

OF SANTA CLARA VALLEY.

FREDERICK W. WHITE WRITES OF A CHARMING REGION.

The Stanford University—The Lick Observatory—Wonderful Groves of Orange and Olive Trees—The Glorious Climate of California.

[Special Correspondence.]
SAN JOSE, Cal., Sept. 12.—Of all the valleys of California Santa Clara is by long odds the most beautiful, most productive, most interesting. Possibly its nearness to San Francisco may account, in a measure, for this. Early settlers probably gathered near the commercial center, and civilization processes and improvements kept pace with the growth of the metropolis of the Pacific. But be-



PALMS NEAR ST. JAMES PARK, SAN JOSE.
yond all these is the exquisite natural beauty and richness of the valley, which has made it the abiding place of the representative wealth of the entire slope and given it a distinction peculiarly its own. I cannot think of any one hundred miles of railway in the civilized world presenting on its line anything like the number of attractions, famous here and abroad, that are seen on the journey from San Francisco to Monterey through the lovely valley of Santa Clara.

First, then, is Menlo Park, the summer home of the Floods, the Mackays, the Crockers, the Stanfords and other Occidental millionaires—which has about it an exclusiveness and repose not unlike Lenox, Mass. Here, too, is Senator Leland Stanford's "Palo Alto," the equine paradise, a ranch of nearly ten thousand acres, where eight or nine hundred horses live better than half the humans of the world, where two hundred men are employed to care for them, and where the celebrated Electioneer, valued at \$100,000, heads the stud. As I patted the grand old horse in his roomy stall, I thought of a few years ago when he was bought in the east for a mere bagatelle. His get, thus far, has been sold for a round million at least.

To the north of Menlo Park is the Leland Stanford university. I wandered through its superb yet unfinished walls of yellow stone, when completed, will have cost twenty millions of dollars. The senator pays this twenty millions and then endows it all with thirty millions more, as a beginning. Upon what a large scale these California millionaires do things! Within sight of the university buildings is San Jose, the prettiest and most cultivated city in the state, with a community of much more than average intelligence. Just beyond the city, on a "heaven kissing hill," is the famous Lick observatory, the Mecca of the average tourist. Not many miles away are the big trees and Santa Cruz, and near them are the two great establishments of Spreckles, the sugar king, where thousands of tons of beets are made into sugar. At the end of all is Del Monte, a miniature garden of Eden. They have a legend in Santa Clara which the loyal native of San Jose will kindly tell you, to the effect that in the far distant, prehistoric times, this was the home of the fairies, who watched over all the provinces or counties in embryo of California; that when the Spanish padre came with his bell and book they departed from the Pacific to other undiscovered lands; that before going the fairy representatives of all the counties met at Santa Clara and into her lap poured the gifts for which they were each most noted. Thus it has come to pass that this valley and county of Santa Clara has "something and the best" of all the other valleys and counties possess, and is therefore so rich in natural treasures that it is called the earthly paradise. Of course this pretty legend is shrewdly advanced by the worldly wise resident as part of the glorification of his home, but the gist and implication of the fairy tale is not far from the truth.

The visitor to the Lick observatory has a sentimental journey if nothing more. The distance up and down the mountain side—or there and back—is fifty-two miles, the fare is \$5, the time occupied about ten hours. The road is an exceptionally fine one and the scenery exquisite. It suggests poetry and things, and they say that miles of tender verses have been written by inspired tourists, who leave the Vendome on the big Concord stages in the early morning. If you take the ordinary conveyance, not built for ordinary mountain travel, you are likely, however, upon your return to San Jose in the evening, to fully appreciate Horace Greeley's remark when Hank Monk, on a wager, drove the great eater over rocky roads from Virginia City to Placerville, 112 miles, in ten hours.

The old man, getting down from the coach with much difficulty, observed to the waiting and gaping mob: "Gentlemen, I'll bet \$50 that Hank Monk is the best driver in America, and that I'm the sorest man." The observatory is built on the crest of what is now called Mt. Hamilton, a slightly eminence which the Spaniards a century ago gracefully christened Mt. Ysabel. The new name is a gross impertinence. Some village doctor wandered up there one day, and in a burst of tremendous egotism called the mountain after himself. He wrote something about it and then—decently died. When the visitor gets to the observatory he stays there a couple of hours, wanders through the buildings, is told several times that "there, sir, is the larg-

est telescope on God's wide earth," and that under its foundation of one hundred tons or more James Lick, pioneer and philanthropist, is laid permanently and deep. He rests under the great dome of the observatory, just as Napoleon rests under the dome of the Invalides in Paris. But the Frenchman gives, even to this home of death, a touch of artistic beauty by brightening it with rich colors and decorating it with fine mosaics. Lick's vault, on the contrary, is dark and gloomy.

The Lick observatory has been here for several years and is yet to be heard from. It reminds me of Charles Dickens' refreshment station at Mugby, "whose proudest boast was that it had never refreshed anybody." I can't for the life of me see how James Lick acquired a reputation for great philanthropy by building this observatory with its "biggest telescope on earth." Your correspondent may be of the Gradgrind species, and might make palatable soup of his grandmother, but he really cannot see what practical use the observatory is. It has been here nearly a decade and its astronomers have accomplished nothing. Possibly there is nothing to accomplish. Astronomical science has virtually reached its zenith. The movements of the heavenly orbs, the principles by which their motions are regulated, with the causes of the various phenomena, are known thoroughly, and if all the observatories on the globe were abandoned today the science of navigation, for example, would know, and does know, all that can aid it for the next thousand years. San Jose, however, is very proud of this observatory, which overlooks its beautiful valley, and never asks unpleasant questions concerning its utility.

At the broad bases of these towering hills lies some of the fairest land under the sun. Deep green orange groves, luscious vineyards, extensive orchards, with olive and prune trees galore. I spent two or three days driving about under the shadow of Mount Hamilton, and never did my eyes rest on a rosier or more prosperous country, seeing nowhere a sign of poverty, and meeting a people of uncommon thrift. One afternoon I unexpectedly visited an olive ranch, meeting the owner on the highway by accident. It was near Los Gatos, a few miles from San Jose, and is known, I believe, as the Quito grove.

Could I be in California? I recalled a day in Tuscany, when I sat eating olives and black bread with a sanctified Italian priest, and heard him sing his dreams of hope, and laugh his satisfaction over the drooping yield of his purple trees. Some one has said that no landscape is spiritual from which the olive is absent. I do not know as to that, but the growing olive to me seems to have the breath of heaven on its body just as it had on that mount where the sermon was preached more than eighteen centuries ago. Quito grove is an Italian reproduction. All the men employed on it have been brought from the olive groves near Florence, and have given a national character to their present home. The owner is Mr. Goodrich, a gentleman with a passion for olive culture. He is an eastern man, an alumnus of Yale and a traveler of observation and taste. His family is living in Florence, where his children are being educated, and he has made his present quarters resemble the Italian home of his wife as much as possible. The servants and the service are Italian, which is the one language spoken, and the whole place has the true Tuscan flavor. He is improving the olive and, I assume, making money in this delicious valley, while all about him are tidy little ten and twenty acre farms devoted to the French prune, the grape and the olive, whose owners say they realize two and three hundred dollars an acre. To the visitor it seems an ideal existence; what its drudgery may be I do not know. But this I do know, that the roads of a neighborhood are a fair criterion of the neighborhood's intelligence and prosperity, and the roads of Santa Clara are magnificent, well graded and ballasted. The Alameda, for instance, a broad avenue running from San Jose to Santa Clara, is level as a floor and shaded by trees planted by the mission fathers 100 years ago. In the perfection of its roadway California gives the east many points in the game. "If you are in San Jose next Sunday I will run up and dine with you at the Vendome," said a San Francisco friend as on a March Monday evening he saw me off for Del Monte and Monterey. The next Sunday I sat in the cool of the veranda awaiting the arrival of the noon train, when my friend quietly bowled into the court yard on his bicycle. The distance from San Francisco to San Jose is fifty miles. He had made it in a trifle over three hours, so perfect are the roads.

Leland Stanford's Memorial Chapel. Toward dusk he returned, thinking nothing of the spin. It is one of the ordinary Sunday jaunts of the wheelmen, especially during, say February and March, when the warm spring sun has nothing enervating in its caress. Wasn't it Cervantes who said it was like bidding farewell forever to a traveling companion with whom one has passed agreeable travel from home? He is not a friend, yet you seem to love him like one, and you will remember him all through life with a feeling of desire more lively than you would experience toward many of those to whom you give the name of friends. And so, with a tinge of regret I bid adieu to the prosperous city of San Jose, the enchanted gardens at Del Monte, the marvels of Menlo Park, the "glorious climate of California."



FREDERICK W. WHITE.

THE COSSACK IN CENTRAL ASIA.

Information About an Interesting People by a Famous Traveler.

[Special Correspondence.]
NEW YORK, Sept. 26.—A wide, treeless plain, looking vaster and drearier than ever beneath the creeping shadows of evening, amid which the last gleam of sunset glows red and angrily in the far west; a dark belt of matted brushwood, marking the winding course of a shallow, muddy river; a score of camp fires twinkling faintly along its bank amid the gathering dimness, like stars seen through a mist; sheaves of lances and rifles piled around them with military exactness, and groups of gaunt white clad figures and dark, lean, wolfish faces flitting ghostlike to and fro in the spectral glare of the firelight: Such was the scene upon which I came suddenly one evening in Central Asia during Russia's last war with the native tribes of Tartary.

These men were the renowned "Cossacks," of whom the world has heard so much and seen so little, and whom it usually pictures to itself as forever rushing at full gallop across a boundless plain, with a writhing baby on their lance point and a slice of raw horseflesh "keeping hot" between the steed and the saddle—maintaining themselves and their horses where there is nothing to eat, and amassing stores of ill gotten gain where there is no one to rob. In reality, I have always found this legendary ogre a very jovial, boyish, simple hearted fellow, who, though too often committing fearful atrocities when his blood is up in battle, has never done anything worse than many recorded deeds of far more civilized soldiers within the memory of living men.

It is with warriors like these that Russia is now heaving a path of conquest across the whole breadth of Central Asia and overpowering the fierce Afghans and Turkomans with a hardihood and endurance even greater than their own. In bearing heat and cold, thirst and hunger, long marches and unwholesome camping grounds no man living can surpass the Cossack. It is true that against the disciplined armies of Germany these wild spearmen would be of little use except as scouts and foragers; but for the irregular warfare of the eastern deserts they have no match on the face of the earth.

Most of the men were lying stretched on the ground after their march, in lazy enjoyment; for a Cossack's life has no medium—either rushing across the steppe like a whirlwind, or snoring in the dirt like a hog. But a few were still busy around the fires, and some of them struck up all at once an old Russian war song as familiar to my ears as to their own:

"Soldiers, soldiers, lads of the czar,
Who are your fathers, say?"
"Our fathers are battles whose fame rings loud,
They are our fathers—they!"
"Soldiers, soldiers, lads of the czar,
Who are your mothers, say?"
"Our mothers are tents standing white on the field,
They are our mothers—they!"
"Soldiers, soldiers, lads of the czar,
Who are your sisters, say?"
"Our sisters are sabers whetted to snite,
They are our sisters—they!"
"Soldiers, soldier, tell me once more
Who are your brides, I pray?"
"Our brides they are guns well loaded for fight,
They are our brides—aye, they!"

As the song ended, I walked into the camp quite unnoticed; for, in my soiled white Russian forage cap, travel stained cotton jacket and trousers and knee high boots, I was quite like enough to the men around me to have passed for one of themselves in that uncertain light. But I had no wish to avoid their observation.

I sat down on a stone and, taking out my colored map of Central Asia, pretended to be studying it, knowing well that the Cossacks (who, like most savages, are as curious as children) would soon be drawn around me by the sight of this strange object, which, with its gay colors, queerly printed names and puzzling network of crossed lines, would be a very novel and startling thing to them.

And so it proved. I suddenly became aware of a gaunt, sallow, gray mustached visage—so crisscrossed with saber scars as to look just like a railway map—peering inquisitively over my shoulder. Then another and another came edging in beside it, till I was hemmed in by a complete ring of wild figures and grim faces.

"What's that picture, father? We can't quite make it out."
"It's not a picture at all, brothers—it's a plan that shows me the very way by which you have come here from Holy Russia and all the places that you have passed through."

And then, seeming not to notice the looks of unbelief and meaning grins with which my hearers received what they considered to be a most outrageous lie, I went on:

"Up here, at Orenburg, you passed the Ural river and then marched eastward to Orsk, where you crossed the frontier and turned to the southeast."
"So we did, comrades!" shouted half a dozen voices at once. "He speaks the truth—so we did."
"Then you passed Fort Kara Butak, crossed the Kara Kum Desert and halted here and here and here (naming and describing the various posts, all of which I knew well).

The Cossacks listened open mouthed and wide eyed to the familiar names, and the excited clamor was followed by a silence of utter amazement. Then one said timidly:
"Father, can you show us the very place where we are now?"
"To be sure I can, my lad. See, that black spot is the village yonder; there's the river, twisting and winding; and here, just where you see this line, is your camp."

There was another pause of blank bewilderment, and then the scarred veteran with the gray mustache asked in awe stricken whisper:
"But, father, tell me, for the love of heaven, if we've marched a thousand miles since leaving Holy Russia, how the devil can it all go into a little scrap of paper no bigger than an Easter cake?"
DAVID KER.

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