

CHAPTER XII.

A CHAPTER FOR SETTLERS.

SOMETIMES an affirmative is best reached through a pathway of negatives.

Those persons should not go to California with any expectation of prospering in material good who have not the tact and energy and enterprise to succeed in "the States."

There is not one element essential to success elsewhere that is not needed there; the urgency of an increased need might be emphasized. It is true in California, as it is in other countries, that the easy places are already occupied. There is a superabundance of clerks, book-keepers, teachers, civil engineers and professional men generally.

It is no longer the fact that fortunes can be made in a day in California, as they once were. He who would thrive must do so there, as he would anywhere else, by patient industry, by economy and by earnest endeavors. No one should go there expecting, or even hoping, that in some fortunate moment he may come across a nugget of gold that will prove a nest-egg out of which can be hatched a fortune.

But to one who goes expecting to endure hardship, expecting to toil, and especially expecting to *save*, the avenues to comfortable living are many and sure. There is a tendency to large expectation growing out of the influence of early mining operations, when money was made rapidly, spent lavishly and all business transacted in a

grand way—when expenditures were on a scale of magnificence that already seems almost fabulous, and marks that period as having been literally the golden age. Although the time is past, the influence of it still remains. It is perceptibly diminishing year by year, however, as is shown by the fact that dimes are coming into use, and even half-dimes are sometimes seen, while only a little while ago a man scorned to look at anything less than a quarter. There is no better index to the precision in trade and the economy in commerce which prevail among a people than the value of the coins in use. The more careful the expenditure the lower will be the denominations of the medium used.

At present it would seem that the first and strongest attraction is toward agriculture, in some of its numerous departments. California is truly a paradise for farmers. The summer is not spent in raising grain and other products to be eaten up by man and beast in winter, while nothing can be done; but the farmer continues steadily at productive labor all the year round. Nothing requires to be housed or fed except the working-horses, or possibly the milch-cows, which will need to be fed a small part of the time.

If near a market, or if a market is easily accessible, fruit raising is one of the most profitable as well as pleasant kinds of farming. Less land is required than for raising grain. There does not seem, at present, any danger of the supply exceeding the demand, as is shown by the price of fruit in the market of San Francisco. Most kinds of fruit sell for more than they do in St. Louis or Cincinnati. Even grapes, that grow everywhere so lux-

uriantly and yield so abundantly, sell for more than they do in St. Louis. Eight cents per pound—three pounds for a quarter—is about the usual price, though they may occasionally be found for five or six cents per pound.

The cultivation of small fruits is very profitable. Strawberries, raspberries and currants always sell well, and can be easily cultivated if arrangements for irrigation are secured.

There is beginning to be much doubt as to the profitability of the large-ranch system which has prevailed so extensively in California. It is a well established fact that very few of the owners of large ranches have become rich, and in a majority of cases the original owners are poor men now, their lands having passed into other hands. Some of those who continue in possession are cumbered with debt and troubled to know how to make the ends meet. Of course there are exceptions to this rule. There are owners who have the tact and energy to manage in a way to bring in large profits. It is especially true in the raising of grain that there must be land enough to cultivate considerable quantities in order to make it profitable. Labor is expensive, and machinery must be used as far as possible in its stead. Steam and horse power must take the place of horses. Such machinery is expensive, and there must be large profits to make it pay. There is probably no country in the world that admits of so varied a range of agricultural pursuits, because there is no other where it is possible to cultivate so great a variety of products. It would only be telling what is already known to write about fruits, grain, etc. Statements will, therefore, be confined to some of the more recently tried

experiments and to some of the urgent wants not yet met.

The wheat crop of California is handled in sacks. There is but one grain elevator in the State. Boats pass down the Sacramento and up the San Joaquin rivers loaded with sacks of wheat, which are piled up many feet high and lie uncovered and exposed. The immunity from rain makes it safe to transport grain in this way. The sacks thus used are made of jute, which is raised in India, taken to Scotland and manufactured into bags and then brought to California. Of course there must be a profit for the producer of the jute, another for those who take the crude material to Scotland, another for the manufacturer, and yet another for the importer, by whom it is brought to this country, and finally, if the sacks are not bought at first hands, a profit goes into the pocket of the retailer. It is not strange that all these items added together make a large aggregate which it takes one-eleventh of the entire wheat crop to pay. The cost to the State for sacks is about two millions of dollars per annum. The price is about fifteen cents per sack, but in times of scarcity it sometimes goes up to seventeen or eighteen cents. Already something has been done toward supplying this demand. A factory in Oakland turns out one million of bags annually, and more than a million are manufactured elsewhere in the State. The jute is imported directly from India. The sacks can be made for fourteen and a-half cents apiece and yield a fair profit. Any soil and climate that will produce corn will also produce jute. It is less difficult to raise than cotton, and more profitable. Recently the experiment of growing jute was successfully tried on Kern Island. The

man or men who would go into central or southern California and enter upon the business of raising jute would be sure of large profits, and have a much better chance to make a fortune than though they owned a gold mine or shares in a diamond field. The value of the wheat crop of 1875 in California was twenty-six millions of dollars, which is only eighty per cent. of that of 1874, because of the deficiency of rain causing a poor crop. To provide sacks for such a quantity of wheat is an item of great importance.

* Cotton-raising has passed beyond the period of experiment, and taken a position among established facts. Mr. J. Ross Browne says: "Experiments made in the culture of cotton show conclusively that this will soon become one of the great staples of the Pacific coast. The area of land suitable for its growth is, however, limited. It requires moisture, heat and comparative exemption from frost. The alluvial lands of the San Joaquin valley adjacent to Kern, Buena Vista and Tulare lakes will, in all probability, prove as valuable for cotton lands as the best lands in Georgia. Cotton produces fiber in diminished quantity, though of improved quality, when removed from a southern locality further north. It never seems to be injured by the most intense heat. When other crops, including even Indian corn, are drooping under a blazing sun, the large succulent-looking leaves of a cotton field will seem to enjoy the congenial atmosphere. Cotton is decidedly a sun-plant."

California is particularly fitted for the growth of cotton. The period between the late frosts of the spring and the early frosts of the fall is longer than is required to mature the plant, and the absolute immunity from rain

allows a long period for picking after the balls have matured, without any danger of damage by rain.

There being no rain in summer, weeds do not grow, and the cotton has the whole strength of the soil. This is particularly well adapted to cotton. Sandy soil is found in the valleys and the adobe lands corresponding almost exactly with the black lands in the South, which are regarded as normal cotton soil.

The staple produced in California is superior to the great bulk of the production of the southern States.

Cotton, when it requires any irrigation at all, needs less than half the quantity necessary for the production of Indian corn. The expense of its cultivation does not exceed that of corn, while the profit is much greater, and the cost of transportation is only a fraction of what it is for grain. In the southern States it costs twelve cents per pound to raise it; in California, not more than six or seven cents. There is scarcely any plant that requires so little moisture, and none for which irrigation is so well adapted. The time may come when California will rank as the best cotton-growing State in the Union. The Legislature has done what it could to encourage effort in this direction.

Experiments in the cultivation of rice have been sufficiently successful to warrant the expectation that this will become one of the profitable crops of the State, when complete arrangements are made for irrigation. Rice requires so much water that nothing can be done satisfactorily in the way of raising it until the natural supply of the essential commodity can be supplemented.

In Fresno county experiments have been tried in raising coffee with a good degree of success.

Tea has also been tried in Santa Barbara county and elsewhere. Although its growth has been proved a possibility, it may well be doubted if it can be cultivated with profit so as to compete with China and Japan. Labor is so much dearer, and so much manipulation is required in the preparation of the article, that the cost can scarcely fail to be greater here than there.

Increased attention is being given to the dairy business. The yield from this source was five million dollars for the year 1875. The business is found to be profitable in whatever part of the State it has been attempted. In Marin county, north of San Francisco, there are some fine dairies in which large profits are made.

At present there is, probably, no branch of business more profitable than sheep raising, whether tried on a large or a small scale. A man who has sheep has also credit, for it is known that twice in the year he is sure of turning the product of his labor and care into gold; that is, in those parts of the State where sheep are sheared both spring and autumn. The chances for this business are better in the northern than in the southern portion of the country. There is more rain, and consequently the pastures do not dry up so soon. Humboldt county is an attractive point.

Sheep are often let out on shares; the wool and the increase being divided equally between the owner and the one who takes care of them. Hence in this business a man can get a start without capital. But he must be willing to "deny himself." For the time being he will be obliged to turn hermit, and care only for his flock. He must be with them by day and near them by night;

and if he goes to the mountains or on to the large tracts of unsold government lands, it will involve complete isolation. It is estimated that one man can care for two thousand sheep. The profits are large and sure, and a man may comfort himself by looking forward to the near future, when he will have such an increase of means as will enable him to make other arrangements if he choose. With good care the increase will be one hundred per cent. per annum, and there will be the wool besides.

The most desirable way of emigrating is to go in colonies. Take your friends with you and you will have society that suits you, and will thus escape the longing and disquietude of home-sickness. Make up your mind before going that there will be hardships and privations to be endured,—there must always be in breaking up old homes and establishing new ones, especially if means are not abundant. Go in the fall, early enough to get in crops before the winter rains set in; and be sure of *water*—whatever else you lack, see to it that you have this *sine qua non*. With it you can raise almost anything that grows on the face of the earth; without it crops will be uncertain and failures frequent. Either go where artificial irrigation is not necessary, or where it is provided for by canals and artesian wells. These wells succeed wherever tried, and on account of the constancy of the winds they are easily worked by means of windmills.

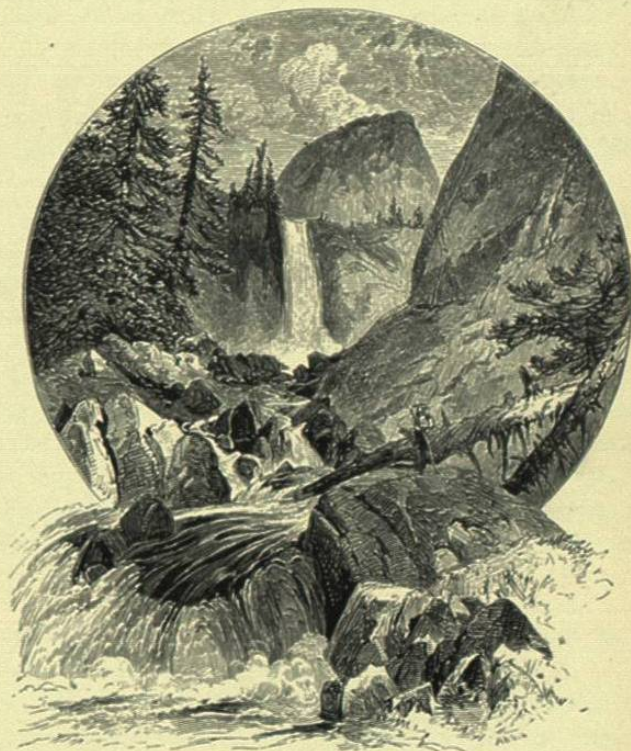
There is also great demand for skilled labor. Mechanics and artisans will find abundant occupation, and get good wages. San Francisco does the lion's share of the manufacturing executed in the State. With a population of two hundred and fifty thousand, the returns of the last

year show that this city produced nearly three hundred dollars' worth of manufactured goods per capita. The kinds, number and amount of manufacturing done would surprise those whose knowledge has not kept pace with the growth of the city. There is almost no limit to its industrial development. The principal drawbacks are the high price of coal and iron. The cost of the former ranges from nine to eighteen dollars per ton, giving an average of about twelve dollars; the latter is at present forty-six dollars per ton.

• Do not establish your faith and found your expectation upon any basis that has the lottery-principle for its support. Be sure that there are many prizes and but few blanks before you invest. Three crops out of seven will not do for a farmer.

If you are blessed with sufficient pecuniary means to enable you to live comfortably, and go to California for the sake of having a pleasant home in a most salubrious and delightful climate, Oakland or its vicinity would perhaps suit you better than any other part of the State. You would there miss but few, if any, of the religious and social privileges to which you have been accustomed. If the lungs are not quite sound, or there is any tendency to sensitiveness in these vital organs, go further from the coast—to San José, or, better yet, to Santa Barbara. If climatic conditions alone influence your choice, undoubtedly the latter place is the one to which you should direct your steps.

No one thing was more of a surprise to the writer than the security there seemed to be to life and property. The influence of the vigilance committees is still felt. On the



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two ranches described elsewhere the doors of the houses were not only left unfastened at night, but sometimes wide open; and that with money left loosely in an unoccupied room below stairs, while all the family slept above! It was only by drawing bolts and turning keys in the doors of the particular room occupied that the denizen of eastern towns and cities could be sure of a sufficient degree of safety to make sleep a possibility. Theft seemed to be almost an unheard of thing in California.

Another of the notable facts is the attention paid to schools. The schoolmaster is abroad everywhere in the land. The best house in the small towns and villages is frequently the school-house. The public schools in the larger towns and cities do not seem to be one whit behind those in eastern towns and cities. Seminaries for girls are quite numerous, and many of them well conducted. The oldest in the State, and one of the best, is in Benicia, a very pleasant town on the straits of Carquinez. In the days when the capital of the State was peripatetic, and the quick-wittedness of school-boys was tested by their ability to answer correctly the question, What is the capital of California? Benicia had the honor of being, for a season, the place where the legislators gathered themselves together.

The want of religious privileges is sadly felt in the rural districts and thinly-populated parts of the country. The influence of the miners and early settlers was not, and is not now, strongly felt in favor of the support of churches and religious ordinances. Very often it is decidedly opposed. The Sabbath is a holiday when visits are made and social enjoyments sought for. Still, in these

respects there is constant progress, and there is only need of the helping hands of those who go, to bring about a better state of things.

The last word of advice to would-be settlers is this: If you wish for full and reliable information in regard to California and all or any of its interests, apply for the same to the California Immigrant Union, No. 328 Montgomery street, San Francisco, and, if the writer may judge from her own experience, you will be served promptly, amply, and without cost.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE CHINAMAN IN CALIFORNIA.

JOHN CHINAMAN is too important an institution in California to be dismissed with a mere passing notice. There is no question connected with the development and present condition of the State to which the writer gave more patient and unprejudiced attention than to this. What has been the result of the immense emigration from the "Central Flowery Kingdom" upon the material interests of the Pacific coast? Have these almond-eyed laborers been a help or a hinderance? Truthful answers to these questions were sought for with diligence, and every means of gaining accurate information called into requisition. Personal observation and competent testimony were arranged side by side and compared. Among intelligent men there seemed to be no great difference of opinion as to the beneficial results of their labors as railroad builders, as miners, as gardeners, as agriculturists, and as assistants in manufacturing establishments.

As to their employment in any of these capacities, the verdict was almost always in their favor. That without their help in these directions the natural wealth of California could not have reached its present development in a quarter of a century to come, was generally admitted.

The old idea that Chinamen are specialists and imitators only has generally been thrown aside by those