

climbing around and penetrating the coast range of mountains. Then we run rapidly along by the almond and fruit groves in the vicinity of the bay. That long line of silver to the left is the bay itself. Here we are at Oakland, and now crossing the ferry to San Francisco. Our trunk is checked to the Palace Hotel, and we are on our way there, when some one steps up with the inquiry, "Is not this Mr. Hendrix?" "Yes, sir." "My name is Chamberlain; we expect you at our house." So here we are, pleasantly ensconced with the pastor of our Church in San Francisco.

October 24, 25, 1876.

LETTER IV.

AT THE GOLDEN GATE.

OUR programme was to spend somewhat on this wise the six days after reaching San Francisco, before sailing on the "Alaska" for Japan—two days at the Geysers in Napa Valley, two days in the city, and two days at San José, in the beautiful Santa Clara Valley. This would have enabled us to see all the most interesting parts of Middle California, save the Yosemite Valley, a visit to that point requiring ten or more days, which of course were not at our disposal. We were able to carry out the programme, excepting a visit to the Geysers. The heavy rain that fell for the first two days made it alike impossible and undesirable to visit that mysterious valley, where the tourist is both amazed and amused at the peculiar modes in which the water is constantly bursting from the ground.

The heavy mists which hung over San Francisco as we crossed the ferry from Oakland did not give the city a prepossessing appearance. Much of it is built on the irregular hills which look down upon the bay, while the dismal fog shut out all the houses save those nearest the wharf. The rainy season had begun, and we had the consolation of knowing that we could see California at her worst, if not at her best. This rainy season is the winter. The rain often pours down for days and weeks together. Then comes a bright spell, and the grass is left green

and growing, as in the spring. The weather in the summer is often really colder than in the winter. This is owing to the chilly winds that sweep in nearly every afternoon from the Pacific. There is really so little difference between summer and winter here that the same clothing is worn all the year round. An overcoat while walking and a lap-robe while riding are never unwelcome companions in any afternoon of the year. The amount of dampness in the atmosphere is so great that we have noticed the new roofs of houses in the Santa Clara Valley covered with moss and mold. This dampness and the fear of earthquakes have caused most of the houses on the coast to be built of wood. Many of them are very elegant structures, costing over a hundred thousand dollars. Perhaps not less than nine out of ten of the houses of San Francisco are built of wood, and a large proportion of them with bay-windows, to admit all the sunlight possible. One would suppose, owing to the scarcity of the water supply of the city and to the high winds from the coast, that the city is in great danger of a general conflagration. Should one occur, it would be more destructive than that of Chicago or Boston. There is this much to be said: the houses are mostly built of red-wood, which burns far less readily than pine. It could not, however, resist such blow-pipe heat as swept away brick and stone buildings in Boston. This red-wood abounds in the mountains here. The "big trees" of California are of this kind. We had pointed out to us while in San José red-wood trees two hundred feet high and fourteen feet in diameter, plainly visible on the mountains perhaps fifteen or twenty miles away.

San Francisco is proud of her big things—the largest hotel in the world, the Palace Hotel, an immense mass, elegant within, but to our thinking unsightly without, and lacking in architectural

beauty; the largest mint; the largest sea-lions; and more Chinese to the square foot. We can see no reason why this should not be the largest mint, and until better informed we shall join with the Californians in calling it so. The immense quantities of gold and silver from the mines of Nevada and California can here be readily transmuted into eagles, trade-dollars, halves, and quarters. In company with Bishop Marvin and Brother Chamberlain, we were shown all through this immense structure, from the room where the metal is received in the rough and weighed to where it is paid out in glittering coin. We saw all the processes, such as melting, running into molds, flattening into bars, reducing to a uniform thickness about that of a half-dollar, cutting out half-dollars one hundred and twenty a minute, milling them, or turning up their edges, three hundred a minute, stamping them one hundred and twenty a minute, and counting them one hundred and fifty dollars a minute. When stamped they are all thrown loosely together in a shallow box with grooves at the bottom. The box is then turned up slightly on one end and shaken to and from you until the coins all arrange themselves in these grooves. This is done very quickly, and the box filled thus holds a hundred and fifty dollars in silver half-dollars. To stamp a dime requires a pressure of seventy-five tons, one hundred tons for a quarter, one hundred and fifty tons for a half-dollar, and one hundred and ninety tons for a trade-dollar or an eagle. Many women are employed in the weighing room. Every gold piece must be weighed before it is stamped. It is filed down if it weighs too much, and it is cast aside for re-melting if too light. The very water in which these ladies wash their hands is strained, and the residue is re-melted and used. The sweepings of the floor have often yielded hundreds of dollars.

The sea-lions are a great institution of the coast. A view from the balcony of the Cliff House shows you the immense Pacific in the background, with the Farralone Islands faintly visible in the distance, while in the foreground are the seal-rocks covered with gulls and scores of lazy, barking sea-lions. We expected to see three or four, but there were over a hundred on a single rock. We hoped to see "Ben Butler," a huge one-eyed mass of flesh that always amused the visitors by his climbing to the best place and refusing to share it with his envious neighbors, but alas! he was dead; his "vaulting ambition had overleaped itself." The park through which we drive to the beach is a series of sand-hills set with evergreens, and, by means of a deep-rooted grass, rapidly being covered with sod. The cool winds detract much from the pleasure of a drive save to the acclimated Californian.

The Stock Exchange is perhaps the great institution of the coast. Here mining stocks are bought and sold and fortunes won and lost every day. In company with our old friend Mark McDonald, we visited the Exchange on Monday. The building, itself a fine one, is to be superseded by one now being erected at a cost of four hundred thousand dollars. The members of the board all have chairs in a circle in the center, while others are seated in an outer circle. A seat in the inner circle is worth thirty or forty thousand dollars. There are only one hundred of them. At the death of any member his family receives ten thousand dollars, which is not liable for any debts, while his seat is sold and the proceeds go to either his creditors or his family. The chairman, or caller, whose duty it is to call out the stocks and announce the sales, receives one thousand dollars a month. When his health was feeble some time ago he was granted leave of absence to go to Europe for six months, his salary

continued and a man hired in his place while he was absent. He is employed two hours each day. He is not allowed, however, to buy, sell, or dabble in stocks in any way. He has a list of mining stocks which he calls every day in the same order—Ophir, Mexican, etc. As soon as he calls Ophir the brokers leave their seats, and rushing to the center with lifted hands and hoarse voices, announce how much they wish to sell or buy and at what rates. In less time than it takes me to write it, the sales are all made and the brokers return to their seats. To slap a man on the shoulder or to shake him is to signify that his offer is accepted, when the sale is instantly proclaimed by the chairman and recorded by the secretary, who presently reports the sales. Consolidated Virginia sold highest the morning we were there. Seventeen hundred and forty-five shares were sold at about fifty-four dollars a share. Many brokers buy on commission, while many are speculators. For a few minutes they seem perfectly mad with excitement, even more so than the brokers in the Gold Exchange in New York.

The Chinese are here in vast numbers. The coast could not do without them, but doubtless there are more here now than is altogether desirable. There is less feeling toward those who are here than toward the millions who may come. Feeling has greatly abated with the falling off in immigration, and the people of California appear willing to make the best use of those now here. Some of the Chinese are very wealthy. They have elegant stores, filled with costly goods, and are quiet, refined gentlemen. All appear to be industrious. They are engaged in every profession and business—physicians, ministers, brokers, cigar manufacturers, chair-makers, etc. Their markets interest you greatly. Aside from the novel vegetables, there are dried ducks, etc., brought over from China.

The missions among them are encouraging. The M. E. Church has a building near the heart of Chinatown, erected at a cost of thirty-two thousand dollars, where there are twenty girl boarders. A night-school every night in the week is attended by about eighty, with five regular teachers. The average attendance at Sunday-school is nearly one hundred. The Sabbath preaching is attended by about twenty-five men and the same number of women. Often the number is much larger. Five of the converts have become preachers, and one of them has returned to proclaim the gospel in China. The Baptists, Presbyterians, and Congregationalists also have successful missions among the Chinese. Results in mere numbers fail to indicate the real amount of good being done. Such converts as we saw appeared intelligent and earnest. The native preachers have a hearing from their countrymen, and are doing good. The blade has appeared, and we are confident of the ear and the full corn in the ear.

Steam is up on the "Alaska," and we have but time to say that we enjoyed a delightful run down to San José through the Santa Clara Valley, the garden-spot of California. There are gardens fresh with the new crop of vegetables for winter. There are the live-oaks all bent in the same direction by the wind from the coast, and whose substance has been driven down into their roots, which yield more timber than the body of the tree. The residence of the unhappy Ralston is to the right, but out of sight. On yonder Mount Hamilton is the site of the Lick Observatory, to be built by the funds of the eccentric James Lick. The people of San José are building a fine road, at a cost of fifty thousand dollars, that leads to the Observatory. The homes in San José, surrounded by lawns with the feathery plumes of the pampas grass, the beautiful foliage

of the pepper-tree, with magnolia and cypress, are the most charming we ever saw. A drive through the Alameda in company with Mr. Henderson, of Missouri, is one of the memorable events of our life. Chinamen are busy gathering the grape crop, a single vineyard of forty acres yielding over two hundred tons.

A farewell meeting is held at the Russ Street Methodist Church, attended by many Christians of all Churches. Many pastors give the farewell hand. Our only fear is that the generous hospitality of many friends leaves us badly prepared for a sea voyage. We sail at noon on the "Alaska," for Japan.

San Francisco, Nov. 1, 1876.