SCENES of WONDER & WONDER & CURIOSITY

Selected by Roger R. Olmsted from HUTCHINGS' CALIFORNIA MAGAZINE 1856 THROUGH 1861

Lavishly ILLUSTRATED
Scenes of WONDER & CURIOSITY—Hutchings' California Magazine, 1856-1861

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The five volumes of *Hutchings' California Magazine*, published between 1856 and 1861, are at once a mine for the historian and a delight to the curious. The editor of this volume, a most curious historian, has lost many hours over the past years, when, turning *Hutchings' pages* in search of that specific comment or drawing which will advance the project of the moment, he has been seduced from the narrow path of scholarship by an intriguing illustrated essay on the method of coining gold at the San Francisco mint, the trials of winter in the Sierra mines, the museum at the What Cheer house, the prospects of the honey bee in California . . . before he finds that which he seeks: a description of the Sacramento River salmon fishery, or the Farallon Islands egg industry.

James Mason Hutchings certainly did not intend his magazine only for the piratical eyes of the historian. He sought to both divert and instruct a wide and literate audience. He succeeded often, and where he did he has lost nothing through the passage of a century. The lucid and detailed sketches of life, nature, and institutions to be found in the pages of *Hutchings' Magazine* comprise a vivid portrait of California in the golden fifties.

The artist who created this portrait was thoroughly in love with his subject. J. M. Hutchings was no literary carpetbagger, nor was he an editor and publisher with the instincts of an accountant. He sought to promote California, what he saw as best in California, not to any narrow end, but for its own sake. His magazine with its many expensive illustrations was by far the most ambitious and costly publication among its contemporaries in California. Hutchings appears to have sold it to the subscribers at cost, for he could pay his contributors nothing, and in five years he cleared only the price of a suit of clothes from its profits. When ill health—possibly aggravated by a subscription list which promised economy rather than improvement in his magazine—drove him to sell out to the publishers of the *California Mountaineer*, the quality of the paper he had put into his magazine quickly became apparent. The *California Magazine and Mountaineer* started off a good cut below Hutchings’ worst and from there rapidly slipped into the “literary” steerage-class at Hutchings so detested.

Hutchings stated quite clearly his views as to the editor’s responsibility to his public when he wrote, in answer to a suggestion that the purpose of a magazine was to enable a reader to throw his time away pleasantly,

We have an idea that the general reading public of California and particularly the mining population have been underrated, that they have not been given credit for the real degree of intelligence and good taste which they possess. A great many
persons suppose that the only literature for the mines is of the "yellow kivered" description; but we must differ from them, differ from them not only in opinion but in practice. We have an abiding faith that the people want solid information and a sober, common-sense view of topics of interest — and we shall endeavor, as far as in our power lies, to supply them.

That "solid information" James Hutchings was well prepared to supply. California was his subject; he knew it very well indeed. Born in England in 1824, he had come to the United States as a youth and was employed in a New Orleans business house when news of the great California gold strike swept the nation. He crossed the plains and mountains in '49, arriving in Placerville in October. He served more than an apprenticeship in the mines: he made his "pile" and lost it in the failure of a San Francisco bank, thus gaining invaluable first-hand experience with two major California institutions. He later had little to say about banks in his magazine, but he identified himself strongly with the miners, portraying their life and problems, and ever holding "the industrious miner" the best of the state's citizens.

Back in the mines, Hutchings again struck it rich — with his initial publishing venture. "The Miner's Ten Commandments," an illustrated letter-sheet he brought out in 1853, proved a best-seller of monumental proportions. Its success may have kindled the idea of a California magazine; in any event Hutchings became an inveterate tourist, gathering material and sketches throughout 1854 and 1855 which later appeared in the first volume of the magazine. He took a cameraman (daguerrean in those years) with him whenever possible, that the engravers might work from a perfectly accurate original. In 1854 he put out a letter-sheet depicting one of the Big Trees; in 1855 he led the first tourist party into Yosemite.

On the Yosemite trip he took with him Thomas Ayres to make sketches, as the daguerrotype equipment was too bulky for such a pioneer journey. After Hutchings began publication of the magazine, in 1856, he relied heavily on Arthur and Charles Nahl, the best of California's early artists, for drawings. The result was an illustrated magazine which could compare favorably with the Harper's or Leslie's of the day. We will neither support nor deny the statements of readers in Europe or "back in the States" that Hutchings was the best of the illustrated magazines published in the whole world — but Hutchings was most certainly an effort which California was not again prepared to match.

After James Hutchings retired from his magazine in 1861 he struck out with characteristic energy upon a new career. March of '62 found him struggling through the snows to discover whether or not Yosemite Valley was habitable in winter. (Conceivably with the consent of his physician: in that buoyant era the imposition of astonishing hardship was thought certain to subdue any but the most stubborn malaise.) Later in the season he brought his wife to the valley; he built a house; then he bought the primitive "Upper Hotel," renaming it "Hutchings' House." Already the leading publicist of Yosemite, he became a full-time prophet. He published a guide to Yosemite in 1877, The Heart of the Sierras in 1886.
Yosemite Valley and the Big Trees in 1894. He met death at the entrance to his beloved valley on October 31, 1902, when his team shied at a bear — or a rock, or a shadow — bolted, and threw him headlong onto the rocks beside the road.

THIS VOLUME

In the first number of the fifth volume of his magazine J. M. Hutchings (as introductory to an appeal for more subscribers) recounted an exchange with a friend, who, on seeing the newly bound fourth volume, remarked,

"After all, there is a large amount of labor in writing, collecting and correcting five hundred and seventy-six pages of California matter, in such a volume as this!"

"Which," we continued, "multiplied by four, gives two thousand three hundred and four pages, and includes nearly five hundred characteristic engravings of California life and scenery."

"But," he continued, "I don't see where you could obtain so much interesting material."

In explaining what criteria we used in reducing such a mass of material to rather small compass we would fasten upon the use of the word "interesting" by Hutchings' friend as well as his own reference to "California life and scenery." They were both really talking about the informative articles dealing with California — which comprise far less than the total number of pages in a magazine that carried a large amount of fiction, poetry and editorial matter. Above all, they both most probably had in mind the longer and more lavishly illustrated articles which give the essential character to the magazine.

This volume contains the majority of these major illustrated articles on California. We have chosen what we felt would be most informative — or sometimes most curious or amusing — to the modern reader. A disproportionate number of these articles Hutchings placed in the favored "lead" position, indicating that he liked them, too. Some good articles dealing with Mexico, Central America, or other places outside of California have been left out, as has some California material which has been recently and fully treated elsewhere (e.g., the Pony Express).

The articles are reprinted as they originally appeared, the page size increased slightly in the interests of readability. The reproduction of this work was made possible through the kind cooperation of Donald Coney, Librarian of the University of California; Dr. James Hart, Dr. Robert Becker, and Dr. John Barr Tompkins of the Bancroft Library; and James de T. Abajian of the California Historical Society.

ROGER R. OLMS TED

San Francisco
June, 1962
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VOL. IV. JULY, 1859. No. 1.

FROM SAN FRANCISCO TO SACRAMENTO CITY.

SCENE AT THE MOUTH OF OLD SACRAMENTO RIVER.
Many of our readers are aware that the great navigable highway for at least three-fourths of the inland commerce and passenger transit of the State, lies through the northern end of the bay of San Francisco, from thence past the southern shore of the bays of San Pablo and Suisun, and up the Sacramento river to Sacramento city. To illustrate the beautiful scenes upon this route we find it next to impossible to obtain faithful and reliable sketches from the deck of a swiftly moving steamboat, that generally makes the upward trip (123 miles) within ten hours, about seven of which, even in summer, are by night. To obviate this difficulty, the writer, in company with two others, engaged a sailing craft of about five tons burthen, and deposited thereon our precious lives, (without even taking the precaution of having them insured) a limited but assorted cargo of general stores, cooking apparatus, bedding, and other sundries, then gave our canvas to the breeze, and were off.

As one of our party, in addition to being an excellent draughtsman, was familiar with the mysteries of navigation, and the other with the duties appertaining to the office of a chef de cuisine, we all considered that our prospects of securing the end at which we aimed were indeed flattering; while the comfort and pleasure we endured would more than counterbalance all the risks that were undertaken, and at the same time allow us the opportunity of sailing when and where we pleased, for all the sketches and enjoyment that we wanted.

Inasmuch as the course of our voyage, by mutual consent, lay around several islands and among numerous sloughs and lagoons of the Sacramento, as well as on the principal streams, occupying some eight days, and as much of our time was consumed among the beaver-trappers and salmon-fishers and persons on the above named waters, we shall now recount our personal experiences and adventures, but reserve those subjects for a future and more suitable occasion, and take the reader, with his or her consent, by the far more pleasant and expeditious route of steamboat navigation.

There probably is not a more exciting and bustling scene of business activity in any part of the world, than can be witnessed on almost any day, Sunday excepted, at Jackson street wharf, San Francisco, at a few minutes before 4 o'clock P. M. Men and women are hurrying to and fro; drays, carriages, express-wagons and horsemen, dash past you with as much rapidity and earnestness as though they were the bearers of a reprieve to some condemned criminal whose last moment of life had nearly expired, and by its speedy delivery thought they could save him from the scaffold. Indeed one would suppose by the apparent recklessness of driving and riding through the crowd, that numerous limbs would be broken, and carriages made into pieces as small as mince meat; but yet to your surprise nothing of the kind occurs, for on arriving at the smallest real obstacle to their progress, animals are suddenly reined in, with a promptness that astonishes you.

On these occasions, too, there is almost sure to be one or more intentional passengers that arrive just too late to get aboard, and who in their excitement often throw an overcoat or valise on the boat, or overboard, but neglect to embrace the only opportune moment to get on board themselves, and are consequently left behind, as those boats are always punctual to their time of starting.

Supposing that we have been more fortunate, by securing our passage and stateroom in good time, please to put on your overcoat, as it is always cool in the evening on the bay, and let us take a cozy seat together; and while the black volumes of smoke are rolling from the tops of the funnels, and the boat is shooting past this
THE STEAMBOATS ANTELOPE AND BRAGDON AT JACKSON STREET WHARF, SAN FRANCISCO.
wharf, and that vessel now lying at anchor in the bay or in full sail upon her voyage, or while numerous nervous people are troubled about their baggage and asking the porter all sorts of questions, let us have a quiet chat together, upon the scene we may witness on our trip, and the historical facts connected with the early navigation of this beautiful route to the interior.

The first sailing vessel that made the voyage from San Francisco to where Sacramento city now stands, was the schooner Isabella, chartered by Capt. John A. Sutter, about the 5th of August, 1839; and owing to the numerous intricate outlets of the Sacramento river, he was eight days in discovering its main channel; and when about ten miles below where Sacramento city now stands, two hundred armed and hostile Indians intercepted his progress.

These however, he succeeded in conciliating, and was then allowed to proceed on his voyage accompanied by two of the natives. Other sail vessels of course followed at different times, in the wake of the pioneer schooner “Isabella,” but as we are now more interested in steam navigation we shall not mention them more length.

The first steamboat that ever plowed the waters of the Sacramento, from San Francisco, was the “Sioga,” a Russian built, stern wheel vessel, about sixty feet in length by seventeen in breadth, owned by Capt. Leidesdorff, (the former owner of most of the Folsom property,) and she reached what was then known as Sutter’s Embarcadero, now Sacramento city, in the summer of 1847.

The next was a stern wheel steam scow named the “Lady Washington,” built at Sutter’s Embarcadero, in Sept., 1849, and was owned by Simmons, Hutchinson & Co., and Smith, Bensley & Co., of that place, was run upon the upper rivers, and was the pioneer steam vessel above the mouth of the American river.

The first trip was to where Coloma now stands; but unfortunately on her return trip she struck a snag and sunk, but was afterwards raised, refitted, and named the Ohio.

The next was a side-wheel steamers that was sent out on board ships from New York, put together in Sacramento city, there named the “Sacramento,” and was run between Sacramento city and New York, on the Pacific, (a city of great pretensions, that was located near the mouth of the San Joaquin, but long since defunct,) and there connected with a line of schooners from San Francisco. This vessel was owned and commanded by Capt. John Van Pelt.

A small craft called the “Mint,” was the next steamboat, and ran on this route through from San Francisco to Sacramento.
NOTES AND SKETCHES ON THE BAY AND RIVER.

The large propeller McKim, of about 400 tons burthen, was the next in rotation, and made her trip from New Orleans, through the straits of Magellan to San Francisco, in 1849, and took her first trip up the Sacramento, in the latter part of Oct. of that year.

By far the most beautiful, most commodious, most comfortable, and at the same time, the most successful steamboat that ever ran on the Sacramento river, was the “Senator” of 500 tons burthen. She made the voyage around Cape Horn, and arrived here on the 27th of Oct., 1849, and her first trip up to Sacramento city, Nov. 5th, following. Her rates of fare were $25 per passenger up, and $30 down; Meals $2, each; Stateroom $10; Freight per ton from $40 to $50.

During the first year on that route her net profits exceeded $60,000 per month; and ever since she has been a very profitable boat for her owners. The number of her passengers was generally about three hundred, and her freight about from two hundred to three hundred tons.

The next was a stern-wheel steamboat called the “Lawrence,” 108 feet in length by 18 feet in width. She was brought out by a New Bedford company and put up at New York on the Pacific; and when finished, she was sent to Sackton about the latter part of Nov., 1849, and was the first steamboat that ever sailed for or arrived at that city. In December following she was taken to Sacramento and there sold, when her new owners sent her up the Feather river to Marysville, in command of Capt. Chadwick, and she was the first steamboat that ever ascended that river.

The “Linda,” a stern-wheel steamer, was the next, owned by a company of which Mark Brumagem was one of the principal members. She ran between Sacramento city and Marysville. Freight on the Lawrence and Linda was from 8 to 10 cents per pound; drinks 50 cents each.

The first steamboat that ever ascended the Sacramento river as far as Tehama was the “Jack Hayes,” commanded by Capt. Mason, in May, 1850. She was first named the Commodore Jones, but being lengthened and otherwise changed, she lost her identity and her name at the same time.

The “Gold Hunter,” commanded by Capt. Branham, now the U. S. surveying schooner Active, was put on about this time, but soon withdrawn.

The “Capt. Sutter,” a small stern wheel boat, although only the second boat to Stockton, was the first to make regular trips from San Francisco to that city, and succeeded the “Lawrence.” She was put up by Capt. James Blair, of the U. S. Navy, and was more successful in proportion to her size than the Senator on the other route; and cleared not less than $200,000 for her owners the first year.

We might mention en passant, to illustrate the large profits made by steamboats at that early day, that the Lawrence made a trip from Sacramento city to Lassen’s Ranch, and received 30 cents per pound for freight on her entire cargo.

The following list of the various steamboats that have from time to time been running on this route, occasionally changing to some other, or been laid up, is as complete as we could make it, and we think will include nearly the whole that have ever been upon it:

RED (OR TREASURE) BOOK.
This island is 140 feet in height above low tide, 450 feet in width, and 1650 feet in length, somewhat irregular in shape; and fortified on all sides. The large building on its summit, about the centre or crest of the island, is a defensive barrack or citadel, three stories high, and in time of peace will accommodate about 200 men, and in time of war at least three times that number. It is not only a shelter for the men, but withstands a respectable cannonade, but from the top a murderous fire could be poured upon its assailants at all parts of the island, and from whence every point of it is visible. There is a belt of fortifications encircling the island, consisting of a series of Barbet batteries, mounting altogether about 94 guns, 24, 42, 68, and 132 pounders.

The first building that you notice after landing at the wharf is a massive brick and stone guard house, shot and shell proof, well protected by a heavy gate and draw-bridge, and has three embrasures for 24 pound howitzers that command the approach from the wharf. The top of this, like the barracks, is flat, for the use and protection of riflemen. Other guardhouses of similar construction are built at different points, between which there are long lines of parapets sufficiently high to preclude the possibility of an escalade, and back of which are circular platforms for mounting guns of the heaviest caliber, some of which weigh from 9,000 to 10,000 pounds. In addition to these there are three bomb-proof magazines, each of which will hold 10,000 lbs of powder. On the south-eastern side of the island is a large furnace for the
NOTES AND SKETCHES ON THE BAY AND RIVER.

Straits of Carquinez.

purpose of heating cannon balls; and other similar contrivances are in course of construction.

Unfortunately there is no natural supply of water on the island, so that all of that element which is used there is taken from Sausalito. In the basement of the barracks is a cistern capable of holding 50,000 gallons of water, a portion of which can be supplied from the roof of that building in the rainy season.

Appropriations have been made for the fortification of this island to the amount of $896,000, and about $100,000 more will complete them. From 40 to 200 men have been employed upon these works since their commencement in 1853.

At the south-eastern end of the island is a fog bell of about the same weight as that at Fort Point, and which is regulated to strike by machinery once in about every fifteen seconds.

The whole of the works on this island are under the skillful superintendence of Lieut. McPherson, who very kindly explained to us the strength and purposes of the different fortifications made.

The lighthouse at the south of the barracks contains a Fresnel lantern of the third order, and which can be seen on a clear night some twelve miles outside the heads, and is of great service in suggesting the course of a vessel when entering the bay.

Yet, as we are sailing on at considerable speed across the entrance to the Bay, towards Angel Island, we must not linger here, not even in imagination; especially as we can now look out through the far famed Golden Gate and towards the golden hinged hope of many who with lingering eyes have longed to look upon it and to enter through its charmed portals to this land of gold. How many too have longed and hoped for years to pass it once again, on their way out to the endeared and loving hearts that wait to welcome them at that dear spot they still call Home! God bless them.

Now the vessel is in full sail, and steam-
ships, that are entering the heads, as well as those within that are tacking now on this stretch and now on that to make way out against the strong northwest breeze that blows in at the Golden Gate for three eighths of the year, are fast being lost to sight, and we are just abreast of Angel Island and but five miles from the city of San Francisco. This Island was granted by Gov. Alvarado to Antonio M. Asio, by order of the Government of Mexico, in 1837; and by him sold to its present owners in 1853. As it contains some 800 acres of excellent land it is by far the largest and most valuable of any in the Bay of San Francisco; and the green wild oats that grow to its very summit in early spring, but ripened now, give excellent pastureage to stock of all kinds; while the natural springs at different points afford abundance of water at all seasons. At the present time there are about 500 sheep roaming over its fertile hills. A large portion of the land is susceptible of cultivation for grain and vegetables.

From the inexhaustible quarries of hard blue and brown sandstone that here abound, have been taken nearly all of the stone used in the foundations of the numerous buildings in San Francisco.

The extensive fortifications at Alcatraz, Angel Island, Fort Point, and other places, have been faced with it; and the extensive Government works at Mare Island have been principally built with stone from these quarries, and many thousands of tons will yet be required from the same source before the fortifications and other Government works are completed. Clay is also found in abundance, and of an excellent quality for making bricks.

In 1856 this Island was surveyed by the U. S. Engineers, for the purpose of locating sites for two 24 gun batteries, which are in the line of fortifications required before our Bay may be considered as fortified. The most important of these
NOTES AND SKETCHES ON THE BAY AND RIVER.

batteries will be on the north-west point of the Island, and will command Raccoon Straits; and until this is built, our Navy Yard at Mare Island, and even the city of San Francisco itself cannot be considered safe, as through these Straits ships of war could easily pass, if by means of the heavy fog that so frequently hangs over the entrance to the bay, or other cause, they once passed Fort Point in safety. But let us pass on to Red Rock.

This singular looking island was formerly called Treasure or Golden Rock in old charts, from some traditinary report being circulated of some large treasure having been once carried there by early Spanish navigators. In charts of recent date however, it is sometimes called Molate Island, but is now more generally known as Red Rock, from its general color.

There are several strata of rock, of different colors, if rock it can be called, one of which is very fine and resembles an article sometimes found upon a lady's toilet-table—of course in earlier days—known as rouge-powder. Besides this there are several strata of a species of clay or colored pigment, of from four to twelve inches in thickness, and of various colors. Upon the beach numerous small red pebbles, very much resembling
cornelian, are found. There can be but little wonder it should be called "Red Rock" by plain matter-of-fact people like ourselves. It is covered with wild oats to its summit, on which is planted a flag-staff and cannon. Some few years ago its locater and owner, Mr. Selim E. Woodworth, took about half a dozen tame rabbits over to it, from San Francisco, and now there are several hundred.

As Mr. W., before becoming a Benedict, made this his place of residence, he partially graded its apparently inaccessible sides; and at different points planted several ornamental trees. A small bachelor's cabin stands near the water's edge, and as this affords the means of cooking fish and sundry other dishes, its owner and a small party of friends pay it an occasional visit for fishing and general recreation. Several sheep roam about on the island, and as they like rabbits never drink water, they do not feel the loss of that which nature has here failed to supply.

But on, on we sail, and pass Maria Island and also two low rocks called the Two Sisters, and after shooting by Point San Pablo, we enter the large bay of that name; charmed as we are with fine table and grazing lands on our right at the foot of the Contra Costa range of hills.

Just before entering the Straits of Carquinez, that connects the bays of San Pablo and Suisun, on our left we get a glimpse of the Government works at Mare Island, and the town of Vallejo; but as we shall probably have something to say about these points at some future time, we will now take a look at the straits. As the stranger approaches these for the first time, he makes up his mind that the vessel on which he stands is out of her course and is certainly running towards a bluff, and will soon be in trouble if she does not change her course, but as he advances and the entrance to this narrow channel becomes visible, he then concludes that a few moments ago he entertained a very foolish idea.

Now however the bell of the steamboat and a porter both announce that we are coming near Benicia, and that those who intend disembarking here had better have their baggage and their ticket in readiness. One would suppose as the boat nears the wharf that she is going to run "right into it," but soon she moves gracefully round and is made fast; but while those ashore and those aboard are eagerly scanning each other, to see if there is any familiar face to which to give the nod of recognition, or the cordial waving of the hand in friendly greeting, we will take our seats and say a word or two about this city.

Benicia was founded in the fall of 1847 by the late Thomas O. Larkin, and Roland Semple (who was also the originator and editor of the first California newspaper published at Monterey, Aug. 16th, 1846, entitled "The Californian," upon land donated them for the purpose by Gen. M. G. Vallejo, and named in honor of the General's estimable lady.

In 1843 a number of families took up their residence here. During the fall of that year a public school was established, and which has been continued uninterruptedly to the present. In the ensuing spring a Presbyterian church was organized, and has continued under its original pastor, to the present time.

The peculiarly favorable position of Benicia recommended it at an early day as a suitable place for the general military headquarters of the U.S., upon the Pacific. Being alike convenient of access both to the sea-board and interior, and far enough from the coast to be secure against sudden assault in time of war, it was seen that no more favorable position could be selected, as adapted to all contingencies. These views met the approval of the General Government; and according-
by extensive storehouses were built, military posts established; and arrangements made for erecting here the principal arsenal on the Pacific coast.

There already are erected barracks for the soldiers, and officers' quarters; two magazines capable of holding from 6,000 to 7,000 barrels of gun-powder of 100 lbs. each; two storehouses filled with gun-carriages, cannon, ball, and several hundred stand of small arms, besides workshops, &c.

About one hundred men are now employed, under the superintendence of Capt. F. D. Calander, in the construction of an Arsenal 200 feet in length by 60 feet in width, and three stories in height, suitably provided with towers, loop-holes, windows, &c. Besides this a large citadel is in course of erection. $225,000 have already been appropriated to these works, and they will most probably require as much more before the whole is completed.

Here too are ten highly and curiously ornamented bronze cannon, six 8 pounders and four 4 pounders, that were brought originally from old Spain, and taken at Fort Point during our war with Mexico.

The following names and dates are inscribed on some of them, besides coats of arms, &c.

"San Martin, Ano. D. 1684."
"Poder, Ano. D. 1693."
"San Francisco, Ano. D. 1673."
"San Domingo, Ano. D. 1679."
"San Pedro, Ano. D. 1628."

As the barracks are merely a depot for the reception and transmission of troops, it is difficult to say how many soldiers are quartered here at any one time.

There are numerous other interesting places about Benicia, one of which is the extensive works of the Pacific Mail Steamship Company, where all the repairs to their vessels are made, coal deposited, &c., &c.

In 1853 Benicia was chosen the capital of the State by our peripatetic Legislature, and continued to hold that position for about a year, when it was taken to Sacramento, where it still (for a wonder) remains.

And, though last, by no means the least important feature of Benicia, is the widely known and deservedly flourishing boarding school for young ladies, the Benicia seminary, under the charge of
HUTCHINGS' CALIFORNIA MAGAZINE.

CHURCH ON THE RIVER, NINE MILES ABOVE STEAMBOAT SLUUGH.

Miss Mary Atkins, founded in 1852, and in which several young ladies have taken graduating honors. Next to this is the collegiate school for young gentlemen under the superintendence of Mr. Flatt, and which was established in 1853. Next to this is the college of Notre Dame for the education of Catholic children.—These, united to the excellent sentiments of the people, make Benicia a favorite place of residence for families.

Nearly opposite to Benicia and distant only three miles is the pretty agricultural village of Martinez, the county-seat of Contra Costa county. A week among the live-oaks, gardens, and farms in and around this lovely spot will convince the most skeptical that there are few more beautiful places in any part of the State. A steam ferry boat runs across the straits between this place and Benicia every hour in the day. The Stockton boat always touches here both going and returning.

But now we must hurry on our way, as the steamboat is by this time passing the different islands in the bay of Suisun, named as follows:—Preston Island, King's, Simms', Davis', Washington, Knox's and Jones' Islands; and passing New York on the Pacific, we arrive at the west end of a large, low tale flat lying between the San Joaquin and the Sacramento, named Sherman's Island, and here we enter the Sacramento river. The Montezuma hills seen on our right, and a few stunted trees on the left, are the only objects in the landscape to relieve the eye by contrast with the low tale swamp, until we approach the new and flourishing little settlement of Rio Vista, just opposite the mouth of the "old Sacramento river," or more properly speaking, the principal branch of the stream.

This village is just about half-way between Benicia and Sacramento, and bids fair to be a place of some importance eventually, as arrangements are now being made to open a road past here, and between Suisun and Vacca Valleys and Stockton. From Mr. C. A. Kirkpatrick, the obliging post-master there, we are favored with the following table of distances:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distance from Benicia</th>
<th>Miles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>From Benicia to Suisun</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From Suisun to Stockton</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From Stockton to New York</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From San Francisco to Benicia.....30 Miles.
Benicia to New York...............20 "
" to mouth of San Joaquin.......21 "
" to mouth of Sac. River........26 "
" Montezuma........................27 "
" Louisa Island....................29 "
" Twin House.........................32 "
" Seven Mile Slough..............39 "
" Wood Island,[2 M. Long.]......40 "
" Rio Vista........................41 "
" Mouth of old Sac. River........42 "
" Mouth Cache creek slough.......46 "
" Hog's Back.........................48 "
" Beaver Slough....................52 "
" Mouth Steamboat slough.........54 "
" Mouth of Sutter slough.........54 "
" Head of Sutter slough..........55 "

[one mile long.]
" Head Steamboat slough, and junction with the main Sacramento river, [5 miles long.] 59 "

From Benicia to Randall's Island 61 "
[3 miles long.]
From Benicia to Sac. city........90 "

— 14 —
As we have seen, six miles above the mouth of the old river, is the far famed "Hog's Back." This is formed by the settling of the sediment which comes down, caused by a widening of the stream, and a decrease in the fall of the river. It extends for about three hundred yards in length; and at the lowest stage of water is about five feet from the surface, and at the highest point eleven feet six inches. Being affected by the tides, and as they are exactly at the same point every two weeks, during the fall season of the year for two or three days at each low tide, a detention of heavily freighted vessels of from one to four hours will then take place. Persons when descending the river, as the steamboat generally leaves Sacramento city at 2 o'clock, P. M., have an opportunity of knowing when they arrive at the Hog's Back by seeing the mast of a vessel with the lower cross-trees upon it, and sometimes a portion of her bulwarks. This vessel was named the Charleston, and was freighted principally with quartz machinery, a portion of which being for the Gold Hill Quartz Co., at Grass Valley, she had discharged, but the owners of another and larger portion of it not being found, she was returning with it to San Francisco, but having stuck upon this sand bank at a very low stage of the water, she careened over and was swamped. Several attempts have since been made to take out the machinery, but as yet it has defied all attempts, and being filled with sand it will be a very difficult task for any one to perform, and the reward be but a poor one, inasmuch as it cannot be in any other than a spoiled condition from rust and other causes.

By this means she has created quite a snug little business for herself and become an indispensable visitor to the residents on the river.

Sacramento City is at length in view, but we have gossipod so much by the way, that we have not the space left to devote to the subject which we should wish to give to a place holding the second rank on the Pacific coast, and possessing as many objects of interest as does our sister City of the Plains. We shall, therefore, defer all remarks until some future number, when we intend to give an elaborate description of the capital of our Golden State.

In conclusion, we would say to those who wish to escape for a brief season the confinement of city life, and enjoy a summer's ramble, we could not recommend a tour which can be made with so much ease, and is so generally calculated to please every variety of tastes, as a trip on the bay and river. The tourist who merely journeys for amusement—the individual desirous of beholding the unbounded resources of our state, and the artist, will each find much to gratify the desires which induced them to travel.

The scenery as you steam up the river is in no slight degree picturesque. Here and there, as you turn with the sudden windings of the stream, you come upon the little boats of fishermen, and sloops, with their sails furled like the folded wings of a sea-bird, waiting for the wind. The improvements of the husbandman are everywhere seen along the shores.—Cottages half hidden among the drooping branches of the sycamores, out-houses, haystacks, orchards, and gardens, with their product of squashes and cabbages piled in huge heaps, give a cheerful domestic character to the scene. The landscape is diversified by the gnarled oaks, with vines clinging about them for support, and their branches covered with dark masses of mistletoe. Far away the
snow-capped Sierras, with a black belt of pines at their base, and nearer the mist-draped Coast Range, rise on the view. Along the plains are here and there seen clumps of trees—a sure indication of water; and occasionally the charred trunk of some blasted tree lifts its bare branches toward heaven in solitary grandeur. During these seasons when the immense tracts of sierras which cover the low lands are on fire, the configuration lends a wild and peculiar beauty to the scenes on the Bay and River.

“AROUND THE BAY,” IN THE SEASON OF FLOWERS.

The Rev. T. Starr King in a letter to an eastern journal, written last July, thus describes the “flowers by the acre, flowers by the square mile,” which paint our bay-hills from bases to tops in the spring season:

In the early part of May, a week after my arrival in California, I was invited by a very intelligent gentleman in San Francisco, to take a seat in his carriage for a “drive around the bay.” This means around the Bay of San Francisco, which extends southerly about fifty miles from the Golden Gate, where the tides of the Pacific force their way inland. The bay is, therefore, a large salt-water lake, about eight miles broad and six times as long. It is undotted with islands, and lies placid in the embrace of some of the richest lands of California. In making the tour around it, we drive down along the narrow county of San Mateo, whose hills divide the dreamy bay from the billows of the Pacific, then across the county of Santa Clara, and up, on the eastern side, through Alameda county to Oakland, where the ferry-boat returns us to the metropolis of wind and fog, whose climate in summer is exhaustively stated in the phrase, “gust and dust.”

Early in May is the true time to make this excursion, for then the country is at the height of its brief bloom. California has often been compared with Palestine and Syria for scenery. The passages in the Psalms and the New Testament which describe the fleeting beauty of the flowers and the grass, are certainly applicable here. “For the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, than it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth.” Indeed, there is no grass, properly speaking, native to the landscapes. The green of early May on the uncultivated
GROUP OF SALMON FROM THE SACRAMENTO RIVER.
ANY of the Pioneers of California, if they are not already aware of the fact, will be sorry to learn that the Salmon fish are fast disappearing from our waters—that is, upon all the streams upon which mining is carried on to any extent, and, in fact, we may say from all the streams of importance.

This may be attributed to three causes. First, the mining operations, by which the water is carried by ditches and flumes for miles out of its channel, and, when it again finds its natural course, it would scarcely be true to call such a muddy mass, water.

This being the case on all the tributaries, the fountain being impure the whole stream is polluted, and our beautiful and highly palatable fish, scorning to "live, move, and have their being" in such an impure element, are seeking other realms, where their native element is not made so unpleasant by man's search for gold.

The second cause for the disappearance of the Salmon, is the navigation of the rivers, which has been shown in their leaving the Hudson, Connecticut, and other streams of the Eastern States, where they were once plentiful, and where the first cause spoken of did not exist.

The third cause is the immense destruction of the fish, which has been going on for the last ten years. Just note the recession.

In the year 1849, we had no trouble whatever in procuring all the salmon we wished, by just constructing a rude harpoon or spear of this kind—wade out a few steps, and literally pick up all we desired.

In 1851, we could observe a great decrease, and since that time the fish have been gradually retreating beyond their pursuing destroyers, until, like the "poor Indian," they are being driven westward into the sea.

But, before taking the final "plunge," they seem to have turned at bay in one part of the Sacramento river, and here they are eagerly caught. Rio Vista is now the principal shipping point for the Salmon. This town is situated about forty-five miles below the city of Sacramento, and below the outlets of the large sloughs, or at least two of the largest, Steamboat and Cache Creek sloughs—mile with the main, or old Sacramento river, just above this place; making the stream here about one-third of the shining sides of the many fishes, as they hurried to their mountain retreats, to spend the "season" at the "Springs," or returned to the busy scenes of their old ocean home, the crowded capital of all Fishdom—where stand in all their original splendor, the palaces of the real "Codfish Aristocracy."

FISHERMAN'S HUT ON THE SACRAMENTO.

How well does the writer remember the good old days of '49, when he wished for no better mirror than the crystal waters of the "Rio de los Americanos," Mokelumne, or Los Mariposas, and how the pure water sparkled and flashed from
a mile wide. The reader will see that being upon the main river, so near its outlet into Suisun bay, not over twenty miles, and so far from the mining region, that there is a clearer and larger body of water than can be found any where else on the river. It is to this place that the fish now resort.

The Salmon are taken in this manner:

First, however, we will speak of the means, then the process:

Nets are constructed of stout shoe-thread, first made into skeins, then twisted into a cord about the size of common twine, after the fashion of making ropes. It is then, with a wooden needle, manufactured into a web of open net work from 780 to 1200 feet, or 130 to 200 fathoms long, and 15 feet wide. On both sides of the net are small ropes, to which it is fastened. On the rope designated for the upper side, are placed, at intervals of five or six feet, pieces of cork or light wood, for the purpose of buoys; while on the other line, bits of lead are fastened to sink the net in the water. Now attach to one end of the upper line a small buoy, painted any dark color which can be easily distinguished, and at the other end make fast a line fifteen or twenty feet long, for the fisherman to hold, while his net floats, and the net is complete.

Whitehall boats are those most generally used in this branch of State industry, and which are from nineteen to twenty-two feet in length of keel, and from four...
to five feet breadth of beam; this size and style being considered the best.

Now, the next thing wanted, is two fearless men; one to manage the boat, and the other to cast the net.

The net is then stowed in the after part of the boat, and everything made ready for a haul. Being at what is called the head of the drift, one of the men takes his place in the stern of the boat, and while the rower pulls across the stream, the net is thrown over the stern. Thus is formed a barrier or net-work almost the entire width of the stream, and to the depth of fifteen or twenty feet.

The drift is the distance on the river which is passed after casting the net, and floating with the side until it is drawn into the boat. This passage, and the drawing in of the net, completes the process of catching the salmon.

In coming in contact with the net, the head of the fish passes far enough through the meshes, or openings, to allow the strong threads of the net to fall back of and under the gill, and thus, they are unable to escape, and are effectually caught in the net and drawn into the boat.

During the year 1852, there were probably as many fish caught in that part of the Sacramento river before alluded to, as at any time previous, and more than at any time since. Two men with one net and boat having caught as many as three hundred fish in the course of one night; the night being the best time to take them, on account of their being unable to see and avoid the net.

The fish which are caught in the spring, are much larger and nicer than those caught during the summer months; the former being really a bright salmon color, and the texture of the flesh firm and solid, while the latter, in appearance, might properly be called salmon color faded, and the flesh soft and unpalatable. This difference is, no doubt, owing to the temperature and composition of the water in which the fish may be sojourning; the cold, salt sea water hardening and coloring the flesh, while the warm, fresh river water tends to soften and bleach.
SALMON FISHERY ON THE SACRAMENTO RIVER.

In regard to the habits of this fish, but little seems to be known. They seem to be gregarious in their nature, traveling in herds, or as the fishermen call it "schools." They do not love a very cold climate, as is indicated by their not ascending the rivers on the northern coast, except in very limited numbers, until the month of July. In those streams where the current is very rapid, their rate of speed is supposed to be five or six miles an hour; but where the current is eddying and slow, not more than two miles an hour. It has been also ascertained that they will stop for two or three days in deep, still water; no doubt to rest and feed, as they choose such places where food can be easily procured.

There seems to be quite a difference in the size, flavor, and habits of the Salmon, as found in the Sacramento, Columbia and Fraser rivers; those of the Sacramento, being larger, more juicy and oily, and brighter colored. They are, however, more abundant in the North, and about half the average weight; the average of the former being fifteen pounds.

Although early in the spring some are caught in the North quite as large as any caught in the Sacramento, weighing from fifty to sixty pounds.

In the gulf of Georgia, and Bellingham Bay, and on the Columbia, Fraser and Lumna rivers, the salmon are taken by thousands; while we of the Sacramento, only get them by hundreds. One boat, last season, on the Fraser river, in one month, caught 13,800.

There is also one peculiarity with the fish of the North. Every second or third year there are but few salmon in those waters, their places being taken by a fish called the Homo, which come in great numbers, equal if not greater than the salmon. The two fish never come in any considerable numbers together.

In regard to the manner and power of reproduction of these fish, we shall not even present a supposition. Suffice it to say, that in portions of Fraser river—mentioning but one which they frequent—the water is so filled with their eggs as to render it unfit for use, and the air becomes tainted with the effluvia
a total of 22,500 fish' or 337,500 pounds; the greater part of these are shipped, and used fresh in San Francisco. But this number forms but a small proportion of what are caught, the principal part being retained and salted, or smoked, or otherwise prepared for shipment to various parts of the world—many finding their way to Australia, and the Islands of the Pacific, as well as to New York, and other domestic ports on the Atlantic seaboard.

During the last summer, a new process, which had been for some time maturing, was at last brought to perfection, for putting up in a neat, portable style, the fish, all ready for the table, and capable of being transported to any climate, retaining all its original sweetness and flavor.

There are many other facts and subjects connected with this business which might be of interest to many; and if such be found to be the case, the subject may, at some future time, be renewed.

But few persons who have ever walked the streets of any English city can forget the cry of "Pickled Salmon! Salmon, Oh Fresh Pickled Salmon," from a pair of stentorian lungs; and the method of preserving these delicious fish on the Sacramento, very much resembles that adopted by the most celebrated, and best, of the English preserving houses.
There are but few persons to whom the admiration of the beautiful in nature is not an innate inspiration to a greater or less degree. With different habits of thought in different mental organizations, it may assume various forms and qualities, but the principle is the same.

To some, the graceful form or lithe movement of an animal, or the face, figure and carriage of a beautiful woman or handsome man, may be the most attractive style of beauty in existence. Others will look upon a broad meadow carpeted with flowers, or a quiet stream and placid lake, whose burnished bosom reflects the image of every object upon.
its margin; and, as they watch the shadows chasing each other across it, think it the most charming of any ever witnessed: while to others, the impetuous torrent, as it dashes and foams and addies among rocks, or rushes over a precipice, and at one bold leap breaks itself into myriads of atoms, is the embodiment of all that is grand and lovely and beautiful. Yet to others, no sight is so creative of delightful emotion as the examination of the minute and wonderful; such, for instance, as the downy petals of a flower, or the numerous scales and shades of color that blend into each other on the body of an insect or crest of a bird.

The love of everything beautiful may be possessed in an eminent degree by a single individual; but we never knew one to whom every form of beauty was alike inviting. Control our tastes as we may, there are some individuals whom we like in a greater degree than we do others, and often without being able to assign a reason. It is thus with the beautiful in nature; preferences for this or that particular class will exist, and often we do not know why. Yet it is well.

The engraving given on the first page of this number of the magazine will present one of those beautiful scenes that are sometimes to be witnessed in the valleys at night, from the deck of a steamboat. The serpentine course of the San Joaquin, lighted up by the moon and the tules on fire, every voyager to or from Stockton can perhaps remember. In the foreground of the picture is the boat from whence our sketch was taken. In the shadowy distance looms up Monte Diablo.

Almost every Californian has seen Monte Diablo. It is the great central landmark of the State. Whether we are walking in the streets of San Francisco; or sailing on any of our bays and navigable rivers; or riding on any of the roads in the Sacramento and San Joaquin valleys; or standing on the elevated ridges of the mining districts before us, in lonely boldness, and at almost every turn, we see Monte del Diablo. Probably from its apparent omnipresence we are indebted to its singular name, Mount of the Devil.

Viewed from the north-west or south-east, it appears double, or with two elevations, the points of which are about three miles apart. The south-western peak is the most elevated, and is 3,760 feet above the sea.

For the purpose of properly surveying the State into a net-work of township lines, three meridians or initial points were established by the U. S. Survey, namely: Monte Diablo, Mount San Bernardino, and Mount Pierce, Humboldt County. Across the highest peaks of each of these, a "meridian line" and a "base line" were run; the latter from east to west, and the former from north to south. The boundaries of the Monte Diablo meridian include all the lands in the great Sacramento and San Joaquin valleys, between the Coast Range and the Sierras, and from the Siskiyou Mountains to the San Bernardino meridian, at the head of the Tulare Valley.

The geological formation of this mountain is what is usually termed "primitive;" surrounded by sedimentary rocks, abounding in marine shells. Near the summit there are a few quartz veins, but whether gold-bearing or not has not yet been determined. About one-third of the distance from the top, on the western slope, is a "hornblende" rock of peculiar structure, and said by some to contain gold. In the numerous spurs at the base, there is an excellent and inexhaustible supply of limestone.

At the eastern foot of the mountains, about five miles from the San Joaquin river, three veins of stove coal have been discovered; and are now being worked with good prospects of remuneration, as
the veins grow thicker and the quality better as they proceed with their labors.

It is said that copper ore and cinnabar have both been found here, but with what truth we are unable to determine. Some Spaniards have reported that they know of some rich mineral there; but, do not tell of what kind, and for reasons best known to themselves will neither communicate their secret to others nor work it themselves.

If the reader has no objection, we will climb the mountain—at least, in imagination—and see what further discoveries we can make.

Now, after a substantial breakfast, being provided with good horses—always make sure of the latter on any trip you may make, reader—an excellent telescope, and a liberal allowance of lunch, let us leave Martinez at seven o’clock. For the first four miles we ride over a number of pretty and gently rolling hills, at a lively gait, and arrive at the Pacheco Valley, on the edge of which stands the flourishing little village of Pacheco. We now dash across the valley at good speed for eight miles, in a south east direction, and reach the western foot of Diablo after a good hour’s pleasant ride.

For the first mile and a half of our ascent, we have a good wagon road, built in 1852 to give easy access to a quartz lead, from which considerable rock was taken in wagons to the Bay of Suisun, and from thence shipped to San Francisco to be tested, and which was found to contain gold, but not in sufficient quantities to pay for working it; and for the next two miles, a good, plain trail, to the main summit, passing several clear springs of cold water.

From the numerous tracks of the grizzly bears that were seen at the springs we may naturally conclude that such animals have their sleeping apartments among the bunches of chaparal in the canions yonder; and if we should see the track makers before we return, we hope our companions will keep up their courage, and sufficient presence of mind to prevent themselves imitating Mr. Grizzly at the spring—at least not in the direction of the settlements, and leave us alone in our glory.

As you will perceive, the summit of the mountain is reached without the necessity of our dismounting; and as there
are wild oats all around, and the stores of sundries provided have not been lost or left behind, suppose we rest and refresh ourselves, and allow our animals to do the same.

The sight of the glorious panorama unrolled at our feet, we need not tell you, amply repays us for our early ride. As we look around us we may easily imagine that perhaps the priests who named this mountain may have climbed it, and as they saw the wonders spread out before them, recalled to memory the following passage of holy writ:—“The devil taketh him [Jesus] up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; and saith unto him, all these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, get thee hence, Satan &c.,” Matt. 4th, verses 8 and 9; and from this time called it Monte del Diablo. Of course this is mere supposition, and is as likely to be wrong as it is to be right.

The Pacific Ocean; the city, and part of the bay of San Francisco; Fort Point; the Golden Gate; San Pablo and Suisun Bays; the Government works at Mare Island; Vallejo; Benicia; the valleys of Santa Clara, Petaluma, Sonoma, Napa, Sacramento and San Joaquin, with their rivers, creeks and sloughs, in all their tortuous windings; the cities of Stockton and Sacramento; and the great line of the snow-covered Sierras; with numerous villages dotting the pine forests on the lower mountain range—are all spread out before you. In short, there is nothing to obstruct the sight in any direction; and

with a good glass the steamers and vessels at anchor in the bay, and made fast at the wharves of San Francisco, are distinctly visible.

Stock may be seen grazing in all directions on the mountains. To the very summit, wild oats and chaparal alternate.

In the canions are oak and pine trees from fifty to one hundred feet in height; and on the more exposed portions there are low trees from twenty to thirty feet in height.

In the fall season, when the wild oats and dead bushes are perfectly dry, the

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SCENES IN THE VALLEYS AND MOUNTAINS OF CALIFORNIA.

SUTTER'S BUTTES, NEAR MARYSVILLE.

Indians sometimes set large portions of the surface of the mountains on fire; which, when the breeze is fresh and the night is dark, and the lurid flames leap and curl, and away, now to this side, and now to that, the spectacle presented is magnificent beyond the power of language to express.

The “Sulphur mountain,” at the foot of which is the spring and hotel, seen in the foreground of Mr. Rankin’s sketch on the 484th page, is a well known local landmark, some six miles in a northwesterly direction from Benicia. Its bold, craggy top is in perfect contrast to the gently rolling hills that surround it. The waters of the spring which gush out at its base have long been known to the Indians and native Californians in this vicinity, for their medicinal properties. Judging from the numerous beds of shells to be found there—doubtless deposited by the Indians, who must have been fond of bivalves—it seems to have been a favorite place of resort. Be this as it may, the springs—which are slightly tepid, and of which there are two, but a few feet from each other—are highly impregnated with sulphur, soda, and other minerals; and valuable as a remedial agent in some bodily ailments. The springs were rediscovered and taken up by Milton Brockman, in 1855, and who, with others, built the present commodious hotel. If the proprietors had the taste and would take the trouble to beautify the grounds around, and then keep the hotel as it ought to be kept—which it certainly is not, now—it would become a fashionable place of resort, and very convenient to invalids from a distance.

Between the Sacramento and Feather rivers, about twelve miles west of Marysville, are “Sutter’s Buttes,” or, as they are sometimes called, the “Marysville Buttes.” (The former, we think, should
always be preferred, in honor of the illustrious California pioneer, Gen. John A. Sutter.)

This mountain towers boldly out like a large island above the plain on which it stands, to the height of 1800 feet, and is almost as great a landmark to the residents of this latitude, as Monte Diablo is to those of San Francisco. For a circumference of fifty miles, its uneven and hazy tops are visible above the belt of timber that grows in the valley and apparently girdles its base. From its shape, as much as from the scoria and other similar substances in great abundance upon and round about it, there can be but little doubt that this mountain is of volcanic origin, and of no recent date. It is moreover upon the same line as Monte Diablo and Mount Shasta. Trap, quartz, trachyte, and porphyry rocks are found at its base. Its circumference is about twenty-five miles.

Although we have tarried in the valleys a little too long, perhaps, we hope to have the pleasure of the reader's company on an excursion in the mountains, at least to a few of the localities; and in the first place pay a visit to Coloma.

COLOMA.

Which is the euphonious name of one of the prettiest, and cleanest little towns in the mountains of California; and moreover of one that has the honor of being the mother of all the others! At first sight we are aware that the reader may possibly open his eyes with astonishment, and seem disposed very much to question the correctness of ascribing so large an amount of maternal fecundity, to so insignificant an object; but when we remind him that at Coloma the first piece of California gold was discovered, he will, we think, concede to us the parentage claimed.

It is a fact that in this beautiful valley, so pleasantly located on the south bank of the south fork of the American river, James W. Marshall, E. Pierson, John Wimmer, W. H. Scott, A. Stephens, H. Bigler, J. Brown, Peter L. Wimmer, C. Bennett, and several others whose names we have not learned, were engaged in constructing a saw mill (seen to the left of the engraving, near the bank of the river) for Gen. John A. Sutter, when gold was discovered by Mr. Marshall, Jan. 19, 1848.

As our readers are well aware, this news was soon trumpeted abroad, and large numbers of persons flocked to the new El Dorado, (from this originated the name of the county in which Coloma is situated, and which became the county seat of El Dorado) and Coloma, from containing only a double log cabin and about eighteen persons, exclusive of Indians, became a large town with a population of between two and three thousand.

When we first became acquainted with Coloma, late in the fall of 1849, it contained several hotels, the principal of which was Winter's; and a long street of stores and dwelling houses. On the opposite or north side of the river, John T. Little formed the nucleus of a small settlement, by erecting a large hotel and other buildings. At that time the principal part of the village (as those on both sides of the river were called Coloma), on the south bank, was nearly as large as it now is, but of course was not as substantially built. Although there were some good diggings being worked near the village, and many persons were making money at mining, its principal support was from those persons who were passing through it to other places, on prospecting trips, to diggings supposed to be rich, between the south and middle forks of the American river, the principal of which were those in the vicinity of Georgetown and Oregon Cañon.

At that time meals were $2,00 each, and barley for mules sold at $1,00 per pound; other grains and hay, none.
SCENES IN THE VALLEYS AND MOUNTAINS OF CALIFORNIA.

From that time to the present, Coloma has experienced the ups and downs usual to most mining settlements where the population is ceaselessly changing. Nevertheless she now has a steady resident and flourishing people, who are the owners of some of the finest fruit orchards, vineyards and gardens, to be found in any of the mountain towns; and the possessors of some of the most extensive, and in many cases some of the most profitable mining claims in the State. Remunerative diggings are even found beneath the very houses of the town.

The removal of the county seat to Placerville in 1857, was a serious check to her prosperity for a time; but she is now rapidly regaining her former position. The activity seen in the long street of stores, offices and hotels, will tell their own story to the visitor. Churches and school houses; Masonic, Odd Fellows and Sons of Temperance Societies are all said to flourish here. Then, though "last yet not least," must be included among her most useful institutions, one of the best conducted newspapers in the State, "The Coloma Times," edited and published by G. O. Kies, which has our best wishes for the prosperity it so well deserves.

MARIPOSA

Is the most southerly of all the mining towns of importance in the State. Although it has suffered more, perhaps, than almost any other mining district for the want of water for mining purposes, owing to its quartz leads and rich flat, gulch, and hill diggings, it has generally been prosperous; and being the county seat, as well as the trading centre of numerous small camps around, its streets at certain seasons of the year present a very lively appearance. Two abley edited and spirited papers are issued weekly; one the "Mariposa Gazette," and the other the "Mariposa Star."

The population is about thirteen hundred, or about one seventh of the entire county.