

OUR GREAT PACIFIC COMMONWEALTH.

A STUDY OF ULTIMATE CALIFORNIA.



CALIFORNIA is widely celebrated, but little known. Its unique climate and productions, and the dramatic incidents of its early history, have been deeply impressed upon the popular imagination wherever the name of the republic is spoken. These circumstances have given it rank among the most famous of American States, yet its problems and its future are inscrutable enigmas to all who have not studied the subject at close range, and to many who have. The anomaly that one of the States most talked of should be one of the least understood is not difficult to explain.

In the first place, California is known not by what millions of people have seen, but by what millions have read. Europe is better known by contact to Americans than California. A prominent American author recently «discovered» California, and filled the newspapers with the interesting and suggestive impressions it had made upon his mind. He had been to Europe twenty times, and to the Pacific coast once, which is once oftener than many other distinguished travelers of the Eastern seaboard. Still further, the Anglo-Saxon race is dealing with new conditions in California. Coming from dense forests, from a land of heavy rainfall, and from a temperate climate where winters are long and stern, it settled in treeless deserts, in a land of slight and peculiar rainfall, and under a sky that never knows the winter. Finally, California is in its infancy, having recently celebrated its forty-sixth birthday as an American commonwealth. Born in a paroxysm of speculation,—one of the wildest the world has seen,—it has outlived a trying experience of lesser economic epilepsy, and come to the threshold of its true career strengthened and purified by the extraordinary process. In less than half a century several far-reaching changes have swept through the industrial and social life of the State, swiftly altering the conditions of labor and of business. Even for those living in the midst of these events, it has been difficult to read their significance and estimate their influence on the ultimate character of the place and people. What wonder, then, that to the outside world California has meantime appeared like a jumble of gold, palms, and oranges, of gilded millionaires and

hopeless paupers, of enviable farmers living luxuriously on small sections of paradise, and of servile alien laborers herded in stifling tenements? Such are the conflicting aspects of the Golden State to those who view it from afar. What are the facts?

THE SPECULATING FARMER.

THE great farmer of California is the successor of the gold-hunter. Both were speculators of the thoroughbred type; both looked with contempt upon the matter of making a living, and dreamed only of making a fortune. Of homes and institutions they were neither architects nor builders, for they sought only to take the wealth from the soil and spend it elsewhere. The miner leaves nothing to commemorate the place where he has gathered gold save crumbling hovels and empty tin cans. The five-thousand-acre wheat-farmer leaves no monument beyond fields of repulsive stubble and the shanties of his «hoboes.» These social forces belong rather more to barbarism than to civilization.

The rise of horticulture brought no material change in these conditions. As with the miner and wheat-farmer, so with the fruit-grower the aim was to get rich quickly, and the method was speculation. Certain districts were devoted almost exclusively to prunes, others to wine-grapes, others to raisins, and yet others to oranges. Fruit-land rose to almost fabulous prices, and was readily bought by those who had been taught to believe that they could realize profits ranging from one hundred to one thousand dollars per acre for certain crops. Exceptional instances justified this prediction, and everybody seemed to prefer to found expectations upon these instances rather than upon average returns. It is not difficult to understand why a man who counts upon an income of five to ten thousand dollars from ten acres, or double that amount from twenty acres, should turn his back upon common things, and devote his land exclusively to the crops which promise such gilded profits.

WHEN PROSPERITY IS A BLIGHT.

THIS was the general policy, and it conferred great prosperity upon some classes, particularly the Chinese and Italian market-gardeners, who raised food for the orchard-

farmers to eat. There were years, however, when the fruit of trees and vines brought very large returns. Wherever the policy of single crops is pursued, whether it be wheat, corn, or cotton, raisins, prunes, or oranges, there are occasional years of well-nigh riotous prosperity. But such years are frequently more disastrous in their results than sober periods of depression. They feed the flame of speculation and raise false industrial ideals. Under the spell of such times, the people depart still further from the safe path of self-sufficient agriculture, buying more land to devote to the favorite crop, expanding their living expenses, and running into debt. When this spirit becomes the breath of industry no human laws can avert disaster. A true industrial system is like a noble river fed by eternal snows: it never floods its banks with an excessive flow, and never sinks below its normal stage. It ebbs and flows with the regular tides of the great commercial ocean to which it is tributary, but alike at high water and at low it bears the ships of men upon its tranquil bosom.

THE CIVILIZING POWER OF IRRIGATION.

THE evolutionary process of the last twenty years has wrought out some very valuable lessons for the future of California. It has demonstrated that irrigation is essential to the highest standard of civilization. The census of 1890 revealed the fact that two thirds of the gain in rural population stood to the credit of eight counties where irrigation prevailed. The counties which rely upon rainfall had about reached a standstill or scored a loss. The people have always been divided on the question as to whether irrigation is necessary. Those who oppose urge that it breeds malaria and injures the quality of the fruit. Those who favor insist that it is essential to the most scientific agriculture, and to the maintenance of dense population. The last twenty years have answered the question forever. The answer consists of a comparison between the south and the north. The one was born of the irrigation canal; the other of the mining-camp and the wheat-ranch. The one is characterized by a high civilization; the other by a low one.

THE HOLLAND OF THE SOUTH.

WHAT Holland was to the life of Europe in the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries, southern California is to the life of the Pacific coast at the end of the nineteenth century. The industrial impulse which the men of the Netherlands caught from their

conquest of the sea, the men of the southern valleys caught from their conquest of the desert. «Curbing the ocean and overflowing rivers with their dikes,» says one of the closest students of Dutch history, «they came to love the soil, their own creation, and to till it with patient, almost tender care.» So they became the fathers of scientific farming in Europe. They wrought a marvelous revolution in the methods of cultivating the soil. «When Catherine of Aragon wished for a salad, she was compelled to send for it across the Channel by a special messenger.» The civilization founded upon this wonderful agriculture maintained its high character through the whole range of their economic life. The habits of skilful industry which grew from the intensely cultivated soil conferred the same prosperity when adapted to the workshop and the store. The thread of coöperation spun from their common labor on the dikes ran through the entire industrial fabric of the crowded little nation. The influence of neighborly association involved in the conditions of existence on farms of petty size colored and shaped their social life. As it was in Holland, so it is in southern California.

The men of the southern valleys made the small farm unit supreme. With marvelous patience and intelligence they worked out the highest methods of watering and tilling the soil known to the world. Tempering their speculative instincts with love of home, they developed towns and surroundings of rare beauty and comfort, and made them centers of high social and intellectual life. To compare these conditions with those which prevail in the great wheat- and cattle-ranches of the north, where labor is mostly servile, and where beauty has never laid its hand upon the home or dooryard, is like comparing Holland to Paraguay. Although the south has by no means escaped the evils of the single crop, it has vindicated irrigation and the small farm, and the extraordinary social possibilities inherent in both. These are the valuable lessons which may be set against the failures and disappointments of the last two decades.

CALIFORNIA'S FUTURE MILLIONS.

WITH a population estimated by Governor Budd in 1896 at less than one million and a quarter, California has a territory nearly as large as that of France. It is inferior to France neither in climate, soil, natural resources, nor sea-coast, and its capacity for sustaining a dense population is fully as great as that of the European republic. The latter

supports more than thirty-eight millions. If, then, the comparatively few inhabitants of the California of to-day are not equally prosperous, it is because they have failed to make the best use of their opportunities. With the same rate of increase in the next century as in that of the immediate past, the United States will contain in 1996 a total population of over five hundred and eighty millions. Nothing is more certain than that California must receive its full share of these future millions. It seems hardly less certain that they will realize there the highest destiny of the race. But how?

Notwithstanding the supreme attractions of its rural life, more than seventy-seven per cent. of California's total increase in the last decade covered by the national census settled in towns and cities. As a result, the urban life of this far, new State is as badly congested as that of the old communities of the East. But the possibilities of agriculture, of manufacture, and of mining are relatively untouched. Ultimate California remains to be fashioned from these undeveloped materials. The tendencies of future growth are revealed by the teaching of the past, and not less by its failures than by its successes—not less by the fury of old speculations than by the calm current of these saner times. The future tides of population in the Golden State must first spend their energy upon the soil. It is the creation of a new and ampler civilization that is involved, and agriculture must be its foundation. But if those now engaged in cultivating the soil can scarcely maintain themselves, what hope is there for new recruits in the industry? The question is natural, but the answer is conclusive. There is no hope for them if they engage in speculation, but there is an absolute guaranty of a living and a competence, to be enjoyed under the most satisfying and ennobling social conditions, if they work upon sound industrial lines. These lines are clearly disclosed by the light of past experience.

THE SETTLER'S OPPORTUNITY.

THREE classes of products should enter into the calculations of the new settler in California: the things he consumes; the things California now imports from Eastern States and foreign countries; the things which Eastern communities consume, but can never hope to produce, and of which California possesses virtually a monopoly. In the first list is almost everything which would appear in an elaborate dinner menu, from the course of olives to the course of oranges,

nuts, and raisins, and excluding only the coffee. This policy of self-sustenance has been ignored to a startling degree in the mad struggle for riches, but the coming millions of farmers can be sure of a luxurious living only by stooping to collect it from the soil.

MILLIONS FOR NEEDLESS IMPORTS.

IN the second list are many of the commonest articles of consumption, which California might readily produce at home, but for which it sends millions of dollars abroad each year. The imports of pork and its products range as high as eight or ten millions each year. Condensed milk is not only a very important article of consumption in mining-camps and great ranches, but is largely shipped abroad for the Asiatic trade. It is brought across the continent from New Jersey. California also sends beyond its borders from twenty to twenty-five millions annually for the item of sugar, which should not only be produced in sufficient quantities to supply consumption, but for export as well. It is a curious fact that many of the finest fruit preserves sold in San Francisco bear French and Italian labels, and that the supply of canned sweet corn comes mostly from Maine. Essential oils made from the peelings of citrus fruits are also imported. It is not uncommon to find orange marmalade which has been prepared in Rochester, New York, the oranges having been shipped eastward, and the manufactured product westward, at a cost of two transcontinental freights. Imports are by no means confined to things which require capital and machinery for their manufacture. Chickens, turkeys, and eggs are largely brought from outside. A single commission-house in San Francisco imports five hundred thousand chickens every year. Thus a good many thousands of the new settlers can profitably be employed in feeding much of the present population of the State, which includes a large proportion of those who are speculating on wheat and fruit, sheep, cattle, and hogs.

PRODUCTS FOR EXPORT.

HAVING made perfectly sure of his living, and disposed of his surplus for cash in the home market, the settler still has left a promising field in the list of things which nine tenths of the American people consume but cannot produce. Among these products are oranges, lemons, and limes. Florida competition in this line has been temporarily destroyed, if not permanently injured. Mexico is, perhaps, a rising competitor; but there is little reason

to fear that California cannot hold its own against all foreign producers. Even more promising is the olive culture; for while the orange is an article of luxury, the olive must ultimately become here as elsewhere an important article of food. Californians are just beginning to pickle the ripe olives. The difference between a green olive and a ripe one is precisely the difference between a green and a ripe apple. In Spain the people subsist largely on olives, but not on green ones. All who have eaten the ripe fruit which is now being pickled in California will agree that it is conservative to say that when the American public become acquainted with this product, its consumption will be enormously increased. This will be true, because in its new form the olive is as nutritious as it is palatable, and the people will learn to depend upon it as an article of diet. In the production of deciduous fruits, such as peaches, apricots, cherries, and nectarines, California has much competition, and is to have much more in the future. There are irrigated valleys throughout the Pacific Northwest, the intermountain region, and the now undeveloped Southwest, which are beginning to produce marvelous fruits of this kind. The same is true of olives, almonds, and walnuts in a much more restricted way. The California wine industry is promising to-day, and the culture of grapes for this purpose profitable. Planters who depend for their entire income upon the cultivation of these export crops will necessarily suffer all the evils of speculative farming, but those who have founded their industry upon the plan of self-sufficiency will always have a surplus income from this third source, and in years of high prices it will be large. It is thus that the agricultural basis of California will be indefinitely broadened in order to sustain future millions.

THE FACTORY AND THE MINE.

UPON this foundation manufactures, mining, and an enlarged commerce will rest. The first cannot be long delayed. California will not permanently endure the enormous waste involved in shipping its wool and hides across the continent to Eastern mills, tanneries, and workshops, and in shipping back again the manufactured cloth and shoes. The factories must inevitably grow up near the raw material and the consumers. Expediency and the economy of nature alike demand it. This important part of California's civilization remains almost wholly to be developed. Its growth will open new avenues for employ-

ment and new outlets for the products of the soil.

The mining industry is also in its youth. To use a common phrase, but a true one, «the surface of the ground has only been scratched.» Old methods have been outlived, and the conditions of the industry are changing in vital ways; but the work of taking gold and silver, copper, lead, and iron, from the foot-hills and mountains of California has only been begun. The day of the individual miner, working with his pan in the gravel bed of the stream, is mostly past. The conditions of hydraulic mining were materially altered by legislation because of the injury done by polluting the rivers and filling their channels; but quartz-mining is in a state of rapid development, and is destined to assume prodigious proportions. It will add untold millions to the wealth of the community, increasing the demand for labor, and widening the markets of the farmer.

THE FUTURE INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATION.

NATURE has unquestionably provided the foundation of a marvelous industrial life in which millions of people will finally participate. To-day these resources are undeveloped. There is but one force that can awaken the sleeping potentialities into a manifold and fruitful life. That force is human labor. Looking down the years of the future, it is possible to predict, with the accuracy of mathematics, that human labor will coin from these vacant valleys and rugged mountain-sides billions upon billions of money. The wealth to be so created will build many beautiful homes, capitalize banks, factories, and railroads, and send great steamships across the Pacific to foreign shores. To whom shall these things belong when labor has made them from the materials which nature provided? Upon the answer to that question hang the destinies of California.

The seed of the California of the past was in the little group of feverish gold-hunters who camped by Sutter's mill in 1849. It bore the gaudy weed of speculation, with its bitter harvest of misfortune and discontent for the many, accentuated only by the superfluous riches which it gave to the few. The seed of the California of the future is in the irrigation canals owned and administered by small landed proprietors; in the fruit-exchanges which are supplanting the commission system and securing to the producer the rewards of his labor; in the coöperative creameries and canning-factories which, in the face of deficient capital and unfair competition, are

slowly fighting their way to the sure ground of abiding prosperity; in the multitudinous and uniformly successful manufacturing and mercantile associations which Mormon genius has planted in the valleys of Utah; in the banks, insurance companies, and loan and building societies which, all over the Union and all over the world, have vindicated the possibilities of associated man.

SOIL FOR NEW INSTITUTIONS.

INDUSTRIAL organization is the only shield against the evil possibilities of concentrated wealth. In a settled country, where the roots of old institutions are deeply planted, and where vested interests have fastened upon all the sources of natural wealth, the application of this principle is surrounded by serious difficulties. But in a country where, in a comparative sense, all remains to be made, there is a fair field for its development. Such is the fortunate situation of California and of nearly one half of the continent to-day. It is mostly a blank page which awaits the makers of history. Its institutions are to be formulated, founded, and realized by the men of the future. Without raising a hostile hand against a vested right or privilege, without enacting a single new law, and without doing violence to any rational sentiment, the millions that are yet to occupy the fairest portion of the national domain may win precious victories for humanity.

Those who come to till the soil may own the numerous small industries which consume and concentrate their crude products either by setting aside a portion of their original investment, or by dedicating a part of their subsequent income to the purpose. This has been done on a great scale in Utah and in some foreign countries, and is being done in a small way in various parts of the West. They can go further under the same principle, and establish industries less closely related to the soil. The problem of distributing their products even to the remotest markets is already in process of rapid solution. Only the possession of the iron highway by private capital now balks their perfect triumph, and even the railway system may some day be made subservient to the interests of production. The mines are mostly within the reach of the organized community; they are located on public lands. They require only well-directed labor to bring them to a stage where they readily command either capital or credit sufficient to obtain the necessary machinery. The labor that does the work requires to be fed only with that which grows

from the soil. The properly organized community would furnish both the labor and the sustenance. Thus the earnings of mines, like the rewards of the farm and factory, would be distributed among those whose labor created them.

All this has been done, and will be done in a much larger way, without resort to socialism or any other daring scheme of revolutionary character. It involves but two principles—the joint-stock company and the New England town meeting. These are applicable, if not to great aggregations of people, at least to small communities. The system which they represent rests upon individual independence. The society which they serve finds its unit in the family and the home. There is a point beyond which the individual cannot go without associating his labor with that of others, either as wage-earner or share-owner. Under the system now growing up in the West, the stock company, composed of many petty capitalists, takes the place of the employer. It is a legitimate and natural economic development, and perhaps the most hopeful one of recent times.

THE FIELD FOR GROWTH.

It is interesting to consider what portions of California will receive the bulk of the future population. The coast region presents a frontage of over one thousand miles to the sea. Though narrowly hemmed in by mountains, it contains many fertile agricultural valleys which have long been occupied. The chief industries are dairying, stock-raising, and general farming, with some mining; in a few districts, notably the Santa Clara Valley, fruit-raising has assumed large proportions. While the coast region will inevitably enjoy a gradual increase of population, we must look elsewhere to find a field which invites the immigration of millions, and offers hopeful ground for the growth of new institutions.

What is popularly known as southern California is a narrowly restricted district reaching eastward from Los Angeles for about one hundred miles, and southward to San Diego. Like the coast region, its character is fixed, though on widely different lines. Its population is already comparatively dense, and its future growth will be measured by the water-supply for irrigation, the limitations of which seem already in sight. It is an impressive fact that the seven counties of the south received sixty-one per cent. of the whole increase of rural population between 1880 and 1890. This marvelous showing was chiefly due to the su-

perior public spirit of the locality, and to the attractive institutions which grew out of it. But its very success in the past places limitations upon the country as a field for future expansion. Land values have risen high, and the water-supply has become almost as precious as gold. A curious development of colonization in this locality is a new community to which desirable families are admitted upon condition that they will expend not less than two hundred and fifty thousand dollars each for improvements. It is reassuring to reflect, however, that the millionaire colonists can accomplish little more with their abundant capital than humbler settlers may do with their united labor. The sun, the sky, the earth, and the waters will be as kind to one class as to the other. While it should not be inferred that none but the very rich can settle in the south, it is perfectly true that this charming district is not within the field of the largest future developments.

Where, then, is the field to accommodate the hosts who will come when the population of California begins to approximate that of France? It lies principally in four great and distinct bodies, which may be named, in the order of their importance, as follows: the Sacramento Valley, stretching north from the Bay of San Francisco to the feet of snowy Shasta; the San Joaquin Valley, reaching south from the great bay to the place where the two mountain-ranges meet at the pass of Tehachapi; the intermountain valleys on the eastern slope of the Sierra, extending over the boundary into Nevada; and the Colorado Desert, in the extreme southeastern part of the State, on the borders of Mexico.

THE SACRAMENTO VALLEY.

THE first of these, the valley of the Sacramento, received an addition of only two thousand to its rural population, out of a total of nearly ninety-seven thousand for the State, between 1880 and 1890. The fault lay neither with the soil nor the climate, which are equal to those of any part of California, but with economic conditions. The country is held in vast estates, principally devoted to the cultivation of grain, which has been a losing industry for several years. Where horticulture has been adopted it has frequently been done upon a great scale. The vast orchards and vineyards of Mrs. Stanford, of General Bidwell, and of A. T. Hatch are striking instances of this tendency. When General N. P. Chipman, himself a distinguished resident of the Sacramento Valley, called attention to the

startling revelations contained in the census figures, the matter was widely discussed, but with little result. The public spirit which has given the southern counties their splendid place in the life of the Pacific coast is distinctly lacking in the north. The truth is that it cannot be cultivated on wheat-fields or in mining-camps. It comes with irrigation, with the subdivision of the land into thousands of diminutive holdings, with a citizenship composed of a multitude of small proprietors.

These conditions are exactly reversed in the northern valley, with pitiful results. The same forces would make the same civilization in both localities, for the physical foundation is practically identical. The southern valley lies open to the sea, the breezes from which mercifully temper the summer heat. In other respects, the advantages are all on the side of the Sacramento. It is far greater in area; its water-supplies are both more abundant and more reliable; its surrounding advantages, notably in the way of mines and timber, are much superior. Finally, it possesses the inestimable blessing of a mighty river, navigable for a distance of two hundred miles, and capable of being much improved. This is a factor of the highest import. It furnishes cheap transportation by boat, and materially lessens railroad charges. Furthermore, it gives the valley a comprehensive system of drainage from Shasta to the sea. The wonderful mineral riches of this locality will be rapidly developed. They are by no means confined to gold, for what promises to be one of the greatest copper-mines in the world has recently been opened in Shasta County, with the aid of British capitalists. It is from the foot-hills on the eastern side of the Sacramento Valley that the earliest oranges and lemons seek the market. They command high prices, and are mostly sold on the coast from San Francisco to British Columbia. It is in this imperial valley, and in the foot-hills and mountains which rise above it in splendid pictures on each side, that a large proportion of the future millions will find homes and prosperity.

THE SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY.

THE San Joaquin Valley is even larger, and in many respects resembles its northern sister. It is not as fortunate, however, in extent of water-supply, navigation facilities, or natural drainage. Here irrigation and the small farm had begun to make themselves felt, and the single county of Fresno gained more than five times as much in population

in the last census decade as the entire Sacramento Valley. Both irrigation and small farming have here been attended with misfortunes which have injured them in public esteem. Perhaps the earliest triumph of the new woman in this generation was that of Miss Austin and her three associates—all school-teachers of San Francisco—who founded the wonderful Fresno raisin industry. Investing their savings in a ranch, and then boldly venturing upon a culture in which few had faith, they demonstrated that raisins equal to those of Spain could be produced in the San Joaquin. They were rewarded with handsome profits, and later thousands of people shared in the benefits of their demonstration. But speculation and the fallacy of the single crop followed as natural consequences, bringing hard times, mortgages, and disappointment in their train. In the mean time unskilful irrigation without proper drainage wrought harm in various ways. All of these misfortunes are being overcome, but it is not easy for the great valley to undo the injury which its reputation has suffered in the last few years. Nevertheless, the country of the San Joaquin contains great possibilities, and will sustain a dense population. Its contiguous mountains are richly endowed with mines and great timber, as well as with the sublimest scenery.

THE FALL OF WHEAT A BLESSING.

THE valleys of the Sacramento and San Joaquin have been, and are yet, the grain-fields of the Pacific coast. Many of their residents have bemoaned the fall in the price of wheat as the greatest of calamities. The truth is that for California it is the first of blessings. The fall in wheat prices has broken the land monopoly which kept labor servile, and gave the most fruitful of countries to four-footed beasts rather than to men. Not until nearly all great ranches had been mortgaged to their full capacity, not until the failure of prices had made the debts intolerably burdensome and brought their owners face to face with disaster, was it possible to open the country for its best and highest uses. With the supremacy of wheat will go the shanty and the «hobo» laborer, to be followed in time by the Chinaman. In their places will come the home and the man who works for himself. Civilization will bloom where barbarism has blighted the land. There are localities where the cultivation of grain can be pursued, but the semi-tropical valleys of California were plainly intended for better things.

Irrigation, drainage, and cheap transportation are closely related as economic problems in the great interior valleys. William Hammond Hall, the former State engineer, has predicted that within fifty years the waters which rise in the mountains and meander through these valleys to the sea will all be utilized to moisten and fertilize the soil, and then be turned into canals, serving the double purpose of drainage and transportation. He claims that it is feasible, from an engineering standpoint, to construct such works, and to propel trains of freight-boats by electricity at a speed of six miles an hour. If this shall be done, the gain to the State will be beyond all calculation, provided the works be owned by the public. It is by no means an idle dream when considered in connection with ultimate California.

EAST OF THE SIERRA.

THE third field of future development is the desert country lying east of the Sierra Nevada. This is almost unknown to the outside world, and is reached only by lines of narrow-gauge railway running northwest and southwest from Reno, Nevada. It lies in two large bodies, the more northerly of which is in Lassen and Modoc counties. This enjoys large water-supplies and fertile soil, with abundant resources of timber and mineral. The country is of a sage-brush character, and most of the land is still open to entry by citizens. The altitude ranges from four thousand feet upward, and the climate is distinctly that of the temperate zone. The more southern body east of the Sierras lies largely in Inyo County. Here the climate is milder, though temperate rather than semi-tropical. A large population will occupy these districts in the future.

THE COLORADO DESERT.

THE most famous of waste places in America, the Colorado Desert, is popularly regarded as an empire of hopeless sterility, the silence of which will never be broken by the voices of men. But the great desert is the life-work of the Colorado River. The scientific men of the University of Arizona have analyzed these waters, and found that the actual commercial value of the fertilizing matter which would be deposited upon each acre by irrigation amounts, in the course of a year, to \$9.07. What, then, is the potential value of the land which this river has created in centuries? The products of the region include oranges and the dates of commerce. The place is more like Syria than any other part of the United

States, and the daring imagination may readily conceive that here a new Damascus will arise, more beautiful than that of old.

With the occupation of the Colorado Desert, and of the great peninsula which adjoins it, a powerful impulse will be given to agriculture, mining, and commerce in a vast region now little peopled. One of the inevitable consequences will be the rise of San Diego to the proportions of a large city—probably the largest in the southern part of the coast.

LAND OF THE COMMON PEOPLE.

THE future of California will be very different from its past. It has been the land of large things—of large estates, of large enterprises, of large fortunes. Under another form of government it would have developed a feudal system, with a landed aristocracy resting on a basis of servile labor. These were its plain tendencies years ago, when somebody coined the epigram, «California is the rich man's paradise and the poor man's hell.» But later developments have shown that whatever of paradise the Golden State can offer to the rich it will share, upon terms of marvelous

equality, with the middle classes of American life. Over and above all other countries, it is destined to be the land of the common people. This is true because, owing to its peculiar climatic conditions, it requires less land to sustain a family in generous comfort. For the same reason cheaper clothing and shelter, as well as less fuel, suffice, while it is possible to realize more perfectly the ideal of producing what is consumed. Moreover, it is a natural field for the application of associative industry and the growth of the highest social conditions. Indeed, the country has distinctly failed as a land of big things, and achieved its best successes in the opposite direction. Its true and final greatness will consist of the aggregate of small things—of small estates, of small enterprises, of small fortunes. Progress toward this end is already well begun. It must go on until the last great estate is dismembered and the last alien serf is returned to the Orient. Upon the ruins of the old system a better civilization will arise. It will be the glory of the common people, to whose labor and genius it will owe its existence. Its outreaching and beneficent influence will be felt throughout the world.

William E. Smythe.

WHAT LANGUAGE DID CHRIST SPEAK?

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

It is by no accident that Mrs. Agnes Smith Lewis, the author of the following article, has won the credit of having made one of the greatest biblical discoveries of the century. She had been a student of the Syriac language, and could talk Arabic and Greek. It was with the plan of getting access to the treasures of the monastery of St. Katherine that she went to Mount Sinai, where Tischendorf had found the magnificent Sinaitic manuscript of the Greek Bible, and where Professor Palmer had failed to complete his attempted catalogue of the library. Her ability to talk with the Greek monks in their own language, and her wonderful tact and generalship, secured their good will; and she was not slow in discovering, under a late and worthless monkish biography, the faded letters of an ancient Syriac text of the four gospels. The leaves were stuck together, but she separated them by the steam of a tea-kettle, and took four hundred photographs, which she brought to England, where they proved to be a peculiar and very old version of the gospels of extraordinary interest. She has since visited the monastery again, with her sister, Mrs. Gibson, who made a catalogue of the six hundred Arabic manuscripts, while she catalogued the two hundred Syriac manuscripts, and made other important discoveries. A volume published by her last year contains a translation of the famous manuscript which bears her name.

William Hayes Ward.

THIS subject has awakened considerable interest of late years, owing partly to the discoveries of ancient biblical manuscripts which have recently been made, and partly to a growing desire on the part of Christians to realize how truly the Son of God became man,