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BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTES ON EARLY
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BY

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BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTES ON EARLY CALIFORNIA.^a

By ROBERT ERNEST COWAN, 1862 -

In the annals of recorded history, ancient or modern, there is perhaps no section of territory that in its growth and development presents so many remarkable features as does that of California, whose entire history is almost a unique annals of romance and reality.

Discovered in 1542 by Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo (if we disregard the earlier and somewhat apochryphal claims of Ulloa, Alarcon, and Melchor Diaz), California appears to have lain dormant for more than two and a quarter centuries, and, considering the temper and disposition of the period, this fact is at least worthy of passing notice.

Columbus had added to the map of the world the shadowy outline of a western continent; Cabot and Vespucci had projected these outlines further; and succeeding the discoveries of these great pioneers, the next half century witnessed the greatest explorations and the most feverish lust for conquest the world has ever known.

Balboa had discovered the Pacific Ocean; Magellan, beating through the strait that yet bears his name, had plowed the trackless Pacific to India; Vasco di Gama had rounded the Cape of Good Hope; Pizárrro, Cortez, and Bernal Diaz had invaded and planted the banner of Spain in the ancient empires of the Incas and Montezumas; further, many hardy adventurers had sailed into unknown waters, or had explored pathless wastes beset by savage men scarcely less wild than savage beasts.

In the full flush of this fever came Cabrillo, landed at the Bay of San Diego, where he remained for six days, and which he named San Miguel, the expedition proceeding along

^a Read at the meeting of the Pacific Coast Branch of the Association, November 26, 1904.

the coast northward until Mendocino Bay was reached and named. After the death of Cabrillo, who lies in an unknown grave upon this coast, his pilot, Ferrelo, succeeded to the command. A report of the expedition was transmitted to the viceroy, the vessel sailed away, and thenceforth for two and a quarter centuries, practically unknown save to its aboriginal children, California slumbered in oblivion, bathed in the sunlight of its perennial summer.

In actual fact, during this long period a few explorers sailed along the coast of what is now known as California, some of whom effected a landing. The principal of these have been Sir Francis Drake, in 1579; Francisco Gali, 1584; Sebastian Rodriguez de Cermeñon, in 1595, and Sebastian Viscaïno, in 1602. The object of these expeditions, save that of Drake, was in no wise concerned with colonization, but was chiefly the hope of discovering a northwest passage and the yet mythic Strait of Anian. The Spanish navigators also entertained some indefinite notion of finding a harbor that would be of service to the Philippine vessels.

The accounts of these expeditions will be found in many sources, but mention of the earliest is sufficient. The original diary of Cabrillo is among the Spanish archives of Seville. Further accounts of this and the others may be found in the collections of Ramusio,^a Hakluyt,^b Torquemada,^c Herrera,^d Burney,^e and other contemporary authorities, besides references which exist in a great number of later works.

Drake's narrative will be found in his "World Encompassed,"^f published in London in 1653.

The bibliography of California is as varied in its many aspects as is the history of the State. Some of the familiar features so common to the bibliography of other localities, especially to the eastward of the Mississippi, are in that of California almost entirely wanting, more particularly those

^a Ramusio, G. B. *Navigazione et Vlaggi*. Venice, 1563-1574. 3 volumes.

^b Hakluyt, Rich. *The Principal Navigations*. London, 1590-1600. 3 volumes.

^c Torquemada, Juan de. *Monarquia Indiana*. Madrid, 1723. 3 volumes.

^d Herrera, Ant. de. *Hist. General, etc.* Madrid, 1725-1730. 4 volumes.

^e Burney, James. *Chronological History of Discoveries in South Sea*. London, 1803-1817. 5 volumes.

^f Drake, Francis. *Sir Francis Drake Revived*. London, 1653.

relating to town history, genealogy, and the history and linguistics of the American Indians. These important features, which form the body of history of every eastern locality, constitute little more than a tenth part of the bibliography of this State. The absence of early productions of a local press is also noticeable. The earliest imprint from a Californian press bears the date of 1833—almost two centuries after the establishment of the press of New England—and the entire number of documents issued from this press is about 60, most of which are broadsides of but a single sheet.

On the other hand, the bibliography is especially wealthy in certain features in which the other localities are more or less entirely deficient. In this enumeration may be mentioned the great number of works relating to the gold discovery; the many printed documents upon the Spanish and Mexican land claims, which comprehend also the history of the Californian missions and the Pious fund; the extensive literature of the Chinese question; and finally, though to a lesser extent, the history of the several vigilance committees.

But if there be these discrepancies and differences in the bibliography of the printed documents relating to Californian history, their presence is not evidenced in the manuscript documents of this territory. Here is wealth even to prodigality. Every feature of sociology is presented; every phase of history can be found. The many affairs of the State—political, civil, military, official, commercial, and domestic—are all amply and even extravagantly represented. The State archives in the office of the surveyor-general of California have probably never been fully enumerated, but are estimated at many thousands. The manuscripts in the Bancroft Library add to these many thousands more, and if there be included the great mass of manuscript material that exists elsewhere—some in scattered institutions, some in the possession of the Catholic Church, and others retained in private hands—this feature of the bibliography of California is a formidable one and fabulously rich in resource.

The aggregate number of these various manuscript documents can be left only to conjecture, but some faint indication of the use of the word thousands may be formed if we cite the fact that the collection of the Vallejo documents alone

numbers 20,000, which is perhaps not much more than 5 per cent of the entire number of California's historical documents.

For obvious purposes the bibliography of California may be divided into three periods—from 1510 to 1768, from 1769 to 1848, and from 1849 to the present time.

Prior to 1769, generally speaking, the name "California" was applied to what is now known as Baja, or Lower California, but as at that time no dividing line existed such references are properly included in the bibliography of Alta, or Upper California. The term "the Californias" was in vogue for nearly two centuries.

The earliest mention of the name "California" is to be found in the "Sergas da Esplandian," by Montalvo,^a published in Seville in 1510. This antedates the actual discovery of California by over forty years, and is of course purely imaginary. Strangely enough this fact remained in obscurity and forgotten for three hundred and fifty years, being brought to light by Edward Everett Hale^b as late as 1862.

Following Cabrillo's report in 1542, for the next two centuries there are but few printed authorities on California. Drake's "World Encompassed" is perhaps the most important, although the old geographers gave California a considerable share of attention. Nearly all of the old collections of voyages contain a map of California. The earliest figure California as a peninsula, which practice was continued during the sixteenth century. In some cases the location and configuration was remarkably correct; in others exceedingly doubtful. In some maps California is found joined to Mexico; in others it extends to the Arctic, and there ends at the Straits of Anian, or, the latter being ignored, is joined directly with Asia. The inspiration of one early cosmographer who outlined California as an island was followed by nearly all others for two centuries; in fact some geographical works published as late as 1800 continue to describe California as an island.

The old cartographer apparently regarded it of importance that California should exist on his map, and in placing

^a *Sergas de Esplandian*. Seville, 1510 et seq.

^b Hale, Edw. E. *Name of California*. In *Amer. Antiq. Soc. Proceed.*, April, 1862.

it seems frequently to have followed a childlike device. The child drawing the semblance of the human face feels and observes the necessity of investing the drawing with an eye, but is not always careful nor happy in the placing of that feature.

So with the old geographers. The name California identifies without doubt their conception of its location, but inspection of most of these old maps shows that California was usually made to occupy a vacant space above Mexico, of greatly varied form and extent. Probably the earliest known map of California is one reproduced by Kunstmann,^a in his "Atlas of the Earliest Maps Relating to America." The original is a manuscript map in the royal archives of Lisbon, the date being uncertain, but ascribed to about 1540. This map shows California to be a peninsula, the western coast of which is continued to the Arctic, to the Straits of Anian, where it ends apparently only for the reason that the chart sheet also ends there. This, as Bancroft observes, was frequently done to allow the geographer to set down the names of all the bays, islands, and cities that he fancied existed.^b

After the settlement of Lower California the items of bibliography become more numerous. A work published in London in 1686 contains an account of the "Descent of the Spaniards upon the Island of California." In one of the volumes of the "Lettres Edifiantes,"^c of the Jesuits, in 1705, will be found descriptions by Le Gobien and Picolo, Jesuit missionaries, with the famous map of Padre Eusebius Kino, which has been frequently reproduced in later works. Then come such authorities as Edward Cooke,^d Woodes Rogers,^e Betagh,^f Shelvocke,^g and others. Shelvocke, in writing in 1726, asserts it as probable that gold exists in every mountain in California. Cabrera Bueno's "Navegacion Especulativa"^h (Manila, 1734), contains accounts of the coast line, with charts.

^a Kunstmann, Friedr. Die Entdeckung Amerikas. Mayence, 1859. 2 volumes.

^b Bancroft, H. H. History of California. San Francisco, 1884. Vol. 1, p. 108.

^c Lettres Edifiantes de la Comp. de Jesus. Paris, 1705. Vol. 5.

^d Cooke, Edw. Voyage to South Sea. London, 1712. 2 volumes.

^e Rogers, Woodes. Cruising Voyage Round the World. London, 1718.

^f Betagh, William. Voyage Round the World. London, 1728.

^g Shelvocke, George. Voyage Round the World. London, 1726. Page 400.

^h Cabrera Bueno, J. G. Navegacion Especulativa. Manila, 1734.

Another remarkable and almost unknown work is the Latin thesis of one Gemeling, printed in Marburg in 1739, bearing the title "A Geographical Dissertation upon the True Site and Condition of California."^a

The Jesuit missionaries Kino, Ugarte, and Consag, with others, have also left accounts, both manuscript and in print.^b

The great work and body of authority of this period is that of Padre Miguel Venegas,^c in reality the work of a Jesuit named Burriel. This is a work of much extent and importance. It contains the history—natural, civil, and missionary—much about the aborigines, and much of biography of the early founders. No work on California has been more popular nor better known. It appeared at Madrid in 1757, and in ten years was translated into English, Dutch, French, and German.

Another curious work published at this time, but almost absolutely unknown, is an Italian tract printed at Rome, 1759.^d It relates to the discoveries of the Russians upon the northwest coast of America, with accounts of their encroachments in California.

A few other works, such as the anonymous "Apostólicos Afanes,"^e (Barcelona, 1754), and Lockman's "Travels of the Jesuits,"^f complete this period.

Heretofore all of the works mentioned have referred almost entirely to Lower California. With the establishment of the mission settlements at San Diego, Monterey, and San Francisco, a new epoch begins, the works being more numerous and more definite in character. Two accounts of the expeditions that resulted in the establishments exist, the imprint being Mexico, 1770.^g These are pamphlets of 3 and 4 leaves, which accounts for their extreme rarity.

Costanso, a Spanish engineer, inspected and charted the coast of California.^h This work, which was published in

^a Gemeling, J. *Dissertatio Geographica de vero Californiæ Situ et Conditione*. Marburg, 1739.

^b Backer, A. A. de. *Bibl. des Ecrivains de la Comp. de Jesus*. Liege, 1853-1861. 7 volumes.

^c Venegas, Mig. *Noticia de la Cal.* Madrid, 1757. 3 volumes.

^d Torrubia, G. *I Moscoviti nella California*. Rome, 1759.

^e *Apostólicos Afanes*. Barcelona, 1754.

^f Lockman, John. *Travels of the Jesuits*. London, 1762. 2 volumes.

^g Monterey. *Extracto de Noticias*. Mexico, 1770.

^h Costanso, Miguel. *Diario Histórico de los Viages de Mar y Tierra al Norte de Californias*. Mexico, 1770.

Mexico, was carefully guarded by the Spanish nation, which then feared that the English might take California, and but few copies are now extant.

Jacob Baegert,^a a Jesuit, after a residence of eighteen years in California, published in Mannheim in 1772 an account of the country. Perhaps no man ever wrote an impersonal book with more bitterness of heart. According to Baegert, the country was absolutely unfitted for habitation; it was inhabited by wild and ferocious beasts; peopled by inhospitable and cruel savages; water was unfit for use; wood was scarce; the soil could not sustain life.

The Government of Mexico printed in 1784 the "Reglamento,"^b or "The Rules and Regulations for the Government of the Californias." Like most of the Mexican documents of this period, this work is of most unusual occurrence.

Other important works of this time are the well-known "Life of Junipero Serra"^c (Mexico, 1787); Clavijero's "History of California,"^d in Italian; Arricivita's "Crónica Seráfica,"^e and Sales's "Tres Cartas."^f This latter is three letters on California, written by a priest to his friend. In addition to the geography of the country, the work contains accounts of the Indians; the affairs of the Jesuits, Franciscans, and Dominicans; and the Nootka Sound affair. It is also of interest that this has been the only work on California published by the Dominicans. Costanso's diary, already mentioned, was translated into English by William Reveley,^g and published in London in 1790. It contains, among other maps, plans of San Francisco and Los Angeles.

In a collection of voyages published at Madrid in 1799^h will be found an account of California, by an unknown writer, one of the most important and extensive to that time.

During the latter part of the eighteenth century and ex-

^a Baegert, J. Nachrichten von der Amerik. Halbinseln Californiens. Mannheim, 1772; also 1773.

^b Reglamento para el Gobierno de la Provincias de Californias. Mexico, 1784.

^c Palou, Fr. Vida de Junipero Serra. Mexico, 1787.

^d Clavijero, F. S. Storia della California. Venice, 1789. 2 volumes.

^e Arricivita, J. D. Crónica Seráfica y Apostólica. Mexico, 1792.

^f Sales, Luis. Noticias de Californias. Valencia, 1794. 3 volumes.

^g Reveley, William. Hist. Journal of Expedition by Sea and Land to the North of California. London, 1790.

^h P., D. P. E. California, 1799. In Viagero Universal, vol. 26. Madrid, 1799.

tending well into the nineteenth, California was visited and explored by many admiralty expeditions of England, France, and other nations. These works are all of much value, being of scientific as well as of historic interest. Among these are La Perouse, *Sutil y Mexicana*, Krusenstern, Kotzebue, Choris, De Mofras, Wilkes, Belcher, and others.

A few narratives were written by sailors and overland travelers. Morrell's "Narrative of Four Voyages to the South Sea,"^a published in 1832, contains accounts of California. Jedidiah Smith, who came overland to California in 1826, left a narrative which appeared in a French geographical publication,^b but which was not issued separately. James O. Pattie, leaving St. Louis, journeyed to California in company with his father in 1828. They were apprehended as spies by Governor Echeandia and imprisoned, during which captivity the elder Pattie died. This narrative was published in Cincinnati in 1833.^c

Of these early travels two printed narratives exist which are almost completely unknown. In 1838 Zenas Leonard made an overland journey and came in sight of the Pacific at a point somewhere between San Francisco and Monterey. His narrative was published in Clearfield, 1839.^d Johnson and Winter traveled from Fort Independence to California in 1843, their narrative appearing at Lafayette, 1846.^e Comment upon the rarity of these works is unnecessary.

During the last twenty years of their domination the Mexicans issued some works on California, a number of which relate to the Pious fund. Two, however, are notable exceptions. The council of public works printed in the city of Mexico, in 1827, a collection of documents relating to the affairs of upper California.^f An examination of these discloses the curious fact that at that time a project

^a Morrell, Benjamin W. *Narrative of Four Voyages*. New York, 1832.

^b Smith, Jed. *Excursion á l'ouest Monts Rocky*, 1826. In *Nouv. An. Voy.*, vol. 37.

^c Pattie, J. O. *Personal Narratives*. Cincinnati, 1833.

^d Leonard, Zenas. *Narrative of Adventures*. Clearfield, 1839.

^e Johnson, Overton, and Winter, W. H. *Route Across the Rocky Mountains*. Lafayette, 1846.

^f *Junta de Fomento de Californias. Coleccion de los Trabajos*. Mexico, 1827.

was formed to establish a line of vessels from Monterey to China, to be called the Mexican-Asiatic Company, a plan which never materialized.

A collection of documents by Manuel Castañares (Mexico, 1845)^a contains an account of the discovery of gold in California in 1844, four years earlier than that of Marshall, but so rare is this work that this fact came to light but recently.

Among the works relating to the Pious fund is that by Carlos Antonio Carrillo (Mexico, 1831).^b This is the first printed literary work of a native Californian.

In the year 1833 a local press was established at Monterey and continued until 1844. The productions were chiefly broadside proclamations of the governors, all of which are excessively rare, but specimens of most may be found in the archives. Eleven little books were printed. These are even of less common occurrence, as of several of them, but one copy is known to be in existence.^c

Following the conquest in 1846 the local press was reestablished, this time by Americans. The publication of newspapers began at Monterey August 15, 1846.^d Sundry proclamations by the military governors were also published. In 1847, at San Francisco, a pamphlet containing some special laws of the town council was printed, one copy of which was recently brought to light, though it appears heretofore to have been altogether unknown to the student of these matters.^e

The first book printing in San Francisco was in 1849,^f closely followed by Sacramento in 1850,^g Benicia^h and Colomaⁱ in 1851, and in Stockton in 1852.^j

^a Castañares, Manuel. *Coleccion de Documentos Relativos al Departamento de Californias*. Mexico, 1845.

^b Carrillo, Carlos Antonio. *Exposicion Sobre el Fondo Píadoso*. Mexico, 1831.

^c Cowan, Robert E. *The Spanish Press of California, 1833-1844*. San Francisco, 1902.

^d Californian, Monterey, August 15, 1846. Colton and Semple, editors.

^e *The Laws of the Town of San Francisco*. San Francisco, 1847.

^f Wierzbicki, F. P. *California as It Is, and as It May Be*. San Francisco, 1849.

^g Benton, Jos. A. *California as She Was: As She Is: As She Is to Be*. Sacramento City, 1850.

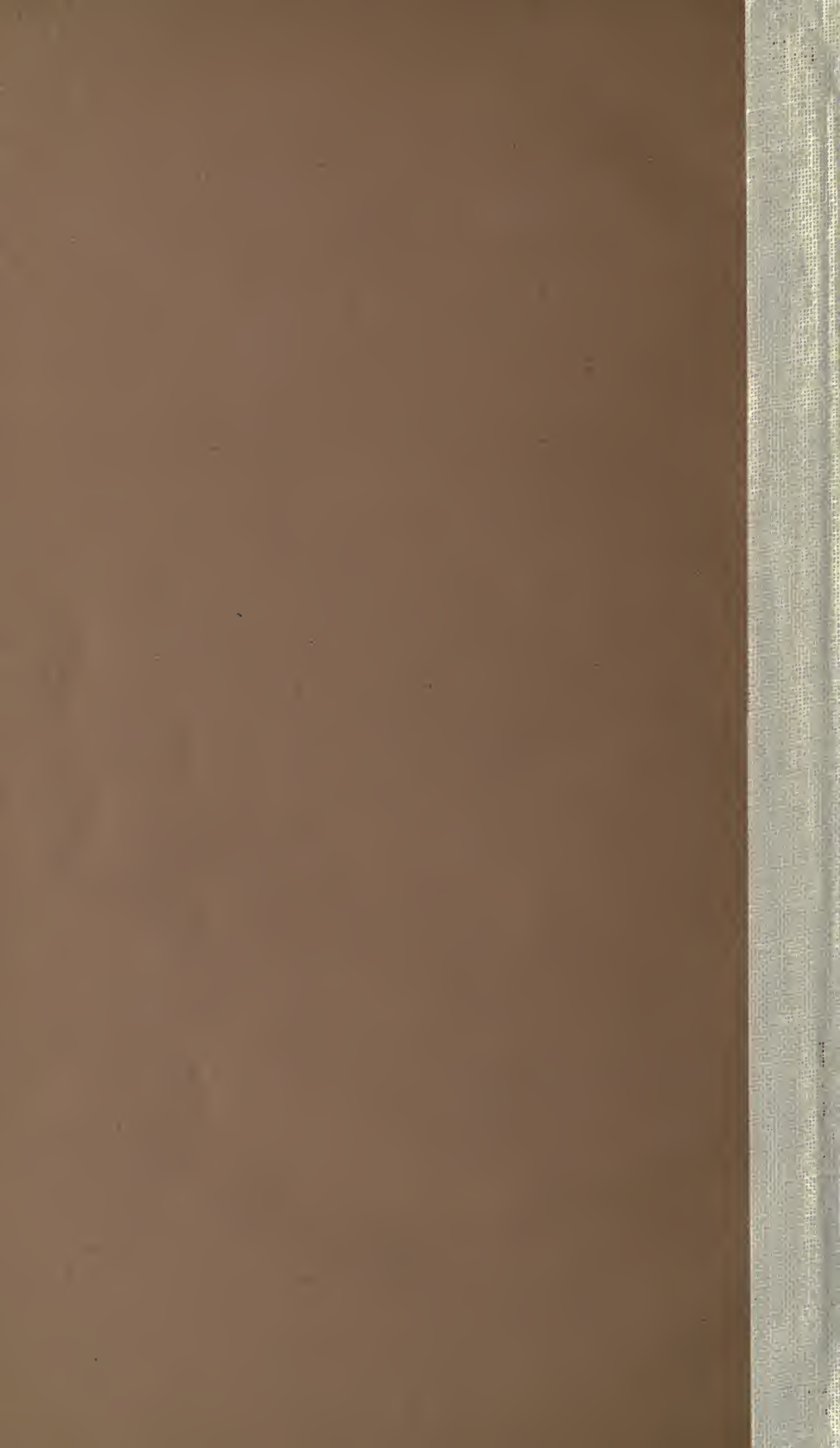
^h Werth, John J. *Dissertation on the Resources of California*. Benicia, 1851.

ⁱ Slater, Nelson. *Fruits of Mormonism*. Coloma, 1851.

^j Carson, J. H. *Early Recollections of the Mines*. Stockton, 1852.

The investigator of the bibliography of California will find, in addition to the anomalies already mentioned, a fact that is a very positive one and not easily understood nor appreciated by him who may have pursued similar studies upon the Atlantic coast. This is the scarcity of copies of books and other documents published here since the formation of the State. There are but few works printed in New England after the year 1700 that are not more plentiful than most of our works published since 1849, and this has been strongly influenced by special causes—the number of copies of the individual work was usually at no time large; the character of the population was unsettled and shifting; there was during the first decade an almost complete absence of family and domestic life; this and most other towns were ravaged by successive and widely disastrous fires, which almost invariably involved the newspaper and the printing offices; the neglect by the public libraries of early days to secure and preserve local material, and, finally, the unhappy success of the ignorantly disposed who waste much valuable material that appears to them to be useless.

Each year witnesses the destruction and loss of some valuable material, both printed and in manuscript, and these various agencies, so destructive to books, waste the priceless with the poorer material, and it will be only by systematic endeavor that the comparatively little that yet remains can be secured and preserved for those who will one day hold this generation to account.



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