was their sole judge, counsellor and protector. His word was law. All disputes and difficulties arising from their daily routine of life were settled by him, who after listening to both sides of a story would administer the necessary justice, inquire about their wives and families and send them on their way. Thus this story has been related as an illustration:

Wahokea would accuse Noel of having his bridle. The two would repair to the Mansion, as the General's house was called, to consult the General, who if the day was sunny would be found seated on his wide veranda. He was probably attired, if the weather was warm, in a duck suit, while carrying in his hand the inevitable palm-leaf fan, which he would wave back and forth in his calm, unruffled way.

“Now,” would say the General in measured tones, as the two would appear before him, “what is the difficulty?”

“Well, this man Wahokea, he have my bridle,” would answer Noel.

Then Wahokea would take off his hat and bow and answer, “No, General, I no have those bridle, he mine.”

“Oh, my, oh my!” the General would gasp, “this is really getting serious.” And then perhaps the fan would move a little faster.

Noel would look at Wahokea and Wahokea would look at Noel.

“Well, you see, General, it is this way,” Wahokea would hesitate and finally go on, “my mother she died. Noel father he died. My father he marry Noel mother. Noel mother my mother now. She say him bridle hers,—belong my father,—belong to her,—belong to Noel and——”

Here the General would shift uneasily on his chair, fan slowly and gaze far across at an acacia tree in bloom, and then without looking at either Noel or his companion, he would ask:

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“And what does your father say, Wahokea?”

“He no say nothing, General; he go and catch fish, General.”

Another silence. Finally the General would say to Wahokea, “You have done most of the talking, so you keep the bridle, and you, Noel, as you haven't talked much, you may go down to the harness house and ask Andy for that new bridle of mine. And how is your wife, Wahokea? And your baby, Noel?”

The two would say goodbye and walk away, the General calling after them, “Tell Andy it's the one with the red buttons on the side.”

As the years passed on a new factor entered into the management of the Indian question on Rancho Chico. In 1868 General Bidwell married Miss Annie Kennedy, of Washington City, the daughter of Joseph C. G. Kennedy, a man of high social and literary standing, who had been Superintendent of the United States Census of 1850 and 1860.

Immediately after her arrival, Mrs. Bidwell began to feel an interest in the Indians and their evolution that soon ripened into a fascination.

She developed plans for their elevation and education along both religious and industrial lines. She established an industrial school through which they were taught to cut and make their own garments; they were also taught to read and sing, and finally at their own request, a pretty and

comfortable little church was built for them in the midst of their village and where Mrs. Bidwell has since made it her pleasureable duty to conduct religious services for their benefit.

In all this work she was nobly and faithfully seconded and assisted by General Bidwell.

Such has been the life, the history and the achievements of this broad-minded, persistent, progressive, philanthropic, and withal most modest, Pioneer of 1841. To whom does the State of California owe more homage? Whose memory is more deserving of her faithful consideration? Whose deeds are more worthy of perpetuation in imperishable bronze or marble? If any there be, let his name be proclaimed from the housetops, for the people of the Golden West do not know him.

But this long life of adventure and achievement was drawing to a close. Though eighty years of age General Bidwell's health was good and his outdoor activity and usefulness were unimpaired. Indeed, for the two years preceding his death, he had been most actively engaged in superintending the regrading and improvement of his

Scene in Chico Creek Canon—Rancho Chico

65 favorite mountain road, pitching his tent along the line of his work and undergoing all the deprivations, as well as pleasures, of camp life.

On the night of April 3, 1900, he had attended a political meeting and returned home feeling as well as usual. On the following morning he went to the woods with a couple of assistants to do some work. It became necessary to cut a log, as a result of which operation he was suddenly seized with heart failure. Assistance was summoned and he was hastily conveyed to his home where, after a recurring attack, he passed quietly into eternity at 2:30 P.M.

There remained but the memory of a useful life, the glory of an honorable career, the example of a faithful steward. From all sections of California and from the country at large came messages of sympathy and condolence. Locally, special meetings were called of the different organizations and resolutions of respect and affection were offered and adopted. The City Trustees, the various fire and hose companies, Halleck Post of the G. A. R., the Women's Christian Temperance Union, the

student body and the faculty of the State Normal School, The Republican Club, The Native Sons of the Golden West, Company A, National Guard of California, Presbyterian Mite Society, the various church organizations and the county officials of Butte County, all gave expressions of deepest grief.

On the 11th day of April all that was mortal of John Bidwell was committed to the grave. The funeral services were conducted from the portico of the Bidwell Mansion, attended by a large concourse of friends and neighbors who stood reverently and patiently throughout the services in spite of a cold, drizzling rain.

Among those who aided in conducting the services was the venerable Rev. S. H. Willey, who was Chaplain of the first Senate of California, of which body General Bidwell was a member.

The funeral procession was led by the local company of the California National Guard, followed by the City Trustees, County Officers, Fire Department, Grand Army of the Republic, Native Sons of the Golden West, Women's Christian Temperance Union and sundry other organizations, while the school children carpeted the roadway to the cemetery with beautiful flowers. Among the pall bearers, were four of the leading Indians of the village. Their presence, as well as that of the entire population of the Indian rancheria, was one of the most impressive and touching scenes at the funeral.

In the weeks that followed, memorial services were held at the 66 State Normal School and under the direction of the Butte County Officers at the County Seat in Oroville, where in each case, tender and loving tributes were paid to the memory of the departed. One of the speakers, in the course of a most beautiful and finished address, said: "'tis a far cry from 1841 to 1900. Empires have been carved and crushed within that span. Men whom the world call great have come and gone again within that cycle, but this man's page in history viewed in the light of a lifetime, stands ever clear, clean-cut and rugged as yon western mountains 'neath setting sun.

“He was the ideal pioneer. In discovery, in research, in the domain of thought, we find him fearlessly treading unknown paths and blazing the wilderness for generations yet to be. In every expedition looking to the uplifting of humanity, in every movement leading mankind to higher



planes and broader fields, we find this pioneer spirit ever controlling. It was the master principle of his life, the mainspring governing and directing a grand existence. No man more proudly marched in the front rank of advancing thought and progress. To him, who had aught to offer of useful invention; to the thinker who wrought for the betterment of the race, his mind was open to receive, his purse was open to assist.

“John Bidwell was ever a good man, always a pure man, from first to last a man of high ideals, aiming and hoping for something better, striving for the best.

“So he lived and when death came unwarned, swift and painless, it found him as ever ready. And he went, not like the stricken pine midst winter's storm, crashing headlong to earth with roar and echo, but gently and noiseless , as if a tired flower had folded its leaves at sunset and slept.

“Would we build a monument to this man? Then let it not be of granite nor of marble to crumble and decay. Let it not be of bronze to blacken and yield to the resistless hand of time. Rather let him live in the memory of a grateful people. Let those Sierras, whose heights his feet first trod, be for him monument and epitaph. Let spring-time zephyrs that woo the wild vine and golden poppy along the paths he loves so well, chant for him requiem and dirge; for so long as the oak shall lend its beauty to the plain, so long as wild flowers shall spread their mantle of gold and purple on the hills of old Butte, so long as the golden Feather shall bear her treasure from its mountain fastnesses, so long as his own loved Arroyo shall, midst vine and grass and fern, go singing to the sea, so long in the hearts of our people will live the memory of John Bidwell.”

*Requiescit in Pace.*”

## **ADDRESSES REMINISCENCES, ETC. OF General John Bidwell**

Compiled by

C. C. ROYCE

CHICO, CALIFORNIA, 1907

BERKELEY, April 23, 1907.

I hereby certify that the following copy of John Bidwell's trip to California, 1841, has been verified, page by page, and line by line, and is a true copy of the printed journal in the Bancroft Library, University of California.

JAMES R. ROBERTSON, Assistant Custodian Bancroft Library, and Teaching Fellow in History, University of California.

### **PREFACE.**

The publisher of this Journal, being aware that a great many persons, in Missouri and of the other Western States, are at this time anxious to get correct information relative to Oregon and California, hopes in part to gratify them by giving publicity to these sheets through the press; having been solicited to do so by men of information who have perused them in manuscript.

The author, Mr. John Bidwell, a young man of good acquirements and unexceptionable moral character, came to Missouri from the Buckeye State about four years ago, and resided in Platte County two years, during which time he made many staunch friends, and was prosperous in business.

But the many inducements held forth to enterprising young men to go to California, caused him to adopt the motto, "Westward ho," shoulder his rifle, and join one of the California Companies which leave the rendezvous near Independence annually. Prior to his going, he promised his friends to keep a Journal, noticing the incidents of the trip, and also give his observations of the country after his arrival there. This promise he has redeemed, by forwarding the publisher this copy of his Journal, etc.

### **A JOURNEY TO CALIFORNIA.**

Bodega, Port of the Russians, Upper California, March 30th, 1842.

Most Esteemed Sir: Owing to circumstances I am compelled to abridge my Journal, and likewise a description of the country so far as I have been able to travel.

By perusing the following pages you will learn most of the particulars of all my travels since I left the United States.

I will now begin with my daily Journal, from the time the company arrived at Kansas River, till they arrived at Marsh's, in Upper California.

The missionary company consisted of eleven persons, viz.: Capt. Fitzpatric, the pilot, Father De Smet, Pont and Mengarine, missionaries; John Gray, hunter; Romaine, and five teamsters.

Our company was composed of the following individuals: T. H. Green, G. Hinshaw, Charles Hopper, J. P. Springer, A. G. Patton, J. Bartleson, N. Dawson, Josiah Belden, J. M. Jones, J. W. Chandler, John DeSwart, H. S. Brolaske, M. C. Nye, Elias Barnet, Major Walton, A. Walton, Green McMahan, J. McDowel, R. H. Thomes, Elisha Stone, Isaiah Kelsey, Samuel Kelsey and family, William Towler, Richard Williams and family, E. W. Flugge, W. P. Overton, George Simpson, V. W. Dawson, Andrew Kelsey, Benj. Kelsey and family, Edw. Rogers, D. F. Hill, A. Cook, Jones Carroll, Jas. Ross, Henry Huber, John Roland, Wm. Belty, Thos. Jones, Augustus Fifer, Jas. John, R. Rickman, H. Peyton, Chiles, Charles Weaver and James Shotwell, the last six did not overtake us at Kansas River.

The trappers for the mountains are the following: Jas. Baker, Piga, a Frenchman, and Wm. Mast.

A. E. Frye and Rogers, on a pleasure excursion; Williams, a preacher on a visit to Oregon.

May T. 18th, 1841.—Having waited at this place (two miles west of Kansas River), two days, and all the company being arrived, except those heretofore mentioned, the company was convened for

the purpose of electing a captain and adopting rules for the government of the company. when T. H. Green was chosen president, and J. Bidwell secretary.

After the rules were read and adopted, J. Bartleston was elected captain; it will be understood that Fitzpatric was captain of the missionary company and pilot of the whole. Orders were given for the company to start in the morning, and the meeting broke up.

W. 19th.—This morning, the wagons started off in single file; first the four carts and one small wagon of the missionaries: next eight wagons drawn by mules and horses, and lastly, five wagons drawn by seventeen yoke of oxen. It was the calculation of the company to move on slowly till the wagon of Chiles overtook us. Our course was west. Leaving the Kansas no great distance to our left, we traveled in the valley of the river, which was prairie excepting near the margin of the stream. The day was very warm, and we stopped about noon, having traveled about twelve miles.

This afternoon we had a very heavy shower of rain and hail. Several Kansas Indians came to our camp; they were well armed with bows and arrows, and some had guns; they were daily expecting an attack by the Pawnees, whom they but a short time ago had made inroads upon, and had massacred at one of their villages a large number of old men, women and children, while the warriors were hunting buffalo.

T. 20.—The day was tolerably pleasant. Our road was interrupted by small streams which crossed our course in every two or three miles during the day. The land was prairie, except the narrow groves which accompanied every stream—timber principally, bur-oak, black walnut, elm and white hickory. Traveled this day about sixteen miles and encamped in a beautiful grove of timber through which meandered a small stream.

F. 21st.—Our oxen left us last night, and it was 9 o'clock before we were all ready to start; passed a considerable stream called Vermillion, a branch of the Kansas; on its banks was finer timber than we had heretofore seen—hickory, walnut, &c.. The country was prairie, hilly and strong. We

passed in the forenoon a Kansas village, entirely deserted on account of the Pawnees. Encamped by a scattering grove, having come about fifteen miles.

S. 22d.—Started at 6 o'clock this morning, traveled about eighteen miles; high, rolling prairie. Encamped on a small stream, shaded by a few willows.

S. 23d.—All the oxen were gone this morning excepting nine. There was considerable complaint among the company, some saying at this slow rate of traveling we would have to winter among the Black Hills, and eat our mules. We, however, made a start about 9 in the morning, proceeded about nine miles and stopped to wait for Chiles' wagon, which overtook us about 5 p. m. Fourteen Pawnees were seen by the wagon, well armed with spears, &c.. It was supposed they were on an expedition against the Kansas.

M. 24th.—Traveled about thirteen miles today, over rolling prairies, and arrived at the Big Vermillion, a branch of the Kansas. Here we were obliged to stop, the water being so high as to render it impossible to cross with the wagons.

T. 25th.—Passed the stream without much trouble and made a stretch of about twenty miles, when we encamped on the border of a beautiful forest, where we found plenty of grass and water. The country over which we passed was similar to that of yesterday.

W. 26th.—Two wagons were broke today. About a dozen Pawnees came to our camp. Stopped to repair the wagons, having come about fifteen miles. A deer was brought in by C. Hopper. A man by the name of Williams, a Methodist preacher, overtook the company this evening on his way to visit the Oregon Territory; he had not arrived in time to start with the company from the settlements, and had traveled entirely alone, without any gun or other weapon of defense, depending wholly on Providence for protection and support.

T. 27th.—Started late, being detained at repairing the wagons. The day was warm, but the evening mild and pleasant. Encamped in a commodious valley, well watered by a beautiful little stream which glided smoothly through the scattering grove. Come about fifteen miles.

F. 28th.—Started about sunrise, traveled about five miles and stopped to take breakfast. The heat was oppressive and we were compelled to go twenty miles farther before we came to either wood or water. The stream on which we encamped is a fork of the Kansas and is well known to all the mountaineers by the name of the Big Blue. An antelope was killed.

S. 29th.—We again started about sunrise and traveled not less than twenty-two miles. One antelope was killed; saw several elk.

S. 30th.—Nothing of importance occurred; distance, about fifteen miles; grass, mingled with rushes, afforded our animals plenty of food of the best quality. Game appeared to increase, though but one deer and one antelope were brought in.

M. 31st.—This morning about 10 o'clock we met six wagons with eighteen men, with fur and robes, on their way from Ft. Larimie to St. Louis. Ft. Larimie is situated on Larimie's fork near its junction with the north fork of the Platte, and is about 800 miles from Independence. The wagons were drawn by oxen and mules—the former looked as though they received a thousand lashes every day of their existence! The rusty mountaineers looked as though they never had seen razor, water, soap or brush. It was very warm and we traveled till dark before we were able to reach water, and then it was not fit to drink, and then we could not procure any wood; grass scarce. June T. 1st.—This morning we hastened to leave our miserable encampment and proceeding directly north we reached Big Platte river about 12 o'clock. The heat was uncommonly oppressive. I here discovered the ground was in many places hoary with Glauber salts, or at least I was unable to distinguish them by taste. This afternoon we had a soaking shower, which was succeeded by a heavy hail storm. Wonderful! This evening a new family was created! Isaac Kelsey was married to Miss Williams, daughter of R. Williams. The marriage ceremony was performed by Rev. Pr. Williams, so we now have five families if we include a widow and child.

W. 2d.—This morning the company was convened for the purpose of taking a vote upon the question, whether the companies should continue to travel together; that some were complaining that the missionaries went too fast; but the very thought of leaving Mr. Fitzpatric, who was so well

acquainted with the Indians, &c., &c., met, as it ought to have done, the disapprobation of all. We now proceeded directly up the river, making this day about twelve miles.

T. 3d.—Still continued up the river; traveled about sixteen miles. Rained in the afternoon.

F. 4th.—Half-past six this morning saw us on the march. The valley of the river was here about four miles wide. Antelope were seen in abundance. A young man (Dawson) was out hunting, when suddenly a band of Chienne Indians, about forty in number, came upon him; they were pleased to strip him of his mule, gun and pistol, and let him go. He had no sooner reached the camp and related the news than the whole band came in sight. We hastened to form a corral (yard) with our wagons, but it was done in great haste. To show you how it affected the green ones, I will give the answer: I received from a stout young man (and he perhaps was but one of thirty in the same situation) when I asked him how many Indians there were. He answered with a trembling voice, half seared out of his wits, there were lots, gaubs, fields and swarms of them! I do really believe he thought there were some thousands. Lo! there were but forty, perfectly friendly, delivered up every article taken but the pistol.

S. 5th.—Started early to get clear of our red visitors; descried a large herd of buffalo on the opposite side of the river; saw several boats descending the river, laden with fur, robes, &c.. They belonged to the American Fur Company. One of our company, E. Stone, returned with them. The latter part of the day was very inclement—high winds, dark clouds rushed in wild confusion around and above us. Soon, with amazement, we saw a lofty waterspout, towering like a huge column to support the arch of the sky: and while we were moving with all haste lest it should pass over us and dash our wagons to pieces, it moved off with the swiftness of the wind and was soon lost among the clouds. Rain and hail succeeded, the largest hailstones I ever saw; several were found, an hour after the sun came out bright and warm, larger than a turkey egg. Nine of the Indians that left us this morning returned this evening.

S. 6th.—This morning was extremely cool for the season. Twenty-five more of the same Indians came up with us.

M. 7th.—Three Indians continued with us. The wind blew very hard towards evening. Three buffaloes were killed and part of their meat was brought to camp.

T. 8th.—There were eight or ten buffalo killed today, but not one-tenth of the meat was used; the rest was left to waste upon the prairie. In the afternoon we passed the confluence of the north and south forks of Platte River, and encamped, having come about eighteen miles. Many hundred of buffaloes were seen at this place. The scenery of the country of the Platte is rather dull and monotonous, but there are some objects which must ever attract the attention of the observant traveler; I mean the immense quantity of buffalo bones, which are everywhere strewn with great profusion, so that the valley, throughout its whole length and breadth, is nothing but one complete slaughter-yard, where the noble animals used to graze, ruminate and multiply in uncounted thousands. But they are fast diminishing; if they continue to decrease in the same ratio that they have for the past fifteen or twenty years, they will ere long become totally extinct. It has been but a few years since they left the frontiers of Missouri, and are now fast retreating towards the Rocky Mountains. The Indians are anxious to preserve them, and it is said of them that they never kill as long as they have any meat remaining, but behold with indignation the shameful and outrageous prodigality of the whites, who slaughter thousands merely for their robes and leave the meat, which is far more delicious than that of tame cattle, to waste or be eaten by wolves and vultures.

W. 9th.—Spent the day in crossing the south fork of Platte. A buffalo was killed from a herd that came within 800 yards of the camp. We crossed the river by fording, the water being sufficiently shallow; width of river here, about two-thirds of a mile; its waters are muddy, like those of the Missouri.

T. 10th.—This morning the most of the oxen were again at large, owing to the neglect of the owners, to the great danger of losing them by the Indians and by their mingling with buffalo, or by their straying so far that it would be impossible to track them on account of the innumerable tracks of the buffalo; making, therefore, rather a late start, we continued to ascend the river on the north side. We traveled about fourteen miles and encamped on the river. Buffalo were seen in countless thousands on the opposite side of the river. From the time we began to journey this morning till



we ceased to travel at night, the whole south side of the stream was completely clouded by these huge animals, grazing in the valley and on the hills—ruminating upon the margin of the river, or crowding down its banks for water.

Through the remissness of the sentinels, the guard last night was nearly vacant; and as this was considered dangerous ground on account of the warlike Pawnees, Chiennes, &c., a court-martial was called to force those to their duty on guard, who were so negligent and remiss.

F. 11.—The oxen had wandered about half a mile from the camp this morning, when a man was sent to bring them in; he soon came running back in great haste, crying, “The Indians are driving the oxen off!” In less than half an hour the oxen were at camp and not an Indian seen. All this is easily accounted for, when we consider how timidity and fear will make every bush, or stone, or stump, an Indian, and forty Indians thousands. Vast herds of buffalo continued to be seen on the opposite side of the river. Distance today, about twenty miles.

S. 12th.—Left the south fork, and after a march of twelve miles found ourselves on the north fork. In the afternoon passed a small ash grove of about twenty-five trees; timber is so scarce that such a grove is worthy of notice. We encamped on the north fork, having come about eighteen miles. On leaving the south fork, we left the buffalo also.

S. 13th.—A mournful accident occurred in the camp this morning. A young man by the name of Shotwell, while in the act of taking a gun out of the wagon, drew it with the muzzle toward him in such a manner that it went off and shot him near the heart. He lived about an hour, and died in full possession of his senses. His good behavior had secured him the respect and good will of all the company. He had resided some eight or nine months on or near the Nodaway River, Platte purchase, Missouri, prior to his starting on this expedition; but he said his mother lived in Laurel County, Kentucky, and was much opposed to his coming into the West. He was buried in the most decent manner our circumstances would admit of, after which a funeral sermon was preached by Mr. Williams. In the afternoon we passed on about five miles, making an inland circuit over the hills which approached boldly to the river and compelled us to leave its banks. We, however,

reached it again by descending the dry channel of Ash Creek, on which was considerable timberash, cedar, &c..

M. 14th.—The day was so cool and rainy we did not travel.

M. 15th.—There was so sudden a change from cool to cold that we were not comfortable in our best apparel. I do not remember that I ever have experienced weather so cold as this season of the year. Traveled about sixteen miles.

W. 16th.—Several wild horses were seen on the opposite side of the river. Advanced about twenty miles; encamped on the river, opposite to high and uneven bluffs, bearing considerable forests of pine.

T. 17th.—Continued to coast along up the river; encamped on its banks nearly opposite to a huge isolated bluff bearing some resemblance to an immense castle in ruins. Its distance from us no one supposed more than one and one-half miles, and yet it was at least seven—this deception was owing to the pure atmosphere through which it was viewed, and the want of objects by which only accurate ideas of distance can be acquired without measure.

F. 18th.—About 12 o'clock today we passed another object, still more singular and interesting; it is called by the mountaineers the Chimney, from its resemblance to that sweet; and is composed of clay and sand so completely compact as to possess the hardness of a rock. It stands near the high bluffs that bound the valley on the south, and has been formed from a high, isolated mound which, being washed on every side by the rains and snows of ages, has been worn down till nothing is left but the center, which stands upon an obtuse cone, and is seen towering like a huge column at the distance of thirty miles. The column is 150 feet above the top of the cone, and the whole 250 feet above the level of the plain. Distance made today, about twenty miles.

S. 19.—We gradually receded from the river in order to pass through a gap in a range of high hills, called Scot's Bluffs. As we advanced toward these hills, the scenery of the surrounding country became beautifully grand and picturesque—they were worn in such a manner by the storms of

unnumbered seasons that they really counterfeited the lofty spires, towering edifices, spacious domes and in fine all the beautiful mansions of cities. We encamped among these envious objects, having come about twenty miles.

Here we first found the mountain sheep; two were killed and brought to camp. These animals are so often described in almost every little schoolbook that it to unnecessary for me to describe them here.

S. 20th.—Passed through the gap, came into an extensive plain. The beautiful scenery gradually receded from view: came to a creek called Horse, passed it, reached the river again; cool and windy; having come about twenty-three miles.

M. 21st.—We had an uncommonly good road today: an abundance of cottonwood timber; traveled late, having taken a stride of twenty-seven miles.

T. 22d.—Eight miles this morning took us to Fort Larimie, which is on Larimie's fork of Platte, about 800 miles from the frontiers of Missouri. It is owned by the American Fur Company. There is another fort within a mile of this place, belonging to an individual by the name of Lupton. The Black Hills were now in view; a very noted peak, called the Black Hill Mountain, was seen like a dark cloud in the western horizon. Remark.—The country along Platte River is far from being fertile and is uncommonly destitute of timber. The earth continues, as we ascend, to become more strongly impregnated with glauber salts.

W. 23d.—Remained at the Fort. The things of Mr. Shotwell were sold at auction.

T. 24th.—Left the Fort this morning and soon began to wind among the Black Hills. Two of our men stopped at the Fort, (Simpson and Mast), but two other men, with an Indian and his family, joined us to travel to Green River. Encamped, having made about seventeen miles. Hills here sandy, many wild pears, likewise an abundance of peas (wild, though the bush was dissimilar to ours, yet the pods bore an exact similarity, taste the same).

F. 25th.—Journeyed over hills and dales; encamped on a stream affording plenty of grass, better cottonwood timber—it resembles the sweet cottonwood of Missouri, except the leaves are like those of the willow. Distance, eighteen miles.

S. 26th.—Traveled about eighteen miles, and missing our road, encamped on the North Fork. At noon we passed the best grass I had seen since I left the frontier of Missouri; it was like meadow, kind of bluegrass. Found buffalo, killed three.

S. 27th.—Day was warm, road hilly; found no water for twenty miles; encamped on a stream affording grass and timber in abundance, cottonwood, &c. found no hard timber.

M. 28th.—Passed an immense quarry of beautiful white alabaster. Three buffalo killed. Distance traveled, eighteen miles; encamped on a little rivulet affording as good water as ever run.

T. 29th.—Arrived at the North Fork this evening; road good; distance traveled, fifteen miles.

W. 30th.—Ascended the North Fork about sixteen miles and encamped on it. Buffalo in abundance, killed six.

July, T. 1st.—Spent the day in passing over the river to the north side of it; the water ran very rapidly, and it was with considerable difficulty that we forded it. One mule was drowned, and one wagon upset in the river. The water in the North Fork is not so muddy as the South Fork.

F. 2d.—Continued to coast up the North Fork. The bottoms of the river were in many places completely covered with glauber salts, so much so that even handfuls could be taken up perfectly white. A man (Mr. Belden) was hunting a short distance from the company and left his horse tied while he crept in pursuit of a buffalo, but he was not able to find the same place again and consequently lost his horse. Though the country is perfectly free from timber, excepting near the river, yet there is so great a similarity in the hills that experienced hunters are frequently bewildered in a clear sky when attempting to find a certain place a second time.

S. 3d—Left the North Fork; a distance of twelve miles took us to a spring of cool, though unpleasantly tasted, water. The day was intensely warm, and road mountainous. Killed four buffalo and two deer.

S. 4th.—Pursued our way over hills and dales, scorched with heat; came to a small copse of red willows, from which issued excellent springs of water. Three buffalo killed. Distance traveled, twenty-two miles.

M. 5th.—The hills continued to increase in height. After traveling sixteen miles, we encamped at a noted place called Independence Rock. This is a huge, isolated rock covering an area perhaps of half a square mile, and rising in shape of an irregular, obtuse mound, to a height of 100 feet. It took its name from the celebration of the Fourth of July at this place by Capt. Wm. Sublette, and it now bears many names of the early travelers to these regions. Immediately at the base of these rocks flows a small stream called Sweet Water, and is a branch of the North Fork. Six buffalo killed today.

T. 6th.—This morning John Gray and Romaine were sent on to Green River to see if there were any trappers at the rendezvous, and then return to the company with the intelligence. All hands were anxious to have their names inscribed on this memorable land-mark, so that we did not start until near noon. Went up stream about eight miles and encamped on Sweet Water.

W. 7th.—As we journeyed, the mountains were high and naked; passed a pond that was nearly dried up, perfectly white with glauber salts, and in many places two or three inches deep, so that large lumps weighing several pounds were taken up. Buffalo increased in number; ten were killed. Traveled today about fourteen miles.

T. 8th.—This morning we came in sight of Wind River Mountains; their snow-enveloped summits were dimly seen through the misty clouds that obscured the western horizon. Made about fifteen miles today and encamped on Sweet Water, in full view of thousands of buffalo; twenty were killed; we now began to lay in meat to last us over the mountains to California.

F. 9th.—Traveled about eighteen miles. Killed ten buffalo.

S. 10th.—Traveled about fourteen miles, and stopped to kill and dry meat; buffalo began to grow scarce.

S. 11th.—More than half the company sallied forth to kill meat, but the whole killed but six or seven buffalo. Remained hunting and drying meat: killed today but four or five buffalo.

T. 13th.—Left our hunting encampment and met John Gray and Romaine returning from Green River; they found no person at the rendezvous on Green River, nor any game ahead; it was therefore thought best to lay in more meat, while we were in the vicinity of the buffalo. We therefore came to a halt, having traveled about fifteen miles.

W. 14th.—Company engaged in hunting and curing meat.

T. 15th.—As many of the company had articles of traffic which they wished to dispose of at Green River, a subscription was raised to recompense any who would go and find the trappers. John Gray started in pursuit of them, while the company marched on slowly, waiting his return. Traveled about six miles today.

F. 16th.—Traveled about ten miles and encamped opposite the Wind River Mountains, where we were in full view of many lofty peaks glittering with eternal snow and frost under the blaze of a July sun.

S. 17th.—Traveled about five miles—still on Sweet Water.

S. 18th.—Left Sweet Water this morning, course southwest; crossed the divide which separates the water of the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, and after a travel of twenty miles reached Little Sandy, a branch of Green River. One buffalo was killed.

M. 19th.—Fifteen miles took us on to Big Sandy, which is likewise a branch of Green River. Two buffalo were killed.

T. 20th.—Traveled about eighteen miles in a circuitous direction, first west, then south; country was extremely dry and dusty; no game seen but a few antelope. Encamped on Big Sandy, having come about eighteen miles.

W. 21st—Descended Big Sandy about fifteen miles and again encamped upon it; no grass. Had a little rain this evening, but not enough to lay the dust.

T. 22d.—Descended Big Sandy about twelve miles and stopped where we found plenty of grass—this was very acceptable, as our teams were already much jaded for want of grass. The oxen, however, stood travel, &c., as well as the horses and mules. Gray returned this evening, having found Trapp's company, which consisted of about twenty men; they had returned to meet our company, though on their way to hunt buffalo, and were now encamped on Green River, about eight miles distant. Gray had suffered much in overtaking the trappers; his mule gave out, there being no water for a great distance, and he himself was so much reduced by hunger and thirst that he was unable to walk; he was therefore compelled to crawl upon his hands and feet, and at last came up with the company, in the most forlorn situation imaginable; if they had been another half-mile farther he never could have reached them.

F. 23d.—Went to Green River, distance eight miles; spent the remainder of the day trading with the hunters.

S. 24th.—Remained at this encampment and continued our traffic with the hunters. Chiles sold his oxen, two yoke, and wagon; another also was left.

S. 25th.—Left the rendezvous this morning. Six of the company, viz., John Gray, Peyton, Frye, Rogers, Jones, and Romaine—started to return to the United States. Baker stopped in the mountains

to trap. Crossed Green River and descended it about eight miles. Trapp and his company likewise left in pursuit of buffalo.

(Remark.—I will not omit to state the prices of several kinds of mountain goods. Powder, which is sold by the cupful (pint), is worth \$1.00 per cup; lead, \$1.50 per pound; good Mackinaw blankets, \$8 to \$15; sugar, \$1 per cupful; pepper, \$1 also; cotton and calico shirts, from \$3 to \$5; rifles, from \$20 to \$60. In return, you will receive dressed deerskins at \$3; pants made of deerskins, \$10; beaver skins, \$10; moccasins, \$1; flour sold in the mountains at 50 cents per cupful; tobacco at \$2 per pound; butcher knives, from \$1 to \$3; a good gun is worth as much as a horse—a cap-lock is preferred; caps worth \$1 per box. We crossed Green River, went about eight miles down stream, and encamped.)

M. 26th.—Left Green River; moved off in a westerly direction, distance twelve miles; encamped on a branch of Green River called Ham's Fork; land high, dry and barren, except upon the streams, which afford grass in abundance; also black currants, which, though not delicious, are acceptable.

T. 27th.—Advanced up-stream about twelve miles.

W. 28th.—Advanced up-stream about twelve miles.

T. 29th.—Advanced up-stream about twelve miles.

F. 30th.—Traveled about five miles and camped. Guess what took place? Another family was created! Widow Gray, who was a sister to Mrs. Kelsey, was married to a man who joined our company at Fort Laramie; his right name I forget, but his everywhere name in the mountains was Cocrum. He had but one eye. Marriage ceremony performed by Father De Smet.

S. 31st.—Left Ham's Fork this morning. A distance of fourteen miles, over an uncommonly hilly road, took us to Black's Fork of Green River, on which we encamped. Here we found it little grass and no wood. The hills which everywhere rose to view were thinly clad with shrubby cedars. The fruit found in this lonesome part of creation—service berries on the mountains and currants on the



streams. In the afternoon we descried a large smoke rising from beyond the intervening chain of hills; from this and other signs, we were assured that there were plenty of Indians in the country. It was necessary therefore to keep a vigilant lookout, lest the Blackfeet should leave us minus a few horses.

S. August 1st.—Ascended Black's Fork about twelve miles.

M. 2d.—Retraced about two miles of yesterday's travel and went up another defile, in order to find a practicable route across the divide between the waters of Green and Bear Rivers. Plenty of grass, good spring water. Distance, eleven miles.

T. 3d.—Ascended a high divide and passed down a most difficult route into the valley of Bear River. The course of this stream was marked out as it wound its way through the vale by the willows that skirted its banks. Reached the river, where we found abundance of grass, having come about twenty miles.

W. 4th.—Did not travel.

T. 5th.—Proceeded down stream about eighteen miles.

F. 5th.—Had a fine road down the valley of Bear River and made about twenty-five miles during the day. Found many kinds of wild currants—red, black, yellow, &c.—some of which were of an excellent quality.

S. 7th.—This morning we were obliged to make an inland circuit from the river, the bluffs approaching so near the river as to render it impossible to continue along its banks, We, however, reached it again by a most difficult defile, and beautifully watered by a small rivulet proceeding from a spring. In the afternoon we again left the river on account of the hills, and did not reach it again until dark. The bluffs were exceedingly high, and no person could ever believe that wagons ever passed these huge eminences of nature, did he not witness it with his own eyes. But the pleasing view we had from their top, just as the sun was going to sleep behind the western

mountains, paid us for all our trouble. A most beautiful landscape presented itself to view; the rugged summits, of almost every shape, were fantastically pictured upon the sky, bounding the western horizon; a beautiful little lake was seen to the south, whose surface was fancifully mottled with numerous islands, while the river meandered proudly through the valley among willows and scattering cottonwoods, till it disappeared among the hills in the shades of the evening. Distance traveled today, sixteen miles.

S. 8th.—Started about noon and went ten miles. Scenery of the country was grand.

M. 9th.—Distance, eighteen miles.

T. 10th.—The day was fine and pleasant; a soft and cheerful breeze, and the sky bedimmed by smoke, brought to mind the tranquil season of autumn. A distance of ten miles took us to the Soda Fountain, where we stopped the remainder of the day. This is a noted place in the mountains, and is considered a great curiosity; within the circumference of three or four miles there are included no less than 100 springs, some bursting out on top of the ground, others along the banks of the river, which are very low at this place, and some even in the bottom of the river. The water is strongly impregnated with soda, and wherever it gushes out of the ground a sediment is deposited, of a reddish color, which petrifies and forms around the springs large mounds of porous rock, some of which are no less than fifty feet high. Some of these fountains have become entirely dry, in consequence of the column of water which they contained becoming so high as to create sufficient power by its pressure to force the water to the surface in another place. In several of the springs the water was lukewarm, but none were very cold. The ground was very dry at this time, and made a noise as we passed over it with horses as though it was hollow underneath. Cedar grows here in abundance, and the scenery of the country is romantic. Father De Smet, with two or three flathead Indians, started about dark this evening to go to Fort Hall, which was about fifty miles distant.

W. 11th.—Having traveled about six miles this morning, the company came to a halt. The Oregon company were now going to leave Bear river for Fort Hall, which is situated on Lewis River, a branch of the Columbia. Many, who purposed in setting out to go immediately through to

California, here concluded to go into Oregon; so that the California company now consisted of only thirty-two men and one woman and child, there being but one family. The two companies, after bidding each other a parting farewell, started and were soon out of sight. Several of our company, however, went to Fort Hall to procure provision, and to hire if possible a pilot to conduct us to the Gap in the California Mountains; or at least, to the head of Mary's River. We were therefore to move on slow till their return. Encamped on Bear River, having come about twelve miles.

I, in company with another man (J. John), went some distance below the camp to fish in the river; fished some time without success—concluded we could spend the afternoon more agreeably. The day was uncomfortably warm; could find no place to shelter us from the burning sun, except the thick copse of the willows; these we did not like to enter on account of the danger of falling in with bears. We concluded to ascend the mountain, where were two spots of snow in full view, in order to enjoy the contrast between a scorching valley and a snowy mountain. Supposed the snow not more than four miles distant; set out without our guns, knowing they would be a hindrance in ascending the mountain. Our march was unremitted for at least four miles; had only gained the side of a hill which we at first supposed not more than a mile off. Here we lingered to observe several kinds of trees which we had not before observed, among which were a kind of rock maple, choke-cherry, &c.. But, conscious of being defeated in our object if we lost much time, we ran up the eminence with renewed vigor, till at last gained the summit. But being determined not to be outdone, we continued on under all the strength we could command; crossed a valley three-quarters of a mile wide, ascended craggy steeps, and passed through thickets of the densest kind. Night obscured the valley below us, lost sight of the snow above us; afraid to return, lest we might fall in with bears, as their signs were plenty and fresh, continued to ascend the mountain till midnight. Could not find the snow. We were cold, not having our coats; clouds drifted against the mountain and made us wet; slept under a pine tree, which afforded us good shelter. Morning came, it found us about half a mile below the snow. Took as much as we could conveniently carry, took another route down the mountain, running and jumping as fast as our strength would permit, arrived at the camp about noon. They supposed, without doubt, that the Blackfeet had got us; had been up all night on guard, every fire had been put out. They had been out twice in search of us and were about to start again

when we arrived. We were received with a mixture of joy and reprehension. The company was soon under way and traveled about four miles.

F. 13th.—Traveled about ten miles in a southerly direction. It was the intention of the company to stop and hunt in Cash Valley, which is on Bear River three or four days' travel from its mouth.

S. 14th.—Left the river on account of the hills which obstructed our way on it. Found an abundance of choke-cherries, many of which were ripe. Road uncommonly broken; did not reach the river. Distance, about fourteen miles.

S. 15th.—Continued our journey over hills and ravines, going to almost every point of the compass in order to pass them. The day was very warm. The grass had been very good, but it was now very much parched up. Having come about fifteen miles, we encamped on a small stream proceeding out of the mountains at no great distance from us. But we were surprised to see it become perfectly dry in the course of an hour; some of the guard said there was plenty of water in it about midnight.

M. 16th.—This morning there was abundance of water in the little stream, and it was running briskly when we left it. If the water was not supplied by the melting of the snow in the mountains, it was really an interesting spring. Found an abundance of choke-cherries, very large and exquisitely delicious—better than any I ever ate before. Distance traveled, twelve miles.

T. 17th.—Traveled about sixteen miles. Saw a large smoke rising out of the mountains before us; it had probably been raised by the Indians as a telegraph to warn the tribe that their land was visited by strangers. We were unable to procure any fuel this evening; we therefore slept without fire. The Indians found in this region are Shoshonees; they are friendly.

W. 18th.—Traveled but a short distance, when we discovered that a deep salt creek prevented our continuing near the river. In ascending this stream in search of a place to cross it, we found on its margin a hot spring, very deep and clear. The day was very warm and we were unable to reach the river. Encamped on this salt creek and suffered much for water, the water being so salt we could not drink it. Distance, fifteen miles.

T. 19th.—Started early, hoping soon to find water, when we could refresh ourselves and animals. But, alas! the sun beamed heavy on our heads as the day advanced, and we could see nothing before us but extensive arid plains, glimmering with heat and salt. At length the plains became so impregnated with salt that vegetation entirely ceased; the ground was in many places white as snow with salt and perfectly smooth; the mid-day sun, beaming with uncommon splendor upon these shining plains, made us fancy we could see timber upon the plains, and wherever timber is found there is water always. We marched forward with unremitted pace till we discovered it was an illusion, and lest our teams should give out we returned from south to east and hastened to the river, which we reached in about five miles.

A high mountain overlooked us on the east and the river was thickly bordered with willows; grass plenty, but so salt our animals could scarcely eat it—salt glitters upon its blades like frost. Distance, twenty miles.

F. 20th.—Company remained here while two men went to explore the country; they returned bringing the intelligence that we were within ten miles of where the river disembogued itself into the great salt lake. This was the fruit of having no pilot. We had passed through Cash Valley, where we intended to have stopped, and did not know it.

S. 21st.—Marched off in a northwest direction, and intersected our trail of Thursday last, having made a complete triangle in the plain. At this intersection of the trails, we left a paper elevated by a pole, that the men returning from Fort Hall might shun the tedious rounds we had taken. Found grass and water which answered our purpose very well, though both were salt. Distance, ten miles.

S. 22d.—This morning a man (Mr. Bralaski) returned from the Fort, and said the reason why he came alone was, the other man had left him, because he was unable to keep up with them, he having a pack-horse laden with provision. He had seen the paper at the intersection of the trails and was guided by it to the camp; the others were undoubtedly going the rounds of the triangle. Sure enough, they came up in the afternoon, having gone to the river and back. No pilot could be got at the Fort. The families that went into Oregon had disposed of their oxen at the Fort, and were going

to descend the Columbia River with pack horses—they in exchange received one horse for every ox; their wagons they could not sell. They procured flour at 50 cents a pint, sugar same price, and other things in proportion. Near where we were encamped here were a few hackberry trees.

M. 23d.—Started, bearing our course west, in order to pass the Salt Lake, passed many salt plains and springs in the forenoon. The day was hot. The hills and land bordering on the plains were covered with wild sage. In passing the declivity of a hill, we observed this sage had been plucked up and arranged in long winrows, extending near a mile in length. It had been done by the Indians, but for what purpose we could not imagine, unless it was to decoy game. At evening, we arrived in full view of the Salt Lake. Water was very scarce. Cedar grows here, both on the hills and in the valleys. Distance, twenty miles.

T. 24th.—Cattle strayed this morning to seek water; late start; day was warm; traveled about ten miles in a westerly direction; encamped where we found numerous springs, deep, clear and somewhat impregnated with salt. The plains were snowy white with salt. Here we procured salt of the best quality. The grass, that grew in small spots on the plains, was laden with salt which had formed itself on the stalks and blades in lumps, from the size of a pea to that of a hen's egg; this was the kind we procured, it being very white, strong and pure.

W. 25th.—Remained here all day.

T. 26th.—Traveled all day over dry, barren plains, producing nothing but sage, or rather it ought to be called wormwood, and which I believe will grow without water or soil. Two men were sent ahead in search of water, but returned a little while before dark unsuccessful.

Our course intersected an Indian trail, which we followed directly north towards the mountains, knowing that in these dry countries the Indian trails always lead to the nearest water. Having traveled till about 10 o'clock p. m., made a halt, and waited till morning. Distance, about thirty miles.

F. 27th.—Daylight discovered to us a spot of green grass on the declivity of the mountain towards which we were advancing; five miles took us to this place, where we found, to our great joy, an excellent spring of water and an abundance of grass; here we determined to continue till the route was explored to the head of Mary's River, and run no more risks of perishing for want of water in this desolate region.

S. 28th.—Company remained here. A Shoshonee Indian came to our camp, and from him we learned that there were more Indians not far off who had horses. Several men and myself went in search of them. Having gone about five miles, up hills and down hills covered with thick groves of cedar (red), we unexpectedly came to an Indian, who was in the act of taking care of some meat—venison—which he had just killed; about half of which we readily purchased for twelve cartridges of powder and ball. With him as a pilot, we went in pursuit of other Indians; he led us far up in the mountains by a difficult path, where we found two or three families, hid as it were from all the world by the roughness of nature. The only provision which they seemed to have was a few elder berries and a few seeds. Under a temporary covert of bushes I observed the aged patriarch, whose head looked as though it had been whitened by the frosts of at least ninety winters. The scars on his arms and legs were almost countless; a higher forehead I never saw upon man's head. But here, in the solitude of the mountains and with the utmost contentment, he was willing to spend the last days of his life among the hoary rocks and craggy cliffs, where, perhaps, he, in his youthful gayety, used to sport along crystal streams which run purling from the mountains. Not succeeding in finding horses, we returned to the camp.

S. 29th.—Capt. Bartleson, with C. Hopper, started to explore the route to the head of Mary's River, expecting to be absent about eight or nine days—the company to await here his return.

M. 30th.—Nothing of importance occurred.

T. 31st.—No success hunting.

Sept., W. 1st.—An ox killed for beef.

T. 2d.—Idle in camp.

F. 3d.—Four or five Indians came to camp—bought three horses of them.

S. 4th.—Bought a few service berries of the Indians.

S. 5th.—Grass having become scarce, we concluded to move on a little every day, to meet Capt. B. and H. Traveled about six miles and encamped by a beautiful cedar grove.

M. 6th.—Traveled about seven miles.

T. 7th.—Traveled about seven miles. Antelope appeared to be plenty.

W. 8th.—Exceedingly cold; ice in our water buckets. Part of the company remained on account of the cold—two wagons with owners being contrary, went on.

T. 9th.—The part of the company that remained yesterday went on and overtook the two wagons. Capt. Bartleson and Hopper returned, bringing intelligence that they had found the head of Mary's River—distant about five days' travel. Distance traveled today, about twelve miles, southwest direction. The Indians stole a horse. Day cool.

F. 10th.—Traveled about fifteen miles and encamped without water.

S. 11th.—Traveled about fifteen miles and came to water; course west.

S. 12th.—Mr. Kelsey left his wagons and took his family and goods on pack horses, his oxen not being able to keep up. Distance today, about twelve miles.

M. 13th.—Traveled about fifteen miles south, between salt plains on the east and high mountains on the west.



T. 14th.—Traveled about twenty-five miles and stopped about 9 o'clock at night, in the middle of a dry plain, destitute of water.

W. 15th.—Started very early; day was exceedingly warm. Passed through a gap in a ridge of mountains, came into a high, dry plain; traveled some distance into it, saw the form of a high mountain through the smoky atmosphere; reached it, having come about fifteen miles. Found plenty of water; our animals were nearly given out. We were obliged to go so much farther in order to get along with the wagons, we concluded to leave them, and pack as many things as we could.

T. 16th.—All hands were busy making pack-saddles and getting ready to pack. While thus engaged, an Indian, well advanced in years, came down out of the mountains to our camp. He told us by signs that the Great Spirit had spoken to him to go down upon the plains in the morning, and on the east side of the mountains he would find some strange people, who would give him a great many things; accordingly he had come. We gave him all such things as we had intended to throw away; whenever he received anything which he thought useful to him, he paused and looking steadfastly at the sun, addressed him in a loud voice, marking out his course in the sky as he advanced in his invocation, which took him about two minutes to perform. As he received quite a number of articles, it took him a considerable part of the day to repeat his blessings. No Persian, in appearance, could be more sincere.

F. 17th.—About 11 a. m. all were ready to start; horses, mules and four oxen packed. Proceeded south along the mountains, seeking a place to pass through. At length an Indian trail took us across into a dry plain, perfectly destitute of grass and water. Traveled till about midnight, having come about seventeen miles. This plain was white in many places with salt, and the cool evening contrasting with the color of the salt on the ground gave a striking similarity to winter. Two of the oxen that were carrying packs got lost from the company in the night, about eight miles from where we were encamped, but it was supposed they would follow on.

S. 18th.—Morning found us on the east side of a mountain not far from its base, but there were no signs of water. The lost oxen not having come up, I, in company with another young man, went

in search of them, while the company went on, promising to stop as soon as they found water. I went back about ten miles, but found nothing of their trail. The sun was in a melting mood; the young man became discouraged, and in spite of all my entreaties returned to the company. About an hour after, I found the trail of the oxen, which bore directly north (the company were traveling southwest). After pursuing it some distance, I discovered fresh moccasin tracks upon the trail, and there began to be high grass, which made me mistrust the Indians had got the oxen. But my horse was good and my rifle ready, and I knew the Indians in these parts to be very timid, for they were generally seen in the attitude of flight. But what made me most anxious to find the oxen was prospect of our wanting them for beef. We had already killed four oxen and there were but thirteen remaining, including the lost ones, and the company was now killing an ox every two or three days. Having followed the trail about ten miles directly north, to my great delight I found the oxen. I was soon in motion for the company, but not being able to overtake them, was obliged to stop about dark. I passed the night rather uncomfortably, having neither fire nor blanket. I knew Indians to be plenty from numerous signs, and even where I slept the ground had been dug up that very day for roots. The plains here were almost barren; the hills were covered with cedar.

S. 19th.—This morning I met three men who were coming to bring me water, &c.. Arrived at camp. They journeyed yesterday about twelve miles. Did not travel today.

M. 20th.—Passed along one of the highest mountains we had seen in our whole journey, seeking a place to scale it, as we wished to travel west instead of south, being convinced that we were already far enough south. At length, passed through and descended into a beautiful valley, inclining towards the west. All now felt confident that we were close to the headwaters of Mary's River, distance twenty-five miles. Two hunters slept out last night, the company taking a different direction from that which they expected.

T. 21st.—Hunters returned; many antelope were seen, and two or three killed. About 10 o'clock a. m., as we were coasting along the mountain in a westerly direction,, we came to some hot springs, which were to me a great curiosity. Within the circumference of a mile there were perhaps twenty springs, the most of which were extremely beautiful, the water being so transparent we could see

the smallest thing twenty or thirty feet deep. The rocks which walled the springs, and the beautiful white sediment lodged among them, reflected the sun's rays in such a manner as to exhibit the most splendid combinations of colors—blue, green, red, &c.—I have ever witnessed. The water in most of them was boiling hot. There was one, however, more beautiful than the rest; it really appeared more like the work of art than of nature. It was about four feet in diameter, round as a circle, and deeper than we could see—the cavity looked like a well cut in a solid rock, its walls being smooth and perpendicular. Just as I was viewing this curiosity, some hunters came up with some meat; we all partook, putting it into the spring, where it cooked perfectly done in ten minutes. This is no fish story!

The earth around the springs was white with a substance which tasted strongly of potash, and the water in the springs was of this quality. Traveled about fifteen miles. Several Indians came to our camp, several of whom had guns. From signs, the valley contained thousands.

W. 22d.—This morning eighty or ninety Indians were seen coming full speed from the west; many had horses. One was sent about half a mile in advance of the rest—so we ought also to have done, but Captain B. was perfectly ignorant of Indian customs, and the whole band of savages were suffered to come directly up to us, and almost surround our camp, when Mr. B. Kelsey showed by forcible gestures they would be allowed to proceed no farther. The Indians were well armed with guns and bows and arrows. The only words I recollect of hearing Captain Bartleson say were, “Let them gratify their curiosity!!” The Indians were Shoshonees, but like other savages always take the advantage where they can. Besides, they were not a little acquainted with warfare, for they undoubtedly visited the buffalo country (having many robes), which requires much bravery to contend with the Blackfeet and Chiennes, who continually guard the buffalo in the region of the Rocky Mountains. They traveled as near us as they were allowed, till about noon, when they began to drop off, one by one, and at night there were but eight or ten remaining. Distance, about twelve miles.

T. 23d.—We could see no termination of the valley, nor any signs of Mary's River. We therefore concluded that we were too far south, and passed over the mountains to the north, where we struck

a small stream running towards the northwest. On this we camped and found plenty of grass; a few fish were caught, some of which were trout, which led us to the conclusion that this was a branch of Mary's River. Distance, eighteen miles.

F. 24th.—As we descended the stream, it was rapidly increased in size, and proved to be a branch of a larger stream. The country was desolate and barren, excepting immediately on the streams, where grew a few willows and cottonwoods; the hills in some places produced a few shrubby cedars. Traveled today, about twenty miles.

S. 25th.—The creek became perfectly dry and its banks rose to high, perpendicular precipices, so that there was no other road than the dry bed of the stream. Having come about fifteen miles, we encamped in a place affording a little grass and water, where we could see nothing but the sky. But the men who ascended the precipice to see what was the prospect ahead, said that in about a mile we would come to a valley. This was delightful news.

S. 26th.—The valley, seen yesterday evening, was about four or five miles in length and led into another difficult defile, though not so long as the one of yesterday, for we passed it into another valley. Distance eighteen miles. The stream continued to increase in size.

M. 27th.—Road very difficult all day. Course of the stream, west. Traveled about twenty miles.

T. 28th.—Traveled about twenty miles. Several Indians came to our camp this evening. No timber excepting willows; grass plenty.

W. 29th—Traveled about twenty miles. Course of the stream was west-northwest; according to the map, Mary's River ran west-northwest. Strong doubts were entertained about this being Mary's River. The men who got directions at Fort Hall were cautioned that if we got too far south we would get into the great sandy desert; if too far north, we would wander and starve to death on the waters of the Columbia, there being no possibility of getting through that way. We had now been six days on this stream, and our course had averaged considerably north of west.

T. 30th.—Our course today was about due north, eighteen miles.

Oct. 1st.—The stream had already attained the size of which we supposed Mary's River to be, and yet its course was due northwest. Distance, twenty miles.

S. 2d.—Having traveled about five miles, we all beheld with delight the course of the river, changed to southwest. Here was excellent grass—it was three or four feet high, and stood thick like a meadow; it was a kind of bluegrass. The whole valley seemed to be swarming with Indians, but they were very timid. Their sable heads were seen in groups of fifteen or twenty, just above the tops of the grass, to catch a view of us passing by. Whenever we approached their huts, they beckoned us to go on. They were extremely filthy in their habits. Game was scarce, though the Indians looked fat and fine. They were Shoshonees.

S. 3d.—Traveled about twelve miles today, west.

M. 4th.—Distance, twenty-five miles southwest. Country dry, barren, sandy, except on the river.

T. 5th.—Today was very warm, and the oxen were not able to keep up with the horses. Traveled about thirty miles and stopped on the river about dark; grass plenty; willows. This going so fast was the fault of Captain B.; nothing kept him from going as fast as his mules could possibly travel. But his dependence was on the oxen for beef, for it was now all we had to live upon. W. 6th.—Company was out of meat and remained till the oxen came up. Several Indians came to camp, one of whom we hired to pilot us on.

T. 7th.—Capt. Bartleson, having got enough meat yesterday to last him a day or two, and supposing he would be able to reach the mountains of California in two or three days, rushed forward with his own mess, consisting of eight persons, at a rate entirely too fast for the oxen, leaving the rest to keep up if they could, and if they could not, it was all the same to him. The day was very warm. The Indian pilot remained with us. The river spread into a high, wide swamp, covered with high cane grass. Indians were numerous. Encamped by the swamp about dark, having come about twenty-five

miles; water bad; no fuel, excepting weeds and dry cane grass which the Indians had cut in large heaps to procure sugar from the honey dew with which it was covered.

F. 8th.—The swamp was clouded with wild geese, ducks, &c., which rose from its surface at the report of our guns. We traveled about six miles and stopped to kill a couple of oxen that were unable to travel.

S. 9th.—Crossed Mary's River where it led from the swamp into a lake beyond; our pilot led us south on the trail of Capt. B.; crossed a plain which is covered with water the greater part of the year; then came into sand hills, among which traveling was very laborious. Saw to the west of us a lake, presenting a sheet of water twenty or thirty miles in extent. Encamped by another swamp, in which the water was very nauseous. Distance, twenty-eight miles. Large numbers of Indians lived about this place, but few (fifty or sixty) visited our camp. Crossed Mary's River—it was here running east, leading from the lake which we saw to the west of us yesterday, into the swamp by which we stayed last night. Our course today was southwest. Distance, fifteen miles; encamped upon the lake.

M. 11th.—Left the lake this morning, going into the mountains on a southwest course. Today we left the trail of Captain B., and having traveled nineteen miles, arrived on a stream which flowed rapidly and afforded more water than Mary's river. We thought now, without doubt, that we were safe on the waters of the St. Joaquin (pronounced St. Wawkeen), according to Marsh's letter. Here grew willows, balm gilead, and a few cottonwoods. The course of the stream as far as we could see was south, but we know not how soon it might take a turn here in the mountains.

T. 12th.—Traveled about four miles up stream, and encamped, understanding our Indian (having hired another pilot) that it would be a long day's travel to water after leaving the creek.

W. 13th.—Traveled about thirteen miles and only crossed a bend of the river; at this place it run due north. Day was hot. The creek had dwindled to half its first size.

T. 14th.—This morning we saw at a distance Captain B., with his seven men, coming in a direction toward us, but we made no halt; ascended the stream about twenty miles. The mountains continued to increase in height.

F. 15th.—Advanced up stream about twelve miles, and arrived at the base of very high mountains; the creek had become a small spring branch, and took its rise at no great distance in the mountains. But we saw plainly that it was impossible to progress farther without scaling the mountains, and our Indian guides said they knew no farther.

S. 16th.—This morning four or five men started to ascend several of the high peaks, to ascertain if it was possible to pass the mountains. Just as they were going to start, Capt. B. came up; he was in rather a hungry condition, and had been traveling several days without provision, excepting a few nuts which they had purchased from the Indians and which they had eaten on a very small allowance. We killed yesterday the best ox we had; this we shared freely with them. There were now but three oxen left, and they were very poor. But there was no time to lose. The explorers returned and reported that they thought it almost an impracticability to scale the mountains, which continued to increase in height as far as they could see. This evening the company was convened for the purpose of deciding by vote whether we should go back to the lake and take a path which we saw leading to the northwest, or undertake to climb the mountains. We had no more provisions than would last us to the lake. Nearly all were unanimous against turning back. I should have mentioned that our Indian pilots last night absconded. This stream I shall call Balm River; there being many Balm of Gilead trees upon it. (It is not laid down on any map.)

S. 17th.—This morning we set forth into the rolling mountains; in many places it was so steep that all were obliged to take it on foot. Part of the day we traveled through valleys between peaks, where the way was quite level; passed down and up through forests of pine, fir, cedar, &c.; many of the pines were twelve feet in diameter, and no less than 200 feet high. Encamped on the side of the mountain, so elevated that the ice remained all day in the streams; but we had not yet arrived at the summit. Killed another ox this evening. Made twelve miles.

M. 18th.—Having ascended about half a mile, a frightful prospect opened before us—naked mountains whose summits still retained the snows, perhaps of a thousand years; for it had withstood the heat of a long, dry summer, and ceased to melt for the season. The winds roared, but in the deep, dark gulfs which yawned on every side, profound solitude seemed to reign. We wound along among the peaks in such a manner as to avoid most of the mountains which we had expected to climb; struck a small stream descending toward the west, on which we encamped, having come fifteen miles.

The rivulet descended with great rapidity, and it was the opinion of all that we were at least one mile perpendicular below the place where we began to descend. The stream had widened into a small valley. Cedars of uncommon size, pines the most thrifty, clothed the mountains. (One pine, as it was near our camp, was measured, though it was far from being the tallest; it was 206 feet high.) All were pleased to think we were crossing the mountains so fast.

T. 19th.—Descending along the stream, we found several oak shrubs, which confirmed us in hope that we were on the waters of the Pacific. But the route became exceedingly difficult; the stream had swelled to a river; could not approach it, could only hear it roaring among the rocks. Having come about twelve miles, a horrid spectacle bid us stop; we obeyed, and encamped. Those who went to explore the route had not time to come to any conclusion where we could pass. We had descended rapidly all day. The mountains were, still mantled with forests of towering pines. The roaring winds, and the hollow murmuring of the dashing waters conveyed in the darkness of the night the most solemn and impressive ideas of solitude. To a person fond of a retired life, this, thought I, would be a perfect terrestrial Paradise, but it was not so with us; when we knew that winter was at hand, and that Capt. Walker (the mountaineer) had been lost in these very mountains twenty-two days before he could extricate himself.

W. 20th.—Men went in different directions to see if there was any possibility of extricating ourselves from this place without going back. They returned and reported it was utterly impossible to go down the creek. One young man was so confident that he could pass along the creek with his horse that he started alone, in spite of many persuasions to the contrary. Capt. B. also being tired



of waiting for the explorers to return, started down the stream, which so jaded his animals that he was obliged to wait all day to rest them before he was able to retrace his steps. In the meantime the rest of the company, suffering for water, were obliged to travel. We proceeded directly north up the mountains about four miles; found a little grass and water. Here we killed one of the two oxen.

W. 21st.—Our route today was much better than expected, though in any other place than the mountains it would be considered horrible. Capt. B., with his seven or eight, overtook us, but we heard nothing of J. Johns. Distance, about ten miles. Could see no prospect of a termination of the mountains!

T. 22d.—Descended towards the river about fifteen miles; had a tolerable road; arrived within a mile of the river—could not approach nearer. Here was considerable oak, some of which was evergreen and thought to be live oak. Three Indians came to camp. Killed the last ox. Let this speak for our situation and future prospects!

F. 23d.—Having no more meat than would last us three days, it was necessary to use all possible exertions to kill game, which was exceedingly scarce. For this purpose I started alone, very early in the morning, to keep some distance before the company, who had concluded to continue as near as possible to the creek on the north side. I went about four miles, met the Indian who came to us last night, obtained a little provisions made of acorns, got an Indian boy to pilot me to his house. He took me down the most rugged path in all nature; arrived on the banks of a river at least three-fourths of a mile perpendicular from where I started with him; found no more provision; continued down the river. Oak in abundance, buckeye, and kind of maple. The mountains which walled in the stream were so steep that it was with great difficulty I scaled them—having in one place come within an inch of falling from a craggy cliff down a precipice nearly a fourth of a mile perpendicular. Four long hours I labored before I reached the summit; proceeded directly to intersect the trail of the company. Mountains covered with the largest and tallest pines, firs, &c., thick copses of hazel, &c.. Traveled till dark over the hills, dales, crags, rocks, &c. found no trail; lay down and slept.

S. 24th.—Concluded the company had gone north. I traveled east, found no trail; traveled south, came to the place where I left the company yesterday morning, having made a long quadrangle in the mountains, eight by ten miles; took the trail of the company. They had with great difficulty descended to the river; saw where they stayed last night. Distance about six miles. Ascended on the south side of the creek a high precipice; I overtook them. They had traveled today ten miles. They had hired an Indian pilot, who had led them into the worst place he could find and absconded. Five horses and mules had given out; they were left. I learned likewise that two hunters (A. Kelsey and Jones) started shortly after I did and had not returned. Part of a horse was saved to eat.

M. 25th.—Went about six miles and found it was impossible to proceed. Went back about two miles and encamped; dug holes in the ground to deposit such things as we could dispense with; did not do it, discovering the Indians were watching us. Among them was the old, rascally pilot. White oak in abundance.

T. 26th.—Went south about three miles and encamped in a deep ravine. It was urged by some that we should kill our horses and mules, dry what meat we could carry and start on foot to find a way out of the mountains.

W. 27th.—It commenced raining about 1 o'clock this morning and continued till noon. Threw away all our old clothes to lighten our packs, fearing the rain would make the mountains so slippery as to render it impossible to travel. I have since learned that the Indians in the mountains here prefer the meat of horses to cattle, and here in these gloomy corners of the mountains they had been accustomed to bring stolen horses and eat them. Here and there were strewed the bones of horses; so the design of the veteran Indian pilot is apparent in leading us into the rugged part of creation.

As we left this place, one of the men, G. Cook, remained concealed to see if the old pilot was among the Indians, who always rushed in as soon as we left our encampments to pick up such things as were left. The old gentleman was at the head of this band, and as he had undoubtedly led us into this place to perish, his crime merited death; a rifle ball laid him dead in his tracks. We proceeded south about six miles. As we ascended out of the ravine, we discovered the high

mountains we had passed were covered with new snow for more than a half mile down their summits.

T. 28th.—Surely no horses nor mules with less experience than ours could have descended the difficult steeps and defiles which we encountered in this day's journey. Even as it was, several horses and mules fell from the mountain's side and, rolling like huge stones, landed at the foot of the precipices. The mountains began to grow obtuse, but we could see no prospect of their termination. We ate the last of our beef this evening and killed a mule to finish our supper. Distance six miles.

F. 29th.—Last night the Indians stole a couple of our horses. About noon we passed along by several huts, but they were deserted as soon as we came in sight, the Indians running in great consternation into the woods. At one place the bones of a horse were roasting on a fire; they were undoubtedly the bones of the horses we had lost. Traveled no less than nine miles today. The night was very cool, and had a heavy frost. Although our road was tolerably level today, yet we could see no termination to the mountains, and one much higher than the others terminated our view. Mr. Hopper, our best and most experienced hunter, observed that "If California lies beyond those mountains we shall never be able to reach it." Most of the company were on foot, in consequence of horses giving out and being stolen by the Indians, but many were much fatigued and weak for the want of sufficient provision; others, however, stood it very well. Some had appetites so craving that they ate the meat of most of the mule raw, as soon as it was killed; some ate it half-roasted, dripping with blood.

S. 30th.—We had gone about three miles this morning, when lo! to our great delight we beheld a wide valley! This we had entirely overlooked between us and the high mountain which terminated our view yesterday. Rivers evidently meandered through it, for timber was seen in long extended lines as far as the eye could reach. But we were unable to reach it today, and encamped in the plains. Here grew a few white oaks. Traveled today about twenty miles. Saw many tracks of elk. The valley was wonderfully parched with heat, and had been stripped of its vegetation by fire. Wild fowls, geese, &c., were dying in multitudes.

S. 31st.—Bore off in a northwesterly direction to the nearest timber. Day was warm, plain dry and dusty; reached timber, which was white oak (very low and shrubby), and finally, the river which we had left in the mountains. Joyful sight to us poor, famished wretches! Hundreds of antelope in view! Elk tracks, thousands! Killed two antelopes and some wild fowls. The valley of the river was very fertile, and the young, tender grass covered it like a field of wheat in May. Not a weed was to be seen, and the land was as mellow and free from weeds as land could be made by plowing it twenty times in the United States. Distance today, twenty miles.

Nov., M. 1st.—The company tarried to kill game; an abundance of wild fowl and thirteen deer and antelopes were brought in. My breakfast this morning formed a striking contrast with that of yesterday, which was the lights of a wolf.

T. 2d.—Capt. Bartleson, with his seven, remained to take care of the meat he had killed, while the rest of the company went on. We passed some beautiful grapes, sweet and pleasant. The land decreased in fertility as we descended the stream. Behold! this morning, Jones, who left the camp to hunt on the 23d ult., came to the camp. They (he and Kelsey) had arrived in the plains several days before us, and found an Indian, who conducted them to Marsh's house, but he brought bad news. He said there had been no rain in California for eighteen months, and that the consequence was there was little breadstuff in the country. Beef, however, was abundant and of the best quality. Traveled today, sixteen miles.

W. 3d.—We waited till Capt. B. came up, and all started for Marsh's about noon; arrived at the St. Joaquin and crossed it. Distance, thirteen miles. Found an abundance of grass here. The timber was white oak, several kinds of evergreen oaks, and willows; the river about 100 yards in width.

T. 4th.—Left the river in good season, and departing gradually from its timber, came into large marshes of bulrushes. We saw large herds of elk and wild horses grazing upon the plain. The earth was in many places strongly impregnated with salt. Came into hills; here were a few scattering oaks; land appeared various, in some places black, some light clay color, and in others mulatto (between black and white), sometimes inclining to a red soil; but it was all parched with heat.

Finally we arrived at Marsh's house, which is built of unburned bricks, small, and has no fireplace, wanting a floor and covered with bulrushes. In fact, it was not what I expected to find. A hog was killed for the company. We had nothing else but beef; the latter was used as bread, the former as meat. Therefore, I will say we had bread and meat for dinner. Several of our company were old acquaintances of Marsh in Missouri, and therefore much time was passed in talking about old times, the incidents of our late journey, and our future prospects. All encamped about the house, tolerably well pleased with the appearance of Dr. Marsh, but much disappointed in regard to his situation, for among all his shrubby white oaks there was not one tall enough to make a rail-cut. No other timber in sight, excepting a few cottonwoods and willows.

F. 5th.—Company remained at Marsh's getting information respecting the country.

S. 6th.—Fifteen of the company started for a Spanish town, called the Pueblo of St. Joseph, (which is situated about four miles from Marsh's), to seek employment.

#### OBSERVATIONS ABOUT THE COUNTRY, &c..

You will, undoubtedly, expect me to come out in plain language, either for or against the country; but this I cannot do, not having been able to see as much of it as I intended before I wrote to you. I have, however, been diligent in making inquiries of men who are residents in the country. This will, in some measure, answer the place of experience.

The whole of my travels in California I will now briefly relate; and then make a recapitulation, describing the country, &c..

W. 10th.—I went to R. Livermore's, which is about twenty miles from Marsh's, nearly west; he has a Spanish wife and is surrounded by five or six Spanish families.

On the 11th.—I returned to Marsh's. This evening, M. Nye, of Weston, Mo., returned from the Mission of St. Joseph, bringing the intelligence that part of those who started down to the Pueblo were detained at the Mission, and that the others were sent for, in consequence of not bringing

passports from the States. He likewise brought a letter from the Spanish commander-in-chief of Upper California, to Marsh, requesting him to come, in all possible haste, and answer or rather explain the intentions of the company in coming to California. News had just arrived by the papers of the United States, via Mexico—it was the remarks of some foolish editor—that the United States would have California, and if they could not get it on peaceable terms, they would take it by force. This created considerable excitement among the suspicious Spaniards. All, however, obtained passports from the General, till they should be able to procure them from the Governor at Monterey. On the 15th, I started for the Mission of St. Joseph, and arrived there on the 16th, returned to Marsh's on the 18th.

Started for Capt. Sutter's on the 21st, and arrived there on the 28th. This place is situated nearly due north of Marsh's, on the Sacramento River, and about seventy-five miles. We were received by Capt. Sutter with great kindness, and found there J. John, who had left us in the mountains on the 20th of last month, October. He arrived one day sooner at this place than we did at Marsh's. Captain Sutter, on hearing of the company, immediately sent in search of us, loading two mules with flour and sugar for our comfort. I remained with Capt. Sutter about five weeks, during which time I was principally employed in studying the Spanish language. I made no travel here, except about fifteen miles up the American Fork, a considerable branch of the Sacramento River. On the 27th of December, Mr. Flugge, one of our company who went to Oregon, arrived at Capt. Sutter's—he came with the Trapping company from Fort Van Couver, on the Columbia—and brought the intelligence that the families had safely landed in the Columbia, and were pleased with the country; that an express came, bringing the news from Green River that Trapping and one of his men were killed by the Chienne Indians, two or three days after we had left that place.

The journey from Oregon to this place by land cannot be performed in less than six or eight weeks with horses. (Remark.—Capt. Sutter has bought out the whole Russian settlement, consisting of about 2000 head of cattle, 600 horses, and 1000 sheep, besides dry property. All the Russians, owing to their dissatisfaction of some proceedings of this Government, relative to them selves, have left the country; they consisted of about 200 men, besides women and children.)

On the 8th of January, 1842, I left Capt Sutter's, in his employ, for the Russian settlement. I descended the Sacramento in a launch of thirty tons, into the Bay of St. Francisco. I landed at Sausalita (pronounced Sow-sa-le-ta), on the north side of the bay, in full view of the vessels lying at anchor at Port St. Francisco. I here took it by land and in three days arrived at this place, which is about six miles from Bodaga, the Russian port, and sixty miles north of Port St. Francisco.

Since my arrival here, I have made two trips to Ross, which is about thirty miles north of this place, on the Pacific; most of the Russians resided at this place. And once I have been to Sausalita, through the Mission of San Rafael. These are all my travels in California. It will be necessary for me to describe Marsh's house, as I have made it rather a starting place. It is about fifty miles from Port St Francisco, six or seven miles south of the Sacramento River, fifteen miles from the bay of St. Francisco, and fifteen or twenty miles below the mouth of the St. Joaquin River, and is among a few scattering oaks overlooked by a high mountain peak on the west—which is a termination of that chain of mountains which terminated our view on the 29th of October last. The high California mountains are in full view, and the country which intervenes between them and the ocean to on an average 100 miles wide. Most of the land in these parts is unfit for cultivation, but well adapted to grazing; the reason of this is because it is too wet in winter and too dry in summer. In many places the soil is black, and has every appearance of being as fertile as any land I ever saw; but I am informed this is never sown or planted, in consequence of its drying too much in summer and cracking open. It may be considered a prairie country, for the plains are destitute of timber—streams are frequent and always skirted by timber. Every kind of timber which I have seen, you will see in the following list: Oak, cottonwood, willow, ash, black walnut, box elder, alder, buckeye, redwood, pine, fir, sycamore, madrone (Spanish name), laurel, cedar, maple, hazel bushes, and whortle berries (huckle berries). Here are many other shrubs, but I don't know their names.

Oak.—Here are many kinds of oak, but the only kind which I remember to have seen in the United States resembling the oak of this, to the white oak; this grows on almost every stream, frequently among the mountains, sometimes in the middle of plains. The other kinds of oak are principally evergreen, as they retain their leaves all the year. I have been told by many that it answers every

purpose that the oak does in the United States, excepting for rails and building, it being generally too shrubby. It grows very large in places; I have seen trees ten or twelve feet in diameter.

Cottonwood—This grows neither large nor tall, and only on streams or in low places. On the Sacramento and its branches are more or less of it.

Willows.—These grow on every stream, both great and small, and are often so densely interwoven along banks of rivers that a bird can't fly through them.

Ash.—This is very scarce. It is the kind called white ash, but is so low that it is not valuable for building; it to an excellent substitute for hickory, making axe helves, gun sticks, &c..

Black Walnut—I am not aware that this grows in any other place than on the Sacramento river; even here confined to a few miles; grows shrubby.

Box Elder.—An abundance on every stream.

Alder.—This is an excellent substitute for hickory: it is also found in abundance.

Buckeye—This grows very small, always branching from the ground; it bears a larger nut than the buckeye of the United States.

Redwood.—This is abundant in almost every mountain. It is a kind of hemlock or cedar, found on both sides of the St. Francisco Bay; sometimes grows in valleys. It is the most important timber in California, generally 150 feet high; but I have seen many 200 feet high and not less than fifteen feet in diameter. It splits the easiest of any timber I ever saw; it is very durable; houses, doors, &c., are made of it.

Fir.—This generally grows with the redwood, but not so useful.

Sycamore—Grows in plenty along the Sacramento river; principally used for canoes, but not hollow, as in the United States.



Pine.—This is abundant in the mountains, but is difficult to obtain; what kind it is I am unable to say.

Madrone—Grows as abundant as the oak. It is one of the most beautiful trees which I have ever seen; it is an evergreen, retaining a bright foliage, but that which renders it so pleasing to the color of the bark of all its branches—it is smooth like the sycamore, and of a lively scarlet color; is a most excellent fire wood, and I have been informed by creditable gentlemen that it is an elegant substitute for mahogany.

Laurel—Another beautiful evergreen, and on the north side of the bay, abundant; the largest are two feet in diameter, tough wood. I have not learned its uses.

Cedar.—Scarce here, but abundant in the mountains.

Maple.—Plenty in some places; different from any I have heretofore seen, but curly sometimes; will answer every purpose maple does in the United States, but for sugar—too warm here.

Hazel bushes grow on almost every stream, and in the mountains among the redwood; produce nuts, as in Missouri, and being tough, make excellent withes.

Whortle berries abundant on the hills.

I will here observe that there is no live oak in California, but presume that there is timber to answer all purposes for ship building.

Grass.—The grass is not like that of the prairies of the United States; it is of a finer and better quality. It ceases to grow about the first of July, in consequence of the heat, and dries; the cattle, however, eat it, and become remarkably fat. It begins to grow again in October or November, when the rainy season sets in, and continues to grow all winter. When I went to Ross, the Russian settlement, the grass all along the Pacific (on the 3d of February) was at least a foot high, green, and growing finely.

Mustard grows in abundance.

Here, on this side of the Bay, is an abundance of red and white clover growing with the grass.

Here are also innumerable quantities of wild oats, which I am told grow nearly all over California, and grow as thick as they can stand, producing oats of an excellent quality; but as neither cattle nor horses are ever fed here, they are never harvested.

Wheat.—On the south side of the Bay of St. Francisco, the soil, climate, &c., are as well adapted to raising wheat as in any part of the world. I have been credibly informed that it yields from 70 to 115 fold; wheat will always come up the second year and produce more than half as much as it did the first. This is because of its scattering on the ground while harvesting. Wheat is sown in December, January and February; harvested in June and first of July. North side of the bay will not yield more than 15 or 20 fold.

Corn does not grow well in any part of California; it, however, thrives far better on the north side of the bay than on the south. It will not yield more than fifteen or twenty bushels to the acre—when you read my description of the climate, you will not wonder. The corn is of a small kind, planted in April and May.

Potatoes—Irish potatoes grow well and are of a good quality; should be planted in April.

Sweet potatoes have never been tried.

Beans are produced abundantly, likewise peas. Peas are planted in gardens about the 10th of March and are ripe about the last of May.

Barley yields well, and is sown at the time of wheat.

Onions, cabbages, parsnips, beets, turnips, grow well.

CLIMATE.

First, I will commence with the rainy season, as it was about the beginning of this part of the year that I arrived in California. October is said to be a doubtful month in regard to the commencement of the rainy season. It, however, sets in about the 10th of November. The rains are never very cold, and there are many warm and beautiful showers, like those of summer in the United States. Judge from the following diary of the weather which I have regularly attended to since coming here:

Nov. 4th, 1901.—Day warm and 3d.—Mild, but somewhat hazy. pleasant; evening cool. 4th.—A little rain. 5th day.—Warm. 5th.—Rained nearly all day. 6th day.—Bright and clear; warm. 6th.—Inclined to be fair. 7th day.—Bright and clear; warm. 7th.—Fair and mild. 8th day.—Bright and clear; warm. 8th.—Drizzling rain. 9th day.—Bright and clear; warm. 9th.—Rained half the day. 10th day.—Bright and clear; warm. 10th.—Rained half the day. 11th day.—Bright and clear; warm. 11th.—Fine day. 12th day.—Bright and clear; cool. 12th.—Rained and blew all day. 13th day.—Bright and clear; warm. 13th.—Tolerably fair. 14th day.—Mild and pleasant. 14th.—Same. 15th day.—Pleasant; warm and 15th.—Drizzly all day. rainy. 16th.—Forenoon rainy; afternoon 16th.—Rain today; evening cool. cloudy. 17th.—Warm and rainy. 17th.—Fair; sun shone bright. 18th.—Showery today; morning 18th.—Light showers. clear. 19th.—Fine day; mild evening, 19th.—Cloudy all day. 20th.—Fine day: mild evening. 20th.—Pleasant day; evening cool. 21st.—Pleasant day. 21st.—Morning cool; day cool, with 22d.—Pleasant weather. northwest breeze; rainy evening 23d.—Same. 22d.—Warm showers. 24th.—Same. 23d.—A few showers. 25th.—Light showers of rain. 24th.—Cloudy; evening cool, with 26th.—Fair and pleasant. frost. 27th.—Same. 25th.—Cloudy, without frost. 28th.—Same. 26th.—Warm and clear. 29th.—Inclined to be cool. 27th.—Warm, cloudy. 30th.—Rainy. 28th.—Clear though somewhat cool. 31st.—Fair day. 29th.—Day cloudy and moderate. Jan. 1st.—Same. 30th.—Day cloudy and moderate. 2d.—Same. Dec. 1st.—Clear and warm. 3d.—Same. 2d.—Mild and warm. 4th.—Same. 5th.—Fair, clear weather. 19th.—Same. 6th.—Light showers. 20th.—Same. 8th.—Cloudy, no rain; warm. 21st.—Light showers. 9th.—Cloudy, no rain; warm. 22d.—Rained nearly all day. 10th.—Cloudy, no rain; warm. 23d.—Fair weather. 11th.—Cloudy; heavy frost in 24th.—Same. morning. 25th.—Same. 12th.—Inclined to be fair. 26th.—Rainy. 13th.—Rainy, warm showers. 27th.—Cloudy and cool. 14th.—Pleasant weather. 28th.—Fine and pleasant. 15th.—Pleasant weather. March 1st.—Fair. 16th.—Rain half the

day. 2d.—Same. 17th.—Fair weather. 3d.—Cool and cloudy. 18th.—Fair weather. 4th.—Same. 19th.—Fair weather. 5th.—Bright, clear and warm. 20th.—Cool. 6th.—Same. 21st.—Cloudy. 7th.—Rainy. 22d.—Fine and clear. 8th.—This morning, snowed 5 minutes. 23d.—Fine and clear. 24th.—Fine and clear. 9th.—Cool. 25th.—Fine and clear. 10th.—Fine and warm. 26th.—Variable and rainy. 11th.—Same. 27th.—Fine weather. 12th.—Same. 28th.—Cloudy weather. 13th.—Same. 29th.—Variable and rainy. 14th.—Same. 30th.—Cloudy and cool. 15th.—Same. 31st.—Rainy and warm. 16th.—Cloudy. Feb. 1st.—Fine weather. 17th.—Inclined to rain. 2d.—Same. 18th.—Fine. 3d.—Same. 19th.—Showery. 4th.—Rainy. 20th.—Rainy. 5th.—Bright and clear. 21st.—Rainy and cool. 6th.—Same. 22d.—Rainy and cool. 7th.—Same. 23d.—Morning, rain; evening, fair. 8th.—Same. 24th.—Cloudy. 9th.—Same. 25th.—Fine. 10th.—Same. 26th.—Rainy in afternoon. 11th.—Rainy. 27th.—Cloudy and rainy. 12th.—Fine and warm. 28th.—Fair. 13th.—Same. 29th.—Same. 14th.—Same. 30th.—Same. 15th.—Same. 31st.—Rainy. 16th.—Rainy. April 1st.—Fine. 17th.—Fair and pleasant. 2d.—Very fine. Strawberries will 18th.—Same. be ripe in a few days.

(Remark—When it is rainy, the wind is always from the south; and when fair, from the west-northwest. Here are many bright, frosty mornings, which freeze the ground sometimes an inch deep. I have seen the ice half an inch thick, but seldom thicker than a pane of glass. There are but few mornings that we have frost; it, however, freezes in day time.)

## SUMMER.

From March, the rainy season gradually decreases, ceases entirely about the last of May. During the summer months, heat is intense, so that it is customary for laborers to be unemployed from 10 a. m. till 4 p. m.

Certain situations are much protected from heat by northwest breezes, which always prevail in summer.

When the wind from the sea is blowing in the morning, it continues till 10 o'clock a. m.; heat then becomes intense, but it generally begins about 3 or 4 in the afternoon. The mountains frequently preclude the sea breeze from many situations, so there is a great difference in places but a few miles

apart. It seldom thunders or lightnings here. I will here remark that there is more rain on the north side of St. Francisco bay than on the south; why this is so I am unable to explain. It is in California an it is in the Rocky Mountains—and I believe in all mountains or mountainous countries—very warm during the day and cool at night—so cool that there are frosts sometimes even as late as July. The nights are not proportionately cold in winter; in fact, many of them are quite warm.

The cool nights, together with the dryness of the summer, are undoubtedly the reason why corn, and many other things, do not come to so great perfection here as in many other parts of the world. Watermelons and pumpkins are produced here in abundance, though I fear not so well as in Missouri; they are said not to be so sweet as in the United States, but they last longer, frequently to December, up in June. Strawberries are found in many places in abundance, large and delicious, and are ripe about the middle of April.

Falling of the Leaves.—This is very different in California from what it is in the United States; there they become yellow by frosts, &c., and hasten down in showers, so that in a week or two the whole vegetable world is stript of its foliage. But here, most of the trees are evergreens, and those that are not gradually resign their verdure till they are quite naked about the first of January.

All concur in pronouncing the country good for fruit, apples, &c. I presume it is so. I went to Ross, (this is the most northern settlement in California,) on the 25th of January. I saw there a small but thrifty orchard, consisting of apple, peach, pear, cherry and quince trees. The peach trees had not shed their leaves, and several were in blossom; the quince and more than half the apple trees were as green as in summer. There were roses, marygolds, and several kinds of garden flowers in full bloom. I again visited this place on the 3d of February; saw wild plants in bloom, such as the violet, &c. apple and peach trees beautifully arrayed in blossoms. What time apples are ripe, I cannot say, but presume in June or July.

Pear trees, I am informed, come to great perfection. Fig trees, likewise, are found in almost every orchard and grow well.

The wine grape is cultivated and grows to great perfection.

You have undoubtedly heard that here are English and American settlements in California; but it is not the case. There are from three to 600 foreigners here, principally English and American, but they do not live in settlements by themselves; they are scattered throughout the whole Spanish population, and most of them have Spanish wives; and in fine they live in every respect like the Spaniards. I know of but two American families here—one, the family of Mr. Kelsey, who came with us, and the other, Mr. Walker, who came here from Jackson county, Mo., by way of Oregon; he is a brother to Capt. Walker, the mountaineer: he likes California better than Oregon. There are many English and American traders on the coast.

The population of the Spaniards probably will not exceed 5000.

It is a proverb here (and, I find, a pretty true one) that a Spaniard will not do anything which he cannot do on horseback; he does not work on an average one month in the year; he labors about a week, when he sows his wheat, and another week when he harvests it; the rest of the time is spent riding about.

I know a few Spaniards who are industrious and enterprising. They have become immensely rich—this likewise is the case with the foreigners who have used the least industry. Wealth here principally consist in horses, cattle, and mules.

Fences are in many places made with little trouble. Capt. Sutter has about 300 acres under fence; his fences are made of small, round sticks, inserted endwise into the ground and lashed with cowhide. But where the redwood grows, the fences are made of rails, the same as in the States.

Wheat, corn and potatoes are seldom surrounded by a fence; they grow out in the plains and are guarded from the cattle and horses by the Indians, who are stationed in their huts near the fields.

You can employ any number of Indians by giving them a lump of beef every week, and paying them about one dollar for the same time. Cattle are so wild, however, as to keep some distance

from houses. Since my residence in the country I have become sick of the manner of fencing or protecting grain, etc., from cattle, as done by the Spaniards. To farm well, you must make a fence, as it is in the United States.

The land on the north side of the bay is beautifully diversified with hills and valleys. The farms are chosen according to circumstances among the hills, and are very scattering. Some hills are timbered, some are not, affording excellent pasturage for cattle, horses, etc. The timber grows generally on creeks and ravines on the sides of the mountains south and east of the bay.

The Sacramento spreads into a wide valley or plain, through which run most of its tributaries, the St. Joaquin, etc. These plains are now the province of thousands of elk, antelope, deer, wild horses, etc.; they might easily be changed to raising of thousands of fine cattle.

Tule Marshes.—Tule is a name given by the Spaniards to a kind of bulrush. They grow very large, sometimes an inch in diameter, and occupy large portions of the valley of the Sacramento. They are called marshes, because they grow on the lowest ground and are covered in the rainy season with water, which continues till evaporated by heat of summer. These are the haunts of incalculable thousands of wild geese, ducks, brants, cranes, pelicans, etc., etc.

Situations on the coast are not so pleasant as I expected, on account of the stiff northwest breezes of summer, and the fogs that rise from the ocean in the morning, obscuring everything till sometimes near 12 o'clock. The trees along the coast are governed by the northwesterners, and lean to the south-east.

One Spanish league (this is about 6 ½ sections or square miles) is considered a farm. This I believe is the smallest grant which the Spanish Government gives, and eleven leagues the largest; the grantee is allowed to take it in the shape of the valley or tillable land, and not include mountains which bound the valleys.

To obtain a grant, you must become a citizen (which requires a year's residence), and become a member of the Catholic Church. (See another remark relative to this.)

Houses are most universally built of unburnt bricks; this is the Spanish mode. They could just as well make and burn brick here as anywhere, and build good houses.

Sheep.—In some places there are a great many (sheep); on the farm of Livermore I saw 6000. Capt. Sutter has 1000. They are small, and the wool is rather coarse.

Hogs.—There are a few hogs here, but they can be raised here as well as in the United States. The few I have seen looked fine. A hog weighing 200 pounds is worth four or five dollars.

Cattle.—Of all places in the world, it appears to me that none can be better adapted to the raising of cattle than California. The cattle here are very large, and a person who has a thousand is scarcely noticed as regards stock.

R. Livermore and the Spaniard adjoining have about 9000 head. I. Reed (an Irishman) has 2000. Valleo (pronounced Vag-ya-ho) is the most wealthy Spaniard in the country, and has 12,000 head. Capt Sutter has 2000 head. There is no regular price for cattle, but it is about four dollars per head. I have been assured any quantity might be bought for \$2 per head; yet such opportunities I do not think common. A few years ago cattle could be bought for \$1 per head; times have changed. Hides are worth anywhere on the coast, \$2; tallow, \$6 per hundred pounds. Many persons own from 1000 to 6000, but it is unnecessary to insert names here.

Horses.—These are next in number of cattle. They are not in general large, but they answer every purpose. The price is various; I have known good horses to sell from \$8 to \$30. Mares are never worked or rode; they are worth from \$3 to \$5. Capt. Sutter has about 600 head of horses; Valleo has from 2000 to 3000; a hundred persons might be mentioned who have from 300 to 800. Horses here are not subject to diseases.

Mules.—These are large and fine, and are worth, before they can be rode, about \$10 per head, after being broke to the saddle, \$15. Jacks worth from \$100 to \$200.



Oxen.—The Spaniards work oxen by lashing a straight stick to the horns. Good, tame, working oxen are worth about \$25. It is actually more work to haul the clumsy, awkward, large, unhandy carts of the Spaniards than an American wagon with a cord of wood.

Butter and Cheese.—But little butter and cheese made in this country: pains not being taken to milk the cows. Butter is worth 50 cents per pound. What a chance there is in this line of business for industrious Americans. No doubt sale for any quantity could be made to ships, but the price would become somewhat less.

Missions.—Missions are nearly all broken up; but few pretend to preach or teach, and those that still remain are fast declining. Whether the missions have ever been the means of doing the Indians much good, I cannot say; but I do not like this manner of civilizing the Indians, who still live in filth and dirt, in mud houses without floors or fireplaces. Whenever an offense is committed, like stealing, they are plunged into the prison houses, laden with irons, and made to toll a bell every minute of the night; this was the case at St. Joseph when I was there, on the 16th of November last.

Missions that have ceased their labors have distributed the cattle and horses among the Indians, after reserving a large share for the priests, etc.; and artful men have taken advantage of the times and purchased the cattle and horses from the Indians for a small quantity of ardent spirits or some trifling articles, leaving them destitute. All missions were once very rich in cattle. etc., but they are now very much reduced. There are about twenty-two missions in Upper California. The mission of San Gubler had 100,000 head of cattle, that of St. Joseph 18,000, that of St. Clara 30,000; many others had intermediate numbers. These missions likewise had horses, sheep, etc., in proportion. There is now a bishop in Monterey, lately arrived from Mexico, come to revive the missions; but the people all objected to his remaining in the country. The consequence would be, perhaps, that the people would have to pay tithes. (August, 1842.—The bishop has not yet arrived on this side of the bay.)

Honey Bee.—I have been informed that there is a kind of honey bee in this country which makes honey; but they are not like the honey bee of the States, and are neither plenty nor common. If bees were brought to this country, I think they would do well.

Health.—The country is acknowledged by all to be extremely healthy; there is no disease common to the country; the fever and ague are seldom known. I knew a man to have several chills, but he had been intoxicated several days in succession. The Indians who did so several years ago were (it is the opinion of all of whom I inquired) afflicted with the smallpox. They use on all occasions, both in health and in sickness, excessive sweatings; the manner of doing it is by heating a large house, which they build and cover like a cockpit, very hot, and lie in it until they are so weak they can hardly stand, and then coming out, entirely naked, throw themselves upon the cold, damp ground, or into the water. This occurs daily, under my own observation.

Water.—There is an abundance of springs here; the water, I believe, is universally freestone water. Every family is supplied with either a spring or a running stream. There is limestone in the country, but not to say plenty; there is enough, I presume, including the shells of the seashore, to supply every want.

Trees begin to unfold their leaves about the 1st of March, but do not all entirely unfold their leaves till the middle of May. Strawberries ripe about the 1st of June.

Mills.—Mills go by horse power; in fact, I know of but one grist and one saw mill in California. The streams, I believe, in general are not very suitable for mills, there not being sufficient power near the sea, and in winter the water rises so high that the dams would be swept away. But good millwrights, no doubt, would succeed in establishing mills on most of the streams. The Sacramento river is the most beautiful river I ever saw for steamboat navigation. It has several streams which would be navigable in high water.

Dews on the coast are very heavy, but they extend but a few miles back into the country. Since I wrote relative to the fog on the seashore, I have been told that from St. Francisco south there is but little fog.

Lumber is generally sawed by hand; it is worth from \$40 to \$50 per thousand feet, redwood.

Fish.—There is a great abundance of salmon in every stream, particularly in the spring of the year, when they are very fat. The Sacramento and its branches contain an abundance.

Whales likewise I see almost daily spouting along the coast. There are other fish which come up from the ocean.

There are few snakes here—the rattlesnake and corral; the others are common.

Bears are plenty—they are the grizzly kind, but are not so tenacious of life as those of the Rocky Mountains. They are very large.

The animals along the coast are the sea lion, sea elephant, seals, etc. There are an abundance of prairie wolves, wolves of another kind also; very large. An animal is found here called by the Spaniards the lion, but I think it to be the real panther. It frequently kills horses; it latterly killed two on the place I have charge of.

Crows, buzzards and vultures are large and numerous.

Mosquitoes are not troublesome, excepting on the Bay of St. Francisco, and in the neighborhood of marshes. Horse flies are not numerous or bad.

Here grows a root in great abundance which answers every purpose of soap to wash with.

The wages of white men are about \$25 per month; mechanics get about \$3 per day; Indians hired from \$4 to \$6 per month, but are very indolent.

Goods are very high, owing to the high duty on them. Factory cloth is 50 cents per yard; blankets, from \$5 to \$10; shirts are worth \$3; sugar, from 15 to 30 cents; tea, \$2; coffee, 50 cents. Goods are cheaper in Oregon than in the Western States; so they would be here but for cause mentioned above. Shoes are worth from \$3 to \$5; boots, \$10; other things in proportion.

Wheat is worth \$1 per bushel; corn, I can't say.

The ploughs with which the Spaniards work are crude and awkward.

Guns are very high; a good, first-rate rifle is worth from \$75 to \$100. One of our company sold a rifle for thirty head of cattle. Guns worth \$15 in the States are worth \$50 here.

It is seldom a Spaniard makes a charge against travelers for his hospitality; they are kind in this respect. But I can't say how much they p——r.

The number of civilized Indians in California is about 15,000.

I have learned but little concerning the mines of the country. There is a silver mine near Monterey, but it has not been worked; how extensive it is, I cannot say.

The dexterity with which the Spaniards use the lasso is surprising; in fact, I doubt if their horsemanship is surpassed by the Cossacks of Tartary. It is a common thing for them to take up things from the ground, going upon a full run with their horses; they will pick up a dollar in this way. They frequently encounter a bear on the plain in this way with their lassos, and two holding him in opposite directions with ropes fastened to the pommels of their saddles. I was informed that two young boys encountered a large buck elk in the plains, and having no saddles, fastened the ropes around the horses' necks and actually dragged the huge animal into the settlements alive.

I will here remark that all who would come to this country must bring passports from the Governors of their resident States.

Whether persons of any other denomination than Catholic would, when piously disposed, be interrupted by the law, I can't say, but think not.

The best part of California, I am told, lies high up on the Sacramento. The country south and east of Marsh's is unoccupied; likewise north, excepting Capt. Sutter's grant of eleven leagues, as Capt. Sutter, in order to fulfill his contract with the Government, is obliged to have a certain number of settlers. Perhaps a person could not do better than join him; it would, at any rate, be a good place to come to on arriving in the country, on account of the Sacramento River, which can be descended every week or two in launches to this place.

Capt. Sutter would give any information to emigrants, and I believe render any assistance in his power. The Pueblo of St. Joseph would be another good place to arrive at; it is situated near the southeast extremity of the Bay of St. Francisco. There is a number of Americans and English in the place. Mr. Gullnack is noted for his kindness to strangers, and would undoubtedly give the best advice in his power. Mr. Forbes, likewise, who lives near the place, is capable of giving any information.

So long as the Spanish Government holds this country, neighborhoods and settlements will be thin; it will, therefore, be some time before districts can be organized, schools established, etc., etc. People coming to this country want all the land the law will allow them; wealth is as yet the sole object of all, consequently houses are generally from three to ten miles distant from each other; but it is my opinion a Spanish boy would not think it so hard to go ten miles on horseback to school as children generally do half a mile.

I have endeavored to state facts with impartiality as well as I could. I will here remark that at least half of the company with whom I came are going to return this spring to the United States; many of them well pleased with the country, and others so sick they cannot look at it. People generally look on it as the garden of the world, or the most desolate place of creation. Although the country is not what I expected, yet if it were not under the Mexican Government I should be as willing here to

spend the uncertain days of my life as elsewhere. It may be I shall, as it is, but I intend to visit the United States as soon as I can, if possible the coming fall.

Let me here remark that those of the company who came here for their health were all successful. A young man by name of Walton, who, when he set out, was of a deathlike appearance—having been afflicted with dropsy or consumption—landed in perfect health.

In Upper California there are no large towns. Monterey is the principal, and contains about 500 or 600 inhabitants; the Pueblo of St. Joseph about 300; Port St. Francisco, 50.

People say there has been already three times as much rain this winter (of '41 and '42) as they ever knew in one season before. Notwithstanding this, I do not think the rains and snows here as disagreeable as those of the United States. Where the land has not been pastured by cattle and horses, the rains make it very soft and miry, so that it is extremely bad traveling in some places.

If I were to come to this country again, I would not come with wagons, but would pack animals, either mules or horses—mules are rather better than horses generally for packing, but the latter for riding. As I have come but one route to this country, I cannot recommend any other. This journey with packed animals could be performed in three months, provided the company have a pilot—and surely no other company than ours ever started without one.

Allowing a person to be three months on the route, he will need, in the provision line, 100 pounds of flour, 50 pounds of bacon, and if a coffee drinker, 20 pounds of sugar and coffee to his taste; a few other things—dried fruit, rice, &c.—would not come amiss. With all these he would have to be prudent, and before passing the mountains or buffalo range, it will be necessary to lay in 150 pounds of dried buffalo meat. A person will need one animal to pack his provision, one to carry his clothing, and one to ride. It would be well to bring some kind of mountain goods in order to traffic in the mountains, provided one was so unlucky as to have a horse stolen by the Indians or lose one otherwise. A person, if fond of sporting or intends to hunt, will require five pounds of powder and ten pounds of lead; if the gun is a cap-lock one, he should be provided with fire works-flint, steel, lint, &c. if a few extra boxes of caps, they would sell well. Should bring a good supply of clothing

(a hunter should wear nothing but buckskin), clothes being very dear here. Persons coming here with the intention of selling, will do well to bring an extra animal laden with guns or dry goods, as they are more current than money; if, however, any large quantity were brought into the country, duties would be required, which would overrun the profit.

I will now describe the route to his country as well as I can—I knowing that if we had had directions as follow we could have found our way much better. You leave Westport, following the Santa Fe road, till you arrive at Elm Grove, which is 25 miles from Westport; going about 6 miles, you leave the Santa Fe road to the left and take a west course and arrive at the Kansas River. Here you start in the road of the mountain traders and which you follow all the way to the mountains; its course till you strike the Platte River is considerably north of west. You ascend Platte River six or eight days' travel till you arrive at the confluence of the north and south forks. About 6 miles above this place is where we forded the south fork; this place is easily known by the bluffs coming in upon the banks, leaving no valley on the river. If you cannot ford here, two days' upstream travel will take you to a place, where, being passed over, you take the road to the north fork, which you will ascend, all the time in the road, till you reach Fort. Laramie. The Black Hills here set in, and the route could not be described intelligibly—a pilot must be along. It will not perhaps be difficult at any time to procure a pilot at this place to go to the rendezvous on Great River; you will here get directions to Bear River. You ascend this stream, passing the soda fountain, about 8 miles beyond which the river turns to the south. You will, perhaps, have to make several inland circuits from the river; here is no road, and the way will have to be explored as you advance. Thus continue till you arrive at Salt Creek, which you will see mentioned on the 18th of August, when you will seek the first opportunity to take a westerly direction through the hills. About 30 miles will bring you in view of the Great Salt Lake. You will have to keep near the high mountains to the north to procure water. Continue about two days along these mountains in a westerly course, then turn directly southwest; in order to do this your traveling will be, perhaps, sometimes south and then west, on account of the hills—keep out of the smooth, white, salt plains—and five days' travel will take you to the head of Mary's, Ogden's or Buenaventura River. It will be necessary to compare this with the journal. Descend this stream until on the north side you come to where it spreads into a swamp

of cane grass; keeping as near the swamp as you can, cross a small outlet and take a southerly direction about 30 miles. Now 15 miles south or southwest will take you to the south side of the lake. You now continue south, bearing very little to the west, pass a long, narrow lake of beautiful water, and four days will take you to the great gap in the mountains. The mountains become low so gradually that you are at them before you are aware of it. One day will take you into the plains of the St. Joaquin. You will undoubtedly see Indians here, who can tell you the way to Capt. Sutter's, if you can speak this much Spanish: "Por donda esta el rancho de Capitan Sutter?" It will be about five day's travel, perhaps west or north.

There would be many advantages in coming to this country by water—so many useful things could be brought, such as ploughs, wagons, &c.. Surely no American could reconcile himself to the awkward utensils of the Spaniards. I am not prepared to say what would be the value of a good American wagon—not less than \$200 or \$300. I will say plainly that I do not know that you can live any better here than in Missouri, but your prudence and economy would not fail to make you a vast fortune, provided you came in time to get a farm in a suitable place, and conform to the Spanish laws. Persons wanting any information by letter will direct their letters to New Helvetia, Rio Sacramento, Upper California, to myself or Capt. Sutter.

I will here speak of the climate on the seashore, and can say that with the exception of a few frosty mornings in the winter, the summer is nearly as cold as the winter—in fact, I believe the cold of the summer is as disagreeable as that of the winter. There have been, speaking of the seashore, but few warmer days than those I have experienced in Missouri; but in other parts of the country it is excessively hot a few hours in the middle of the day.

Although fruit trees along the seashore are in blossom in January, February and March, yet the cold of summer coming on retards their growth so that no apples are ripe until the first of September—I speak particularly of the seashore. A small distance from it there is a difference of one and one-half months. Never did I expect to see the earth so beautifully arrayed in flowers as it is here, and from the variety of the humble-bees I certainly think if bees could only once be brought here they would do exceedingly well.



Wild oats in some places ripen the last of May. I have not seen a mosquito here this summer; but as I was going into the bay, a small party attacked me and succeeded in taking a little blood. This country is surely a healthy one. I have known but one person to die, and it was the opinion generally the cause of his death was intemperance and the want of exercise. I asked a respectable physician what disease prevailed most in California, and he answered “the knife,” having reference to the treacherous Spaniards. I have not seen one without a knife since I have been here, but I cannot say that I fear them—I, too, carry a knife and pistol.

It is now preached in all the missions that people will have to pay tithes this year. The bishop has found a letter, which lately has fallen from heaven (so the priests say who read copies of it in all the church). The contents of said letter I have not been told. The sheet is very large and written in a hand different from any in the world.

A general is expected every day from Mexico with 500 or 600 men; he is to be both military and civil governor.

To my friends and others, I must speak candidly of Dr. Marsh here. What he was in Missouri, I can't say. I speak for the emigrant, that he may be on his guard, and not be gulled as some have been, on coming to this country, by him. He is perhaps the meanest man in California. After the company had encamped near his house about two days, and here had been killed for them a small hog and a bullock, he began to complain of his poverty, saying “the company had already been more than \$100 expense to him; God knew whether he would ever get a rial of it or not.” But poor as the company was, he had already got from them five times the value of his pig and bullock in different kinds of articles—powder, lead, knives,&c.. He charged the company \$3 apiece to go out and get their passports—a good price for his services. There is not an individual in California who does not dislike the man. He is seldom admitted into a house to sleep; if rightly informed, he had to sleep under his cart in a Spanish town to which he had taken some hides. No other foreigner would be obliged to do so. He came to this country pretending to be a physician. He has, however, gained by it—he has charged and received \$25 for two doses of salts; he has refused his assistance to a female in labour and not expected to live, without immediate relief, unless the husband promised

him for his pay 50 cows. When he first came to this country, he hired in the family of an obliging American, during which time he laid out 50 cents for some fresh fish; after having a whole year clear of charges, he dunned the man for his 50 cents. I might write 50 pages detailing similar incidents, but it is unnecessary to mention but one more. A child being afflicted with the headache, Dr. Marsh was called, administered two or three doses of medicine, made a charge of 50 cows. The family was a poor one, not having more than 150, and in order to reduce the price, charged the doctor (?) 25 cows for washing a couple of shirts; so he went off grumbling, with 25. Enough of him.

It is the report now that the Mexican Government will allow a person to hold property in this country without his becoming a Catholic.

To all of my acquaintances and friends, who may be in bad health, I would recommend a trip to California. All whom I have heard speak of the climate as regarded their health, say its effects have been salutary.

THE END.

Peter Lassen

### **LIFE IN CALIFORNIA BEFORE THE GOLD DISCOVERY.**

By John Bidwell (Pioneer of '41).

THE party whose fortunes I have followed across the plains\* was not only the first that went direct to California from the East; we were probably the first white people, except Booneville's party of 1833, that ever crossed the Sierra Nevada. Dr. Marsh's ranch, the first settlement reached by us in California, was located in the eastern foothills of the Coast Range Mountains, near the northwestern extremity of the great San Joaquin Valley and about six miles east of Monte Diablo, which may be called about the geographical center of Contra Costa County. There were no other settlements in the valley; it was, apparently, still just as new as when Columbus discovered America, and roaming

over it were countless thousands of wild horses, of elk, and of antelope. It had been one of the driest years ever known in California. The country was brown and parched; throughout the State, wheat, beans, everything had failed. Cattle were almost starving for grass, and the people, except perhaps a few of the best families, were without bread, and were eating chiefly meat, and that often of very poor quality.

See "The First Emigrant Train to California." in *The Century* for November, 1890.

Dr. Marsh had come into California four or five years before by way of New Mexico. He was in some respects a remarkable man. In command of the English language I have scarcely ever seen his equal. He had never studied medicine, I believe, but was a great reader; sometimes he would lie in bed all day reading, and he had a memory that stereotyped all he read, and in those days in California such a man could easily assume the role of doctor and practice medicine. In fact, with the exception of Dr. Marsh there was then no physician of any kind anywhere in California. We were overjoyed to find an American, and yet when we became acquainted with him we found him one of the most selfish of mortals. The night of our arrival he killed two pigs for us<sup>\*</sup>. We felt very grateful, for we had by no means recovered from starving on poor mule meat, and when he set his Indian cook to making tortillas (little cakes) for us, giving one to each,—there were thirty-two in our party,—we felt even more grateful; and especially when we learned that he had had to use some of his seed wheat, for he had no other. Hearing that there was no such thing as money in the country, and that butcher-knives, guns, ammunition, and everything of that kind were better than money, we expressed our gratitude the first night to the doctor by presents—one giving a can of powder, another a bar of lead or a butcher-knife, and another a cheap but serviceable set of surgical instruments. The next morning I rose early, among the first, in order to learn from our host something about California,—what we could do, and where we could go,—and, strange as it may seem, he would scarcely answer a question. He seemed to be in an ill humor, and among other things he said: "The company has already been over a hundred dollars' expense to me, and God knows whether I will ever get a real of it or not." I was at a loss to account for this, and went out and told some of the party, and found that others had been snubbed in a similar manner. We held a consultation and resolved to leave as soon as convenient. Half our party concluded to go back to the

San Joaquin River, where there was much game, and spend the winter hunting, chiefly for otter, the skins being worth three dollars apiece. The rest—about fourteen—succeeded in gaining information from Dr. Marsh by which they started to find the town of San Jose, about forty miles to the south.

Men reduced to living on poor meat, and almost starving, have an intense longing for anything fat.

then known by the name of Pueblo de San Jose, now the city of San Jose. More or less of our effects had to be left at Marsh's, and I decided to remain and look out for them, and meantime to make short excursions about the country on my own account. After the others had left I started off, traveling south, and came to what is now called Livermore Valley, then known as Livermore's Ranch, belonging to Robert Livermore, a native of England. He had left a vessel when a mere boy, and had married and lived like the native Californians, and, like them, was very expert with the lasso. Livermore's was the frontier ranch, and more exposed than any other to the ravages of the Horse-thief Indians of the Sierra Nevada (before mentioned). That valley was full of wild cattle,—thousands of them,—and they were more dangerous to one on foot, as I was, than grizzly bears. By dodging into the gulches and behind trees I made my way to a Mexican ranch at the extreme west end of the valley, where I staid all night. This was one of the noted ranches, and belonged to a Californian called Don Jose Maria Amador—more recently, to a man named Dougherty<sup>\*</sup>. Next day, seeing nothing to encourage me, I started to return to Marsh's ranch.

The rancheros marked and branded their stock differently so as to distinguish them. But it was not possible to keep them separate. One would often steal cattle from the other. Livermore in this way lost cattle by his neighbor Amador. In fact, it was almost a daily occurrence—a race to see which could get and kill the most of the other's cattle. Cattle in those days were often killed for the hides alone. One day a man saw Amador kill a fine steer belonging to Livermore. When he reached Livermore's—ten or fifteen miles away—and told him what Amador had done, he found Livermore skinning a steer of Amador's!

On the way, as I came to where two roads, or rather paths, converged, I fell in with one of the fourteen men, M. C. Nye, who had started for San Jose. He seemed considerably agitated, and reported that at the Mission of San Jose, some fifteen miles this side of the town of San Jose, all the men had been arrested and put in prison by General Vallejo, Mexican commander-in-chief of the military under Governor Alvarado, he alone having been sent back to tell Marsh and to have him come forthwith to explain why this armed force had invaded the country. We reached Marsh's after dark. The next day the doctor started down to the Mission of San Jose, nearly thirty miles

distant, with a list of the company, which I gave him. He was gone about three days, Meanwhile we sent word to the men on the San Joaquin River to let them know what had taken place, and they at once returned to the ranch to await results. When Marsh came back, he said ominously “Now, men, I want you all to come into the house and I will tell you your fate.” We all went in, and he announced, “You men that have five dollars can have passports and remain in the country and go where you please.” The fact was, he had simply obtained passports for the asking; they had cost him nothing. The men who had been arrested at the Mission had been liberated as soon as their passports were issued to them, and they had at once proceeded on their way to San Jose. But five dollars! I don't suppose any one had five dollars; nine-tenths of them probably had not a cent of money. The names were called and each man settled, giving the amount in something, and if unable to make it up in money or effects he would give his note for the rest. All the names were called except my own. There was no passport for me. Marsh had certainly not forgotten me, for I had furnished him with the list of our names myself. Possibly his idea was—as others surmised and afterwards told me—that, lacking a passport, I would stay at his ranch and make a useful hand to work.

The next morning before day, found me starting for the Mission of San Jose to get a passport for myself. Mike Nye, the man who had brought the news of the arrest, went with me. A friend had lent me a poor old horse, fit only to carry my blankets. I arrived in a heavy rain-storm, and was marched into the calaboose and kept there three days with nothing to eat, and the fleas were so numerous as to cover and darken anything of a light color. There were four or five Indians in the prison. They were ironed, and they kept tolling a bell, as a punishment, I suppose, for they were said to have stolen horses; possibly they belonged to the Horse-thief tribes east of the San Joaquin Valley. Sentries were stationed at the door. Through a grated window I made a motion to an Indian boy outside and he brought me a handful of beans and a handful of “manteca,” which is used by Mexicans instead of lard. It seemed as if they were going to starve me to death. After having been there three days, I saw through the door a man whom, from his light hair, I took to be an American, although he was clad in the wild picturesque garb of a native Californian, including serape and the huge spurs used by the vaquero. I had the sentry at the door hail him. He proved to be an American,

a resident of the Pueblo of San Jose, named Thomas Bowen, and he kindly went to Vallejo, who was right across the way in the big mission building, and procured for me the passport. I think I have that passport now, signed by Vallejo and written in Spanish by Victor Pruden.

Everyone at the Mission pronounced Marsh's action an outrage; such a thing was never known before.

We had already heard that a man by the name of Sutter was starting a colony a hundred miles away to the north in the Sacramento Valley. No other civilized settlements had been attempted anywhere east of the Coast Range; before Sutter came the Indians had reigned supreme. As the best thing to be done I now determined to go to Sutter's, afterward called Sutter's Fort," or New Helvetia. Dr. Marsh said we could make the journey in two days, but it took us eight. Winter had come in earnest, and winter in California then, as now, meant rain. I had three companions. It was wet when we started, and much of the time we traveled through a pouring rain. Streams were out of their banks; gulches were swimming; plains were inundated: indeed, most of the country was overflowed. There were no roads, merely paths, trodden only by Indians and wild game. We were compelled to follow the paths, even when they were under water, for the moment our animals stepped to one side, down they went into the mire. Most of the way was through the region now lying between Lathrop and Sacramento. We got out of provisions and were about three days without food. Game was plentiful, but hard to shoot in the rain. Besides, it was impossible to keep our old flint-lock guns dry, and especially the powder dry in the pans. On the eighth day we came to Sutter's settlement. This was November 28, 1841; the fort had not then been begun. Sutter received us with open arms and in a princely fashion, for he was a man of the most polite address and the most courteous manners, a man who could shine in any society. Moreover, our coming was not unexpected to him. It will be remembered that in the Sierra Nevada one of our men named Jimmy John became separated from the main party. It seems that he came on into California, and, diverging into the north, found his way down to Sutter's settlement perhaps a little before we reached Dr. Marsh's. Through this man Sutter heard that our company of thirty men were already somewhere in California. He immediately loaded two mules with provisions taken out of his private stores, and sent two men with them in search of us. But they did not find us, and returned, with the provisions, to Sutter's. Later, after a

long search, the same two men, having been sent out again by Sutter, struck our trail and followed it to Marsh's.

John A. Sutter was born in Baden in 1803 of Swiss parents, and was proud of his connection with the only republic of consequence in Europe. He was a warm admirer of the United States, and some of his friends had persuaded him to come across the Atlantic. He first went to a friend in Indiana with whom he staid awhile, helping to clear land, but it was business that he was not accustomed to. So he made his way to St. Louis and invested what means he had in merchandise, and went out as a New Mexican trader to Santa Fe. Having been unsuccessful at Santa Fe, he returned to St. Louis, joined a party of trappers, went to the Rocky Mountains, and found his way down the Columbia River to Fort Vancouver. There he formed plans for trying to get down to the coast of California to establish a colony. He took a vessel that went to the Sandwich Islands, and there communicated his plans to people who assisted him. But as there was no vessel going direct from the Sandwich Islands to California, he had to take a Russian vessel by way of Sitka. He got such credit and help as he could in the Sandwich Islands and induced five or six natives to accompany him to start the contemplated colony. He expected to send to Europe and the United States for his colonists. When he came to the coast of California, in 1840, he had an interview with the Governor, Alvarado, and obtained permission to explore the country and find a place for his colony. He came to the bay of San Francisco, procured a small boat and explored the largest river he could find, and selected the site where the city of Sacramento now stands.

A short time before we arrived Sutter had bought out the Russian-American Fur Company at Fort Ross and Bodega on the Pacific. That company had a charter from Spain to take furs, but had no right to the land. The charter had about expired. Against the protest of the California authorities they had extended their settlement southward some twenty miles farther than they had any right to, and had occupied the country to, and even beyond, the bay of Bodega. The time came when the taking of furs was no longer profitable; the Russians were ordered to vacate and return to Sitka. They wished to sell out all their personal property and whatever remaining right they had to the land. So Sutter bought them out—cattle and horses; a little vessel of about twenty-five tons burden, called a launch; and other property, including forty-odd pieces of old rusty cannon and one or two

small brass pieces, with a quantity of old French flint-lock muskets pronounced by Sutter to be of those lost by Bonaparte in 1812 in his disastrous retreat from Moscow. This ordnance Sutter conveyed up the Sacramento River on the launch to his colony. As soon as the native Californians heard that he had bought out the Russians and was beginning to fortify himself by taking up the cannon, they began to fear him. They were doubtless jealous because Americans and other foreigners had already commenced to make the place their headquarters, and they foresaw that Sutter's fort would be for them, especially for Americans, what it naturally did become in fact, a place of protection and general rendezvous; and so they threatened to break it up. Sutter had not as yet actually received his grant; he had simply taken preliminary steps and had obtained permission to settle and proceed to colonize. These threats were made before he had begun the fort, much less built it, and Sutter felt insecure. He had a good many Indians whom he had collected about him, and a few white men (perhaps fifteen or twenty), and some Sandwich Islanders. When he heard of the coming of our thirty men he inferred at once that we would soon reach him and be an additional protection. With this feeling of security, even before the arrival of our party, Sutter was so indiscreet as to write a letter to the governor or to some one in authority, saying that he wanted to hear no more threats of dispossession, for he was now able not only to defend himself, but to go and chastise them. That letter having been despatched to the City of Mexico, the authorities there sent a new governor in 1842 with about six hundred troops to subdue Sutter. But the new governor, Manuel Micheltorena, was an intelligent man. He knew the history of California and was aware that nearly all of his predecessors had been expelled by insurrections of the native Californians. Sutter sent a courier to meet the governor before his arrival at Los Angeles, with a letter in French, conveying his greetings to the governor, expressing a most cordial welcome, and submitting cheerfully and entirely to his authority. In this way, the governor and Sutter became fast friends, and through Sutter the Americans had a friend in Governor Micheltorena.

The first employment I had in California was in Sutter's service, about two months after our arrival at Marsh's. He engaged me, in January, 1842, to go to Bodega and Fort Ross and to stay there until he could finish removing the property which he had bought from the Russians. At that time the Russians had an orchard of two or three acres of peaches and apples at Fort Ross. I dried the



peaches and some of the apples, and made cider of the remainder. A small vineyard of white grapes had also been planted. In February, 1842, I made a trip from Bodega northward as far as Clear Lake in the present Lake County. I remained at Bodega and Fort Ross fourteen months, until everything was removed; then I came up into Sacramento Valley and took charge for Sutter of his Hock farm (so named from a large Indian village on the place), remaining there a little more than a year—in 1843 and part of 1844.

Nearly everybody who came to California made it a point to reach Sutter's Fort<sup>\*</sup>. Sutter was one of the most liberal and hospitable of men. Everybody was welcome—one man or a hundred, it was all the same. He had peculiar traits: his necessities compelled him to take all he could buy, and he paid all he could pay; but he failed to keep up with his payments. And so he soon found himself immensely—almost hopelessly—involved in debt. His debt to the Russians amounted at first to something near one hundred thousand dollars. Interest increased apace. He had agreed to pay in wheat, but his crops failed. He struggled in every way, sowing large areas to wheat, increasing his cattle and horses, and trying to build a flouring mill. He kept his launch running to and from the bay, carrying down hides, tallow, furs, wheat, etc., returning with lumber sawed by hand in the redwood groves nearest the bay, and other supplies. On an average it took a month to make a trip. The fare for each person was five dollars, including board. Sutter started many other new enterprises in order to find relief from his embarrassments; but, in spite of all he could do, these increased. Every year found him worse and worse off; but it was partly his own fault. He employed men—not because he always needed and could profitably employ them, but because in the kindness of his heart it simply became a habit to employ everybody who wanted employment. As long as he had anything he trusted anyone with everything he wanted—responsible or otherwise, acquaintances and strangers alike. Most of the labor was done by Indians, chiefly wild ones, except a few from the Missions who spoke Spanish. The wild ones learned Spanish so far as they learned anything, that being the language of the country, and everybody had to learn something of it. The number of men employed by Sutter may be stated at from 100 to 500—the latter number at harvest time. Among them were blacksmiths, carpenters, tanners, gunsmiths, vaqueros, farmers, gardeners, weavers (to weave coarse woolen blankets), hunters, sawyers (to saw lumber by hand, a custom

known in England), sheep-herders, trappers, and, later, millwrights and a distiller. In a word, Sutter started every business and enterprise possible. He tried to maintain a sort of military discipline. Cannon were mounted, and pointed in every direction through embrasures in the walls and bastions. The soldiers were Indians, and every evening after coming from work they were drilled under a white officer, generally a German, marching to the music of fife and drum. A sentry was always at the gate, and regular bells called men to and from work.

Every year after the arrival of our party, in 1841, immigrant parties came across the plains to California; except in 1842, when they went to Oregon, most of them coming thence to California in 1843. Ours of 1841 being the first, let me add that a later party arrived in California in 1841. It was composed of about twenty-five persons who arrived at Westport, Mo., too late to come with us, and so went with the annual caravan of St. Louis traders to Santa Fe, and thence via the Gila River into Southern California. Among the more noted arrivals on this coast I may mention: 1841.—Commodore Wilkes's Exploring Expedition, a party of which came overland from Oregon to California, under Captain Ringgold, I think. 1842.—Commodore Thomas ap Catesby Jones, who raised the American flag in Monterey. 1842.—First: L. W. Hastings, via Oregon. He was ambitious to make California a republic and to be its first president, and wrote an iridescent book to induce immigration.—which came in 1846,—but found the American flag flying when he returned with the immigration he had gone to meet. Also among the noted arrivals in 1843 was Pierson B. Reading, an accomplished gentleman, the proprietor of Reading's ranch in Shasta county, and from whom Fort Reading took its name. Samuel J. Hensley was also one of the same party. Second: Dr. Sandels, a very intelligent man. 1844.—First: Fremont's first arrival (in March); Mr. Charles Preuss, a scientific man, and Kit Carson with him. Second: The Stevens-Townsend-Murphy party, who brought the first wagons into California across the plains. 1845.—First: James W. Marshall, who, in 1848, discovered the gold, Second: Fremont's second arrival, also Hastings's second arrival. 1846.—Largest immigration party, the one Hastings went to meet. The Donner party was among the last of these immigrants.

Harvesting, with the rude implements, was a scene. Imagine three or four hundred wild Indians in a grain field, armed, some with sickles, some with butcher-knives, some with pieces of hoop iron roughly fashioned into shapes like sickles, but many having only their hands with which to gather by small handfuls the dry and brittle grain; and as their hands would soon become sore, they resorted to dry willow sticks, which were split to afford a sharper edge with which to sever the straw. But the wildest part was the threshing. The harvest of weeks, sometimes of a month, was piled up in the straw in the form of a huge mound in the middle of a high, strong, round corral; then three or four hundred wild horses were turned in to thresh it, the Indians whooping to make them run faster. Suddenly they would dash in before the band at full speed, when the motion became reversed, with the effect of plowing up the trampled straw to the very bottom. In an hour the grain would be thoroughly threshed and the dry straw broken almost into chaff. In this manner I have

seen two thousand bushels of wheat threshed in a single hour. Next came the winnowing, which would often take another month. It could only be done when the wind was blowing, by throwing high into the air shovelfuls of grain, straw and chaff, the lighter materials being wafted to one side, while the grain, comparatively clean, would descend and form a heap by itself. In this manner all the grain in California was cleaned. At that day no such thing as a fanning mill had ever been brought to this coast.

The kindness and hospitality of the native Californians have not been overstated. Up to the time the Mexican regime ceased in California they had a custom of never charging for anything; that is to say, for entertainment—food, use of horses. etc. You were supposed, even if invited to visit a friend, to bring your blankets with you, and one would be very thoughtless if he traveled and did not take a knife with him to cut his meat. When you had eaten, the invariable custom was to rise, deliver to the woman or hostess the plate on which you had eaten the meat and beans—for that was about all they had—and say, “Muchas gracias, Senora” (Many thanks, Madame”); and the hostess as invariably replied, “Buen provecho” (May it do you much good).” The missions in California invariably had gardens with grapes, olives, figs, pomegranates, pears, and apples, but the ranches scarcely ever had any fruit<sup>\*</sup>. When you wanted a horse to ride, you would take it to the next ranch—it might be twenty, thirty, or fifty miles—and turn it out there, and sometime or other in reclaiming his stock the owner would get it back. In this way you might travel from one end of California to the other.

With the exception of the tuna, or prickly pear, these were the only cultivated fruits I can recall to mind in California, except oranges, lemons, and limes, in a few places.

The ranch life was not confined to the country; it prevailed in the towns, too. There was not a hotel in San Francisco, or Monterey, or anywhere in California, till 1846, when the Americans took the country. The priests at the Missions were glad to entertain strangers without charge. They would give you a room in which to sleep, and perhaps a bedstead with a hide stretched across it, and over that you would spread your blankets.

At this time there was not in California any vehicle except a rude California cart; the wheels were without tires, and were made by felling an oak tree and hewing it down till it made a solid wheel nearly a foot thick on the rim and a little larger where the axle went through. The hole for the axle would be eight or nine inches in diameter, but a few years use would increase it to a foot. To make the hole, an auger, gouge, or chisel was sometimes used, but the principal tool was an ax. A small tree required but little hewing and shaping to answer for an axle. These carts were always drawn by oxen, the yoke being lashed with rawhide to the horns. To lubricate the axles they used soap (that is one thing the Mexicans could make), carrying along for the purpose a big pail of thick soap suds which was constantly put in the box or hole; but you could generally tell when a California cart was coming half a mile away by the squeaking. I have seen the families of the wealthiest people go long distances at the rate of thirty miles or more a day, visiting, in one of these clumsy two-wheeled vehicles. They had a little framework around it made of round sticks, and a bullock hide was put in for a floor or bottom. Sometimes the better class would have a little calico for curtains and cover. There was no such thing as a spoked wheel in use then. Somebody sent from Boston a wagon as a present to the priest in charge of the Mission of San Jose, but as soon as summer came the woodwork shrunk, the tires came off, and it all fell to pieces. There was no one in California to set tires. When Governor Micheltoarena was sent from Mexico to California he brought with him an ambulance, not much better than a common spring wagon, such as a marketman would now use with one horse. It had shafts, but in California at that time there was no horse broken to work in them, nor was there such a thing known as a harness; so the governor had two mounted vaqueros to pull it, their reatas being fastened to the shafts and to the pommels of their saddles. The first wagons brought into California came across the plains in 1844 with the Townsend or Stevens party. They were left in the mountains and lay buried under the snow till the following spring, when Moses Schallenberger, Elisha Stevens (who was the captain of the party), and others went up and brought some of the wagons down into the Sacramento valley. No other wagons had ever before reached California across the plains\* .

Mr. Schallenberger still lives at San Jose. He remained a considerable part of the winter alone with the wagons, which were buried under the snow. When the last two men made a desperate effort to escape over the mountains into California, Schallenberger tried to go with them, but was unable to bear the fatigue, and so returned about

fifteen miles to the cabin they had left near Donner Lake (as it was afterward called), where he remained, threatened with starvation, till one of the party returned from the Sacramento Valley and rescued him.

Elisha Stevens was from Georgia and had there worked in the gold mines. He started across the plains with the express purpose of finding gold. When he got into the Rocky Mountains, as I was told by his friend Dr. Townsend, Stevens said, "We are in a gold country." One evening (when they had camped for the night), he went into a gulch, took some gravel and washed it and got the color of gold, thus unmistakably showing, as he afterwards did in Lower California, that he had considerable knowledge of gold mining. But the strange thing is, that afterwards, when he passed up and down several times over the country between Bear and Yuba rivers, as he did with the party in the spring of 1845 to bring down their wagons, he should have seen no signs of gold where subsequently the whole country was found to contain it.

The early foreign residents of California were largely runaway sailors. Many if not most would change their names. For instance, Gilroy's ranch, where the town of Gilroy is now located, was owned by an old resident under the assumed appellation of Gilroy. Of course, vessels touching upon this coast were liable, as they were everywhere, to lose men by desertion, especially if the men were maltreated. Such things have been so common that it is not difficult to believe that those who left their vessels in early days on this then distant coast had cause for so doing. To be known as a runaway sailor was no stain upon a man's character. It was no uncommon thing, after my arrival here, for sailors to be skulking and hiding about from ranch to ranch till the vessel they had left should leave the coast. At Amador's ranch, before mentioned, on my first arrival here, I met a sailor boy, named Harrison Pierce, of eighteen or twenty years, who was concealing himself till his vessel should go to sea. He managed to escape recapture and so remained in the country. He was one of the men who went with me from Marsh's ranch to Sutter's. Californians would catch and return sailors to get the reward which, I believe, captains of vessels invariably offered. After the vessels had sailed and there was no chance of the reward, the native Californians gave the fugitives no further trouble.

At that time the only trade, foreign or domestic, was in hides, tallow and furs; but mostly hides. With few exceptions the vessels that visited the coast were from Boston, fitted out by Hooper to go

there and trade for hides<sup>\*</sup>. Occasionally vessels would put in for water or in distress. San Francisco was the principal harbor; the next was Monterey. There was an anchorage off San Luis Obispo; the next was Santa Barbara, the next San Buenaventura, then San Pedro, and lastly San Diego. The hides were generally collected and brought to San Diego and there salted, staked out to dry, and folded so that they would lie compactly in the ship, and thence were shipped to Boston. Goods were principally sold on board the vessels; there were very few stores on land; that of Thomas O. Larkin at Monterey was the principal one. The entrance of a vessel into harbor or roadstead was a signal to all the ranchers to come in their little boats and launches laden with hides to trade for goods. Thus vessels went from port to port, remaining few or many days according to the amount of trade.

When the people stopped bringing hides, a vessel would leave<sup>\*</sup>.

See Dana's "Two Years Before the Mast," for a description of the California coast at this period. My first visit to the bay of San Francisco was in the first week of January, 1842. I had never before seen salt water. The town was called Yerba Buena, for the peppermint which was plentiful around some springs, located probably a little south of the junction of Pine and Sansome streets. Afterward—in 1847—when through the immigration of 1846 across the plains, and through arrivals around Cape Horn, the place had become a village of some importance, the citizens changed the name to San Francisco, the name of the bay on which it is situated. With the exception of the Presidio and the Aduana (custom-house), all the buildings could be counted on the fingers and thumbs of one's hands. The most pretentious was a frame building erected by Jacob P. Leese, but then owned and occupied by the Hudson Bay Company, of which a Mr. Ray was agent. The others belonged to Captain Hinckley, Nathan Spear, Captain John J. Vioget, a Mr. Fuller, "Davis the carpenter:" and a few others. Monterey, when I first saw it (in 1844), had possibly 200 people, besides the troops, who numbered about 500. The principal foreigners living there then were, Thomas O. Larkin, David Spence, W. E. P. Hartnell, James Watson, Charles Walter, A. G. Toomes, R. H. Thomes, Talbot H. Green (Paul Geddes), W. Dickey, James McKinley, Milton Little, and Dr. James Stokes. The principal natives or Mexicans were Governor Micheltorena, Manuel Jimeno, Jose Castro, Juan Malarine, Francisco Arce, Don Jose Abrego. Larkin received his commission as American consul for California, at Mazatlan, in 1844. On his return to Monterey, the woman who washed his clothes took the smallpox. Larkin's whole family had it; it spread, and the number of deaths was fearful, amounting to over eighty. When I first saw Santa Barbara, February 5, 1845, the old Mission buildings were the principal ones. The town—probably half a mile to the east—contained possibly one hundred persons, among whom I recall Captain Wilson, Dr. Nicholas Den, Captain Scott, Mr. Sparks, Nibever; and of natives, Pablo De la Guerra, Carlos Antonio, Carillo, and others. Los Angeles I first saw in March, 1845. It then had probably two hundred and fifty people, of whom I recall Don Abel Stearns, John Temple, Captain Alexander Bell, William Wolfskill, Lemuel Carpenter, David W. Alexander; also of Mexicans, Pio Pico (governor), Don Juan Bandini, and others. On ranches in the vicinity lived William Workman, B. D. Wilson, and John Roland. At San Pedro, Captain Johnson. At Rancho Chino, Isaac Williams. At San Juan Capistrano, Don Juon Foster. I went to San Diego, July, 1846, with Fremont's battalion, on the sloop of war "Cyane," Captain Dupont (afterwards Admiral). The population was about one hundred, among whom I recall Captain Henry D. Fitch, Don Miguel de Pedorena, Don Santiago

Arguello, the Bandini family, J. M. Estudillo, and others. Subsequently, after the revolt of September, 1846, San Diego was the point from which, in January, 1847, the final conquest of California was made.

I have said that there was no regular physician in California. Later, in 1843, in a company that came from Oregon, was one Joe Meeks, a noted character in the Rocky Mountains. On the way he said, "Boys, when I get down to California among the Greasers I am going to palm myself off as a doctor"; and from that time they dubbed him Dr. Meeks. He could neither read nor write. As soon as the Californians heard of his arrival at Monterey they began to come to him with their different ailments. His first professional service was to a boy who had a toe cut off. Meeks, happening to be near, stuck the toe on, binding it in a poultice of mud, and it grew on again. The new governor, Micheltorena, employed him as surgeon. Meeks had a way of looking and acting very wise, and of being reticent when people talked about things which he did not understand. One day he went into a little shop kept by a man known as Dr. Stokes, who had been a kind of hospital steward on board ship, and who had brought ashore one of those little medicine chests that were usually taken to sea, with apothecary scales, and a pamphlet giving a short synopsis of diseases and a table of weights and medicines, so that almost anybody could administer relief to sick sailors. Meeks went to him and said, "Doctor, I want you to put me up some powders." So Stokes went behind his table and got out his scales and medicines, and asked, "What kind of powders?" "Just common powders—patient not very sick." "If you will tell me what kind of powders, Dr. Meeks—" "Oh, just common powders." That is all he would say. Dr. Stokes told about town that Meeks knew nothing about medicine, but people thought that perhaps Meeks had given the prescription in Latin and that Dr. Stokes could not read it. But Meeks' reign was to have an end. An American man-of-war came into the harbor. Thomas O. Larkin was then the United States consul at Monterey, and the commander and all his officers went up to Larkin's store, among them the surgeon, who was introduced to Dr. Meeks. The conversation turning upon the diseases incident to the country, Meeks became reticent, saying merely that he was going out of practice and intended to leave the country, because he could not get medicines. The surgeon expressed much sympathy and said, Mr. Meeks, if you will make me out a list I will very cheerfully divide with you such medicines as I can spare." Meeks did not know the names of three kinds of medicine, and tried evasion, but the surgeon cornered him and put the question so direct that he had to answer. He asked him what medicine he needed most. Finally

Meeks said he wanted some “draps,” and that was all that could be got out of him. When the story came out, his career as a doctor was at an end, and he soon after left the country.

In 1841 there was likewise no lawyer in California. In 1843 a lawyer named Hastings arrived via Oregon. He was an ambitious man, and desired to wrest the country from Mexico and make it a republic. He disclosed his plan to a man, who revealed it to me. His scheme was to go down to Mexico and make friends of the Mexican authorities, if possible get a grant of land, and then go into Texas, consult President Houston, and go East and write a book, praising the country to the skies, which he did, with little regard to accuracy. His object was to start a large immigration, and in this he succeeded. The book was published in 1845, and undoubtedly largely induced what was called the “great immigration” of 1846 across the plains, consisting of about six hundred. Hastings returned to California in the autumn of 1845, preparatory to taking steps to declare the country independent and to establish a republic and make himself president. In 1846 he went back to meet the immigration and to perfect his plans so that the emigrants would know exactly where to go and what to do. But in 1846 the Mexican war intervened, and while Hastings was gone to meet the immigration California was taken possession of by the United States. These doubtless were the first plans ever conceived for the independence of California. Hastings knew there were not enough Americans and foreigners yet in California to do anything. He labored hard to get money to publish his book, and went about lecturing on temperance in Ohio, where he became intimate with a fellow by the name of McDonald, who was acting the Methodist preacher and pretending, with considerable success, to raise funds for missionary purposes. At last they separated, McDonald preceding Hastings to San Francisco, where he became bartender for a man named Vioget, who owned a saloon and a billiard table—the first, I think, on the Pacific Coast. Hastings returned later, and, reaching San Francisco in a cold rain, went up to Vioget's and called for brandy. He poured out a glassful and was about to drink it, when McDonald, recognizing him, leaned over the bar, extended his hand, and said, “My good temperance friend, how are you?” Hastings, in great surprise, looked him in the eyes, recognized him, and said, “My dear Methodist brother, how do you do?”



It is not generally known that in 1841—the year I reached California—gold was discovered in what is now a part of Los Angeles county. The yield was not rich; indeed, it was so small that it made no stir. The discoverer was an old Canadian Frenchman by the name of Baptiste Ruelle, who had been a trapper with the Hudson Bay Company, and, as was not an infrequent case with trappers, had drifted down into New Mexico, where he had worked in placer mines. The mines discovered by Ruelle in California attracted a few New Mexicans, by whom they were worked for several years. But as they proved too poor, Ruelle himself came up into the Sacramento Valley, five hundred miles away, and engaged to work for Sutter when I was in Sutter's service<sup>\*</sup>. Now it so happened that almost every year a party of a dozen men or more would come from or return to Oregon. Of such parties, some—perhaps most of them—would be Canadian French, who had trapped all over the country, and these were generally the guides. In 1843 it was known to everyone that such a party was getting ready to go to Oregon. Baptiste Ruelle had been in Sutter's employ several months, when one day he came to Sutter, showed him a few small particles of gold, and said he had found them on the American River, and he wanted to go far into the mountains on that stream to prospect for gold. For this purpose he desired two mules loaded with provisions, and he selected two notably stupid Indian boys whom he wanted to go into the mountains with him, saying he would have no others. Of course, he did not get the outfit. Sutter and I talked about it and queried, What does he want with so much provision—the American River being only a mile and the mountains only twenty miles distant? And why does he want those two stupid boys, since he might be attacked by the Indians? Our conclusion was that he really wanted the outfit so that he could join the party and go to Oregon and remain. Such I believe was Ruelle's intention; though in 1848, after James W. Marshall had discovered the gold at Coloma, Ruelle, who was one of the first to go there and mine, still protested that he had discovered gold on the American River in 1843. The only thing that I can recall to lend the least plausibility to Ruelle's pretensions would be that, so far as I know, he never, after that one time, manifested any desire to go to Oregon, and remained in California till he died. But I should add, neither did he ever show any longing again to go into the mountains to look for gold during the subsequent years he remained with Sutter, even to the time of Marshall's discovery.

New Mexican miners invariably carried their gold (which was generally small, and small in quantity as well) in a large quill—that of a vulture or turkey buzzard. Sometimes these quills would hold three or four ounces, and, being translucent. They were graduated so as to see at any time the quantity in them. The gold was kept in by a stopper. Ruelle had such a quill, which appeared to have been carried for years.

Early in the spring of 1844, a Mexican working under me at the Hock Farm for Sutter, came to me and told me there was gold in the Sierra Nevada. His name was Pablo Gutierrez. The discovery by Marshall, it will be remembered, was in January, 1848. Pablo told me this at a time when I was calling him to account because he had absented himself the day before without permission. I was giving him a lecture in Spanish, which I could speak quite well in those days. Like many Mexicans, he had an Indian wife; some time before, he had been in the mountains and had bought a squaw. She had run away from him and he had gone to find and bring her back. And it was while he was on this trip, he said, that he had seen signs of gold. After my lecture, he said, “Senor, I have made an important discovery; there surely is gold on Bear River in the mountains.” This was in March, 1844. A few days afterward I arranged to go with him up on Bear River. We went five or six miles into the mountains, when he showed me the signs and the place where he thought the gold was. “Well,” I said, “can you not find some?” No, he said, because he must have a “batea.” He talked so much about the “batea” that I concluded it must be a complicated machine. “Can’t Mr. Keiser, our saddle-tree maker, make the batea?” I asked. “Oh, no.” I did not then know that a batea is nothing more nor less than a wooden bowl which the Mexicans use for washing gold. I said, “Pablo, where can you get it?” He said, “Down in Mexico.” I said, “I will help pay your expenses if you will go down and get one,” which he promised to do. I said, “Pablo, say nothing to anybody else about this gold discovery, and we will get the batea and find the gold.” As time passed I was afraid to let him go to Mexico, lest when he got among his relatives he might be induced to stay and not come back, so I made a suggestion to him. I said, “Pablo, let us save our earnings and get on a vessel and go around to Boston, and there get the batea; I can interpret for you, and the Yankees are very ingenious and can make anything.” The idea pleased him, and he promised to go as soon as we could save enough to pay our expenses. He was to keep it a secret, and I believe he faithfully kept his promise. It would have taken us a year or two to get money enough to go. In those days there were every year four or five arrivals, sometimes six, of vessels laden with goods from Boston to trade for hides in California. These vessels brought around all classes of goods needed by the

Mexican people. It would have required about six months each way, five months being a quick passage. But, as will be seen, our plans were interrupted. In the autumn of that year, 1844, a revolt took place. The native chiefs of California, Jose Castro and ex-Governor Alvarado, succeeded in raising an insurrection against the Mexican governor, Micheltorena, to expel him from the country. They accused him of being friendly to Americans and of giving them too much land. The truth was, he had simply shown impartiality. When Americans had been here long enough, had conducted themselves properly, and had complied with the colonization Laws of Mexico, he had given them lands as readily as to native-born citizens. He was a fair-minded man and an intelligent and good governor, and wished to develop the country. His friendship for Americans was a mere pretext; for his predecessor, Alvarado, and his successor, Pio Pico, also granted lands freely to foreigners, and among them to Americans. The real cause of the insurrection against Micheltorena, however, was that the native chiefs had become hungry to get hold again of the revenues. The feeling against Americans was easily aroused and became their main excuse. The English and French influence, so far as felt, evidently leaned toward the side of the Californians. It was not open, but it was felt, and not a few expressed the hope that England or France would some day seize and hold California. I believe the Gachupines—natives of Spain, of whom there were a few—did not participate in the feeling against the Americans, though few did much, if anything, to allay it. In October, Sutter went from Sacramento to Monterey, the capital, to see the governor. I went with him. On our way thither, at San Jose, we heard the first mutterings of the insurrection. We hastened to Monterey, and were the first to communicate the fact to the governor. Sutter, alarmed, took the first opportunity to get away by water. There were in those days no mail routes, no public conveyances of any kind, no regular line of travel, no public highways. But a vessel happened to touch at Monterey, and Sutter took passage to the bay of San Francisco, and thence by his own launch reached home. In a few days the first blow was struck, the insurgents taking all the horses belonging to the governor at Monterey, setting the governor and all his troops on foot. He raised a few horse as best he could and pursued them, but could not overtake them on foot. However, I understood that a sort of parley took place at or near San Jose, but no battle, surrender, or settlement. Meanwhile, having started to return by land to Sutter's Fort, two hundred miles distant, I met the governor returning to Monterey. He stopped his forces and talked with me half an hour and confided to me his plans. He desired

me to beg the Americans to be loyal to Mexico; to assure them that he was their friend, and in due time would give them all the lands to which they were entitled. He sent particularly friendly word to Sutter. Then I went on to the Mission of San Jose and there fell in with the insurgents, who had made that place their headquarters; I staid all night, and the leaders, Castro and Alvarado, treated me like a prince. The two insurgents protested their friendship for the Americans, and sent a request to Sutter to support them. On my arrival at the fort the situation was fully considered, and all, with a single exception, concluded to support Micheltorena. He had been our friend; he had granted us land; he promised, and we felt that we could rely upon his continued friendship; and we felt, indeed, we knew, we could not repose the same confidence in the native Californians. This man Pablo Gutierrez, who had told me about the gold in the Sierra Nevada, was a native of Sinaloa in Mexico, and sympathized with the Mexican governor and with us. Sutter sent him with despatches to the governor, stating that we were organizing and preparing to join him. Pablo returned, and was sent again to tell the governor that we were on the march to join him at Monterey. This time he was taken prisoner with our despatches and was hanged to a tree, somewhere near the present town of Gilroy. That of course put an end to our gold discovery; otherwise Pablo Gutierrez might have been the discoverer instead of Marshall<sup>\*</sup>

The insurrection ended in the capitulation—I might call it expulsion-of Micheltorena. The causes which led to this result were various, some of them infamous. Pio Pico, being the oldest member of the Departmental Assembly, became governor, and Castro commander-in-chief of the military. They reigned but one year, and then came the Mexican war. Castro was made governor of Lower California, and died there. Pio Pico was not a vindictive man; he was a mild governor, and still lives at Los Angeles.

But I still had it in my mind to try to find gold; so early in the spring of 1845 I made it a point to visit the mines in the south discovered by Ruelle in 1841. They were in the mountains about twenty miles north or northeast of the Mission of San Fernando, or say fifty miles from Los Angeles. I wanted to see the Mexicans working there, and to gain what knowledge I could of gold digging. Dr. John Townsend went with me. Pablo's confidence that there was gold on Bear River was fresh in my mind; and I hoped the same year to find time to return there and explore, and if possible find gold in the Sierra Nevada. But I had no time that busy year to carry out my purpose. The Mexicans, slow and inefficient manner of working the mine was most discouraging. When I returned to Sutter's Fort the same spring, Sutter desired me to engage with him for a year as bookkeeper, which

meant his general business man as well. His financial matters being in a bad way, I consented. I had a great deal to do besides keeping the books. Among other undertakings we sent men southeast in the Sierra Nevada about forty miles from the fort to saw lumber with a whipsaw. Two men would saw of good lumber about one hundred or one hundred and twenty-five feet a day. Early in June I framed an excuse to go into the mountains to give the men some special directions about lumber needed at the fort. The day was one of the hottest I had ever experienced. No place looked favorable for a gold discovery. I even attempted to descend into a deep gorge through which meandered a small stream, but gave it up on account of the brush and the heat. My search was fruitless. The place where Marshall discovered gold in 1848 was about forty miles to the north of the sawpits at this place. The next spring, 1849, I joined a party to go to the mines on and south of the Consumne and Mokelumne rivers. The first day we reached a trading post—Digg's, I think, was the name. Several traders had there pitched their tents to sell goods. One of them was Tom Fallon, whom I knew. This post was within a few miles of where Sutter's men sawed the lumber in 1845. I asked Fallon if he had ever seen the old saw-pits where Sicard and Dupas had worked in 1845. He said he had, and knew the place well. Then I told him I had attempted that year to descend into the deep gorge to the south of it to look for gold.

“My stars!” he said. “Why, that gulch down there was one of the richest placers that have ever been found in this country”; and he told me of men who had taken out a pint cupful of nuggets before breakfast.

Fremont's first visit to California was in the month of March, 1844. He came via eastern Oregon, traveling south and passing east of the Sierra Nevada, and crossed the chain about opposite the bay of San Francisco, at the head of the American River, and descended into the Sacramento Valley to Sutter's Fort. It was there I first met him. He staid but a short time, three or four weeks perhaps, to refit with fresh mules and horses and such provisions as he could obtain, and then set out on his return to the United States. Coloma, where Marshall afterward discovered gold, was on one of the branches of the American River. Fremont probably came down that very stream. How strange that he and his scientific corps did not discover signs of gold, as Commodore Wilkes' party had done when coming overland from Oregon in 1841! One morning at the breakfast table at Sutter's,

Fremont was urged to remain a while and go to the coast, and among other things which it would be of interest for him to see was mentioned a very large redwood tree (“*Sequoia sempervirens*”) near Santa Cruz, or rather a cluster of trees, forming apparently a single trunk, which was said to be seventy-two feet in circumference. I then told Fremont of the big tree I had seen in the Sierra Nevada in October, 1841, which I afterwards verified to be one of the fallen big trees of the Calaveras Grove. I therefore believe myself to have been the first white man to see the mammoth trees of California. The Sequoias are found nowhere except in California. The redwood that I speak of is the “*Sequoia sempervirens*,” and is confined to the sea-coast and the west side of the Coast Range Mountains. The “*Sequoia gigantea*,” or mammoth tree, is found only on the western slope of the Sierra Nevada—nowhere farther north than latitude 38 degrees 30 minutes.

Sutter's Fort was an important point from the very beginning of the colony. The building of the fort and all subsequent immigrations added, to its importance, for that was the first point of destination to those who came by way of Oregon or direct across the plains. The fort was begun in 1842 and finished in 1844. There was no town till after the gold discovery in 1848, when it became the bustling, buzzing center for merchants, traders, miners, etc., and every available room was in demand. In 1849 Sacramento City was laid off on the river two miles west of the fort, and the town grew up there at once into a city. The first town was laid off by Hastings and myself in the month of January, 1846, about three or four miles below the mouth of the American River, and called Sutterville. But first the Mexican war, then the lull which always follows excitement, and then the rush and roar of the gold discovery, prevented its building up, till it was too late. Attempts were several times made to revive Sutterville, but Sacramento City had become too strong to be removed. Sutter always called his colony and fort “New Helvetia,” in spite of which the name mostly used by others, before the Mexican war, was Sutter's Fort, or Sacramento, and later Sacramento altogether.

Sutter's many enterprises continued to create a growing demand for lumber. Every year, and sometimes more than once, he sent parties into the mountains to explore for an available site to build a sawmill on the Sacramento River or some of its tributaries, by which the lumber could be rafted down to the fort. There was no want of timber or of water power in the mountains, but the canyon features of the streams rendered rafting impracticable. The year after the war (1847) Sutter's

needs for lumber were even greater than ever, although his embarrassments had increased and his ability to undertake new enterprises became less and less. Yet, never discouraged, nothing daunted, another hunt must be made for a sawmill site. This time Marshall happened to be the man chosen by Sutter to search the mountains. He was gone about a month and returned with a most favorable report.

James W. Marshall went across the plains to Oregon in 1844, and thence came to California the next year. He was a wheelwright by trade, but, being very ingenious, he could turn his hand to almost anything. So he acted as carpenter for Sutter, and did many other things, among which I may mention making wheels for spinning wool, and looms, reeds, and shuttles for weaving yarn into coarse blankets for the Indians, who did the carding, spinning, weaving, and all other labor. In 1846 Marshall went through the war to its close as a private. Besides his ingenuity as a mechanic, he had most singular traits. Almost everyone pronounced him half crazy or hare-brained. He was certainly eccentric, and perhaps somewhat flighty. His insanity, however, if he had any, was of a harmless kind; he was neither vicious nor quarrelsome. He had great, almost overweening confidence in his ability to do anything as a mechanic. I wrote the contract between Sutter and him to build the mill. Sutter was to furnish the means; Marshall was to build and run the mill, and have a share of the lumber for his compensation. His idea was to haul the lumber part way and raft it down the American River to Sacramento, and thence, his part of it, down the Sacramento River and through Suisun and San Pablo Bays to San Francisco for a market. Marshall's mind, in some respects at least, must have been unbalanced. It is hard to conceive how any sane man could have been so wide of the mark, or how anyone could have selected such a site for a sawmill under the circumstances. Surely no other man than Marshall ever entertained so wild a scheme as that of rafting sawed lumber down the canyons of the American River, and no other man than Sutter would have been so confiding and credulous as to patronize him. It is proper to say that, under great difficulties, enhanced by winter rains, Marshall succeeded in building the mill—a very good one, too, of the kind. It had improvements which I had never seen in sawmills, and I had had considerable experience in Ohio. But the mill would not run because the wheel was placed too low. It was an old-fashioned flutter wheel that propelled an upright saw. The gravelly bar below the mill

backed the water up and submerged and stopped the wheel. The remedy was to dig a channel or tail-race through the bar below to conduct away the water. The wild Indians of the mountains were employed to do the digging. Once through the bar there would be plenty of fall. The digging was hard and took some weeks. As soon as the water began to run through the tail-race, the wheel was blocked, the gate raised, and the water permitted to gush through all night. It was Marshall's custom to examine the race while the water was running through in the morning, so as to direct the Indians where to deepen it, and then shut off the water for them to work during the day. The water was clear as crystal, and the current was swift enough to sweep away the sand and lighter materials, Marshall made these examinations early in the morning while the Indians were getting their breakfast. It was on one of these occasions, in the clear shallow water, that he saw something bright and yellow. He picked it up—it was a piece of gold! The world has seen and felt the result. The mill sawed little or no lumber; as a lumber enterprise the project was a failure, but as a gold discovery, it was a grand success.

There was no excitement at first, nor for three or four months—because the mine was not known to be rich, or to exist anywhere except at the sawmill, or to be available to anyone except Sutter, to whom everyone conceded that it belonged. Time does not permit me to relate how I carried the news of the discovery to San Francisco; how the same year I discovered gold on Feather River and worked it; how I made the first weights and scales to weigh the first gold for Sam Brannan; how the richness of the mines became known by the Mormons who were employed by Sutter to work at the sawmill, working about on Sundays and finding it in the crevices along the stream and taking it to Brannan's store at the fort, and how Brannan kept the gold a secret as long as he could till the excitement burst out all at once like wildfire.

Among the notable arrivals at Sutter's Fort should be mentioned that of Castro and Castillero, in the fall of 1845. The latter had been before in California, sent, as he had been this time, as a peace commissioner from Mexico. Castro was so jealous that it was almost impossible for Sutter to have anything like a private interview with him. Sutter, however, was given to understand that, as he had stood friendly to Governor Micheltorena on the side of Mexico in the late troubles, he might rely on the friendship of Mexico, to which he was enjoined to continue faithful in all emergencies. Within



a week Castillero was shown at San Jose a singular heavy reddish rock, which had long been known to the Indians, who rubbed it on their hands and faces to paint them. The Californians had often tried to smelt this rock in a blacksmith's fire, thinking it to be silver or some other precious metal. But Castillero, who was an intelligent man and a native of Spain, at once recognized it as quicksilver, and noted its resemblance to the cinnabar in the mines of Almaden. A company was immediately formed to work it, of which Castillero, Castro, Alexander Forbes, and others were members. The discovery of quicksilver at this time seems providential in view of its absolute necessity to supplement the imminent discovery of gold, which stirred and waked into new life the industries of the world.

It is a question whether the United States could have stood the shock of the great rebellion of 1861 had the California gold discovery not been made. Bankers and business men of New York in 1864 did not hesitate to admit that but for the gold of California, which monthly poured its five or six millions into that financial center, the bottom would have dropped out of everything. These timely arrivals so strengthened the nerves of trade and stimulated business as to enable the Government to sell its bonds at a time when its credit was its life-blood and the main reliance by which to feed, clothe and maintain its armies. Once our bonds went down to thirty-eight cents on the dollar. California gold averted a total collapse, and enabled a preserved Union to come forth from the great conflict with only four billions of debt instead of a hundred billions. The hand of Providence so plainly seen in the discovery of gold is no less manifest in the time chosen for its accomplishment.

I must reserve for itself in a concluding paper my personal recollections of Fremont's second visit to California in 1845-46, which I have purposely wholly omitted here. It was most important, resulting as it did in the acquisition of that territory by the United States.

JOHN BIDWELL.

## **FREMONT IN THE CONQUEST OF CALIFORNIA**

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By John Bidwell (Pioneer of '41).

IN the autumn of 1845 Fremont came on his second exploring expedition to California. This time he divided his party east of the Sierra Nevada and sent the greater portion to come in through a gap supposed to exist farther to the south, while he followed substantially what is now the emigrant road, or Truckee route, and came direct to Sutter's Fort with about eight or nine men. At that time I was in charge of Sutter's Fort and of Sutter's business, he being absent at the bay of San Francisco. Fremont camped on the American River about three miles above the fort. The first notice of his return to California was his sudden appearance, with Kit Carson, at the fort. He at once made known to me his wants, namely, sixteen mules, six pack-saddles, some flour and other provisions, and the use of a blacksmith's shop to shoe the mules, to enable him to go in haste to meet the others of his party. I told him precisely what could and could not be furnished—that we had no mules, but could let him have horses, and could make the pack-saddles; that he might have the use of a blacksmith's shop, but we were entirely out of coal. He became reticent, and, saying something in a low tone to Kit Carson, rose and left without saying good-day, and returned to his camp. As they mounted their horses to leave, Fremont was heard to say that I was unwilling to accommodate him, which greatly pained me; for, of course, we were always glad of the arrival of Americans, and especially of one in authority. Besides, I knew that Captain Sutter would do anything in his power for Fremont. So I took with me Dr. Gildea, a recent arrival from St. Louis, across the plains, and hastened to Fremont's camp and told him what had been reported to me. He stated, in a very formal manner, that he was the officer of one government and Sutter the officer of another; that difficulties existed between those governments; and hence his inference that I, representing Sutter, was not willing to accommodate him. He reminded me that on his first arrival here, in 1844, Sutter had sent out and in half an hour had brought him all the mules he wanted. I protested my willingness to do anything in my power, but was obliged to plead inability to do more than stated, telling him that in 1844 Sutter was in far better circumstances; that on that occasion a man (Peter Lassen) had just arrived with a hundred mules, of which Sutter had bought what Fremont needed. But he had not been able to pay for them, because Fremont's drafts had to go East before Sutter could realize on them the money which had been promised to Lassen. In a few days Sutter returned, but could

not furnish anything more than I had offered. Then Fremont concluded to go down to the bay and get supplies. He went with his little party of eight or nine men, including Kit Carson, but without success; so he sent the men back to Sutter's Fort to go, as best they could, to find the main party. Meanwhile he himself had made his way Monterey to see the American consul, Thomas O. Larkin. After several weeks Fremont and his entire party became united in the San Joaquin Valley<sup>\*</sup>. While at Monterey he had obtained permission from Jose Castro, the commandant-general, to winter in the San Joaquin Valley, away from the settlements, where the men would not be likely to annoy the people. He had in all in the exploring party about sixty well-armed men. He also had permission to extend his explorations in the spring as far south as the Colorado River.

See the preceding papers by the present writer: "The First Emigrant Train to California" and "Life in California before the Gold Discovery," in *The Century* for November and December, 1890, respectively.—Editor. His men in the mountains had suffered considerably. Fremont had given positive orders for them to wait at a certain gap or low divide till he should meet them with supplies, but the place could not be found. The men got out of provisions and bought from the Indians. The kind they most relished was a sort of brown meal, which was rich and spicy, and came so much into favor that they wanted no other. After a while the Indians became careless in the preparation of this wonderful meal, when it was discovered to be full of the broken wings and legs of grasshoppers! It was simply dried grasshoppers pounded into a meal. The men said it was rich and would stick to the mouth like gingerbread, and that they were becoming sleek and fat. But after the discovery they lost their appetites. How hard it is sometimes to overcome prejudice!

Accordingly, early in the spring (1846) Fremont started south with his party. When Castro gave him permission to explore towards the Colorado River he no doubt supposed he would go south or southeast from where he was camped in the San Joaquin Valley, and on through the Tejon Pass and the Mojave Desert; but, instead, Fremont with his sixty armed men started to go west and southwest through the most thickly settled parts of California, namely, the Santa Clara, Pajaro, and Salinas Valleys. As he was approaching the last valley, Castro sent an official order by an officer warning Fremont that he must leave, as his action was illegal. The order was delivered March 5th. Fremont took possession of an eminence called Gavilan Peak, and continued to fortify himself for several days, perhaps a week or more, Castro meantime remaining in sight and evidently increasing his force day by day. Fremont, enraged against Castro, finally abandoned his position in the night of March 9th, and, gaining the San Joaquin Valley, made his way rapidly northward up the Sacramento Valley and into Oregon, leaving Sutter's about March 24th.

A little over four weeks after Fremont left I happened to be fishing four or five miles down the river, having then left Sutter's service with the view of trying to put up two or three hundred barrels of salmon, thinking the venture would be profitable. An officer of the United States, Lieutenant A. H. Gillespie, of the marines, bearing messages to the explorer, came up the river in a small boat and at once inquired about Fremont. I told him he had gone to Oregon. Said he: "I want to overhaul him. How far is it to the fort?" And receiving my reply, he pushed rapidly on. He overtook Fremont near the Oregon line. Fremont, still indignant against Castro, who had compelled him to abandon his explorations south, returned at once to California. It so happened that Castro had sent Lieutenant Arce to the north side of the bay of San Francisco to collect scattered Government horses. Arce had secured about one hundred and fifty and was taking them to the south side of the bay, via Sutter's Fort and the San Joaquin Valley. This was the only way to transfer cattle and horses from one side of the bay to the other, except at the Straits of Carquinez by the slow processes of swimming one at a time, or of taking one or two, tied by all four feet, in a small boat or launch. Arce, with the horses and seven or eight soldiers, arrived at Sutter's Fort, staid overnight as the guest of Sutter, and went on his way to the Cosumne River (about sixteen or eighteen miles) and camped for the night.

Fremont's hasty departure for Oregon and Gillespie's pursuit of him had been the occasion of many surmises. Fremont's sudden return excited increased curiosity. People flocked to his camp; some were settlers, some hunters; some were good men, and some about as rough specimens of humanity as it would be possible to find anywhere. Fremont, hearing that the horses were passing, sent a party of these promiscuous people and captured them. This, of course, was done before he had orders or any positive news that war had been declared. When Gillespie left the United States, as the bearer of a despatch to Larkin and Fremont and of letters to the latter, war had not been

#### SONOMA FORT

declared. The letters included one from Senator Benton, who had the confidence and knew the purposes of the Administration. As Gillespie had to make his way through Mexico, he committed the despatch and his orders to memory, destroyed them, and rewrote them on the vessel which took him, via the Sandwich Islands, to the coast of California. There had been no later arrival, and

therefore no later despatches to Fremont were possible. Though Fremont was reticent, whatever he did was supposed to be done with the sanction of the United States. Thus, without giving the least notice even to Sutter, the great friend of Americans, or to Americans in general, scattered and exposed as they were all over California, he precipitated the war.

Sutter was always outspoken in his wish that some day California should belong to the United States; but when he heard that the horses had been taken from Arce (who made no resistance, but with his men and with insulting messages was permitted to go on his way to Castro at Santa Clara), he expressed surprise that Captain Fremont had committed such an act without his knowledge. What Sutter had said was reported to Fremont, perhaps with some exaggeration.

As soon as the horses arrived at Fremont's camp, the same party—about twenty-five in number—were sent to Sonoma. By this party General Vallejo, the most prominent Californian north of the bay, his brother Salvador, his brother-in-law Jacob P. Leese, and Victor Prudon were surprised at night, taken prisoners, and conveyed to Fremont's camp, over eighty miles distant by the traveled route on the Sacramento River. The prisoners were sent to Sutter's Fort, Fremont arriving at the same time. Then Sutter and Fremont met, face to face, for the first time since Fremont, a month before, had passed on his way towards Oregon. I do not know what words passed between them; I was near, but did not hear. This, however, I know: that Sutter had become elated, as all Americans were, with the idea that what Fremont was doing meant California for the United States, But in a few minutes Sutter came to me greatly excited, with tears in his eyes, and said that Fremont had told him he was a Mexican, and that if he did not like what he (Fremont) was doing he would set him across the San Joaquin River and he could go and join the Mexicans. But, this flurry over, Sutter was soon himself again, and resumed his normal attitude of friendship towards Fremont, because he thought him to be acting in accordance with instructions from Washington. For want of a suitable prison, the prisoners were placed in Sutter's parlor,—a large room in the southwest corner of the second story of the two-story adobe house<sup>\*</sup>,—which had but one door, and this was now guarded by a sentinel. Fremont gave me special directions about the safety of the prisoners, and I understood him to put them under my special charge. Some of Fremont's men remained at the fort.

This adobe house is still standing, within the limits of the city of Sacramento, and is the only relic left of Sutter's Fort. (See sketch on page 169, *The Century* for December, 1890.) It was built in 1841—the first then, the last now.

Among the men who remained to hold Sonoma was William B. Ide, who assumed to be in command. In some way (perhaps through an unsatisfactory interview with Fremont which he had before the move on Sonoma), Ide got the notion that Fremont's hand in these events was uncertain, and that Americans ought to strike for an independent republic. To this end nearly every day he wrote something in the form of a proclamation and posted it on the old Mexican flagstaff. Another man left at Sonoma was William L. Todd<sup>\*</sup>, who painted, on a piece of brown cotton, a yard and a half or so in length, with old red or brown paint that he happened to find, what he intended to be a representation of a grizzly bear. This was raised to the top of the staff, some seventy feet from the ground. Native Californians looking up at it were heard to say “Coche,” the common name among them for pig or shoat.

More than thirty years afterwards I chanced to meet Todd on the train coming up the Sacramento Valley. He had not greatly changed, but appeared considerably broken in health. He informed me that Mrs. Lincoln was his own aunt, and that he had been brought up in the family of Abraham Lincoln.

The party at Sonoma now received some accessions from Americans and other foreigners living on the north side of the bay. Rumors began to reach them of an uprising on the part of the native Californians, which indeed began under Joaquin de la Torre. Henry L. Ford and other Americans to the number of thirty met De la Torre—whose force was said to number from forty to eighty—near the Petaluma Ranch, and four or five of the Californians were said to have been killed or wounded. The repulse of the Californians seems to have been complete, though reports continued alarming, and a man sent from Sonoma to Russian River for powder was killed. A messenger was sent in haste to Sacramento for Fremont, who hurried to Sonoma with nearly all his exploring party and scoured the country far and near, but found no enemy.

I tried to make the prisoners at Sacramento as comfortable as possible, assisting to see that their meals were regularly and properly brought, and sometimes I would sit by while they were eating. One day E. M. Kern, artist to Fremont's exploring expedition, called me out and said it was Fremont's orders that no one was to go in or speak to the prisoners. I told him they were in my

charge, and that he had nothing to say about them. He asserted that they were in his charge, and finally convinced me that he had been made an equal, if not the principal, custodian. I then told him that, as both of us were not needed, I would go over and join Fremont at Sonoma. Just at this time Lieutenant Washington A. Bartlett of the United States Navy arrived from the bay, inquiring for Fremont. The taking of the horses from Arce, the capture of the prisoners, and the occupation of Sonoma, had been heard of, and he was sent to learn what it meant. So he went over to Sonoma with me.

On our arrival Fremont was still absent trying to find the enemy, but that evening he returned. The Bear Flag was still flying, and had been for a week or more. The American flag was nowhere displayed. There was much doubt about the situation. Fremont gave us to understand that we must organize. Lieutenant Gillespie seemed to be his confidential adviser and spokesman, and said that a meeting would be held the next day at which Fremont would make an address. He also said that it would be necessary to have some plan of organization ready to report to the meeting; and that P. B. Reading, W. B. Ide. and myself were requested to act as a committee to report such a plan. We could learn nothing from Fremont or Gillespie to the effect that the United States had anything to do with Fremont's present movements.

In past years rumors of threats against Americans in California had been rather frequent, several times causing them and other foreigners to hasten in the night from all places within one or two hundred miles to Sutter's Fort, sometimes remaining a week or two, drilling and preparing to resist attack. The first scare of this kind occurred in 1841, when Sutter became somewhat alarmed: the last, in 1845. But in every case such rumors had proved to be groundless, so that Americans had ceased to have apprehensions, especially in the presence of such an accessible refuge as Sutter's Fort. And now, in 1846, after so many accessions by immigration, we felt entirely secure, even without the presence of a United States officer and his exploring force of sixty men,

General M. G. Vallejo

until we found ourselves suddenly plunged into a war. But hostilities having been begun, bringing danger where none before existed, it now became imperative to organize. It was in everyone's

mouth (and I think must have come from Fremont) that the war was begun in defense of American settlers! This was simply a pretense to justify the premature beginning of the war, which henceforth was to be carried on in the name of the United States<sup>\*</sup> .

So much has been said and written about the "Bear Flag" that some may conclude it was something of importance. It was not so regarded at the time: it was never adopted at any meeting or by any agreement; it was, I think, never even noticed, perhaps never seen, by Fremont when it was flying. The naked old Mexican flagstaff at Sonoma suggested that something should be put on it. Todd had painted it, and others had helped to put it up, for mere pastime. It had no importance to begin with, none whatever when the Stars and Stripes went up, and never would have been thought of again had not an officer of the navy seen it in Sonoma and written a letter about it.

Under these circumstances on the Fourth of July our committee met. We soon found that we could not agree. Ide wished to paste together his long proclamations on the flagstaff, and make them our report. Reading wrote something much shorter, which I thought still too long. I proposed for our report simply this: "The undersigned hereby agree to organize for the purpose of gaining and maintaining the independence of California." Unable to agree upon a report, we decided to submit what we had written to Lieutenant Gillespie, without our names, and ask him to choose. He chose mine. The meeting took place, but Fremont's remarks gave us no light upon any phase of the situation. He neither averred nor denied that he was acting under orders from the United States Government. Some men had been guilty of misconduct in an Indian village, and he reprimanded them—said he wanted nothing to do with the movement unless the men would conduct themselves properly. Gillespie made some remarks, presented the report, and all present signed it.

The organization took place forthwith, by the formation of three companies. The captains elected were Henry L. Ford, Granville P. Swift, and Samuel J. Hensley. Thus organized, we marched into the Sacramento Valley. The men who had not been at Sonoma signed the report at the camp above Sutter's Fort, except a few who soon after signed it at the Mokelumne River on our march to Monterey. This was, so far as I know, the last seen or heard of that document, for Commodore Sloat had raised the American flag at Monterey before our arrival, and soon it waved in all places in California where American influence prevailed.



As yet Fremont had received advices from Washington no later than those brought by Gillespie. His object in going to Monterey must have been to confer with Commodore Sloat and get positive information about the war with Mexico, which proved to be a reality, as we learned even before our arrival there. There was now no longer uncertainty; all were glad. It was a glorious sight to see the Stars and Stripes as we marched into Monterey. Here we found Commodore Sloat. The same evening, or the next, Commodore Stockton, a chivalrous and dashing officer, arrived around Cape Horn to supersede him. Plans were immediately laid to conquer California. A California Battalion was to be organized, and Fremont was to be lieutenant-colonel in command. Stockton asked Fremont to nominate his own officers. P. B. Reading was chosen paymaster, Ezekiel Merritt quartermaster, and, I think, King commissary. The captains and lieutenants chosen at Sonoma were also commissioned. Though I did not aspire to office, I received a commission as second lieutenant.

Merritt, the quartermaster, could neither read nor write. He was an old mountaineer and trapper, lived with an Indian squaw, and went clad in buckskin fringed after the style of the Rocky Mountain Indians. He chewed tobacco to a disgusting excess, and stammered badly. He had a reputation for bravery because of his continual boasting of his prowess in killing Indians. The handle of the tomahawk he carried had nearly a hundred notches to record the number of his Indian scalps. He drank deeply whenever he could get liquor. Stockton said to him: "Major Merritt" (for he was now major), "make out a requisition for some money, say two thousand dollars. You will need about that amount at the start. Bring your requisition on board, and I will approve, and direct the purser to honor it." Major Reading wrote the requisition and Merritt got the money, two thousand Mexican silver dollars. That afternoon I met him in Monterey, nearly as drunk as he could be. He said: "Bidwell, I am rich; I have lots of money"; and putting both hands into the deep pockets of his buckskin breeches he brought out two handfuls of Mexican dollars, saying, "Here, take this, and if you can find anything to buy, buy it, and when you want more money come to me, for I have got lots of it."

Merritt was never removed from his office or rank, but simply fell into disuse, and was detailed, like subordinate officers or men, to perform other duties, generally at the head of small scouting parties. Merritt's friends—for he must have had friends to recommend him for quartermaster—in some way managed to fix up the accounts relating to the early administration of his office. In fact, I tried to help them myself, but I believe that all of us together were never able to find, within a thousand dollars, what Merritt had done with the money. How he ever came to be recommended for quartermaster was to every one a mystery. Perhaps some of the current theories that subsequently prevailed might have had in them just a shade of truth, namely, that somebody entertained the idea that quartermaster meant the ability and duty to quarter the beef!

The first conquest of California, in 1846, by the Americans, with the exception of the skirmish at Petaluma and another towards Monterey, was achieved without a battle. We simply marched all over California, from Sonoma to San Diego, and raised the American flag without opposition or protest. We tried to find an enemy, but could not. So Kit Carson and Ned Beale were sent East, bearing despatches from Commodore Stockton announcing the entire conquest of California by the United States. Fremont was made Governor by Stockton at Los Angeles, but could not enter upon the full discharge of the duties of his office till he had visited the upper part of California and returned. He sent me to take charge of the Mission of San Luis Rey, with a commission as magistrate over the larger portion of the country between Los Angeles and San Diego. Stockton and all his forces retired on board of their vessels. Fremont went north, leaving part of his men at Los Angeles under Gillespie, part at Santa Barbara under Lieutenant Talbot, and some at other points. Pio Pico and Jose Castro, respectively the last Mexican governor and commander-in-chief, remained concealed a while and then withdrew into Mexico.

Suddenly, in about a month, Fremont being in the north and his troops scattered, the whole country south of Monterey was in a state of revolt<sup>\*</sup>. Then for the first time there was something like war. As there were rumors of Mexican troops coming from Sonora, Merritt was sent by Gillespie to reconnoiter towards the Colorado River. Gillespie was surrounded at Los Angeles, and made to capitulate. I fled from San Luis Rey to San Diego. Merritt and his party, hearing of the outbreak,

also escaped to San Diego. Meanwhile, Fremont enlisted a considerable force (about four hundred), principally from the large Hastings immigration at Sacramento, and marched south. Commodore Stockton had landed and marched to retake Los Angeles, and failed. All the men-of-war, and all the scattered forces, except Fremont's new force, were then concentrated at San Diego, where Commodore Stockton collected and reorganized the forces, composed of sailors, marines, men of Fremont's battalion under Gillespie and Merritt, volunteers at San Diego, including some native Californians and that portion of the regular troops under General S. W. Kearney that had escaped from the field of San Pascual\* —in all between 700 and 800 men. Of these forces I was commissioned and served as quartermaster. This work of preparation took several months. Finally, on the 29th of December, 1846, the army set out to retake Los Angeles. It fought the battles of San Gabriel and the Mesa, which ended the insurrection. The enemy fled, met Fremont at San Fernando, and surrendered to him the next day. The terms of surrender were so lenient that the native Californians from that time forth became the fast friends of Fremont.

Royce, in his history of California, says that the immediate cause of this revolt was the intolerant and exasperating administration of affairs by Gillespie at Los Angeles.—Editor.  
Time does not permit me to do more than allude to the arrival at San Diego of General Kearney with one hundred soldiers, and with Kit Carson and Beale, from New Mexico; or to his repulse at San Pascual.

Unfortunate differences regarding rank had arisen between Stockton and Kearney. Fremont was afterwards arrested in California by Kearney for refusing to obey his orders, and was taken to Washington and court-martialed. Stockton, however, was largely to blame. He would not submit to General Kearney, his superior in command on land, and that led Fremont to refuse to obey Kearney, his superior officer. Fremont's disobedience was no doubt owing to the advice of Stockton who had appointed him governor of California\* .

Mr. Charles H. Shinn informs us that General Vallejo in one of his letters tells of having received on the same day communications from Commodore Stockton, General Kearney, and Colonel Fremont, each one signing himself "Commander-in-Chief of California."—Editor.

The war being over, nearly all the volunteers were discharged from the service in February and March, 1847, at Los Angeles and San Diego. Most of us made our way up the coast by land to our homes. I had eleven horses, which I swam, one at a time, across the Straits of Carquinez at Benicia,

which J. M. Hudspeth, the surveyor, was at the time laying out for Dr. Robert Semple, and which was then called “Francisca;’ after Mrs. Vallejo, whose maiden name was Francisca Benicia Carrillo.

JOHN BIDWELL.

COMMODORE ROBERT FIELD STOCKTON.

### **EARLY CALIFORNIA REMINISCENCES. By Gen. John Bidwell.**

(For more than half a century John Bidwell was one of the foremost citizens of California—not by any accident of birth or happy business venture, but mainly by the sheer force of righteousness, using the word in its larger meaning. Coming here years before the golden magnet had given its first tug hitherward at the hearts of adventurers the world over, he saw the Mexican province wrenched from the hands that had held till then and molded into a State, which was to weigh powerfully in shaping the social and economic future of the Republic. In the development of that State his voice and hand were potent factors for fifty years. Through all that time he preserved upon his own estate the patriarchal traditions of the older day, as did few other Americans. To all within its borders, he was guide, counsellor and friend; its gates swung wide in limitless hospitality; its storehouses were gladly open to every opportunity of benevolence.

Near the close of his life this clear-visioned, clean-hearted, high-souled Californian recorded some personal recollections of the days when California was in the making. In publishing these, they will be treated with the respect due to historical “sources”—that is to say, without editing or alteration, except for slight changes in punctuation and arrangement.—Ed.)

ON THE WAY IN 1841.

Our first experience in packing animals was under the most trying circumstances. The packs had all to be lashed very tight in order to stay on at all. The mules were not the only animals that kicked. The horses were as bad or worse than the mules, and the oxen, at least some of them, surpassed all in dislodging the burdens they were to carry. In fact, horses and mules ran about in every direction,

scattering the packs. The oxen not only ran, but kicked and heaved and helped to cause general disaster; but we tried and tried them again until we were able to make the packs stay on without having to fix them for several miles.

The first night we were unable to reach water. Some of the pack-oxen strayed in the darkness before we camped and had to be hunted for the next day, while the main party went on to find water. I was the one who was to find the missing animals. The man who went with me became discouraged and left me when we had gone back about ten miles. Striking the trail of the lost animals, I followed on alone for about ten miles directly north, and at sundown overtook the animals lying down in the grass with the packs on.

They were evidently not far from water, which the grass indicated. They had followed an Indian trail, and fresh moccasin tracks had been made for some distance after the animals had passed along. However, I saw no Indians, though they must have seen me, and certainly the Indians could not have been hostile, for I was entirely alone.

It took some time to change and readjust the packs on the oxen so as to begin my return to the company. Without being molested, I started and traveled during the whole night, striking the trail of the company at daybreak, where there was an abundance of water, but no timber except willows. The company had evidently stopped there for noon the previous day. My disappointment was great when I found that they had not waited for me as they had promised to do when they found water. I tied the oxen to the willow trees and began to make extended circles to the south and west to find in which direction the company had gone.

I had seen Indian fires in various directions, particularly toward the north and west. The ground was very hard, almost like rock, and the animals had left no tracks. The atmosphere was hazy and the mirage very embarrassing. When about three miles to the west of where I left the oxen, I saw two forms in the mirage to the south. Their motions led me to believe they were Indians mounted on horses. I hastened to regain the place where I had left the oxen. My horse suddenly plunged into a miry place almost out of sight, my gun filled with mud, but I threw it onto the dry ground, and with

the greatest difficulty succeeded in getting myself and my horse out, covered with mud, and our ears and eyes filled. The Indians, as I supposed, were by this time quite near. My gun, a flintlock, could not be fired, but I prepared as well as I could by making barricades of oxen, and trying to get dry powder into my gun, to resist attack; but to my delight, two of our men appeared in place of Indians. They had come back to meet me, bringing water and provisions. I had been deceived, not supposing that the company had turned so sharply toward the south. From this time on for several days our course lay to the southwest.

One morning, as we were in the midst of packing up, a band of Indians, all mounted on horses and numbering about ninety, came up to us. Not knowing what they might do, it certainly was not safe to permit them to come up to us while preparing to start. The captain could not be persuaded to send men to stop them. He said the Indians would consider this a hostile act. Nevertheless, four or five of us seized guns and went out toward them, and by earnest gestures made them understand not to come too near. Meantime the company hastened to get ready to start.

That band of Indians was armed with carbines, and was well supplied with buffalo robes and other things, showing their ability to cope with the Blackfeet and other warlike tribes between them and the buffalo country, which was at that time at least 500 miles to the east and northeast.

These Indians were short of ammunition. They traveled with us nearly all day; that is to say, keeping abreast of us and about 100 or 200 yards from us. Occasionally one would come to us, or toward us, to exchange deerskins, moccasins, and other things for powder and balls. They were willing to give a large, well-dressed skin for four charges of powder and four bullets, and other things in proportion. They showed no signs of hostility, but might have done so had we permitted them to come promiscuously among us.

In a few days we came to a country where there was very little grass. Everything was dry—absolutely no water. We then called a halt and asked the men who had been to Fort Hall for information, to repeat again what they had learned about the country. It was the same old story: “Be

careful not to go too far to the south, because you will get to a country destitute of water and grass, and your animals will perish.”

We thereupon changed our course and went directly north, and passed a range of mountains. The topography of the country was such as prevented our taking a westerly course. We camped on a small stream running directly toward the north. The traveling was very good next day, crossing and recrossing the stream, until at last it entered a canyon. We traveled into the canyon till night overtook us, by which time the sides of the canyon had become precipitous, in places over 100 feet high. Hoping to get through, we got along as best we could, floundering over boulders in the very bed, which was now drying up, but which, in the winter season, must have been a raging river. Here we had to pass the night, our animals being jaded and footsore and unable to go farther. That was a dismal night. Our men were again called upon to give us the information they had obtained at Fort Hall. They were particularly enjoined not to go too far to the north, as they might get into deep, impenetrable canyons and become bewildered, as trappers had been, and might wander about and starve to death. The canyon bore directly to north. To return the way we came we decided to be impossible, so at daylight next morning we determined to see if it was possible to get through the canyon or to scale its precipitous banks. Our reconnoitering party returned and reported that about three miles farther up the country looked better. This answer seemed to summon up the courage in our animals as well as in ourselves, and by two or three o'clock of that day we came to a flowing stream, and comparatively good traveling. This stream is what is now known as the Humboldt River, in the present State of Nevada. This stream we followed first south and then north for many days. We could kill no game, it being very scarce; partly because the country had been all burned over, and partly because of its naturally barren, desolate character. It was almost entirely destitute of every living thing, except an occasional rabbit, or distant antelope far beyond reach. We had had no bread for several weeks, and the only meat was the poor beef of our oxen, which we very carefully drove with us, and were saving as our only source of supply. Our horses and mules, of course, were able to travel faster than the oxen, so some of our company, especially the captain and some seven or eight other men who belonged to his mess, were in favor of leaving the oxen and hurrying on to

California. I was one of those who opposed leaving the oxen. Others who thought with me would take turns driving the oxen.

Finally, one day when it was my turn to drive the oxen, the captain led the company on so fast that I could not keep up, and at night I was about nine miles behind the company. The next morning it was no easy task for me alone to get the oxen out of the brush, put the packs on and start on my way. The company, however, having nothing to eat, were obliged to wait till I overtook them, so that an ox could be killed for breakfast. I considered that I had been badly treated, and did not hesitate to tell the captain, and the men whom I thought to blame, what I thought. Curiously enough, they made no response. An ox was killed and the company breakfasted about noon. About one o'clock we were packed and ready to travel. The captain and his mess came to us and said, "Let us have a double share of meat. Our animals are stronger and can carry it better, and we will kill the next ox and pay you back." We very willingly consented, but as soon as all was ready to start the captain made known his purpose and said, "I have been found fault with and am not going to stand it any longer. I am going to California, and if you can keep up with me it is all right, and if you can't you may go to hell." So he and the seven started off as fast as they could go, and were soon out of sight.

SUTTER'S FORT, NEW HELVETIA (SACRAMENTO) IN 1847.

### **EARLY CALIFORNIA REMINISCENCES. By Gen. John Bidwell. II.**

On November 28, 1841, we arrived at Sutter's Fort—that is, at the station. There was no fort yet, but merely a station for the convenience of the hunters and fur-traders. Agriculture was in an embryo state, for no crop had been raised yet. Some of the settlers had sown grain, but owing to the unprecedented dry season, the crop was a total failure. There was no such a thing as bread,, so we must eat beef, varying it with an occasional game dinner consisting of elk, deer, antelope, or geese and ducks. Our Christmas dinner was entirely of ducks. The valley abounded in elk, deer, antelope, geese and ducks, cranes, beaver and otter. Grizzly bear were almost an hourly sight. In the vicinity of the streams, it was not uncommon to see from thirty to forty in a day.



Speaking of bear, I will relate one incident. Becoming tired of beef, James John, one of the first overland party, said he was going to have some bear meat. An old Rocky Mountain hunter, named Bill Barrows, offered to go with him to get bear meat. It was only a question of one, two or three miles to shoot them, so they started and soon came in sight of one, a monster in size, feeding in the tall grass not far from the river timber, on the west side of the river, opposite the place where the City of Sacramento now is. A man who is acquainted with the habits and disposition of grizzly bears is cautious. Old hunters always keep to the leeward of a bear so as to take an advantage and secure a dead shot, but a raw hunter is often careless, till experience is sure to make him cautious. James John went to within fifty yards of the bear and fired at him. The old hunter was screaming at him, "You fool, don't go there; come back," but Johnny, as we used to call him, was one of those strange beings you may see once in a lifetime, who never seem to know what fear is.

When the bear heard the shot, he broke into the thicket along the river bank, it being one of those dense thickets of grapevine and willows, but John followed right in after the bear, and was gone a quarter of an hour or more. He came out greatly disappointed because he had not succeeded in killing the bear, saying that he had had bad luck, for he got within six feet of the bear, thinking he was wounded. When the bear opened his mouth he tried to get the gun into it, so as to make a sure shot; but before he could do this the bear broke and ran farther into the thicket.

A dozen or more of our party reached Sutter's in 1841 in December. Robert Livermore had charge of the stock, cattle and horses, of which Sutter had about 2,000 head. This same Livermore had a farm in Livermore Valley, to which valley he gave his name. He was a runaway English sailor boy, who had grown up in the country and understood the Spanish laws, and knew the customs almost as well as the natives themselves.

Without imputing dishonesty to the natives, cattle and horses were so abundant that the distinctions of the civil courts were not strictly observed by them. The boundaries between ranches were, in many cases imaginary. Stock roamed at will and herds became mixed. If one happened to kill the bullocks of another, it was hardly worth noticing, for it would be strange if at some time or another that neighbor had not killed a bullock belonging to him. Competition between Livermore and his

neighbors was sharp, and a friend, thinking he was doing Livermore a great favor, told him that a neighbor had just killed one of his bullocks, and that if he would hurry he would find him in the act of skinning it. Livermore said, "No, I'm too busy taking the skin off of one of his bullocks."

There were some sailors, much mixed as to nationality—German, English, French, Scotch, etc. Generally the sailors left their vessels off coast, though there were some that had come over the Rocky Mountains, some from Oregon, and some by the way of New Mexico. There were also a few Canadian-French, who had found their way to California in some manner. Sutter had six Kanakas from the Sandwich Islands, also Native Californians and Spanish, and a great many pure natives, Indians, who had collected around to work, forming a great mixture of all classes. The language was principally Spanish, and most of the people had learned it or begun to do so.

It was about this time that Sutter had come into possession of the Russian property on the sea at Fort Ross and at Bodega. He purchased all the property which they were unable to remove when they retired from the country. I allude to the Russian settlement, which was but a branch of the Russian Fur Company, of which the Czar of Russia was president, and which had a charter from old Spain, authorizing the company to establish a branch for the purpose of taking furs along the coast at Fort Ross. The charter had nearly expired, so they sold nearly everything to Sutter, including a schooner of about twenty tons, and forty pieces of cannon, together with some old muskets, some or most of which were those lost by Napoleon in the disastrous campaign to Moscow. These muskets kicked pretty hard. The purchase included also about 2,000 head of cattle, about 600 horses, and all the buildings at the settlement. On our arrival most of the horses and cattle had been removed from the Russian settlement, having been driven by way of Sonoma, and through what is now the counties of Solano and Yolo, to and across the Sacramento River in the vicinity of Sutter's settlement. At that time there was no settlement east of the farm of Salvador Vallejo, where Napa City now is, except an Indian village at Suisun, and the country was entirely without roads or paths, except those made by wild game, principally elk, antelope and grizzly bear.

Sutter had begun also to remove some of the cannon before mentioned. This probably was because of the jealousy or fear the native authorities had of Sutter. Another cause, however, might be

named, to-wit, Sutter's settlement had become the rendezvous for foreigners, and especially for Americans, who were becoming odious both on account of the war in Texas, and because of rumors that the Americans might rise, and, with Texas, take California. When Sutter heard threats against him, coming from the native Californians, he felt insecure, not knowing what might be the result; so he hastened to remove all the arms and cannon from the Russian settlement.

When by chance one of our men, lost from our company in the Sierra Nevada Mountains, reached Sutter's Fort in the Sacramento Valley and announced our coming across the plains (being about thirty men of us), he supposed that we would all come immediately to his settlement, and in fact, sent men to find us and bring us there. Sutter took courage with reinforcements and sent word to the Governor of California that he did not wish to have any more threats made against his settlement, for he was not only able to defend himself, but amply able to chastise him. That letter was sent to Mexico, and the Mexican Government sent 500 troops to break up Sutter's Settlement, but they moved slowly and it was two years or more before the Governor and his troops got there, and then Sutter was equal to the emergency. He took time by the forelock and sent couriers to the Governor at San Diego as soon as he had landed, with letters of congratulation and welcome, and submitting wholly to his authority. Then he made of the Governor a fast friend, and, through Sutter, a friend of the Americans who had clustered around him.

Vallejo was the commander-in-chief of the military forces. The Commandante General had a hundred soldiers, and could by proclamation raise from two to three or even five hundred more.

In the winter of 1841-42 was one of the most remarkable floods, the oldest inhabitants having seen nothing like it, following, as it did, one of the dryest years in the memory of the oldest inhabitant.

My first occupation in California was at Bodega and Fort Ross, taking charge with Robert T. Ridley, who preceded me there, of the Russian property still remaining at those points, and removing the same as fast as practicable to Sutter's Settlement at Sacramento, whither everything was eventually transferred. (All the Indians on the coast at that time in the vicinity of the Fort, spoke the Russian language, the Spanish gradually superseding it.) There I remained about fourteen

months. During the time my occupation consisted in demolishing the houses at Fort Ross, and shipping the lumber up the Sacramento River, and sending almost everything in the shape of personal property. Russian plows, yokes, carts, house furniture, and everything transportable that could be made useful at Sacramento were sent. The Russians had carried on farming and gardening to a limited extent, sowing some wheat, corn, potatoes, melons and other things. There was an orchard and small vineyard belonging to a Russian nobleman called here "Don Jorge."

Sutter also had lumber sawed by hand in the redwoods near Bodega, and sent by sea in his schooner and up to Sacramento.

When all the cattle (wild cattle I mean, for all the cattle were considered wild, except a few which had been broken in to milk or to work as oxen) had been removed to Sacramento, there still remained from 150 to 200 head so wild that they seldom could be seen in the day time. Late in the evening, when it was almost dark, they would emerge from their impenetrable hiding places to eat grass. They were wilder than any deer, buffalo, elk, or antelope, possessing the keenest vision and hearing. It was almost impossible to kill them, the country being so hilly and brushy. They were so wild that for a year I never killed one because the deer, antelope, etc., would get between me and the game, and if I scared a deer, they knew that meant danger, and ran. I thought I had seen wild animals, but I confess they were the wildest I had ever seen.

Even the native Californians could not believe they were so wild, and readily undertook to catch and kill them for one-half the hides. They were all expert horsemen and expert lazoderos, and they followed the cattle into their haunts in the thickets to drive them out. After an effort of two weeks, they succeeded in killing about a dozen; but during that time they lassoed any number of grizzly bears, elk, antelope and even deer. They killed also one black bear, and one big stag, in the center of the liver of which was an arrowhead.

All these cattle had been brought here from Mexico. Of horses there were thousands in the San Joaquin Valley. I have seen herds twenty miles long on the west side. The men at Sutter's Fort were very orderly, showing that when men are beyond the law and the customs of civilization, there

springs up a common law among themselves. There was no law by which to regularly govern the men, yet there was no trouble except with a degraded set of mountaineers hovering around the Indian rancheria, trading beads and whiskey, and sleeping in the rancheria. There was no such thing as murder till as late as 1845. Sutter had a distillery in 1845.

The property being all removed from the Russian settlement on the coast, I made a trip on horseback in February, 1843, to Sutter's Fort, accomplishing the journey in four days. The first day I travelled sixty miles and arrived at the place now known as Vacaville. The country in that region was one vast field of wild oats, fully headed out. Manuel Vaca had built a house at my stopping-place; that is to say, he had begun a settlement by putting willow poles into the ground, and making a thatch roof of tule, and had built a corral. He was from New Mexico. A corral was the first and most necessary improvement for a new settlement.

I had with me an Indian. We had each two horses, and a pack horse to carry provisions and blankets. That night I lost all four of the riding horses. They were the best in California, and I suspected they had been stolen. Being unable to find them, I was obliged to borrow from Vaca the only animals he could spare; to-wit, an old mule for myself to ride, and a wretchedly poor horse for the Indian.

No one then knew the way to Sutter's Fort, there being no road. Using our own judgment, we struck off in a northeasterly direction which, could I have continued, would have brought me to my desired destination, Sutter's Fort at Sacramento; but a seemingly impassable stream intervened, and I was obliged to follow it down into the tule marsh, where night overtook us, and the water grew deeper and deeper, rendering it impossible to proceed. Obligated to retrace my footsteps, I endeavored to cross the stream in many places, and at last succeeded not only in getting into the stream during the night, but in getting out on the other side. I stayed on the plains about seven or eight miles north of the stream, without fire, without timber, without anything.

As I followed down that stream the night previous the number of grizzly bears that sprang out and ran into the timber was very large. All the paths seemed to be the paths of grizzly bears, judging from the tracks, but they invariably ran from us.

I mention the fact of crossing the stream (which is known as Putah Creek) because of the impossibility of crossing it even in the dry season, both banks being so steep and the sands so soft. I never afterward in the daytime found a crossing. You can ride a Mexican horse anywhere if you spur him.

We struck north, and the next morning found a stream and a house which had been built only a month previously by Wm. Gordon (commonly called Billy Gordon) on Cache Creek. It was a most welcome sight under the circumstances, and here we breakfasted, principally on a fat young grizzly bear, the only bear meat I ever liked. Mr. Gordon was an American, but had lived in New Mexico, and his wife was a Mexican. He was a Mexican citizen and withal was a hospitable and kind man.

The rest of our route lay down Cache Creek to a place now known as Knight's Landing, afterwards settled by Wm. Knight, father-in-law of Hon. Chas. F. Reed. At that time, from a point opposite the Feather River to the present town of Washington opposite Sacramento City, the banks of the river were such that the horses could not reach the water to drink, being so steep and so covered with thickets. At the site of Washington the grass was good, and there I tied the animals that I had borrowed, and crossed the river in a canoe which was kept there for that purpose, and walked to Sutter's Fort, which had at that time been partly constructed.

During my stay there of a week, it was necessary to send my Indian vaquero to change and water the animals staked out over the river. Two of these, the two which I had borrowed, during the time disappeared, and of course had been stolen, because animals fastened as they were by hemp ropes could not of themselves get away. It was very difficult to account for this. Indians did not ride horses. Others were always supposed to have plenty Taking a relay of new animals from Sutter's I hastened to Vaca's ranch on my way to Bodega, hoping to find that the animals had returned home, but

## P.B. Reading

they had not. My own had been found, however, and were awaiting me. Of course I had to settle for the animals, and was surprised to find that the mule was a very valuable animal, valued at \$50, and the horse, too, noble steed, was worth \$25.

These figures seemed amazing, for, in fact, the best horses sold for from \$5 to \$10, and the best mules for from \$10 to \$15. I could not entertain the idea of paying the vast sum of \$75. It would take three months to earn it at the salary I was getting, so I sent word to Sutter to send a man to take my place, which he did, a Mr. Wm. Benitz; and I set out to scour the Sacramento Valley especially to find those wonderful animals. I could not hear of them, but I heard of something which led to their discovery, viz; that a company had started for Oregon. I was advised to overtake it. The leaving of the company was, I was advised, an event of sufficient importance to make people look out carefully for horses. Sutter furnished an Indian to go with me. The Company had been gone about a week.

Peter Lassen, whose name now attaches to Lassen Peak and Lassen County, happened at Sutter's Fort in search of a place to locate a ranch. He joined me to come up the valley for that purpose. At Hock Farm, on the Feather River, forty miles above the forth, we took fresh horses, traveling as rapidly as possible. At a place on the Feather River, now known as Nicholas, a German, by name Joe Bruheim, also joined us. We were on no trail and simply steered through the center of the Sacramento Valley.

Approaching Butte Creek, where we camped for the first time after leaving Hock Farm, we had an episode among the grizzly bears. In the spring of the year they lived principally on the plains, and especially in the little depressions on the plains. The first we saw made for the timber two or three miles distant, soon another, and another and more, all bounding away toward the creek. At one time there were sixteen in the drove. Of course we chased them, but had no desire to overtake them; there were too many. As they advanced, one of the largest diverged to the left, and I pursued him alone. He was the largest I had ever seen, and his hair was long and shaggy, and I had the keenest

desire to shoot him. I rode almost onto him, but every time I raised the gun the horse commenced bucking. My desire to shoot the bear became so great that it overcame my prudence, and I charged as near as I dared and dismounted, intending to get a shot and mount again before he could get me. But the moment I was on the ground it was all I could do to hold the horse, which jumped and plunged and sawed my hands with the rope. When I could look toward the bear, I found he had stopped, reared and was looking toward me and the horse. My hair, I think, stood straight up, and I was delighted when the bear turned and ran from me. I soon mounted the horse, and saw him plunge into the timber and make off.

The Indian had killed a large one, the flesh, however, of which was all fat; still it was very useful in frying bread in place of lard.

Horses and mules are always frightened at the sight and smell of grizzly bears. It was difficult to keep our horses, as they snorted and tried to get away all night.

The next morning we were early in the saddle and on our way, and in a few miles' ride took further lessons in the pastime of chasing grizzly bears. I pursued a large one and a very swift one. When following, you must run by the side and not immediately behind him, for he can more easily catch you if you do.

I was chasing too directly behind him, and before I could turn, so close was I, that when he turned and struck, his claws touched the tail of my horse, and for a hundred yards at every jump he struck my horse's tail. Coming to better ground we soon left the bear in the distance, and as soon as he turned I turned after him. I heard him plunge into a stream and swim across it. Stationing myself where I could see him when he came out, as he stood on his hind feet, I shot. The blood spurted out of his nostril two or three feet high, and he bounded about one hundred yards and died. These scenes were common—of daily and almost hourly occurrence.

Hastening up the valley we struck the trail of the Oregon Company on what is now known as Chico Creek, Rancho Chico, and to me one of the loveliest of places. The plains were covered with scattered groves of spreading oaks; there were wild grasses and clover, two, three and four feet



high, and most luxuriant. The fertility of the soil was beyond question, and the waters of Chico Creek were clear, cold and sparkling; the mountains were lovely and flower-covered, a beautiful scene. In a word, this chase was the means of locating me for life. I never was permanently located till I afterward located here. It was early in March, 1843, when we reached Chico Creek.

It is not easy to conceive and understand the change in the condition of the country caused by the extensive pasture of horses and cattle on these plains. We seldom or never were out of sight of game, deer, elk, antelope and grizzly bear. The snow-capped mountains on each side of the valley seen through the clear atmosphere of spring, the plains brilliant with flowers, the luxuriant herbage, all truly combined to lend enchantment to the view. In fact the valley, with two or three unimportant exceptions, was as new as when Columbus discovered America.

We were now on the trail of the Oregon company, which lay on the east bank of the Sacramento River. The streams flowing into it, with the exception of Butte Creek, had at that time not been named. Seeing some of the Sabine pine on a stream where we camped, we named it Pine Creek.

The next stream we came to was beautiful and clear, and came swiftly from the mountains in considerable volume. On its banks appeared deer in great numbers; they seemed to be in droves; and so we named it Deer Creek.

The next flowing stream some ten or twelve miles beyond, having still more fall where we crossed it, suggested its value as fine water power, so we named it Mill Creek.

The next fine stream presented not only its well timbered borders, but also fertile, grass-covered plain, over which roamed innumerable antelope, so the creek received that name.

Crossing Antelope Creek, and following the trail of the Oregon party, we came to the Sacramento River opposite the site of Red Bluff. Here the company had crossed the river and were encamped on the opposite bank. They had no wagons, simply pack animals. The stream at that time was considerably swollen, deep, swift and cold. With simply a small hatchet, scarcely larger than a

tomahawk, I set about making a raft to cross, which was no easy task to construct of a dry willow brush and such dead sticks as we could secure with our means.

At last it was completed, being sufficient merely to hold me above water; however, to secure a dry passage if possible, a second story was built on it, consisting of fine, dry brush, tied securely. In size it resembled somewhat a small load of hay. Fearing I could not manage it alone, I persuaded a wild Indian to go with me. He consented to go with great reluctance, but a few beads and a cotton handkerchief were so tempting that he could not resist. The only things we could get to propel the raft were willow poles, and none of them were long enough to touch the bottom when we got started into the stream; so we had to use them as paddles. We were high and dry when we started, but the displacement of the water by the brush was so little, and the material became so quickly water-logged, that the raft was soon under water. The swift current carried us so rapidly down that it was with difficulty we got over at all, but we finally got across one-and-half or two miles below. The most of the time we were up to our arms in cold water, and only knew by the brush under our feet that we were on the raft at all. If men ever labored for their lives we did.

Safely on land, however, I soon made my way to the camp of the Oregon company. Peter Lassen and others had remained on the left bank of the river. Several of the party which had come across the plains were in the Oregon company, notably Ben Kelsey, Andrew Kelsey and Dawson, generally called "Bear" Dawson, from a circumstance which occurred in the Rocky Mountains. I at once made known my object which was to find the mule and the horse, which I had lost at Sacramento.

These men at once declared that if the animals were there, and if I could identify them, I could have them, but nearly all protested that there were no such animals there, and they all agreed to drive up all the horses and mules they had for my inspection. As a result I soon found my animals and demanded their surrender. There was some opposition, but Ben Kelsey, a very resolute man, and on this occasion a very useful one to me, declared that I should have them. Then all opposition being withdrawn, the animals were driven to the river and made to swim across.

RAPHAEL-GEN. BIDWELL's INDIAN VALET. 1850.

**EARLY CALIFORNIA REMINISCENCES. By Gen. John Bidwell. III.**

My object being accomplished, I at once set about my return. Peter Lassen was a very singular man, very industrious, very ingenious, and very fond of pioneering, in fact, stubbornly so. He had great confidence in his powers as a woodman, but strangely enough he always got lost.

As we passed the Butte Mountains, our route, of course, lay between the Sacramento and Feather Rivers. The point we wished to reach that night was Sutter's Hock Farm on the Feather River. Night had overtaken us when we were some fifteen miles from it. Lassen persisted in keeping the lead.

Our Indian vaquero, however, who knew the country well in that vicinity, pointed to the eastward as the way we should go. Lassen could not be persuaded to go to the east, and, finally, about morning, we concluded to say we must go east, and if he would not, we would leave him. This had no effect on Peter, so he kept on toward the south, while we, following the Indian, came to the farm, the only place Lassen could reach being the intervening tule marsh.

Now, if you want to see the humor a man is in after spending a night in a tule marsh full of mosquitoes you ought to have seen Peter Lassen when he came to the camp at Hock Farm the next morning. He was so mad he would not speak to any of us, and would not travel in the same path, but kept to one side or the other and 100 yards away from us all day, and I think, never forgot or forgave us. Yet he was a man who had many good qualities. He was a good cook in camp and would do everything and anything necessary to do in the camp, even to making the coffee, providing those traveling with him would attempt to assist him. If they did not attempt to assist him they at once became the target of the best style of grumbling that any man born in Denmark is capable of. But of course each one would attempt to assist, and that was all that was necessary to do, for Lassen would drive them away, and do it all himself, even to the staking of the tent.

After our arrival from the trip, I sketched, as best I could, the country visited, laying down and naming the streams by the names they have ever since borne.

Lassen selected, as a place to locate a ranch, the country on both sides of Deer Creek, since owned by Senator Stanford, where is located his immense vineyard and the town of Vina.

I engaged with Sutter to take Hock Farm on the Feather River. This was his great stock farm, where most of his horses and cattle were located and there I stayed for a year, and while there made most of the improvements seen by people within the historic period, which is said to commence at the close of the Mexican War, in the spring of 1847.

While at Bodega in 1842, Commodore apCatesby Jones raised the American flag in Monterey. The store-ship Relief, was sent to Bodega, and dispatches were sent in my care to look out for a vessel, which I did, and delivered them. The Mexicans made no resistance.

In 1843 a company came by land from Oregon, composed partly of the immigration which had gone to Oregon the year before from across the plains. This party had men with it, two at least, who might be styled "Indian-killers," and on the way they frequently fired at Indians seen in the distance. The better portion tried to dissuade them from this, but with only partial success.

On arriving at Red Bluff the company camped early in the day, intending to remain during the night, but hastily left owing to this event. One of the Indian shooters, seeing an Indian on the opposite bank of the river, swam over, carrying a butcher knife in his mouth. The Indian allowed him to approach until he was very near, but at last ran. The man with the knife threw a stone and crippled him, and then killed him with the knife. The company, fearing the Indians, concluded to travel on.

After a few miles an Indian was seen following them—no doubt out of curiosity, not having heard of the killing. One of the Indian-killers, seeing the opportunity, hid in the brush until the Indian came up, and then shot him.

The company still travelled on the west side of the river, and in more than ordinary haste, feeling insecure lest the Indians, who were very numerous in the Sacramento Valley at that time, should be hostile on account of what had occurred. One of their encampments was near the Sacramento River, below the mouth of Stony Creek, in what is now Colusa County. The Indians, however, came near in considerable numbers, and hence had evidently not heard of the shooting alluded to.

In the morning, as they were packing up to leave camp, one of the Indian killers missed his bridle, and swore that "some of the damned Indians" had stolen it (an unreasonable thing, as the Indians had no horses). He fired at an Indian who stood by a tree 100 yards or so distant. The Indian fell back into the brush and all the other Indians in sight fled in terror. The company became alarmed and hastened away, but before they had started the man found his bridle under some blankets in camp. All that day the Indians on the east side of the river were in a state of great excitement, as the company passed along the west side.

For more than forty miles, at that time, there was no place where the horse could reach the water to drink, the banks being either steep or so grown up with timber and grapevines as to render it impossible to reach the water.

The day after, the company camped and reached water at the place now called Colusa. The excitement among the Indians had preceded them, and a considerable number of them were gathered on the opposite bank of the river. When the horses were led down to water, in an almost famished condition, the Indians fired at them with arrows. No one was hurt or hit. For some unaccountable reason, when the party reached Sutter's establishment a few days later and reported what had happened, Sutter came to the conclusion that the Indians where the arrows had been shot across the river were hostile and should be punished.

Let me say here that the Indian village on the present site of Colusa was one of the largest in the valley, but there were many other villages on both sides of the river in the vicinity of the Colusa village, and both above and below it. I believe I can truthfully say that the number of Indians within ten miles of that point amounted to not less than 1,500 or 2,000. They lived largely on fish, mostly

salmon, which they caught in great numbers in the river. For the purpose of fishing they formed a fish-weir at a point some miles above Colusa, by using willow poles, the ends of which were rounded and sharpened, and then in some manner made to penetrate the sandy bottom to a depth sufficient to resist the force of the current. By the use of cross-sticks lashed with grape vine, the structure formed a bridge not less than eight or ten feet wide, for men to pass and repass upon. At this point the river was very wide and the bottom very sandy, and the water perhaps not more than four or five feet deep.

I heard the story of the emigrants. Some thought the Indians where the shooting was done were hostile, but most of them, and the best informed as I thought, did not blame the Indians in view of the previous occurrence.

Sutter, however, concluded to punish them, and went with fifty men and attacked the Indians at daylight. His forces were divided, part having gone above and crossed on the Indian bridge, so that they would be ready simultaneously at daybreak to begin the attack. The Indians fled and mostly jumped into the river, where they were fired on and great numbers of them killed. After that time the Indians in that part of the valley were never known to be hostile to the whites. At any rate I remember of no hostile act on their part, having gone among them almost alone a year after, twice at least, and once, with only five men with me, camped all night near a village without molestation.

Two years later, in 1846, I went from Sacramento during the prevalence of a great flood, passing, not up the river, but over the plains, which were like a sea of water. I arrived in a canoe, near the place where the Indians were killed in 1843, to trade for Indian twine for the purpose of making seines with which to take salmon. I had no white men with me, but only two Indians to paddle the canoe, and I found the Indians perfectly friendly.

Here I mention another fact which might have had some relation to the present county of Colusa. I ought to have said that a part of the aforesaid Oregon company left the main body somewhere about this time, or a little before, it entered the Sacramento Valley, and had reached Sutter's Fort some days in advance, and had seen nothing of the occurrences which had caused the campaign against

the Indians just described. Among this advance party, in fact its leader, was one L. W. Hastings, a man of great ambition. His purpose in coming to California was to see the country and write a book and induce great numbers of emigrants to come here, declare the country independent and become its first president. It did not take him long to learn that the Mexican Government was in the habit of granting large tracts of land. Not knowing how long it might take to establish here an independent republic, and having an eye to business, he at once took the preliminary steps with the intention of securing a large tract of land of ten or twelve square leagues lying on the west side of the Sacramento River, between Colusa and Knight's Landing, and to that end employed me to make a map of it. This was to be kept a profound secret.

True to his purpose, he made his way through California, Mexico and Texas to the United States. On the way he conferred with Sam Houston in Texas as to the aid and co-operation he might expect from the Lone Star Republic in its then chaotic condition. It is certain, I believe, that Hastings received no encouragement from that source. He was not, however, in the least discouraged, but wrote a book of two or three hundred pages, picturing California in the most glowing colors, and eventually secured its publication. The book induced six or seven hundred to cross the plains in 1846. Hastings preceded them late in the fall of 1845, to be ready to lay the foundations of his republic. The next spring he went to meet his large emigration, but the Mexican War in that year blasted all his fondly cherished schemes.

One other incident is worth telling. After Hastings wrote the book it was some time before he could raise funds with which to publish it. Among other devices to raise money he delivered temperance lectures in Ohio and the neighboring States, and while on his lecturing tour he became acquainted with a Methodist preacher named McDonald, who rendered him some aid, and they became fast friends. Late in the fall of 1846, Hastings, having returned from his trip to meet his emigration, arrived at Yerba Buena, now San Francisco, in a cold rain. His friend McDonald, whom he had never expected to see in California, had preceded him to the Bay, and, for want of other employment, was actually attending the only bar in town. Hastings, the temperance lecturer, drenched in the cold rain, went to the bar, called for brandy, and poured out a glass full. As he was about to drink (McDonald, the barkeeper, recognized him and said, "My temperance friend, how

do you do?" Hastings immediately recognized the Methodist preacher who had helped him in Ohio, grasped his hand and said. "My dear old preacher I'm glad to see you."

SUTTER'S MILL, WHERE GOLD WAS FIRST DISCOVERED.

### **EARLY CALIFORNIA REMINISCENCES. By Gen. John Bidwell. IV.**

In 1842 snails six inches long covered the country, for a radius of several miles, so thick that we could scarcely step without stepping on them. They stayed only a few days.

For food we had in those days chiefly beef, game, butter and fish. Salmon came from the ocean up the streams. When the streams had gone down the salmon would remain in the deeper places, which were not more than three or four feet deep; often less. They were caught by taking a cord, making a noose at one end, putting it carefully over the salmon's tail and jerking him out. We sent Indians to the sandy places and they brought us strawberries by the bushel. When the time came we picked and dried huckleberries. From the Russian orchard at Fort Ross, apples and peaches were dried, and cider made, and through the favor of Captain W. A. Richardson, captain of Yerba Buena, or San Francisco, whose two sons lived with me in order to learn English, I was able to get occasionally a little of the luxury known as brown sugar, generally known in Mexico as panoche. I had more luxuries than any one.

Thomas O. Larkin was a prominent American in California when I arrived in 1841. He lived in Monterey and had a store there, probably the largest in California. His children were Americans, the father and mother both Americans, (the wife being the only American woman in California, except Mrs. Kelsey, who came with our party). He wished to obtain for them from the Mexican Government a grant of land of ten or twelve square leagues. For this purpose I engaged to find him a tract, and began explorations about July, 1844. I ascended the valley on the west side of the Sacramento River as far as Colusa, having with me one man only, and he an Indian who had been civilized in Mission San Solano, in Sonoma Valley. I encamped for the night on a slough some miles west of Colusa. Before reaching camp I had killed a large female grizzly bear, and carried with me the only part fit to eat—the foot. The next day we went directly west over the wide plains.



The day was hot—terrifically so. We found no water until toward night, and that was so salt that neither ourselves nor our animals could drink it, and we were obliged to sleep without water.

We saw deserted Indian villages, deserted because the springs had dried up (I should mention the fact that the summer of 1844 was a very dry one, because the previous winter had been almost rainless.) We were in our saddles at daylight, making our way toward the high mountains that lay to the southwest, feeling sure of finding water there. About 10 or 11 o'clock in the morning, from the top of a ridge, we saw a glorious sight, a large, clear, flowing stream. This we reached as soon as possible, and our nearly famished horses plunged into the middle of it. We saw at the same time a great number of Indians, men, women and children in a state of flight, running and screaming. Unsaddling our horses under a wide-spreading oak, they began to eat the wild oats, which were abundant. We were absolutely obliged to give them rest.

In less than an hour, the Indians that we had seen fleeing from us, the men I mean, were seen coming toward us from many directions. The Indian with me became alarmed. I had a gun, but he had none. By certain signs, I gave them to understand that they must not approach us, but still large numbers had come very near. We saddled our horses, jaded as they were, so as to be ready if obliged to retreat.

Four or five of the Indian chiefs, or head men, came nearer than the others. They understood no Spanish, but my Indian, who came originally from the country between Sonoma and Clear Lake, was able to understand a few words from a very old Indian. They asked what we came for. They said they had never seen white men before.

Here I felt obliged to let them know what I could do by showing them what I had done, and so I pointed to the foot of the grizzly bear which I had had with me, and told them I wanted to kill grizzly bear.

The grizzly bear were looked upon by the valley Indians with superstitious awe, also by the coast Indians. They were said to be people, but very bad people, and I have known Indians to claim that some of the old men could go in the night and talk with the bears.

I told them I did not want to kill Indians, because they were good people; but I wanted to kill grizzly bear, because they were bad people. Under the circumstances, however, I thought it prudent to mount our horses and go on, and we followed the beautiful stream down (that is to say, almost due north, that being its natural direction), knowing that it must find its way into the Sacramento Valley. To our surprise the number of Indians increased to many hundreds. In one half-day we passed seventeen large villages. They evidently came from the permanent villages and made temporary ones on this flowing stream. These Indians certainly proved anything but hostile. They were evidently in great awe of us, but showed no signs of hostility.

Hundreds were before and behind us, and the villages were made aware of our approach before we reached them. I generally found the ground carpeted with branches and weeds, and made ready for me as a place to stop and talk.

Women ran in great haste and brought baskets full of provisions of all kinds, apparently to pacify me, supposing, perhaps, that I was hungry and came to lay in a supply of provisions. In fact, I found myself almost barricaded with baskets full of acorn bread, grasshoppers, various kinds of seeds, etc. Among them, however, I found a kind of meal, made by pounding the cone or berries of juniper, which made a kind of yellowish meal, very good, and resembling gingerbread in taste. Its Indian name I well remember. viz: Mun.

The sun began to go down over the mountains and we were still traveling in the midst of a vast multitude of Indians, and every village added to the number. The old Indian before mentioned I took care to keep near me, so that through him I could communicate with the other Indians.

I should mention that before, at our first talk with the Indians, I tried to present each of the chiefs with a few beads and fancy cotton handkerchiefs (things I always carried for that purpose when

among them). Seeing a conical hill, I determined to make that my camp for the night. I told the old Indian I was going there to sleep and that all the Indians must go to their villages and not come near me in the night, as it would make me very angry if any Indians approached me in the night. In great obedience the Indians were soon all out of sight. I made a barricade near the top of the hill by piling rocks around us, and tied our horses near us. The Indian lay awake one-half of the night, and I the other half, but not an Indian appeared during the night; for we had a view in every direction from our position. But soon after daylight the mountain seemed to be alive with Indians, and we thought it best to continue our journey down the stream, passing, as before, many large villages. At noon we came to the largest of all the permanent villages. There the Indians had built a large dance-house in the usual Indian style, using long poles for rafters, and were finishing the roof, the house being circular in form, by covering with earth in the usual way.

Here for the first time and the last time in my life I saw that the Indians had procured poles for the rafters of the house by cutting down cottonwood and willow trees with stone axes, leaving the stumps a mass of bruised, woody fibers resembling well worn brooms. The stone axes bruised rather than cut.

This 4th of July, 1844, seemed to be a gala day with the Indians, or else for my benefit they made it so. Male and female were in the gayest costumes, wearing, ornaments of feathers and beads. To cap the climax, they got up the largest and gayest dance and the best singing I've ever witnessed among the Indians. I still carried the bear's foot, and thought it best to tell the Indians that my desire was to kill bear. They wanted to know what I killed the bears with, and of course I told them, "With the gun." Then they wanted to see me shoot it. This I declined to do, because I did not wish to frighten them or injure them, and bidding them good-bye, that evening I reached the Sacramento Valley. The above mentioned stream proved to be what is now known as Stony Creek. The Indian name was Capay (Capi), and by this name it went until Peter Lassen and William C. Moon, in 1845, made grindstones from material found upon one of its branches, after which it gradually became known as Stony Creek.

The next day, July 5th, 1844, I reached the Sacramento River and met Ed. A. Farwell, with two canoes, coming up the river to begin occupation of a grant located on the east side of the river and south of Chico Creek.

Finding no considerable extent of level land in the mountains, I mapped out the Larkin grant on the Sacramento River above Colusa (the location is well known), in Colusa county.

On my return to Sutter's Fort and describing the country seen and the streams along the Coast Range Mountains, the trappers believed that it was a good country in which to trap beaver. A man named Jacob Meyers raised a company of twenty or more and went to trap beaver.

The first thing they did, however, was to become alarmed at the number of Indians, and, considering them hostile without proper cause, made war on them and killed a great number. I asked why they shot the Indians, who were so friendly to me, and he said that they wore white feathers in their head-dresses or caps, and that they made a great noise, and that he considered these a sign of hostility. He said he had seen an Indian with a white feather and had shot him. I told him they ran and screamed and showed white feathers when I was there, but no one showed any signs of hostility. I was sorry he felt obliged to kill them. They caught some beaver, but not many on account of the Indians.

Before the party went out for beaver, I had made another trip, going up on the east side and returning on the west side, and having five or six white men with me. During that trip we explored to some extent the north and west forks of Stony Creek, and saw some Indians, but found them friendly. Peter Lassen started in the fall of 1843 to take possession of the ranch selected on Deer Creek, but did not get there, the rains detaining him in the Butte Mountains in what is now Sutter County, till January or February, 1844.

FIRST SENATE OF CALIFORNIA

**EARLY CALIFORNIA REMINISCENCES. By Gen. John Bidwell. V.**

Nearly all the grants of land by the Mexican government in the Sacramento Valley were made in the year 1844, and that was the year when nearly all the settlements were either begun or contemplated, but many interruptions and obstacles occurred in those days. One of them was the insurrection which resulted in the expulsion of the Mexican governor, Manuel Micheltoarena, in the spring of 1845.

Early history of California under the Mexican rule will show that it was almost a rule of the native chiefs of California to make insurrection and expel the governors sent from Mexico. To do this, almost any pretext would answer, and very little military demonstration would suffice, as the governors had nothing that they could call an army with which to make resistance. The Mexican governors were to the native chiefs of Spanish descent a kind of foreign rulers, and it did not take long after a governor was sent out to deprive him of the public revenues such as they were, and make him long for even loaves and fishes. With the exception of the priests in charge of Missions, to whom tithes were sometimes paid, the only revenue of a public nature were duties on goods sent to the coast by Boston vessels to trade for hides and tallow. These duties probably amounted per year to the nominal sum of \$200,000 or \$300,000, paid not on goods, but in the very goods upon which duties were levied. Four to six vessels per year came thus laden with goods. The Mexican tariff on a cargo of goods which cost in Boston six cents per yard, \$30,000 to \$40,000, being the first cost of the cargo, would be about the same sum, and the goods were counted out in payment of duties, as I am informed, to the Mexican officials, at 25 to 40 cents per yard, and doubtless other goods in like proportion.

Small as were these revenues, the goods thus received were greatly needed and desired by the hungry ex-officials.

Governor Micheltoarena came from Mexico, as before stated, in 1843, bringing with him some 500 soldiers, well knowing, as did every intelligent Mexican, that he could not rely on the native Californians. However, his rule was eminently just, displaying no partiality between native and naturalized citizens. To sustain these soldiers and pay other expenses of administration of course

used up all the scanty revenues, so grants of land were made to all native and naturalized citizens alike, who desired to settle and improve the country.

The prejudice against the naturalized citizens, especially those from the United States, on the part of the native Californians, was simply intense, hence it was not a difficult task for native leaders, especially such men as Castro and Alvarado, to arouse the people and to fan the prejudice into insurrection.

One of the pretexts was that the governor was giving all the lands to Americans. The insurrections began to take shape in October of that year, 1844. I went with Sutter to Monterey in that month to see the governor. We were the first to hear at San Jose that an insurrection was brewing, and learned that the place of rendezvous was to be in the San Jose Valley or beyond. To go from Sacramento to Monterey, then the capital of California, we traveled on horseback, camping out all the way, consuming about five days, the distance being about 200 miles. We gave the governor the first intelligence of the uprising. In a few days the first blow was struck by an attack upon the men guarding his cavalry horses, which were all driven away in a single night and the governor and his small army left entirely on foot. Everything was in confusion and consternation. Sutter hastened by water to the bay of San Francisco, and finding his own schooner there, lost no time in reaching the fort at Sacramento. As for myself, I remained about three or four weeks till the governor with his infantry forces marched to San Jose in pursuit of the insurgents under Castro and Alvarado. Unable to overtake them, the general had to return to Monterey. I set out to return by land to Sacramento and met the governor returning to Monterey. In an interview lasting more than half an hour, he reiterated his friendship for Americans, and told me to tell them that he would make good all titles promised them, and to counsel them to remain loyal to Mexican rule, and not take part in the insurrection. Arriving at the Mission San Jose, I there met Castro and Alvarado and all their forces. They, too, professed friendship for Sutter and the Americans, and advised them to take no part in upholding the Mexican government.

On my arrival at Sutter's Fort, I found that Americans and other foreigners had begun to come from all parts of the coast to consult in regard to their own safety on account of the insurrection. It

was unanimously agreed that our duty and our safety lay in standing by Governor Micheltorena, who had proved himself not only our friend as an impartial ruler and in promising us grants of land, but a friend to the best interests of the entire coast, so we organized and prepared to march from Sacramento to Monterey in his defense. All this took considerable time. The last week in December, 1844, however, saw us ready and on the march. Our forces, under Sutter, consisted of about ninety Americans and other foreigners, and 120 Indians armed with carbines. The white men generally were armed with rifles. We also had a few pieces of small cannon. A messenger was sent by us to the governor. He returned in due time and was sent again. His name was Pablo Guterrez. He was a native of Sinaloa, Mexico, and was friendly to the cause in which we were engaged. On the second trip he was taken prisoner, and being found to be the bearer of letters from us was hanged at a place near the present site of the town of Gilroy. The governor met us in the Salinas Valley, and it was resolved to pursue the insurgents, who fled towards Los Angeles. All the winter was occupied (it was now about the second week in January) in a march to Los Angeles.

The rebels barricaded the coast near San Buena Ventura and detained us three weeks. On the 22d of February we met and gave them battle at Cahuenga, twelve miles this side of Los Angeles. This aroused all of Los Angeles in favor of Castro and Alvarado, and Captain Bill o'Fallen, with a trapping party of thirty trappers, joined their side. I was aide-de-camp. When we saw the Americans there, we said the Mexicans and the Indians could fight it out. The Americans would not fight. I told the governor that the Americans would not come. I was made a prisoner and made to pull ropes at cannon, but I mounted a horse and ran away. They wounded five or six horses with grape shot. Sutter and I joined the governor, and they took us prisoners. Castro met Sutter and kissed him and was glad to see him. He sent us to Los Angeles.

Our men kept their word, but the other hunters and trappers fought against the governor and made him capitulate, and compelled him to leave the country. This was known as the Micheltorena war.

AUTOGRAPHS OF FIRST SENATE OF CALIFORNIA

**EARLY CALIFORNIA REMINISCENCES. By Gen. John Bidwell. VI.**

Pio Pico went in as governor and so remained until the Mexican war. Alvarado had been governor in 1841. It was now the spring of 1845. Pico made Los Angeles his capital. Governor Pico and the native Californians, for the time being, seemed satisfied with their achievement in expelling the governor, and expressed a desire to be friendly to us, and permitted all to go to Sacramento with arms, ammunitions, horses and equipments. Some of our people retraced their steps by the coast route by which we went, and some of us crossed into the Mojave Desert, and then over the mountains through the Tejon Pass into the San Joaquin Valley. I may remark here that while at Los Angeles I saw some gold and learned about gold mines that had been discovered some two or three years previously in the mountains between the Mission San Fernando and the Mojave Desert, and which were being worked to a limited extent by "Greasers" from New Mexico. (More about these mines later on.)

At the place now known as Tejon was a large Indian village. The Indians, all or most of them, had been at the Mission and spoke Spanish. The country was beautiful, the vegetation most luxuriant, the landscape brilliant with innumerable flowers, and the air laden with their fragrance.

Traveling along the San Joaquin Valley, we encountered vast numbers of wild horses. At this time and for many years previously there had been tribes of Indians inhabiting the Sierra Nevada Mountains for a considerable distance, from the Mokelumne River on the north and extending a great distance toward the south.

It was the custom of the Indians, who had become great experts in riding wild horses, and in the use of lassos, to ravage all the ranches lying between the coast and the San Joaquin Valley from the bay of San Francisco to points south of Monterey, driving off horses by the hundreds into the Sierra Nevada Mountains, and killing them for food.

On this journey of ours up the San Joaquin Valley, we encountered a band of tame horses, nearly 100 in number, and took them from the Indians who were driving them into the mountains. Such raids by the Indians into the settlements were of frequent occurrence. In the winter of 1844-5, the first settlement in the San Joaquin Valley was begun by a man named Lindley, who was engaged



to begin occupation on a grant of land made to William Gulnac of San Jose, on the east bank of the San Joaquin River. He constructed a cabin on the present site of Stockton, but when we passed the cabin was empty. The Indians had killed him. Not long after, at Sacramento, Sutter, finding out what Indians had committed the murder, sent a force to punish them, and succeeded in breaking up their village and killing fifty of them.

Fremont's arrival in March, 1844, may be called an event of some interest. He had explored in the Rocky Mountains, especially the region near Salt Lake, in the previous year (1843). Till then, Salt Lake had never been correctly laid down upon any map. Its existence was known, especially to the trappers of the Rocky Mountains, at an early day, and the early maps, some at least, indicated a body of water in that region, but much larger than Salt Lake really was. Some of them went so far as to show two great rivers, one from the south end, running southwesterly, and one from the north end, running northwesterly, into the Pacific Ocean. Such maps were consulted by me before starting for California in 1841, and friends advised me to bring tools to make canoes to descend one of these to the Pacific Ocean, should the country be found too difficult to proceed all the way by wagons.

Fremont cleared away once and forever those mysterious rivers, and, leaving the Rocky Mountains, found his way into Oregon, and in the winter of 1843-4, extended his explorations southward and east of the Sierra Nevadas opposite the bay of San Francisco and reached the Sacramento Valley at Sutter's Fort in March, 1844. Fremont in 1844 had no time to go to the coast, though many said to him: "Go and see the double redwood tree 72 feet in circumference."

On that occasion I had my big tree story to tell. I told Fremont of the big trees I had seen in the Sierra Nevadas. I was the first white man to see the mammoth trees of California, the Sequoia Gigantea.

In the spring of 1844 Sutter sent me across the Coast Range mountains and up on Cache Creek to explore for lumbering regions. Sutter needed lumber for our own use and this demand was every year growing, and hence he was making every possible effort to find a place where he could get

the best and most cheaply. It was his favorite idea to find a lumbering region on the Sacramento or Feather river, or some tributary where lumber could be brought down on rafts, for this purpose.

In the winter of 1843-4, he sent his men high up on the Sacramento River, in what is now Shasta county, and they cut a large number of logs and put them into the river, but the enterprise failed, as few of his logs reached his fort at Sacramento.

My trip to the Coast Range Mountains was also unsuccessful. A great rain storm overtook us and we attempted to ascend Cache Creek. Finding no timber, and the stream not suitable to float lumber upon, we returned.

Under Pio Pico's administration in 1845, the granting of land to the naturalized citizens was not wholly, but to a large extent, stopped. There even were many rumors that under the influence of Jose Castro, who was the commander-in-chief of the military forces, an effort might be made to expel all Americans who had unlawfully come into the country. Such danger was by no means imminent, for there were too many Americans already here for the weak government, in this distant Mexican province, to make any such attempt.

I estimate the number of Americans in California at the time to be not less than 250, scattered all along the coast from Sonoma to San Diego, and in the Sacramento Valley.

Sutter's Fort being, in case of danger, common headquarters, thus it was, when any rumors seemed worthy of credence, looking to an attack to expel Americans, they came from all points on the north of San Francisco bay, and as far south as Monterey, including San Jose and intervening ranches, and with Americans came other foreigners.

After being at Sutter's Fort for a week, or two or three, sometimes partially organizing and to some extent drilling, consulting for the common safety, and then hearing of no action upon the part of Castro, or any attempt to disturb them, they would quietly disperse and return to the places where they lived. Of course, coming to Sutter's Fort on such occasions would be kept a profound secret from the Mexican administration.

After the war and the expulsion of Governor Micheltorena, which happened to be coincident with political disturbances down in Mexico which had dethroned the ruling powers there and brought into existence a new administration of affairs, a peace commission was sent by Mexico to investigate and reconcile the troubles here, and harmonize with Mexico. The commission was re-enforced with the name of Castellero, who had come from Mexico on a similar mission of peace. This commission came with Jose Castro as far as Sutter's Fort. So jealous was Castro of Sutter and Castellero that it was almost impossible for those two to have a private conference. The commissioner, however, managed to say to Sutter that he approved his action in going to the support of Micheltorena, and of his loyalty to the Mexican government, and counseled him, whatever political disturbances might arise, always to be loyal to the Mexican Republic. He was very kindly disposed to Sutter for the part Sutter had taken with the Americans and others who joined with him and went to the support of Governor Micheltorena.

There was some talk at that time (in the fall of 1845) that the Mexican government would purchase Sutter's Fort and pay \$50,000 for it. Castellero and Castro came to Sutter's Fort by way of Sonoma, where they had been to visit General Vallejo, traveling, of course, on horseback, as it was the only mode of traveling in those days, and having an escort of twelve or fifteen soldiers. When they left they went by way of the San Joaquin Valley to San Jose, Sutter and myself accompanying them for several miles. In two or three weeks' time we heard that the mine, now New Almaden, was discovered to contain quicksilver by Castellero, and a company was formed to take possession and work it. It had been known for many years, but no one, until Castellero saw it, was intelligent enough to know what it was.

The Indians painted their faces with it by rubbing their hands on the rocks, which became covered, by exposure to air, with vermillion. Men frequently took heavy pieces of cinnabar and tried to smelt them in the blacksmith shop, and they thought the mine to be worthless.

The year 1845 was marked by more activity than any other, in making settlements of grants of land which had been given in that and in previous years.

In 1844 there were no settlements in Colusa county. In 1845 a grant of two leagues was made where the town of Colusa now is, and there was no house built until 1846 and that was built for Thomas O. Larkin by John H. Williams. I think it was in the fall of 1846. I know Williams was there in the summer of 1847, and when I visited the place and found him with a cat and horse on the grant, he had done some cultivating, notably a fine garden, abounding in watermelons of the Black Spanish variety; these I vividly remember.

This year, 1845, was memorable by reason of the coming from Oregon of a company of immigrants, of whom J. W. Marshall was one, he being the discoverer of gold on the American River in 1848, which event turned the world upside down. Other immigrants came about the same time to California across the plains.

Fremont also returned to California late in the fall of the year. He had divided his exploring party, sending the greater part to find a way into California through a pass which he imagined to exist a hundred miles or so to the south, and coming himself with the remainder, eight or ten, including the famous Kit Carson, across the Sierra Nevada Mountains, and arriving in the Sacramento Valley and camping on the American River near Sutter's Fort.

Sutter was absent at San Francisco bay. I was in charge of the fort. My first notice of Fremont's coming was by himself and Kit Carson dashing up to the fort. I of course treated them with all possible courtesy, but their demands I was unable to meet. They wanted sixteen jack mules and several saddle-horses to go to meet that part of their company which had been sent to come over the Sierra Nevada Mountains through the gorge supposed to be in the far south. They wanted also the use of the blacksmith shop to shoe their animals, as well as a supply of provisions. Mules, Sutter had not; the use of the blacksmith shop, Fremont was welcome to, but we had no coal; provisions, such as we had. I offered to furnish him. Captain Fremont became reticent, and with Kit Carson arose and left without ceremony, making the remark as he left the fort—it was told me soon after by one who heard it—that I was unwilling to accommodate him. This greatly pained me, for I knew that Sutter would wish everything possible done for Fremont, and I hastened to the camp on the American River to make every possible apology and explanation. He said with great dignity that

he was an officer of one government and Sutter an officer of another government, between which difficulties were existing; in other words, that Sutter, being a Mexican officer, sympathized with the Mexican government, and that I was merely complying with Sutter's wishes in not furnishing him what he required; "for," said he, "when I came in 1844, Sutter sent immediately and brought me fifty or sixty mules and furnished me all the supplies I required."

This compelled me to explain that Sutter had few or no mules at the time of his first coming, but it so happened that a man chanced to be passing who had about a hundred mules and Sutter was able to buy them from the owner and pay for them, whereas he had not been able to get returns from Fremont's drafts to reimburse him, and that no one here or anywhere near had mules. Also that Sutter was much more depressed and circumscribed in his circumstances, owing to vast debts which he had not been able to meet, than he was on Fremont's first arrival in 1844.

Fremont' however, remained to see Sutter when he returned, which would be in about a week's time.

Sutter was unable to do more than I had promised, but wished to console Fremont in every possible way, so invited him to dinner with him at the fort; in fact, he went to Fremont's camp and accompanied him and Kit Carson to the fort, having previously arranged that when he drew near with Fremont, all the old cannon, about forty in number, should be fired, and give him a grand salute. The guns were fired, sure enough, dangerous, old, rusty pieces as they were, and made a terrific noise, and Fremont had the full benefit, for a large gun in front of him blew off his hat and I think came very near taking off his head. I presided at the dinner table.

Fremont decided to go to San Francisco bay and get an outfit there. Sutter sent him down in his launch from Sacramento, that being the only way except a long way around on horseback, and swimming the streams, all of which were swollen in the winter and spring time. Provisions, when there were any furnished, were such as the launch usually carried. The sailors were Indians, but the captain was white, or Kanaka. It took a week or two to reach the bay while the wind was contrary,

but no matter how long the passage was the price was uniformly \$5.00. There was no charge for provisions, but the passengers furnished their own bedding.

Fremont had a free pass. When he reached the bay he found it impossible to get mules or anything, and he ordered the vessel, with eight men, immediately back to Sacramento. Fremont's party got out of provisions, but staid as near where Fremont had told them as possible, and got provisions from the Indians. They staid as long as they could, but when the provisions gave out they went to the San Joaquin Valley and there found the others, and his exploring party was again united.

The Indians' provision was a kind of meal. The men were fond of it. It was rich, pleasant, and spicy to the taste. The calls upon the Indians being urgent, caused them to become rather careless in grinding the aforesaid meal, and Fremont's men discovered legs, wings, and heads of grasshoppers in it. The meal was simply grasshoppers pounded and pulverized in the usual way. Their fondness for the meal from that time rapidly waned, but not before some had become quite sleek and fat.

#### **EARLY CALIFORNIA REMINISCENCES. By Gen. John Bidwell. VII.**

The winter of 1845-6 was now here. Fremont when he visited Monterey to see Thomas O. Larkin who was the American Consul, was made acquainted with Jose Castro, who was commander in chief, as before stated, of the Mexican military forces in California. The usual military courtesies were exchanged. Fremont asked and obtained permission to camp, with his men, in the San Joaquin Valley, where they could live on game and be distant from the settlement, and thus create no apprehension or disturbances among the people. He also asked leave of Castro, when Spring should open, to extend his explorations as far southward as the Colorado River. Hence the surprise of Castro when Fremont, in March or April, appeared with his whole force of about 60 men, well armed, in the Salinas Valley. Castro had not understood the permission to mean coming with armed forces into the settlement, and he confronted Fremont with such a military force as he had, perhaps two or three hundred men, before which Fremont retreated, and barricaded himself in the Gavilan Mountain. After remaining several days, Castro in the meantime making no attack, but remaining plainly in sight, and evidently increasing his forces, Fremont beat a hasty retreat in the night, and

got into the San Joaquin Valley, and thence in great haste to and by Sutter's Fort, up the Sacramento Valley along the way to Oregon.

After he had been gone about three weeks a bearer of dispatches to Fremont came from Washington through Mexico, and via the Sandwich Islands to Monterey in California, thence to the Bay of San Francisco, and the Sacramento River, inquiring as to Fremont's whereabouts. This bearer of dispatches was Lieut. A. A. Gillespie, of the United States Marine service. He had committed the dispatches to memory, and destroyed them before entering Mexico, and re-wrote them on the way to the Sandwich Islands, that being the nearest practicable route, at the time, to reach the coast of California.

I was the first man met by Gillespie. When I ascended the Sacramento river his first inquiry was for Fremont. No one knew the purpose of his visit. Sutter furnished him with means to overtake Fremont, which he did at Klamath Lake, in Modoc County, and Fremont immediately returned to the Sacramento Valley. Of course he had not forgotten the circumstances of Castro's having confronted him in the Salinas Valley, and caused him to change all his plans, and beat a hasty retreat toward Oregon.

Fremont reached Butte Mountains, now in Sutter County, and encamped. Hunters and settlers in the valley immediately flocked to his camp to see what was up. It so happened at the time that a band of horses, belonging, in part, to the Mexican forces, had been collected on the north of the Bay of San Francisco, and, in charge of Lieut. Arce, of the Mexican service, was on the way to Castro, going from Sonoma by way of Sacramento to the Santa Clara Valley. Here was an opportunity for Fremont to have revenge on Castro. He sent and siezed those horses, which was an act of war, and precipitated at once hostilities on this coast. Fremont, it is presumed, did this on the strength of his dispatches, the purport of which, so far as we have been able to learn, was that war was imminent between the United States and Mexico. Before Fremont knew this, however, his first act had actually precipitated the war, which he was obliged to follow up by sending and capturing Sonoma, and taking the leading men, viz: General Vallejo, Jacob P. Leese, and Victor Prudon, prisoners, and bringing them to Sacramento and Sutter's Fort, and raiding generally all the settlers

on the north of the Bay of San Francisco, with all the forces at his command. It was more than a month after the first blow was struck that Fremont, or any one on the coast, actually knew that war existed between the United States and Mexico.

Commodore Sloat had heard at Mazatlan, through Mexican sources, that war existed, and presuming it to be so, he sailed to Monterey and raised the American flag. The British man-of-war, Collingwood, touched at Monterey just after the American flag had been raised, and her commander said, that if he had reached Monterey first, he should have raised the British flag.

While Fremont and all his men were scouring the country on the Sonoma side of the Bay, I went to Sonoma with Lieutenant Bartlett, of the United States Navy, who came to Sutter's Fort to learn what Fremont meant by the war which he was carrying on, and there met Fremont soon after he was returning to San Rafael. It is also a matter of history that Commodore Sloat simultaneously, with his artillery at Monterey, heard what Fremont had done on the north of San Francisco Bay, and was influenced in his action by supposing that Fremont had later advices from Washington than himself. As it happened, and in due time was known to all, war with Mexico had already been declared.

Previously, however, to the coming of the intelligence, and while I was still at Sonoma, the war which Fremont waged was, as Fremont well knew, premature and without authority, but as it had been begun, to carry it on was a necessity, and to find an excuse for it was an obligation. Hence, we were all called together by Fremont at Sonoma, on the 4th or 5th of July, 1846, to consider what, under the circumstances, was to be done. We all felt that we could not go back. Fremont was willing to help all he could, providing it could be done under the pretext of defending American residents here in California against pretended threats of expulsion by the Mexican authorities. A committee was appointed to report a plan to a meeting at a later hour on the same day. That committee consisted of Wm. B. Ide, who had been assigned to be the leader, before Fremont's arrival at Sonoma, of the forces which took and held Sonoma. Mr. Ide was enthusiastic for proclaiming the country independent of Mexico, and every day he put something on paper, and posted it on the flag-staff at Sonoma, which papers were known at the time as Ide's proclamations.



While waiting for Fremont to come, a man by the name of Wm. Todd thought it necessary, whether in earnest or not I do not know, to raise a banner, so he painted upon a piece of cotton cloth, with red paint, the representation of a grizzly bear, and raised it to the top of the Mexican flag-staff. The Mexicans, when they looked at it, called it “coche,” that is to say “pig”, supposing the figure to be meant for a pig; and that famous and now wellknown, bear flag was one of the incidents connected with the movement now, but not then, known as the Bear Flag Movement.

I said a committee was appointed and that Ide was one; P. B. Reading was another, and I was the third member. We met, consulted and disagreed as to what was to be done. Ide wanted all his long proclamations made a part of the report. Reading wanted something less, and finally we three agreed to report separately, and asked Lieutenant Gillespie to select without knowing whose the reports were. He selected my report, which was unanimously adopted, and signed by Fremont, Gillespie, all of Fremont's men ( the exploring party), and also Americans and others at Sonoma, who were willing to join in gaining and maintaing the independence of California. Fremont with all his forces, started next day for Sacramento, and a few days later was on his way to Monterey to meet Commodore Sloat, and co-operate with the naval forces at that point. At noon, on the day after he left Sacramento, some men who had joined us and who were not present at Sonoma, here signed the plan of organization adopted at Sonoma. This was the last time I saw that paper.

As soon as we reached Monterey and knew for a certainty that Commodore Stockton was to command the naval forces on the Coast, and that war between the United States and Mexico was a certainty, there was no further need of pretending to make war in defense of the American settlers. The organization of a battalion of mounted riflemen, under Fremont, was begun, and immediate steps were taken to hold California in the name of the United States.

The remainder of this difficulty is a matter of common history, and I took little further part in it.

Some of Gen. Bidwell's opinions concerning Gen. Fremont seem to Out West not justified by the records. But since they are the frank expression of an honest man who took part in the event, they are given place in these pages.—ED.

## LETTER FROM JAMES W. MARSHALL. THE GOLD DISCOVERER

### **EARLY CALIFORNIA REMINISCENCES. By Gen. John Bidwell.**

VIII.—(Concluded.)

In those early California days stories were frequently circulated to the effect that mines of gold were known to the missionaries, the knowledge having been communicated by Indians, and that the missionaries suppressed all such information, believing mining to be adverse to the great missionary enterprises. I placed no credence in it. My experience has shown me that man, under all circumstances, is thinking about, or looking for gold. Before I started for California, reports were current along the western frontier that hunters and trappers in the Rocky Mountains had found gold, or had knowledge that it existed. This thing was related to me, that a certain hunter in the Rocky Mountains in crossing a stream picked up a rock that answered for a whetstone, and carried it in his pocket. He afterward found in the same pocket a piece of gold. This fact led him to believe that there was gold where he had picked up the stone. On the strength of this, and similar stories, men searched at various times and in various places, with the idea that, although not yet found, gold actually existed. When passing through the Rocky Mountains we frequently talked about gold, remembering the stories we had heard before leaving civilization. One man proposed to me to stop in the Rocky Mountains and let the company go on, and that we remain, living as best we could, to look for gold.

When we reached California the same ideas were current everywhere. It was talked that gold and silver existed in the mountains, and on the seacoast at Bodega. I remember seeing great quantities of yellow mica, almost as brilliant as gold, and I went so far as to test it to see whether or not it was gold. Before the mine at the place now called New Almaden was known to be quicksilver, the story was current that quicksilver existed in California, and one story in regard to it was this. A man hunting on Mt. Diablo became thirsty and seeing something shining, which he thought was water, hastened to it and attempted to drink it. It disappeared mysteriously. Relating the circumstance, the conclusion was general that it was quicksilver.

When speaking of the discovery of gold in California, people generally have reference to the discovery by Marshall, in 1848, and lose sight of the former discovery, in 1841, in the mountains lying between the Mojave Desert and Mission San Fernando. A few natives of New Mexico worked to a limited extent for several years, selling what little gold they found at Los Angeles. I myself visited these mines in March, 1845, and saw them working them. A few days previous I had seen some of the gold in Los Angeles. Some pieces weighed a half an ounce, were very smooth, and free as the average gold, but the mines were by no means rich, at least worked as they were at that time. In fact, from the best information I could gain, the average wages would not exceed 25 cents per day. Previous to this time, however, in 1843, there arrived on the Coast a very learned and intelligent gentleman named Dr. Sandalls, who, I believe, was a Swede by birth, but had been educated in London, and seemed to be well versed in the natural sciences. His history, as I remember it, was something like this. He, in company with a friend, who had accompanied Von Humboldt on some of his voyages, went to Brazil, intending to make it their home for life. There they passed several years, having purchased plantations adjoining and greatly improving them. However, the death of his friend, and political disturbances, decided Dr. Sandalls to sell out all his interest, which he did, receiving \$189,000 therefor. He then went to Mexico and engaged in mining enterprises, investing a considerable portion of his means, and being robbed of the remainder. While in Mexico, as well as Brazil, he had gained considerable knowledge of gold mining. Having lost all his fortune, he returned to England, and under the auspices of his son-in-law, a nobleman, he set off on a voyage around the world, collecting specimens of botany, mineralogy, etc. The vessel in which he sailed touched at the port of San Francisco, and he came as far into the interior as the Sacramento Valley, and of course was the guest of Captain Sutter at Sacramento. Sutter, struggling as he always was against adverse fortune, begged Dr. Sandalls to find him a gold mine, but the doctor told him never to think of gold mining, and told him the experience he had had in Mexico, and what he had seen in Brazil, and said that gold mining countries, of all in the world, were the most undesirable. He concluded by strongly advising him never to think of mining for gold, and telling him that he already had an inexhaustible gold mine in the rich and fertile soil. Dr. Sandalls, however, came up the Sacramento Valley as far as Chico Creek, coming and returning through the Butte Mountains. I asked him if he thought there was any gold in the country. He said he thought

there was; but, judging by the Butte Mountains, and thinking them to be a fair sample, or indication, of the character of the mountains on either side of the Valley, he thought that the gold mines would not be rich enough to pay for the working.

In the winter of 1843-4, I myself was told of the existence of gold on the Bear River. A Mexican named Pablo Guterrez was in Sutter's employ. He had known of gold mining as carried on in Mexico. Going into the mountains on the Bear River he saw what he considered unmistakable signs of gold. A few days later I had him go and show me the place and signs, which were coarse, heavy, black sand, red gravelly quartz, etc. Of course I importuned him to try and get gold but I lacked the means. It was indispensable to a placer-miner in Mexico that he should have a wooden bowl of a certain shape. Pablo was sure nothing of the kind could be had, or be made here. The first proposition was that he should return to Mexico and get a bowl, I helping to pay the expenses. He and I to keep the gold discovery a secret between us. Later, fearing he could not be trusted to go to Mexico, lest perchance he should remain with his relations and friends, I made another proposition, which he gladly accepted, to wit, both of us to save our earnings for a year or two, then going by vessel to Boston, where I assured him the ingenious Yankees could make a bowl or anything which might be required. This was in February or March, 1844.

In the Fall of the year 1844, during the insurrection against Governor Micheltoreno, known as the Micheltoreno War, this Pablo Guterrez, being friendly to the cause espoused by the American residents of the Valley, was sent with dispatches to advise the Governor that we were coming to his assistance. Once he went and returned, and was sent the second time, and while on such journey, to join the Governor in Salinas Valley, near Monterey, he was taken prisoner by the insurgents and hanged to a tree near Gilroy. This of course put an end to the prospect of making gold discoveries with a wooden bowl.

However, after visiting the mines worked by the Mexicans in 1845, as before mentioned, and returning to the Sacramento Valley, I at once went into the Sierra Mountains, about 40 miles from Sutter's Fort, with a view of looking for gold. In fact, I started to go into a certain deep gulch in the heart of Dry Creek, south of Consumne River, but circumstances prevented me from reaching

the stream. A few years afterwards gold was discovered by Marshall, and 1000 people went into the Sierra Nevada Mountains in the vicinity of that gulch, and found it wonderfully rich. Some miners took pint cupfuls out before breakfast.

In regard to the gold discovery by Marshall in 1848, the enterprise which led to it was Sutter's. He had great need of lumber, and his needs were increasing every year. Frequently, for years before, he had sent parties in different directions to find a practicable site to build a saw-mill, desiring if possible to locate it on some stream or tributary of the Sacramento or Feather Rivers, whereby they could be floated down into the valley. I was sent once, in 1846, up the Feather River, and explored the country nearly as far as the place now called Cherokee Mine, in Butte County. Other parties had frequently been sent out on the same mission. My return from the search for a mill site was simultaneous with Fremont's return to the Butte Mountains, before mentioned, and the time when the blow was struck which began the Mexican War in California. That, of course, put an end to saw-mill enterprises by Sutter, for a time.

The war being over, however, Sutter, in the Summer of 1847, sent Marshall to find a mill site. He explored the Sierra Nevada Mountains, and reported favorably on a place now called Coloma. No man, I think, but a crazy man, or just such a man as Marshall, would have selected such a place at such a time, as best and most suitable for obtaining lumber. To raft lumber down the south fork of the American River was simply out of the question, but by hauling it a short distance he imagined he could do go. Coloma was distant more than 50 miles in the mountains, and much of the way was most difficult hills, which rendered it impracticable to transport the lumber by wagons. The building of the mill, however, was a great success, as a gold discovery, but in no other respect.

The picking up of the first piece of gold by Marshall was the result of an accident, or the mistake made by Marshall himself, because the place located for the wheel was lower than the rocky bar below it. This made it necessary, after the mill was built, and ready to run, as he thought, to dig a race, or channel, through the rocky bar below the mill to allow the water freely to escape after it had gone through the wheel. In digging this race the water was turned on every night to permit the current to wash away the sand and light gravel. In this clear, limpid current Marshall saw the first

piece of gold. This discovery gave impetus to trade, commerce, immigration, and almost everything else throughout the world, and was brought about by two men of most peculiar characteristics—Sutter, so confiding as to believe Marshall's report of the feasibility of making a saw-mill where I feel sure no sane man would advise, in the light of a profitable lumber enterprise; and Marshall, so wild and erratic in judgment about such matters as to select a site most difficult, impracticable and unprofitable. Yet the two together by this means turned the world upside down. Of course, I believe the matter was providential.

## RECEIPT FOR DUES. CALIFORNIA PIONEER SOCIETY

### THE PASSPORT OF 1841

### **TRANSLATION OF ORIGINAL PASSPORT**

From

Gen. M. G. Vallejo to John Bidwell.

Mariano G. Vallejo, General Ambassador of the Department and Director of Colonization of the Northern Frontier.

For as much as John Bidwell of the United States of North America and State of Missouri, has presented a certificate of good conduct and seeks to obtain legal residence in this country as required by law; he shall be allowed to travel freely in this jurisdiction and he shall be accorded by the local authorities, pass-ports for the various places where he may wish to stay. This will serve him as a provisional letter of security until he obtain from the Government a permanent one, which he will have to demand.

Consequently the Civil and Military authorities of the Districts where he will present himself with pass-ports of the representative judges, will not obstruct his transit nor the exercise of his profession.

They will also render him the assistance he may need according to value.

San Jose, 9 bre 18, 1841. M. G. VALLEJO.

THE SUTTER “GENERAL TITLE”

**TRANSLATION OF SUTTER GENERAL LAND TITLE.**

Manuel Micheltorena, Brigadier General of the Mexican Army, Adjutant-General of the same, Governor, Commandant-General and Inspector of the Department of the Californias.

This Supreme Departmental Government, not being able at this time, on account of being excessively occupied, to extend one by one the respective titles to all the citizens who have solicited lands with a favorable report to Senor Don Augustus Sutter, Captain and Judge, charged with the jurisdiction of New Helvetia and Sacramento, in the name of the Mexican Nation I grant by these letters to them and their families the ownership of the respective lands described in their petitions and maps, to all and to each one of those who may have solicited and obtained the favorable report of said Don Augustus Sutter, up to the day of this date, so that no one can dispute their ownership, —a copy of this, which Senor Sutter shall soon after give them, serving as a formal title, with which they will present themselves to this Government to have extended to them the same title in due form and on corresponding stamped paper and that in due testimony hereof for all time I give this document which shall be acknowledged and respected by all authorities, civil, and military, of the Mexican Nation in this and the other departments, it being duly authenticated by the Military seal and that of the Government in Monterey on the twenty-second day of December, one thousand eight hundred and forty-four. MANUEL MICHELTORENA.

I certify that this is a copy. New Helvetia, June 8, 1846. J. A. SUTTER.

LETTER FROM JOHN A. SUTTER

**ADDRESS OF MAJOR JOHN BIDWELL.**

Transactions of the State Agricultural Society. 1860.

At eight o'clock last evening the President of the Society called the large concourse of visitors on the main floor to order, and after premising the importance of remaining still during the exercises, to the end that the speaker's voice might be heard throughout the hall, he introduced the orator of the evening, Major John Bidwell of Chico, who proceeded to deliver the following:

#### ANNUAL ADDRESS.

Mr. President and Members of the State Agricultural Society:—Nineteen years ago this magnificent valley was scarcely known to the civilized world, with a single exception and that exception was this very place, Sutter's Fort—it was all a wilderness, inhabited by a race of human beings almost as wild as the deer, and less capable of civilization perhaps, than any other on the American continent. This place had been selected by that distinguished pioneer—John A. Sutter—who was planting the germ of civilization by beginning to cultivate the soil. He had begun to erect walls for self-defense, and had already in operation that most useful of all establishments to the farmer and pioneer—a blacksmith's shop. Other useful branches of industry were in the very germ of incipiency. Horses and cattle—those indispensable attendants of man in all countries, new as well as old—had been brought hither; but they were nearly as wild as the elk and antelope, with which they were then beginning to dispute the possession of the plains, and which they were often seen grazing harmoniously when undisturbed, or in coming—led flight at the approach of danger. Leaving this place, you saw no habitation, no settlement; no sign of civilization was to be seen until you passed beyond the coast range of mountains. To the north, nothing in the shape of human advancement till you had wound your way for nearly a thousand miles to the Columbia River. To the east, more than fifteen hundred miles separated this point from the frontiers of Missouri and Arkansas, and a thousand from the borders of New Mexico. Sacramento even then began to exhibit indications of future importance. It was a place of protection to all who came to the country. It became the destination and home of the early immigration across the plains. It brought to notice the existence of these rivers, these fertile plains, and these mountains. It was a point of interest to be visited by every traveler who came to the Pacific Coast. It was the nucleus of a gradually expanding settlement



which was destined to furnish the means of enacting important results to the whole country. Here the first blow was struck which began the war, revolutionized the whole country, and gave it to the United States. From this place emanated the enterprise which unlocked, for the use of the world, that vast magazine of treasure, the Sierra Nevada mountains.

When we call to mind the early discovery of the western coast of America, we can but express our astonishment that California should have remained so long unnoticed and really unknown. Discovered in fifteen hundred and forty-two by the Spaniards, visited by Sir Francis Drake in fifteen hundred and seventy-nine, and by Viscayno in sixteen hundred and two, more than one hundred and sixty years elapsed before the Missions of upper California were established, or the coast frequented again. It seems almost incredible, while European nations poured in upon the New World, peopled even the most desolate portions of the Atlantic slope from Patagonia to Labrador, and, penetrating the wilderness' depths, spread their colonies alike over frozen and sultry climes, and from ocean to ocean in South and Central America and the greater part of Mexico; and while boundless forests of North America almost defied the conquering march of even Anglo-Saxon enterprise, requiring of the hardy pioneer the labor of a life time to clear and reduce to proper cultivation even one hundred, or two hundred, acres—that California with her millions of acres already cleared, of surpassing fertility and productiveness, and clothed in richest verdure, unequaled in loveliness of scenery and salubrity of climate, should have so long remained unnoticed. But time evolves all things, and the veil which had shrouded her lovely features was about to be removed. The Anglo-American had for years been accumulating in the country; the Mexican War had aroused in the American people the spirit of adventure and paved the way for the eventful period when the golden key was turned; the gold was discovered the very month and year (February, eighteen hundred and forty-eight), in which the treaty was consummated between the United States and Mexico. Wars are evils to be dreaded; but it often comes to pass in the dispensation of an inscrutable Providence, that good comes out of evil. So with the Mexican war. It broke down the barrier which separated the Atlantic from the Pacific and shut out the light of civilization from this distant coast. A new era began with the close of the war, and California, which had so long been discovered and really so little, or so unfavorably known, was now known

in every land and to every people. Uncounted thousands by sea and by land rushed to our shores—Europeans, traveling in opposite directions, some by the Mediterranean and Red Seas, or around the Cape of Good Hope, and some by New York and the Isthmus of Panama, or around Cape Horn, met each other here; and thus the streams of immigration, from the North and the South, across the plains and over the broad Pacific, commingling like opposing currents in the ocean, created a maelstrom which absorbed everything within its influence. In this whirl of the political and social elements the prospect of acquiring sudden and almost fabulous wealth seemed to control every other consideration, and produced a state of things wholly anomalous. Here were brought into striking contrast scenes of order, good will, and the noblest acts of friendship, against anarchy, outrage and crime. Men were good without compulsion, and took no advantage of absence of law to defraud each other, and malefactors received sentence and execution on the same day, or perhaps within the same hour, or escaped the penalty due to their crimes altogether. But I will not dwell to describe the various phases of order, or tumult, consequent upon the sudden influx of a heterogeneous population which greatly exceeded in numbers and overwhelmed the former inhabitants; and that, too, at a time when the former laws and customs of the country had been invaded and almost broken up, and before a new government had been established in their stead. It will be sufficient to say, that liberty-loving, law-abiding, sentiment, and that peculiar adaptability to self-government so characteristic of the American people, were in the ascendant and naturally tended to organization. And in due time order was brought out of chaos; a State government was created and put in motion and California added a new star to the bright galaxy of the Confederation.

We have now fairly set out upon our career as an independent State, and its guidance and destiny, with the momentous consequences, are committed to our charge. Previous to the Mexican war, the white population of California were confined principally to a narrow belt—from twenty to thirty miles wide—along the coast, extending from Russian River to San Diego. They were generous and hospitable, living in a state of pastoral civilization, and had made but little advancement in agriculture. The population at that time could not have exceeded twenty-five or thirty thousand, and from that small beginning, what do we now behold! It may be said that we began in eighteen hundred and forty-eight with almost nothing; and in the short space of twelve years we have

promoted agriculture, developed our mineral resources, established manufactures, and created commerce; we have increased in population, and in all the branches of human industry which go to make up the wealth and contribute to security, independence and well being, of a nation, till we are entitled to take a high rank by the side of the proudest of our sister States.

The principles of political economy require that a nation should produce all the necessaries, conveniences, ornaments, and luxuries of life, in order to guard against the contingencies of war and famine. And thus California, although one of the sovereign States, and entitled as such to the protection of the National Government, should, on account of her distant and almost isolated position, become more self-sustaining and self-reliant than any other member of the Federal Union. It is, therefore, a matter of congratulation to know that, although in the beginning of our existence as a State, we are not only advancing, but have really accomplished much, however much remains to be done.

From eighteen hundred and forty-eight to eighteen hundred and fifty-three, we were dependent on importation from abroad for almost everything, even the staff of life. Since that time our home productions have been, as I will show, constantly and successfully marching onward. Thus, in eighteen hundred and fifty-three we imported four hundred and ninety-eight thousand seven hundred and forty barrels of flour. How stands the case now? We are able to export half a million ourselves. In eighteen hundred and fifty-three we imported eighty thousand one hundred and eighty-six bags of wheat—now the scales have turned, and we are able to export. In eighteen hundred and fifty-three we imported sixteen thousand two hundred and eighty-one barrels of beef; in eighteen hundred and fifty-nine, only four thousand eight hundred and seven. In eighteen hundred and fifty-three we imported two hundred and ninety-four thousand and sixty-five bags of barley; in eighteen hundred and fifty-nine we exported two hundred and ninety-five thousand eight hundred and fifty-two bags, and thereby exceeded the amount imported six years before. In oats, the difference in our favor is still greater. Imported in eighteen hundred and fifty-three, one hundred and four thousand nine hundred and fourteen bags, and exported in eighteen hundred and fifty-nine two hundred and eighteen thousand six hundred and forty-eight bags. The importations of pork in eighteen hundred and fifty-three, amounted to fifty-one thousand one hundred and sixty-nine

barrels; in eighteen hundred and fifty-nine, to twenty thousand four hundred and forty-four barrels. Thus, it is seen, as we become able to supply ourselves with these necessaries, the importation of them declines. The same may be said of everything which we are now actually producing, and it is to be hoped will, at no distant period, be said of everything that our varied soil and climate are able to produce, and thereby cut off the immense drafts upon the precious metals to pay for things which we ought to sell and not to purchase. The mines of California have yielded to this time not less than six hundred millions of dollars, of which over four hundred millions have been coined in the United states. How much of this sum now remains in California? Probably not exceeding ten millions. If we wish to construct railroads, or other great improvements, where shall we find the capital to accomplish them. The answer must be, from abroad. And yet this same money was carried from our shores, and a large proportion of it to pay for articles which can and ought to be produced here, and some of which could and ought to be dispensed with. What can explain the complaint throughout the farming and mining region—the general scarcity of money—unless it be that the gold which is constantly flowing from our mines is sent away to pay for importations.

If we were to cease to cultivate the soil and depend as formerly on supplies from abroad, the additional exportation of treasure would drain the last dollar from the whole country. We have now arrived at a point which enables us to see that the mines would almost ceased to be worked, and the golden fountain which supplies the world with currency dried up, were it not for the products already derived from agricultural industry. And the same point of observation enables us to see, further, that our agricultural prosperity is dependent on the mines for a market, as is also the manufacturing and mercantile, showing a mutual dependence on each other. They were established at the same time, have grown up together, one has promoted the other, and this society in its wisdom extends like encouragement to all of them.

But in every well regulated State, agriculture must ever be deemed the paramount interest, because it furnishes the necessaries of life, food and raiment, on which all depend, and without which no government, or society, can exist. It is a safeguard against the contingencies of war and famine, and should ever be the pride of the people and receive the fostering care of the government. I stated that we had already accomplished much, and were still progressing. But we must not be content to

barely progress, and rely upon the fertility of our soil without an effort to improve it. It is true our advantages are great. We have millions of acres unsurpassed in fertility, producing grain almost spontaneously; and yet it does not become us to look always to the fairest side of things, for there is no country capable of a higher degree of improvement, or that will better reward the labor bestowed upon it, than California. We were never made to be idle, and it is a blessing that we can find so much to do, because we require exercise to promote our health, and occupation to make us contented. All that California needs is intelligent labor to make it what nature designed it should be, the most delightful abode of man on earth. To carry out the great purposes we have in view, we must inquire what we want and what we can do. In many things we may judge of the future by the past, but our early history is in many respects exceptional to general rules.

We want accessions of industrious people, not to come with inflated hopes and extravagant anticipations based upon the prices and chances of eighteen hundred and forty-nine—those days are gone, never to return—but come with their families and household goods and all they hold most dear, to settle down permanently and make and call this country their home; to throw away the idea of sudden riches, which is to come by chance, and then of leaving the country; and first seek to obtain a comfortable living and educate their children—nothing more. Such would soon find their prospects based on something more substantial than the fleeting realities of eighteen hundred and forty-nine. With the frugality and industry required to make a comfortable living in the Atlantic States, in a few years they would find their means, however small at first, expanding to easy circumstances and finally to opulence. The development of vast mining regions and of the wonderful capabilities of our soil, the establishment and growth of home manufactures, and the expansion of our commerce, are all intimately connected with the question of population. It is true, we produce a sufficiency, even a surplus, of some things; but we seem prone to extremes and inconsistencies. For instance, we have this year raised twice as much wheat as we know what to do with, and more than can be sold, even at ruinous rates, because there is but a limited demand: our home market is not adequate, because we produce too much of one thing and not enough of another; and we have done this, too, when labor was up to thirty, forty, and in harvest, fifty dollars per month, and wheat worth at the same time only sixty to ninety cents a bushel. These things,

however, will eventually regulate themselves, on the principle of supply and demand, but intelligent foresight could materially abridge the time. But we want an increase of intelligent labor, not only to enhance our market at home, but to enable us to supply those articles which we do not produce at all, or in sufficient quantity for the increasing demand.

There is no reason why we cannot supply ourselves with the thousands of barrels, boxes, hogsheads, and casks, of dried apples, peaches, nuts, raisins, and other fruits which are constantly imported hither. It will not do to say that we cannot raise apples in California, for it is too well known that our mountains, the country along our extended sea coast, and numerous intermediate valleys, produce in abundance the finest apples in the world. Even this valley, once thought to be too warm for the apple, produces many of the best varieties in abundance and great perfection. Our experience must be our guide in selecting the kinds best adapted to particular localities. On my own farm, in a black alluvial soil, and where, during a portion of the day, the sun beams down with almost tropical heat, I have found the Early Harvest, Summer Pearmain, and Rhode Island Greening, to do well, and about thirty other varieties give flattering indications of success. No one who is a witness here, or who is acquainted with the fruit-producing capabilities of California, will be so hazardous as to say that all the staple and other fruits of temperate and semi-tropical climes cannot be raised here better than in any other State of the Union, for your loaded tables, bending under the luscious gifts of Pomona, would confute him. Almonds grow to perfection here, and can be raised almost as easily as peaches and in quantities to supply all the markets on the Pacific Ocean. We can also grow the Persian Walnut, or Maderia Nut, and without doubt the Filbert also. The cranberry can doubtless be raised here. It grows in abundance in Oregon, near the mouth of the Columbia River, and is cultivated with success on the marshy lands of the New England States. High in our Sierras are to be found similar marshy meadows, as well as similar climate—increased altitude corresponding to higher latitude so that we can not only produce the cranberry, but possess the conditions of soil and climate adapted to almost every desirable fruit and production known to the civilized world.

California is emphatically the land of the vine; and can there be any doubt that we can produce the finest wines? This is an important question, because we are actually importing in casks, barrels,

baskets and cases, millions of gallons every year. And yet it is admitted that there is not a land beneath the sun better suited to grape culture than California. The name of Los Angeles is as famous for wine and for the grape as that of California for gold. But the grape flourishes well everywhere, and its cultivation is being extended all over the State.

But I must not here omit to state that laudable and, it is to be hoped, well remunerated enterprise has already begun the good work, and sent abroad an article which compares favorably and is able to compete with the best wines in Europe.

Of peaches and pears it would be vain to attempt description that would be credited abroad—to be appreciated they must be seen. No country can equal much less surpass them. The unbounded enterprise of our horticulturists, has done wonders in supplying the country with these as well as all other kinds of fruit, and to them the gratitude of the State is due for a large share of her prosperity and renown. No branch of industry yields a greater share of the comforts and luxuries with which our state abounds than horticulture, and none which it should foster more, or on which it should rely for future advancement.

We are importing a hundred thousand dollars in figs and raisins almost every year, which can and should, and, by the aid of horticultural enterprise, will be with us as a home production.

We have not less than a million head of cattle, and our plains, pastures, and even highways, are beginning to swarm with porcine life, and yet we export one million dollars annually to pay for butter, and five hundred thousand dollars for lard.

We want a permanent population, and the faster they come the sooner we shall be able to remedy all these things and supply not only our own demands, but have a surplus to export and exchange for those necessaries, tea, sugar, coffee, and other tropical productions which may not be found a profitable staple suited to the conditions of the soil and climate of our latitude.

But of all the products which bounteous nature affords for the use of man, none can rank in importance with the grasses, embracing as they do, the cereals; and of these, that which is to us the

staff of life leads all the rest. In the production of wheat, no country can claim to equal the Pacific Coast of North America—California and Oregon. No land beneath the star-lit canopy can exhibit such proof of the especial favor of Ceres. If we sow, we are sure to reap, and, as often as any way, we reap without sowing at all. Six months of almost unbroken sunshine are given for harvest. With all these favors from the gods above, nothing would invite us to idleness—man must furnish what the gods have left undone.

A vast field is presented for the display of all our faculties, and munificent rewards await the bidding of intelligent and skillful labor. But this most valuable of all the cereals is subject to a blight or disease, called the “black ball” or “smut”, which almost threatens its existence. Whole fields are swept away. Many remedies have been proposed, but, on account of our ignorance of the cause, they are partial not specific—and thus our knowledge on this, as on many important questions relating to agriculture, is altogether empirical. And it will not do to anticipate a perfect cure until we know the cause. Its sudden appearance in California is worthy of remark. From the year eighteen hundred and forty-one to the present time I have been familiar with the cultivation of grain in this country. Its first appearance, at least in the region where I reside, was in eighteen hundred and fifty-four, and it originated in a field sown with Australian seed. But every kind of wheat seems subject to it, unless it be the Turkish Flint. Even the grass which borders fields badly affected with the smut becomes affected the same as the wheat itself. Experience and observation have shown that wheat imported from Chile and Australia escapes the ravages of the smut, for one, two, and sometimes three years. But after that, as if they had exhausted some vital principle of the soil, essential to the perfect grain, and having asked in vain the husbandman to supply the want, they offer him only what he merits, ashes instead of fruit. The Sonora Wheat will do well also for one, sometimes two, years, and then, as if dissatisfied with the conditions of its new location, refuses to put forth its strength and perfect its grain at the demands of an exacting master. Or it may be that dame Earth, wont to be arrayed in native vestments of green and variegated hues, submits awhile with grace to foreign rule, and then fatigued with the monotony of similar attire, puts forth her strength to change the fashion. Nature seems to call for change, and all experience has shown that in husbandry changes are beneficial. Wheat has been subject to this destructive disease in different countries, and



various remedies prescribed. More than sixty years ago English farmers were accustomed to wash their seed in lye of wood ashes, lime water, or a solution of arsenic, and it was thought with perfect success. And farmers, both of Europe and America, have from time to time, as one remedy would seem to fail, substituted others with beneficial results, such as soap-suds, slackened lime, salt water, chamber lye, caustic lye and blue vitriol. The last named is, beyond question, the most efficacious, (although it has often been known to fail), and should not be discarded until something better has been discovered to take its place. The changing of seed, however, by importation from abroad—the farther the better, provided the dissimilarity in climate be not too great—seems to give better promise than anything else. To do this effectually it would be necessary for farmers to organize an association and send reliable agents to select the seed, and then they would know it to be reliable. Until this can be done we should not discard the preventives already known to do some good. It is true sometimes wheat would do well without it. But a patient will sometimes get well without medicine. This scourge of the harvest field is so prevalent that the wheat must be considered as always indisposed.

In order to stay the progress of this fearful evil, before it spreads universal desolation over this, the fairest of earth's fair climes, by changing our harvests from golden grain to black and sickening dust, we should invoke the aid of science to analyze the soil and its productions, at different periods and under various conditions. We should become thoroughly versed in vegetable chemistry, and the anatomy and physiology of plants.

We should bring together, compare and combine our varied experiences, and thus continue to do, till our efforts have been crowned with success. He who shall discover a sure antidote to this apparently unconquerable evil, will deserve to have his name enrolled high on the list of those who have earned the proud title of benefactor of mankind.

It will, doubtless, accord with the experience of many farmers that grain, especially wheat, in California, is generally sown too thick, and when this is the case, the product is inferior in quality, and very often in quantity, and is, besides, very exhaustive of the soil. Perhaps by sowing thick, especially if the soil is very rich, a larger yield could be obtained for a few years, but then by so

doing, we should the sooner exhaust its strength. On the same principle, we might add to the loads of our beasts of burden, but by the operation, we might the sooner break them down.

An important point in grain culture, and which will always distinguish a good, from a bad, farmer, is the early sowing and planting of his crops—that is to say, everything in its season. Wheat should be sown before the rains set in, or immediately after the first rain in October, or November, as the case may be, that it may receive the benefit of all the moisture which falls upon the ground. Otherwise, in a dry season, it might fall altogether. Late sown grain may do well in some seasons when a great deal of rain falls in the spring, especially in the month of April, but such seasons are exceptional, and must not be taken as a general rule.

The practice of volunteering grain is not to be recommended. It is apt to be choked by the weeds, and when harvested, is full of impurities; besides, it leaves the ground in a foul condition.

Our success in raising to the greatest perfection this, the most valuable staple of the world, involves the momentous question of our capacity to augment the production with the increasing demand for the staff of life, till we prove to the people of other lands what we have already begun to exhibit, and what we can justly claim, that ours is the granary of the Pacific hemisphere. Much that has been suggested in reference to the culture of grain, will apply to the production of everything else. All kinds of crops should be planted and harvested in proper season. Planting late, or early, as it may happen, and putting in seed at random, so that it is a little earlier, or a little better, than somebody else, is not philosophical, and the farmer who will practice it, should never be credited, with the expectation that he will be able to pay.

Nothing adds more to the value of the land, or the salubrity and beauty of a country, than properly constructed rural improvements. The farmer should drain off stagnant water; save his fertilizers and spread them upon his fields; plant along the roadsides, contiguous to his place, useful and ornamental trees, to beautify the landscape, and protect the passerby from the rays of the beaming sun. He should construct reservoirs and channels, to preserve surplus waters for irrigation, or conduct them away, to improve the healthfulness of his location. Above all, for his reputation as a

farmer, and as he values his own peace of mind, the friendship of neighbors, and the preservation of his crops, it should be an object of primary importance to construct good fences. The style and material must depend on circumstances and his own good taste. Nothing displays the character, the thrift, the good judgment, or the negligence, unskillfulness, or slothfulness, of a people with more certainty than the condition of their fences. These indicate the prosperity or decline of agriculture and give character and consideration to whole regions of country. It may be remarked that anything will do for a fence which will turn hogs and cattle, but ditches should not be resorted to if the country abounds in squirrels, for by so doing, they are invited to burrow around the fields, and destroy the crops.

By judicious cultivation, and the proper use of fertilizers, lands will yield to the cultivation more than a double profit. Such is the case in other countries, and there can be no doubt it would prove to be so in California. Irrigation, would, of itself, go far to reclaim extensive tracts now considered almost worthless. That such lands can be made to yield abundantly, is certain—that they will be at some future period, can hardly admit of a doubt. In the year eighteen hundred and fifty-nine, I was traveling through a portion of the State of Massachusetts, in company with an old resident of much intelligence and undoubted veracity, when, seeing lands under fence which seemed to be almost worthless, being bare, stony, and showing every indication of sterility, I had the curiosity to ask what such lands were worth, and, to my surprise, he told me one hundred dollars per acre. I wished to know for what purposes they could be so valuable. He answered, for raising corn, or almost anything else. And may I ask how much it will yield to the acre? He replied, one hundred bushels, and informed me that it cost from twenty-five to thirty dollars per acre to soil and cultivate it properly, and that the corn would bring from seventy-five to ninety cents per bushel. I asked further, what such land would produce without using fertilizers, and by simply cultivating it. He answered, with unquestionable correctness, not anything. By an outlay of twenty-five to thirty dollars, a clear profit of nearly fifty dollars per acre could be obtained. And, in the Patent Office Reports, numerous statements, made by practical cultivators, in reference to cost and yield of corn, and other crops, fully corroborate the probability of the yield and profit before stated, and of the great importance of bestowing more labor and expense on a given quantity of land, in preference to

less labor and a large amount of land. As a general rule, the same amount of grain and produce as is generally raised in all farming districts, can be produced by putting the same amount of labor and expense on half the quantity of land.

And there are many reasons why California should adopt this system of agriculture. First, land could be better preserved in all its original productiveness; and it would be far better to do thus, than to impoverish the soil, and then, at great expense, attempt to restore it. Second, every farmer is obliged to raise, or keep, a certain amount of cattle and horses, and perhaps, hogs and sheep, and he should provide an abundance of hay and pasture land to guard against the contingency of exceedingly dry seasons. It is true that dry seasons do not occur very frequently; but, nevertheless, they should be provided against, and not allowed to come upon us unprepared, and sweep three-fourths of all our stock away in a single year. There has been no dry season since eighteen hundred and forty-four, but, as it happened then, so may it happen again. Our valleys and mountains are teeming with bovine and equine life, and in such a year as eighteen hundred and forty-four, if it were to come suddenly upon us, hundreds of thousands, perhaps nearly all our stock would perish by starvation. California never had so many cattle, horses and other stock as at the present time, and hence the importance of ascertaining and cultivating the best grasses and forage crops adapted to our soil and climate. Alfalfa sown and properly attended to on our ordinary alluvial soils, will remain as green and luxuriant in September as in May, and during the whole year, producing ten times the quantity of forage, in the shape of hay and pasture, as would grow from the native grasses and forage plants without cultivation. The native grasses of California are not generally perennial, and consequently, by being mown and closely pastured, they are fast disappearing from existence. Hence the necessity of substituting something better in their places.

The time will soon arrive—aye the time has arrived—when large bands of cattle and horses of inferior breeds and poorly attended, will cease to be remunerative. The time is already at hand when it will be to the interest of stock growers to raise one-fourth the number which they now struggle to maintain, by driving them periodically from mountain to valley, and from valley to mountain, but of finer breeds, which are immensely more valuable and cost no more to be fed, or taken care of. And it is gratifying to know that in this as well as other useful pursuits, California

by no means occupies a position in the background, and will, ere long, be far in advance of all her sister States. The unbounded enterprise of her citizens demand, as they have a right to do, in exchange for her precious treasure, the choicest of all the earth affords, both in the animal and vegetable kingdoms, with which to replenish her valleys and her hills, her plains and her mountains, and to enrich and adorn her fair proportions. As lands in California are, in obedience to the laws of necessity, gradually becoming subdivided, and as finer cattle replace the wild stock, so the finer breeds of horses are fast superseding the wild ones. The horse is the noblest and most beautiful animal that walks the earth. His fleetness, strength and docility distinguish him above all others. Even the California horse, the decendant of the Moorish stock in Spain, so well adapted to the purposes of the country in earlier times, possesses these noble qualities in a very high degree. But he, too, must yield to the march of civilization. So, too, with all the animals of the country: they are all fast yielding to superior importations from distant lands. The poor Indian forms no exception; he, too, is fading away, and will soon be out of existence.

The space which I have allotted myself will not permit extended notice of many useful things which deeply concern our prosperity. It is important that the useful as well as the ornamental timber regions of California should not be wastefully destroyed. In order to preserve the beautiful groves of ever-green oak, which in winter enliven the valleys and hills, and which are, in many places, being rapidly destroyed merely for the bark, we should introduce the Sumach and Valutina Oak to furnish the material necessary for tanning. Other useful timber trees should be made to occupy many parts of our valleys where no trees exist. To do this will, no doubt, require irrigation, and that, fortunately, is in thousands of places practicable, and by system and enterprise can be made so in thousands more. Channels must be cut to conduct the waters of springs, creeks, and rivers, to the dryer lands. Artesian wells, in some sections—pumps, by horse, or wind power, and reservoirs, to save the surplus waters in winter, in others—can all be used as a means of irrigation. And as the mines recede, or agriculture comes to pay a larger per cent than placer mining, the thousand ditches and canals made to develop the mines may be used to conduct the waters of our mountain streams to the plains.

But agriculture in California, as in other countries, is vastly indebted to the mechanic arts for the ease and success with which the farmer is now able to perform his rural labors. Witness the plow, the cultivators, the reapers, the threshers, the engines, and say if California is behind in inventive skill and enterprise. He who, in the face of high labor and many other obstacles, has established and successfully carried on manufacturing branches of industry, for the purpose of supplying home demands, has helped to create the country, and to a patriot and useful member of the State, and is deserving of the patronage and the grateful thanks of the people.

The capacity of California to sustain a vast population, is beyond dispute. Our markets, in size, quality, and variety of fruits and vegetables, challenge the world. To describe them is unnecessary. They are known at home, and a true description would not be believed abroad. We have a population of nearly five hundred thousand, and they are amply supplied with all these necessaries, as well as bread and meat and many of the luxuries; and yet we have not developed one fiftieth part, have not cultivated one acre in fifty to produce them. There is no question that the State of California alone is capable of yielding the necessaries and most of the luxuries to sustain twenty millions of people, when all her resources shall have been explored and improved—her fisheries, her mountain slopes and valleys—when broad canals shall intersect to drain and transport the enormous produce to be realized from our tule lands.

It may seem bold to say that the immense tracts of arid and apparently sterile lands which border the valleys and guard the bases of our mountains will ever be mantled with verdure. And yet we have all seen the beautiful cottages peeping through dense foliage of shrubbery, fruit and ornamental trees, which are already rising up as if by magic, to gem, like islands of green these same dusky, sunburnt plains. If these scenes appear in a few places, they must eventually appear in hundreds and thousands; it is only a question of time and population. When we, as a State, shall begin to number millions of people—when our metropolis shall become, in point of trade, what it seems destined to do—perhaps, even in our day, the fifth, or sixth city of the globe—when the grand continental railway, on which are centered our anxious hopes, shall have united the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, and become, as it surely will, a link in the grand highway around the globe,

as well as the best and most speedy route from Europe to Australia, Japan, and Eastern Asia—when the rugged mountains and barren wastes which lie adjacent to the Sierra Nevada and Rocky Mountains shall have disclosed their mineral treasures and become peopled with a million of industrious miners—and when magnificent steamships shall arrive in San Francisco from the Amoor, China, Japan, Australia, and the islands of the ocean, with as much regularity as they now do from Europe to New York—then it may not seem visionary to say that these may come to pass, and that instead of our parched plains absorbing the solar heat and changing at times the air into sirocco blasts, they may be transformed into beautiful fields, fanned by the genial breezes of heaven, and made to bloom and blossom and yield abundantly the necessaries of life.

And now, Mr. President, having witnessed the past and ventured to look forward towards a hopeful future, I beg to say that it is with pleasure and with pride that I now behold, not the nucleus of the new and sparsely settled colony, where the germ of civilization is just beginning to bud—not merely the center of a rude population of ten, or fifteen years' growth, but the apparent center of an empire—the center of a great and flourishing State, having all the signs of wealth, commerce, refinement, and a vigorous and cultivated growth, displaying almost every product which industry can earn, or refinement enjoy—not regressive, or stationary, but in a state of healthy and permanent advancement.

And to what shall we ascribe the cause of all this change? What has changed the tumultuous scenes of eighteen hundred and forty-nine—the gambling hells that made night hideous in almost every town, or public place—from a moral chaos to order, the abodes of virtue, refinement and civilization? Certainly not the temporary multitude who rushed in by hundreds of thousands to grasp our golden treasures and go away—but to the permanent citizens, the families, the presence of lovely woman, and the arts, sciences, and institutions, which have caused to be established here.

An finally, Mr. President, of all your institutions, none has greater claims for usefulness and on the gratitude of the people, and none portray with more certainty the energy, the genius, the skill, the industry, and the intelligence of your people, than this noble temple erected to the genius of agriculture. Its founders, and those who sustain and perpetuate it, demand no praise of me. To them

these fruits and flowers, this golden grain, these works of art and skill, these stately walls and this bannered canopy, are a more glorious monument.

JOHN BIDWELL's SECOND MILL. ERECTED 1854

### **JOHN BIDWELL's UNION SPEECH.**

From Alta-California, June 23, 1861.

John Bidwell, late a Breckenridge, and now a member of the Douglass Party, made the following remarks before the Douglass County Convention of Butte county:

“Our meeting on this occasion has been under circumstances of more than usual importance. I cordially endorse the Union sentiments we have just heard so eloquently expressed and yield to no man in devotion to our common country. In the present crisis there can be but one issue—our Government must be sustained or it will go down. There can be no middle ground. He who is not for it is against it. Such was our progress in all the attributes of national greatness and power, that no statesman, however wise, no human sagacity, however profound, could have formed the least conception of the high position we were destined to hold among the powers of the globe. Must all this be lost to us and to the world?

Shall we aid the madness and folly that now seeks the destruction of the greatest and best government ever devised by human wisdom? No loyal citizen can give but one response. The laws must be executed and the government sustained at every hazard—no matter by whom administered. It is now 20 years since I crossed the parched and trackless waste which then separated the Atlantic from the Pacific slope of the continent. I have learned to appreciate the advantages of a free and efficient government and I feel in this hour of peril more determined than ever before in my devotion to my country.”

THE “OLD ADOBE” 1858



**ANNUAL ADDRESS DELIVERED AT THE ANNUAL FAIR OF THE AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY OF THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA, AUGUST 20, 1865,**

By Gen. John Bidwell, of Chico.

Mr. President, Officers, and Members of the Agricultural, Horticultural, and Mechanics' Society of the Northern District of California:

We live in an age of progress—in a period eventful beyond any other in ancient or modern times, and one of Science, Invention, and Discovery, which carries us forward with unprecedented rapidity in the scale of improvement and civilization. While this is true in a greater or less degree in respect to all nations, it applies with peculiar force to our own country, where, in comparison with the old world, everything is new and just budding into development. Progression is the order of the day, and the term most expressive of the character of the times. Progress seems stamped upon the very face of things, and points from the past to a higher future and even onward. We see it in railroads that almost outstrip the winds in velocity; in steamships that plough every ocean against gale and tide, and in steam power applied to thousands of useful purposes. We see it upon the ocean and upon the land; we feel it in the very air; it is on our rivers and plains; on the mountains and in the valleys; it pervades every place and everything, and is the life and spirit of the age. It is essential alike to individual and national prosperity. In peace it is like an angel of mercy, filling the land with inventions to abridge the labor of toiling millions; in war it is terrible, furnishing engines and missiles of destruction that would frighten the very demons of the lower world and make them rejoice to find refuge in the realms of Pluto. Of all people that inhabit the globe the American nation is the most progressive. More useful modern inventions have been made in America than all the world besides. Our example seems to influence the balance of the world and inspire them with progress. We discovered gold, and soon every land was aroused to seek for gold. In our acquired domain marvellous discoveries of silver have been made and forthwith a European monarch is seized with a desire to acquire territory, (not scrupulous, either, as to how he acquires it), in order that he may have silver, too. Swift clipper ships were exclusively American property, till one day England became waked up by an American yacht, and now all Europe are rapidly casting aside

their old sea going tubs for swift and beautiful clippers. We made ironclad war vessels, and the whole system of naval warfare around the globe becomes instantaneously revolutionized. The old world and the new are all activity and resonant with the hum of American inventions. In the spirit of enterprise and progressive ideas that are to revolutionize the world, both materially and politically, the United States have fairly won the advance of all other nations. That we have all the material resources necessary when developed by this American spirit of advancement to maintain the advance, and even to carry us greater lengths in the march of improvements, all intelligent Americans believe, candid foreigners admit, and there are few from any country so ignorant as not to know, or so bigoted as to deny it. With surprising vigor and elasticity, the population of the United States has expanded from about two million eight hundred thousand in seventeen hundred and seventy-six, to more than thirty-one and a half million in eighteen hundred and sixty, increasing at the wonderful ratio of nearly thirty-five per centum on an average during each decade. At a less ratio than this, a calculation based upon a very reasonable estimate of the causes of our numerical growth in the past will show the following amazing expansion during the remainder of the present century:

Eighteen hundred and seventy 42,000,000 Eighteen hundred and eighty 56,000,000 Eighteen hundred and ninety 77,000,000 Nineteen hundred 100,000,000

But rapid and healthful as has been the growth of population in the past, and amazing as it promises to be in the future, the increase of wealth has been and promises to continue to be still more wonderful. The value of real estate and personal property in the United States in eighteen hundred and fifty amounted to seven thousand one hundred and thirty-five million seven hundred and eighty thousand two hundred and twenty-eight dollars; in eighteen hundred and sixty it had more than doubled, and reached the vast sum of sixteen thousand one hundred and fifty-nine million six hundred and sixteen thousand and sixty-eight dollars, the ratio of increase being over one hundred and twenty-six per centum in the space of ten years.

In eighteen hundred and thirty scarcely a railroad had been begun in the United States, but in a few years we led the van in this, as in nearly all other improvements. In eighteen hundred and thirty-

eight we had constructed and in operation eighteen hundred and forty-three miles of railroad and from this point mark the improvement. We had in

Year. Miles. Eighteen hundred and forty 2,167 Eighteen hundred and forty-two 4,862 Eighteen hundred and forty-eight 6,491 Eighteen hundred and fifty 8,827 Eighteen hundred and sixty 31,185

Thus it will be seen that in the ten years immediately preceding the last date—eighteen hundred and sixty—over twenty-two thousand miles, were built and put into operation, making an aggregate extent of more than thirty-one thousand miles of railway in the United States, or over six thousand miles more than would be required, if placed in a line, to encircle the globe.

But the agricultural productions of our country exhibit, too, a marked activity and advancement. The yield of wheat amounted in eighteen hundred and fifty, to one hundred million four hundred and eighty-five thousand nine hundred and forty-four bushels. In eighteen hundred and sixty it rose to one hundred and seventy-one million one hundred and eighty-three thousand three hundred and eighty-one bushels. All other agricultural products exhibit similar or proportional results.

But how is it with our manufactures? We will examine the latest reliable authority on the point. The Superintendent, in his preliminary report on the census of eighteen hundred and sixty says: “The total value of domestic manufactures (including fisheries and the products of the mines) according to the census of eighteen hundred and fifty, was one thousand and nineteen million one hundred and six thousand six hundred and sixteen dollars. The product of the same branches for the year ending June first, eighteen hundred and sixty, as already ascertained in part and carefully estimated for the remainder, will reach an aggregate value of nineteen hundred millions of dollars. The result exhibits an increase of more than eighty-six per centum in ten years.”

I have made these references to the manufactures, railroads, agriculture, population, and wealth of the United states, in order to show that, in material development we do possess the inherent and unmistakable elements and prestige of permanent progress. This is no fancy sketch, but a reality so apparent to every one that he who runs may read. It cannot be denied that the late war which threatened the existence of our governmental fabric, was a heavy blow to our prosperity. And let

us hope that, an the past can never be recalled, so may fraternal war never return to deluge our happy land in blood. Let us regulate our actions and policy upon the principle that, "Peace hath her victories, No less renowned than war;"

and may that Providence who guideth the destinies of nations inspire us with prudence and wisdom to establish our future career upon the solid foundations of truth and justice, as the only true way to preserve enduring peace. Nothing short of the preservation of our national existence or national honor should impel us to resort to the arbitrament of the sword. The blow was heavy, but we have emerged from the contest with strength and confidence greater than when the war began, and with the brightest hopes for the future. Circumstances have changed; a new and better order of things, we believe, has taken place, and we begin to march towards the future under promising but different auspices. The gushing sources of our former prosperity have not been annihilated, not dried up. Our national boundaries embrace the same expanse of domain. We face upon the two great oceans of the world, with ever twelve thousand miles of shore line, and a greater extent of inland navigation than all Europe. We have within these boundaries nineteen hundred millions of acres of arable, grazing and mineral lands. Of this vast area there are but five hundred millions of acres of the most fertile and productive soil on the globe. The most recent reliable data show that less than two hundred millions of acres are embraced in improved farms; showing a balance of over three hundred millions of acres awaiting the creative energy of labor to transform them into abodes of wealth and civilization. It was not unreasonable to suppose that, while recuperating from the effects of the war, we should remain for a time apparently stationary. But already signs of returning prosperity appear. The statistics of the port of New York for the first six months of the present year give clear indications of improvement in the right direction, as will be seen by the following table from the report of the Commissioner of the Department of Agriculture for the months of June and July, eighteen hundred and sixty-five:

#### TOTAL IMPORTS.

Of Dry Goods and General Merchandise at New York from January first to July first, and Exports at the same place and for the same time.

1863. 1864. 1865. Total imports \$ 90,107,715 \$129,311,035 \$ 70,542,220 Total exports, exclusive of specie . 95,117,505 92,747,942 80,693,722 Total exports of specie 20,587,619 29,268,846 17,988,916

There are abundant resources to establish the belief that our volume of material wealth, as measured by the statistics of eighteen hundred and sixty, is fast returning, and that, too, before we have scarcely time to realize that we are in a state of peace. The indications are truly encouraging. There is not a shade of doubt that our national debt of three thousand millions of dollars can be borne without feeling the burden to be oppressive. I will not pause to argue the question whether or not this enormous amount can be made to operate as a national blessing. It is sufficient to know that the faith and honor of the nation are pledged to its redemption, that we have abundant means in prospect, and that we are unalterably resolved to keep that faith and use those means till every dollar of the debt be discharged.

Would an individual possessed of large and productive property, consisting of lands, cultivated farms, villages, machine shops, with plenty of dutiful industrious children, skilled in all the branches of business, some adopted, and others constantly coming for adoption, and all competent and willing to take charge of this property and carry it on—would such an individual, a thrifty farmer if you please, consider himself hopelessly involved if he should by some unavoidable occurrence, owe one-fifth of the taxable valuation of his property? No. All he would ask would be to be permitted to pay a reasonable interest for a reasonable time in which to pay the principal. Why, the cash value by the census report of farms alone—not including farming implements and machinery—amounted in eighteen hundred and sixty to six billion six hundred and fifty million dollars, a sum more than twice as large as the national debt. I repeat, there is no cause for discouragement. On the contrary, there is reason to rejoice; though our debt is great, we are possessed of boundless resources with which to meet and discharge that debt, though our stature as to territory, population, and wealth is of gigantic proportions, yet as a nation we are not in a state of decline, but in the very bloom and vigor of youth; though our burden is large, yet our growing strength will enable us to bear it easily. We have reason to rejoice, too, that we are in

fact as well as in theory a nation of freemen—that we are in a condition as a nation to practice the doctrines we have preached as political axioms of our faith, that all men are created equal, and that all governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed, and thus demonstrate before the world that man is capable of free, enduring self-government. Let us regulate our actions according to the principle of justice, and not unnecessarily be drawn into war with foreign powers, and thereby increase our national burden. Then with our boundless and ever-augmenting sources of wealth to be developed by our ever-expanding population, enlarged by a constant stream of immigration from Europe, we shall at once mount upward in the scale of progress and civilization with a velocity that shall leave all other nations in the distance. And now, Mr. President, permit me to say that we, as Californians, have occasion to feel a just pride that California is a part and parcel of this great and glorious nationality. From her position it is her mission to act an important part in the future, as she has done in the past, in sustaining the national credit, and furnishing the sinews of currency. Her golden treasures flowing into the national system for twelve years prior, as well as during the great rebellion, when all our hopes hung breathless upon the nation's fate, gave temper to its nerves, added strength to every bone, muscle, and tissue of the body politic, and supplying a constant stream of life-giving nutriment, gave it power to meet the shock, surmount every obstacle, and come forth crowned with enduring laurels of victory. It was the high privilege of California to first unlock the golden fountain. The discovery and development of the mines here led to the discovery and development elsewhere—in Australia—Colorado—and all over the Pacific Slope of North America. Every field of enterprise, every nation, agriculture, commerce, all industrial pursuits, and perhaps every human being upon the globe, have felt their influence.

But great as have been the results of the discovery of the precious metals —the impulse given to the world's march, or the particular benefit to our own country at a most opportune period—we cannot ignore the fact, that agriculture is the foundation, and, therefore, the most important of all other pursuits. Without increasing production by cultivating the soil, no civilized nation could exist—blot out this paramount pursuit, and but few of the present population of the globe would be able to survive. But while agriculture is by common consent placed first in the scale, do not understand me to lightly estimate the value of other branches of industry. They are as important in developing

agriculture as agriculture is important to the existence of man. Without the aid of the mechanic arts, and of science, and of all useful professions and occupations, the intelligent agriculturist of today would have advanced but a short distance upon the wide space which now separates him from barbarism. There is, then, Mr. President, a harmony or co-ordination of interest between agriculture and all other useful pursuits. One cannot flourish without the other. We place agriculture first, because it is indispensable—as the first letter of the alphabet is indispensable, so all other letters are indispensable to the construction of syllables, words, and sentences. Advance agriculture, and you advance all other branches of human industry.

It is to me, Mr. President, a source of much gratification to witness the efforts which your society are making to advance permanent interests of the State. I know of nothing better calculated to awaken interest, and stimulate generous emulations, than exhibitions of this character. They are powerful incentives to industry and improvement. As evidence of the fact, it ought to be sufficient to mention that fairs of this kind are held and patronized most where agriculture and the mechanic arts are in the most flourishing condition. But to set the question entirely at rest, I will state that what all can see with their own eyes, and what none will have the temerity to dispute; the ladies always patronize fairs, and they are the fairest portion of all fairs—whatever they patronize is sure to succeed. I am most happy therefore to be able to bear witness that, judging by this infallible rule, without attempting to describe this gorgeous display of fruits and flowers and works of industry and skill which crowd this noble hall, and challenge comparison, that your exhibition is a grand success—that Marysville, the Queen City of this magnificent valley, is alive to the future as she has ever been in the past, and is moving on the true and broad road to a higher prosperity. The same exertion and enterprise that have created this beautiful and flourishing city—that have lined the margins of these rivers, and dotted the plains and foothills with farms, gardens, orchards, and vineyards—I say, the same efforts all over the coast would banish dull times from the land, and convert this into the most prosperous, beautiful and desirable region upon the face of the earth. My time on this occasion would not permit me to particularize, except to a limited extent, and much that would be both useful and interesting to know must be omitted. It will be sufficient for this occasion to say that the soil, climate and many other features of California, are unsurpassed. It is a region of

wonderful variety and production. The cereals are here produced of superior quality, and in larger quantity per acre than in any other part of the United States. It would be a poor farm indeed, and badly cultivated at that, if it failed to yield twenty-five bushels of wheat, and thirty of barley or oats per acre. Fifty bushels of wheat are no uncommon crop, and other grains in proportion. In some localities, generally in rich alluvial bottoms like those of the Yuba, Indian Corn flourishes in a manner to compare favorably with the famous Valley of the Mississippi. All the productions known to temperate and semi-tropical climates are or may be produced here in the greatest perfection and abundance. If one-half of the real capabilities of the soil and the advantages of the Pacific Coast were known abroad, I do really believe we should be over-whelmed in a single year with millions of population from Europe and the Atlantic states, provided they had the means to come here. The climate presents every possible attraction that can be imagined. It is salubrious and invigorating, and adapted to the production of many things only known to lower latitudes in other parts of the world. Italy cannot boast of skies more serene than our genial and glowing summers present—these summers that make this emphatically the land of the fig, the grape, the olive, and the pomegranate, and ripen even the orange in some localities. The evenings are most charming, and more than redeem the effects of the heat during the day. In this gorgeous Valley of the Sacramento, the cool breezes playing alternately from the ocean and the snow-capped summits of the Sierra and the Coast Range Mountains, refresh and purify the air, and render the nights and mornings, as well as evenings, delightful beyond description. No person probably ever came to California and went away again without desiring to return and enjoy again the beauties of the climate. Those who have left with the intention of remaining away permanently, are almost sure to come back again. They will tell you that no one can fully appreciate the climate here, and its many advantages until he has left it and attempted to live in another. The contrast then becomes glaring, and invariably inclines them back to this land of sunshine and pleasant prospects.

But I will not deny that, with all these advantages of fertility, salubrity, fruitfulness and many more impossible for me now to specify, there is room for vast expansion, and a field that would require the labor of millions to develop.



All that is wanted is a market for what we can produce, and an abundance of skillful and intelligent labor. If we could sell everything we could produce here, the labor would naturally flow in this direction and fill the vacuum created by the demand for production. As it is, there are many causes which tend to postpone the attainment of all that we desire, and which address themselves to everyone whose hopes and prospects are identified with the Pacific Coast. It is not wise to bask always in the sunshine, and contemplate only the bright side of the circumstances that surround us. Even in the most favored lands there are clouds that overcast the skies, but unveiled brightness is beaming above them. Labor is the greatest desideratum of the Pacific States and Territories. We must have a greater population to supply that labor. Business becomes at times so dull, and money so scarce, that we can hardly pay our taxes, much less our debts, and find means to expend in improvements. Our seasons, in the opinion of some who are not acquainted with all the circumstances and conditions, are too wet, or too dry; and millions of acres, only arid and apparently sterile, they imagine to be worthless. Another drawback to our prosperity is, they say, there is a large number of non-producers. They are found all over the country, on the ranches, in the saloons, of our towns and cities, almost everywhere. As they are not inclined to work, they must of necessity live off the labor of those who do work. These are some of the clouds that lower to our horizon.

In answer to all these evils, I must be permitted to state that no country upon earth, not even our beautiful and lovely California, is free from imperfections. The world was not made, finished and ready to be enjoyed, without the labor of intelligent beings to do what nature left undone and designed for them to do. I know there are many idle people in California, who do not pretend to work at all, and some who do pretend, scarcely more than half work. I do not believe there are any of that sort here, because such people would not have enough ambition to get here. The warm climate, and the little labor requisite to obtain the necessaries of life, do, no doubt, invite to idleness. Now, I can speak from experience, when I say there is no necessity for idleness. There is enough, and more than enough for every man to do. The honest, industrious men of the State—the very bone and sinew of our prosperity—work and endure fatigue here as well as in any climate in the world. Idleness invariably enervates the system and leads to vice. He who permits an able

bodied man to live around him in idleness does the man a positive injury, and is only educating him for the highway and to become a candidate for the gallows or the penitentiary. I will have no such men about me, because I do not wish to do any man an injury. If every man could be made to see the question in this light, the remedy for idleness would be certain, immediate and complete. Among the Mexican population of this coast there is, no doubt, a trace still existing of the pastoral habits derived through their forefathers from Spain. This kind of life may be more or less copied by Americans and others who find their way out here through Mexico or other Spanish American countries. Buckle, in his *History of Civilization in England* says of Spain: "The low state of agriculture in Spain may be ascribed partly to physical and partly to moral causes. At the head of the former must be placed the heat of the climate and the aridity of the soil. Most of the rivers with which the country is intersected run in deep beds, and are but little available, except in a few favored localities, for the purposes of irrigation." Also, "that the vicissitudes of climate, particularly in the central parts, make Spain habitually unhealthy." And he further observes: "Another feature of this singular country is the prevalence of a pastoral life, mainly caused by the difficulty of establishing regular habits of agricultural industry. In most parts of Spain the climate renders it impossible for the laborer to work the whole of the day; and this forced interruption encourages among the people an irregularity and instability of purpose, which makes them choose the wandering avocations of a shepherd rather than the more fixed pursuits of agriculture."

Now, Mr. President, whether from the fact of our living in what was once a Spanish American territory, and coming in contact with people who introduced pastoral habits from Spain, those habits are beginning to tell on us, I will not pretend to determine. Certain it is that as a general rule no more enterprising people ever existed than those who have come to California since the discovery of gold. They have explored nearly every nook and corner of the Pacific Slope. No danger has been sufficient to check their explorations. They have brought to light hidden treasures that have astonished and almost revolutionized the commerce of the world. Their herculean efforts are literally moving the mountains toward the sea. They have built cities, towns and villages innumerable, and been the pioneers of civilization all over the Pacific Coast, from Arizona to Cariboo. They have carved States and Territories from the regions of former savage desolation, and

made the deserts to bud and blossom as the rose. I have an abiding faith in the Anglo-Saxon race. I believe they can do and perform wonders, and even withstand the allurements to idleness of this or any other climate. I speak of them as a class, of course, and believe a noble destiny awaits them in the future.

In regard to the dullness and stagnation of business, which from time to time pervade the land, there are many causes and many remedies. We should ask ourselves: Do we not continue to practice the habits we assumed in former and flusher times, and thereby live beyond the legitimate bounds of our present available resources? It is true, too, that the scarcity of money, and the high rates of interest which capital commands, precludes the possibility of engaging in many enterprises for the development of mines and the improvement of the material resources of the State, but we can and ought to produce more than we do, even with our present means and the present high price of labor and capital. I will not assert that we can remedy all the trouble that seems to beset our path; but I do say that it is in our power to remedy much of it. But so long as we continue to import things that can be produced here, just so long must we send away all our gold to pay for them. We can and ought to produce all or nearly all of the thousands of barrels, boxes and cases of dried apples, raisins and other fruits, which we import, amounting annually to half a million of dollars. We could produce nearly all of the brandies, wines, malt and other liquors, if we must have them, which we import, and thereby save annually, a quarter of a million dollars more. We have the means and should produce all of the butter, cheese, bacon, hams, lard, pork, lard oil, linseed, and in time, even olive oil, which we import, and thereby make a saving of at least half a million dollars more every year. We have in this State exhaustless mines of nearly pure iron; and we can and ought to produce all of that material used for railroads, machinery and other purposes, and thereby save annually millions of dollars more. These, and thousands of other things, which we ought and will eventually be compelled to produce here, or do without, we have to pay for in gold, and at prices which charge the consumer with transportation, insurance and profit and the gold sent to pay for them, and this of course in addition to the original cost; all of which could be saved by producing them here. If we cannot do all of this at once, we should do as much as we can, and aim to make the residue at the earliest practical period. It is true that in this land of luxuriant vegetation, where literally, the “cattle

feed upon a thousand hills”, graze and thrive in winter as well as summer, with little or no attention, that we must continue to transport butter and cheese from New York? There is no such necessity, and I speak from experience.

But a few years ago nearly all the farmers in this valley, and I among the rest, purchased nearly all the butter they used—butter that had been imported across the Isthmus of Panama, or around Cape Horn. Some of it seemed old enough to have made a voyage around the world. I became ashamed of it, and resolved that if I could not, with thousands of cattle, which I had at that time, make sufficient butter to supply my own family—and my family is large, over fifty, and sometimes a hundred in number—I would do without it. And with many other things I have made similar resolves; and I am happy to be able to say that they have resulted in success. If the whole State, aroused to the importance of decreasing importations, which deplete our purses and absorb the means that would give us prosperity and independence, would make a firm resolve to manufacture more of many things or do without them, the result would be an impetus to all branches of industry that would revolutionize the condition of things and banish complaint from our shores.

However similar the pastoral habits of the early pioneers to this coast may be to those of Spain, as before alluded to, the comparison does not hold true in regard to the physical features—while in most parts of Spain the heat of the climate, as mentioned by the historian, renders it impossible for the laborer to work the whole day, and the climate itself, from certain causes, was habitually unhealthy, and the aridity of the soil could not, on account of obstacles in the way of irrigation, be overcome; here in California labor is performed even in the most sultry valleys during all hours of the day and at all seasons of the year. On my farm at Chico, in this valley, where we claim to have a reasonable degree of heat, especially in the time of harvest, I can scarcely remember an instance of a hand becoming sick in the harvest field. Perhaps some will say we do not kill ourselves with work at Chico. In reply, I will answer that we do not; and what is more, we do not intend to do so. I will tell you what we did do. We harvested the present season, during the hottest part of the summer, cut, threshed, cleaned and put in the granary, ready for market, forty thousand six hundred and eighteen bushels of grain; three-fourths of it wheat, and the remainder of it oats and barley, in thirty-six

days, including all delays by breakages and other causes, averaging one thousand, one hundred and twenty-eight and a quarter bushels per day, with an average of twenty-two hands, all told.

Now then, can men work in this valley? You have my answer, which is the best proof I am able to give. It is true the climate in some localities is somewhat miasmatic and productive of intermittent fevers, but the causes local and transient in their character, can and will be removed. Until this can be accomplished, I would suggest that residences in such localities should be so constructed as to afford sleeping apartments in the upper story, and thus enable the dwellers along the margins of rivers, and in the vicinity of sloughs and tule lands, to escape from inhaling the lowest stratum of air during the night. In regard to the aridity of certain portions of this State, and the apparent sterility of large tracts of land above referred to, we have the means of their complete reclamation at hand. The great remedy is irrigation. Different from Spain, all the streams of this valley, even our largest rivers, can be made available for purposes of irrigation.

Some have pretended to believe that irrigation was detrimental, and therefore not to be recommended. So is food, or any other useful and indispensable thing, detrimental if not used in a proper manner, in proper quantities and at proper times. Time will not permit me to give even a faint idea of what I conceive to be the great importance of irrigation. It is such that it should, in my opinion, command the attention of the State and be a subject of State regulation. The short and partial experience already had in many localities has proved that even the barren places, when irrigated, will produce the very best of grapes, fruits and other products. In fine, such are the wonderful capabilities of the soil of California, that irrigation, properly conducted and applied to these barren hills, and plains, and mountains, would awake them as if by magic into such fertility and life, and beauty, and fruitfulness, as to astonish even Californians themselves. The canals for irrigation should be made upon a system so as to harmonize with the reclamation of swamp and tule lands, and equalize the distribution of water for the benefit of all. Constructed upon an extensive scale, these canals, under proper regulations, could be made useful to conduct away the surplus waters in seasons of heavy floods, and thereby prevent the destructive effects of inundations. They would create sites and water power for mills and other machinery, and besides be available for navigation. The rivers of this portion of the State are becoming so rapidly filled up as to threaten

the total destruction of navigation. The raising of the beds of the rivers by continual deposition from the mines, while it destroys navigation and increases the danger from floods, diminishes the labor of transferring the waters into artificial channels. Preservation from the danger of inundation should impress upon us the necessity of giving this subject early consideration. The tule and swamp lands of this valley, when reclaimed, which is to me as certain as time and seasons, will become the garden of the State. When the mountains and plains shall be redeemed from their aridity and apparent sterility by irrigation then the great staple of export from the Pacific Coast will consist, not in gold and silver, but the products of the soil. In every country many things deemed essential to modern civilization are now transported, and probably will be for all time, from distant parts of the globe; and we have no reason to expect that California will be, even after the proudest triumphs in development we can ever hope to achieve, an exception to the rule. Vessels will continue to make our shores, laden with such articles of luxury and necessity as we may fail to produce here. Instead of exporting from this coast fifty or sixty millions of dollars to pay for these things, we would send hundreds of millions of dollars in wines and other agricultural products, and thus turn the premium of exchange in our favor.

The rearing of domestic animals is another subject which commends itself to the attention of all who feel interested in the welfare of the State. It cannot have escaped the observation of those engaged in rearing stock in California that the indigenous grasses, once so abundant as to pasture thousands of animals where only hundreds are able to subsist now, are fast disappearing from the plains. This is attributable no doubt to excessive grazing, especially by sheep and horses, which destroy the seed, and consequently the essential condition of reproduction. Weeds spring up and encumber the ground and stock disappear. That these grasses can ever be restored in their original excellence is, to me, extremely problematical. Whether any forage plant can be found that will grow upon our hills and plains, and become a profitable substitute for the original grasses, remains for the future to bring forth.

There must be a remedy somewhere in nature, but who will discover it? He who should succeed in making the discovery would be a benefactor to his race, and deserve the lasting gratitude of this country. Till this can be accomplished, it becomes us to be careful of the grazing capabilities of our

land, otherwise we destroy what cannot be replaced. Hence arises the necessity, if no higher motive, of rearing breeds of finer blood, and diminishing the scrub races that have to such an alarming extent heretofore destroyed the grasses to little profit. There is another fact in connection with the subject of raising stock which deserves to be noticed. When pasture lands are not overfed so as to eradicate, and there is an abundance of pasture for stock in winter, it sometimes occurs that we have hard winters—cold weather, and some snow, that render it absolutely necessary to be prepared to feed stock, say at least one month, if we would be certain to save them. During a residence here of twenty-four years, I have witnessed but one such season—then there were from six to eight inches of snow, which lay in this valley for nearly a month. I feel it a duty to place this warning upon record, because what has once transpired is sure to occur again. I have seen also one, and only one, really dry season—that was eighteen hundred and forty-four. You have so recently seen the effects of dry seasons, especially in the southern part of the State, it is necessary only to make this passing allusion.

The subject of establishing agricultural schools and colleges, where the arts and sciences applicable to practical farming can be acquired for the benefit of the present as well as the future generations, is one of momentous importance, and I commend it to your earnest consideration. The subject of useful inventions is one of so much interest and about which so much is daily written and spoken, that it would be supererogatory to attempt to impart anything new to this intelligent audience; and even if I could do so, I should fail for want of time. I will only say that steam threshers, steam ploughs, spading machines, with perhaps hundreds of other inventions, are worthy of the consideration of every agriculturalist. If there is any one art progressing more than another by the aid of science and invention, that art is agriculture. No other calling is capable or is susceptible of greater improvements, no other profession is more respectable. Labor, it is admitted, is the true source of wealth and must be free in order to be intelligent and honorable. Of all things necessary to promote the progress of the Pacific Coast, none will compare with the completion of a railway across the continent. The Atlantic and Pacific railroad is the *sin qua non* of our destiny. Our hopes and prayers should be centered upon its earliest possible completion. With this great enterprise accomplished, our destiny, in spite of wicked men, would be inseparably connected with the Union.

Finally, Mr. President, I return to you and the officers and members of this society, and to the ladies who have honored the occasion with their lovely presence, and to all others who have to worship at this noble shrine of industry, my grateful thanks.

#### EPITOME OF RANCHO CHICO TITLE

(Sacramento Daily Union, September 12, 1867.)

#### **FOURTEENTH ANNUAL STATE FAIR.—Third Day.**

SACRAMENTO, September 11, 1867.

The rush of strangers continues, and it is beyond doubt that this is the largest attendance of visitors ever drawn to Sacramento by the State Fair or any other attraction. At a meeting of the Board of Directors of the Agricultural Society, held last evening, it was unanimously resolved to continue the Fair till Wednesday of next week. This action will give universal satisfaction, and is an evidence of the great success of the exhibition.

About half-past eight o'clock, the President of the Society, Charles F. Reed, introduced General John Bidwell, who was enthusiastically received.

#### **Address of John Bidwell.**

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen: Ordinarily an individual ought not to shrink from discharging the duties of any honorable position he may be called upon to occupy. On the contrary, it is and should be esteemed by every one an honor to be permitted to aid, to the extent of his capacity and opportunity, in useful and laudable undertakings. Whatever a man may engage to do, be it much or little, be it in the lowly rounds of common toil, or in stately halls, exposed to the public gaze, be ought to labor with all his might, and bring to the task earnestness and sincerity of purpose. This to all I have to claim at the hands of an indulgent audience, for my errors may be too numerous, my offenses too grave, however unintentional, to receive excuse or pardon. I assure you, Mr. President, that I feel duly grateful for the honor conferred upon me by your Society. I



believe, sir, that I appreciate the responsibility assumed, by the acceptance of your distinguished invitation to deliver the annual address on this occasion, but I feel constrained to acknowledge that I approach the task with much embarrassment and many misgivings as to my ability to offer anything instructive or interesting, much less new, upon a subject so old and so important as that of agriculture and kindred branches of industry with which it is inseparably connected. I cannot, then, say that I hope to meet, to any considerable degree, your just expectations. Whatever I may utter, however, shall be uttered in good faith. I profess a deep desire, if in my power, to serve the best interests of the State. However short of the mark I may fall, my aim shall be at usefulness rather than display.

Agriculture is the first and most important occupation of man, and embraces, in the general and practical idea of rural employment, both the cultivation of the soil and the rearing of useful animals. It is old as sacred history, and may be said to date from the creation of man. "And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden." Thus the Creator himself set the first example for man to imitate—a decree which in all ages he has been forced to obey or suffer the penalty. Man must plant or he cannot reap—he must earn his food or suffer the pains of hunger. Many of the prominent names of sacred history are identified with rural labors. Noah was a husbandman, and "planted a vineyard." "Abraham was very rich in cattle," and he "planted a grove in Beer-sheba." Lot "had flocks, and herds, and tents." "Moses kept the flock of Jethro, his father-in-law." David was chosen and taken "from the sheepfolds." Solomon planted "vineyards" and made himself "gardens and orchards." Elisha was "plowing with twelve yoke of oxen before him." But time will not suffice for prolonged exemplifications, which might be extended from ancient to modern times through all authentic history, and present an imposing array of illustrious names who have practiced or encouraged agriculture and other kindred and useful branches of industry, including those of Cincinnatus, Cato, Pliny and Columella, and so on to Peter the Great, Arthur Young, Napoleon I, Washington, Cavour, Liebig, and Lincoln. No nation has ever existed, or ever can exist, without agriculture. As population increases they must resort to cultivation, for the earth will not bring forth spontaneously sufficient to supply their wants. This is true of all civilized people—and, in many instances, or semi-civilized nations as well as barbarous tribes—as, for instance, the Chinese and

other Eastern nations, the Incas of Peru, the Aztecs of Mexico, and some other Indian tribes of North America. No nation can hope to endure and be an independent power, with all the essential attributes of permanent nationality, unless its governmental fabric be built upon the sure foundation of its own agricultural and other industrial capabilities. Agriculture is so intimately related to and dependent upon the arts and sciences, and especially the mechanic arts, as to be inseparable from them. They must all flourish together and exist in harmonious co-operation as the several parts of a great whole. A state of civilization and advancement renders a division of labor absolutely essential, for in order to excel a man must concentrate all his energies on a single object. Without this, there could be little or no advancement. Labor-saving machinery in almost all industrial occupations has become necessary—I may say, indispensable; and in no one more than that of the farmer. It is demanded by the intelligent laborer—by the employer and the employed—everywhere. The time has passed, and passed forever, when laborers will go about, as they did in some parishes of Great Britain as late as 1830, “actually destroying every machine they could find.” The law has become obsolete and can never be revived which forbid “anyone to hold a plow who could not make one, or to drive until he could make a harness.” What would the intelligent American freeman of today—the laborer—say if his employer were to be seized with the insane idea that machinery to useless—that modern civilization is no improvement an the good old customs of his forefathers, and were to order his heading machines, his reaping and threshing machines, while harvesting from standing grain and storing it at the rate of one thousand to two thousand bushels of wheat per day in his granary, clean and ready for the mill or market, to be thrown aside, and the sickle, the flail and the winnowing fan to be substituted in their place? Why, the laborer would desert such an employer instantly. The farmer who has the best machinery, the latest improvements, and keeps up with the age, can hire cheaper and his men work more cheerfully and better, other conditions, of course, being equal. To make machinery, mines must be wrought, the metals must be elaborated and worked into all the innumerable forms and inventions as seen in works of art and skill everywhere in daily use. Some men are destined to excel in one thing and some in another. Even nations have their peculiarities—their advantages and disadvantages—and it is found not only convenient but necessary to transport their respective products to other countries. This is commerce. To carry it on there must be vessels to navigate the ocean, and to construct vessels

there must be architects and all the various materials required in naval architecture. The products of one country may fail from drouth, war or other cause, and when this occurs the deficiency must be supplied from abroad. The necessity is often imperative in order to prevent starvation. So it is with every useful pursuit and profession. They are alike dependent on agriculture and essential to its prosperity. It takes them all to make up a grand whole of national prosperity. This Society, therefore, acts wisely and aims to foster the best interests of the State when it invites all to meet here upon a common level and compete, with a proper spirit of emulation, in the results of their respective professions and occupations. This is a State institution, and I am happy to know that it has worked its way up till it has become an object of State pride. It has grown up under trials and discouragements, but having surmounted them by the indomitable will and energy of those intrusted with its keeping, it is more and more endeared to us every year, and gives higher and higher promise of usefulness. None will now be so bold as to deny that the annual Fairs held in this State have done more than all else beside to create a lively interest in, and to encourage the development of, our agricultural and mineral resources. This institution has claims upon and should, as I doubt not it will, be sustained and encouraged by the State for the benefit of all interests and occupations. After witnessing these scenes of beauty and wonder, no one can fail to return to his home glowing with a spirit of emulation and a determination to do better than he has ever done before, and with a purpose to renew, as the earth shall accomplish the annual circuit of its orbit, his devotions at this shrine of Industry. In no way can he better promote the public good than by being a worthy and active member of the State Agricultural Society and participating in the annual exhibitions of its industry.

The spirit of laudable rivalry which has brought you here, my friends, is not confined to this State, or to our country; it is one of the prominent and hopeful signs of the times. It is not only national, but international. It has culminated in the grand Exhibition of Industry of all nations, now being held at Paris; but the culmination there is but temporary, for the next World's Fair is bound to surpass it, whether it be held in England, Russia or the United States, or, I might say, New York or San Francisco. By these international reunions nations are fighting far more important battles than they have ever fought with arms; they are actually conquering ignorance and battering down

the fortress of prejudice, and thereby promoting peace by annihilating the causes of war. Prejudice arises from ignorance and has been the origin of most of the wars which have desolated the earth. Frequent intercommunication is of vital importance to nations, and of scarce less moment to the different parts of nations, especially large ones like our own, in order to dissipate the cankering effects of prejudice before they ripen into open hostility. No plan ever has been, or ever will be, devised, according to my judgment, better calculated to attract the masses—I do not mean the classes—I mean the “high, the low, the rich, and the poor”—than these grand industrial exhibitions. Would anything but a State Fair throng this spacious hall with such multitudes of the industrious and intelligent people of the land; with such an array of beauty, grace and virtue; with such a prospect of blooming and youthful faces, smiling with happiness and radiant with intelligence? Would anything other than such an exhibition as this bring together the old and the young and the middle-aged, the citizen and the stranger; in a word, all worthy, amiable classes, sexes and conditions, and all of them patriotic, I hope, for it seems almost impossible for anyone to witness such a scene as this and not feel his inmost soul to burn with patriotic emotion. There is little doubt that Europe would have been, ere this, in a blaze of revolution were it not for the said grand Exposition of Industry which is now attracting hundreds of thousands from every quarter of the globe and making the French capital the scene of friendly greeting between the people of all nations. Even the crowned heads of Europe found it consistent with their feelings of propriety (or pride) to go upon this pilgrimage and bow at the shrine of peace. As a compensation for their trouble, however, they found themselves for once in respectable company, for they met there citizens of the United States of America—real and true sovereigns who will never, I trust, bow the knee to tyrannical power, but who felt a far higher and purer pride, let us hope, in wearing their own civic crowns of American citizenship, even amidst all that regal splendor, than the most haughty and defiant monarch of them all.

The benefits to be derived from exhibitions of this character cannot be overestimated. We ought to encourage, by every means in our power, State, District, County, and City Fairs, where all can go and join in harmless but useful emulation, and thus do all we can to banish prejudice from our peaceful borders. It is proper on an occasion like this for us to inquire more particularly what

can be done to advance the interests of our own State? With all the known and acknowledged advantages of California in respect to fertility of soil, serenity and salubrity of climate, and beauty of general topography, there is still enough, even here, for man to do. We have swamp lands to drain and fortify against periodical inundations; we have sterile lands to reclaim by irrigation and the application of fertilizers; we have to construct canals, roads and highways for travel and commerce, and many other indispensable improvements and all these are to be brought about only by the one now universally acknowledged source of all true wealth—labor. We are led to inquire how can these things be best and most speedily accomplished? That the drainage of the vast tule marshes is important—nay, a necessity—none will deny. That these vast regions, which occupy the central and most accessible part of our great interior valleys, would be the very best lands as regards fertility, and their capacity to yield almost everything required to supply human wants, is an undeniable fact. Can these tule lands be reclaimed is a most vital question to the State. It is evident that if the work be ever done it must be done upon a system commensurate with the magnitude of the obstacles to be overcome. It is not my purpose to overlook any part of this magnificent State. It would be wholly out of the question, however, within the limits allotted me on this occasion, to attempt to particularize or expatiate on the beauties and glories of particular localities. They have often been described in swelling periods and glowing narrative, as far as pen and tongue are capable of portraying their unrivaled excellences. Their names—at least many of them—are co-extensively known with that of California itself, and others are fast marching up into prominence. Who has not heard of Los Angeles, famous for its wines and oranges? Of San Gabriel and Luis Rey? Who has not heard of San Diego, with one of the loveliest of climates to be found within the borders of our State, and with the castor bean growing perennially and spontaneously along its sandy shores? Who has not seen or heard of San Fernando, noted for her grapes and the Agave Americana growing in her Mission gardens? Who has not heard of Santa Barbara, of the asphaltum along her coast, her genial climate, and the world-renowned Dominguez grapevine growing in the adjacent valley of the Prieto, and yielding annually over fifty tons of luscious grapes? Who has not heard of San Luis Obispo, and of her salubrious climate, her soil, and her palm trees flourishing in the open air? Have not all heard of and many seen the Salinas and Pajaro Valleys, and Santa Cruz, its climate and scenery? Who has not seen or heard of San Jose, Santa Clara, Napa, Sonoma, Petaluma, Santa

Rosa, Russian River? all celebrated for their vineyards fruits, general productiveness and inimitable beauties of climate and landscape. In even a cursory statement of the leading features of the State, the names of Indian Valley, Honey Lake, Visalia, Tejon, Kern River, King's River, Sierra Valley, Scott's and Shasta Valleys, Round Valley (or Nomecult), Surprise Valley, and many other places and valleys, some of them well and favorably known and some just expanding into prominence, ought to remove more than a passing notice. But, as I said before, time and space would fail me were I to undertake to enumerate, much less describe, the diversified excellences of all the places deserving of notice. They are all susceptible to a high state of improvement, and must be seen and examined in order to be understood and appreciated. Time and enterprise alone can, and surely will, unfold the wondrous capabilities of this state.

But I was endeavoring to call attention to the swamp lands and tule marshes, lying, as it were, in the very center of this great central valley, and a question of momentous interest to the State inseparably connected with them, namely, the possibility of their successful reclamation. On the practical solution of this problem depends the salubrity of many localities, and, to a vast extent, the wealth and prosperity of the State. The great central figure of the State, if I may use the term, is this grand and gorgeous valley of the Sacramento and San Joaquin. And it is a real valley—not like the monotonous and common-place tracts of country drained by certain streams and known in the Atlantic States and other parts of the world as valleys; but a real valley, traversed by noble streams and surrounded by magnificent mountains, and on a scale so ample that, literally, —"distance lends enchantment to the view, And robes the mountain in its azure hue."

This valley stretches northwesterly from Tejon over nearly six degrees of latitude, having the average proportions of thirty miles in width and five hundred miles in length. It is bounded upon the east or northeast by the Sierra Nevada Mountains, rising from 6000 to more than 14,000 feet above the level of the sea, many peaks of which, clad in perpetual snow, look serenely on the valleys lying at their base and blushing with almost tropical fruits and flowers and rejoicing in almost perpetual Spring, Summer or Autumn. These mountains—famous for their mines of gold, and copper, and silver, and for the largest trees in the world, some of which are more than ninety feet in circumference, and for their forests of pine (including the celebrated sugar pine), and spruce,

and fir, and for their abundant snows, falling sometimes ten to twenty feet deep and frequently drifting to the depth of thirty to forty feet; and for unrivaled fruits, including nearly all the varieties known to warm and temperate climates—are rent into chasms and corrugated by the channels of mountain torrents which rush down to swell the volume of the Sacramento and San Joaquin rivers. These gorges have generally steep, sometimes precipitous, sides, ranging from hundreds to thousands of feet in depth. This valley is bounded on the west or southwest by the Coast Range, not so high as the Sierra Nevada, except to the north, where it has many features in common, including a vast system of steep and precipitous ravines and canyons, through which the streams flow to the Sacramento river. The area of this grand interior valley of the State is not less than fifteen thousand square miles, or three or four times the size of the famous valley of the Nile. This extent, though less than one-tenth of the surface of the entire State, will be amply sufficient, when developed, to sustain a population of more than a million of souls. The two principal rivers—the Sacramento and San Joaquin—coming from opposite directions, severing the Coast Range Mountains and disemboguing through the Golden Gate, drain a vast region, in addition to the valley proper, comprehended by the margins of the valley and the summits of the before-named two great ranges of mountains. The watersheds or summits of these two ranges cannot average less than eighty miles apart. The superficies drained by the said rivers, including the valley, cannot, therefore, fall far short of, and may exceed, forty thousand square miles, or a superficial extent equal to the aggregate areas of New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut and New Jersey.

It must be evident to every observing man, that whatever be the remedies resorted to to reclaim these tule lands and prevent devastating inundations, they must be upon a grand system—upon a scale commensurate with the great work to be accomplished. There must be a great design or system adopted, and then general and extensive co-operation to execute it. It will of necessity require vast sums of money and a considerable period of time. The intrinsic value of the tule lands in question is beyond computation; but aside from this consideration, every inhabitant of the valley and adjacent mountains has a direct interest in their reclamation. They certainly ought to desire to see the landscape improved and beautified and the atmosphere freed from noxious exhalations. These lands were donated to the State for the purpose of being reclaimed. To throw

up embankments of loose earth, to be swept away almost as soon as made by every return of the annual floods, will evidently never accomplish the desired result. I desire to be understood. I blame no one for what has been done or omitted to be done. Experience is good, but sometimes a very dear teacher. We have probably already seen enough to convince us that one or two dollars per acre will never suffice to construct the substantial works which will be required to withstand the periodical inundations. If reclaimed, these lands are destined to be worth, at no distant period, hundreds of dollars per acre. It does not become us to under-estimate the obstacles to be overcome. They are great, but not, in my judgment, insurmountable. The entire surface of the country between the summits of the two ranges of mountains named, amounting to the combined areas of so many States, as before stated, is subject for six months of the year to plenteous, and often excessive, rains. Upon the mountains are precipitated vast accumulations of snow. The innumerable ravines, gulches, and chasms, with their steep declivities and precipitous walls, operate as so many funnels, and pour their waters down, simultaneously toward the valley. When the snows happen to melt by warm and heavy rains, the combined waters converge into large and larger streams till they swell into mighty rivers, overflowing their banks, covering the plains like an inland sea, and causing destructive inundations. To devise some plan by which to prevent these ever-recurring visitations is, I hesitate not to say, worthy of the consideration of this Society, and of every citizen who has the public interest at heart. The best engineering talent ought to be employed. Liberal premiums should be paid by the State for the best system of reclamation, and no considerable amount of money ought to be expended till a system has been adopted, a system that shall look to the ultimate and complete reclamation of all these lands.

It is not possible on an occasion like this, or within the scope of an ordinary address, to enter into detail or even indicate anything more than a few general ideas respecting such a plan as must necessarily be, required for so great a work. My suggestions are given for what they are worth. I therefore may be permitted to say, generally, that I believe the floods and inundations before named can in a great measure, if not entirely, be prevented; and, consequently, that the swamp and tule lands can be reclaimed, by the use of three co-operative works or measures: First, the building of reservoirs at all feasible points, to retain the waters in the mountains; second, the construction



of canals, so made as to occupy the shortest possible distance between their termini, in order to secure the greatest possible amount of fall to a given distance, and thereby the discharge of the largest possible quantity of water by a canal or channel of given dimensions—and also in order to economy; third, the raising of suitable levees along the banks of rivers and streams to retain the remaining waters within their proper channels. If all three of these measures do not suffice, it is certain that no one or two of them can. And here I hope to be pardoned for referring to a subject intimately connected with the reclamation of the swamp lands—I allude to that of the reclamation of the dry lands, by the aid of irrigation. These same reservoirs and canals would, therefore, answer two great and equally important purposes. In this view they at once become doubly valuable. Aside from what are known as dry lands, comparatively valueless without irrigation, there are large tracts of land which by the aid of irrigation would more than double its yield, and the value of it would consequently be correspondingly enhanced. In other words, there can and ought to be entire co-operation in these two great and desirable undertakings. Both objects can be accomplished with little or no additional expense. I know there have existed among farmers differences of opinion as to irrigation, its effects and general necessity. Let me say I do not propose to raise any doubtful question. If there is any land that will produce as well or better without irrigation as it will with it, that land ought not to be irrigated. Those are not the lands which I propose to irrigate. That some have irrigated to excess—used water at wrong times and in wrong quantities, and in a wrong manner—and thereby injured their crops, is quite probable. Food and medicine, and many other things good in their places, if improperly used, would have a bad effect, but they ought not for that reason to be discarded altogether. The art of irrigation is as old as the cultivation of the soil. “It was practiced from time immemorial by the ancient Egyptians and by the Assyrians and Babylonians, and has ever continued of prime necessity in the warm countries bordering the Mediterranean.” It has been practiced from the remotest times, and by almost every nation of which we have any authentic knowledge down to the present time. Nor is its use confined to warm, dry regions, such as Palestine, Arabia, Northern Africa, Spain, parts of South America and Mexico, for it is found beneficial and extensively used in humid England, in France, Prussia, Italy, and in many other countries both in Europe and America. There is probably no civilized or even half-civilized people who have not found its use beneficial and often indispensable. In some instances irrigation even

antedates civilization; for instance, the Aztecs of Mexico and the aboriginal inhabitants of Peru. It was the custom of the Incas to go out annually to the suburbs of Cuzco and, in the presence of all the people, consecrate rural labor by turning up the soil with a golden plow. Prescott says of that country that “many places needed only to be properly irrigated to be susceptible of extraordinary production.” The Peruvians had innumerable aqueducts and canals, one of which measured between 400 and 500 miles, and all these without an acquaintance with the use of iron. In agriculture, as in almost everything else, something useful may be learned from all nations without regard to rank in the scale of civilization. We shall find it profitable now to adopt the practice of irrigation in use by the ancient inhabitants of Peru for centuries before the discovery of America.

The Chinese are known to have practiced for many centuries both drainage and irrigation. It is said that “no other country can boast of an equal length of artificial water communication,” and that in the construction of canals the two leading objects which they always kept in view were drainage and irrigation—that of navigation being entirely a secondary one. Some of their canals are of great length and prodigious dimensions. The one connecting the city of Pekin with the Yangtse-Kiang river is said to be from 200 to 1000 feet in width and over 600 miles in length. Perhaps the Chinese, should they be permitted to remain in this country and increase in numbers by immigration, may be profitably employed on works of a similar character.

Irrigation is sometimes brought about by natural causes—for instance, periodical overflows; but the lesson to be derived from them is, for that reason, none the less instructive. The famous river of Egypt is a striking example. For three months of the year—August, September and October—the Nile generally overflows its banks, bearing down a vast amount of decayed vegetable growth and rapid decay, and copious rains, under the burning sun of equatorial Africa—which, intermingling and combining, on its long journey of more than two thousand miles, with the silicious and calcareous particles contained in the muddy waters, finally precipitates, in the form of slime or muck, all along the narrow valley on both sides of the river, covering an extent of four to five miles wide and between four and five hundred miles in length. The wonderful productiveness of Egypt was the consequence. This was Nature's plan—her great laboratory, which, long ages before the explorations of Speke and Baker “broke the spell which guarded the secret fountains of the

Nile," had been in operation, analyzing and compounding, transmitting and distributing from her exhaustless storehouse the elements of fertility which rendered Egypt, above all other countries, famous as a land of corn and plenty. What is true of the Nile will apply, to a greater or less degree, to all streams which overflow their banks, from the mighty Amazon and Mississippi down to the smallest rivulet that meanders through the meadows. These operations of Nature teach us both to irrigate and to fertilize. As a bountiful Providence by these means continually renews and fructifies the earth, so ought man, as a co-worker with his Creator, who is ever repeating for his benefit these instructive lessons, to aid and improve the soil by giving it moisture to dissolve and prepare those ingredients which, chemical analyses have taught us, go to constitute the food of plants, and by restoring to it, as far as is in his power, those elements of fertility of which he is continually robbing it by improvident cultivation.

All running waters contain more or less organic and other fertilizing matter in a state of solution. The farther they run, and especially through alluvial regions, the more impregnated they become, and consequently more beneficial when required for irrigation.

Some parts of our own country are naturally so dry in Summer as to require to be irrigated even for cereals—for example, Salt Lake Valley, in Utah Territory. There are many other places in several of the States and Territories, and even within our own State, which can only be rendered productive and made to supply the wants of a vast population by a proper application of water. I am bold to assert it as my belief, founded upon observation, that the development of the agricultural capabilities of this State has hardly begun; and yet California has acquired a reputation for fertility and productiveness that is world-wide. An extensive and judicious system of irrigation is, in my judgment, the only thing that will ever enable the State to attain its highest development. All lands, as I have said before, do not require to be irrigated—some must even be drained—but I speak generally when I say that, sooner or later, the necessities of a growing population will demand increased production, and that this can only be brought about to the fullest extent of which the land is capable, in the way I have suggested. This subject is therefore of vital importance to the agricultural interest of our State.

There is a vast aggregate amount of land belonging to the United States, lying between the summit of the Sierra Nevada Mountains and the sea-coast, which can be made available only by a judicious application of water. We see the necessity of reclaiming the tule and other swamp lands. We have also seen what must be evident to all who will give the subject attention, that both classes of land (the dry and the swamp land) can be reclaimed at about the same cost that would be required for either one of said classes. The conclusion is irresistible, therefore, that the waters of all the streams of the State are destined to become very valuable, and it is consequently important that they should, as far as possible, be stored away in the mountains in Winter to be used when required in Summer. It will cost immense sums of money, of course, to construct the almost numberless reservoirs which will be required throughout all the mountain regions of the State. The General Government will never be able to give its attention to this (to us) most important subject. The State alone can and ought to control it, and enact the requisite regulations. Why not, then, ask of Congress a donation to this State of all lands within our borders which are valueless on account of their aridity? By undertaking to reclaim the dry and the swamp lands at the same time, your labors will, I certainly believe, be ultimately crowned with success. If you go on with but the one—that is, the reclamation of the swamp lands alone—I have some apprehension that you may possibly fail, and that the swamps may continue to be the great source of miasmatic exhalations for an indefinite period. I know it will take time and effort to convince Congress that California is not wholly made up of flowery meads and fruitful vales, and rocks of silver and golden sands. It is difficult for men who have never crossed the continent, or had their souls elevated and their minds expanded by the influence of mountain scenery, to comprehend the peculiar but imperative wants of our State. But the earlier we begin to show them the necessities of our situation, and the more earnestly we urge the facts to sustain our petitions, and the more persistently we knock at the door of Congress, the sooner will our prayers be granted. Congress is generally disposed, so far as my experience goes, to act justly toward California, and it is only a question of our ability to convince them of what our wants are.

There may be said to be, in the world two systems of agriculture, which have been adopted by different nations according to the peculiarities of soil and climate. These systems may be

denominated as the Northern and Southern systems. Both have come to California, but by different routes; both are destined to be useful. Here may be said to be a common field where each, separately or both combined, may be beneficially employed. The Southern system originated in warm, dry climates where irrigation was indispensable. It was practiced in Palestine, Arabia and all the dry countries bordering on the Mediterranean, and found its way here from Spain and Mexico. The other system is derived from Middle and Northern Europe, where the climate and soil are such as to render irrigation less and drainage more a necessity, but both generally dispensable in ordinary seasons. This system accompanied our forefathers from Europe to America, and has traveled westward with our advancing columns till it came with us to the Pacific Coast. Both these systems, with variations to suit our varied conditions, will be required to develop the diversified capabilities of our soil and meet the conditions of our peculiar climate.

While the customs and practices of almost every country, in respect to variety of production and modes of culture, may be beneficially adopted in California—I mean to say, to a greater degree than in almost any other country in the whole world,—there is something so peculiar in our surpassingly rich soils—in our wet and dry seasons—in our dry and apparently barren lands but which, when irrigated, astonish us with their productiveness—in the indomitable energy of our people—and, in short, in almost everything as to require for California a new system of agriculture, and as a matter of course a new agricultural literature. Every practicable farmer must be aware how comparatively inapplicable here are the periodicals and treatises on agriculture published in the Atlantic States and Europe. No farmer can afford to dispense with agricultural publications; but those published nearest the locality of his farming operations ought to be the most valuable and consequently preferred. How would a paper published at Greenland or at Panama suit a California farmer? I believe I am within the truth, Mr. President, when I say that California offers, taking everything into consideration the grandest field for human enterprise to be found anywhere upon this round globe. Our resources—agricultural and mineral—are literally boundless. Five millions of people can be sustained and all find enough to do within the limits of this State alone. Population is what we want to carry this State forward in a career of progress and prosperity unknown even in the brightest periods of our brilliant history. We want common labor and skilled labor, and all kinds

of labor, except slave labor. We have beautiful plains to cultivate, malarious marshes to drain—waterless hills and valleys and slopes to irrigate, cottages and homes and stately edifices to build, roads and canals to construct, forests to subdue and forests to create, institutions to establish and build up, landscapes to embellish, and a thousand other things to do in order to unfold the varied capabilities of this new but most interesting region. Population is the great desideratum. Whatever may promote the immigration of an industrious and useful—useful is the very term I desire to employ—useful population, and the investment of capital in laudable enterprises, is worthy of the attention of this Society, and should have the earnest and active consideration of the State. We ought to encourage hither the best classes from foreign countries, and we want them as fast as they can become assimilated to us in language, customs, intelligence and love of republican freedom. The wealth-creating class—the laborer—is what I mean. It makes no difference whether the man labors with his head or his hands, or both. Each is useful in his place—useful, as I said before, is the term that expresses my meaning. This term will include the farmer, the gardener, the stock-raiser, the mechanic, the engineer, the minister of the gospel, the school-teacher and all the learned professions, and all who are willing to work, and are capable of earning an honest living. It would not include the drones of the political and social hive—gamblers, impecunious speculators and professional politicians—all those who are too lazy to work and too proud to beg—nor would it include those who have been brought up to labor and, through a false pride, have become ashamed to acknowledge that they have ever labored, or that they know how to work, for fear, perhaps, they may not be thought to have descended from rich ancestry. It would exclude the “shoddy tribe”—by this I do not mean those who became wealthy suddenly or otherwise and still retain their senses—but that giddy, reckless class which cannot bear prosperity, those who, upon the sudden acquisition of wealth, start off on the road to ruin, affect aristocracy, wonder how bread and pies are made, and ask how turnips look when they are growing. It will not include those who loiter from day to day and from month to month around grogshops, setting baneful examples to the young, who are soon to be the men and rulers of the land. None but the useful should ever be encouraged to come to our shores. The Atlantic States and the principal countries of Europe swarm with the very people we want, and they are doubtless willing to come, or would be so if they but knew the facts and had the means to enable them to get here. What we want to do is to disseminate reliable information as to

this country and its advantages, and then devise some feasible way for the people to come here. Our great hope is centered on the completion of the Pacific Railroad. But if possible to avoid, we ought not to be obliged to wait for that event, or to be entirely dependent upon it when it shall be completed. The difficulty lies in this, that all the principal channels of travel are in the hands of monopolies, and are likely to continue to be so. It requires quite a fortune for a laboring man to make the journey from Europe to California. It takes as much to pay for the passage of a single man from New York to San Francisco as it does to purchase a farm of 160 acres from the Government of the United States after he gets here. If there is any legitimate remedy for the obstacles in the way of immigration it should be sought for and applied. Agriculture and all our industrial interests are involved in this vital question. Hence it is proper to make this inquiry upon the present occasion. We know that monopolies are always onerous and dangerous to the best interests of a people. They may be less dangerous perhaps in a free country like ours, where exorbitant charges will, in most cases, diminish patronage, beget opposition, curtail resources, and thus wound in the most vital part, soulless corporations. Excessive prosperity may produce extravagance, extravagance beget indebtedness, and indebtedness dissolution. But the prosperity of a State—a great country like ours—ought not to be dependent on these fortuitous or capricious remedies. I believe there is a remedy if the people will it—a legal remedy—within the just scope and meaning of our national organic law. By what right does Congress regulate the carrying of passengers and commerce on the ocean? I do not pretend to be a constitutional expounder—I have no claim to legal learning, and consequently no reputation as a lawyer to lose. I profess simply to feel, in common with other citizens, a deep and abiding interest in all that concerns the prosperity of the Commonwealth. There is but one clause in the Constitution which covers the case, but that clause is, in my judgment, ample for all purposes,—domestic as well as foreign. In connection with the clause “to provide for the general welfare,” the power is certainly, in my judgment, unquestionable. Congress has power, namely (I now quote the language of the Constitution):

“To regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several States and with the Indian tribes.”

What regulation, I ask, can be more important to commerce among the several States than to fix a reasonable limit, beyond which even extortion can not go, to the charges for freight and travel? Our country is expanding into wonderful proportions. So rapid is our advancement that many who have already passed the meridian of life, and who are now witnessing this interesting scene, may live to see the United States the third nation of the earth in population and territorial extent and the first in power, intelligence, goodness, and having all the attributes essential to make us a great, good independent and happy people. We are already the first nation in the cause of freedom, and the defense of human rights. The travel, commerce and free and untrammelled intercommunication between the States composing this vast nation of ours are of vital importance, in order to dissipate prejudice and bind all its members into one indissoluble and harmonious whole. The prosperity of agriculture, of mining, of manufactures, in a word, of all interests, hinges upon the proper regulation of commerce among the several States. How important, then, it becomes that these regulations should be enacted and subject, from time to time, to amendment by the representatives of the whole people. And, thanks to the wisdom of our forefathers, Congress has ample power for this duty, soon to be of imperative necessity, to meet the growing wants of the entire country, implanted in the foundation of our governmental fabric. That the power now claimed may not have been exercised is probably true, but that is no argument against its existence. Many provisions in the Constitution have been permitted to lie dormant because Congress has not seen proper to provide for carrying them into effect.

This question does not concern California alone; the States upon the Atlantic slope will soon demand it. The monopolies so combine to fix the prices of freight—(and the travel is inseparably connected with the commerce)—that the farmer of Illinois is often obliged to sell his corn at a mere nominal price for fuel, when it would bring 75 cents to \$1 per bushel in New York.

The States themselves sometimes violate the Constitution by imposing burdens on the travel and commerce passing through them. The State of Illinois, for instance, charges seven per centum on the gross earnings of the Illinois Central Railroad, thereby taxing the commerce and travel of all the States to the extent of about half a million dollars per annum. New Jersey and Maryland also



raise large sums of money to support their State governments from taxing the travel passing through them, a vast majority of which comes from the other States.

All public highways must be subject to regulation under the provision quoted, for they are but links of highways passing through all of the States. It was once said that all roads led to Rome. We can say that all roads in America lead to New York and San Francisco.

It is, therefore, undeniably wrong for the States to tax the travel and commerce passing through them. It is wrong for monopolies to do the same thing by unrestricted charter privileges. Congress can never alienate the right to regulate commerce among the several States. Agriculture and all the industrial interests of California, and of all the States, are deeply concerned in seeing commerce among the several States freed from all odious and unjust obstructions and properly regulated by the only power having competent authority to do it, namely the Congress of the United States. Unless this be so they must all, for all indefinite future, if not for all time, lie at the mercy of formidable monopolies. Even after the Pacific Railroad shall have been completed—aye, and after the Northern Pacific and Southern Pacific Railroads shall span, as they surely will, the continent and be the coterminus with the northern and southern borders of this great country, from the Mississippi valley to the Pacific Ocean—the danger will still remain. The railroad and steamship companies can and will combine to gage their tariffs of charges by their own—I was going to say consciences, but corporations have no consciences, —I will say, by their own will, limited only by their love of money and their ability to extort it from the people at the expense of the prosperity and all the material interests of the whole country. The carrying business between the Atlantic States and the Pacific Coast is destined to be immense beyond computation. Shall it be suffered to permanently go into the grasp of unrestricted monopolies? In view of the facts of the case, it must be patent to everyone that Congress alone can remove the obstacles in the way of immigration. The earlier the people make the demand, the sooner will Congress obey their will.

The policy of granting subsidies in order to encourage the establishment of ocean steamship lines to important points in foreign countries is, I believe, a good one,—a necessity—in order to enable us to compete with the formidable steam marine of Great Britain. We must either do this or remain

a second power upon the ocean. We find it necessary to grant aid to great enterprises, even within our own borders. Where subsidies are granted and accepted, the Government can make all proper restrictions and regulations. Of course no one will deny that, I hope; but it ought to be done with caution and discrimination, for it would be buying the very right which already belongs to the Government and paying for it with large sums of the public money. Just and liberal encouragement ought to be given to laudable enterprises and investments of capital. I am in favor of them; we are all in favor of them. Without them no great undertakings could be begun and executed. But we cannot favor the building up, at the expense of the people and the prosperity of the whole country, monstrous moneyed oligarchies, powerful enough to control Conventions, Legislatures, and even Congress, and contaminate our whole political system. Human laws limit the interest on money—why not fix limits to the earnings of capital invested upon the highways of commerce under the express authority given to regulate commerce among the several States. In a word, the channels of commerce among the several States ought to be redeemed from the grasp of the grandest monopolies, perhaps, the world has ever seen and be regulated with an eye single to the public welfare before they become so potent as to virtually own the Government itself.

Agriculture, mining, manufactures, in a word, all the industrial pursuits are so dependent upon and so intimately connected with the labor of the country, I hope to be pardoned for the allusions I am about to make. While agriculture stands, by common consent, first in importance, because it is the true source and foundation of a nation's wealth and prosperity, all branches of human industry, each in its place, are equally important, and the whole rest upon a common foundation—labor. We are but one among many nations, and, in a degree, we have to compete with all nations. Our necessities must be supplied, and to do this we must produce and manufacture or become dependent upon other nations for what we eat and for what we wear. I speak of productive labor. Nothing can be done without labor. If our mountains were all gold and silver, like the fabled isles of Chrysa and Argyra, they would be valueless without labor. The price of money in a day's wages is no just unit of measure as to remuneration for services performed, so far as the laborer himself is concerned. The question of greatest moment to him is, as to the amount of food and clothing, and comforts and conveniences of life, to maintain himself and family he may be able to purchase for the price

of a day's labor. But the case is different with the manufacturer or producer of commodities which have to find a market in foreign countries. In order to enable him to compete successfully he desires labor to be cheap—that is, have a low money value. But when it is dear, as in our own country, the manufacturer is continually crying for protection—for protection to his capital. Now, labor, being the real wealth-producing element, not only of ours, but of all countries, ought to be as free, untrammelled, respected and amply remunerated as circumstances will warrant. It ought to be protected, if any should be, but without discrimination—the farmer, as much as the manufacturer, is entitled to regard as long as we deem it indispensable to resort to a protective tariff. But there is no real danger of unjust and galling discriminations if the laborers be intelligent, for they themselves are the real rulers. Let us look, for a moment, at some interesting figures to illustrate this most significant fact.

By the census of 1860 there were in the United States, of male persons twenty years of age, and upward 8,109,656. There were classed as having occupations 8,287,043. Now, let us endeavor to arrive at the real voting population among the productive laborers of the country. In order to do this let us deduct all females and those who, in the common acceptance of the term, may not be said to labor, namely:

Barkeepers, 13,263; agents, 16,478; brokers, 4,907; grocers, 40,070; innkeepers, 25,818; merchants, 123,378; milliners, 25,722; public officers, 24,693; peddlers, 16,594; seamstresses, 90,198; teachers, 110,469; U. S. officers, 7,097; tailors and tailoresses, 33,900; actors, 1490; auctioneers, 1,348; bankers, 2,753; bank officers, 2,995; housekeepers, 22,393; lawyers, 33,193; music teachers, 5,625; nurses, 8,132; overseers, 37,883; physicians, 54,543; students, 49,993; traders, 11,195; planters, 85,661; unknown, 62,872—912,563.

Among the occupations are: Carpenters, 242,598; deduct 42,958; farmers, 2,423,895, deduct 423,895; farm laborers 795,679, deduct 95,679; servants, 559,908, deduct 159,908; common laborers, 969,301, deduct 169,301—891,741. Some of these, however, may not be worthy of the honorable occupations with which they are classed. I want these calculations to be below rather than above the truth. Some may not actually labor; some may be only jack-knife carpenters; some

who profess to be servants may be eye-servants. Hence, to be entirely on the safe side, the above liberal deductions are made. There are 164,608 shoemakers, some of whom may be cobblers—let us deduct 40,000. To make sure that we cover everything and leave the number of productive laborers—the bone and sinew and hope of the country—who are American male citizens and entitled to vote let us make the further allowance for foreigners and all others, say 1,442,739. Total deductions, 3,287,043. Balance, in round numbers, of 5,000,000 of wealth-producing citizen voters: The Presidential vote of 1860—the same year of the census from which the above conclusions have been drawn—was as follows: For Lincoln, 1,857,610; Douglas, 1,365,976; Breckenridge, 847,953; Bell 590,631; total, 4,662,170.

These figures are irresistible, and demonstrate that five-sixths of the voters of the United States are the laborers—yes, the active workers on the farms, in the manufactories—every place where men obey the command of their Creator, and eat their bread in the sweat of their face. But there are teachers, and many other useful—yes, indispensable— occupations and professions, amounting in the aggregate to hundreds of thousands, a majority of whom must of necessity be in sympathy with the laboring and wealth-producing classes, and essential to our prosperity. Hence our calculations are, beyond all question, within the truth. From data found in the same census report the evidence is conclusive that more than four-fifths of the entire population of the United States are the laboring men and women and their dependent families thereby showing the important fact that the producers are themselves the principal consumers. The same rule obtains here as well as in the other States. Who, then, I ask, are the rulers of the land? Who most interested in reasonable prices for all the necessaries and comforts of life? Who so desirous to see economy in the administration of public affairs, as those who pay all the taxes and bear all the burdens?—aye, and who so responsible? Oh that the laborers and producers of all that the country can boast—of all that has made its name great among the nations—may appreciate the magnitude of their responsibility! May they always be intelligent, for in their keeping are committed the hope, the destiny, the momentous future, pregnant with coming events too grand and too brilliant, let us hope, to fade away, of this Republic.

I had intended to say something in regard to silk culture and other industries, but time will not permit.

I had intended, also, Mr. President, to discuss or at least to allude to many other topics, and among them the subject of the steam plow. I cannot doubt that ere long steam or some other convenient power will be made to perform the labor of plowing instead of animals. It to already used in England to great advantage. In offering premiums to encourage agriculture, our State ought not to forget the steam plow. Labor being dearer here than in any other part of the world, we must make up the disadvantages under which we struggle by adopting all the improvements in the form of labor-saving machinery. In this regard we are certainly in advance and I believe will maintain the lead of all other nations. As long as we do this, wages will be more remunerative here than elsewhere.

Finally, Mr. President, I am most happy to believe that the Golden State has a bright future before her. No State in the sisterhood of the Union occupies geographically a more important position. With many disadvantages, on account of want of population and our distance from the great markets of the world, our State has still so many other advantages and so many attractive features, that it seems amazing to those who have seen and known the facts, that the people from the Atlantic States and from the overcrowded populations of Europe do not rush here by countless thousands. The reason must be that they have not the necessary information, or the means to reach here, or both. So far as intelligence is concerned, it is only necessary to state the naked truth; but truth, in this land of wonders, of beauty and of fruitfulness, seems to the people of other lands like fiction. You must show them that the truth is the truth.

Do you think the peasant farmer of Germany, or the viticulturist laboring upon the few rods of terraced cliffs overlooking the Rhine, or any of the intelligent laboring classes in other European countries, would remain where they are were they able to reach California, and knew the real facts, the naked truth?

If they knew that wages are higher here than in any other part of the known world?

That here, a common laborer can earn, over and above his own board, from four to six barrels of flour in a single month?

That bread and nearly all the necessaries of life are cheaper here than in any other country upon the globe?

That there is room for millions of people to come here and cultivate the vine, the fig, the olive, and all the cereals and vegetables known to warm and temperate climates?

That the climate here is actually one of indescribable loveliness?

That we are blest with the “early and the later rain,” which makes California a land of almost never-failing harvest and fruitfulness?

That Winter, except in the mountains, is hardly known; no rains in Summer to blight or destroy harvests; that for six months of the year the sky bends over this land of “hills and valleys” with almost unclouded serenity?

That fruits of nearly all kinds, such as peaches, apples, pears and grapes, are so abundant as to be literally almost without price?

That while in corresponding latitudes upon the Atlantic slope of the continent, the States are buried in snow and ice and chilled by piercing blasts from the frozen zone, here our hills and valleys and mountain slopes, refreshed and fructified by generous rains, rejoice in robes of living green?

I am greatly rejoiced to know that those who have produced this fine exhibition—manufactured these works of skill and beauty—these implements and inventions—these unrivaled products of the soil—these wares, and all the varied products of manufactures—those, I say, who have produced all these, are the people who are to control and shape the future of this great country. The country is in their hands—may they appreciate the responsibility resting upon them. I believe they will. In them is all our hope, and I believe the country, Mr. President and gentlemen, is and ever will be safe in

your keeping. You, gentlemen, who represent the labor and industry and all that makes our country great.

PREMIUM AWARDED FOR BEST GRAIN FARM BY STATE AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY

**ADDRESS OF GENERAL JOHN BIDWELL.**

Delivered before the State Agricultural Society, September 18, 1868.

About nine o'clock P. M. John Bidwell, of Butte, was introduced to the audience by I. N. Hoag, and delivered a neat and forcible speech, commencing by extolling the exhibition as far surpassing its predecessors. He said that if we went on progressing in the future as we had done in the past, hardly any man could anticipate our future greatness; but although we had done so much, much still remained to be done. Wherever he had been upon the Atlantic seaboard, he had found a dearth of general intelligence concerning California —her products and her capacity. It would redound to the great benefit of this State if there should be sent to the Department of Agriculture at Washington, from some reliable source, specimens of our cereals and other products, properly labelled and glass-jarred. He had raised some wheat upon his farm which he defied anybody to beat, and he would like to have some of that wheat exhibited in the Patent Office at Washington. He was told there was some wheat in the exhibition which could beat his; if so, all he had to say was that it must be exceedingly good, for he believed his wheat to be the best ever raised in California. It would be of real advantage to the State, in his judgment, if the State Agricultural Society, would collect and forward specimens of our products to the Agricultural Bureau at Washington. If the masses upon the Atlantic seaboard could see a worthy exhibition of our products, thousands would come here who had at present no idea of leaving the East. He really believed that within the next five years the population of this State would be more than trebled, and thought that our State was capable of sustaining many millions of inhabitants. In the way of manufactures we could, even now, in our infancy, compete in the quality of the articles manufactured, with any country in the world. We were only in the morning dawn of our existence, and our career was onward and upward. The great labor question of our country, he thought, would solve itself. He believed the steam plow, if not

already a success, was assuredly destined to be so within a short period. He believed that steam, that great power which was now moving the world, would eventually, and that at no distant period, be applied to pulverizing the ground; and that was nearly the whole secret of farming. Failure of good crops generally resulted from want of proper plowing—proper pulverizing of the soil. The old plow should be thrown away; it would not answer, as it polished rather than pulverized the soil. Nothing but steam would accomplish the latter purpose. When he grazed around him and saw what had been accomplished in this State, and then looked forward and attempted to grasp its future, he was overwhelmed. He was proud to be a citizen of the United States, and proud to be a resident of California, the brightest of all America. We had surmounted every obstacle in the way of making our country respected, permanent and great, and we were imbued with all the elements of perpetuity; there was no nation in the world that would dare to attack us. We were able to compete with foreign nations either in the pursuits of peace or on the field of battle, and there was no taller man upon this globe than a free American citizen.

JOHN BIDWELL IN 1868

**OPENING ADDRESS.**

Delivered before the Upper Sacramento Agricultural Society, September Twenty-sixth, Eighteen Hundred and Sixty-Nine.

BY GENERAL JOHN BIDWELL, President.

Members of the Upper Sacramento Agricultural Society, and Ladies and Gentlemen:

On occasions like this it is customary, as you are aware, for the presiding officer to deliver an opening address, dilating upon the importance of agriculture and portraying in glowing terms the resources of the country, present and prospective; but I have neither time nor inclination to enter upon, much less to perform such a task; nor do I believe that you, under the circumstances desire such at my hands.



Officers of an agricultural society, if they discharge their duties as they should, occupy anything but sinecure positions. No amount of smooth words, lazy good humor, or self-laudation will suffice to fill the chasm of inefficiency. They must work—that is the word—work—and triumph or fall by their work. Active, earnest, efficient work knows no such word as fail. And, my friends, it is a glorious circumstance that we live in an age of universal activity—in a country of liberty and progress, where it is no disgrace to toil. We should recognize labor as the foundation of prosperity; and no man can plead as an excuse that it is not honorable to work. It is not enough for the members of such a society to elect officers, resolve to hold a fair, and then fold their arms and say all is done. But, pardon the comparison of small with great things, how long would our government, or any other free government, last without the active sympathy and support of the people? Expenses must be paid, and moral and material forces brought into requisition. The life of a society like this, as that of a nation, depends on the existence and efficiency of these essential conditions. When a government or society is organized, it has but just begun its career. Sympathy and material support are its vital atmosphere. As “eternal vigilance is the price of liberty,” so is earnest and ceaseless effort the price of success.

For two preceding years, the local or Butte County Agricultural Fairs were temporarily provided with a structure dignified with the name of Pavilion. The plan of annually building up and tearing down was believed by the present officers unwise and not to be continued. It was believed that prominent and enterprising citizens of adjoining counties would come to our aid and do much to promote the object and success of the annual exhibition (which we have come here to celebrate) and share equally with us in the beneficent results sure to flow from the exchange of happy greetings and peaceful rivalry. With these views and objects, it was but fair to give the citizens of other counties equal rights and representation. To this end it became necessary to reorganize and merge into a district organization, under the name of the “Upper Sacramento Agricultural Society,” embracing the Counties of Butte, Colusa, Tehama, Shasta, Plumas and Lassen, and such others as may unite with us in the future. This accomplished, an appeal was made for means to erect a structure which should be of ample proportions to answer the present and prospective wants of the society; a building which could be so far advanced, with the means we might reasonably expect,

as to answer the purposes of the present fair; one that could, when the financial condition of the society should permit, be appropriately finished.

A firm brick foundation, three feet high—eighty by ninety-six feet—with two cross walls, was laid, and a substantial frame erected thereon. The outside boarding, though substantial, is temporary; but the floor and roof may be considered good and permanent. But further description is unnecessary. Without drawing somewhat upon your imaginations you may not be able to form a proper conception of this now unfinished edifice when it shall have been completed. But draw upon your fancy as you may—picture to yourselves this temple of industry, surmounted with cupola or dome, embowered amidst stately trees; this vast aisle and transept arched and groined, and these walls decorated with mottoes and allegorical frescoes—all these things and more are within the possibilities of the near future, if the people will that they shall be done, and furnish the means. Industry, and rivalry, and development—these will secure all we need, and satisfy our fondest hopes. In attempting to make these allusions—this sort of general and imperfect report of the doings of this society, let me say, the work itself is the best witness as to what we have done. Whether or not it meets with the intelligent expectation of those who have a right to call us to account, I can conscientiously say it is all we have been able to do. We present it to you as the result of your willing contributions, and trust that you will find in it something worthy of your approbation. We are here to exchange kindly greetings, and celebrate our annual jubilee; and we have reason to rejoice and return thanks to a gracious Providence, who has crowned the land with abundant harvests and filled our hearts with gladness. We are here, my friends, in the interest of labor, of harmony and good will, and of all that makes us a prosperous and progressive people, to dedicate this hall to agriculture. It rose at your command; it is filled with the products of your industry. Accept it at our hands, and make this occasion one of sincere rejoicing. And more than that—make it a season of profit as well as pleasure, that all may be able to say, when they shall return to their homes, that it was good to have been there; that they feel encouraged, and their ambitions aroused, to excell in their various callings. It is an auspicious indication to see the growing interest felt in these annual exhibitions. It is in your power to make them occasions not only of happy reunions, but of lasting benefit to all; and it is hard to imagine how any can return from here without feeling

amply recompensed. If, however, there is a son of Adam so buried in avarice, so fascinated with the bubbles and frivolities of idleness—in a word, so lost to the finer sensibilities of his nature, as not to feel the kindling power of emulation—his case is one of commiseration; he is, indeed, a drone in the hive of industry. But if one spark of genuine humanity is left in his bosom, there is hope—hope that the spark may be ignited into a flame—hope that he will resolve to add his mite to the sum of activity, which carries the country forward in its career of prosperity, and annually return to compete in the race of merit, where excellence alone should win the prize. No man is so wise that he cannot learn; none so rich that he cannot be taught economy; none so prosperous that he cannot be benefited by the knowledge of other men; none so humble that he may not rise.

It may be proper to allude to one or two obstacles to the completeness of the exhibition of the present year. The season for fruit has not been favorable. In comparison with former years, grapes have been almost a failure; and the same may be said of most products of the orchard. The failure has been both in quantity and quality of the fruit, owing, doubtless, to the small amount of rain last spring and winter, and the few days of unusually hot weather in July. Another effect or peculiarity of the season has been: fruits ripened and disappeared a month earlier than ever before, within the memory of the oldest inhabitant.

I may be pardoned, perhaps, for making one more excuse and counting it among the obstacles with which we have had to contend, and that is, the stringency of the money market, which is without parallel. The land is groaning with plenty, but amidst this abundance every man feels poor. One thing is evident, there is no available or adequate market for farm products. Look at your granaries, they are literally bursting with the staff of life. Look at your banks of the Sacramento, they are barricaded with grain awaiting shipment. There is, in this state of affairs, no sufficient circulating medium. Importations carry away all the gold and silver, and there is nothing left with which to transact business. From what source are we to find relief? I do not pretend to comprehend the intricacies of financial strategy by which a few men rule the entire Pacific Coast. One thing is clear—a crisis is upon us. The most apathetic must feel it. The year eighteen hundred and sixty-nine has been made memorable by the completion of the great transcontinental railway, and we are suddenly

brought into more intimate relations with the Atlantic States and Europe. The mystery and romance of our isolation have been snatched away and we now stand face to face with the world.

In this changed condition of affairs, what is to be done? Fold our arms and wait for some thing to turn up? I answer, by no means. To me the solution of the problem seems not difficult; but it may be more readily said than done. We must compete, and competition means labor. Look at the vast array of our importations. We must either go to manufacturing or continue to export the precious metals. It takes all our gold and silver, as soon as they are dug out from the ground, and a considerable portion of our agricultural products, to pay for what we consume and wear out, a very considerable proportion of which, sufficient, in my judgment, to relieve this coast from the very embarrassments we now suffer, can, and by every consideration of wise policy or local pride, should be manufactured in this State. But I have no time to enter into detail or speculation. Look at the vast—aye, unlimited water power of the Pacific Coast! Consider this mild and salubrious climate! See the exhaustless fountain of cheap labor in China and Japan. Cannot these advantages be made to avail us anything? I tell you, my friends, that if we remain inert and fail to grasp the logic of this new order of things our prestige is gone—business must languish—our prosperity must be deferred. It is not necessary to dive into the severe logic of political economists; Adam Smith and John Stuart Mill may be laid on the shelf. Let capitalists begin at once, and spend in the next two years as much in building up manufactures as they have in the past two years in wild and fruitless speculations in mines, and, my word for it, such an impetus to permanent prosperity would be given as to be wholly without parallel in the history of the State. Reduce, as fast as practicable, the importations, and you will have enough gold to fill every man's pockets; every man who shall, by his industry, deserve it, will be sure to have it.

Wait and hope, and speculate as we may, I do not believe that real and permanent prosperity will dawn upon us until we become, to a considerable extent, a manufacturing as well as agricultural and mining State. We are too great a distance from the principal grain markets of the world to make our wheat take the place, of gold except in times of famine or great scarcity abroad.

According to the Commercial Herald and Market Review, a paper published in San Francisco, there were bound to that port,, on the seventeenth of this month, not less than one hundred and thirty-nine vessels. Of these, thirty-four were from New York, seven from Boston, twenty-seven from Liverpool, sixteen from Australia, etc. Now, what are these vessels bringing to exchange for your gold? The first thing I notice in five hundred and seventy-five barrels of alcohol, because it begins with A. But looking down the list I find six hundred and thirty-five barrels of whiskey; or, reckoning each barrel at forty gallons, two hundred and sixty-five thousand four hundred gallons; this at two dollars per gallon (I believe the article rates at about that figure) amounts to more than half a million of dollars. Do not imagine this is all the whiskey consumed on this coast; by no means. This item of half a million of dollars worth is simply what is on the way here at this particular time to make up the deficiency; it has nothing to do with the magnificent operations of manufacturing whiskey and brandy in California. So much for that. Next are four thousand seven hundred hogsheads of coal; also, seven thousand two hundred and eighty-three tons of the same. These are probably a necessity, like many other things. But what about four thousand one hundred and seventy-three packages of boots and shoes? Our hills and plains are covered with cattle, and still hundreds of thousands of dollars must be sent away to pay for boots and shoes. Gold is the only thing, as a rule, which they will take in exchange. And what next? Fifty-four thousand four hundred and seventeen boxes of candles! In this land of verdure and sunshine, where domestic animals live in winter as well as summer on spontaneous pasture; where the very clouds drop fatness all over the land; can we not, ought we not, I ask, manufacture our own candles? Next, thirteen thousand one hundred and forty-six boxes of soap; also, thirty-eight thousand one hundred and seventy-three casks, kegs, cases and packages of pickles, preserves, etc. But I cannot specify; the list is too great. I am aware that the vessels bringing these things to us will take away some wheat—four to eight millions of dollars worth perhaps, during the entire year, provided they can get it at low figures, so low as to be ruin to the producers. But it takes all our gold, besides, to pay the balance against us; and here, where our currency is gold, gold we must have or all business will languish and die. But there is no need of discouragement if we will but sieze the reins and put the car in motion. Do not understand me that manufactures are the only desideratum. We want combination and co-operation of enterprise. Agriculture must be better and more varied, to embrace everything within the range of

our unequalled and diversified soil and climate. Mining should be carried on with more intelligent economy and better comparative results. All the parts of the industrial resources of the country should come into play, for they are all necessary to make the sum of that prosperity which awaits our bidding. These exhibitions of peaceful rivalry are just what we need to stimulate us to greater and greater results. They are the fruit of industry and measure the length and breadth and depth of enterprise. They should therefore receive at our hands all due encouragement, that may show us to be, a people worthy our name and pretensions; free, enlightened, refined, progressive.

Before closing, I beg leave to say to those who are here from a distance, we are glad to see you and feel honored by your presence. We are aware of the inconveniences inseparably connected with the sojourn of a large number of people in a small town. But I sincerely trust there will be no such thing as extortion or other cause of complaint. The people of Chico will, I believe, do all in their power to render the stay of their visitors agreeable. I must not omit to express the thankfulness of this society to those whole-souled, liberal minded citizens of this and adjacent counties, who have in our time of need so generously lent us a helping hand.

The ladies, whose kind and timely assistance was so acceptable in decorating the hall, have our special thanks. Finally, to one and all, ladies, gentlemen and children who grace the occasion by your presence, I greet you in the name of our Society with a sincere and heartfelt welcome. Good night.

THE "OLD ADOBE" IN 1868

### **THE FARMERS' UNION. Remarks of Gen. Bidwell.**

We publish in full the proceedings of the Farmers' Union, held on Friday last in the City of San Francisco. The resolutions passed have the right ring and show that steps are being taken in the right direction to combine and consolidate effort in behalf of the farmers interests:

A special meeting of the Board of Directors of the California Farmers' Union was held at the Committee room of the Mechanics' Institute in this City on Friday, at which there were present

General John Bidwell of Butte, President; J. R. Synder of Sonoma, W. H. Ware of Santa Clara, T. Hart Hyatt of Solano, Vice-Presidents; A. T. Dewey, Treasurer; and I. N. Hoag of Yolo, Secretary.

The meeting was called to order by the President, who said the objects of the meeting were to devise means by which the cost of moving and marketing the farmers' crops of the coming year might be lessened, and thereby enable them to realize a larger per cent of profit. The expenses of sacking grain and freighting it to market, whether at home or abroad, under the present management, are so great that the small amount left the farmer scarcely remunerates him for the labor necessary to produce it. This state of things arises not from any natural causes, such as the want of an abundant yield or the great distance from a reliable and extensive market, but rather from **THE EXHORBITANT EXACTIONS** of those through whose hands the material for sacking, the money to move it, and the means of transportation, both inland and on the high seas, are furnished. While it is not politic or business like for the farmers to express bitter feelings toward those who thus oppress them, without trying to relieve themselves from such oppression, still it is their interest and their duty to endeavor, by combined action, by organization, by financial or political power and influence, to protect their own interests, to demand, exact and enforce justice and common honesty from those with whom they have to deal.

General Bidwell said: "In my opinion there is but one way for the farmers to succeed in the accomplishment of these objects, and that is through the organization of local clubs, and the steady support of the State Club in its efforts in their behalf. If the farmers in all portions of the State will come together and form local clubs and put themselves in correspondence and business relations with the State Farmers' Union, in such a manner as to authorize the officers of this association to act for and bind them under necessary moral and financial obligations, in my opinion the relief which they seek can be obtained, to a great degree at least, and industrial prosperity may become general throughout the state. But while the farmer remains aloof from his neighbors —while he continues to act on the selfish individual policy—other classes, such as importers and manufacturers of sacks, common carriers, grain dealers commission merchants and money loaners, will unite for the advancement of their interests and ends, and will take undue and unjust advantages of the farmer;

will oppress, prey upon him and eat out his substance and keep him poor and dependent. Farmers now, unorganized are weak and

**IN A GREAT DEGREE HELPLESS,**

and they have but little courage to make an effort to free themselves or better their conditions; but let 100,000 farmers of this State unite together and act as one man, through an honest and reliable organization, demanding only common justice, but exacting this to the last degree and with a firm and united front, and there is no power in the land that can prevent the attainment of their demands. The farming interests of the country need some wholesome legislation to place them on an equal footing with other occupations and to relieve them from the exactions of heartless monopolies, and if farmers will but unite to send the proper men to represent them in our legislative halls, both State and National, will see to it that our judicial and executive offices are filled with honest, efficient and reliable men, it will then be but an easy matter to secure such legislation and such constitution and execution of the laws as their interests and the best interests of the State demand. For the purpose of emphasizing the idea, I repeat, and I wish I could sound it in the ears of every farmer in the State, the only salvation of the agricultural interests, the only safety to the individual interests of the farmer, is in union of interest and union of action.”

JOHN BIDWELL IN 1872

**CALIFORNIA'S PRODUCTIVE INTERESTS.**

Annual Address Delivered Thursday Evening, September 22, 1881, at the Pavilion, by Hon. John Bidwell.

MR. PRESIDENT, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: My sincere and earnest thanks are due to this society for their kind invitation. By its acceptance I have the honor of standing before you tonight to participate in the ceremonies of this very interesting occasion.



Bewildered as I am by this vast concourse and the magnificence around me, my beginning may be bad, my closing may be worse. And I therefore crave your indulgence and your pardon in advance. Being a farmer you may very naturally expect me to view things from a farmer's standpoint, and to tell you much about farming; but I do not propose to tell you about anything of the kind. It is the wish of my heart to say something, if I may be able in the interest of agriculture—Pacific Coast agriculture.

I shall certainly ramble more or less. Rambling was, you know, an early habit of Californians—or rather, I should say, it was a habit of some very early Californians. Some of us would not have found the way here, perhaps, had we not learned to ramble before we came. And in my rambles on this occasion it is my purpose, in the interest of agriculture, in a general way, to say something of our markets; something of lines of transportation; something of this State Agricultural Society; perhaps, of several other things. But I do not promise them in the order here named.

It would be not only a waste of time, but the height of presumption in me to attempt to instruct the farmers of this State how to manage their farms; how to plow, sow, and harvest; how to plant and cultivate their lands; and how to prepare and market their products; for they all know these things, and many of them much better than myself. They are part of their daily life, and they see and read about them every day. But almost every farmer, like other people, differs, in some respects, from every other farmer.

In the vast hive of modern activity, there must of necessity be many callings. They are indispensable to modern progress and civilization, which are inseparable. The farmer who uses, and the mechanic who makes the plow, are of mutual benefit; so with all the useful trades, professions and employments. They are but links in the great chain of human industry.

In accordance with an early desire on my part, and believing it to be rather a duty, as well as more profitable, to occupy the allotted time in referring to matters of general rather than of special import; and regardful, as I should be, of your patience and your kindness, I have given myself very little room for detail or specification. It is not therefore within my purpose, nor will it be in my

power, to scarcely mention, much less to dwell at length on questions of mere local or personal interest.

That I may avoid, as far as possible, repetition or misconception, let it be understood that, in aiming to further agriculture, or if I shall be so fortunate as to say anything having a bearing in that direction, it is my intention to include, in their appropriate relations, all useful industries and callings. My intention is to slight no one, being all members as we are of the same family—the great industrial family, and a part of that of the nation.

The reports of the California State Agricultural Society during the twenty-six or twenty-seven years of its existence, and the able addresses embodied therein, embrace, and have ably set forth almost every question and phase of agricultural interest in the State and upon the coast, not omitting to portray, in eloquent strains and glowing periods, all the known wonders of climate, scenery, fertility of soil, mineral wealth, and countless capabilities, realized and to be realized, of this marvelous El Dorado of the Pacific. And if the said reports have made omissions or been guilty of shortcomings in respect to anything new or of interest to agriculture, the numerous enterprising periodicals with which the State abounds, are stainless in that regard, for they may almost invariably be found on the very crest of the wave of progress. Boundless almost as is the field of agriculture, there is scarcely a space large enough to set foot which has been left unexplored. Agriculture is coeval with the very dawn of, and will endure as long as civilization itself.

The practice of this finest and most important of arts is so common in our own, indeed, in all countries; so many people in this age of travel are the daily witnesses of farms and farming in all their aspects; farming has been so largely the employment of the masses in all times and in all countries, being so naturally the occupation of man; and so much on the subject has been written and spoken, that I trust you will not expect from me impossibilities, in the way of things charmingly new or sensationally interesting. Things new and strange there are, the world is full of them, and some of them, doubtless many of them, come within the range of the great question we are considering; for agriculture, like the ambient air which enfolds everything upon the earth, comes in contact with and in countless ways and aspects bears important relations to almost everything

in the industrial and material world, even to the glittering orbs made to emblaze the sky and to “be for signs, and for seasons, and for days and years.”

But the events of every day life, the commonplace objects which are nearest and we oftenest see, may sometimes have, and, I may say, generally do have, a significance, a bearing upon our welfare far more useful and enduring than the wonders which are the sensation of the hour, and which meteorlike so frequently disappear. Those who have the taste may indulge in giddy flights, and range ad libitum in the realms of fancy. My desire is far otherwise. I have no wish, and especially at this time, to stray from this lovely scene which you have made so attractive, so brilliant, and so enjoyable.

Of course I must see things from a farmer's standpoint, if I see them at all; but I have no right to speak for more than one. The right I claim for myself I cheerfully concede to every man—to see from his position, and through the medium of his own vision. If no differences existed among men, this world would indeed be an unbearable monotony. There would be no use of coming here if in all things we all saw alike. None could teach, none could learn, on such a dead level of dreary uniformity. But there is no danger on this score. And yet, I will venture to assume that there are points of agreement on many questions of general interest, and that among them are these: That agriculture is indispensable, and, therefore, that it is our duty, and the duty of every one, to encourage it. That in this active and cultured age a division of labor is necessary to advancement, and, therefore, that all employments essential to the general good are equally useful and honorable. That agriculture, being of vital importance, should have the watchful and fostering care of the State, and be relieved of every unnecessary burden. That all taxes should be made as low as good government will admit and wise economy can make them.

Notwithstanding our peculiar and profitable seclusion in early times on this distant coast, we have ever hailed with unbounded satisfaction every inroad upon our isolation. We have ever longed for closer and closer connection with our friends in the East, and with the people of other countries.

Before the world-renowned discovery of gold in 1848, there were but two principal ways by which to reach this then almost terra incognita of the American continent, to wit: across the Plains and round Cape Horn. A few came through Mexico, and some by the way of Arizona or Santa Fe. And we were gladdened, first, by the Panama steamship line and Isthmus railway, which improved it. Then followed the pony express, overland stage, and telegraph; and, last and greatest, the culmination of our fondest hopes in the completion of the celebrated transcontinental railway. But perhaps I should not say last of anything in the line of improvement within the possibility of achievement by steam, lightning, and modern enterprise. In this rushing, flying age, nothing seems to be last very long, especially in regard to facilities for locomotion.

As waters flow from higher to lower levels, so supplies gravitate in the direction of increasing wants. Pacific coast enterprise has done much by its readiness to anticipate and supply demand. Steam ships have been from time to time added to the Pacific waters, till at length lines diverge from the Golden Gate to various points, trans-oceanic, coastwise, and otherwise, thereby extending commercial enterprise to many countries, islands, and places in our own and other lands. And yet the supply of commercial facilities has never been adequate to the demand.

Such has been, and is, the inherent energy of our people, and such the producing power of this State in their hands, as to demand ever increasing facilities for transportation.

In response to these imperative calls, another railway is soon to unite us with the Gulf of Mexico, and the Mississippi at New Orleans. It promises important results. In a word, it promises competition with the sailing vessels laden with wheat for Liverpool via Cape Horn. (What it may do when it drives the vessels all away, I am not prepared to say). Under all circumstances, songs of rejoicing will herald its completion, and no more sincere acclamations will be heard than those of the farmers of California.

Another grand line of railway is speeding to join the great lakes with the Pacific ocean. Other lines of railway, and ramifications of existing lines, are in progress or in contemplation, one pointing westward through the dominions of our friendly cousins to the north, and another looking

towards the capital of our fair “cactusian” sister republic on the south. The signs of the times are unmistakable. The car of progress is rolling onward with ever increasing speed.

This once most out of the way land of ours, is soon to become in common with our whole country, and at no distant period, one almost measureless net work of rails, wires, and locomotives. And as these checker the continent, so are steam and sail, and cable to streak the ocean. Truly this is an age of locomotion. When younger than now, in western New York, I remember that it was something quite remarkable to see a man who had traveled round the world. Now such travelers are as thick as bees. They fairly swarm around the earth.

The earliest adventurers to this land of gold came like a rushing torrent, having death and almost every known danger by sea and by land, meeting and overcoming obstacles innumerable and seemingly insurmountable. But a rich fruition awaited them. Perhaps no other people ever had, under similar circumstances, so grand a harvest of gold, and such a monopoly of high prices and large profits.

Modern agriculture, as we see it on this coast today, was born of the necessities of those early years. The fabulous prices paid for agricultural products gave to agriculture its first encouragement. The success attending the first attempts at farming and horticulture were almost as remarkable as the gold mines, and not unfrequently more profitable. Vessels, coming laden with merchandise, at length began to carry away, at reasonable rates, rather than return in ballast, the products of our infant agriculture. This was our first encouragement to extend production beyond State or local requirements.

As population and production advanced prices, of course, declined. Still, they remained exorbitant, in comparison with the Atlantic States and foreign countries. Distance and isolation could not be wholly overcome. There were many disadvantages and inconveniences, but money and plenty abounded. So, we almost came to imagine that halcyon days were to be our perpetual inheritance; and this idea permeated our business habits and social relations. We talked about high wages, large profits, boundless mineral wealth, inexhaustible fertility of soil, and never-failing harvests. And so

we lived and planned and dreamed. But those early scenes are consigned to the buried past—buried, but not dead, for they live in history and in memory.

The third of a century has laid its hand upon us, and waked us from those dreams. The bubble, isolation, has burst, and, lo, we stand face to face in competition with the world. We have discovered that we are no longer in a world by ourselves, but that we live on the same planet as other people, and that henceforward we must run the race of life in competition with all mankind—and win if we can—and, in my judgment, we can, if we do our duty. And it is but too true that, in the great markets of Europe, as well as in all other markets to which we are obliged to go in order to find sale for the vast surplus of our staple products, we are in sharp competition, not only with our sister States, but with all the world besides, meeting wheat from Russia, France, Germany, Spain, Italy, Hungary, and other countries too numerous to mention.

To our disadvantage in some respects—to our advantage in others, perhaps—high prices on this coast have not wholly disappeared; but they are very naturally disappearing, as means of travel cheapen and population pours in. Many years may elapse before we reach the low level of prices that obtain even on the Atlantic seaboard of our own country; and it is to be hoped we may never have to come to the prices of labor in many foreign countries, because it is of much importance to attract hither the best labor. Nevertheless, it is not wise to deceive ourselves; for we are evidently drifting in the direction of a common level. In a word, the inevitable tendency is towards a level with our surroundings, be they near or distant. Cheap transportation is to us, on this relatively distant coast, a necessity. Without it we cannot compete and prosper.

Considering our situation and the ruling prices of our products, some kinds of labor are still too high—really more than farmers can afford to pay. I allude to that of the harvest field. And still farmers are seemingly willing to pay as long as they are possibly able, because in harvest they require the best of hands.

Though to the farmer the future at times looks dark, as disadvantages multiply and appear too great to be overcome, often struggling, as he does, against fearful odds in the shape of floods, dry

seasons, and many other forms; yet, upon the whole, the average farmer of the State is not, he will not be discouraged; he is steadfastly set in the direction of progress; his face is still radiant with hope. He can stand almost anything except a ruinously low wheat market and hydraulic debris.

Having mentioned debris, I might as well say in regard to that momentous question, that it is one which deeply concerns agriculture. Large as is the area of our State, vast portions are mountainous—too steep, too rocky, too cold. Other portions are arid and sterile plains and foothills, of little or no value to cultivate.

I am aware that irrigation properly used can do wonders; and I say, let it do them as fast as the wheels of industry can propel it onward. But after it has done them to the utmost extent conceivable within the limits of centuries there will still remain thousands of places which cannot be reached, or if reached, would be of little or no value.

California has no agricultural lands which she can afford to destroy. Neither the metropolis of this coast, nor the State, nor the nation, can afford to witness the destruction of this valley. The navies of the world may come and ride safely in our magnificent harbor. Yes, when this valley—I call it but one valley, north and south; nature made it one valley, but we for convenience have given it two names; when I came here, forty years ago, it had but one name, the Tulare Valley, or Valle de los Tulares—when this valley shall be, not destroyed, but reclaimed, they may come and find products in abundance to supply all their wants. We have no internal navigation which we can afford to see permanently destroyed.

I have not an adverse thought against any rightful industry of this State. I have not an unkind emotion against mining—even hydraulic mining. On the contrary, all useful industries have my warmest sympathies. I wish hydraulic mining could continue, and the whole country prosper. At the same time, I admit that it is not to me a pleasing scene to see havoc made of hills, and mountains, and stately forests, and a once lovely prospect changed to a desolation.

There can be no question that agriculture is the only enduring interest, and that an immediate and adequate remedy is demanded, not to wholly repair the injury done, for that may be impossible, but

to avert greater impending peril. And, without attempting to discuss remedies, I must confess my inability to see how the continual and widespread destruction is to cease without stopping the cause. The mines have a rule or common law which governs among themselves, and it is just, namely: that miners working claims above, on the same stream, must not dump their tailings on claims below them. Let them apply this rule to their brother farmers, and the trouble is at once settled. It is justice, pure and simple; under it the scales of the blind goddess balance with equal poise.

But to return to the business of farming. Farmers and farmhand alike are interested in a good wheat market, for the continued low price of our staple product, like that of the past year, coupled with disadvantages of situation, would soon render a continuance of high wages in harvest impossible.

While the average farmer has perhaps made little or no money, he has acquired something else of real value, he has learned a great deal. He has learned to be less boastful, less presuming in his expenses upon the results of the approaching harvest; to purchase less frequently, when he can do without them, new buggies, new separators, headers, engines, and whole outfits of harvesting machinery, and especially when perhaps his nearest neighbor has learned that he must, if possible, earn a little more and spend a good deal less, and save all he can.

Being Americans, the farmer believes in obedience to the laws of his country. He believes in the force of the public will. He knows that his country is great and strong, and he believes she means to be just. He has an abiding faith in coming remedies for existing evils. He has come to consider no obstacles too great to be surmounted, so he suffers, endures, and hopes.

The great want of a California farmer is a fair price and an adequate market, there being no question in his mind about his being able to produce the greatest abundance. No market can be deemed available unless products can be transferred to it with at least a small margin of profit.

We are no longer an out of the way corner of the earth—a sort of ultima thule of the nation—but an important station on the greatest highway round the world. Multitudes have come and are coming to swell the volume of our population. California has become one of the most prominent points of interest to the traveler and to the tourist. The distinguished, and some whose names are on the scroll



of renown, unable to resist, have been attracted hither to see for themselves the fame of California and the great ocean which rolls at her feet, and which should, by occupation, be almost our own. An Emperor and a King have visited us. Greater still; a President of the United States, and an illustrious General and ex-President, have been here.

The coming of notable visitors is no accident; for in the modern sense of the word, no man can be said to be much of a traveler, and no American can be said to have seen his country, who have never been in California, and witnessed for themselves, at least something of her climate, topography, and wonderful objects. And hence their coming, as I said, is no mere accident. In the presence of daily departing trains, they invariably linger as long as their time will admit, and then, with seeming reluctance, they choose perhaps the longest way out of the State for their return.

Nor is this strange. There is perhaps no other point on the globe so accessible, where a traveler may see so much of beauty and learn so much of thrilling interest, in a country so new in years and so old in the march of improvement, as in California.

Is it not well to pause sometimes, even in a rapid march, if not to learn how far we have gone, to see the direction we are traveling and something of our surroundings? We are the living witnesses of amazing advances in many, I may say, all directions, and especially in that of railways and telegraphs upon land and steam locomotion upon the ocean, and, I may add, cables under the ocean. A breaking up of our once boasted seclusion has been one of the results, and we have not mourned but rejoiced. Expenses have lessened, but not sufficiently so to tally with our reduced earnings. Distances in point of time have diminished and are diminishing.

But with great gains often come some disadvantages. The causes which have abridged expense and distance, and brought us into more direct relations with our own and other lands, have, to a considerable extent, taken away the shipping that once bore away, at reasonable rates, our earlier products; and they are building up most rapidly formidable competition everywhere, especially in the production of our greatest present staple, bread.

We live in an age of great production. The special agent for the collection of statistics of agriculture for the census of 1880 says:

“The most striking suggestion of these figures is the unprecedented advance in production during the last decade.”

#### WHEAT.

Now just a few figures, and only a few; for I promised to avoid specification as far as possible for this occasion. In 1869 there were raised of wheat, in all the States and Territories, 187,745,626 bushels. Ten years later the same cereal product was 459,591,093 bushels. Eleven States in the last census show a falling off of 2,303,607 bushels. But in comparison this is simply insignificant, being less than one and a half per cent. of the grand aggregate gain of the other thirty-six States and Territories (which was 174,149,074 bushels.) In some of the States and Territories the expansion was truly amazing.

Had the figures been made for 1880 instead of 1879, there is no doubt the gain would have been in round numbers over 200,000,000 bushels. Looking back to 1860, the national flight upward in wheat production is at a very large angle of elevation, as measured by the census reports being, in round numbers, in 1850, 100,000,000; in 1860, 172,000,000; in 1870, 288,000,000; in 1880, 460,00,000 bushels.

And wonderful as is the average national advance in wheat production, that of our own State during the same period is, in comparison, immensely greater.

Comparing 1879 with 1869, the following States show diminution in wheat production, according to the census of 1880:

STATES. 1880— 1870— Bushels. Bushels. Louisiana . 5,044 9,906 Massachusetts . 15,818 34,648  
Mississippi 218,890 274,479 Nevada 70,404 228,866 New Hampshire 169,316 193,621 New Jersey

1,901,739 2,301,433 New York 11,586,754 12,178,462 Pennsylvania 19,462,405 19,672,967 Rhode Island 290 784 Vermont 37,257 454,703 Wisconsin 24,884,689 25,606,344

The following States and Territories show increased production:

States and Territories. 1880 1870 1860 1850 Bushels. Bushels. Bushels. Bushels. Alabama 1,529,683 1,055,068 Arizona . 189,527 27,052 Arkansas 1,252,181 741,736 California 28,787,132 16,676,702 Colorado 1,475,559 258,474 Connecticut 38,742 38,144 Dakota 3,018,354 170,662 Delaware 1,175,182 895,477 District of Columbia 6,402 3,782 Florida 513 Georgia 3,158,335 2,127,017 Idaho 540,564 75,650 Illinois 51,136,455 30,128,405 Indiana 47,288,989 27,747,222 Iowa 31,177,225 29,435,692 Kansas 17,324,141 2,391,198 Kentucky 11,355,340 5,728,704 Maine 665,714 278,793 Maryland 8,004,484 5,774,503 Michigan 35,537,097 16,265,773 Minnesota 34,625,657 18,866,073 Missouri 24,971,727 14,315,926 Montana 469,688 181,184 Nebraska 13,846,742 2,125,086 New Mexico 708,778 352,822 North Carolina 3,385,670 2,859,879 Ohio 46,014,869 27,882,159 Oregon 7,486,492 2,340,746 South Carolina 962,330 783,610 Tennessee 7,331,480 6,188,916 Texas 2,555,652 415,112 Utah 1,167,268 558,473 Virginia 7,822,354 7,398,787 Washington Territory 1,921,382 217,043 West Virginia 4,002,017 2,483,543 Wyoming 4,762

Totals 459,591,093 287,745,626 172,034,301 99,551,012

With few exceptions, every part of our country is susceptible of vastly enlarged wheat production. The Territories, wonderful as their beginning has been, have, in reality, scarcely begun. But our country is not to be without competitors. Russia, already large, is making rapid strides. France, Germany, and other countries, add to the volume. A vast region of the Canadian Dominion lying west of Lake Superior, and soon to be opened up by Canadian railway enterprise, is said to be one of the finest countries for wheat in America. But the United States will, of course, hold the lead of all countries for an indefinite period, if not for all time. But California must not lose sight of the fact that all countries, including our own, are looking principally to one great market—that of Europe. The notable advance in wheat production on this continent since 1840, doubtless

had its beginning in two causes: American harvesting inventions, and the increasing demand for wheat almost everywhere, especially in Europe. With all our increased facilities for transportation, California must not lose sight of the fact that we remain, relatively to the great common market and the many competing sources of supply, the same distant country, and at a great disadvantage. Distance and expense have been lessened to us, and so have they been lessened to our competitors. They may suffer from combination; we are in more imminent danger than they. We may have competition, and that soon; but we may have combination much sooner than we expect.

And right here I wish to place a mark: There is, in my humble judgment, but one thing in the nature of competition that will endure and, at the same time, meet the wants of the people of the Pacific Coast; and that one thing will necessarily require time. I mean, of course, a great tide water Isthmus canal, without locks or portages. On this question California ought to be a unit, and as firm as adamant. No matter who may build, America must control, or the control must be international.

Other schemes, and delays, and oppositions may be in the interest of combinations. Note whence they come, and weigh them carefully. Such a canal alone can afford adequate relief; and will be permanent, unless the combinations become strong enough to fill it up.

Even now, in the morning of her agriculture, California has demonstrated her capacity for varied and almost boundless production. But nearer and better markets are a desideratum, for they alone can develop her highest prosperity.

The nearest are generally the best markets, and therefore we ought, as far as in our power to, encourage home markets. But how can we do this? I answer: Enlarge our manufactures. Make as many as possible of the "thousand and one" articles which we could make, but which continue to come by land and by water from the East and from almost everywhere. And I answer further: Diversify your agriculture. It is written, "man shall not live by bread alone." This was true more than three thousand years ago; may, it not be true in California today.

That wheat culture exhausts fertility, does not admit of argument. So does everything we raise exhaust, but wheat more than almost anything else. Rest and summer fallow simply mean

postponement of exhaustion. It we are to enjoy the benefit of inexhaustible fertility we must make restoration. We cannot, with impunity, continue to violate an inexorable law of nature, which requires the return, in form, of that which is borrowed from the soil. There are many ways. Almost everything contains some one or more elements of fertility—even water, air, and the very rocks. Your mountains and hills, “rock-ribbed and ancient as the sun,” are the eternal storehouses of fertility. You have doubtless seen—some of you, at least— at Yosemite, large trees growing from crevices where no nourishment could reach them except air, water, and soil formed from the disintegration of rocks.

California has the important problem of practicable fertilization yet to solve. If we had rich sedimentary waters, like those of the Nile, an annual overflow would suffice to repair every possible waste.

By diversified agriculture I do not mean that we are to cease raising wheat; but to raise many other products which we either need or for which we can find profitable markets at home or elsewhere.

California will, without doubt, be largely a wheat-producing State for all time. Considering her vast area, and what we have already done, it is almost certain that wheat culture could be carried to an annual production of at least one hundred million bushels. This would furnish bread to fifteen million people. But the people will never come as long as we so largely grow wheat only or principally, because of a lack of employment. It requires comparatively few men to raise wheat, and they are employed scarcely half the year. If we can vary production, and profitably (and I believe we can, because more people can find employment, and we can find better market for what we have, though it consist less of wheat and more of something else), will it not be wise, I say, to encourage the effort?

Some may respond that our peculiar climate is not favorable to diversification. Go to the extent of practicability, that is all I ask, expense and everything considered. Make available the variable conditions of humidity, soil, climate, and elevation suited to varied productions, and existing in

almost boundless variety; do this to the extent of half the amount that lies within easy reach of genuine enterprise, and I greatly err if you do not only surprise yourselves but our whole country.

I beg to diverge a few moments. I remember the time when it was thought a thing impossible to raise wheat in this valley or the San Joaquin valley, for I was here before grain had been sown or ever grown in this great valley, five hundred miles in length. The object in asking for grants of land in those early days was to raise cattle. There was grass—some places it was rank (in the bottoms), but generally it was short everywhere else; but no one supposed then that anybody would be foolish enough to settle nearer than five, ten or twenty miles of a prior settler. It was not long, however, before it was found that wheat would grow in this valley, but the wildest dreamer never imagined that fruit would grow here; but now, after a lapse of forty years, it is almost impossible to say what will not grow in this valley. But I must not make my parenthesis so long. To return. Almost innumerable as are the places in this State which will admit of varied culture, the number may be greatly increased. And how? You can clothe the surface with verdure, and thereby modify the heat. You may not, perhaps, practice any of the known theories of storms, to the extent of calling down, at will, copious showers to cool and fructify the earth, but you can, in numberless places, and ever vast regions, substitute irrigation for showers, and almost literally purple the landscape with ripening fruits; but diversity is not to be achieved in a day or a year, it will take time; this society may find it the labor of long years of trial.

And here I wish to ask a question in regard to markets for wheat, of which staple product, for an infinite period, we are to be a large producer. Can we not, for a portion of our wheat, find nearer and more profitable than European markets? This is merely a suggestion. Are there no fields of commercial enterprise to be enlarged, or new fields to be discovered, to respond to our peculiarities of situation and production? Surely this magnificent country, with more than a thousand miles of loveliest coast, and grandest of oceans lying at our feet, whose tides lave the shores of republics, kingdoms, and empires, were never made in vain. Why can we not exchange our bread all along this sunset slope of the continent, at least as far as the equator, for the products we buy and pay so largely in money? We can reach, besides, many countries and islands, all populous, and nearly all

wanting bread. To me it seems that our position is the very key to the Pacific Ocean commerce, if we will but use and occupy the advantages within our grasp.

We have a treaty with China and, as I understand, we have ample control of Mongolian immigration. All is satisfactory. Why may we not lay hold of China and convert that vast empire of more than four hundred million people into a boundless and never-failing market for all our surplus flour? I do not mean to compel the Chinese to swallow our bread at the cannon's mouth—far otherwise. But lay hold of China by the stronger and more enduring ties of friendship. I can see no reason why we should perpetuate the senseless abuse and prejudices for which politicians and demagogism have in the past, as I think, been so largely responsible. We, on this coast, are too needy, and our country too powerful and too magnanimous, I trust, to give any uncertain sound on a question of such vital moment to her Pacific border. The Mongolian becomes degraded by the use of opium; but do not let us in any way help degrade him (by abuse or otherwise) and then blame him because he is degraded. Let it not be said that Mongolians came in contact with Christian civilization and were made worse. Genuine friendship alone can elevate.

It has been said that the people of China eat rice, and will not therefore, use wheat flour. But they do use wheat flour. The shipments of flour from San Francisco were: In 1878 two hundred and nine thousand six hundred and eleven barrels; in 1879, two hundred and thirty-five thousand seven hundred and eighty-nine barrels; in 1880, two hundred and thirty-five thousand three hundred and three barrels. These shipments began with ninety-six thousand barrels in 1865, and have steadily increased till the present time; and thus far this year they have been at the rate of nearly three hundred thousand barrels.

Flour exports from San Francisco to all foreign countries amounted last year to five hundred and sixty-two thousand one hundred and thirty-nine barrels, of which China took forty-one per cent, England thirty per cent, Spanish America seventeen per cent., all other countries twelve per cent.

I may err; but to me this flour business with China seems susceptible, by a just and wise policy, of almost indefinite expansion. But China takes more than flour from California. Last year the

merchandise exports amounted to three million three hundred and twenty-four thousand seven hundred and sixty-six dollars.

During last month (August, 1881) the exports of merchandise from San Francisco by sea were larger to China than to any other foreign country except England.

The following table shows the value of merchandise exported to sea from San Francisco during August, 1881:

AUGUST EXPORTS. England \$2,485,669 British Columbia \$ 103,314 China 361,082 Japan 40,927 New York 617,741 Panama 27,243 Hawaiian Islands 272,570 India 1,550 Tahiti 26,222 Belgium 72,818 Mexico 132,134 France 307,539 Central America 67,796 South America 7,069 Australia 106,759 Germany 578

Total \$4,631,102 August, 1880 2,065,983

Increase for 1881 \$2,565,119

The exports for 1880 and 1881, from January 1st to date, compare as follows: MONTH 1880. 1881.  
January \$ 300,542 \$ 4,111,046 February 2,881,904 4,103,613 March 3,133,571 3,293,066 April 1,951,711 3,711,527 May 2,131,181 2,578,510 June 1,962,793 3,715,830 July 2,257,248 3,668,898 August 2,065,983 4,631,192

Totals \$19,389,933 \$29,813,592 Increase for 1881 \$10,423,659

These figures are given, and I make these suggestions, to show that there is a beginning even in China, and to add that, in my judgment, it is in the interest of California agriculture, in order to extend the sale of her products, to cultivate amicable relations with all countries, building upon the foundations already laid, and laying new ones for our increasing productions, especially in all countries most accessible to the Pacific Coast.



An indispensable element to success in agriculture is transportation. Emphatically so is this the case with California. Like a chain, it may have, few or many links; but it extends all the way from the producer to his market. Every product ought to be able to pay a full reasonable charge for its carriage. But how often is it otherwise. It may, and frequently does happen that the smallest fraction of an overcharge amounts to prohibition or great oppression. Where there is little or practically no competition common carriers are apt to fix their charges almost to the very line of prohibition, and invariably much nearer than they ought. The wide ocean is less liable to such perils than the land. It is also in the interest of agriculture to encourage the multiplication of steam and other vessels for both internal and external navigation. In a word, American ship building ought, by a wise and liberal policy of our Government, to be encouraged and revived; it ought to be brought to life, for it is almost dead. We on the Pacific coast cannot hold what is legitimately ours—the Pacific ocean by occupation—unless we build and own the ships and sail them under the American flag. Nor can we reach as profitably as we ought, the vast markets even now awaiting our enterprise. Hence, we, Californians, of all people, should, as far as possible, look oceanward, at least with our heavy products. There is no encouragement to multiply production, unless markets can be reached by the producer with at least a small margin of profit. But we are not always permitted to go to the ocean, for the perils of which I speak, may lie between us and the seashore; and sometimes the only market may be in the opposite direction from the ocean. It is therefore not only of interest, but is essential to the industrial development of this distant coast, for us to make available, and to improve and multiply, all possible ways of travel and transportation, including common roads, railroads, river, and other navigation; making them by every legitimate means in our power, and to the utmost practicable extent, inexpensive. Competition upon land, almost always unreliable, is simply out of the question in California. It is in my judgment a necessity that the channels of internal transportation be made cheap, and be held and controlled in the interest of agriculture, and all other industrial pursuits. There is an inseparable connection. And this is no fancy picture. These ways must either be owned and controlled by the Government, or they will own and control the Government, and its agriculture, and all manifold industries. Please do not understand me to mean any attack on railroads or other ways of travel, or anything like confiscation or destruction of their rights of property. By no means. I would not confiscate a hair that honestly belongs to any

man or company of men; nor would I incite others to do an unlawful act. I am utterly opposed to agrarianism, communism, and nihilism in all their lawless forms and tendencies. But I am in favor of the General Government's obtaining control by lawful means and paying a fair compensation; because no other power can grapple with the mighty question; it has passed beyond the stage of State or local issues. It must be a national, because trade and commerce are questions of national regulation under the Federal Constitution.

Large capital being necessary to the accomplishment of great enterprises, all legitimate investments should, under just and wise laws, receive ample encouragement and protection. Those who minister to great public wants by the construction of public highways, or otherwise; who meet and overcome stupendous obstacles, scaling and tunneling mountains, and successfully contending against the elements, earn for themselves imperishable names on the scroll of progress. They deserve and will receive the plaudits of a grateful people, and they should be amply rewarded.

Assuming it to be a fact known to all that the so-called owners of a certain kind of public highways in our country have in the aggregate acquired a dangerous degree of power in the form of moneyed influence; that such power will ever be used, as it has been in the past, to resist all attempts to regulate charges; that agriculture, and all other industries, are virtually at the mercy of such power; that men have never been known willingly to relax such domination; it becomes the bounden duty of the Government, in the early and wise exercise of its sovereign authority, to rescue all the industrial interests of the nation from a thralldom which no other power can reach.

Equal and exact justice alone will be a permanent solution of the question. This is a question of greatest moment, and it is evident to my mind that the rights are not all on one side. It has not been possible, at least thus far, to divest my mind of the idea that the people have some rights in these great public highways. I contend that they were not only made for the people, but that the people made them. It was their prior enterprise, in the various fields of production and invention, that created the demand for and made them possible. The people were the real moving power which brought them into existence. Their industries alone sustain and perpetuate them; the people are indispensable to them: they are indispensable to the people; they alone can protect and prosper

them; without the people they would vanish from the earth. If I may without irreverence allude, by way of comparison, to a certain unprofitable undertaking of Aaron, in the absence of his brother Moses, on a certain occasion, I would say that our people had as much to do in these profitable enterprises as the children of Israel had in making the golden calf. In that wonderful history it is written: "And the Lord plagued the people because they made the calf which Aaron made." The people were the moving responsible cause; they wanted the calf and furnished the means. Just so now; the people wanted the highways and furnished the means to build them. In our case we ought to be able to paraphrase and say; "The people were not plagued, because they made the highways which the builders made." Even had it been a laudable and profitable transaction, Aaron had no right to claim the calf as all his own.

In their grand achievement I would not rob the builders of these indispensable modern improvements of the smallest modicum of merited praise or profit. But I do claim that the people are entitled to equal credit, equal advantages, and equal glory.

We have the privilege, and should esteem it a high duty to promote agriculture, because that means, in a wide sense, the promotion of all the material resources of the State. And how can we do this? My answer is, in many ways. There are many things we can do, many instrumentalities we can use; my time will permit the mention of one only, but that is the greatest; it is this: sustain this State Agricultural Society; make its exhibitions so instructive, interesting and useful that it shall be the pride of the State; make them so attractive that multiplied thousands, with the countless products of their rich and varied industries, shall annually throng its spacious hall—not this hall, but one indeed spacious and convenient, and that shall be worthy of the great State of California. But how can this great end be achieved? I answer from my own standpoint, and for those only whose views accord with my own, that one thing will be a great help in that direction—that one thing is: erase from your premium list, and that of every District Society receiving State aid, the speed programme. Concentrate and use the energy, time, and money now wasted in this one useless and demoralizing trait of most of our so-called agricultural Fairs, upon all such other features as are by common consent admitted to be unobjectionable. I say this with no view to censure this Society, or any society, or to offend any individual here or elsewhere, but I submit the question

to the good sense and moral convictions of the people of this State, that horse racing (for that in common phrase is what it is) is not an innocent recreation unless gambling is innocent. At these races they sell pools and bet money. This is the programme, and the daily unblushing practice; but this Society and cognate District Societies are wholly under State control, therefore the State, in this matter, maintains gambling institutions under the guise of Fairs. If it is right to have the speed programme, then give it a purse, or purses, from the public money. No one, I believe, has ever yet been bold enough to ask that of this State, yet inadvertently the public money has been used for that very purpose.

And for myself, I have another objection, which is, that these races are unmitigated cruelty to that noble animal, the horse. I am aware that many good and respectable people are passionately fond of races. There is, I conceive, no danger of "trials of speed" falling into disuse, even if the State should not continue to support the custom at the annual Fairs, because the millionaires, the Vanderbilts of the Atlantic and Pacific coasts, will be able and generous enough to come to its rescue, if it be found worthy of perservation. I am not the keeper of any man's conscience, and I have no desire to dictate to any one: but I do say that Fairs are, in my opinion, running altogether too much to races. If a farmer were to follow the example and judge of the value of races by the prominence given them at Fairs. then, to be consistent, he would have to spend most of his time at home in the same branch of agriculture.

But to return. For more than twenty-five years I have witnessed in this State the workings of this and county and district Fairs. I have seen in them things I considered objectionable. The racing feature has to me always been so. But take Fairs as a whole, it is my conclusion that the good they do far outweighs the evil; that no available instrumentalities under the circumstances could have done so much to provoke that spirit of emulation and laudable rivalry so essential to progress, and so characteristic of our people. We do not judge a man's character altogether by his defects. So with this and all similar institutions. Ascertain the sum of affirmative good, and from it substract the negative bad. The remainder is the true value or character. Julius Caesar in his campaigns made many mistakes; and he was great enough to point out and acknowledge them; but his grand achievements so far outweighed his errors as to leave a large balance in his favor, and stamp him

the greatest general of any age. And so I believe that this Society in spite of many things which some may wish had been otherwise during a long and useful career, will be found in the day of reckoning to have a large balance in its favor.

Upon the whole, I say this society ought to have the right arm of our best efforts to sustain and make it, if possible, more and more useful every year. Its capacity for good is not to be measured by any mere arithmetical computation. Its benefits may not always be immediate, or felt with equal force in every locality. Some may think they do not see or feel them at all, but they are real and vast nevertheless. Unseen things are often very important. The air is not seen, and sometimes scarcely felt, and yet it sustains every living thing that breathes. As seed sown in rich ground, which in its own good time puts forth, blossoms, and bears its fruits so this society blossoms into these great annual Fairs, and its fruits will be seen clustering in every valley, and on every hillside, and upon every mountain, and ripening into industrial harvests in all the coming years.

California cannot afford to dispense with its aid, or suffer this society to languish. I believe no State does or can do without some similar organization. Fairs are essential to modern progress, and one of the marked features of the age. There is scarcely a State, Territory, county, or city of any importance without them. For the last thirty years World's Fairs have been the rage among the nations.

In order to its greatest measure of prosperity and usefulness, this society needs to be placed upon a permanent foundation. It may require State aid. Being a State institution it ought, to the extent of its needs and in proportion to its importance, to have the fostering care of the State. But in order to permanence, it needs more than money; its foundations must rest deep in the hearts and affections of the people. Banish that "speed programme," and one hundred thousand dollars for a suitable hall and other requisites would be a cheap and profitable investment; not a hall like this, covering part of a block, but a grand temple of industry which, with its museum of natural history, and with its machinery hall, would cover a whole block; and which, with its ample stock grounds near, and its park and botanical gardens, could, in the no distant future, be made to grow into the most useful and attractive institution in all the State.

The Good Book says: "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there in that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to proverty." In public as in private affairs, there are such things as wise economy, and wise liberality. The idea is a broad that this Society, since it had a sort of new creation and second birth under the new Constitution, may merge into something different from what it was before; that because it is of necessity under State control, it may in time become more of a "ring," or political machine. Such apprehensions are, I believe, groundless; if they are not they ought to be. This Society is and always will be just what the people make it, by taking a deep interest, or by showing their neglect.

In numbers, farmers and all engaged in useful industries, are allpowerful. They form a vast majority (as I could show by the census tables of occupation) of the voters. And in this, as in other public matters, their power measures exactly their responsibility. The people are everything—they are the State. "The glory of a nation are its people." Let them resolve that, as they love the State and her interests, and this institution as a most efficient aid to her progress, no political breath shall ever enter these sacred walls.

Again, I repeat, sustain this institution. If it is not what we all desire, let us do our best to make it so. No matter how many district or local Societies there may be. They are useful, and should also be sustained in proportion to their capacity for good. But they should in some way be aids, and share the destiny of the State Society, bearing a relation thereto like that of a county or district to the State. But these local societies can never take the place of the State Society, because we need one more central, more representative of all localities, and all interests, and all our people, than any local society can be. In a word, the agricultural interest of the State needs this Society, in this place, the capital of the State, where ample and permanent arrangement can be provided, and the people from every section of the State can come, meeting each other face to face, with the countless products of their respective callings in one great field of meritorious competition.

The good results of Fairs, as I have said, are not always to be seen or measured. But from my own experience, I aver that no man can come here without receiving benefit. He cannot breathe this vital air without becoming enthused, and bearing with him new thoughts and higher aims in life. The

moment he feels the glow of emulation kindling in his breast, that moment he is a new creature. He begins to leave the old ruts in which he may have been plodding all his life. The lessons he has learned are to be of imperishable value; for the flame that burns within his own breast he imparts to the community around him. We all need the inspiration which comes from generous rivalry. It does us good now and then to be outdone, in order to humble our pride and show us where we stand. We need to cultivate friendships and obliterate prejudices; to see how small we are individually and how large collectively; to be roused from inaction; to have our social and industrial life quickened and brightened by the attrition of association and competition. In a word, we require a State Society to so direct and harmonize, to so mold and Americanize, to so segregate and unify the elements that make up the sum of public life and character, that we may, indeed, be one people—one in prosperity, one in patriotism, and one in the glory of a common country.

JOHN BIDWELL IN 1876

**BIDWELL'S ESTIMATE OF SUTTER.**

CHICO, March 10, 1881.

CAPT. W. F. SWASEY,

San Francisco, Cal.,

MY DEAR SIR:—It is not in my power, to write as I would wish—fully, suitably. For this reason I delayed, hoping to see you when I went below, and to be able to give you verbally what I can never find time to put in writing—an appropriate answer to your kind letter, of Jan., 17, ult. I called twice at 230 Mont'g'y St., and would certainly have found you had you thought to have named a time and place on the card you left for me at the Occidental Hotel.

Asking in advance your pardon for the long delay, and for incompleteness and imperfections I am sure to be chargeable with, I proceed to write what little or more I may.

## GEN. SUTTER.

It seems almost a mockery to starve the noble pioneer to death, and starve his broken hearted wife to death also, and then immediately proceed to do grand things to perpetuate his memory: The State of California can never atone for the ingratitude of withdrawing the pittance of aid once extended to him. No pioneer ever did so much for this State as Sutter. Nay, I verily believe, no pioneer ever did so much for the United States. More, few men in modern times have done so much for the world at large. He suffered every hardship, privation and danger incident to pioneer life. At last his labors were crowned with success—but not success for himself.

## MARSHALL'S DISCOVERY OF GOLD IN FEBRUARY, 1848.

Sutter had proposed for years to build a saw mill. Different men at different times had been sent into the Sierra Nevada Mts., up Sacramento, Feather, and other rivers and streams to find a mill site (among others Sutter sent Dr. Robt. Semple and myself in Spring of 1846 up Feather river to find if possible a site for a saw mill). He sent Marshall to find a place, and then furnished men and all the means to build the saw mill. I wrote the agreement between Sutter and Marshall. This was in the Fall of 1847. After the saw mill was built and ready to run, except that a trail race had to be made to enable the water to flow off after passing through the wheel, Marshall happened to see (while digging this race) and picked up the first piece of gold. I could relate how this was done, but I must not do or say anything unnecessary, for time is precious. Marshall claims to have found the first piece of gold, and his claim is indisputable. But in a broader and grander sense Sutter was the discoverer, Marshall but the mere agent. In relation to that discovery, Sutter will ever be known in history. It was his discovery. In the light of results, it deserves the appellation of great discovery, because it was the beginning of a new epoch—from all States and Countries thousands rushed into California—it led to the discovery of gold in Australia, silver in Nevada, and of the precious metals in thousands of places where they have since been found—it quickened commerce and enterprise—it so strengthened the financial nerves of our own country that it was enabled to meet the shock of, and emerge, Phoenixlike, from the fires of the great rebellion—it was the beginning of an era of



progress and prosperity before unknown, that had blessed every civilized nation, and that promises to extend with its countless blessings into the indefinite future.

Sutter, then, was the direct agency—the fore runner—under Providence, of the great discovery and its beneficent results.

And now I will try to add a few of Sutter's prominent traits.

As a business man, he always attempted more than he could do.

He never made any calculation about obstacles. Crops might fail, as they did more than once with him, but he never took into consideration crop failures or other possible reverses, in carrying on his many enterprises.

He always lacked adequate means, for he was always going beyond his means, trusting ever that the next crop—and the next crop and so on—would bring him out all right. He knew no such thing as discouragement.

He was generous and hospitable without measure. His establishment known as Sutter's Fort, New Helvetia, Sacramento, Cal., was the home of many and headquarters of all Americans arriving overland on this coast, and of all others who came to share his hospitality, and everything was free as water. All the early immigrations found in Sutter a friend, and in his fort a home.

If he thought any applicant in need, he never stopped to inquire as to his ability to pay, but supplied at once all classes alike. If he had one article and two wanted it, the stranger almost always was the successful petitioner.

Sutter was a man of great enterprise. Considering his means, how straitened, in want of almost everything necessary in a new settlement, nothing but his credit and promises to pay with, what he actually accomplished, in the face of the fact too that the native Californians were from the beginning jealous of his prosperity and wished to break him up and continually threatened to do so

(except during the two years of Micheltorena's administration). Sutter may be said to be a man of unbounded enterprise.

Sutter was intelligent and prepossessing. When I first saw him in 1841, he surpassed in many respects any man I have ever known. He spoke many modern languages, German, French, Spanish, English and etc. Amidst intelligent friends and in polite society he was fitted to please and win the admiration of all. He surpassed in princely courtesy which he extended to high and low, rich and poor alike.

He believed in Republican Government, and that of the United States was his admiration. On this account, he was regarded as dangerous as Americans themselves, by the native Californians if not by all Mexico. On the arrival of our small party across the plains in 1841, as soon as Sutter heard of it and before we were within a hundred miles of his settlement (then only just begun) he, in answer to threats he had heard of hostile movements on the part Jose Castro and the Departmental Government to suppress his embryo establishment at Sacramento, wrote a letter to the authorities in which he took occasion to announce that he hoped to hear no more threats as he was not only able to defend himself if attacked but able to go and chastise them. When this missive was sent, Sutter had not even begun the fort. He had around him perhaps 20 Americans, 200 or 300 wild native Indians, 7 or 8 Kanakas, and a few others consisting of Mission Indians as vaqueros, a few trappers or hunters, Canadian French, etc., not to exceed twenty-five in number. But such was Sutter's reliance on Americans and their ability to cope with the native Mexicans, that he went on with business of every kind, sending to all parts of the country on both sides of the bay, and even to Monterey, Los Angeles, and everywhere, just as if he had written no letter or no threats had ever been heard of.

Time will not permit me to write more. To attempt to describe the events that filled the years between 1841 and the discovery of gold in 1848, would fill a volume, and therefore I will make no attempt.

Sutter did much with small means. No other man, I have often thought, could have done so much in so short a time and so little to do it with. His fine address won the esteem of all, strangers became at once his friends. So the Departmental Government promised him a grant of land, and permitted him to take immediate possession. Individuals trusted him for large numbers of cattle and horses, and for implements and goods of various kinds, and the Russians sold him all their possessions and property at Fort Ross and Bodega amounting in round numbers to one hundred thousand dollars, and all these on his simple promise to pay. He made his promises in good faith, and no man ever tried harder to pay; but he was seldom able to meet them at maturity. For instance, the Russians were to have a cargo of wheat every year. Sometimes the annual vessel could get only a part of a cargo, and sometimes none. This was the case in 1844 when, owing to the almost rainless winter of 1843 and 1844, of two thousand acres of wheat sown Sutter harvested less than two hundred bushels; but nothing could discourage him. For reasons before alluded to the native Californians had become jealous and unfriendly but not openly hostile. The Governor, though friendly to Sutter, was hated by the natives because he listened to Sutter and extended favors to Americans. Nothing daunted, Sutter sent to various places around the bay and to the coast ranches and picked up a little seed wheat here and there to sow for another harvest. Castro, who organized a revolt against the Governor in the Fall of that year (1844), was unfriendly to Sutter, but feigned friendship so as to keep the Americans quiet. So Sutter even armed his launch to bring up his seed wheat lest it might be attacked. In fact, he had scarcely gotten his seed wheat home, when hostilities began. I cannot relate the incidents of the war in the space of a letter. Suffice it to say, Sutter started his farming, then left his fort and business in charge of P. B. Reading, and, with as many men as could be spared from his fort and farming, marched, joined the Governor on the Salinas, carried the war to Los Angeles, returned in the Spring (1844) via Mojave, Kern river, King's river, etc., to Sacramento. Sutter's force in this campaign consisted of about 80 Americans and 100 Indians. Greatly straitened for means Sutter went on with all kind of business as if nothing had happened. But I must not enlarge, for you yourself came into California this year (1845) and therefore know much more than I can write.

Referring to the great discovery, who but Sutter would have ransacked the then wild Sierra Nevada Mts., to find a saw mill site? It seemed at the time an accident? Was it not the direct result of Sutter's untiring energy and enterprise? I doubt if there was another man in the United States who would have undertaken in 1847 to build a saw mill in a canon in the Sierra Nevada Mts., 50 miles from Sacramento. No sugar pine lumber had ever been seen, except a little Sutter had made by hand south of the Cosumne river in 1845, and there was little demand for lumber of any kind. Houses were generally made of adobe.

Sutter was not looking for gold, but found it; as a miner now may be looking for gold and find a diamond. The saw mill paid Sutter nothing, but it benefitted our whole country and all countries. He was under Providence the humble instrumentality of ushering in a new era of wonderful events and great prosperity.

When we consider what Sutter did, how he lived, suffered, and died in utter indigence, we are forcibly reminded of Columbus and Spain as the nearest parallel to Sutter and the United States.

The past we cannot recall. The only thing left to be done in to honor his memory.

I am as always, Very Truly Yours, JOHN BIDWELL

JOHN BIDWELL, 1880

### **ANTI-DEBRIS.**

Short Address Delivered by General Bidwell at Chico.

The Anti-Debris Convention, which has just closed its session at Sacramento, was largely attended by representatives from all parts of the State. General John Bidwell of this place was made Chairman of the Convention, and after being escorted to the platform, made the following remarks:

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen of the Convention: There is no language that I can select to express the depth of my gratitude for this honor, but it should have been conferred on an older soldier in

the cause, one of those who have fought from the beginning in this great battle for right. You all know the object of this Convention; it is not necessary for me to waste your time in stating it to you; you have seen it for years; you have seen your places converted into almost a widespread desolation. My mind reverts on this occasion to the time when every stream was as pure and clear as crystal. No man can measure in dollars and cents, nor with all the gold that has been taken out or that may be taken out, the value of returning these streams to their pristine purity and of clearing the rivers and the plains, and of returning them once more to their original beauty and susceptibility of cultivation. There is no man here perhaps that takes greater pride in whatever may benefit the State of California than myself. If there is a spot on earth where I prefer to live, it is California than myself. If there is a spot on earth where and for me, all my endeavors every thought and purpose of my mind, are united with the interests of California. (Applause). When I saw the wide ruin already begun and greater impending ruin, I could not remain at home, and so I came here to consult with you. It is true, my own farm has not yet been touched, but I see the danger almost at my door. Let the Sacramento River above where I live be filled with the same material as other streams, and one-third, I think, to be within the truth, and perhaps I may say one-half of Butte County, which has once been the banner county, at least in the production of cereals, one-third or one-half will be blotted out of existence. I believe, gentlemen of the Convention, that I ought not to waste your time with these thoughts: yet I wish to say this, that whatever I can do to promote the great objects of this convention to promote peace and harmony, and to bring about such results as this momentous question now demands, will be done cheerfully and to the best of my ability. One thought more: We should be very careful today to do nothing to stir up strife or party feeling. It seems to me that we should stand here today upon a plane above politics. (Applause). We ought to endeavor to do right ourselves and to demand of others that they, too, shall do right. I have no prejudice against the miners—no, no candidate for office should have any prejudice against the miners—they have a calling; but there is a right, even the miner on the stream above cannot bury the claim of a miner next below. That is a law that is right. Why should it vary as to a cultivator of the soil just below that miner? (Applause). That one principle will settle it all—use your property in such a way as not to endanger others. Apply the golden rule—”Do unto others as ye would have them do unto you.” That principle is older than the granite mountains. It will outlive the very hills of adamant.

Not thirty years, nor one hundred years, can repeal that law. You might as well undertake to repeal the law of gravitation. It cannot be done. All that this Convention asks, I think, is right, and by the right we should stand firmly until the day of election. If the people have not understood this question, never give it up until it is understood throughout the length and breadth of the state. It may be that we have not time now in this short space that we have before the people to speak upon this great public question, but it seems to me that we ought to try to do all we can, and make our appeal to the people of California not only in the counties represented but to all the people of the State. (Applause).

SUTTER's FORT IN 1880

### **AT G. A. R. POST-ROOM.**

Gen. Bidwell Relates to the Soldiers his Experience in War.

Yesterday afternoon after the decoration ceremonies at the Cemetery, Gen. Bidwell went with the Chico Guard, the Halleck Post, G. A. R., and several citizens, to the Post-Room in Armory building, where he was called upon for some remarks. He promptly responded and was received with applause. The General said that he always liked to associate with soldiers as they were a genial and warm-hearted set, and that he held them in the highest respect as protectors of our nation. In his opinion our country should have a large and well-disiplined army in the profound peace, to be able to put down any insurrection that might arise. He then proceeded to relate many interesting and laughable anecdotes of his experience in the Mexican war and his early life in California. The General said that at different times he held all military offices in the gift of the soldiers and government; and while holding the highest he had taken his turn at tramping on the picket line. He spoke of the hardships the soldiers endured; of their struggle at times for food, and of the "uniforms" they wore, made of buckskin. Sometimes, he said, the soldiers had almost perished in some of the fearful storms, having their tents and covering blown away, and being compelled to lie in water. The General said that the hardest march he ever had was from Monterey to San Diego. He kept his hearers highly interested throughout his remarks, and was frequently applauded. The

speaker complimented the Chico Guard, and spoke of the deeds of valor of the old soldiers during the late war, and who had assembled that day all over the country to do honor and strew the graves of their dead comrades with flowers. He closed by thanking the company for their attention, and said that at some future day he would relate his early experience in this vicinity.

GOLD MEDALS AWARDED JOHN BIDWELL. PARIS AND OTHER EXPOSITIONS.  
OBVERSE SIDE

GOLD MEDALS AWARDED JOHN BIDWELL. PARIS AND OTHER EXPOSITIONS.  
REVERSE SIDE

### **GEN. BIDWELL ON HYDRAULIC MINING.**

The following letter appeared in the Record-Union of the 22nd, written by Gen. Bidwell, giving his views upon a new order of things to spring from the system of hydraulic mining. The General looks into the future and sees a new growth and healthy development of the great foothill region, by a system of irrigation:

Eds. Record-Union: Referring to your editorial a few days since, concerning industries which may follow that of hydraulic mining in the mountains, permit me to say: Mining is a legitimate industry, and all other industries must of necessity be friendly to it. But that class known as hydraulic has grown to be intolerable, and its stoppage has become inevitable. Nothing in the line of human enterprise can be permitted to measure importance with agriculture. Hydraulic mining is a landmark never to be obliterated in the history of this State, both because of its good and bad results. The bad results are seen and known by all. They caused vast expenditures, ruin, terror and desolation. To effect even partial restoration to lands, streams and navigation will require vast sums in the future. But I believe, and all with whom I have conversed seem convinced, and we fondly hope that, with the stoppage of hydraulic mining, a new and important era in the new future will dawn upon California, and witness at least the beginning of restoration—the once crystal waters to purity, the streams to navigation, etc.

The good results of hydraulic mining do not wholly or even chiefly consist of the gold production. Vastly more gold will yet be extracted from these same mines by other processes. Nor do they consist of having given employment to labor, for the other processes will employ vastly more labor. But this is the good that hydraulic mining has done: It has taught us how to make ditches, to divert water courses, span chasms with aqueducts, overcome obstacles seemingly insurmountable.

Irrigation is the natural successor to hydraulic mining, and important beyond computation. Without it we can never know or have any conception of California's productive capacity. By showing that waters can be conducted almost everywhere, hydraulic mining has unwittingly solved a most important feature in the problem of irrigation.

I take it for granted that many have seen the remarkable adaptability of the Western Slope of the Sierra Nevada to fruit culture, especially that vast belt reaching up to an altitude of say three thousand feet.

The water already flowing in artificial channels on that belt has made the transition from mining to cultivation not only possible, but easy and inviting. In such change there may be cases of hardship, but these will scarcely be more severe or frequent than the failure of mines. There is no human employment not subject to losses or interruptions. We have the best Government in the world. For every real wrong there should be a remedy. Let us be wise. Are we equal to the occasion? I believe we are. Let us then accept the inevitable, without boasting, without recrimination, without despondency.

Our markets will increase with our cultivation, and there is no reason to doubt that the new order of things will bring with it, by timely and wise effort on the part of all concerned, an era of prosperity beyond our most sanguine conception—not suddenly, of course, but surely, as the dawn that emerges into day. Healthy expansion is the result of growth.

These thoughts occur to me as among the possibilities that await us.



Very Truly Yours,

Chico, January 19, 1884. JOHN BIDWELL.

## INDIANS HULLING ALMONDS ON RANCHO CHICO

### THE COLUSA SUN.

Gen. John Bidwell: It may be maintained that no large land-holder can be a benefit to a community, but if ever one was a benefit, that one is John Bidwell. We come to write now of him, because of some slurs we have seen on him, brought about by the Anti-Debris agitation. He has been our neighbor for thirty-five years and over, and during most of that time we have known him and have respected him for his high moral worth. We have thought him prim—have thought that he erected a moral standard too high for a mere mortal to reach, but he has hewed to the line thus marked out as nearly as ever man did. It makes us ashamed of our profession when we see writers willing to cater to a momentary depravity by slurring the character of a man whose virtues we only wish we could imitate. We were politically opposed to him when he was a candidate for Congress, and then for Governor, and did all in our power to defeat him—we wrote some things that we would rather had not have been written concerning some of his peculiarities, but we always had a great admiration for his moral character. Now we say he is as good a man for a country—as good a man for the white laborer to fall back upon as any large land owner ever was, or ever can be. No man was ever more charitable to the needy. What has he not done for every enterprise in the town of Chico, upon which labor was applied? His great orchards afford work for hundreds of laborers, among whom are many children of the people of Chico. A few years ago the writer of this paragraph undertook to get up a subscription—a subsidy—to be given for the construction of a narrow guage railroad from Chico to Colusa. Gen. Bidwell gave us encouragement—helped to talk it up, and finally we concluded that it would be a success, and in company with A. H. Chapman, we went to see Gen. Bidwell at his residence, to get him to start the subscription, and he started it at ten thousand dollars. This was a guarantee of success. We never felt more jubilant in our life, and was going to bed early, to get a good start in the morning on the work of subscriptions; but just as we went to our

room we heard the firebell, and on going down were informed that it was over at Bidwell's. We went with the crowd, and saw that it was a large barn on fire. As we tramped along toward it, we heard men saying: "This is not the end—the mansion will go next." This was about the time of some Caucassian leagues, and a soap factory of Gen. Bidwell's had been twice burned. Everybody supposed the burning to have been incendiary. We did not start out next morning, but we thought we would see Gen. Bidwell first. We saw him and he was much disheartened. He said he did not know where the end would be: that he must now pay out at least \$10,000 for hay, to say nothing of the barn, and he did not feel that he ought to subscribe to the railroad at that time. We agreed with him, and started for home. And that is the reason why we had no railroad from Chico to Colusa. Somebody thought it was his duty to boycott Bidwell, to the extent of burning him out. He told us that when he hired no Chinese servants—hired no Chinaman where he could work a white person in, but that there were some things, such as slopping around in the water, that a white man would not do; and there were times when he had to pick up a few Chinese. His voice had been Anti-Chinese; his work has been the same, as far as possible; and yet, because he will not come down to the dictation of a parcel of irresponsible men and discharge at once, and for all time, help that he thinks he cannot do without, he must not only be boycotted, but have low-flung insinuations thrown out against his character! This is going too far. It will work evil to the cause men pretend to cherish. Gen. Bidwell will make more sacrifices to rid the State of Chinese than ninety-nine out of a hundred of those who make this demand on him, and who slander him.

JOHN BIDWELL. 1890

### **THE VOICE.**

Thursday, July 7, 1892.

BIDWELL and CRANFILL.

The Ticket Nominated by the Sixth National convention of the Prohibition Party.

Detailed Report of the Proceedings of our great National Gathering at Cincinnati.

A Peerless Ticket, a Broad Platform and a Magnificent Convention. Dickie Re-elected chairman of the National Committee, with Wardwell Secretary.

How the Candidates were nominated and the Platform adopted.

Ex-Governor St. John made Temporary Chairman—Dr. M. C. Lockwood Delivers the Address of Welcome—Permanent Chairman Ritter Makes the Speech of the Convention—Spirited Debate Over the Free Coinage and Tariff Planks in Which Free Coinage is Defeated.

The “Dominant Issue” Plank of the last National Platform Adopted After an Exciting Scene—St. John, Dickie and Bain Nominate Bidwell—Gideon T. Stewart Presented by Logan, of Ohio, and Demorest by Thomas of New York—How Dr. Cranfill was named as the Candidate for Vice-President.

CINCINATI, July 1 (Special Correspondence).—At 2:15 this morning the National Prohibition Convention adjourned without day. The story of its doings has already been told for the readers of The Voice in outline by telegraph. The detailed report of the proceedings fills many columns of this issue.

It is the same old Prohibition party that the Convention has left us, but broadened and more fully developed. Of course it would have been a Prohibition Party in any event. There was no one in the Convention who would have harbored any thought of altering, modifying, qualifying or even touching the essential and distinguishing policy, character and identity of the party. This was so clear that with one accord the delegates turned their minds to other subjects of thought. Some of them were occupied with the question how to bring the Convention up to particular standards of aggressiveness in relation to special subjects. Others busied themselves with preparations to teach the Convention that there were at least two ways of thinking upon each of these other questions, and that both ways of thinking were actively in operation among Prohibitionists.

The friends of free coinage made a beautiful fight, and so did the friends of The Voice's tariff plank (which was substantially the plank of the minority report of the Committee on Resolutions). Both

were beautifully licked. Both are willing to stand it. They were contending for the best interests of the Prohibition Party as understood by them, but only for the best interests in minor respects.

As for fusion, it was never heard of, and as for, “union of forces,” the advocates of it, or good folks who would be glad to see it accomplished, could make no headway against the stern conditions that confronted them.

The National Reformers' conference, thanks to the courtesy of the Prohibition delegates, was very creditably attended, and Edward Evans made one of his enthusiastic addresses, dwelling upon the necessity of a union of reformers with all his old-time zeal.

The resolutions adopted by the National Reformers recommending that the Prohibition National Committee place itself in communication with the People's Party National Committee, and advising a change of the name of our party to the National Reform Party, did not reach the Prohibition Convention.

The struggle for the Presidential nomination did not attain to the dignity of a real struggle. It was settled from the beginning. (As I said in my dispatch of Wednesday, Mr. Demorest gained no new supporters—at least none of perceptible weight. Neither did he make any enemies. He never had any enemies among the Prohibitionists. There were no documents or circulars issued against him, either signed or anonymous. There were editors and delegates in the Convention who had written against the expediency of Mr. Demorest's candidacy—written plainly and relentlessly because the issue had been forced; but they had done so in their own newspapers, and over their own names and in ample time. They considered the case closed. During the convention and the days that preceded it they neither printed nor uttered a word to which exception could be taken. In their delegations and their interviews with representatives of other States they took ground firmly for other candidates. Thus, the New York delegation held a caucus, and declared for Bidwell by 72 votes to 7 for Demorest. But it was a contest for preferred men and not against any man.

The anonymous circulars, assailing Bidwell were deplored and condemned, but they did not provoke a word of counter-antagonism. And although New York had pronounced overwhelmingly

for Bidwell and against Demorest, she graciously yielded the floor to the leading Demorest advocate when she was reached on roll call.

The nominating speeches, and the scene that followed the announcement of the result, will never be forgotten by anyone who was present. Col. Bain's address would have graced any convention ever held. St. John and Dickie spoke with almost equal eloquence and power. The pleaders for Demorest were listened to with respect and sympathy.

The demonstrations in the convention were marked and inspiring.

That was splendid testimonial of appreciation that was awarded to Mr. Wardwell, and indeed, few of the speeches were more happily conceived or handsomely delivered than his simple address. The elegant success of Dr. Evans' appeal for subscriptions to the campaign fund awakened unbounded wonder among the newspaper men. Some of them were veterans of the daily press, accustomed to the exciting and unusual scenes of the national conventions, but they never witnessed anything like that. They could understand why Democrats and Republicans go wild for particular candidates, and even for particular so-called ideas, because those candidates and ideas stand for victory and rewards. But here was something new. There could be only one explanation, the Prohibitionists were tremendously in earnest, and were glad of the chance to invest their money in the cause simply for the sake of the cause.

Not to be forgotten was the hearty demonstration for Gideon T. Stewart when delegate Logan, of Ohio, called to memory the long and excellent services of that old warrior. It was known that Mr. Stewart could not receive the Presidential nomination, for the strength of the Bidwell forces was invincible. But the convention was delighted to testify its recognition of all that was said of Stewart.

The nomination scene was undoubtedly the most remarkable affair of the kind the Prohibitionists have ever gotten up. It was after midnight before the ballot was completed, and it was 15 minutes after when Secretary Small, holding the tally sheet in his hand, read: "General John Bidwell, five hundred and seventy." For 11 minutes after that the able and experienced representatives of the daily press were quite at home. One would have thought that if the election of Bidwell was not

altogether as sure as that the sun will rise on the eighth day of November, at least that Bidwell was very decidedly "in it." It was a glorious 11 minutes.

There was another rousing time when Cranfill was selected for the Vice-Presidency. It rested with Mr. Cranfill to make it outshine the Bidwell performance, for Cranfill was there on the spot, and the convention would have stayed with him and howled for him 22 minutes or 33 minutes if he had let it do so. But he was modest. He wouldn't have it. He stopped the convention by getting out of it as soon as he had delivered his very brief speech of thanks. The convention began the campaign by following Cranfill.

Yet it did not break up at once. A woman's strong, passionate voice arrested attention and checked the retiring hosts. She stood on a seat in the Michigan delegation. She was a colored lady, Mrs. Lucy Thurman, of Jackson, Mich. Stung to the heart by the discrimination against her race at the hotels and in other places of resort, she could not permit the convention to adjourn without giving utterance to the indignation that was surging within her. With flashing eyes and burning words, she denounced the white men of the North who hypocritically talk about southern outrages and make an issue along that line in their platforms, yet refuse to eat with the "nigger" and sneer at just-minded men and women who protest against the race discrimination. This was the closing incident of the convention. Mrs. Thurman's were the last formal words spoken in it, and the last shouts were shouts of approval for the fervid advocates of the colored people.

The oratory of the convention was of high order throughout.

Mr. Axel Gustafson cut something of a figure. He was conspicuous among the delegates. He was probably the most typical representative of his party in one respect; he stood for things not popular on the whole; he made two motions, neither of which received a second. Yet Mr. Gustafson enlivened the convention. The most joyous episode of it was produced by him. It was nearing the third night. A chill, raw air was 'round and about Fifteen State delegations had seconded Bidwell's nomination. These were two circumstances that a less humorous Demorest gentleman than Mr. Gustafson would hardly have thought of connecting. But Mr. Gustafson has an eye for the bright

sides of life. He arose and said with what was supposed to be great seriousness and gravity: "Mr. Chairman, it is getting very cold in here Can't some of these windows be shut?"

Talk about your Bidwell demonstrations, and your Cranfill demonstrations, and your Sam Small speeches. They were nowhere. First there was a titter, then the entire New York delegation gave utterance to a long guffaw, and then, as the word flew around the hall that Mr. Gustafson was the most red-hot of all the Demorest men, and even he was chilled to the bone, there was such a laugh raised as was never before heard in a Prohibition convention.

There was no more work of duty that was more grateful or did the convention more credit than its vote of thanks to Oscar B. Todhunter, the chairman of the Press Committee. The resolution was drawn up by the reporter for the Associated Press, and signed by every newspaper man and woman who had a chance to get at it. It ought to be engrossed. Mr. Todhunter was untiring from the first day that the convention began to attract the notice of the press. The arrangements that he had made for the newspaper representatives could not be improved. He was always to be found wherever he was wanted, and was at the service of every one who needed information.

Much satisfaction is expressed by the delegates at the re-election of Professor Samuel Dickie as Chairman of the National Committee, and with his fine direction of the Convention machinery.

The City of Dayton, Ohio, has a Prohibition editor who can fairly claim to be one of the most enterprising in the land. J. O. Alwood is his name. He published the Dayton Liberator. Dayton is about 25 miles from here. At 6:30 Thursday afternoon Mr. Alwood placed in my hands a copy of his paper and told me to look at it. It was worth looking at. It was dated Thursday, June 30th. It had eight pages and was handsomely printed. Five and one-half columns of the first page were filled with special telegrams from the Convention Hall. The proceedings of Thursday up to 3:35 P. M., were faithfully reported in it. A picture of Bidwell was at the masthead. Yet the Liberator is only a local weekly of small circulation.

The rummies looked glum. They didn't like the convention. The most disgusted saloon keeper in town is Fred Stuehrmann, whose shop is right across the street from Music Hall. Rummy

Stuehrmann said to me: "Dot Brohibition Convention was no good yet. I ordered me a good many extra bottles of selzer water and weiss beer, also sarsaparilla. I thought they would want some temperance drinks. I was mistaken already. I have no use for Brohibition Conventions."

## THE PROCEEDINGS

Detailed report of the Convention's work by "The Voice's". Special Correspondent and Stenographer.

A few minutes after ten o'clock, Rev. C. H. Mead and his colleagues of the Silver Lake Quartette stepped to the front of the stage, and to the accompaniment of the organ, began to sing the National Hymn, "My Country, 'tis of Thee." The delegates and audience arose and joined in the singing. Chairman Samuel Dickie of the National Committee, then came forward. He was greeted with three resounding cheers. He introduced Rev. Dr. J. G. Evans of Illinois, President of Hedding College, the Clergyman designated by the committee to make the opening prayer. Dr. Evans prayed for the blessing of God upon the great convention: "Our Father, shine upon this Convention with Thy wisdom. Guide those who shall construct the platform of principles and those who shall be leaders in the exercise of influence over this convention. Grant, Our Father, that the right things may be done, that the principles adopted may be in harmony with Thy will and for the good of this great nation. And grant that the men who shall be here nominated as our standard-bearers may be men of upright lives and pure hearts, and with an eye single to the glory of God and the good of this great notion."

After more singing by the Silver Lake Quartette, Rev. Dr. M. C. Lockwood, of the First Baptist Church of Cincinnati, was presented to deliver the address of welcome. Dr. Lockwood said:

### **Dr. Lockwood's Address of Welcome.**

"On behalf of the Prohibitionists of Cincinnati I give you welcome. 'Not many wise after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called in this City.' (Laughter and applause.) Your coming has been earnestly desired, that our citizens may learn that in intelligence, culture, and,



best of all, character—(Applause)—the Prohibition Party has never had a peer; that on her platform are the ablest orators, among her counselors the ripest scholars, and in her ranks the cleanest manhood; that in your conventions there is the dignity of moral purpose, the enthusiasm of the purest patriotism and the calm confidence of an unshaken faith. In this you differ from a convention whose only dignity was in its numbers, whose enthusiasm was inspired in barrooms, and whose calm confidence was in organized office-holders. You represent a party which has no faction ready to barter a President for a Governor—to imitate the historic procedure in the Democratic Party from the days of Sam Tilden to those of Grover Cleveland. (Applause.)

“You are welcomed by those in whom the sentiment of loyalty to American institutions has survived; welcomed by those who in this City, which is under the double curse of immigrated depravity and a lawless liquor traffic, are hoping for better things. (Applause.) There are among our American population hidden fires of danger, rumblings of discontent, pent-up resentments which are full of the portents of our victory. The storm which is slowly gathering has in it the stored-up wrath of years and its work will be swift and sure.

The insolence and temerity of those against whom you are organized have fostered secret hate even in the servile office-holders in whom all love of country has not perished. From the Governor in his chair to the policeman on his beat there is a concealed hatred of the traffic. A great deal of the battle against you is sham battle. Your chief work is to overcome animal gregariousness led by political herders with the human organization of sentiment and principle.

“A belated train stood panting impatiently at a southern railroad station. The express agent was hurrying with his work, when one of his men came with a puppy in his arms. ‘Hurry up,’ said the agent; ‘where is that dog going?’ And the man answered, ‘I dunno, he dunno, nobody dunno, he has eat his tag.’ What would be the political destiny of the average Republican or Democrat if he should eat his tag. (Great laughter and applause.)

I welcome you on behalf of the most thoughtful, unselfish and best manhood among the labor leaders in our City. They are fast learning that industrial conditions cannot be improved apart

form the improvement of moral conditions. 'the soul of all improvement is the improvement of the soul.' A better man is the first necessity of organized labor. A better manhood is not possible in an environment of drunkenness and its concomitant evils. The labor and liquor problem cannot be separated. The Prohibition Party has, naturally, logically become a party in sympathy and in alliance with the labor leaders. The word sympathy I could not use alone; its meaning has been degraded and falsified in political uses. (Laughter). There is nothing asked for by labor that can be divorced from the right we represent, and the Ohio platform has blazed a path where this Convention must begin to build a highway to the throne of power.

“And with this confidence I welcome you on behalf of the party in this State. Ohio has more politics in it to the square yard than any other State in the Union. And if this Convention will find more politics in it than you have ever seen before, you may consider it due to your environment.

“Friends if in anything my welcome has been found wanting, my fellow citizens will by their cordiality make ample amends, and you will pardon me, for the head has not kept pace with the heart. We meant that you should have a royal welcome, and you shall. It could not be otherwise from the Queen City.” (Prolonged applause.)

Mr. Dickie made the following response:

### **Chairman Dickie's Response.**

“I am sure, Dr. Lockwood, that I voice the sentiments of this entire Convention when I heartily thank you for this cordial welcome to the Queen City. And it is certain that there is no danger that this Convention or any delegate in it will ever devour his tag. (Laughter.) We know precisely what ye are here for. We understand, Dr. Lockwood, where we are going. And there is no danger whatever that any influence or obstacle will divert us from our relentless purpose. (Applause.) We are here for the transaction of important business. We are here for the nomination of candidates for President and Vice-President of the United States, candidates who will remain in the field and force the fight from the hour of their nomination until the polls close next November. (Applause.) We are here for the purpose of laying down a platform of principles that shall be as unequivocal as the best

English can make it. We shall be on both sides of no question. (Cheers.) It shall say exactly what it means and mean exactly what it says. We are here, I trust, to lay down a platform that shall be remarkable for its clearness and shall be as broad as we can make it, with an unequivocal utterance on every point.

But I am not to take your time. I hold in my hand a corrected list of the delegates from 43 States, as well as the District of Columbia. (Applause.) Shall I read it? (Cries of "No.") I trust not. (Laughter.)

The list was accepted as the official convention list pending the report of the Committee on Credentials.

Prof. Dickie then, in a few eloquent words of eulogy, announced that Ex-Governor John P. St. John, of Kansas, had been selected by the National Committee, as Temporary Chairman, and appointed Dr. Evans and Samuel D. Hastings of Wisconsin, a committee to escort him to the platform. As the candidate of 1884 made his way from the Kansas delegation the delegates rose as a body and made the great hall ring with their enthusiastic shouts. The cheering was redoubled as he stood at the speaker's desk smiling and bowing his acknowledgements. He spoke as follows:

### **St. John's Speech As Temporary Chairman.**

"Members of the Convention: I return my sincere thanks, and shall be ever grateful for the distinguished honor of being chosen to preside as temporary chairman of this magnificent political convention, the greatest and grandest in sobriety, moral force and brain power, that ever convened on American soil. (Applause.) It represents a party that dares to do right because it is right, and condemn the wrong because it is wrong. It stands for peace and prosperity to every home, and death to every saloon in the land (Applause) It demands for woman equal pay in the shops and equal say at the polls (prolonged cheers): a free ballot for the white men of Pennsylvania, Massachusetts and Iowa; as well as for the black men of Mississippi, Louisiana and South Carolina; that North and South, East and West, black and white, rich and poor, every human being, should have protection to life and property (applause); that the expenses of government be levied upon the wealth instead of the necessities of the people. (Applause) We claim that any system which imposes a high tariff on

the food, fuel and clothing of the poor, and lets the diamonds of the rich come in free, is legalized robbery under the guise of protection, and ought to be forever abolished, (applause) that all money should be issued by the general government, and every dollar, whether gold, silver or paper, should stand upon an equality before the law for all purposes, and that the coinage of both metals should be free (applause, mingled with objections); that railways and telegraph lines should be under the control of the Government, to be operated at cost in the interest of all the people (applause); that President, Vice-President and United States Senators should be elected by a direct vote of the people, and that the term for President be extended to six years, with no second successive term for any man (applause); that all monopolies that oppress the people ought to be suppressed; that the legalized liquor traffic, for beverage purposes, is the greatest monopoly that ever existed. It destroys 150,000 lives and costs \$1,500,000,000 annually, and sends misery, poverty, crime and heartache broadcast among the people. It is the product of Republican and Democratic rule, a damning blot upon our civilization, a sin against God, and ought to be made a crime against humanity and driven from the face of the earth. (Great applause.)

“The Prohibition Party is the only party that dares fight this mightiest curse of the world. Here we are, and we come to stay. From this hour on let no fusion, no deals, no compromise be our motto. (Loud and repeated applause) Let our platform be so broad, just, clear and comprehensive that all who love God, or home, or country can join the procession which is now ready to move on to victory.”

### **Opening of the Convention Proper.**

The afternoon session of the convention began with prayer by Rev. Father Martin Mahoney of Minnesota, who prayed:

“That in this convention and in the time to follow Thou, Almighty God, mayest enlighten our minds by Thy grace and strengthen our hearts in holy purposes, so that we may gird ourselves with new zeal and greater effectiveness to the spreading of this great cause, which is destined, we trust, to

gather the hearts, minds and activities of Thy people in this nation for preserving it and furthering good.”

The Presidential and Vice-Presidential candidates of former campaigns were called to the platform and presented to the convention. All of these candidates are living except General Fisk. Neal Dow and General Green Clay Smith were unable to come to the convention, but the others responded when their names were called. The venerable Mother Stewart of Ohio, was also called up and introduced.

The Committee on Credentials, through its Chairman, W. R. Miles, presented its report, showing that 972 delegates and alternates were in attendance. The only States not represented were Louisiana and South Carolina.

#### THURSDAY'S SESSIONS.

The convention opened Thursday morning at 10 o'clock, a vast audience completely filling Music Hall. Prayer was offered by Rev. J. C. Quinn, of Fremont, Ohio.

A request that Frances E. Willard be invited to the platform and asked to address the convention was presented.

The enthusiasm of a few minutes before was revived as Miss Willard came to the front.

The rest of the morning session was devoted to the work of securing contributions and pledges for the campaign fund.

Altogether, more than \$20,000 was secured—an amount exceeding the fund raised in Indianapolis in 1888 by more than \$5,000.

#### THURSDAY AFTERNOON SESSION.

While the convention was reassembling, the Beveridges and other favorite singers rendered stirring music. The Liberator Band of Dayton, played its usual pleasing part in the preliminaries.

Judge James Black of Pennsylvania, now appeared on the platform and said that the Committee on Resolutions, after giving the most careful thought and consideration to the business before it, had completed its labors. Secretary E. J. Wheeler of the Committee, stood up and read the long awaited statement.

Each plank was generously applauded. The ones on equal suffrage and public schools were received with particular enthusiasm. The currency, free coinage and tariff planks were greeted with long cheers from those whom they pleased, and cries of "No" from those who did not like them.

#### FINAL SESSION.

Nominating Candidates for President and Vice-President.

The final session of the convention, Thursday evening, was opened by music by the Liberator Band. Prayer was offered by Rev. J. W. Hagans, of Indiana.

The roll of States was then called for nominations for President. Alabama and Arkansas had no candidate to present. California called on Mr. St. John of Kansas, to place General Bidwell in nomination. St. John said:

"It affords me not only great pleasure, but what I esteem to be one of the most distinguished honors of my life to present the name of California's candidate for President. He went to that State long before it was admitted to the Union; went there in 1841, when a mere boy. The man to whom I refer is in every respect a self-made man. Starting out in the world without education and without means, by his own effort he has made his way; educated himself, and is today one of the best posted of men, possessed of a thorough education. He is a man who has always been in sympathy with the great body of the people; a man who knows what it is to have his hands blistered and calloused; a man who knows what it is to dig deep in the mines and work his way by the sweat of his brow; a

man who knows what it is to be among and in sympathy with the men of this country. This man has served two terms in Congress.”

Ex-Governor St. John then referred in scathing terms to the unsigned dodgers which had been circulated among the delegates on the eve of the nominations, attacking the character and record of General John Bidwell. Continuing he said:

“This man served two terms in Congress and it is said that he voted for the Pacific Railway land grant. He lived in California, that country so far away, and if he had not voted for this grant he would have voted against the best wishes of his constituents. He was sent there to represent them. (Applause.) He cast a ballot that met the approval of the people who sent him. Another objection is that he voted against taxing wines. God bless him. (Cries of “Amen.”) The greatest evil is that we impose a tax and take a revenue. Suppose he was wrong then. It is better to have been wrong then and right now than to have been a man then a monkey now. (Applause). The man whose name I present to you, when his conscience told him that the manufacture and sale of wine was wrong, called his men to him and sent them to the vineyard and dug it up, root and branch and burned it. (Applause.) He was a candidate of the Prohibition Party of California in 1891, and polled more votes than were ever given for any man in that State. During all these years his neighbors, the people of that State, never circulated a single scandal against him.

He owns a farm of 25,000 acres, and he works it and gives employment to 250 men on that farm. He has owned it for nearly 60 years. It came to him from the Mexican settlement. When he came into possession of this land there was a little band of Indians on it, and he employed a teacher and built them houses and then a church, and the Indians are there, and General Bidwill preaches to them on the Sabbath. (Applause).

“The man whose name I present to you is a man grand and broad and generous, a man who is competent to fill the position, if elected, and God helping us we will elect him if we can.

“It has been said that if he is nominated, when the Omaha convention convenes, he will resign in favor of the People's Party nominee. General Bidwell is a true man, and I stand here and give my

personal pledge that if he is nominated he will stand until the last ballot is polled in November. (Applause.)

Wardwell—"It has been stated that John Bidwell is a very sick man, and is unable to do the duties of this office. Will you speak on this statement?"

St. John—"That is untrue unless his wife is mistaken, and she has lived with him for 20 years and was with him yesterday."

Colorado, through John Hipp, seconded the nomination of Bidwell. Connecticut and Florida seconded Bidwell.

Iowa and Kansas seconded Bidwell.

Col. George W. Bain spoke in part as follows, in behalf of Kentucky:

"It is with great pleasure that I second tonight the nomination of California's grandest man, General John Bidwell. (Applause.) In doing so I do not endorse a man I never saw, with whom I have no acquaintance. I became acquainted with him 20 years ago. Standing by the side of Cleveland, he would tower almost 18 inches above him; and standing by the side of the Republican candidate he would hide him almost, hat and all. (Applause.)

We are told that he was in favor of the wine interest 25 years ago. So was Paul in favor of the devil before he was converted. His conversion made him a hero of Christianity. Twenty-five years ago General Bidwell had not studied the temperance question. When the conviction came to him, what did he say? Did he say, "O, Conviction, wait until I sell my vineyard for half a million dollars?" or "Conviction, go thy way, at a more convenient season I will call for thee." Did he? He said rather "Go cut up that vineyard; take that wine from the storehouse and give it to the sick: so help me God I will never take another dime from it." (Applause.)



“Some say he cannot make an active campaign. His temperance record in a campaign would be worth 50,000 speeches.”

Volney B. Cushing said: “The good old State of Maine, which has been a Prohibition Hercules for 40 years, seconds the nomination of that Hercules of Prohibitionists of the Pacific Coast, General John Bidwell.”

Walcott Hamlin of Massachusetts, pledged the loyal support of the Bay State to the nominee of the Convention, whoever he might be.

Chairman Samuel Dickie, speaking for Michigan, said:

“Michigan has no favorite son. She has within her ranks a man known to the Prohibitionists of every State in the Union, a man whom all the Prohibitionists of Michigan know but to love, and, knowing well, are proud to speak his name with honor everywhere. It had been the purpose of the Michigan delegation to show its love, its devotion and its desire to honor this son by a complimentary vote, but that son himself asks that the second ballot be rather expressed at this moment, so you will pardon me if I vary the usual custom and say that he whom Michigan most desires joins in expressing a desire that the Michigan delegation shall second the nomination of Gen. John Bidwell.” (Applause.)

Minnesota, Missouri, through Dr. John A. Brooks, and Montana, seconded the nomination of Bidwell.

A. G. Wolfenbarger, for 18 of the 23 delegates of Nebraska, seconded the nomination of Bidwell:

“We ask for this magnificent party of the people, a man of the people. We ask for a courageous, faithful founder, a true and tried pioneer. We ask a President, who, when elected, will not travel from ocean to ocean with a travelling drunken crowd. (Applause.) We ask a President who will not set the pernicious example to the young manhood of the country by serving five kinds of wine at public banquets, or permit his name to be used in connection with particular brands of brandy. We

ask for a President, one who will not ask or accept, when sent across the sea, a forty-gallon barrel of whiskey. (Applause.) We ask for a President, one whose brave little wife will not let the wine cup disgrace the table of the White House. Nebraska, through a majority of her delegation, asks for that prince of leaders, that champion, John Bidwell of the Pacific Coast.

Nevada and New Jersey seconded the nomination of Bidwell.

When New York was called Mr. Wardwell said: "The State of New York as a delegation, has no candidate to present, but it voted 73 for Mr. Bidwell and 7 for Demorest, and under the rule I ask that the friends of Mr. Demorest may be allowed to present his name from New York."

John Lloyd Thomas was introduced to present the name of Demorest. Mr. Thomas said: "when the typical leader of the Prohibitionists declined the nomination, the great masses of the Prohibition Party turned spontaneously to one man in this country, whose name it was not necessary to spell before any man, woman or child in this great land, whose record it is not necessary to vindicate in any home in this country, whose political record it is not necessary to explain to any man in this land or ours, and that man is W. Jennings Demorest, of New York." (Applause.)

Grandison of North Carolina, seconded the nomination of Demorest for a portion of the delegation of that State.

North Dakota seconded Bidwell.

A. A. Stevens, in behalf of 66 of the 80 delegates from Pennsylvania, seconded the nomination of Bidwell.

Wisconsin said "Amen" to the nomination of Bidwell.

Sam Small, in behalf of Georgia, which had been passed when first called, took the floor to second the nomination of Demorest.

Hale Johnson, of the Illinois delegation, introduced delegate Patton, who seconded the nomination of Gideon T. Stewart.

#### THE VOTE FOR PRESIDENTIAL NOMINEE.

The vote for Presidential candidates was taken as follows:

Bidwell. Demorest. Stewart. Bascom  
Alabama 4 4 Arkansas 4 California 13 Colorado 2 1  
Connecticut 14 1 Delaware 2 Florida 6 Georgia 19 Indiana 22 10 6 Idaho 5 Illinois 24 13 33 Iowa  
24 3 3 Kansas 27 Kentucky 22 5 4 Louisiana Maine . 4 3 Maryland 12 6 2 Massachusetts 24 3 10  
Michigan 17 6 20 Minnesota 22 1 3 Mississippi 3 Missouri 22 2 3 Montana 3 1 Nebraska 12 8  
Nevada 1 New Hampshire 2 2 New Jersey 25 1 2 New York 70 12 6 3 North Carolina 9 8 North  
Dakota 3 1 Ohio 2 68 Oregon 3 Pennsylvania 65 17 3 Rhode Island 9 South Carolina South Dakota  
3 Tennessee 30 Texas 3 3 5 Vermont 11 Virginia. 9 8 4 Washington 6 West Virginia 9 2 1

#### THE VOTE FOR PRESIDENTIAL NOMINEE.—(Continued).

Bidwell. Demorest Stewart Bascom

Wisconsin 82 6 Wyoming 1 Arizona District of Columbia .

Totals, 583 142 184 3

The demonstration was renewed for ten minutes after the secretary had finished announcing the vote, which was finally made as follows: Bidwell, 590; Stewart, 179; Demorest, 129; Bascom, 3.

Col. R. S. Cheves moved to make the nomination of Bidwell unanimous. The motion was seconded by one of Stewart's friends from Ohio, and adopted with a mighty shout. The convention again rose to its feet, and for ten minutes the demonstration which broke loose on the announcement of the former vote was continued.

JOHN BIDWELL. 1891

**CALIFORNIA PROHIBITIONIST, THURSDAY, AUGUST 25, 1892. BIDWELL'S  
LETTER. Formally Accepting His Nomination.**

Views of a Statesman.

A Thoughtful Review of Live Issues.

A Successful Vote-Making Document. The Position of the Party Fairly Stated, and its Purposes Defined—It will Command Thoughtful Attention From All Parties.

By your polite letter of this date, which I have the honor to receive at your hands, I am formally notified that the National Prohibition convention in session in the City of Cincinnati, adopted a platform of principles for the coming political campaign, and thereupon conferred upon me the distinguished honor of its nomination for President of the United States.

In accepting the nomination, which I do with misgivings as to my ability to meet the just expectations of the people, permit me to thank you, gentlemen, for the courteous and kindly manner in which you have been pleased to discharge the trust assigned to you, and through you, to embrace the occasion to express to the members of the convention and the friends of Prohibition and reform throughout the country whom you represent, my grateful acknowledgement.

It is scarcely necessary to add that I am overwhelmed with a keen sense of the responsibility which I assume.

Mistakes are possible, but I trust the cause may not suffer in my hands. All I have to plead is unswerving devotion to those great principles and needed reforms which have brought into existence the Prohibition party of the nation.

Those who witnessed the convention in Cincinnati need not be reminded that something of unusual moment had aroused the nation, and brought together a representative body of men and women, the

equal of which for intelligence and patriotic earnestness has seldom if ever been seen at any former period.

#### OUR GREAT GOVERNMENT.

In 1776 our fathers made proclamation of the birth of the nation. Now, having grown to be one of the greatest powers on earth, the freest and best government ever devised, the hope of the world, this “grandest governmental fabric of human invention,” our beloved American nation is, in the minds of the most thoughtful and intelligent people, drifting unmistakably towards decay, if not to sure and swift destruction.

Prohibition comes, therefore, to proclaim, as we believe, the only way of salvation.

There are well founded apprehensions that this nation which we love— this mighty empire of sovereign states—cannot survive unless redeemed from the dangers that jeopardize its existence, prominent among which are that immeasurable evil, the monstrous liquor traffic, and the numerous forms and phases of monopolistic combinations, creating immense wealth in the hands of the few and impoverishing the many. The same causes and processes which have created increasing numbers of millionaires will, if unchecked under the rules of old political parties, in time turn over the entire nation into the hands of an aristocracy of monster billionaires.

Labor creates the wealth of the country. Without labor there can be no development of resources, no national prosperity. The liquor traffic robs, impoverishes and demoralizes labor, thereby sapping the very foundations of the national fabric.

#### THE LIQUOR TRAFFIC.

The liquor traffic is an enormous incubus upon the nation, amounting in cost and consequences to the annual sum of not less than two billion of dollars —four times the amount requisite to pay the annual expenses of the national government, even under the recent expensive administrations.

But it is not necessary further to enumerate; suffice it to say, the liquor traffic is a standing curse; a danger to public health; the prolific source of untold political corruption, crimes, diseases, degradation and death; a public nuisance and a public immorality; in a word, it is an unmitigated and measureless evil without a redeeming feature.

Every consideration of justice, the public welfare, protection to labor, all cry out against this wrong. The only adequate remedy lies in the entire overthrow of the liquor traffic in every state and territory.

The liquor power leads, corrupts and dominates both the old political parties. Without the liquor support neither could make another political fight or win a victory.

The Prohibition party asks the intelligent and patriotic people of this nation this question. Are not these charges true? And if true, have we not a right to ask, How can any good men consistently support the infamous saloon business, by longer clinging to the destinies of those parties?

The family is the unit of civilized government. Protect the home and the nation will be protected.

#### EQUAL SUFFRAGE.

In the name of right and humanity then, let not free, enlightened and Christian America longer injure and degrade women by withholding from her that which is her inalienable right; that which will elevate American womanhood; that which will enlarge her usefulness; that which will impart to her greater ability to be the helper and co-worker with man under all circumstances and conditions, that which alone will make woman man's equal before the law and place in her hands the most efficient weapon with which to defend her rights and protect her home. I allude of course to that priceless heritage, the ballot.

In doing this Americans should lose no time. Americans, of all people under the sun, are the most nearly ready.

Our women know what the ballot is and its power: they are brave enough to ask it because it is their right. They are as a class intelligent, virtuous, selfreliant, womanly, modest.

If we delay, England will take the lead in the emancipation of woman.

The nation that first gives woman equal rights with man will earn a crown of imperishable glory.

The old parties, controlled as they are by the liquor power, and by vast monopolistic and other influences, dare not even propose, much less seriously propose, to overthrow the saloon, grant equal suffrage, or do any other act in the direction of a beneficent reform antagonistic to these controlling influences.

They need them this year for re-election; they will need them next time, and on as long as they have an existence. Powerful political parties invariably in time become corrupt, and utterly helpless to right themselves. The only real service they can do is to go out of existence. It is a singular phenomenon that good men will remain in affiliation with such parties and thus lend aid and comfort to the liquor business.

THE FINANCIAL QUESTION. The financial question in our platform is briefly and fairly stated, and broad enough to satisfy all reasonable men in these words,—”The money of the country should consist of gold, silver and paper.” Also that it be “issued by the government only.” It should of course be in sufficient quantity to meet all demands, and the volume be so increased and adjusted as at all times to respond to the conditions of the country.

Of all the forms used by men to overreach each other in the scramble for wealth, there is none more oppressive and blighting to labor and business generally than the monopoly of money. Combinations to lock up capital with the view to raise the rate of interest, or to reduce the price of labor or commodities, should be made illegal.

Take farmers for example. As a class they are compelled to be, and as a rule are, frugal. Yet there is little doubt that the mortgages which cover their farms indicate with almost unerring certainty the overcharge of interest they are obliged to pay.

**LEGAL INTEREST.** The legal rate of interest on money should be made low and reasonable for the benefit of all classes, occupations and industries, and be uniform in all the states. No man ought to be compelled to pay exorbitant interest because he is poor. If his security is doubtful, exacting from him high interest will not increase his ability to pay. As a matter of equity, all who honestly and promptly pay should have the benefit of the legal low rate of interest. If combinations may be formed ad libitum to accumulate and hoard the money and the wealth of the country, they will soon have it in their power to stop the very wheels of progress—to exercise dangerous control over legislatures, courts, and congresses, if not virtually to dictate all the affairs of the nation.

**LABOR.** In a wide sense all who pursue useful occupations, professions or callings are laborers. In the busy hive of national industry there is a place for the merchant, the mechanic, the doctor, the teacher, the learned professor, the lawyer, the legislator—in a word, for all who in any manner perform useful or valuable service.

In the common acceptance of the term laborers (which I may use), it is usually applied to those who labor with their hands. Happily in this land of freedom and equal rights all labor is regarded as honorable, and none more useful than manual labor.

**IMMIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION.** In order to relieve the labor of the country of its abnormal and often congested condition, there should be the earliest possible revision and restriction of the immigration and naturalization laws of the United States. These laws, so inimical to American labor and the best interests of all, if not purposely enacted, have doubtlessly been kept in force for partisan interests—till our country has become the almost daily scene of riot, lawlessness and bloodshed, and not unfrequently on such scale as to portend, if permitted to go unchecked, the possible subversion of authority.—The discord between capital and labor cannot safely be allowed to continue. No matter what the cause, it is imperative to remove it.



CAPITAL AND LABOR. The general welfare and even the fate of the nation demand that a remedy be found and applied, whether by arbitration or otherwise. Tribunals of adequate jurisdiction between men or bodies of men, be they large or small, capitalists and laborers, or employers and the employed.

Labor itself has the deepest interest in the general welfare. All its hopes are inseparably associated with the prosperity and destiny of the nation. All intelligent and patriotic Americans concede that the laboring classes, and all classes, have the right to ask and to receive ample and adequate protection under just and equal laws.

Intelligent laboring men, being in the majority at the polls, must bear in mind their own responsibility in making the laws to which themselves and all others are bound to yield obedience.

That capital sometimes over-reaches and oppresses labor is doubtless true. There seems to be no limit to human greed.

That labor is sometimes unreasonable and even vicious is also probably true. But lawlessness and lawless combinations of men, the only effect of which is to enervate and destroy, must at once be put under the ban of severe public disapprobation if this country is to prosper.

In the national hive there should be no drones. There should be room—and there is room—for all to labor, and all ought to have and must have the right to labor. It is a duty and a right to labor. It is a duty and a right that all men have to earn their bread and support their families. If it be necessary to have organizations as a defense against capital or competing labor, such organizations should be authorized and regulated by law.

THE TARIFF. Whatever tariffs may do they do not seem adequately, if at all, to protect labor. Except the partial effort to check the introduction of Mongolians, our ports are open to all the world to come and compete with American labor. There is no tariff on labor.

We must concede that all nations have the right to levy tariffs. As Americans we are in favor of protecting all American interests. The tariff proposed by the Democratic party and that of the Republican party differ only in degree—both are sufficiently high to be termed protective.

To the objection that tariffs bear unequally—that is to say, that under them the rich pay comparatively nothing, and the masses nearly all the revenue so derived to support the national government—must be added the further objection that they are binding and deceptive.

Under the present tariff there is not a man in the United States who can tell what he pays toward the support of the national government. Impressed with this fact, which all intelligent citizens ought to know, and all people must sooner or later learn, the tariff is doubtless destined to undergo constant and numerous revisions by congress in the impossible effort to equalize all its burdens and benefits.

Our national convention wisely justifies tariff as a defensive measure, which practically can but mean reciprocity.

In a country of such vast and varied resources as ours, such a tariff system could not fail to yield a very considerable revenue.

INCOME TAX. A further provision of the platform contains a measure of revenue of such transcendent importance as to commend itself to the favor of all classes and especially the masses, in these words: “The residue of means necessary to an economical administration of the government should be raised by levying a burden on what the people possess instead of upon what they consume.”

The platform fairly, and, as I think with great wisdom, embraces the policy of laying the burden of public revenue where it justly belongs, and precisely where the ability lies to pay, namely, “on what the people possess”; in other words, on their wealth—the value of which will generally be measured in dollars by the revenue or net income it yields to the possessor.

An income tax can do no injustice, work no opposition; for where there is no income there will be nothing to pay; the rich will pay most and the poor least or nothing. This mode of revenue is no experiment in this country. During the great rebellion when every source of revenue was strained to sustain the armies of the Union an income tax was resorted to and worked like a charm.

It helped them to save the Union and will help to save the nation now in another rebellion—the classes against the masses.

Some men of course will always try to evade the payment of their just taxes. But no honest man, I think, can ever make any reasonable objection to a well regulated income tax.

The effect of this mode of raising national revenue cannot fail to be beneficent. It will relieve the poor without oppressing the rich. Perhaps no other measure possible to be derived will work greater reform or give greater impetus to general prosperity than a wisely regulated income tax. One of its results would be to favor the equal distribution of wealth; it would go far to heal the growing discord between labor and capital.

A further important effect to flow from a revenue system based on “what the people possess instead of what they consume” would be that it would at once become the interest of all, rich and poor alike, to align themselves on the side of the strictest economy in all branches of the public service.

**GOVERNMENT OWNERSHIP.** There is perhaps no one issue in all the broad array of Prohibition principles embraced in our national platform of more vital concern to the material prosperity of our whole country, than that of transportation. Hence we declare in favor of government control of “railroad, telegraph and other public corporations,” in the interest of all the people. If railways cannot otherwise be so controlled, then it becomes the imperative duty of government to acquire and exercise absolute ownership, especially of the great trunk lines, for we mean practical and efficient control—nothing less.

So essential is this instrumentality to our national life and prosperity in this stage of rapid transit, that whatever powers own and control the railways of the United States, intimately associated as

they are with other great monopolistic interests, will have it within their sway virtually to own and control the government.

It is well known that railways and their natural affiliations (the great moneyed and other corporate powers) have already a most dangerous influence in all elections and in every department of the government. They are absolutely corrupting. We boast that ours is the freest and best government, and so it is.

But the question comes home to every thoughtful mind: is it safe for the people to surrender their rights into the hands of great corporations?

The transportation question has and will ever have an important effect in adding strength to the bonds of the national union, by multiplying the facilities for travel and the commingling of the people of all sections, thereby dissipating prejudices, forming and connecting friendships, unifying the people in language, in national spirit and love of country through the constant medium of more intimate social and business relations.

For these considerations transportation must be controlled—owned if necessary—by the Government of the United States.

POPULAR EDUCATION. The general diffusion of morality and intelligence is essential to the preservation of the rights and liberties of the people. One State constitution has it in these words:

“A general diffusion of knowledge and intelligence being essential to the preservation of the rights and liberties of the people, the legislature shall encourage by all suitable means the promotion of all intellectual, scientific, moral and agricultural improvement.”

Another State constitution has the same declaration thus: “Knowledge and learning, generally diffused throughout the community, being essential to the preservation of a free government, it shall be the duty of the general assembly to encourage by all suitable means, moral, intellectual, scientific and agricultural improvement.”

We have, therefore, ample reason for the conclusion that this free popular government—this mighty empire of sovereign states can only be preserved on the basis of morality and intelligence.

The demand is therefore imperative that ample means of education upon such basis be provided at the public expense and placed within the reach of every child in the nation.

**THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS.** The transcendent importance of the common school cannot be too firmly emphasized.

Our national convention has therefore wisely made prominent in its platform the American public school, which should be, if possible, the most prevalent and conspicuous object in the nation.

Over it the flag of freedom should ever be unfurled, for it should be a school of patriotism as well as of intelligence and morality. The teaching of the American public school should be in accord with American ideas—with American civilization, which of course is a christian civilization; but they must be strictly—absolutely—non-sectarian. The standard of morality must accord with our civilization and pervade all the books and teachings of the public school—which must not in any phase be a school of immorality.

Complaint has been made from sources that American public schools are godless and immoral, and therefore not good enough to suit some people. The remedy is, to make them good enough. Place them on a high moral standard. Eliminate from the public school every feature that has the slightest tendency to immorality; ever bearing in mind that under our form of government the conditions essential to our existence as a nation make it imperative that all public schools be free from every sectarian influence.

In the interest of national unity there should be a national language—and that of course, the English.

No other should be the language of the public school. A knowledge of the national language so far as to read and write the same fairly well, should, in addition to good moral character, be made a condition of naturalization and the inestimable right of suffrage.

THE CHRISTIAN SABBATH. Taking our rank as we do foremost among christian nations, we ought not, as a nation, to ignore the Christian Sabbath.

The closing of the World's Fair on Sunday is important to show to the world America's rank among the nations.

This magnificent republic, with an area equal to that of all Europe, with a population already of nearly sixty-five millions; with industries and resources vast, varied and almost limitless; and with more than a century of unexampled prosperity and remarkable history, and destined in the providence of God, as we believe, to become the leading power of the world, is even yet regarded by other nations as in the experimental stage. The enemies of free government still predict and doubtless hope to see America's downfall. America was never more on trial than it is today.

Dangers are ever present. The eyes of the world are upon us to see whether or not America possesses in a measure equal to or greater than monarchies the elements of strength and perpetuity to carry our government through all present and possible emergencies.

WISDOM AND PATRIOTISM REQUIRED. The same wisdom and patriotism that laid the foundation will be required to preserve the temple of liberty. Our foes are more numerous than at the beginning and our dangers are multiplied. Eternal vigilance was never more necessary. The important question of the hour is: How can this republic be tided over all the dangers that threaten, and be preserved to bless the world?

The far-seeing patriot makes answer: Banish alcohol, and make the nation sober. Make the people intelligent, moral and law abiding.

Control all monopolies in the interest of the people. Banish anarchy, punish all crimes, suppress all lawless combinations. Restrict foreign immigration. Rest the right of suffrage and citizenship on the sure basis of morality and intelligence.

Teach all children in the American public school the sacredness of the ballot, of obedience to law, of willing submission to rightful authority, and the settlement of differences between men by arbitration.

That all the great national questions must be settled, and all dangers averted and all needful reforms achieved by the same sacred principles of unreserved acquiescence in the majority rule. Majorities make the laws, Majorities repeal them.

ARBITRATION We fondly believe ours to be the best government the world has seen. On the principles stated of adhering sacredly to obedience to law and the abritrament of all questions to majorities, there can be no reason why our free popular government may not, under the blessings of God, endure till the close of time. The principle is of such vital moment that we cannot begin too soon to make it a feature in the curriculum in all the American public schools.

Making this the inflexible rule of our faith and practice, this proud republic, with all its vast concerns, may he easily held together by the bonds of common interest, even were our boundaries enlarged and our population and all our national affairs indefinitely multiplied.

The principles of our Prohibition platform, as far as I have been able to refer to them, are ample to show that they cover as entirely as ought to be desired in a brief outline of party policy, many, if not the most of the prominent problems pressing for solution at the present hour.

POOLS, TRUSTS, ETC. Our platform warrants unyielding opposition to all speculations in margins, to “the cornering of grain, money and products,” to “pools, trusts,” etc., and by implication to lotteries and all other modes of gambling, public and private. But further allusion to our

principles is not necessary. We cover a wider field than any other political party. We claim that ours is the only party that promises anything whatever in the line of real reform.

**QUALIFICATIONS FOR CITIZENSHIP.** In 1776 we needed immigration. The complaint against England was that immigration had been obstructed. But times have changed.

We make no war against foreigners as such. This is a world of competition. Every nation is competing with all other nations. Some are favored nations. Ours is one. All the world has been and still is coming to us.

But we must now begin to close the doors of self-defense. We do not want the world faster than we can Americanize the world. We have already quite enough of imported nihilism, anarchism and pauperism.

We do not ask foreigners coming to this land of freedom to change their faith. We do not propose to Protestantize or Romanize or in any manner sectarianize them. But we do insist that they shall not destroy our liberties by any attempt to foreignize or anarchize us or our government; that they should appreciate our liberties and privileges; that as a condition of citizenship they should learn to speak our national language and to read and write it fairly well.

Our safety and all our future demands that our government shall never in any manner become denominational or sectional.

Unfortunately at present labor in this country is divided against itself. Banish the saloon, restrict immigration, and relief will soon follow.

**PROHIBITION THE FRIEND OF LABOR.** Prohibition is the greatest friend of labor. No other can achieve in full measure entire relief. We propose to make labor moral, intelligent and united in the common prosperity.

To save and perpetuate this nation our hope is in the masses—in the labor—and not monopolies.



Wealth is boundless in its ambition to gain wealth, and would, if it could, monopolize the very earth. Therefore, we say the hope of this nation is in the many and not the few—the many are they who labor.

Our appeal is to the good and intelligent voters of all political parties.

Religious denominations are all invited to unite in conquering our country for temperance. They can vie with each other in beneficent rivalry. Their field is our whole country and the world. We appeal to the courageous young manhood of the nation before it casts its first ballot, and to the older and veteran voters before they cast their latest—and perhaps their last vote—to vote against the saloon; that is to say, vote with the Prohibition party, for that is the only political party that dares oppose the liquor powers.

JOHN BIDWELL.

PROHIBITION TICKET 1892

**NOT CORRECT. THE SKETCH OF GENERAL JOHN BIDWELL. Copied by The Buckeye From an Exchange, Untrue in Many Respects, so Says C. C. Royce, His Business Manager.**

CHICO, CAL., July 15th, 1892. HON. E. S. WILLIAMS, ED. BUCKEYE, TROY, OHIO: My Dear Captain—I have just read your issue of The Buckeye of July 7th, wherein you publish a biographical sketch of General Bidwell and say: “If not correct, our friend Royce will please furnish The Buckeye with a sketch of the Prohibition candidate for President.”

Appreciating as I do The Buckeye's well known reputation for accuracy of statement and its controlling purpose to avoid, so far as possible, misrepresentation or personal calumny, I accept the invitation to correct a few of the more important errors contained in the sketch copied by you from an exchange.

General Bidwell was born in 1819 in Chautauqua county, New York, and not “in Darke county, Ohio, near Arcanum.” His father moved to Darke county, however, in 1835, but young Bidwell left there for Iowa and Missouri in 1839.

The remaining statements as to his arrival in California and the public services rendered by him are in the main correct as far as they go.

It is, however, stated in the sketch given in *The Buckeye* that General Bidwell planted five hundred acres of wine and brandy grapes. That he set up a winery and distillery for making brandy, with powerful engines and costly machinery. That for twenty years his name stood next to the head in the list of California wine and brandy producers. That six or seven years ago he married a second wife who was opposed to the liquor traffic, and that thereupon General Bidwell became a Prohibitionist. That he still has one hundred and fifty acres in alleged table grapes, but inasmuch as the local market will not consume such a large quantity and as they do not make raisins in Butte county, the inference is thrown out that the bulk of the crop is sold to wine makers and that there is still in existence much good red wine from Rancho Chico.

The variations from the facts in the above statements are both numerous and material.

1st. The largest area General Bidwell ever had in wine grapes was between eight and ten acres, consisting principally of the Old Mission variety and a few Catawbas procured from Cincinnati, Ohio.

2nd. He began wine-making in 1864 or 1865. He dug up or destroyed the vines in 1967 and has never planted a wine grape since.

3d. He never made a drop of brandy in his life and never had a distillery . - of any kind, with or without “powerful engines and costly machinery.”

4th. Consequently his name did not stand “for twenty years as second among California's wine and brandy producers,” for the reason that he only made wine for two years and never made brandy.

5th. He was not married six or seven years ago to a second wife who then “converted him to the doctrine of Prohibition.” He has never had but one wife to whom he was married in 1868 (a year after he dug up his wine grapes); but she has always seconded and enthusiastically supported him in his prohibition views.

6th. It is true he still has one hundred and fifty acres in grapes. These are seventy-five to eighty per cent. raisin grapes and the remainder are table grapes. The annual crop has not been within my knowledge 1,000,000 pounds, as alleged, but is about one-half that quantity.

7th. None of these grapes have ever been sold to a winery, and, notwithstanding the statement that “they do not make raisins in Butte county,” General Bidwell now has on hand from last year's crop about four car loads of raisins. To be somewhat more definite, the products of these vines last year was 521,447 pounds of grapes. Of these 385,786 pounds were used in making raisins; 86,300 pounds were sold as table grapes, most of them being shipped to Chicago and other Eastern markets. The remainder of the crop consisted of culls and refuse grapes and were converted into vinegar.

8th. It may interest the truth-seeker to know that General Bidwell's determination to quit the wine-making business was brought about by the following circumstance: Shortly after beginning the manufacture of wine General Bidwell absented himself from home on Congressional duties for nearly two years. Returning in 1867 he found his wine-maker had a good many visitors at the winery, and that they sometimes went away with unsteady gait. His wine-maker also informed him that he must have brandy to fortify his wines in order to make them keep. Thereupon General Bidwell abolished his winery and dug up his wine grapes. The quantity of good wine he had on hand at that time was about 1000 gallons, and this was the largest quantity he ever had on hand at one time. This wine he presented, through the advice of Rev. White, to a San Francisco hospital for medicinal purposes instead of throwing it away as he originally contemplated. The poorer remnant of his wine be made into vinegar. Since that date he has never had anything to do with the wine business.

I am, as you well know, not a member of the same political party with General Bidwell, but he is my personal friend and I have some knowledge of his life, character, and public services, which have left their impression upon California and have stamped him as one of the broadest minded, most public spirited and philanthropic citizens of the Pacific Coast. His life has been as interesting as a romance. His deeds of private charity and public beneficence have been almost without limit and his moral and business integrity have been unclouded by a single inconsistency.

Again thanking you for the opportunity so kindly proffered of correcting the erroneous statements in question, I remain as ever, sincerely yours,

C. C. ROYCE.

CERTIFICATE OF MEMBERSHIP, CALIFORNIA PIONEERS

**THE STORY OF A GREAT CALIFORNIA ESTATE.**

Rancho Del Arroyo Chico, the Home of the Late General Bidwell.

By Charles Howard Shinn.

Nothing in the social and economic history of California is more interesting than the rise and fall of the Spanish land-grant system under which, a hundred years ago, nearly all the soil thought worth having was given in vast tracts to prominent families. Musical place-names often remain, but one after another the unfenced cattle ranges of the ancient ranches have been changed to highly cultivated fields, orchards and gardens. Close-knit modern horticultural communities, and even in some cases populous cities, occupy most of these fertile ranchlands of the days before the American conquest. Out of the hundreds of old Spanish ranches, not one at the present time retains its dignity and historic importance under modern conditions. Some indeed, like beautiful Camulos made classic by "Ramona," can never be forgotten, but Camulos lives only because of the genius of Helen Hunt Jackson, and not as a great and world-famous estate.

The feudal idea of little principalities ruled by aristocratic families failed with the Spaniards, and, as the Americans came in, the system failed with them also. General Sutter's one hundred square miles of superb soil surrounding his famous fort, General Fremont's lovely Mariposa grant with its mines and forests, Major Reading's broad leagues among the swift rivers of Shasta, failed and faded long ago, as did many other pioneer schemes to have and to hold great territories after the Spanish ranch fashion. Strangely enough, it was reserved for a tall, sedate, simple-minded young man fresh from the "Middle West," who came to California in 1841, to found in the Butte district, in the heart of the Sacramento valley, the most memorable and historic of all the great California ranches. Living there as a gentleman farmer for more than half a century, he rounded out and completed a most useful and indeed stately career.

Not here, in this brief account of the greatest of California farms, can the charming story of the life of General Bidwell be fitly told, and yet it is a human document of surpassing interest. He was born in 1819 in Chatauqua county, New York, and his parents soon joined the westward-moving currents. In 1839 young Bidwell, then in his twentieth year, went to Iowa Territory, starting on foot from his home in Ohio, "with \$75 in cash and a knapsack." He passed on through Iowa, turned down into Missouri nearly to Fort Leavenworth, taught school, and almost immediately secured a claim. I have heard him exclaim, "Such a beautiful place it was, rolling land, springs, trees!" But as it turned out, he could not legally hold the claim, an outsider "jumped" it, and a French trader who had been to California happening along with his picturesque tales, young Bidwell and others organized an association and began to plan for a journey across the continent. In the spring of 1841 they started, sixty-nine men, women and children, the first emigrant train to California, and though many of the party afterwards turned off on the Oregon trail, thirty-two, after six months of danger and hardship, reached Sutter's Fort in the Sacramento valley. Thus before Fremont, the "Pathfinder," had even planned his first exploring expedition to California, this little group of Americans had made their trail across the Rockies and the Sierras.

Young Bidwell, coming thus to California in 1841, when there were only about a hundred Europeans and Americans in the entire province, became General Sutter's secretary. He met the

leading Spanish families, learned their language and manners, recognized their virtues and won their confidence. When the Russians gave up their colony at Fort Ross on the Sonoma coast, selling to General Sutter, Bidwell took charge of the property. He sustained the provincial government in the petty wars of 1844 and 1845, and took a prominent part in the American conquest and reorganization of California.

During these years this man of little schooling, but of close observation and keen thought, kept his journals, and these together with his various contributions to magazines and books, form as a whole a most exact and truthful account of early California as he saw it. So rare and so fine a simplicity abides in his historical writings that some day they will be gathered up to become one of our Pacific coast classics.

Through the great gold excitement of 1848-53, General Bidwell was almost the only man on the Pacific coast who steadily held to the doctrine that the region really needed homes and farms far more than mines and camps. In fact he was studying horticulture as best he might, under great difficulties, chiefly at the old Spanish Missions. Colonel Royce tells me that the first fruit trees planted by General Bidwell at Chico in the year 1847, were obtained by him at San Luis Rey, in San Diego county, which involved a horseback ride of about twelve hundred miles. General Bidwell has told me many details of his early visits to the Missions of San Jose and Santa Clara, to find out all he could about figs, olives, oranges, grapes and other fruits and to obtain seeds, roots and cions.

While thousands of men in feverish '49 were prospecting here, there and everywhere, and tearing down the ancient mountains, Bidwell was for the most part visiting the gold camps and other parts of California, incidentally making valuable observations on soil, climate and productions, and, after a brief experience of his own in mining at the famous Bidwell Bar where stands the first orange tree of Northern California, he settled down on his own ranch, a tract of land which for beauty and quality has no superior in the entire state—an hour-glass-shaped delta in the midst of the Butte country, between two fair streams that flow into the Sacramento. This was that Rancho Chico where C. C. Parry, John Muir, Asa Gray, Sir Joseph Hooker and nearly all of the nature students of the

past fifty-five years have been welcome guests. At first it was used only as a stock range, but by 1858 he had four hundred and fifty acres under the plow, twenty-seven of which were in garden and nursery, and thirty in orchard. The richness of the soil was marvelous; one field of ten and one-tenth acres produced 738 1/2 bushels of Sonora wheat. He started a store, laid out a town, sent produce to the mines, established all sorts of new industries; but found time, nevertheless, to move many native trees and shrubs from the Sierras to his arboretum.

Before me, as I write, is the final deed from the United States Government to John Bidwell. It is written with great care on many pages of parchment—fit for centuries of duration. It sets forth in legal form the history of the grant—that on November 18, 1844, William Dickey obtained this land from Governor Micheltorena. Dickey had been Bidwell's partner, and Bidwell secured the grant and surveyed it; then Dickey wanted to go to his old Eastern home, and sold his interest. Therefore, pursuant to the congressional act relating to land claims, Bidwell filed his petition in 1852; the decree of conformation issued in 1853 was affirmed by the United States District Court in 1855, was signed by President James Buchanan April 4, 1860, and went on final record in Butte county in October. It consisted of five leagues of land, or more than 22,000 acres, and subsequent purchases brought it up to nearly 26,000 acres.

During his life, General Bidwell gave a tract of land worth \$10,000 for a forestry station, now under charge of the University of California. He also gave the site of the State Normal School at Chico, worth \$15,000; his other gifts, public and private, were numberless and continuous. It is simple truth to say that his superb estate was held by him merely as a trust for the community in which he lived. Forced from time to time into public life, he was a state senator, congressman from his district, non-partisan candidate for governor, delegate to national conventions, and Prohibition candidate for President. He also served long, and with singular ability, as a Normal School trustee.

One of the best things done by General Bidwell and his wife (who has co-operated with him in all his undertakings) was their care of the Indians whose ancestral home was on the ranch. They accepted, as did no other landowners in California, the full responsibilities of the situation. By unwearied kindness and patience, by encouraging sobriety and thrift, by protecting these poor

Indians against lawless aggression, and by constant personal efforts to teach and Christianize them, the ancient village of Mechoopda is now peopled by faithful, honest industrious men, women and children living in their own homes, helping to support school and church, and becoming with each generation better able to "hold their own with white folks." To them the Bidwell house is ever "The Mansion," and Mrs. Bidwell their "white sister;" though they have a chief, she is the real head of their community. The General died April 4, 1900, and at his funeral dark Indian children from Mechoopda scattered wild flowers on his grave, while white children of Chico strewed garden blossoms; Indian girls sang a hymn; Indian men bade a most striking farewell to their feudal head, the founder of Rancho Chico.

Mrs. Bidwell, the present owner of this most beautiful estate, was Miss Annie E. Kennedy, of the city of Washington, a daughter of an old and prominent family, and she was married to General Bidwell in 1868. It was a happy day for California when this earnest, high-souled, charming woman came here to give herself, as she has, to the community in which she lives, and to all manner of good causes throughout the state.

The ranch has been especially fortunate in its active manager, Colonel C. C. Royce, of Ohio, an officer in the war of the Rebellion, and from 1866 to 1885 connected with the Indian Bureau and the Bureau of Ethnology. His monographs upon Indian history, lands, etc., have given him deserved high rank as a tireless investigator. In 1888 he assumed charge of Rancho Chico, gradually systematizing its various departments, taking cares from the shoulders of General Bidwell, introducing modern methods and harmonizing conflicting local interests, until he has become an indispensable factor in the evolution of the estate. Cautiously progressive, full of executive talent, loyal to the ranch (which somehow creates and develops loyalty in all those who share its fortunes), Colonel Royce has naturally become one of the best known men in his district. It is to his notes that I am indebted for many of the statistics of the Rancho Chico.

The whole estate is famous for its superb single trees, native and exotic, so that a striking monograph could be written upon the "Trees of Rancho Chico." But the most notable specimen and the finest oak tree in California to the Sir Joseph Hooker oak, which stands in the center of a large



glade about a mile from the forestry station. It is a *Quercus lobata*, or California white oak, and its measurements are as follows: Height, 110 feet; spread of limbs, 150 feet; circumference of trunk 6 feet from the round, 24 feet; circumference of largest branch, 15 1/2 feet.

Rancho Chico has always been an experiment station on a large scale. Its orchards and gardens have tested everything sent them by private persons or by the government. Hundreds of varieties of fruits, vegetables, cereals, etc., have been shown by General Bidwell at successive state and county fairs. In every department of horticulture generous sums of money have been spent to obtain the best. In 1888 the statistics of the ranch as given by Dr. Parry were as follows:

Area devoted to field crops, principally grain and hay, 7,000 acres. Area devoted to field, orchards and vineyards, 688 acres. Area devoted to field, open pasturage and forest, 14,000 acres. Average yield of wheat in fair seasons, 100,000 bushels. Average yield of barley in fair seasons, 50,000 bushels. Average yield of hay (chiefly used on the ranch), 1,000 tons. Stock: 1,000 cattle, 150 milch cows, 300 horses and mules, 500 hogs.

Much of this old orchard of 1888 has been "grubbed out" and new plantations made. At present there are 1,630 acres of bearing orchard. In addition to orchard, there are annually about 8,000 acres sown to wheat, barley, corn, hay and alfalfa, and there are some 12,000 acres profitably used for stock range. The greater part of Rancho Chico will long remain a superb estate, illustrating the finer possibilities for good, inherent in individual ownership. (Jan. 1902.)

### **JOHN BIDWELL\*—A CHARACTER STUDY.**

By Will S. Green, of Colusa.

"The world is some better because he lived."

Were it the purpose of this paper to give a biography of General John Bidwell, I should have to lay stress on the fact that he was born in Chautauqua County, New York, August 5, 1819; that he came to California in 1841; how his life was blended with the affairs of the State; that he was a delegate

to the National Democratic Convention in 1860, and went with the Breckinridge wing of that party; that he came out strongly for the Union as soon as that issue was made; that he was elected to Congress in 1864; that he was a brigadier-general of the State militia; that he was defeated for the Republican nomination for Governor in 1867; that he ran on what was known as the "Dolly Varden" ticket, and was defeated by H. H. Haight for Governor; and that he was the nominee of the Temperance party for President. But other men have been through much such experiences as these whose lives have not entitled them to live on in the love and esteem of the generations. I shall confine myself to such incidents as go to show the character of the man, and, I think, show that "the world is some better because he lived."

General Bidwell was not a success as a politician; and if the reader does not understand why he was not when he is through with this paper, it will be owing to a want of power on my part to portray character.

He was a determined man. When a boy he determined that he was going to have a better education than the country schools of the backwoods of Ohio afforded. He walked 300 miles to the Ashtabula academy, where he took a scientific course, including civil engineering. He thought the Pacific coast was going to develop rapidly, and he determined to reach it. Starting westward, he fell in with an immigrant train and crossed the plains.

Everybody who has been on the plains has been struck with the near appearance of snow on the mountains, and many a man has been disappointed in not being able to reach it. Young Bidwell saw it, started for it, and did reach it; although he did not get back to camp until the next day. He brought some snowballs in his kerchief to show that he did reach it. When he settled at Chico, he wanted to plant trees and vines, but he did not know where he would find a nursery nearer than San Luis Rey, in San Diego county. He saddled up a horse and started after them, and the stock he brought back on that horse formed the nucleus for the great orchards of Rancho Chico. The ride, going and coming, was not less than 1,300 miles. He was not hampered with roads and fences, but he could not go as the bird flies. He explored the Sacramento Valley on horseback, and the map he made would be considered a very correct one now. Stony Creek runs parallel with the

main Coast mountains about forty miles before it turns to the east and debouches into the valley. Young Bidwell saw that there must be a valley to the east of the high mountains, and as he was on an exploring expedition—all alone—he determined to go over there. He knew, of course, that he would meet Indians who had never seen a white man, and who might resent the coming of one, but he had determined to go and he went, and laid Stony Creek down on his map. He met Indians there who wondered much at the manner of man, but he did not fear them. He had been among Indians before to whom the white man was something new. Children, animals and wild men instinctively know their friends. Bidwell's disposition to the Indians—and to all mankind—was one not only of friendship, but of love, and they instinctively trusted him. But the fact that he went shows determination and courage of a rare order.

He was a just man. And speaking of the Indians reminds me that no incident I could relate would show this trait better than his treatment of the Indians. He had seen what civilization had done for the Indians, and when he went to the Rancho Chico he determined to try to protect their rights. He gathered even those not on his land onto it, and gave them a chance to make a living. He taught them to know the living God, and later on built a church on the lands set apart for them, and often worshiped there himself. He furnished them school facilities, so that they are educated. When the town grew up around them, he protected them as far as possible from the corrupting influence of “civilization.” And when he died, he left it incumbent on his widow to provide a home in perpetuity for the Indians. Each family has its allotted ground and household. They occupy considerable valuable land with their homes, their stock, their gardens and orchards. And John Bidwell taught them how to acquire all these things, and how to use them. I have seen many heart-rending stories of the removal of the Indians from their homes to make room for civilization, but I have not heard of another instance like this. John Bidwell was a just man.

He was a Christian. In his pioneer life he kept the Sabbath Day holy. His people were Baptists, but he attended worship wherever he found Christian service. He was the largest subscriber to every church in Chico. He connected himself with the Presbyterian Church, and spent \$13,000 in the erection of a church in Chico. People have thought him straight-laced and sectarian, but in fact every man who worshiped God was his brother. Straightlaced Presbyterians are supposed to be

somewhat prejudiced against the Catholic Church, but he gave this church a block, one-half of which was sold for enough to build a church. In his Christian work, he included temperance. He believed that intoxicating liquors were the bane of the race, and he had no compromise to make with the traffic in them. To have been Governor, or President of the United States, he would not have agreed to sign a saloon license. His religious principles, his determination and his love for all mankind combined on that.

He was a public-spirited man. He was depended upon to head every subscription for anything that was considered of benefit to Chico—and he always did it. He spent \$50,000 on one mountain road to bring trade into Chico. Some twenty-odd years ago I made a survey for a railroad from Colusa to Chico, and undertook to raise \$100,000 subsidy. With one voice, everybody said, “Start with General Bidwell.” I went to see him. He said it had been a hard year on him; that he had not paid the interest on his indebtedness; that he would like to do something worth while for the enterprise in hand, but, all the circumstances considered, he thought that \$10,000—one-tenth of the amount to be raised by the two towns and between—was all he could stand; and he set it down. That night there was a fire. I went to it. It was a hay barn belonging to General Bidwell. It was certainly incendiary, and he had several incendiary fires just before. The hay lost was worth \$10,000, to say nothing of the barn. I went to see him next morning, and asked him how he felt about the subscription. He did not say he wanted the paper back, but he said if he had not signed it he believed he would ask the postponement of the enterprise until he felt more settled about the incendiary fires. I handed him the paper, and left for home. He would not have asked it back. When the people of Chico undertook to get the Normal School located there, General Bidwell was in Europe. They wanted a location, and wired him asking him what he could do in that way. Quickly came the answer so characteristic of the man: “Any place on Rancho Chico is at your disposal except my dooryard.” He made drives all over his fine grounds for the use of the public. I have not in mind the length of these drives, but I think about 100 miles. His enjoyment always was to see other people prosperous and happy. This led him to want to see them all Christian and temperate; and he set an example.

He was precise and particular in all things. Every magazine or paper that he cared to keep over the hour was marked when he had read it, and carefully laid aside. He classified and carefully set down

in a book kept for the purpose every plant or flower, giving its English and its botanical name. He was a great lover of botany; he loved it because it was a part of Nature, and all his works showed that he loved Nature—loved the handiwork of God. He was particular in all his accounts. He had an account with all persons with whom he had any dealings, kept in a precise manner of his own. He knew every day how he stood with all mankind, and it was his aim to know how he stood with his Maker. Knowing how he stood, he kept his end up fully to every mark that Justice could command—and if he wanted to allow something to the other side, that was with him. An instance of how he did things in this way is told by a foreman. The foreman went into his office and said: “General Bidwell, that man who got the load of fruit last week has peddled it all out, and comes back and wants another load on credit. I think he will never pay.” “Well,” said the General, “let him have it. I understand he has no means of supporting his family. It may help do it.” If one could now see that book account so carefully kept, one would see a characteristic credit thereon. Being particular about his own language, never allowing a vulgar or an obscene word to pass his lips, he was naturally somewhat particular about those with whom he associated on intimate terms. He was fastidious about his dress, and being a man of commanding physique, he got the reputation of being proud and haughty.

It is just here that I wish to remark upon that misconception of character. There was no bond of sympathy between General Bidwell and an impure person. There is usually a bond or want of it felt on first introduction. There are men who have forced themselves, through political or business interests, to ignore the instinct until it is not heeded. Give a man the character of being over-religious and over-particular about temperance, who is dressed with precision and who has such a physique as Bidwell had, and a person of opposite character would say, on introduction, that he was “stuck up,” or that he was proud and haughty. I knew General Bidwell for half a century, and I never saw another man whose heart beat so kindly for people in the humbler walks of life; never one who would go farther to lead a man from the path of vice, and put him on the right road; never one more easily approached by anyone who had confidence in himself of being worthy of approaching a good man. I know I have thought more of myself, because during all these years John Bidwell maintained a liking for and a confidence in me.

Children approached him always with the utmost confidence. During all his life on the Rancho Chico the Indians came to him with all their difficulties and disputes, and he was their judge and jury, deciding everything in so just a manner as to lead to perfect acquiescence. Of course, he liked to have at his mansion a man of high standing in science, literature, the arts, men at the head of this church or that; and, attracted by a man of means, of learning, of high character, many of these visited his home. This lent color to the notion of his haughty and exclusive disposition. Can the reader imagine such a man as I have described being a successful politician.

Of the many complimentary things said of him when he died, I think the following by the Board of Education of Chico described his character more exactly than any that came under my observation, and I think it worth preserving in the pages of "Out West":

General John Bidwell died April 4, 1900. Death came to him unwarned, swift and painless, but the day and hour of that coming concerned him not, who was always ready; and yet General Bidwell loved the world, and all she gave of good; the trees, the flowers and vines, spoke for him a language that filled his soul with happiness, and springtime zephyrs, the angry winter winds, the rushing water in its ceaseless journey to the sea, and every voice of Nature was to him a song, finding responsive echo in his heart.

His lifework was to learn all that was good; to teach and educate; to uplift and ennoble humanity. He was the foe of ignorance and vice, friend and patron of enlightenment. When from his bounty he gave his choice gifts for the advancement of education and morality, this he did not as a charity, but in the line of his high ideal of citizenship and patriotic duty, as sacred trusts for high and lofty ends. Of none could it be better said,

"His life was gentle, and the elements  
So mixed in him that Nature might stand up  
And say to all the world, 'this was a man.'"

Colusa, Cal.

\*This study of General Bidwell, written by a lifelong friend, will be followed in subsequent numbers of "Out West" by the publication of General Bidwell's reminiscences, of his life in California before 1850. These are of great interest, and valuable as historical "sources."—Ed.

[Map Showing the Subdivisions of the John Bidwell Rancho]

### **REMINISCENCES OF THE CONQUEST.**

(The following paper was written by General Bidwell many years ago, in an entirely informal and impromptu manner, for the use of Dr. S. H. Willey, who was gathering material for a study of the conquest of California. It contains his estimate of the situation of affairs at the outbreak of hostilities, written before any of the standard histories were issued, and has therefore the value, impossible in any late statement, of being his entirely fresh and independent understanding of the matters spoken of, unaffected by the comparison of notes now possible. General Bidwell intended what he wrote merely as rough notes, which he expected Dr. Willey to revise and sift; but it would lose so much of its value as an original document, as well as of its impromptu force of statement, if revised, that no effort has been made to reduce it to more studied literary form, and the "repetitions" the writer speaks of, have been left to carry their own emphasis. He says in closing:

Through many interruptions I have attempted to explain the beginning of the war. But I regret that it is out of my power to transcribe and condense. In answering to the clauses as numbered, I find I have been guilty of frequent repetition. Could I have seen you for a day or even less time, I could have told you much more and much better than I have written. . . Writing is not my forte. Otherwise I should have corrected many things I have seen in print relating to the early history of California.

The existence of this manuscript of General Bidwell's has been known; it has passed from hand to hand somewhat, and has through private perusal affected at least one of the recent histories of the conquest (see Royce's California, pp99-102, 121); but except for a few quoted paragraphs, it has never before been given to the public.

It was written in the form of a commentary upon an account written by Henry L. Ford for Dr. Willey; the “clauses as numbered,” referred to above, are the clauses of Ford's statement or rather of a condensed summary of them. The original of this statement from Ford, Mr. Bancroft obtained from Doctor Willey, and is one of his authorities for the history of the episode; but though he had later papers from General Bidwell, this original version was not in his hands.—ED.)

Henry L. Ford I knew very well—saw him for the first time at Sutter's Fort in 1844. I cannot recall how or when he first came to California. My impression is that he came by water,—also that it was later than 1842; but in this I am doubtless wrong. He was killed by the accidental discharge of a pistol some nineteen or twenty years ago in Tehama County.

While I am certain to differ with Captain Ford in some things, I attribute to him no intention to pervert the truth. He was earnest and sincere in his views, at the same time he was headstrong, and at times even to blindness. If he understood a thing one way, he was intolerant to any other view of the same thing. He was never guilty of dissimulation, and therefore if he ever erred by tenaciously clinging to peculiar or partial conclusions it was an error of the head and not of the heart.

In justice to Captain Ford I wish to say: In the stirring events which began the war in California he was one of the actors: one of the first, being near, to see General Fremont passing down the Sacramento Valley, so soon after he (General Fremont) had been overtaken by Lieutenant A. H. Gillespie (bearer of dispatches from the United States) on the borders of Oregon. The fact of seeing a courier in pursuit of Fremont excited both interest and curiosity in the few settlers and hunters in and about this great valley. The coming of a party, however small, across the plains or from Oregon, or the arrival of a vessel, greatly interested everyone in those early times; and it was no uncommon thing for men to ride even hundreds of miles on hearing of some arrival, to get news from home. Newspapers were almost unknown,—never reached California less than six months old, and were read with avidity when even a year old, and seemed as fresh to us as do our daily papers now. In 1844 we had no idea of what was going on in the political world—the conveyance



which gave us the first news of the nomination brought also that of the election of James K. Polk, as President of the United States.

Besides, if Lieutenant Gillespie did not intimate (and I do not think he did, because I was the first white man he met in ascending the Sacramento River, and he would intimate to Captain Sutter if to any one, with whom I was very intimate) that something was “in the wind,” it required no such intimation to convince all that something unusual was up. But Fremont's return set interest and curiosity ablaze. Stock-raising and hunting were the principal occupations. Every one had horses and guns, and always carried his blankets, and could mount and go where and when he pleased. There were all kinds of men here—some, but few in comparison to the whole, who had grants of land and had settled—some who lived with those having grants —some intending to become Mexican citizens in order to obtain grants for themselves—some who never intended to settle permanently—some who roved about hunting—some working at one thing or another in the towns or on the ranches. (I wish to be understood that a large majority of the Americans and other foreigners—for all not Mexican or natives were called foreigners—had no grants, no families, no homes, no fixed location. Some might become fixed—some never intended to remain permanently —some had no intentions, merely stayed, hunting when they pleased, hanging about the ranches. In those days there were no hotels, and such a thing as paying for board was unknown. In a word, there were two classes, the settled and the unsettled. The latter predominated, were always foot-loose, and were the first to reach Fremont and participate in the first act of war. Then all were compelled to carry on the war in self-defence, of course.) Of these some were old hunters from the Rocky Mountains, and had trapped their way into California via Oregon and the Sacramento Valley; others were sailors who had deserted from ships touching this coast.

Some had been in the country long enough, and had been so unfortunate as to feel the lash of the law as executed by the Mexican alcaldes and military commandants. These had an intense hatred of everything Mexican. Nothing would suit them as well as war—at least some. They were at times very imprudent in talking about it. In 1840, (the year before I came to California,) this imprudence was carried so far that many Americans were arrested and sent in chains to San Blas. From the time of my arrival in California in 1841, until the war with Mexico in 1846, every year was filled with

rumors—Americans, especially a certain class, were always talking of establishing an independent government here, or revolutionizing the country and annexing it to Texas: Californians were always talking of expelling Americans. In a word, Americans and Mexicans had become in a sense enemies. Many Americans held Mexicans as of little more importance than Indians. All that such wanted was an opportunity—any cause would do—in order to engage in acts of war.

The taking of Monterey in 1842, by Commodore Ap Catesby Jones, hushed for a moment but did not help the matter. The coming of Governor Micheltorena from Mexico, with an army of five hundred, in 1843, gave for a time quiet to the country, and especially to Americans and other foreigners, who generally were wise enough to sustain the new governor, and he wise or politic enough to accept of needed friendship. The country flourished under his administration. He tried to act justly,—gave foreigners, as soon as naturalized, grants, and encouraged the settlement of the vacant lands. Americans, being more numerous, received more favors. This did not help them in the eyes of the native Californians; nor did it in the end help the governor, who in the war begun against him in the fall of 1844, was expelled in the spring of 1845. Americans who took his part could not expect to be in much favor with the revolutionary government under Pio Pico, which succeeded that of Micheltoreno. They simply retired to their grants, and hunting in the valleys and mountains. No one, however, was ever disturbed.

Pio Pico issued flourishing proclamations from time to time, the purport of which was to restrain the illegal introduction of foreigners into the country, intimating expulsion, etc., but the real aim was against Americans. Whenever there was a rumor that Castro or anybody else was concocting some movement against Americans the news would fly like the wind—go in the night from place to place, wherever there was an American, and traveling in the night, Americans would find their way from hundreds of miles around to Sutter's Fort. After talking the matter over, (the feasibility of beginning a new government), drilling for a week or more,—standing guard beginning to grow irksome,—some talking of making raids on the California ranches and taking off thousands of cattle and horses to Oregon, and hearing that all was quiet on the coast, (showing that the rumor had no

foundation in fact), then they would all quietly disperse. Six months or a year might elapse before another such excitement.

So suspicious were Americans, many unnecessarily so, that the least movement, even a friendly visit on the part of prominent persons, would be interpreted into hostile movement or intentions. I, myself, was once led to believe that a hostile movement was contemplated against the Americans, and traveled in the night from the Bay to Sacramento. The truth was, Castro with a few soldiers was escorting a distinguished Mexican peace commissioner, who was on a friendly visit to Sutter!\*

Don Jose Castellero came (as he had been in the habit of doing on similar occasions—for nearly all of Micheltorena's predecessors had like him been expelled) to reconcile the new order of things here to that of Mexico. He it was who recognized as cinnabar the heavy red ore (at the place now known as New Almaden, which he named), which had long been known to the people and to the Indians, who used it for vermilion to paint their faces. This was in the fall of 1845.

But these rumors had this effect—Americans had learned to be always on guard; they (I mean the more considerate class) had learned to weigh signs of danger and put to a considerable extent a true value on them; they had learned how to come together if there should be danger; they had a place to come to, Sutter's Fort, and they had a place of secure retreat, up the Sacramento Valley to Oregon.

Those who had property and had settled in the country to make it their future home, were generally in favor of peace; while those who had little or no permanent interest here were as a rule always ready and anxious for war. All foreigners would have been glad to exchange the feeble and changeable regime under Mexico for a strong and permanent government like that of the United States. The civilized population of Upper California (which embraced all of the present State of California) was estimated in 1844 at twelve to thirteen thousand. This number would include all of the Spanish race, and some of the more intelligent and civilized of the Indians. Yet when not over one hundred Americans in all California could have been mustered into an army, even if all able to bear arms had been willing, there was not wanting an element always eager to begin a revolution. Some had spite against Vallejo, or some other prominent official or individual, because they had at some time been in the calaboose, or in some other way suffered injustice.

The prejudice was as nearly as great on one side as on the other, as regarded Americans and native Californians. But accessions to the American element were becoming more frequent every year. American war vessels as well as merchant, were multiplying. Our party (in 1841) were the first to cross the plains to California—thirty-two in number. The same year a smaller party came in later via New Mexico, also about twenty-five came from Oregon, mostly trappers. In 1842 a party of about thirty went across the plains to Oregon, wintered, and in 1843 came to California. The same year a party crossed the plains, in all some forty or fifty in number. (This might be called two parties, as it divided and came in by different routes). In the spring of 1844 Fremont reached California, and some ten or twelve of his men remained in the country. In the fall of 1844 a company of some forty crossed the plains. This party was the first to come up the Truckee, and the first to succeed in bringing wagons into California, Elisha Stevens was the captain,—and strange to say, he was a gold miner from Georgia, and came on purpose to discover gold, and did find the color of gold near Salt Lake. In 1844 also a party of some twenty-five came from Oregon—mostly Canadian French trappers. In 1845 a company from Oregon, also two across the plains, reached California, say about fifty in all. In February, 1845, about thirty trappers and others came via New Mexico. Also later in the fall of 1845, Fremont with a portion of his second exploring expedition to California, made his appearance.

While all these arrivals were taking place (amounting, I am willing to say, to four hundred, because I have not included those who may have left vessels or who may have come in vessels from Oregon and elsewhere on the Pacific Coast) there were continual departures to Oregon and elsewhere, say one hundred. Estimating the number of foreigners already in California when I came in 1841 at fifty, and the number that remained of the arrivals from and including 1841 to 1845 at three hundred, we have three hundred and fifty foreigners, including Fremont's exploring party, mostly Americans, scattered along this coast for a distance of six hundred miles. Of the foreigners thus far I have counted only the men. Of women and children there might be one hundred.

Thus I have endeavored to give an idea of the number and character of the American element in California at the beginning of the Mexican war in 1846.

Jose Castro was the leading military man of the Californians. He had the magnetism to raise revolutions on short notice, but he had no other resources. General M. G. Vallejo was more intelligent, and was also military in taste and practice; had been commander-in-chief. Governor Juan B. Alvarado was a civil leader—just the considerate, statesmanlike man to advise and hold in proper check the impetuous Castro. Pio Pico was a considerate man, slow but sure—nothing bad or vindictive, unless driven to it by Castro. Andres Pico had the dash of a Murat. These were the leaders of the native Californians. They were shrewd men. I should have included among the leading spirits, Pablo de la Guerra,, Don Juan Bandini, Jose Maria Covarubias, Santiago Arguella, and others. In view of their growing familiarity with Americans from the coming of merchant and occasional war vesels, as well as from land arrivals, and of their knowledge of the growth and power of the United States, and of the weakness of Mexico, I am forced to believe that the California leaders possessed too much discretion seriously to entertain the expulsion of Americans in the spring of 1846.

So much by way of preface—and I fear the preface may be longer than the work in this case. I might as well state here:—When Arce was attacked, and the horses taken from him, which was the first blow that began the war, I had been absent from Sutter's Fort about three days on the Feather River up in the mountains, looking for a suitable sawmill site. Sutter had for years been resolved on building a sawmill somewhere. Others had searched for a place but without success. Doctor Robert Semple (a very tall man, who afterwards laid out the town of Benicia) was sent with me. We reached the North Fork of Feather River near the Toto Indian village. We had no time to go farther and the country, to me, did not look favorable for making lumber. Semple said, “Raft it down the river,”—down the canon of the North Fork! Because I refused to join in a favorable report to Sutter, Semple resolved not to return to Sacramento, but to find his way across the Sacramento River and go to Sonoma. But before we parted we heard of Fremont's return to California, and Semple made for his camp, in the Butte Mountains. Too late for the attack on Arce, he was just in time for the expedition to Sonoma.

On reaching Sutter's Fort I first learned of Arce passing with horses and of their having been taken from him. Captain Ford's date of this event is, I think, exact. But in regard to the number of men with Arce I think he was in error.\* The taking of Sonoma immediately followed, and the four prisoners were soon brought to Sacramento. Fremont directed me to see that they were safely kept, and I understood they were placed in my charge. But learning another had charge over me, I went to Sonoma to join Fremont. From the time of the organization there I continued in the service in California till the close of hostilities in 1847.

The date given by Ford is June 9th; the number of men twenty-three. Vallejo, in notes on the same account, says there were five men.—Ed.

And now I will recur to my reference marks (1), (2), (3), etc.

The sentences (Ford's) commented on are these: (1) "American settlers have begun to come in from over the plains, and over the mountains in considerable numbers. Mexico has just lost Texas in consequence of immigration from the United States, and is exceedingly sensitive lest she shall lose California in the same way. The native California officials warmly sympathize in this feeling. . . . The native authorities . . . began to contemplate driving away foreigners generally, especially those from the United States. (2) They held a Convention at Sonoma to agree upon a course of proceedings, but what their determination was never became known, though it was rumored that some were in favor of invoking the protection of a foreign power.\* (3) The policy\* really adopted, however, was that of driving the settlers away. General Castro proposes to get ready to put this policy in force. He sends Lieutenant De Arce to the Mission San Rafael\* to get government horses that were there, and bring them to Monterey, to have them in readiness to mount his men. (4) De Arce taken the roundabout way of going by Sutter's Fort, and there he lets out the secret of his errand."

On this last sentence Vallejo comments: "There was no such Convention held in Sonoma." It is, however, clearly a version of the story of the Monterey junta, for which Vallejo himself is responsible.

Vallejo writes on the margin here: "There was no such policy adopted." In a private letter of some two or three years later, General Vallejo writes: SONOMA, December 10th, 1878. REV. S. H. WILLEY, Dear Sir: Your letter of November 20th, with accompanying documents, was duly received. I have nothing to add to my former communication to you respecting Capt. Ford's errors in dates and other figures. The dispatch of Castillo Lanzas

is no doubt genuine, but of course his information upon which it was predicated, was greatly erroneous. As to Castro's ordering settlers out of the country and threatening their lives and property should they not go, such rumors prevailed, but were untrue, as I have before stated. Where is there a paper extant from Castro or any other California official to corroborate this story? At the very period it is alleged that Commandante Castro was acting thus, he directed me to issue passports and authorizations of settlement to any reputable foreigner applying for the same; and Castro, himself, was at the time giving such papers. In response to your P. S., I say that the Department Assembly could not, of course, have called for the protectorate of Great Britain or any other Power, except as a revolutionary act, and in defiance of Mexican authority. The conclave of leading Californians assembled in Monterey in March, 1846, of which mention was made in my other letter, was gotten up by myself to head off a junta of Notables called by Governor Pico to meet in Santa Barbara, June following, for the purpose stated in said letter and annotations, made by me to your Bulletin communication. I pride myself much on the success of such forestalling action, albeit my American fellow-citizens have not given me the credit I think my due for such important service to them. But it appears to be the fate of all us old Californians—native and foreigners—(except a few wealthy) to be shoved aside, notwithstanding several are well known men of ability and integrity. Not one of the delegates to the first Constitutional Convention was elected to the present; nor, I believe, a solitary pre-forty-nine immigrant. Very respectfully, Your obedient servant, M. G. VALLEJO. The dispatch mentioned is one from the Mexican department of foreign affairs, dated April 7th, 1846, simply acknowledging receipt of information from Andres Castillero, at Santa Clara, concerning one hundred armed immigrants whom Castillero claimed to have met, and adding without comment that the department had information of three thousand about to start.

Vallejo notes here: "De Arce got no 'Government horses' nor any other horses at San Rafael, but I let him have forty head of well broken ones,"—at Sonoma, that is.

(1) The naturally impulsive native Californian had not viewed with indifference the annually recurring immigrations from the United States, but they were helpless. Mexico was too distant to aid, and there was no certainty of foreign aid. In 1845 there was some talk that England might negotiate for and take California to prevent its falling to Texas or the United States. Reports said that a number of the leading Californians held a consultation in Santa Barbara, and that correspondence was going on between the English Consul here and the British minister in Mexico, looking to England's acquisition of California. Most, if not all, native Californians would have acquiesced in such an arrangement as against the United States. But they could not have had much encouragement there, other wise Castro, Pio Pico, and other leaders, would not have fled to Mexico as they did when the war began in 1846 without making a single stand. It was natural that there should be some resistance after the war was begun. It is true, when Fremont went towards the coast with his exploring party of sixty armed men, approaching Salinas Valley, the Californians protested and made some demonstration. When he peaceably withdrew and left for Oregon, all was quiet again. There were no hostile demonstrations or even threats, to my knowledge. We in the Sacramento Valley felt entirely secure. Others, dispersed throughout the country nearer the coast on

both sides of the Bay, were wholly exposed in case of danger, and would have fled to Sacramento on the least notice. But there was not a whisper or trouble. Americans would surely have given the alarm at Sacramento long before Arce reached there with the horses, had Castro intimated by word or act a purpose to expel them—unless we can suppose him capable of making preparations for war, and at the same time able to keep all his plans and movements a profound secret; which would have been impossible.

(2) It may be that prominent individuals paid General Vallejo a visit. If so, that was nothing uncommon. If Castro were to be one of such a party, and at the same time bring with him a few soldiers to collect the scattered horses belonging to his department, then indeed rumor could shout, War and Expulsion!

Vallejo had been the military chief under Governor Alvarado. But he was superseded in 1843-4 by the arrival of Governor Micheltorena. The expulsion of Micheltorena in 1845 made Pio Pico Governor, and Castro Commander-in-Chief. But up to the spring of 1846 Castro had not even sent for the horses belonging to the military service on the north side of the Bay. But he happened to do so just as Fremont happened to be coming from Oregon! That is all there is in it, I think.

No doubt Californians would have been glad to invoke foreign protection. They knew Mexico never could protect them, for it was both weak and distant. A few of the more shrewd probably thought that California was inevitably drifting toward the United States, and were making up their minds to be reconciled. As early as 1842 Vallejo was heard to say that “some day California would belong to the American Union.” And I believe others thought so.

In 1846 the American power had become quite strong. They could have surely stood their ground for a long time with Sutter's Fort to aid them. If worst came to worst they could have safely retreated to Oregon—and Californians knew it, for they were tools. Macnamara, the Irish Catholic priest, may have given encouragement to some by proposing to bring some 10,000 Irish immigrants, but there was no hope of aid in that way very soon, nor at all after the trouble here began.



Is it not a little strange that if Castro was about to make war against American immigrants or settlers, and these so excited about it as to ask Fremont's aid, that I should have known nothing of it, and been looking for a sawmill site, with only one man—and he proposing to find his way alone to Sonoma?

(3) If Castro really intended to inaugurate the expulsion of Americans, he could have gotten horses everywhere—California literally swarmed with horses. Besides he would have had more need of horses on the north side of the Bay than on the other side. Neither would he have made a display by sending horses via Sacramento at such a time, for he could have quietly swam them across the Straits of Carquinez, which was a common occurrence. I once swam eleven horses over myself, and safely, at that place.

(4) It is impossible to believe Arce so indiscreet as to let out such a secret at such a time, and at such a place as Sacramento. And if it were possible that he did, there was no time for settlers to become aroused and to congregate at Fremont's camp, and then overtake Arce on the Cosumne, only fifteen miles from Sacramento. Fremont was then sixty miles off; most of the settlers were still farther away; Arce merely stayed one night at Sacramento, or passed making no stay at all except to call on Sutter.

(In a supplementary memorandum General Bidwell adds: “Arce certainly would never tell such a secret at Sacramento; but supposing he had done so, Sutter would have known it, and I knew him well, and my relations with him were such that he would surely have told me.”)

You ask if it was known what was the purport of the dispatches brought by Gillespie to Fremont. I answer, no. But the general understanding which I gained from being with Fremont, Gillespie, Kit Carson, and others, in the war that immediately followed, was this: The dispatches to Fremont were confidential and mostly verbal. All that was written, Gillespie committed to memory, destroyed, and rewrote after passing through Mexico: Senator Benton, in a letter sent by Gillespie, (also committed to memory and destroyed I suppose), advised Fremont of the wishes of the President, Polk. Gillespie was armed with a simple letter of introduction from the Secretary of State. And

the sum total of letters and dispatches was, that war against Mexico had been predetermined; that while it was not certain, it amounted almost to certainty; Mexico might accede to certain demands, but there was very little probability that she would; and Congress might possibly not second the purpose of the President, for Gillespie left Washington in October, 1845, to go through Mexico in search of Fremont; and that he, Fremont, with his exploring party, was to hold himself in readiness to co-operate with such forces as might be sent to take and hold possession of California.

After the war was all over it was said that Fremont had been instructed in the dispatches brought by Gillespie to conciliate the California people, with a view to counteract the designs of England towards California. When Fremont withdrew from California, in the spring of 1846, I feel quite certain he carried away with him bitter feelings toward the native Californians. He withdrew peaceably, but his withdrawal was hasty and must have been regarded by himself, if not by others, as almost compulsory. He was greatly disappointed on account of the resistance which prevented his going to explore as far south as the Colorado River. He did not, probably, expect an opportunity to retaliate to come so soon, but it having come he was unable to resist or deter—could not wait for the news of war; but must provide ample excuses for his action in case there should be no war. Hence, the effort to make it appear that the settlers were threatened with expulsion.

I know, too, that Fremont was not very kindly disposed toward Sutter (nor toward me because I was with Sutter) when he left Sacramento for Oregon. His brief absence had made no change.

Sutter was always most kind and friendly toward Americans. His desire for the United States to acquire California, and his unbounded admiration for “the great republic” of the United States, were known to all Americans. Sutter's Fort was a protection to all Americans, and his house a home to them and to all other foreigners. While Sutter was opposed to any premature and ill-advised steps to revolutionize California, he was ever open and earnest for the United States to acquire it. If there was real danger of Americans being attacked and expelled, Sutter was in more danger, for on account of his friendship for Americans he was distrusted, and, if possible, more hated than they. His fort, which was their protection, was to Californians an object of dread, a menace. The native Californians always regretted that Sutter had been permitted to gain a foothold, and there

were threats to nip his embryo settlement in the bud, as early as 1841, before the fort had even been begun. And Sutter, on hearing of the arrival of our company, sent word to the Californians that they must stop threatening him, for he was not only strong enough to defend himself, but was able to go and chastise them! Sutter relied wholly on Americans, and they on him. Mutual interest, a common defense against a common danger, brought and held them together. Sutter's safety was their shield.

When trapping parties went forth, they started from Sutter's fort. When they got through trapping, they returned to the fort. So with hunters. It was the place where immigrations all came first. Sutter, however, had enemies even among Americans,—even among some whom he had trusted as long as he had anything to let them have; but they were generally of that class who never paid, and who turn against a benefactor when they can get no more out of him.

Arce coming along as he did was the first object Fremont saw to strike at. The route of Arce struck the Sacramento River at what is now Knight's Landing in Yolo County, a point nearer to Fremont's camp at that time (in the Butte Mountains) than to Sutter's fort. After Arce had passed on toward the fort, William Knight, hearing of Fremont at the Buttes, went there as likely as any way out of curiosity, and this is the way that Fremont had the first news about the horses and Arce.

Sutter had no warning from Fremont or anybody that war was about to be begun. The valley was peace and quiet. No settler, the truth of history compels me to say it, had any apprehension of danger. After Fremont's retreat toward Oregon the excitement which his attempt to reach Monterey had caused among the Californians subsided. I was making ready to start to Los Angeles on business. Sutter was shocked when he heard the news, for he did not know what it meant. The party sent from Fremont's camp to capture the horses purposely avoided Sutter's fort, and some one carried the story to Fremont that Sutter was unfriendly; Fremont soon came to the fort—the next day, I believe—and told Sutter “if he did not like what was going on he would put him across the San Joaquin River and he might go and join the Mexicans!”

(5) “Since they commence to act in self-defense, they determine to proceed further.”

(5) Self-defense! There was no self-defense about it. I am aware that Fremont and Gillespie in their official reports attempted to justify the beginning of the war with the plea that it was in aid of American settlers who were in danger and acting in self defense! Others perhaps may have repeated the same plea (taking their cue from the beginners). It might have been said, and truly, perhaps, that there was neither strength nor permanence in the government here; that as a consequence there was no adequate security for life and property; that England had designs on California, and there was no time to be lost; that the attitude of California as a department of weak, distant, and convulsive Mexico in the past (by turns unfriendly to Americans and revolutionary toward Mexico, expelling her governors almost as often as sent) was anomalous, gave no promise of a better order of things for the future, and made it a fit prey, and therefore liable to be seized at any time by any foreign power, to the prejudice of the United States; and that the danger of falling into the hands of some other power was sufficient to justify Fremont in beginning war just as and when he did. I am the last one to say anything against the war or its results, for no one could have longed more than myself to see California become a part of the Federal Union. But I do not wish to be a party to the making of a wrong excuse. There was no excitement, no danger, till Fremont began the war by sending his party which attacked Arce, captured his horses, and let him and his escort go with a defiant message to Castro.

At this time Americans, few in numbers, not exceeding three hundred or four hundred, were scattered from Sacramento and Russian River valleys to San Diego. Those in the Sacramento valley, being isolated, could have been readily notified and congregated, but very few of them knew that anything was intended till the blow was struck. If the Americans really were in danger, is it possible to conceive a more unwise thing than the beginning of war at such a time and under such circumstances? Sutter, who had more at stake than any one else, who was as much disliked as Americans because he relied on them, and they on him for protection, was kept in the dark and knew nothing about it till war was begun, at his very door as it were!

The men who first gathered at Fremont's camp and composed the party that went to attack Arce, were mostly trappers and hunters. They had their antipathies. War with Mexico or Mexicans was to

them right. A color of an excuse was enough to start them. A hint or a wink from an American in uniform was more than sufficient at such an opportunity as Arce furnished.

The question is, did he do it? I point to the facts that the first hostile party left his camp; that possibly some of his exploring party went with it; that the party returned to his camp and brought the spoils to him; that the next expedition (to Sonoma) also started from his camp, and the prisoners, General M. G. Vallejo, his brother, Salvador Vallejo, his secretary, Victor Prudon, and his brother-in-law, Jacob P. Leese, taken in their private houses, were first brought to Fremont's camp and by him ordered to be taken and kept at Sutter's Fort. When a call was made for help by those who remained in charge of Sonoma, Fremont with all his exploring party went to their relief, and scoured all the north side of the Bay to find an enemy, but without success.

Therefore I do say Fremont and he alone is to be credited with the first act of war. Truth compels me to say, the war was not begun in California in defense of American settlers. It may be there was a drawn sword hanging over their heads, but if so they did not know it, and Fremont must have the credit of seeing it for them.

I know that at the beginning men who were taking part in the first scenes of the war seemed to understand that they were engaging in a war for independence, and that the movement was in their name,—and somebody must have suggested this idea to them, and there was but one man who could have done it at that time.

It was curious to see how willingly men acted under that plea to justify their course. The first act of war was pure aggression, but it was called selfdefense. But all were glad when we found war had been declared. The raising of the American flag at Monterey by Commodore Sloat was joyful news.

Fremont evidently anticipated the war, for he subsequently declared that Commodore Sloat raised the flag in Monterey because he heard of his (Fremont's) operations at Sacramento and Sonoma, and that thus the country was saved to the United States by his early action, and kept from the British government. But my point is this: Fremont began the war; to him belongs all the credit, upon him rests the responsibility. The benefit accrued to Americans; therefore the ultimate responsibility

lies at their door. But as a great and free people they ought to stand by the truth: they wanted the country—they took it—and afterwards paid for it.

(In a letter of a week later the writer reiterates this.)

Your quotation from Com. Sloat is, I am fully persuaded, the truth. But Fremont did not claim the credit of being the cause of Com. Sloat's early action. But no matter what Fremont or any one else did, our great American nation, right or wrong, inspired everything, paid for everything, reaped all the benefit, and she must bear the ultimate responsibility. She cannot afford to falsify history and say one of her agents was helping certain people in selfdefense to gain independence, when such was not the fact.

I am not in the habit of writing or speaking—but to the extent that I do, whether in letters or by word of mouth, I always enter my protest against false colorings and wrong pretenses—as I understand things.

At the time Fremont began the war, if there was any danger, I did not know it; if anyone was afraid of expulsion, I did not know it; every one was pursuing whatever business or occupation he thought best. I was about ready to start for Los Angeles, intending to go through the San Joaquin Valley, via Tejon (then only an Indian village) and San Fernando, with one man only to accompany me! Strange that I did not know of the terrible danger that impended.

We ought to face the music—tell the truth, even if the truth condemn us. The quotation from Commodore Sloat was from a letter which he wrote in 1855 to Doctor William Maxwell Wood, United States Navy, and was as follows:

I am most happy to acknowledge the very important services you rendered the government and the squadron in the Pacific under my command at the breaking out of the war with Mexico. The information you furnished me at Mazatlan, from Guadalaxara, was the only reliable information I received of that even, and which induced me to proceed immediately to California, and upon my

own responsibility to take possession of that country, which I did on the seventh of July, 1846.  
(Signed) JOHN D. SLOAT.

(6) “They charge the garrison.” Gen. Vallejo<sup>\*</sup> can correct me if I err, but I think there was no garrison in Sonoma at the time, and that there had been none for several years. Possibly there might have been a few soldiers—half a dozen or so—but nothing that deserved the name of “garrison.” During the war which ensued I had opportunity to observe the proneness of men to exaggerate—to magnify small incidents into great achievements, skirmishes into grand battles; for every man killed forty would claim to have killed him!

General Vallejo writes: “There was not a sentinel on guard and not a man in the garrison. There was not a solitary soldier here at the time except my orderly.”

(7) Captain Ford's dates and details are mostly if not wholly correct. I dissent, however, from what is said about resistance to an order to leave the country. The proclamation of Ide was full of such allusions. But old threats and rumors which had lost their force had to be revived, and revised into new editions by those who needed them in the new emergency.

Previous to Fremont's first act of war there was no imminent danger, hut once begun, the war had to be carried on: Americans were forced to come together, act in concert, and as soon as possible assume the offensive.

Having taken part, it was not difficult to persuade men to justify the steps taken by the plea that they were acting in self-defense; that independence was possible and would reward their labors in the end; that they had a right to recall past threats and rumors in proof of their present danger. And these things were so often repeated at the beginning that some, doubtless, did believe them.

Commodore Sloat won the race with the British admiral Seymour from Mazatlan to Monterey, and raised the American flag. Fremont claims that he did so only because hearing of his operations in the north. If this is so he began the war none too soon, and his having done so was the immediate cause, and he should have the credit of checkmating English designs, and of saving California to the United States. But I do object to any one saying he did it in defense of American settlers, and at

their solicitation. No one needed any defense, and no one knew of intended hostile designs except Fremont and those at his camp. Except the two Americans who are said to have joined them at Hock Farm, and Monterey, and another man who went with the party from the American River, where they took supper, not a single one composing the party that struck the first blow, except perhaps Montgomery and two or three others who chanced to be in the wake of the party, had farm, family, home, or anything which would entitle them to be called settlers. Even Ford had no fixed location that I am aware of.

Instead of claiming that he “joined the American settlers in raising the flag of independence and overturning the Mexican government,” it would be more in accordance with fact to say that Fremont induced as many as came to him to begin and carry on war, and that he rendered all possible assistance, and that until the flag was raised at Monterey by Commodore Sloat, and it became everywhere known that war existed between the United States and Mexico, it was called a movement for self-protection on the part of American settlers and for independence.

Doctor Willey adds to Ford's account: “According to Doctor Tuthill the whole battalion was called together at Sonoma on the 5th of July, Sunday being the Fourth that year, and on the following day commenced the pursuit of Castro.”)

(8) In regard to this date Dr. Tuthill is, I think, one day out of the way. By calculation the Fourth of July, 1846, comes on Saturday. Fremont had been as far as Bodega and San Rafael in search of De la Torre, but without finding him returned to Sonoma, where I was at that time. His arrival was, I think, in the morning. All the men were called together in the afternoon.

Fremont complained of the want of discipline on the part of some, and stated the absolute necessity of thorough organization. W. B. Ide, Pearson B. Reading, and myself, were requested by Fremont and Gillespie to report a plan of organization.

We failed to agree. Mr. Ide insisted on including his proclamation, (which he had from time to time issued when he was chosen captain, at or about the time of the raising of the bear flag), which would make a report too cumbrous. I did not choose to subscribe to the plea of self-defense to



justify the first movement. Reading dissented for those or some other reasons. But neither two of us could agree; and we had no time to delay. The hour for the meeting to organize had nearly arrived. So we agreed each to submit his report to Gillespie, and let him (without knowing who had respectively written them) to choose the best.

He chose mine, which was very short, and simply recommended, to be signed by all, a few lines, the purport of which was that we all agreed to go into thorough organization, for the purpose of gaining and maintaining the independence of California. All present signed it. The election was held. H. L. Ford and Granville P. Swift were elected captains.

The next day, which was Sunday, July 5th, preparations for a march to Sacramento were going on. There was not a word, to my knowledge, said about going after Castro. In the evening there were dancing and general rejoicing.

Monday, July 6th, the march for Sacramento began, but not until afternoon, for more horses and some other things were required. General Vallejo's caballada was brought, and many horses taken from it. Some cattle were also taken. The whole force must have amounted to one hundred and fifty, besides the men left at Sonoma.

Friday, July 10:—We arrived at Sacramento, and camped on the north bank of the American River, some seven or eight miles from Sutter's fort. Whether it was feared that Castro would be coming round to attack us, or why it was that we went so far away, when there was abundance of grass as well as corrals for the horses near by, I cannot imagine. It was the next day, I think,—Saturday, July 11, that the news came that Commodore Sloat had raised the flag at Monterey. (Since writing this, I think the arrival of the news from Monterey was on the evening of the 10th at Sutter's fort, but that it was not known in camp eight miles above till the next day, the 11th). Fremont was requested by the Commodore to go with all convenient dispatch to Monterey, as I understood. So no time was to be lost.

Sunday, July 12:—Fremont with all available men set out for Monterey.

Monday, July 13th:—While stopping for dinner on the Moquelumne River, the declaration or agreement so extensively signed at Sonoma was produced, and all who had not previously done so were requested to sign it, which they did. This was the last I saw of that document.

Tuesday, July 14th:—Crossed the Stanislaus River.

Wednesday, July 15:—Crossed the Tuolumne River—camped on the San Joaquin River.

Thursday, July 16:—Crossed Coast Range through Pacheco's Pass. Messrs. Snyder, Martin, and Foster met us. (Jacob R. Snyder now lives at Sonoma, Julius Martin at Gilroy).

Saturday, July 18:—Passed mission of San Juan Bautista—Purser Fauntleroy and party joined us.

Sunday, July 19:—Arrived at Monterey. Frigate Savannah, Commodore Sloat, in the harbor. Frigate Congress, Commodore Stockton, had recently arrived.

Thursday, July 23:—California Battalion organized—officers commissioned by Commodore Stockton—Fremont, Lieutenant-colonel in command.

Friday, July 24:—Battalion embarked for San Diego on sloop of war Cyane (Capt. Samuel R. Dupont; lieutenants, S. C. Rowan, G. L. Selden, G. W. Harrison, E. Higgins; sailing master, J. F. Stenson; surgeon, D. Maxwell; purser, Rodman M. Price who ran for Congress in 1849 here, but was not elected, subsequently was elected Governor of New Jersey; lieutenant of marines, W. A. F. Maddox; midshipmen, John V. M. Phillips, E. Vandenhorst, Albert Allmond, Horace N. Crabb, R. F. R. Lewis, E. Shepherd).

Wednesday, July 29:—Arrived at San Diego.

The foregoing dates and data are about all that I can decipher from an old and almost obliterated diary kept by myself. But even if I could make out more I would forbear torturing you with dry details, which have long since lost their interest except to those who were the actors and witnesses.

I ought to state also that I regard its one reason why the Californians, so impulsive and ready for fight and revolution, did not do more fighting at the very start. Every man had his own horses and arms. Castro had only to sound his bugle to call a large number together.

Fremont's wearing an American uniform was enough to make any one suppose (and even Americans did suppose) that he had authority from the United States government for doing just what he did. Consequently opposition to him would be opposition to the United States. His acting as he did was sufficient to indicate that he had high authority. A few weeks before he had withdrawn from the country. A courier overtakes him and he at once retraces his steps and begins war! This perhaps was sufficient to cause even Castro to pause long enough to assure himself as to who and how strong the enemy was.

But then the question is, Why was the pause so long? There was really nothing that could be called fighting or even remonstrance, until the American flag had been everywhere raised, the country considered conquered, and peace been proclaimed. And now for the reason:—

It has always been my impression that Vallejo, when a prisoner, counseled peace. He may have thought that while he was a prisoner if war were to rage and atrocities should be committed by his countrymen, revenge might be wrought on him. But I think rather that he saw from the beginning the utter folly of attempting to fight the United States. He had large possessions. War would merely result in ruin to all. So the leaders, one and all, abstained from war, and never raised a sword or fired a gun. Vallejo returned and lived peaceably at his home in Sonoma. Pio Pico and Jose Castro went to Mexico. Bandini remained at his home in San Diego: Pablo de la Guerra in Santa Barbara.

A few hot heads like Flores and Andres Pico, Juan de la Torre, and Ramon Carrillo, without any official authority, did succeed in getting up a considerable revolt. This began in September, and all the fighting that deserved the name of war ensued, terminating with the battle of the Mesa, near Los Angeles, in January, 1847. JOHN BIDWELL.

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