

CALIFORNIA.

From Prime's Crop Bulletin.

During the last thirty days I have spent all my time in the state of California. This period has been occupied travelling mostly upon the line of the Southern Pacific Railway in Central and Southern California, besides driving over the country in private conveyance seeing the land and exploring new areas which could not be seen or visited by the railroad. It is almost impossible in the narrow limits of a newspaper article to do justice to this journey. Hence, I must confine myself to the facts which present themselves to me personally and in as condensed a form as possible. I hope to be able to say in this issue nearly all I want to, and if I fail I shall continue it in my May CROP BULLETIN.

I shall start off with the broad statement that there is not one person in a hundred thousand that has the slightest idea of the vast commercial interests which this railroad has already developed and probably will continue to develop for many years yet to come. The Southern Pacific Company are doing for California what Stephen A. Douglas did for Illinois over thirty years ago, and that is, build railroads before they are needed, waiting for the population to come in and settle the state. To say that California is over nine hundred million long gives but a rough idea of its greatness.

But when you say that the state of California is as long as it is from Chicago to New York, or from Chicago to New Orleans by rail, you can form some little idea of the length of this vast state. California covers an area as large as that of the states of Rhode Island, Connecticut, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Delaware, New Jersey, New York, Maine and Ohio. California includes forty million acres of great valley and level land adapted to the growth of all kinds of small grain. Twenty-five million acres known as the foot-hills exceeding in value for fruit. Twelve million acres of timber and grazing land. Thirteen million acres of great mountain ranges which embrace the finest scenery in North America. Ten million acres of what was once considered irreclaimable land, but now with good irrigation is beginning to yield enormous crops.

This is about all the figures and statistics with regard to the state which I care to give. Preferring to tell you more of what I saw and heard of a specific character than dealing in generalities. It can be very readily seen from the above figures which have been verified over and over again, by thorough and accurate surveys, that California in every sense of the word is a great state. Its population, however, is by no means commensurate or what it ought to be with all those advantages compared to its immense area. What California needs to-day more than anything else, is cheap labor to develop its resources and the breaking up of the great land holdings which we know very little about in this part of the world, but stands to-day like a Chinese wall to shut out and stop the rapid settlement of the state.

FRUIT.

The development of the fruit interest in California never was as great as it is to-day. It has proven to be very profitable and I do not see any prospect in the near future of its being overdone. I do not think there is a more impressive sight in nature, than to ride through the long avenues of orange groves which form such an attractive, beautiful and profitable feature of so much of Southern California. And yet this industry is only in its infancy. New markets are being found, and the sale of the fruit every year, when the Southern Pacific road shall have a line of steamers from New Orleans to Liverpool which will connect with their road in Southern California fruit will be laid down in Liverpool in fourteen days from the time it is picked off the trees. The Earl Fruit Company have already on a small scale tested this problem and have been able to deliver fruit in excellent condition which has netted the consumer about two dollars and forty cents a box. Hand in hand with the production of fruit as well as nearly all the developments in agriculture comes this wonderful progress and to me at the same time grand question of

IRRIGATION.

As I have spent so much of my time during the last ten or fifteen years in Illinois interesting myself in the question of trying to get the water out of our soil, it was a revelation to me to see the gigantic irrigation enterprises

in the opposite direction, that of getting it into the ground.

Let me tell about the Kern County Land Improvement company, and something with regard to what they are now doing, and a little about their plans for future development.

I spent two or three days going over their developed and undeveloped lands. Kern county land company own in fee simple four hundred and fifty square miles of land in one body. Just think what a vast territory that is of itself.

But this large land holding is not held for speculation in the near future, but is being sold all the time to actual settlers on very advantageous terms. (This is no paid advertisement). The "canal" which conveys this water from Tulare Lake, is literally a canal and not a ditch. I rode through one avenue of this property which was twenty-five miles long. It was one hundred and twenty-five feet wide, rows of trees twenty-five and thirty feet high on each side of the road. An area laid in the centre of the road for an electric railway which in the near future will be built to convey the fruit, general produce and the people to the railroad station. This avenue was fenced each side with a five board fence, built in the most substantial manner. The lands each side of the road of course, were thoroughly irrigated, and a large proportion when I saw it was in grain; also fruit and large herds of cattle grazing on alfalfa. When you drove out on the unimproved portion of these lands the contrast was so great that it seemed to be impossible to realize that you were in the same land or country. This irrigating company have already expended over seven million dollars in gold coin in these improvements and have by no means arrived at the end of what they propose to do.

Another very practical illustration of what irrigation has done and will continue to do for the state, cannot better be illustrated than what is to be seen at Fresno. This is a city not set on a hill but in a valley which only a few years ago was a desert, now it contains a population of over ten thousand inhabitants. This is the centre of the raisin industry of the state. In 1891 boxes and sacked raisins equalled 1,200,000 boxes or 1,200 car loads were shipped from this city alone. As there is no dew at nights and a cloudless sky, these make the most perfect conditions for drying fruit and making raisins. The city is surrounded by vast vineyards and fruit farms which are generally laid out with the most exquisite taste, and with an idea to make them not only profitable but attractive. This latter feature of attractiveness impressed me greatly wherever I went in the state.

The idea which seemed to take hold of the settler, was, that he might not only have a productive home, but at the same time a beautiful one. Hence, it is not an exaggeration or an imaginative statement to say, that the land literally blossoms with the rose and the beautiful palm trees add so much to its picturesqueness and attractiveness. I have often noticed small and insignificant houses literally surrounded with shrubs and flowers of every hue and color.

Let me tell you of another beautiful spot both as regards natural scenery and what this mighty system of irrigation is doing for the lands in Southern California. The Smileys, who are known all over this country as brothers who are among the most successful and wealthy hotel owners of this country, and who own and operate in the Catskill Mountains Lake Minnewaska House, and the Mohawk House, after having converted an area of the Shawangunk Mountains upon which their hotels were built into one of the most beautiful and attractive resorts in the state of New York came out to Redlands and there bought a very large tract of land. This property which they purchased, no doubt, at a mere song, consisted of foot-hills almost exclusively. They at once commenced their operations upon a grand scale and up to this time have expended hundreds of thousands of dollars in making for themselves homes which, for natural and artificial beauty, I undertake to say cannot and will not be excelled for many years in this country. Snow-clad mountains surround it. A valley teeming with wealth of fruit in every stage from the seedling to the great big naval oranges are seen on every side. For miles and miles you can look up and down a valley of unsurpassed beauty. I could not tell you or begin to tell you what the Smiley Brothers have already done in the way of beautifying their homes. So far as the exterior surroundings are concerned, a magnificent macadamized road, winding road, climbing up the foot-hills which are terraced to the very top, all irrigated and every foot of the land planted with shrubs, flowers, fruit and tropical plants of all kinds. Reaching the summit a most enchanting view presents itself to the eye. A vast country lies at your feet, winding its way through it is the little silvery irrigating ditch bearing peace and plenty on its way to every home and grove it reaches. But enough of this.

ASPHALT.

Seventy-six miles north of Bakersfield the Southern Pacific Company have built a branch to this point for the purpose of bringing into market the vast natural deposits in inexhaustible quantities of this article of commerce which is now being used so much in our cities and parks for roads and driveways. I might say incidentally in this connection that near San Luis Obispo there is a similar deposit but not as pure, and is a mixture of sand and asphalt which can be and is taken out of the bed in its natural state and spread over the roads.

When it is thus spread it hardens at once and makes a very durable and excellent "country road." But to return to the asphalt beds at Asphalt. At this point the asphalt is of wonderful purity. Not only does it lie there in solid mountains easily dug out with a pick ax, but it oozes out of the rocks and as it trickles along the top of the ground looks like old-fashioned New Orleans molasses. So prolific is the asphalt in its liquid state that they dig holes in the ground in order to catch and accumulate the asphalt in its liquid state. I went down into one hole myself where the man had during the last forty-eight hours baled out thirty barrels of the liquid asphalt. The asphalt is being prepared now in the crude form and has found an eastern market as far as Kansas City, and the owners of these beds promise yet to deliver it as far east as Boston.

CONCLUSIONS.

I have so much to tell you, and nobody hates worse than myself to read long articles. But in this case I have not begun to tell of all I have seen, both of a practical and useful as well as of a pleasurable nature. Hence, I am going to say good bye to you in this letter and take up my story again in the May issue of my CROP BULLETIN. I only desire to add this, to express my gratitude as sincerely as possible to all those gentlemen not only connected with the Southern Pacific Railroad, but with every one whom I met all over the state who have done so much in making this the most delightful "outing" of my life.

FRENCH COACH STALLION



DANDOLO 646.

At Renfrew Lodge Stock Farm, Dwight, Ill. MONDAY, THURSDAY and WEDNESDAY at home stable. THURSDAY p. m. and FRIDAY a. m. at stable of Geo. Little, 2 miles west of EMINGTON. FRIDAY p. m. and SATURDAY a. m. at barn of Mr. Austin, Odell, Ill.

Percheron Stallion



VALSEUR 13172, [29775].

This Inbred Percheron Stallion will be found on MONDAY a. m., THURSDAY, FRIDAY and SATURDAY at the home stable. MONDAY p. m., TUESDAY and WEDNESDAY at stable of Wm. Wasson, Nevada.

TERMS:—\$150 to insure mare with foal. Amount of insurance due April 1, 1899. Parties disposing of or removing mares or failing to return same regularly will forfeit amount of insurance. Standing not guaranteed. \$5 extra.

J. P. McWILLIAMS.

DWIGHT

C. & A. Time Table

Table with columns for North and South routes, listing destinations like Chicago, St. Louis, and Kansas City with departure times.

BRANCH TRAINS. WEST. Mail Leaves... Mixed... EAST. Mail Arrives... Mixed... J. CHARLTON, G. P. & T. A. W. H. DUTY, AGENT.

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Table with 4 columns: Town Property (lots 1-20), Farm Property (lots 21-30), and Farm Property (lots 31-41) with descriptions and prices.

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Advertisement for Elkhart Carriage and Harness Mfg. Co. featuring illustrations of a horse-drawn carriage and a horse. Text describes various models and prices.

Frank Conway, Illinois Central R.R.

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Advertisement for W. L. Douglas shoes, featuring an illustration of a man's face and text describing the quality and availability of the shoes.