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Echoes of the Past About California



S. F. PUBLISHED BY

BY THE LATE
GENERAL JOHN BIDWELL

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The Bidwell Mansion, Chico



Footbridge over Chico Creek, Bidwell Grounds



Driveway in Bidwell Grounds, Chico

The First Emigrant Train To California

An Echo from the Past---Scenes, Incidents and
Reminiscences of the First Organized Trip
Across the Plains, and Dealing with the
Early Settlement of California, as
Chronicled by the Late Gen.
John Bidwell, of Chico.

[This series of sketches were written by the late General John Bidwell, about twenty years ago, and comprises an epitome of that gentleman's eventful career from 1839, including the landing on the soil of the Golden West, the many varied vicisitudes which as a pioneer he encountered, until he purchased a grant from the Mexican government and settled upon what is now known as "Rancho Chico," just out of the Chico limits. (See enclosed running folder for cuts of, mansion, roadways and approaches.)—ED.

The Story as Told by a Pioneer

In the spring of 1839—living at the time in the western part of Ohio—being then in my twentieth year, I conceived a desire to see the great prairies of the West, especially those most frequently spoken of, Illinois, Iowa and Missouri. Emigration from the East was tending westward, and settlers had already begun to invade those rich fields.

Starting on foot to Cincinnati, ninety miles distant, I fortunately got a chance to ride most of the way on a wagon loaded with produce. My outfit consisted of about \$75, the clothes I wore, and a few others in a knapsack, which I carried in the usual way strapped upon my shoulders, for in those days travelers did not have valises and trunks. Though traveling was considered dangerous, I had nothing more formidable than a pocket knife. From Cincinnati I went down the Ohio river by steamboat to the Mississippi river, up the Mississippi to St. Louis, and thence to Burlington, in what was then the Territory of Iowa. Those were bustling days on the western rivers, which were then the chief highways of travel. The scene at the boat landing I recall as particularly lively and picturesque. Many passengers would save a lot by helping to "wood the boat," *i. e.*, by carrying wood down the bank and throwing it down on the boat, a special ticket being issued on that condition. It was very interesting to see the long line of passengers coming up the gang-plank, each with two or three sticks of wood on his shoulders. An anecdote is told of an Irishman who boarded a western steamer and wanted to know the fare to St. Louis, and being told, asked: "What do you charge for 150 pounds of freight?" Upon learning the price, a small amount, he announced that he would go as freight. "All right," said the captain, "put him down in the hold and lay some flour barrels on him to keep him down."

In 1839 Burlington had perhaps not over two hundred inhabitants, though it was the capital of Iowa Territory. After consultation with the governor, Robert Lucas, of Ohio, I con-

cluded to go into the interior and select a tract of land on the Iowa river. In those days one was permitted to take up 160 acres, and where practicable it was usual to take part timber and part prairie. After working awhile in putting up a log house—until all the people in the neighborhood became ill with fever and ague—I concluded to move on and strike out to the south and southwest into Missouri. I traveled across country, sometimes by the sun, without road or trail. There were houses and settlements, but they were scattered; sometimes one would have to go twenty miles to find a place to stay at night. The principal game was the prairie hen (*Tetraonidae cupido*); the prairie wolf (*Canis latrans*) also abounded. Continuing southwest and passing through Huntsville, I struck the Missouri river near Keytsville, Chariton county. Thence I continued up the north side of the river till the western-most settlement was reached; this was in Platte county. The Platte Purchase, as it was called, had been recently bought from the Indians, and was newly but thickly settled, on account of its proximity to navigation, its fine timber, good water and unsurpassed fertility.

On the route I traveled I cannot recall seeing an emigrant wagon in Missouri. The western movement which subsequently filled Missouri and other Western States and overflowed into the adjoining territories, had then hardly begun, except as to Platte county. The contest in Congress over the Platte Purchase, which by increasing the area of Missouri, gave more territory to slavery, called wide attention to that charming region. The anti-slavery sentiment even at that date ran quite high. This was I believe, the first adoption to slave territory after the Missouri compromise. But slavery won. The rush that followed in the space of one or two years filled the most desirable part of the purchase to overflowing. The imagination could not conceive a finer country—lovely, rolling and fertile, wonderfully productive, beautifully arranged for settlement, part prairie and part timber. The land was unsurveyed. Every settler had aimed to locate a half mile from his neighbor, and there was as yet no conflict. Peace and contentment

reigned. Nearly every place seemed to have a beautiful spring of clear cold water. The hills and prairies and the level places were alike covered with a black and fertile soil. I cannot recall seeing an acre of poor ground in Platte county. Of course there was intense longing on the part of the people of Missouri to have the Indians removed and a corresponding desire, as soon as the purchase was consummated, to get possession of the beautiful land. It was in some sense, perhaps, a kind of Oklahoma movement. Another feature was the abundance of wild honey bees. Every tree that had a hollow in it seemed to be a bee tree, and every hollow was full of rich, golden honey. A singular fact which I learned from old hunters was that the honey-bee was never found more than seventy or eighty miles in advance of the white settlements on the frontier. On this attractive land I set my affections, intending to make it my home.

On my arrival, my money being all spent, I was obliged to accept the first thing that offered, and began teaching school in the country about five miles from the town of Weston, which was located on the north side of the Missouri river and about four miles above Fort Leavenworth in Kansas Territory. Possibly some may suppose it did not take much education to teach a country school at that period in Missouri. The rapid settlement of that new region had brought together people of all classes and conditions, and had thrown into juxtaposition almost every phase of intelligence as well as illiteracy. But there was no lack of self-reliance or native shrewdness in any class, and I must say I learned to have a high esteem for the people among whom I found warm and life-long friends.

But even in Missouri there were drawbacks. Rattlesnakes and copperheads were abundant. One man, it was said, found a place to suit him, but on alighting from his horse so many snakes greeted him that he decided to go farther. At his second attempt, finding more snakes instead of fewer, he left the country altogether. I taught school there in all about a year. My arrival was in June, 1839, and in the fall of that year the surveyors came on to lay out the country; the lines ran every way, sometimes through a man's house, sometimes through

his barn, so that there was much confusion and trouble about boundaries, etc. By the favor of certain men, and by paying a small amount for a little piece of fence here and a small clearing there, I got a claim, and proposed to make it my home, and have my father remove there from Ohio.

In the following summer, 1840, the weather was very hot, so that during the vacation I could do but little work on my place, and needing some supplies—books, clothes, etc.—I concluded to take a trip to St. Louis, which I did by way of the Missouri river. The distance was six hundred miles by water; the down trip occupied two days, and was one of the most delightful experiences of my life. But returning, the river being low and full of snags, and the steamboat heavily laden—the boats were generally lightly loaded going down—we were continually getting on sandbars, and were delayed nearly a month.

This trip proved to be the turning point in my life, for while I was gone a man had jumped my land. Generally in such cases public sentiment was against the jumper, and it was decidedly so in my case. But the scoundrel held on. He was a bully—had killed a man in Callaway county—and everybody seemed afraid of him. Influential friends of mine tried to persuade him to let me have eighty acres, half of the claim. But he was stubborn, and said that all he wanted was just what the law allowed him. Unfortunately for me, he had the legal advantage. I had worked some now and then on the place, but had not actually lived on it. The law required a certain residence, and that pre-emptor should be 21 years of age or a man of family. I was neither, and could do nothing. Naturally all I had earned had been spent upon the land, and when it was taken I lost about everything I had. There being no possibility of getting another claim to suit me, I resolved to go elsewhere when spring should open.

In November or December of 1840, while still teaching school in Platte county, I came across a Frenchman named Roubideaux, who said he had been to California. He had been a trader in New Mexico, and had followed the road traveled by traders from the frontier of Missouri to Santa Fe. He had

probably gone through what is now New Mexico and Arizona into California by the Gila river trail used by the Mexicans. His description of California was of the superlative degree favorable, so much so that I resolved if possible to see that wonderful land, and with others helped to get up a meeting at Weston and invited him to make a statement before it in regard to the country. At that time when a man moved West, as soon as he was fairly settled he wanted to move again, and naturally every question imaginable was asked in regard to this wonderful country. Roubideaux described it as one of perennial spring and boundless fertility, and laid stress on the countless thousands of wild horses and cattle. He told about oranges, and hence must have been at Los Angeles, or the mission of San Gabriel, a few miles from it. Every conceivable question that we could ask him was answered favorably. Generally the first question which a Missourian asked about a country was whether there was any fever and ague. I remember his answer distinctly. He said there was but one man in California that had ever had a chill there, and it was a matter of so much wonderment to the people of Monterey that they went eighteen miles into the country to see him shake. Nothing could have been more satisfactory on the score of health. He said that the Spanish authorities were most friendly, and that the people were the most hospitable on the globe; that you could travel all over California and it would cost you nothing for horses or feed. Even the Indians were friendly. His description of the country made it seem like a paradise.

The result was that we appointed a corresponding secretary, and a committee to report a plan of organization. A pledge was drawn up in which every signer agreed to purchase a suitable outfit, and to rendezvous at Sapling Grove in what is now the State of Kansas, on the 9th of the following May, armed and equipped to cross the Rocky Mountains to California. We called ourselves the Western Emigration Society, and as soon as the pledge was drawn up every one who agreed to come signed his name to it, and it took like wildfire. In a short time, I think within a month, we had about five hundred

names; we also had correspondence on the subject with people all over Missouri, and even as far east as Illinois and Kentucky, and as far south as Arkansas. As soon as the movement was announced in the papers we had many letters of inquiry and we expected people in considerable numbers to join us. About that time we heard of a man in Jackson county, Missouri, who had received a letter from a person in California named Dr. Marsh speaking favorably of the country, and a copy was published.

Our ignorance of the route was complete. We knew that California lay west, and that was the extent of our knowledge. Some of the maps consulted, supposed of course to be correct, showed a lake in the vicinity of where Salt Lake now is; it was represented as a long lake, three or four hundred miles in extent, narrow and with two outlets, both running into the Pacific ocean, either apparently larger than the Mississippi river. An intelligent man with whom I boarded—Elam Brown, who until recently lived in California, dying when over ninety years of age—possessed a map that showed these rivers to be large, and he advised me to take tools along to make canoes, so that if we found the country so rough that we could not get along with our wagons, we could descend one of these rivers to the Pacific. Even Fremont knew nothing about Salt Lake until 1843, when for the first time he explored it and mapped it correctly, his report being first printed, I believe, in 1845.

This being the first movement to cross the Rocky Mountains to California, it is not surprising that it suffered reverses before we were fairly started. One of these was the publication of a letter in a New York newspaper giving a depressing view of the country for which we were all so confidently longing. It seems that in 1837 or 1838, a man by the name of Farnham, a lawyer, went from New York into the Rocky Mountains for his health. He was an invalid, hopelessly gone with consumption it was thought, and as a last resort he went into the mountains, traveling with the trappers, lived in the open air as the trappers lived, eating only meat as they did, and in two or three years he entirely regained his

health; but instead of returning east by the way of St. Louis, as he had gone out, he went down the Columbia river and took a vessel to Monterey and thence to San Blas, making his way through Mexico to New York. Upon his return—in February or March, 1841—he published the letter mentioned. His bad opinion of California was based wholly on his unfortunate experience in Monterey, which I will recount.

In 1840 there lived in California an old Rocky Mountain mountaineer by the name of Isaac Graham. He was injudicious in his talk, and by boasting that the United States or Texas would some day take California, he excited the hostility and jealousy of the people. In those days Americans were held in disfavor by the native Californians on account of the war made by Americans in Texas to wrest Texas from Mexico. The number of Americans in California at this time was very small. When I went to California in 1841 all the foreigners—and all were foreigners except Indians and Mexicans—did not, I think, exceed one hundred; nor was the character of all of them the most prepossessing. Some of them had been trappers in the Rocky Mountains who had not seen civilization for a quarter of a century; others were men who had found their way into California, as Roubideaux had done, by way of Mexico; others still had gone down the Columbia river to Oregon and joined trapping parties in the service of the Hudson Bay Company going from Oregon to California—men who would let their beards grow down to their knees, and wear buckskin garments made and fringed like those of the Indians, and who considered it a compliment to be told "I took ye for an Injin." Another class of men from the Rocky Mountains were in the habit of making their way by the Mojave desert south of the Sierra Nevadas into California to steal horses, sometimes driving off four or five hundred at a time. The other Americans, most numerous perhaps, were sailors who had run away from vessels and remained in the country. With few exceptions this was the character of the American population when I came to California, and they were not generally a class calculated to gain much favor with the people. Farnham hap-

pened to come into the bay of Monterey when this fellow Graham and his confederates, and all others whom the Californians suspected, were under arrest in irons aboard a vessel, ready for transportation to San Blas, in Mexico, whither indeed they were taken, and where some of them died in irons. I am not sure that at this time the English had a consul in California; but the United States had none, and there was no one there to take the part of the Americans. Farnham, being a lawyer, doubtless knew the proceedings were illegal. He went ashore and protested against it, but without effect, as he was only a private individual. Probably he was there on a burning hot day, and only saw the dreary sandhills to the east of the old town of Monterey. On arriving in New York he published the letter referred to, describing how Americans were oppressed by the native Californians, and how dangerous it was for Americans to go there. The merchants of Platte county had all along protested against our going and had tried from the beginning to discourage and break up the movement, saying it was the most unheard of, foolish, wild-goose chase that ever entered into the brain of man for five hundred people to pull up stakes, leave that beautiful country, and go away out to a region that we knew nothing of. But they made little headway until this letter of Farnham's appeared. They republished it in a paper in the town of Liberty, in Clay county—there being no paper published in Platte county—and sent it broadcast over the surrounding region.

The result was that the people began to think more seriously about the scheme, the membership of the society began dropping off, and it so happened at last that of all the five hundred that had signed the pledge I was the only one that got ready; and even I had hard work to do so, for I had barely means to buy a wagon, a gun and provisions. Indeed, the man who was going with me and who was to furnish the horses, backed out and there I was with my wagon.

During the winter, to keep the project alive, I had made two or three trips into Jackson county, Missouri, always dangerous in winter, when ice was running, by the ferry at

Westport Landing, now Kansas City. Sometimes I had to go ten miles farther down—sixty miles from Weston—to a safer ferry at Independence Landing in order to get into Jackson county, to see men who were talking of going to California, and to get information.

At the last moment before the time to start for the rendezvous at Sapling Grove—it seemed almost providential—along came a man named George Henshaw, an invalid from Illinois, I think. He was pretty well dressed, was riding a fine black horse, and had ten or fifteen dollars. I persuaded him to let me take his horse and trade him for a yoke of steers to pull the wagon and a sorry-looking, one-eyed mule for him to ride. We went via Weston to lay in some supplies. One wagon and four or five persons here joined us. On leaving Weston, where there had been so much opposition, we were six or seven in number, and nearly half the town followed us for a mile, and some for five or six miles to bid us good-bye, showing the deep interest felt in our journey. All expressed good wishes and desired to hear from us. When we reached Sapling Grove, the place of rendezvous, in May, 1841, there was but one wagon ahead of us. For the next few days one or two wagons would come each day, and among the recruits were three families from Arkansas. We organized by electing as captain of the company a man named Bartleson from Jackson county, Missouri. He was not the best man for the position, but we were given to understand that if he was not elected captain he would not go; and he had seven or eight men with him, and we did not want the party diminished, so he was chosen. Every one furnished his own supplies. The party consisted of sixty-nine, including men, women and children. Our teams were of oxen, mules and horses. We had no cows, as the later emigrants usually had, and the lack of milk was a great privation to the children. It was understood that every one should have not less than a barrel of flour with sugar and so forth to suit, but I laid in one hundred pounds of flour more than the usual quantity, besides other things. This I did because we were told that when we got into the mountains we probably would

get out of bread and have to live on meat alone, which I thought would kill me even if it did not others. My gun was an old flintlock rifle, but a good one. Old hunters told me to have nothing to do with cap or percussion locks, that they were unreliable, and that if I got my caps or percussion wet I could not shoot, while if I lost my flint I could pick up another on the plains. I doubt whether there was one hundred dollars in the whole party, but all were enthusiastic and anxious to go.

In five days after my arrival we were ready to start, but no one knew where to go, not even the captain. Finally a man came up, one of the last to arrive, and announced that a company of Catholic missionaries were on their way from St. Louis to the Flathead nation of Indians with an old Rocky Mountaineer for a guide, and that if we would wait another day they would be up with us. At first we were independent, and thought we could not afford to wait for a slow missionary party. But when we found that no one knew which way to go, we sobered down and waited for them to come up; and it was well that we did, for otherwise probably not one of us would ever have reached California, because of our inexperience. Afterwards when we came in contact with Indians our people were so easily excited that if we had not had with us an old mountaineer the result would certainly have been disastrous. The name of the guide was Captain Fitzpatrick; he had been at the head of trapping parties in the Rocky Mountains for many years. He and the missionary party went with us as far as Soda Springs, now Idaho, whence they turned north to the Flathead nation. The party consisted of three Roman Catholic priests—Fathers DeSmet, Pont and Mengarini—and ten or eleven French Canadians, and accompanying them were an old mountaineer named John Gray and a young Englishman named Romanie, and also a man named Baker. They seemed glad to have us with them, and we certainly were glad to have their company. Father DeSmet had been to the Flathead nation before. He had gone out with a trapping party, and on his return had traveled with only a guide by another route, farther to the north and through hostile tribes. He was a genial gen-

tleman, of fine presence, and one of the saintliest men I have ever known, and I cannot wonder that the Indians were made to believe him divinely protected. He was a man of great kindness and great affability under all circumstances; nothing seemed to disturb his temper. The Canadians had mules and Red river carts, instead of wagons and horses—two mules to each cart, five or six of them—and in case of steep hills they would hitch three or four of the animals to one cart, always working them tandem. Sometimes a cart would go over, breaking everything to pieces, and at such times Father De-Smet would be just the same—beaming with good humor.

In general our route lay from near Wesport, where Kansas City now is, northwesterly over the prairie, crossing several streams, till we struck the Platte river. Then we followed along the south side of the Platte and a day's journey or so along the South Fork. Here the features of the country became more bold and interesting. Then crossing the South Fork, and following up the north side for a day or so, we went over to the North Fork and camped at Ash Hollow; thence up the north side of that fork, passing those noted landmarks known as the Court House Rocks, Chimney Rock, Scott's Bluffs, etc., till we came to Fort Laramie, a trading post of the American Fur Company, near which was Lupton's Fort, belonging, as I understand, to some rival company; thence after several days we came to another noted landmark called Independence Rock, on a branch of the North Platte called the Sweetwater, which we followed up to the head, soon after striking the Big Sandy, which empties into Green river. Next we crossed Green river to Black Fork, which we followed up till we came to Ham's Fork, at the head of which we crossed the divide between Green and Bear rivers. Then we followed Bear river down to Soda Springs. The waters of Bear Lake discharged through that river, which we continued to follow down on the west side till we came to Salt Lake. Then we went around the north side of the lake and struck out to the west and southwest.

For a time, till we reached the Platte river, one day was

much like another. We set forth every morning and camped every night, detailing men to stand guard. Captain Fitzpatrick and the missionary party would generally take the lead and we would follow. Fitzpatrick knew all about the Indian tribes, and when there was any danger we kept in a more compact body, to protect one another. At other times we would be scattered along sometimes for half a mile or more. We were generally together, because there was often work to be done to avoid delay. We had to make the road, frequently digging down steep banks, filling gulches, removing stones, etc. In such cases everybody would take a spade or do something to help make the roads passable. When we camped at night we usually drew the wagons and carts together in a hollow square and picketed our animals inside the corral. The wagons were common ones and of no special pattern, and some of them were covered. The tongue of one would be fastened to the back of another. To lessen the danger from Indians, we usually had no fires at night and did our cooking in the daytime.

The first incident was a scare we had from a party of Cheyenne Indians just before we reached the Platte river, about two weeks after we set out. One of our men who chanced to be out hunting, some distance from the company and behind us, suddenly appeared without mule, gun or pistol, and lacking most of his clothes, and in great excitement reported that he had been surrounded by thousands of Indians. The company, too, became excited, and Fitzpatrick tried, but with little effect, to control and pacify them. Every man started his team into a run, till the oxen, like the mules and horses, were in full gallop. Captain Fitzpatrick went ahead and directed them to follow, and as fast as they came to the bank of the river he put the wagons in the form of a hollow square, and had all the animals securely picketed within. After awhile the Indians came in sight. There were only forty of them, but they were well mounted on horses, and were evidently a war party, for they had no women except one, a medicine woman. They came up and camped within one hun-

dred yards of us on the river below. Fitzpatrick told us that they would not have come in that way if they were hostile. Our hunter in his excitement said that there were thousands of them, and that they had robbed him of his gun, mule and pistol. When the Indians had put up their lodges, Fitzpatrick and John Gray, the old hunter mentioned, went out to them and by signs were made to understand that the Indians did not intend to hurt the man or take his mule or gun, but that he was so excited when he saw them that they had to disarm him to keep him from shooting them; they did not know what had become of his pistol or of his clothes, which they said he had thrown off. They surrendered the mule and gun, thus showing that they were friendly. They proved to be Cheyenne Indians. Ever afterwards that man went by the name of Cheyenne Dawson.

As soon as we struck the buffalo country we found a new source of interest. Before reaching the Platte we had seen an abundance of antelope and elk, prairie wolves and villages of prairie dogs, but only an occasional buffalo. We now began to kill buffaloes for food, and at the suggestion of John Gray, and following the practice of Rocky Mountain white hunters, our people began to kill them just to get the tongues and marrow bones, leaving all the rest of the meat on the plains for the wolves to eat. But the Cheyennes, who traveled ahead of us for two or three days, set us a better example. At their camps we noticed that when they killed buffaloes they took all the meat, everything but the bones. Indians were never wasteful of the buffalo except for the sake of the robes, and then only in order to get the whisky which traders offered them in exchange. There is no better beef in the world than that of the buffalo; it is also very good jerked—cut into strings and thoroughly dried. It was an easy matter to kill buffaloes after we got to where they were numerous, by keeping out of sight and to the leeward of them. I think I can truthfully say that I saw in that region in one day more buffaloes than I have ever seen of cattle in all my life. I have seen the plains black with them for several days' journey as far as the eye could

reach. They seemed to be coming northward continually from the distant plains to the Platte to get water, and would plunge in and swim across by thousands—so numerous that they changed not only the color of the water, but its taste, until it was unfit to drink—but we had to use it. One night when we were encamped on the south fork of the Platte they came in such droves that we had to sit up and fire guns and make what fires we could to keep them from running over us and trampling us into the dust. We were obliged to go out some distance from the camp to turn them; Captain Fitzpatrick told us that if we did not do this the buffaloes in front could not turn aside for the pressure of those behind. We could hear them thundering all night long; the ground fairly trembled with vast approaching bands, and if they had not been diverted, wagons, animals and emigrants would have been trodden under their feet. One cannot nowadays describe the rush and wildness of the thing. A strange feature was that when old oxen, tired and sore-footed, got among a buffalo herd, as they sometimes would in the night, they would soon become as wild as the wildest buffalo; and if ever recovered it was because they could not run so fast as the buffaloes or one's horse. The ground over which the herds traversed was left rather barren, but buffalo grass being short and curling, in traveling over it they did not cut it up as much as they would other kinds.

On the Platte river, on the afternoon of one of the hottest days we experienced on the plains, we had a taste of a cyclone; first came a terrific shower, followed by a fall of hail to the depth of four inches, some of the stones being as large as a turkey's egg, and the next day a waterspout—an angry, huge, whirling cloud column, which seemed to draw its water from the Platte river—passed within a quarter of a mile behind us. We stopped and braced ourselves against our wagons to keep them from being overturned. Had it struck us it would doubtless have demolished us.

Above the junction of the forks of the Platte we continued to pass notable natural formations—first O'Fallon's Bluffs, then Court House Rocks, a group of fantastic shapes to which

some of our party started to go. After they had gone what seemed fifteen or twenty miles the huge pile looked just as far off as when they started, and so they turned and came back—so deceptive are distances in the clear atmosphere of the Rocky Mountains. A noted landmark on the North Fork, which we sighted fifty miles away, was Chimney Rock. It was then nearly square, and I think it must have been fifty feet higher than now, though after we passed it a portion of it fell off. Scott's Bluffs are known to emigrants for their picturesqueness. These formations, like those first mentioned, are composed of indurated yellow clay or soft sand rock; they are washed and broken into all sorts of fantastic forms by the rains and storms of ages, and have the appearance of an immense city of towers and castles. They are quite difficult to explore, as I learned by experience in an effort to pursue and kill mountain sheep or bighorns. These were seen in great numbers, but we failed to kill any, as they inhabit places almost inaccessible and are exceedingly wild.

As we ascended the Platte buffaloes became scarcer, and on the Sweetwater none were to be seen. Now appeared in the distance to the north and west, gleaming under the mantle of perpetual snow, the lofty range known as the Wind River Mountains. It was the first time I had seen snow in summer; some of the peaks were very precipitous, and the view was altogether most impressive. Guided by Fitzpatrick, we crossed the Rockies at or near the South Pass, where the mountains were apparently low. Some years before a man named William Sublette, an Indian fur trader, went to the Rocky Mountains with goods in wagons, and those were the only wagons that had ever been there before us; sometimes we came across the tracks, but generally they were obliterated and thus were of no service. Approaching Green river in the Rocky Mountains, it was found that some of the wagons, including Captain Bartleson's, had alcohol on board, and that the owners wanted to find trappers in the Rocky Mountains with whom they might effect a sale. This was a surprise to many of us, as there had been no drinking on the way. John Gray was

sent ahead to see if he could find a trapping party and he was instructed, if successful, to have them come to a certain place on Green river. He struck a trail, and overtook a party on their way to the buffalo region to lay in provisions—buffalo meat—and they returned, and came and camped on Green river very soon after our arrival, buying the greater part, if not all, of the alcohol, it having first been diluted so as to make what they called whisky—three or four gallons of water to one gallon of alcohol. Years afterward we heard of the fate of that party; they were attacked by Indians the very first night after they left us and several of them killed, including the captain of the trapping party, whose name was Frapp. The whisky was probably the cause.

Several years ago when I was going down Weber canyon, approaching Salt Lake, swiftly borne along on an elegant observation car amid cliffs and ever-rushing streams, something said that night at the campfire on Green river was forcibly recalled to mind. We had in our party an illiterate fellow named Bill Overton, who in the evening at one of the campfires loudly declared that nothing in his life had ever surprised him. Of course that raised a dispute. "Never surprised in your life?" "No, I never was surprised. And, moreover, he swore that nothing ever could surprise him. "I should not be surprised," said he, "if I were to see a steamboat come plowing over these mountains this minute." In rattling down the canyon of Weber river it occurred to me that the reality was almost equal to Bill Overton's extravaganza, and I could but wonder what he would have said had he suddenly come upon this modern scene.

As I have said, at Soda Springs—at the northernmost bend of Bear river—our party separated. It was a bright and lovely place. The abundance of soda water, including the intermittent gushing so-called Steamboat spring; the beautiful fir and cedar covered hills; the huge piles of red or brown sinter, the result of fountains once active but then dry—all these, together with the river, lent a charm to its wild beauty and made the spot a notable one. Here the missionary party

were to turn north and go into the Flathead nation. Fort Hall, about forty miles distant on Snake river, lay on their route. There was no road; but something like a trail; doubtless used by trappers, led in that direction. From Fort Hall there was also a trail down Snake river, by which trapping parties reached the Columbia river and Fort Vancouver, the headquarters of the Hudson Bay Company.

Our party, originally sixty-nine, had become lessened to sixty-four in number. One had accidentally shot and killed himself at the forks of the Platte. Another of our party, named Simpson, had left us at Fort Laramie. Three had turned back from Green river, intending to make their way to Fort Bridger and await an opportunity to return home. Their names were Peyton, Rodgers and Amos E. Frye. Thirty-two of our party, becoming discouraged, decided not to venture without path or guide into the unknown and trackless regions toward California, but concluded to go with the missionary party to Fort Hall and thence find their way down Snake and Columbia rivers into Oregon. The rest of us—also thirty-two in number, including Benjamin Kelsey, his wife and little daughter—remained firm, refusing to be diverted from our original purpose of going direct to California. After getting all the information we could from Captain Fitzpatrick, we regretfully bade good-bye to our fellow emigrants and to Father DeSmet and his party.

We were now thrown entirely upon our own resources. All the country beyond was to us a veritable terra incognita; and we only knew that California lay to the west. Captain Fitzpatrick was not much better informed, but he had heard that parties had penetrated the country to the southwest and west of Salt Lake to trap for beaver; and by his advice four of our men went with the parties to Fort Hall to consult Captain Grant, who was in charge there, and gain information. Meanwhile our depleted party slowly made its way down the west side of Bear river.

Our separation at Soda Springs recalls an incident. The days were unusually very hot, the nights almost freezing. The

first day out our little company went only about ten miles and camped on Bear river. In company with a man named James Johns—always called “Jimmy John”—I wandered a mile or two down the river fishing. Seeing snow on a high mountain to the west we longed to reach it, for the heat where we were was intense. So, without losing time to get our guns or coats or give notice at the camp, we started direct for the snow, with the impression that we could go and return by sundown. But there intervened a range of low mountains, a certain peak of which seemed almost to touch the snow. Both of us were fleet of foot and made haste, but we only gained the summit of the peak before sundown. The distance must have been twelve or fifteen miles. A valley intervened and the snow lay on a higher mountain beyond. I proposed to camp; but Jimmy gave me a disdainful look, as much as to say, “You are afraid to go,” and quickened his gait into a run down the mountain toward the snow. I called to him to stop, but he would not even look back. A firm resolve seized me—to overtake him, but not again to ask him to return. We crossed the valley in the night, saw many campfires, and gained a sharp ridge leading up to the snow. This was first brushy and then rocky. The brush had no paths except those made by wild animals. The rocks were sharp and cut through our moccasins and made our feet bleed. But up and up we went until long after midnight, and until a cloud covered the mountain. We were above timber line, except a few stunted fir trees, under which we crawled to await for day, for it was too dark to see. Day soon dawned, but we were almost frozen. Our fir tree nest had been the lair of grizzly bears that had wallowed there and shed quantities of shaggy hair. The snow was still beyond, and we had lost both sight and direction. But in an hour or two we reached it. It was nearly as hard as ice. Filling a handkerchief, without taking time to admire the scenery, we started toward the camp by a new route, for our feet were too sore to go by the way of the rocky ridge by which we had come. But the new way led into trouble. There were thickets so dense as to exclude the sun, and roaring little streams in deep, dark

chasms; we had to crawl through paths which looked untrodden except by grizzlies; in one place a large bear had passed evidently only a few minutes before, crossing the deep gorge, plunging through the wild, dashing water, and wetting the steep bank as he went up. We carried our drawn butcher knives in our hands, for they were our only weapons. At last we emerged into the valley. Apparently numerous Indians had left that very morning, as shown by the tracks of lodge poles drawn on the ground. Making haste, we soon gained the hills, and at about 2 p. m. sighted our wagons, already two or three miles on the march. When our friends saw us they stopped, and all who could ran to welcome us. They had given us up for lost, supposing that we had been killed by the hostile Blackfeet, who, as Captain Fitzpatrick had warned us, sometimes roamed through that region. The company had barricaded the camp at night as best they could, and every man had spent a sleepless night on guard. Next morning they had spent several hours in scouring the country. Their first questions were: "Where have you been? Where have you been?" I was able to answer triumphantly: "We have been up to the snow!" and to demonstrate the fact by showing all the snow I had left, which was now reduced to a ball about the size of my fist.

In about ten days our four men returned from Fort Hall, during which time we had advanced something over one hundred miles toward Salt Lake. They brought the information that we must strike out west of Salt Lake—as it was even then called by the trappers—being careful not to go too far south, lest we should get into a wasteless country without grass. They also said we must be careful not to go too far north, lest we should get into a broken country and steep canyons, and wander about, as trapping parties had been known to do, and become bewildered and perish.

September had come before we reached Salt Lake, which we struck at its northern extremity. Part of the time we had purposely traveled slowly to enable the men from Fort Hall the sooner to overtake us. But unavoidable delays were fre-

quent; daily, often hourly. Indian fires obscured mountains and valleys in a dense, smoky atmosphere, so that we could not see any considerable distance in order to avoid obstacles. The principal growth, on plain and hill alike, was the interminable sagebrush (*artemisia*), and often it was difficult, for miles at a time, to break a road through it, and sometimes a lightly laden wagon would be overturned. Its monotonous dull color and scraggy appearance gave a most dreary aspect to the landscape. But it was not wholly useless; where large enough it made excellent fuel, and it was the home and shelter of the hare—generally known as the jackrabbit—and of the sagehen. Trees were almost a sure sign of water in that region. But the mirage was most deceptive, magnifying stunted sagebrush on diminutive hillocks into trees and groves. Thus misled, we traveled all day without water, and at midnight found ourselves in a plain, as level as a floor, incrustated with salt, and as white as snow. Crusts of salt broken up by our wagons, and driven by the chilly night wind like ice on the surface of a frozen pond, was to me a striking counterfeit of a winter scene. This plain became softer and softer until our poor, almost famished animals could not pull our wagons. In fact we were going direct to Salt Lake and did not know it. So, in search of water, we turned from a southerly to an easterly course, and went about ten miles, and soon after daylight arrived at Bear river. So near Salt Lake were we that the water in the river was too salty for us or our animals to use, but we had to use it; it would not quench thirst, but it did save life. The grass looked most luxuriant, and sparkled as if covered with frost. But it was salt; our hungry, jaded animals refused to eat it, and we had to lie by a whole day to rest them before we could travel.

Leaving this camp and bearing northwest we crossed our tracks on the salt plain, having thus described a triangle of several miles in dimensions. One of the most serious of our troubles was to find water where we could camp at night. So soon came another hot day and all night without water! From a westerly course we turned directly north, and guided by ante-

lope trails, came in a few miles to an abundance of grass and good water. The condition of our animals compelled us to rest here nearly a week. Meanwhile two of our men who had been to Fort Hall went ahead to explore. Provisions were becoming scarce, and we saw we must avoid unnecessary delay. The two men were gone about five days. Under their lead we set forth, bearing west, then southwest, around Salt Lake, then again west, after two or three fatiguing days—one day and night without water—the first notice we had of approach to any considerable mountain was the sight of crags dimly seen through the smoke, many hundred feet above our heads. Here was plenty of good grass and water. Nearly all now said: "Let us leave our wagons, otherwise the snows will overtake us before we get to California." So we stopped one day and threw away everything we could not carry, made pack saddles, and packed the oxen, mules and horses, and started.

On Green river we had seen the style of pack saddle used by the trapping party, and had learned a little about making them. Packing is an art, and only an experienced mountaineer can do well so as to save his animal and keep his pack from falling off. We were unaccustomed to it, and the difficulties we had at first were simply indescribable. It is much more difficult to fasten a pack on an ox than on a mule or a horse. The trouble began the very first day. But we started—most of us on foot, for nearly all the animals, including several of the oxen, had to carry packs. It was but a few minutes before the packs began to turn; horses became scared, mules kicked, oxen jumped and bellowed, and articles were scattered in all directions. We took more pains, fixed things, made a new start, and did better, though packs continued occasionally to fall off and delay us.

Those who had better pack saddles and had tied their loads securely were ahead, while the others were obliged to lag behind, because they had to repack, and sometimes things would be strewn all along the route. The first night I happened to be among those that kept pretty well back, because the horses out-traveled the oxen. The foremost came to a place and

stopped where there was no water or grass, and built a fire so that we could see it and come up to them. We got there about midnight, but some of our oxen that had packs on had not come up, and among them were my two. So I had to return the next morning and find them, Cheyenne Dawson alone volunteering to go with me. One man had brought along about a quart of water, which was carefully doled out before we started, each receiving a little canister cover full—less than half a gill; but as Dawson and I had to go for the oxen we were given a double portion. This was all the water I had until the next day. It was a burning hot day. We could not find the trail of the oxen for a long time, and Dawson refused to go any farther, saying that there were plenty of cattle in California; but I had to do it for the oxen were carrying our provisions and other things. Afterwards I struck the trail; and found that the oxen, instead of going west had gone north, and I followed them until nearly sundown. They had gone into a grassy country, which showed that they were nearing water. Seeing Indian tracks on their trail following them, I felt there was imminent danger, and at once examined my gun and pistols to see that they were primed and ready. But I soon found my oxen lying down in tall grass by the side of the trail. Seeing no Indians, I hastened to fasten the packs and make my way to overtake the company. They had promised to stop when they came to water and wait for me. I traveled all night, and at early dawn came to where there was plenty of water and where the company had taken their dinner the day before, but they had failed to stop for me according to promise. I was much perplexed, because I had seen many fires during the night, which I took to be Indian fires, so I fastened my oxen to a scraggy willow and began to make circles around to see which way the company had gone. The ground was so hard that the animals made no impression, which bewildered me. Finally while making a circle of about three miles off to the south, I saw two men coming on horseback. In the glare of the mirage, which distorted everything, I could not tell whether they were Indians or white men, but I could only tell by the motion that they were mounted. I made a

bee-line to my oxen, so as to make breastworks of them. In doing this I came to a small stream, resembling running water, into which I urged my horse, whereupon he went down into a quagmire, over head and ears, out of sight. My gun also went under the mire. I got hold of something on the bank, threw out my gun, which was full of mud and water, and holding to the rope attached to my horse, by dint of hard pulling I succeeded in getting him out—a very sorry sight, his ears and eyes full of mud, his body covered with it. At last, just in time, I was able to move and get behind the oxen. My gun was in no condition to shoot. However, putting dry powder in the pan I determined to do my best in case the supposed Indians should come up; but lo! they were two of our party, coming to meet me, bringing water and provisions. It was a great relief. I felt indignant that the party had not stopped for me—not the less so when I learned that Captain Bartleson had said, when they started back to find me, that they "would be in better business to go ahead and look for a road." He had not forgotten certain comments of mine on his qualities as a student of Indian character. An instance of this I will relate.

One morning, just as we were packing up, a party of about ninety Indians, on horseback, a regular war party, were described coming up. Some of us begged the captain to send men out to prevent them coming to us while we were in the confusion of packing. But he said "Boys, you must not show any sign of hostility; if you go out there with guns the Indians will think us hostile, and may get mad and hurt us." However, five or six of us took our guns and went out, and by signs made them halt. They did not prove to be hostile, but they had carbines, and if we had been careless and had let them come near they might, and probably would have killed us. At last we got packed up and started, and the Indians traveled along three or four hundred yards one side or the other of us or behind us all day. They appeared anxious to trade, and offered a buckskin, well dressed, worth two or three dollars, for three or four charges of powder and three or four balls. This showed that they were in want of ammunition. The carbines indicated that

they had had communication with some trading post belonging to the Hudson's Bay company. They had buffalo robes also, which showed that they were a roving hunting party, as there were no buffaloes within three or four hundred miles. At this time I had spoken my mind pretty freely concerning Captain Bartleson's lack of judgment, as one could scarcely help doing under the circumstances.

We now got into a country where there was no grass nor water, and then we began to catechize the men who had gone to Fort Hall. They repeated, "If you go too far south you will get into a desert country and your animals will perish; there will be no water nor grass." We were evidently too far south. We could not go west, and the formation of the country was such that we had to turn and go north across a range of mountains. Having struck a small stream we camped upon it all night, and next day continued down its banks, crossing from side to side, most of the time following Indian paths, or paths made by antelope and deer. In the afternoon we entered a canyon, the walls of which were precipitous and several hundred feet high. Finally the pleasant berry banks gave out entirely, and we could travel only in the dry bed of what in the wet season was a raging river. It became a solid mass of stones and huge boulders, and the animals became tenderfooted and so sore that they could hardly stand up, and as we continued the way became worse and worse. There was no place for us to lie down and sleep, nor could our animals lie down; the water had given out, and the prospect was indeed gloomy—the canyon had been leading us directly north. All agreed that the animals were too jaded and worn to go back. Then we called the men: "What did they tell you at Fort Hall about the northern region?" They repeated, "You must not go too far north; if you do you will get into difficult canyons that lead toward the Columbia river, where you may become bewildered and wander about and perish." This canyon was going nearly north; in fact it seemed a little east of north. We sent some men to see if they could reach the top of the mountain by scaling the precipice somewhere and get a view, and they came back about

ten or eleven o'clock saying the country looked better three or four miles farther ahead. So we were encouraged—even the animals seemed to take courage, and we got along much better than had been thought possible, and by one o'clock that day came out on what is now known as the Humboldt river. It was not until four years later (1845) that General Fremont first saw this river and named it Humboldt.

Our course was first westward and then southward, following this river for many days, till we came to its Sink, near which we saw a solitary horse, an indication that trappers had sometime been in that vicinity. We tried to catch him but failed; he had been there long enough to become very wild. We saw many Indians on the Humboldt, especially toward the Sink. There were many tule marshes. The tule is a rush, large, but here not very tall. It was generally completely covered with honeydew, but this in turn was wholly covered with a pediculous-looking insect which fed upon it. The Indians gathered quantities of the honey and pressed it into balls about the size of one's fist, having the appearance of wet bran. At first we greatly relished this Indian food, but when we saw what it was made of—that the insects pressed into the mass were the main ingredient—we lost our appetites and bought no more of it.

From the time we left our wagons many had to walk, and more and more as we advanced. Going down the Humboldt at least half were on foot. Provisions had given out; except a little coarse green grass among the willows, along the river the country was dry, bare and desolate; we saw no game except antelope, and they were scarce and hard to kill; and walking was very fatiguing. We had several tobacco users in our company and the supply was running short. Tobacco lovers would surrender their animals for anyone to ride who would furnish them with an ounce or two to chew during the day. One day one of these devotees lost his tobacco and went back for it, but failed to find it. An Indian in a friendly manner overtook us bringing the piece of tobacco which he had found on our trail or at our latest camp and surrendered it. The owner instead of being thankful, accused the Indian of having stolen it—an im-

possibility, as we had seen no Indians or Indian signs for some days. Perhaps the Indian did not know what it was, else he might of kept it for smoking. But I think otherwise, for, patting his breast, he said "Shoshone, Shoshone," which was the Indian way of showing he was friendly. The Shoshones were known as always friendly to the whites, and it is not difficult to see how other and distant tribes might claim to be Shoshones as a passport to favor.

On the Humboldt we had a further division of our ranks. In going down the river we went sometimes on one side and sometimes on the other, but mostly on the north side, till we were nearing what are now known as the Humboldt mountains. We were getting tired, and some were in favor of leaving the oxen, of which we then had only about seven or eight, and rushing on into California. They said there was plenty of beef in California. But some of us said: "No, our oxen are now our only supply of food. We are doing well, making eighteen or twenty miles a day." One morning when it was my turn at driving the oxen, the captain traveled so fast that I could not keep up, and was left far behind. When night came I had to leave the trail and go over a rocky declivity for a mile and a half into a gloomy, damp bottom, and unpack the oxen and turn them out to eat, sleeping myself without blankets. I got up the next morning, hunted the oxen out of the willow thicket, and re-packed them. Not having had supper or breakfast, and having to travel nine miles before I overtook the party, perhaps I was not in the best humor. They were waiting, and for the very good reason that they could have nothing to eat till I come up with the oxen and one could be killed. I felt badly treated, and let the captain know it plainly; but, much to my surprise, he made no reply, and none of his men said a word. We killed an ox, ate our breakfast, and got ready to start about one or two o'clock in the afternoon. When nearly ready to go, the captain and one or two of his mess came to us and said: "Boys, our animals are much better than yours, and we always get out of meat before any of the rest of you. Let us have the most of the meat this time, and we will pay you back the next ox we

kill." We gladly let them have all they wished. But as soon as they had taken it, and were mounted ready to start, the captain in a loud voice exclaimed: "Now we have been found fault with long enough, and we are going to California. If you can keep up with us, all right; if you cannot, you may go to—;" and away they started, the captain and eight men. One of the men would not go with the captain; he said: "The captain is wrong, and I will stay with you boys."

In a short time they were out of sight. We followed their trail for two or three days, but after they had crossed over to the south side of the Humboldt, and turned south we came into a sandy waste where the wind had entirely obliterated their tracks. We were then thrown entirely upon our own resources. It was our desire to make as great speed as possible westward, deviating only when obstacles interposed, and in such a case bearing south instead of north, so as to be found in a lower latitude in the event that winter should overtake us in the mountains. But, diverting by following our fugitive captain and party across the Humboldt, we thereby missed the luxuriant Truckee meadows lying but a short distance to the west, a resting place well and favorably known to later emigrants. So, perforce, we followed down to the Sink of the Humboldt and were obliged to drink its water, which in the fall of the year becomes stagnant and the color of lye, and not fit to drink at all unless boiled. Here we camped. Leaving the Sink of the Humboldt, we crossed a considerable stream which must have been Carson river, and came to another stream which must have been the Walker river, and followed it up to where it came of the mountains, which proved to be the Sierra Nevadas. We did not know the name of the mountains. Neither had these rivers then been named, nor had they been seen by Kit Carson or Joe Walker, for whom they were named, nor were they seen until 1845 by Fremont, who named them.

We were now camped on Walker river, at the very eastern base of the Sierra Nevadas, and had only two oxen left. We sent men ahead to see if it would be possible to scale the

mountains, while we killed the better of the two oxen, and dried the meat in preparation for the ascent. The men returned toward evening and reported that they thought it would be possible to ascend the mountains, though very difficult. We had eaten our supper, and were ready for the climb in the morning. Looking back on the plains we saw something coming, which we decided to be Indians. They traveled very slowly, and it was difficult to understand their movements. To make a long story short, it was the eight men that had left us nine days before. They had gone farther south than we and had, come back to a lake, probably Carson lake, and there had found Indians, who supplied them plentifully with fish and pine nuts. Fish caught in such water are not fit to eat at any time, much less in the fall of the year. The men had eaten heartily of fish and pine nuts and had got something akin to cholera morbus. We ran out to meet them and shook hands, and put our frying pans on and gave them the best supper we could. Captain Bartleson, who when we started from Missouri was a portly man, was reduced to half his former girth. He said: "Boys, if ever I get back to Missouri I will never leave that country. I would gladly eat out of the troughs with my hogs." He seemed to be heartily sick of his late experience, but that did not prevent him from leaving us twice after that.

We were now in what is at present Nevada, and probably within forty miles of the present boundary of California. We ascended the mountain on the north side of Walker river to the summit, and then struck a stream running west which proved to be the extreme source of the Stanislaus river. We followed it down for several days and finally came to where a branch ran into it, each forming a canyon. The main river flowed in a precipitous gorge in places apparently a mile deep, and the gorge that came into it was but little less formidable. At night we found ourselves on the extreme point of the promontory between the two, very tired, and with neither grass nor water. We had to stay there that night. Early the next morning two men went down to see if it would be possible to get down through the smaller canyon. I was one of them,

Jimmy John was the other. Benjamin Kelsey, who had shown himself expert in finding the way, was now, without any election, still recognized as leader, as he had been during the absence of Bartleson. A party also went back to see how far we should have to go around before we could pass over the tributary canyon. The understanding was, that when we went down the canyon if it was practicable to get through we were to fire a gun so that all could follow; but if not, we were not to fire, even if we saw game. When Jimmy and I got down about three-quarters of a mile I came to the conclusion that it was impossible to get through, and said to him, "Jimmy, we might as well go back; we can't go here." "Yes, we can," said he, and insisting that we could, he pulled out a pistol and fired. It was an old dragoon pistol, and reverberated like a cannon. I hurried back to tell the company not to come down, but before I reached them the captain and his party had started. I explained, and warned them that they could not get down; but they went on as far as they could go, and then were obliged to stay all day and all night to rest the animals, and had to go among the rocks and pick a little grass for them, and go down to the stream through a terrible place in the canyon to bring water up in cups and camp kettles, and some of the men in their boots, to pour down the animals' throats in order to keep them from perishing. Finally, four of them pulling and four pushing a mule, they managed to get them up one by one, and then carried all the things up again on their backs—not an easy job for exhausted men.

In some way, nobody knows how, Jimmy got through that canyon and into the Sacramento Valley. He had a horse with him—an Indian horse that was bought in the Rocky mountains, and which could come as near climbing a tree as any horse I ever knew. Jimmy was a character. Of all men I have ever known I think he was the most fearless; he had the bravery of a bulldog. He was not seen for two months—until he was found at Sutter's, afterwards known as Sutter's Fort, now Sacramento City.

We went on, traveling as near west as we could. When

we killed our last ox we shot and ate crows or anything we could kill, and one man shot a wildcat. We could eat anything. One day in the morning I went ahead, on foot of course, to see if I could kill something, it being understood that the company would keep on as near west as possible and find a practical road. I followed an Indian trail down into the canyon, meeting many Indians on the way up. They did not molest me, but I did not quite like their looks. I went about ten miles down the canyon, and then began to think it time to strike north to intersect the trail of the company going west. A most difficult time I had scaling the precipice. Once I threw my gun ahead of me, being unable to hold it and climb, and then was in despair lest I could not get up where it was, but finally I did barely manage to do so, and make my way north. As the darkness came on I was obliged to look down and feel with my feet lest I should pass over the trail of the party without seeing it. Just at dark I came to an immense fallen tree and tried to go around the top, but the place was too brushy, so I went around the butt, which seemed to me to be about twenty or twenty-five feet above my head. This I suppose to have been one of the fallen trees in the Calaveras Grove of *Sequoia gigantea* or mammoth trees, as I have since been there, and to my own satisfaction identified the lay of the land and the tree. Hence I concluded that I must have been the first white man who ever saw *Sequoia gigantea*, of which I told Fremont when he came to California in 1845. Of course sleep was impossible, for I had neither blanket nor coat, and burned or frozen alternately as I turned from one side to the other before the small fire which I had built, until morning, when I started eastward to intersect the trail, thinking the company had turned north. But I traveled until noon and found no trail; then striking south, I came to the camp which I had left the previous morning. The party had gone, but not where they said they would go; for they had taken the same trail I followed, into the canyon, and had gone up the south side, which they had found so steep that many of the poor animals could not climb it and had to be left. When I arrived the Indians were there cutting the horses to pieces and

carrying off the meat. My situation, alone among strange Indians killing our poor horses, was by no means comfortable. Afterwards we found that these Indians were always at war with the Californians. They were known as the Horse Thief Indians, and lived chiefly on horse flesh; they had been in the habit of raiding the ranches even to the very coast, driving away horses by the hundreds into the mountains to eat. That night I overtook the party in camp.

A day or two later we came to a place where there was a great quantity of horse bones, and we did not know what it meant; we thought that an army must have perished there. They were of course horses that the Indians had driven in and slaughtered. A few nights later, fearing depredations, we concluded to stand guard—all but one man, who would not. So we let his two horses roam where they pleased. In the morning they could not be found. A few miles away we came to a village; the Indians had fled, but we found the horses killed and some of the meat roasting on a fire.

We were now on the edge of the San Joaquin Valley, but we did not even know that we were in California. We could see a range of mountains lying to the west—the Coast Range—but we could see no valley. The evening of the day we started down into the valley we were very tired, and when night came our party was strung along for three or four miles, and every man slept where darkness overtook him. He would take off his saddle for a pillow and turn his horse or mule loose, if he had one. His animal would be too poor to walk away, and in the morning he would find him, usually within fifty feet. The jaded horses nearly perished with hunger and fatigue. When we overtook the foremost of the party the next morning we found they had come to a pond of water, and one of them had killed a fat coyotte; when I came up it was all eaten except the lights and the windpipe, on which I made my breakfast. From that camp we saw timber to the north of us, evidently bordering a stream running west. It turned out to be the stream that we had followed down in the mountains—the Stanislaus river. As soon as we came in sight of the bottom land of the

stream we saw an abundance of antelopes and sandhill cranes. We killed two of each the first evening. Wild grapes also abounded. The next day we killed fifteen deer and antelope, jerked the meat and got ready to go on, all except the captain's mess of seven or eight, who decided to stay there and lay in meat enough to last them into California. We were really almost down to tidewater, and did not know it. Some thought it was five hundred miles yet to California. But all thought we had to cross at least that range of mountains in sight to the west before entering the promised land, and how many beyond no man could tell. Nearly all thought it best to press on lest snows might overtake us in the mountains before us, as they had already nearly done on the mountains behind us (the Sierra Nevada). It was now about the first of November. Our party set forth bearing northwest, aiming for a seeming gap north of a high mountain in the chain to the west of us. That mountain we found to be Mount Diablo. At night the Indians attacked the captain's camp and stole all their animals, which were the best in the company, and the next day the men had to overtake us with just what they could carry in their hands.

The next day, judging from the timber we saw, we concluded there was a river to the west. So two men went ahead to see if they could find a trail or a crossing. The timber proved to be along what is now known as the San Joaquin river. We sent two men on ahead to spy out the country. At night one of them returned, saying they came across an Indian on horseback without a saddle who wore a cloth jacket but no clothing. From what they could understand the Indian knew Mr. Marsh and had offered to guide them to his place. He plainly said "Marsh," and of course we supposed it was the Dr. Marsh before referred to who had written the letter to a friend in Jackson county, Missouri, and so it proved. One man went with the Indian to Marsh's ranch and the other came back to tell us what he had done, with the suggestion that we should go and cross the river (San Joaquin) at the place to which the trail was leading. In that way we found ourselves two days

later at Dr. Marsh's ranch, and there we learned that we were really in California and our journey at an end. After six months we had now arrived at the first settlement in California, November 4, 1841.

The party whose fortunes I have followed across the plains was not only the first that went direct to California from the east; we were probably the first white people, except Booneville's party of 1833, that ever crossed the Sierra Nevadas. Dr. Marsh's ranch, the first settlement reached by us in California, was located in the eastern foothills of the Coast Range Mountains, near the northwestern extremity of the great San Joaquin valley and about six miles east of Monte Diablo, which may be called about the geographical center of Contra Costa county. There were no other settlements in the valley; it was, apparently, still just as new as when Columbus discovered America, and roaming over it were countless thousands of wild horses, of elk and of antelope. It had been one of the driest years ever known in California. The country was brown and parched; throughout the State, wheat, beans, everything had failed. Cattle were almost starving for grass, and the people, except perhaps a few of the best families, were without bread, and were eating chiefly meat, and that often of very poor quality.

Dr. Marsh had come into California four or five years before by way of New Mexico. He was in some respects a remarkable man. In command of the English language I have scarcely ever seen his equal. He had never studied medicine, I believe, but was a great reader; sometimes he would lie in bed all day reading, and he had a memory that stereotyped all he read, and in those days in California such a man could easily assume the role of doctor and practice medicine. In fact, with the exception of Dr. Marsh there was then no physician of any kind anywhere in California. We were overjoyed to find an American, and yet when we became acquainted with him we found him one of the most selfish of mortals. The night of our arrival he killed two pigs for us, men reduced to living on poor meat, and almost starving, have an intense longing for anything fat. We felt very grateful, for we had by no means recovered

from starving on poor mule meat, and when he set his Indian cook to making tortillas (little cakes) for us, giving one to each—there were thirty-two in our party—we felt even more grateful, and especially when we learned that he had had to use some of his seed wheat, for he had no other. Hearing that there was no such thing as money in the country, and that butcher-knives, guns, ammunition and everything of that kind were better than money, we expressed our gratitude the first night to the doctor by presents, one giving a can of powder, another a bar of lead or a butcher-knife, and another a cheap but serviceable set of surgical instruments. The next morning I rose early, among the first, in order to learn from our host something about California—what we could do, and where we could go—and, strange as it may seem, he would scarcely answer a question. He seemed to be in an ill humor, and among other things he said: "The company has already been over a hundred dollars' expense to me, and God knows whether I will ever get a real of it or not." I was at a loss to account for this; and went out and told some of the party, and found that others had been snubbed in a similiar manner. We held a consultation and resolved to leave as soon as convenient. Half our party concluded to go back to the San Joaquin river, where there was much game, and spend the winter hunting, chiefly for otter, the skins being worth three dollars apiece. The rest—about fourteen—succeeded in gaining information from Dr. Marsh by which they started to find the town of San Jose, about forty miles to the south, then known by the name of Pueblo de San Jose; now the city of San Jose. More or less of our effects had to be left at Marsh's, and I decided to remain and look out for them, and meantime to make short excursions about the country on my own account. After the others had left I started off, traveling south, and came to what is now called Livermore Valley, then known as Livermore's ranch, belonging to Robert Livermore, a native of England. He had left a vessel when a mere boy, and had married and lived like the native Californians, and, like them, was very expert with the lasso. Livermore's was the frontier ranch, and more exposed than any

other to the ravages of the Horse-thief Indians of the Sierra Nevadas, before mentioned. That valley was full of wild cattle, thousands of them, and they were more dangerous to one on foot, as I was, than grizzly bears. By dodging into the gulches and behind trees I made my way to a Mexican ranch at the extreme west end of the valley, where I stayed all night. This was one of the noted ranches, and belonged to a Californian called Don Jose Maria Amador, more recently to a man named Dougherty. (The rancheros marked and branded their stock differently so as to distinguish them. But it was not possible to keep them separate. One would often steal cattle from the other. Livermore in this way lost cattle by his neighbor Amador. In fact, it was almost a daily occurrence, a race to see which could get and kill the most of the other's cattle. Cattle in those days were often killed for the hides alone. One day a man saw Amador kill a fine steer belonging to Livermore. When he reached Livermore's, ten or fifteen miles away, and told him what Amador had done, he found Livermore skinning a steer of Amador's!) Next day, seeing nothing to encourage me, I started to return to Marsh's ranch.

On the way, as I came to where two roads, or rather paths, converged, I fell in with one of the fourteen men, M. C. Nye, who had started for San Jose. He seemed very much agitated, and reported that at the mission of San Jose, some fifteen miles this side of the town of San Jose, all the men had been arrested and put in prison by General Vallejo, Mexican commander-in-chief of the military under Governor Alvarado, he alone having been sent back to tell Marsh and to have him come forthwith to explain why this armed force had invaded the country. We reached Marsh's after dark. The next day the doctor started down to the Mission of San Jose, nearly thirty miles distant, with a list of the company, which I gave him. He was gone about three days. Meanwhile we sent word to the men on the San Joaquin river to let them know what had taken place, and they at once returned to the ranch to await results. When Marsh came back, he said ominously, "Now, men, I want you all to come into the house and I will tell you your fate." We

all went in, and he announced, "You men that have five dollars can have passports and remain in the country and go where you please." The fact was, he had simply obtained passports for the asking; they had cost him nothing. The men who had been arrested at the Mission had been liberated as soon as their passports were issued to them, and they had at once proceeded on their way to San Jose. But five dollars! I don't suppose any one had five dollars; nine-tenths of them probably had not a cent of money. The names were called and each man settled, giving the amount in something, and if unable to make it up in money or effects he would give his note for the rest. All the names were called except my own. There was no passport for me. Marsh had certainly not forgotten me, for I had furnished him with the list of our names myself. Possibly his idea was—as others surmised and afterwards told me—that lacking a passport, I would stay at his ranch and make a useful hand to work.

The next morning before day, found me starting for the Mission of San Jose to get a passport for myself. Mike Nye, the man who had brought the news of the arrest, went with me. A friend had lent me a poor old horse, fit only to carry my blankets. I arrived in a heavy rain-storm, and was marched into the calaboose and kept there three days with nothing to eat, and the fleas were so numerous as to cover and darken anything of a light color. There were four or five Indians in the prison. They were ironed, and they kept tolling a bell, as a punishment, I suppose, for they were said to have stolen horses; possibly they belonged to the Horse-thief tribes east of the San Joaquin Valley. Sentries were stationed at the door. Through a grated window I made a motion to an Indian boy outside and he brought me a handful of beans and a handful of "manteca," which is used by Mexicans instead of lard. It seemed as if they were going to starve me to death. After having been there three days, I saw through the door a man whom, from his light hair, I took to be an American, although he was clad in the wild picturesque garb of a native Californian, including serape and the huge spurs used by the vaquero. I had the sentry at the door hail him. He proved to be an American, a resident of

the Pueblo of San Jose, named Thomas Bowen, and he kindly went to Vallejo, who was right across the way in the big Mission building, and procured for me the passport. I think I have that passport now, signed by Vallejo and written in Spanish by Victor Pruden.

Everyone at the Mission pronounced Marsh's action an outrage; such a thing was never known before.

We had already heard that a man by the name of Sutter was starting a colony a hundred miles away to the north in the Sacramento Valley. No other civilized settlement had been attempted anywhere east of the Coast Range; before Sutter came the Indians had reigned supreme. As the best thing to be done I now determined to go to Sutter's afterwards called "Sutter's Fort," or New Helvetia.

Dr. Marsh said that we could make the journey in two days, but it took us eight. Winter had come in earnest, and winter in California then, as now, meant rain. I had three companions. It was wet when we started, and much of the time we traveled through a pouring rain. Streams were out of their banks; gulches were swimming; plains were inundated; indeed, most of the country was overflowed. There were no roads, merely paths, trodden only by Indians and wild game. We were compelled to follow the paths, even when they were under water, for the moment our animals stepped to one side, down they went into the mire. Most of the way was through the region now lying between Lathrop and Sacramento. We got out of provisions and were about three days without food. Game was plentiful, but hard to shoot in the rain. Besides, it was impossible to keep our old flintlock guns dry, and especially the powder dry in the pans. On the eighth day we came to Sutter's settlement. This was November 28, 1841; the fort had not then been begun. Sutter received us with open arms and in a princely fashion, for he was a man of the most polite address and the most courteous manners, a man who could shine in any society: Moreover, our coming was not unexpected to him. It will be remembered that in the Sierra Nevada one of our men named Jimmy John became separated from

the main party. It seems that he came on into California, and, diverging into the north, found his way down to Sutter's settlement perhaps a little before we reached Dr. Marsh's. Through this man Sutter heard that our company of thirty men were already somewhere in California. He immediately loaded two mules with provisions taken out of his private stores, and sent two men with them in search of us. But they did not find us, and returned, with the provisions, to Sutter's. Later, after a long search, the same two men, having been sent out again by Sutter, struck our trail and followed it to Marsh's.

John A. Sutter was born in Baden in 1803 of Swiss parents, and was proud of his connection with the only republic of any consequence in Europe. He was a warm admirer of the United States, and some of his friends had persuaded him to cross the Atlantic. He first went to a friend in Indiana with whom he staid awhile, helping to clear land, but it was a business that he was not accustomed to. So he made his way to St. Louis and invested what means he had in merchandise, and went out as a New Mexican trader to Santa Fe. Having been unsuccessful at Santa Fe, he returned to St. Louis, joined a party of trappers, went to the Rocky Mountains, and found his way down the Columbia river to Fort Vancouver. There he formed plans for trying to get down to the coast of California to establish a colony. He took a vessel that went to the Sandwich Islands, and there communicated his plans to people who assisted him. But as there was no vessel going direct from the Sandwich Islands to California, he had to take a Russian vessel by way of Sitka. He got such credit and help as he could in the Sandwich Islands and induced five or six natives to accompany him to start the contemplated colony. He expected to send to Europe and the United States for his colonists. When he came to the coast of California, in 1840, he had an interview with the governor, Alvarado, and obtained permission to explore the country and find a place for his colony. He came to the bay of San Francisco, procured a boat, explored the largest river he could find, and selected the present site of Sacramento.

A short time before we arrived Sutter had bought out the

Russian-American Fur Company at Fort Ross and Bodega on the Pacific. That company had a charter from Spain to take furs, but had no right to the land. The charter had almost expired. Against the protest of the California authorities they had extended their settlement southward some twenty miles farther than they had any right to, and had occupied the country to, and even beyond the Bay of Bodega. The time came when the taking of furs was no longer profitable; the Russians were ordered to vacate and return to Sitka. They wished to sell out all their personal property and whatever remaining right they had to the land. So Sutter bought them out—cattle and horses; a little vessel of about twenty-five tons burden, called a launch; and other property, including forty-odd pieces of old rusty cannon and one or two small brass pieces, with a quantity of old French flintlock muskets pronounced by Sutter to be of those lost by Bonaparte in 1812 in his disastrous retreat from Moscow. This ordnance Sutter conveyed up the Sacramento river on the launch to his colony. As soon as the native Californians heard that he had bought out the Russians and was beginning to fortify himself by taking up the cannon, they began to fear him. They were doubtless jealous because Americans and other foreigners had already commenced to make the place their headquarters, and they foresaw that Sutter's Fort would be for them, especially for Americans, what it naturally did become in fact, a place of protection and general rendezvous; and so they threatened to break it up. Sutter had not yet actually received his grant; he had simply taken preliminary steps and had obtained permission to settle and proceed to colonize. These threats were made before he had begun the fort, much less built it, and Sutter felt insecure. He had a good many Indians whom he had collected about him, and a few white men (perhaps fifteen or twenty), and some Sandwich Islanders. When he heard of the coming of our thirty men he inferred at once that we would soon reach him and be an additional protection. With this feeling of security, even before the arrival of our party, Sutter was so indiscreet as to write a letter to the governor or to some one in authority, saying

that he wanted to hear no more threats of dispossession, for he was now able not only to defend himself, but to go and chastise them. That letter having been dispatched to the City of Mexico, the authorities there sent a new governor in 1842 with about six hundred troops to subdue Sutter. But the new governor, Manuel Micheltoarena, was an intelligent man. He knew the history of California and was aware that nearly all of his predecessors had been expelled by insurrections of the native Californians. Sutter sent a courier to meet the governor before his arrival at Los Angeles, with a letter in French, conveying his greetings to the governor, expressing a most cordial welcome, and submitting cheerfully and entirely to his authority. In this way, the governor and Sutter became fast friends, and through Sutter the Americans had a friend in Governor Micheltoarena.

The first employment I had in California was in Sutter's service, about two months after our arrival at Marsh's. He engaged me in January, 1842, to go to Bodega and Fort Ross and to stay there until he could finish removing the property which he had bought from the Russians. At that time the Russians had an orchard of two or three acres of peaches and apples at Fort Ross. I dried the peaches and some of the apples, and made cider of the remainder. A small vineyard of white grapes had also been planted. In February, 1842, I made a trip from Bodega northward as far as Clear Lake in the present Lake county. I remained at Bodega and Fort Ross fourteen months, until everything was removed; then I came into the Sacramento valley and took charge for Sutter of his Hock farm (so named from a large Indian village on the place), remaining there a little more than a year—in 1843 and part of 1844.

Nearly everybody who came to California made it a point to reach Sutter's Fort.*

*NOTE—Every year after the arrival of our party, in 1841, immigrant parties came across the plains to California: except in 1842, when they went to Oregon, most of them coming thence to California in 1843. Ours of 1841 being the first, let me add that a later party arrived in California the same year. It was composed of about twenty-five persons who arrived at Westport, Mo., too late to come with us, and so went with the annual caravan of St. Louis traders

to Santa Fe, and thence via the Gila river into Southern California.

Among the more noted arrivals on this coast I may mention:

1841—Commodore Wilkes' exploring expedition, a party of which came overland from Oregon to California, under Captain Ringgold, I think.

1842—Commodore Thomas Catesby Jones, who raised the American flag in Monterey.

1843—L. W. Hastings, via Oregon. He was ambitious to make California a republic and be its first president, and wrote an iridescent book to induce immigration, which came in 1846, but found the American flag flying when he returned with the immigration he had gone to meet. Also among the noted arrivals that year was Pierson B. Reading, an accomplished gentleman, the proprietor of Reading's ranch in Shasta county, and from whom Fort Reading took its name. Samuel J. Hensley was also one of the same party. Dr. Sandels, a very intelligent man, came the same year.

1844—First, Fremont's first arrival (in March); Charles Preuss, a scientific man, and Kit Carson with him. Second, The Stevens-Townsend-Murphy party, who brought the first wagons into California across the plains.

1845—First, James W. Marshall, who, in 1848, discovered the gold. Second, Fremont's second arrival, also Hastings' second arrival.

1846—Largest immigration party, the one Hastings went to meet. The Donner party was among the last of these immigrants.

Sutter was one of the most liberal and hospitable of men. Everybody was welcome—one man or a hundred, it was all the same. He had peculiar traits; his necessities compelled him to take all he could buy, and he paid all he could pay; but he failed to keep up with his payments. And so he soon found himself immensely—almost hopelessly involved in debt. His debt to the Russians amounted at first to something like one hundred thousand dollars. Interest increased apace. He had agreed to pay in wheat, but his crops failed. He struggled in every way, sowing large areas to wheat, increasing his cattle and horses, and trying to build a flouring mill. He kept his launch running to and from the bay, carrying down hides, tallow, furs, wheat, etc., returning with lumber sawed by hand in the redwood groves—nearest the bay, and other supplies. On an average it took a month to make a trip. The fare for each person was \$5, including board. Sutter started many other new enterprises in order to find relief from his embarrassments; but in spite of all he could do, these increased. Every year found him worse and worse off; but it was partly his own fault. He employed men—not because he always needed and could profitably employ them, but because in the kindness of his heart it simply became a habit to employ everybody who wanted employment. As long as he had anything he trusted anyone with everything he wanted—responsible or otherwise,

acquaintances and strangers alike. Most of the labor was done by Indians, chiefly wild ones, except a few from the Mission who spoke Spanish. The wild ones learned Spanish so far as they learned anything, that being the language of the country, and everybody had to learn something of it. The number of men employed by Sutter may be stated at from 100 to 500—the latter number at harvest time. Among them were blacksmiths, carpenters, tanners, gunsmiths, vaqueros, farmers, gardeners, weavers (to weave coarse woolen blankets), hunters, sawyers (to saw lumber by hand, a custom known in England), sheepherders, trappers, and later, millwrights and a distiller. In a word, Sutter started every business and enterprise possible. He tried to maintain a sort of military discipline. Cannon were mounted, and pointed in every direction through embrasures in the walls and bastions. The soldiers were Indians, and every evening after coming from work they were drilled under a white officer, generally a German, marching to the music of a fife and drum. A sentry was always at the gate, and regular bells called men to and from work.

Harvesting, with rude implements, was a scene. Imagine three or four hundred wild Indians in a grain field, armed, some with sickles, some with butcher knives, some with pieces of hoop iron roughly fashioned into shapes like sickles, but many having only their hands with which to gather up by small handfuls the dry and brittle grain; and as their hands would soon become sore, they resorted to dry willow sticks, which were split to afford a sharper edge with which to sever the straw. But the wildest part was the threshing. The harvest of weeks, sometimes of a month, was piled up in the straw in the form of a huge mound in the middle of a high, strong, round corral; then three or four hundred wild horses were turned in to thresh it, the Indians whooping to make them run faster. Suddenly they would dash in before the band at full speed, when the motion became reversed, with the effect of plowing up the trampled straw to the very bottom. In an hour the grain would be thoroughly threshed and the dry straw broken almost into chaff. In this manner I have seen 2000 bushels of wheat

threshed in a single hour. Next came the winnowing, which would often take another month. It could only be done when the wind was blowing, by throwing high into the air shovelful of grain, straw and chaff, the lighter materials being wafted to one side, while the grain, comparatively clean, would descend and form a heap by itself. In this manner all the grain in California was cleaned. At that day no such thing as a fanning mill had ever been brought to this coast.

The kindness and hospitality of the native Californians have not been overstated. Up to the time the Mexican reigme ceased in California they had a custom of never charging for anything; that is to say, for entertainment—food, use of horses, etc. You were supposed, even if invited to visit a friend, to bring your blankets with you, and one would be very thoughtless if he traveled and did not take a knife along with which to cut his meat. When you had eaten, the invariable custom was to rise, deliver to the woman or hostess the plate on which you had eaten the meat and beans—for that was about all they had—and say, "Muchas gracias, Senora" ("Many thanks, Madam"); and the hostess as invariably replied, "Buen provecho" (May it do you much good"). The missions in California invariably had gardens with grapes, olives, figs, pomegranates, pears and apples, but the ranches scarcely ever had any fruit, with the exception of the tuna, or prickly pear, these were the only cultivated fruits I can call to mind in California, except oranges, lemons and limes, in a few places. When you wanted a horse to ride, you would take it to the next ranch—it might be twenty, thirty or fifty miles—and turn it out there, and sometime or other in reclaiming his stock the owner would get it back. In this way you might travel from one end of California to the other.

The ranch life was not confined to the country; it prevailed in the towns, too. There was not a hotel in San Francisco, or Monterey, or anywhere in California until 1846, when the Americans took the country. The priests at the missions were glad to entertain strangers without charge. They would give you a room in which to sleep, and perhaps a bedstead with a

hide stretched across it, and over that you would spread your blankets. At this time there was not in California any vehicle except a rude California cart; the wheels were without tires, and were made by felling an oak tree and hewing it down until it made a solid wheel nearly a foot thick on the rim and a little larger where the axle went through. The hole for the axle would be eight or nine inches in diameter, but a few years' use would increase it to a foot. To make the hole, an auger, gouge or chisel was sometimes used, but the principal tool was an ax. A small tree required but little hewing and shaping to answer for axle. These carts were always drawn by oxen, the yoke being lashed with rawhide to the horns. To lubricate the axles they used soap (that is one thing the Mexicans could make), carrying along for the purpose a big pail of thick soap suds which was constantly put in the box or hole; but you could generally tell when a California cart was coming half a mile away by the squeaking. I have seen the families of the wealthiest people go long distances at the rate of thirty miles or more a day, visiting in one of these clumsy two-wheeled vehicles. They had a little framework around it made of round sticks, and a bullock hide was put in for a floor or bottom. Sometimes the better class would have a little calico for curtains and cover. There was no such thing as a spoked wheel in use then. Somebody sent from Boston a wagon as a present to the priest in charge of the mission of San Jose, but as soon as summer came the woodwork shrunk, the tires came off and it all fell to pieces. There was no one in California to set tires. When Governor Micheltorena was sent from Mexico to California he brought with him an ambulance, not much better than a common spring wagon, such as a marketman would now use with one horse. It had shafts, but in California at that time there was no horse broken to work in them, nor was there such a thing known as a harness; so the governor had two mounted vaqueros to pull it, their reatas being fastened to the shafts and to the pommels of their saddles. The first wagons brought into California came across the plains in 1844 with the Townsend or Stevens party. They were left in the mountains and

lay buried under the snow till the following spring, when Moses Schallenberger, Elisha Stevens, who was captain of the party, and others went up and brought some of the wagons down into the Sacramento Valley. No other wagons had ever before reached California across the plains. Mr. Schallenberger still lives at San Jose. He remained a considerable part of the winter alone with the wagons, which were buried under the snow. When the last two men made a desperate effort to escape over the mountains into California, Schallenberger tried to go with them, but was unable to bear the fatigue, and so returned about fifteen miles to the cabin they had left near Donner Lake, as it was afterwards called, where he remained, threatened with starvation, till one of the party returned from the Sacramento Valley and rescued him.

Elisha Stevens was from Georgia and had there worked in the gold mines. He started across the plains with the express purpose of finding gold. When he got into the Rocky Mountains, as I was told by his friend, Dr. Townsend, Stevens said, "We are in a gold country." One evening, when they had camped for the night, he went into a gulch, took some gravel and washed it and got the color of gold, thus unmistakably showing, as he afterwards did in Lower California, that he had considerable knowledge of gold mining. But the strange thing is, that afterwards, when Mr. Stevens passed up and down several times over the country between Bear and Yuba rivers, as he did with the party in the spring of 1845 to bring down their wagons, he should have seen no signs of gold where subsequently the whole country was found to contain it.

The early foreign residents of California were largely run-away sailors. Many if not most would change their names. For instance, Gilroy's ranch, where the town of Gilroy is now located, was owned by an old resident under the assumed appellation of Gilroy. Of course, vessels touching upon this coast were liable, as they were everywhere, to lose men by desertion, especially if the men were maltreated. Such things have been so common that it is not difficult to believe that those who left their vessels in early days on this then distant coast had cause

for so doing. To be known as a runaway sailor was no stain upon a man's character. It was no uncommon thing, after my arrival here, for sailors to be skulking and hiding about from ranch to ranch until the vessel they had left should leave the coast. At Amador's ranch, before mentioned, on my first arrival here, I met a sailor boy, named Harrison Pierce, aged 18 or 20, who was concealing himself until his vessel should go to sea. He was one of the men who went with me from Marsh's ranch to Sutter's. Californians would catch and return sailors to get the reward which, I believe, captains of vessels invariably offered. After the vessel had sailed and there was no chance of a reward, the native Californians gave the fugitives no further trouble.

At that time the only trade, foreign or domestic, was in hides, tallow and furs; but mostly hides. With few exceptions the vessels that visited the coast were from Boston, fitted out by Hooper to go there and trade for hides. Occasionally vessels would put in for water or in distress. San Francisco was the principal harbor; the next was Monterey. There was an anchorage off San Luis Obispo; the next was Santa Barbara, the next San Buenaventura, then San Pedro, and lastly San Diego. The hides were generally collected and brought to San Diego and there salted, staked out to dry, and folded so that they would lie compactly in the ship, and thence shipped to Boston. Goods were principally sold on the vessels; there were very few stores on land; that of Thomas O. Larkin at Monterey was the principal one. The entrance of a vessel into harbor or roadstead was a signal to all the ranchers to come in their little boats and launches laden with hides to trade for goods. Thus vessels went from port to port, remaining a few or many days according to the amount of trade.*

*NOTE—My first visit to the bay of San Francisco was in January, 1842. I had never before seen salt water. The town was called Yerba Buena, for the peppermint which was plentiful around some springs, located probably a little south of the junction of Pine and Sansome streets. Afterward—in 1847—when through the immigration of 1846 across the plains, and through the arrivals around Cape Horn, the place had become a village of some importance, the citizens changed the name to San Francisco, the name of the bay on which it is situated. With the exception of the Presidio and Aduana (custom house), all the buildings could be counted on the fingers and thumbs of one's hands. The

most pretentious was a farm building erected by Jacob P. Leese, but then owned and occupied by the Hudson Bay Company, of which a Mr. Ray was agent. The others belonged to Captain Hinckley, Nathan Spear, Captain John J. Vioget, a Mr. Fuller, "Davis, the carpenter," and a few others. Monterey, when I first saw it, in 1844, had possibly 200 people, besides the troops, who numbered about 500. The principal foreigners living there were: Thomas O. Larkin, David Spence, W. E. P. Hartnell, James Watson, Charles Walter, A. G. Toomes, R. H. Thomas, Talbot H. Green (Paul Geddes), W. Dickey, James McKinley, Milton Little and Dr. James Stokes. The principal natives or Mexicans were Governor Micheltorena, Manuel Jimeno, Jose Castro, Juan Malarine, Francisco Arce, Don Jose Abrego. Larkin received his commission as American consul for California at Mazatlan in 1844. On his return to Monterey, the woman who washed his clothes took the smallpox. Larkin's whole family had it; it spread, and the number of deaths was fearful, amounting to over eighty. When I first saw Santa Barbara, February 5, 1845, the old mission buildings were the principal ones. The town—probably half a mile to the east—contained possibly one hundred persons, among whom I recall Captain Wilson, Dr. Nicholas Den, Captain Scott, Messrs. Sparks and Nibever; and of natives, Pablo De la Guerra, Carlos Antonio, Carillo, and others. Los Angeles I first saw in March, 1845. It then had probably 250 people, of whom I recall Don Abel Stearns, John Temple, Captain Alexander Bell, William Wolfskill, Lemuel Carpenter, David W. Alexander; also of Mexicans, Pio Pico, governor, Don Juan Bandini and others. On ranches in the vicinity lived William Workman, B. D. Wilson and John Roland. At San Pedro, Captain Johnson. At Rancho Chino, Isaac Williams. At San Juan Capistrano, Don Juan Foster. I went to San Diego in July, 1846, with Fremont's battalion, on the sloop of war Cyane, Captain Dupont (afterwards admiral). The population was about 100, among whom I recall Captain Henry D. Fitch, Don Miguel de Pedrorena, Don Santiago Arguello, the Bandini family, J. M. Estudillo and others. Subsequently, after the revolt of September, 1846, San Diego was the point from which, in January, 1847, the final conquest of California was made.

I have said that there was no regular physician in California. Later, in 1843, in a company that came from Oregon, was one Joe Meeks, a noted character in the Rocky Mountains. On the way he said, "Boys, when I get down to California among the Greasers I am going to palm myself off as a doctor;" and from that time they dubbed him Dr. Meeks. He could neither read nor write. As soon as the Californians heard of his arrival at Monterey they began to come to him with their different ailments. His first professional service was to a boy who had his toe cut off. Meeks, happening to be near, stuck the toe on, binding it in a poultice of mud, and it grew on again. The governor, Micheltorena, employed him as surgeon. Meeks had a way of looking and acting very wise, and of being reticent when people talked about things he did not understand. One day he went into a little shop kept by a man known as Dr. Stokes, who had been a kind of hospital steward on board ship, and who had brought ashore one of those little medicine chests that were usually taken to sea, with apothecary scales, and a

pamphlet giving a short synopsis of diseases and a table of weights and medicines, so that almost anybody could administer relief to sick sailors. Meeks went to him and said, "Doctor, I want you to put me up some powders." So Stokes went behind his table and got out his scales and medicines, and asked, "What kind of powders?" "Just common powders—patient not very sick." "If you will tell me what kind of powders, Dr. Meeks—" "Oh, just common powders." That is all he would say. Dr. Stokes told about town that Meeks knew nothing about medicine, but people thought that perhaps Meeks had given the prescription in Latin and that Dr. Stokes could not read it. But Meeks' reign was to have an end. An American man-of-war came into the harbor. Thomas O. Larkin was then the United States consul at Monterey, and the commander and all his officers went up to Larkin's store, among them the surgeon, who was introduced to Dr. Meeks. The conversation turning upon the diseases incident to the country, Meeks became reticent, saying merely that he was going out of practice and intended to leave the country, because he could get no medicines. The surgeon expressed much sympathy and said, "Dr. Meeks, if you will make me out a list I will very cheerfully divide with you such medicines as I can spare." Meeks did not know the names of three kinds of medicines, and tried evasion, but the surgeon cornered him and put the question so direct that he had to answer. He asked him what medicine he needed most. Finally Meeks said he wanted some "draps," and that was all that could be got out of him. When the story came out, his career as a doctor was at an end, and he soon after left the country.

In 1841 there was likewise no lawyer in California. In 1843 a lawyer named Hastings arrived via Oregon. He was an ambitious man, and desired to wrest the country from Mexico and make it a republic. He disclosed his plan to a man, who revealed it to me. His scheme was to go down to Mexico and make friends of the Mexican authorities, if possible get a grant of land, and then go into Texas, consult President Houston, and then go east and write a book, praising the country to the

skies, which he did with little regard to accuracy. His object was to start a large immigration, and in this he succeeded. Hastings' book was published in 1845, and undoubtedly largely induced what was called the "great immigration" of 1846 across the plains, consisting of about six hundred. Hastings returned to California in the autumn of 1845, preparatory to taking steps to declare the country independent and to establish a republic and make himself president. In 1846 he went back to meet the immigration and to perfect his plans so that the emigrants would know exactly where to go and what to do. But in 1846 the Mexican war intervened, and while Hastings was gone to meet the immigration California was taken possession of by the United States. These doubtless were the first plans ever conceived for the independence of California. Hastings knew there was not enough Americans and foreigners yet in California to do anything. He labored hard to get money to publish his book, and went about lecturing on temperance in Ohio, where he became intimate with a fellow by the name of McDonald, who was acting the Methodist preacher and pretending, with considerable success, to raise funds for missionary purposes. At last they separated, McDonald preceding Hastings to San Francisco, where he became bartender for a man named Vioget, who owned a saloon and billiard table—the first, I think, on the Pacific Coast. Hastings returned later, and, reaching San Francisco in a cold rain, went up to Vioget's and called for brandy. He poured out a glassful and was about to drink it, when McDonald, recognizing him, leaned over the bar, extended his hand, and said, "My good temperance friend, how are you?" Hastings, in great surprise, looked him in the eyes, recognized him, and said, "My dear Methodist brother, how do you do?"

It is not generally known that in 1841—the year I reached California—gold was discovered in what is now a part of Los Angeles county. The yield was not rich; indeed, it was so small that it made no stir. The discoverer was an old Canadian Frenchman by the name of Baptiste Ruelle, who had been a trapper with the Hudson Bay Company, and, as was not an infrequent case with trappers, had drifted down into New Mex-

ico, where he had worked in placer mines. The mines discovered by Ruelle in California attracted a few New Mexicans, by whom they were worked for several years. But as they proved too poor, Ruelle himself came up into the Sacramento Valley, five hundred miles away, and engaged to work for Sutter when I was in Sutter's service. New Mexican miners invariably carried their gold (which was generally small, and small in quantity as well) in a large quill—that of a vulture or turkey buzzard. Sometimes these quills would hold three or four ounces, and, being translucent, they were graduated so as to see at any time the quantity in them. The gold was kept in by a stopper. Ruelle had such a quill, which appeared to have been carried for years. Now it so happened that almost every year a party of a dozen men or more would come from or return to Oregon. Of such parties, some—perhaps most of them—would be Canadian French, who had trapped all over the country, and these were generally the guides. In 1843 it was known to everyone that such a party was getting ready to go to Oregon. Baptiste Ruelle had been in Sutter's employ for several months, when one day he came to Sutter, showed him a few small particles of gold, and said that he had found them on the American river, and he wanted to go far into the mountains on that stream to prospect for gold. For this purpose he desired two mules loaded with provisions, and he selected two notably stupid Indian boys whom he wanted to go into the mountains with him, saying he would have no others. Of course he did not get the outfit. Sutter and I talked about it and queried, what does he want with so much provision—the American river being only a mile and the mountains only twenty miles distant? And why does he want those two stupid boys, since he might be attacked by Indians? Our conclusion was that he really wanted the outfit so that he could join the party and go to Oregon and remain. Such I believe was Ruelle's intention, though in 1848, after James W. Marshall had discovered the gold at Coloma, Ruelle, who was one of the first to go there and mine, still protested that he had discovered gold on the American river in 1843. The only thing that I can recall to lend

the least plausibility to Ruelle's pretensions would be that, so far as I know, he never, after that one time, manifested any desire to go to Oregon, and remained in California until he died. But I should add, neither did he ever show any longing again to go into the mountains to look for gold during the subsequent years he remained with Sutter, even to the time of Marshall's discovery.

Early in the spring of 1844, a Mexican working under me at the Hock farm for Sutter, came to me and told me there was gold in the Sierra Nevadas. His name was Pablo Gutierrez. The discovery by Marshall, it will be remembered, was in January, 1848. Pablo told me this at a time when I was calling him to account because he had absented himself the day before without permission. I was giving him a lecture in Spanish, which I could speak quite well then. Like many Mexicans he had an Indian wife; some time before, he had been in the mountains and had bought a squaw. She had run away from him and he had gone to find and bring her back. And it was while he was on this trip, he said, that he had seen signs of gold. After my lecture, he said, "Senor, I have made an important discovery; there surely is gold on Bear river in the mountains." This was in March, 1844. A few days afterward I arranged to go with him up on Bear river. He went five or six miles into the mountains, when he showed me the signs and the place where he thought the gold was. "Well," I said, "can you not find some?" "No, he said, because he must have a 'batea.'" He talked so much about the "batea" that I concluded it must be a complicated machine. "Can't Mr. Keiser, our saddle-tree maker, make the batea?" I asked. "Oh, no." I did not then know that a batea is nothing more nor less than a wooden bowl which the Mexicans use for washing gold. I said, "Pablo, where can you get it?" He said, "Down in Mexico." I said, "I will help pay your expenses if you will go down and get one," which he promised to do. I said, "Pablo, say nothing to anybody else about this gold discovery, and we will get the batea and find the gold." As time passed I was afraid to let him go to Mexico, lest when he got among his relatives he

might be induced to stay and not come back, so I made a suggestion to him. I said, "Pablo, let us save our earnings and get on board a vessel and go around to Boston, and there get the batea; I can interpret for you, and the Yankees are very ingenious and can make anything." The idea pleased him, and he promised to go as soon as we could save enough money to pay our expenses. He was to keep it a secret, and I believe he faithfully kept his promise. It would have taken us a year or two to get enough money to go. In those days there were every year four or five arrivals, sometimes six, of vessels laden with goods from Boston to trade for hides in California. These vessels brought around all classes of goods needed by the Mexican people. It would have required about six months each way, five months being a quick trip. But, as will be seen, our plans were interrupted. In the autumn of that year, in 1844, a revolt took place. The native chiefs of California, Jose Castro and ex-Governor Alvarado, succeeded in raising an insurrection against the Mexican governor, Micheltorena, to expel him from the country. They accused him of being friendly to Americans and of giving them too much land. The truth was, he had simply shown impartiality. When Americans had been here long enough, had conducted themselves properly, and had complied with the colonization laws of Mexico, he had given them lands as readily as to native-born citizens. He was a fair-minded man and an intelligent and good governor, and wished to develop the country. His friendship for Americans was a mere pretext; for his predecessor, Alvarado, and his successor, Pio Pico, also granted lands freely to foreigners, and among them to Americans. The real cause of the insurrection against Micheltorena, however, was that the native chiefs had become hungry to get hold again of the revenues. The feeling against Americans was easily aroused and became their main excuse. The English and French influence, as far as felt, evidently leaned toward the side of the Californians. It was not open, but it was felt, and not a few expressed the hope that England or France would some day seize and hold California. I believe the Gachupines—natives of Spain, of whom there

were a few—did not participate in the feeling against the Americans, though few did much, if anything, to allay it. In October, Sutter went from Sacramento to Monterey, the capital, to see the governor. I went with him. On the way thither, at San Jose, we heard the first mutterings of the insurrection. We hastened to Monterey, and were the first to communicate the fact to the governor. Sutter, alarmed, took the first opportunity to get away by water, returning home. In a few days the first blow was struck, the insurgents taking all the horses belonging to the governor at Monterey, setting the governor and all his troops on foot. He raised a few horses as best he could and pursued them on foot. However, I understood that a sort of parley took place at or near San Jose, but no battle, surrender or settlement. Meanwhile, having started to return to Sutter's Fort, two hundred miles distant, I met the governor returning to Monterey. He stopped his forces and talked with me half an hour and confided to me his plans. He desired me to beg the Americans to be loyal to Mexico; to assure them he was their friend, and in due time would give them all the lands to which they were entitled. He sent particularly friendly word to Sutter. Then I went on to the mission of San Jose and there fell in with the insurgents, who made that place their headquarters. I stayed all night, and the leaders, Castro and Alvarado, treated me like a prince. The two insurgents protested their friendship for the Americans, and sent a request to Sutter to support them. On my arrival at the fort the situation was fully considered, and all, with a single exception, concluded to support Micheltona. He had been our friend; he had granted us land; he promised, and we felt sure that we could rely upon his continued friendship; and we felt sure, indeed, we knew, we could not repose the same confidence in the native Californians. This man, Pablo Gutierrez, who had told me about the gold in the Sierra Nevadas, was a native of Sinaloa, Mexico, and sympathized with the Mexican governor and with us. Sutter sent him with dispatches to the governor, stating that we were organizing and preparing to join him. Pablo returned, and was sent again to tell the gov-

error that we were on the march to join him at Monterey. This time he was taken prisoner with our dispatches and hanged to a tree, somewhere near the present town of Gilroy. That, of course, put an end to our gold discovery; otherwise Pablo Gutierrez might have been the discoverer instead of Marshall.

But I still had it in my mind to try to find gold; so early in the spring of 1845 I made it a point to visit the mines in the south discovered by Ruelle in 1841. They were in the mountains about twenty miles north or northwest of the Mission of San Fernando, or say fifty miles from Los Angeles. I wanted to see the Mexicans working there, and to gain what knowledge I could of gold digging. Dr. John Townsend went with me. Pablo's confidence that there was gold on Bear river was fresh in my mind; and I hoped the same year to find time to return there and explore, and if possible to find gold in the Sierra Nevadas. But I had no time that busy year to carry out my purpose. The Mexicans' slow and insufficient manner of working a mine was most discouraging. When I returned to Sutter's Fort the same spring, Sutter desired me to engage with him for a year as bookkeeper, which meant his general business man as well. His financial matters being in a bad way, I consented. I had a great deal to do besides keeping the books. Among other undertakings we sent men southwest in the Sierra Nevadas, about forty miles from the fort, to saw lumber with a whipsaw. Two men would saw of good lumber about one hundred or one hundred and twenty-five feet a day. Early in June I framed an excuse to go into the mountains to give the men some special directions about lumber needed at the fort. The day was one of the hottest I had ever experienced. No place looked favorable for a gold discovery. I even attempted to descend into a deep gorge through which meandered a small stream, but gave it up on account of the brush and the heat. My search was fruitless.

The place where Marshall discovered gold in 1848 was about fifty miles to the north of the sawpits at this place. The next spring, 1849, I joined a party to go to the mines on and south of the Consumnes and Mokelumne rivers. The first day we

reached a trading post—Digg's, I think, was the name. Several traders there had pitched their tents to sell goods. One of them was Tom Fallon, whom I knew. This post was within a few miles of where Sutter's men sawed the lumber in 1845. I asked Fallon if he had ever seen the old sawpits where Sicard and Dupas had worked in 1845. He said he had, and knew the place well. Then I told him I had attempted that year to descend into the deep gorge to the south of it to look for gold. "My stars!" he said. "Why, that gulch down there was one of the richest places that have ever been found in this country;" and he told me of men who had taken out a pint cupful of nuggets before breakfast.

Fremont's first visit to California was in March, 1844. He came via Oregon, traveling south and passing east of the Sierra Nevadas, and crossing the chain about opposite the bay of San Francisco, at the head of the American river, and descending into the Sacramento Valley to Sutter's Fort. It was there that I first met him. He stayed but a short time, three or four weeks perhaps, to refit with fresh mules and horses and such provisions as he could obtain, and then set out on his return to the United States.

Sutter's Fort was an important point from the very beginning of the colony. The building of the fort and all subsequent immigrations added to its importance, for that was the first point of destination to those who came by way of Oregon or direct across the plains. The fort was begun in 1842 and finished in 1844. There was no town until after the gold discovery in 1848, when it became the bustling, buzzing center for merchants, traders, miners, etc., and every available room was in demand. In 1849 Sacramento City was laid off on the river two miles west of the fort, and the town grew up there at once into a city. The first town was laid off by Hastings and myself, in the month of January, 1846, about three or four miles below the mouth of the American river, and called Sutterville. But first the Mexican war, then the lull which always follows excitement, and then the rush and roar of the gold discovery, prevented its building up until it was too late. Attempts were

several times made to revive Suttersville, but Sacramento City had become too strong to be removed. Sutter always called his colony and fort "New Helvetia," in spite of which the name mostly used by others, before the Mexican war, was Sutter's Fort, or Sacramento, and later Sacramento altogether.

Sutter's many enterprises continued to create a growing demand for lumber. Every year, and sometimes more than once, he sent parties into the mountains to explore for an available site to build a sawmill on the Sacramento river or some of its tributaries, by which the lumber could be rafted down to the fort. There was no want of timber or of water power in the mountains, but the canyon features of the streams rendered rafting impracticable. The year after the war Sutter's needs for lumber were even greater than ever, although his embarrassments had increased and his ability to undertake new enterprises became less and less. Yet, never discouraged, nothing daunted, another hunt must be made for a millsite. This time Marshall happened to be the man chosen by Sutter to search the mountains. He was gone about a month and returned with a most favorable report.

James W. Marshall went across the plains to Oregon in 1844, and thence to California the next year. He was a wheelwright by trade, but being very ingenious, he could turn his hand to almost anything. So he acted as carpenter for Sutter, and did many other things, among which I may mention making wheels for spinning wool, and looms, reeds and shuttles for weaving yarn into coarse blankets for the Indians, who did the carding, spinning, weaving and all other labor. He had great, almost overweening confidence in his ability to do anything as a mechanic. I wrote the contract between him and Sutter to build the mill. Sutter was to furnish the means; Marshall was to build and run the mill, and have a share of the lumber for his compensation. His idea was to haul the lumber part way and raft it down the American river to Sacramento and thence, his part of it, down the Sacramento river and through Suisun and San Pablo bays to San Francisco for a market. Marshall's mind, in some respects at least, must have been unbalanced. It

is hard to conceive how any sane man could have been so wide of the mark, or how any one could have selected such a site for a sawmill under the circumstances. Surely no other man than Marshall ever entertained so wild a scheme as that of rafting sawed lumber down the canyons of the American river, and no other man than Sutter would have been so confiding and credulous as to patronize him. It is proper to say that, under great difficulties, enhanced by winter rains, Marshall succeeded in building the mill—a very good one, too, of the kind. It had improvements which I had never seen in sawmills, and I had had considerable experience in Ohio. But the mill would not run because the wheel was placed too low. It was an old-fashioned flutter wheel. The remedy was to dig a channel or tail-race through the bar below to conduct away the water. The wild Indians of the mountains were employed to do the digging. Once through the bar there would be plenty of fall. The digging was hard and took some weeks. As soon as the water began to run through the tail-race, the wheel was blocked; the gate raised, and the water permitted to gush through all night. It was Marshall's custom to examine the race while the water was running through in the morning, so as to direct the Indians where to deepen it, and then shut off the water for them to work during the day. The water was clear as crystal, and the current was swift enough to sweep away the sand and lighter materials. Marshall made these examinations early in the morning while the Indians were getting their breakfast. It was on one of these occasions, in the clear, shallow water that he saw something bright and yellow. He picked it up—it was a piece of gold! The world has seen and felt the result. The mill sawed little or no lumber; as a lumber enterprise the project was a failure but as a gold discovery it was a grand success.

There was no excitement at first, not for three or four months—because the mine was not known to be rich, or to exist anywhere except at the sawmill, or to be available to anyone except Sutter, to whom everyone conceded that it belonged. Time does not permit me to relate how I carried the news of

the discovery to San Francisco; how the same year I discovered gold on the Feather river and worked it; how I made the first weights and scales to weigh the first gold for Sam Brannan; how the richest of the mines became known by the Mormons who were employed by Sutter to work at the sawmill, working about on Sundays and finding it in the crevices along the stream and taking it to Brannan's store at the fort, and how Brannan kept the gold a secret as long as he could till the excitement burst out all at once like wildfire.

Among the noted arrivals at Sutter's Fort should be mentioned that of Castro and Castillero, in the fall of 1845. The latter had been before in California, sent, as he had been this time, as a peace commissioner from Mexico. Castro was so jealous that it was almost impossible for Sutter to have anything like a private interview with him. Sutter, however, was given to understand that, as he had stood friendly to Governor Micheltorena on the side of Mexico in the late troubles, he might rely on the friendship of Mexico, to which he was enjoined to continue faithful in all emergencies. Within a week Castillero was shown at San Jose a singular heavy reddish rock, which had long been known to the Indians, who rubbed it on their hands and faces to paint them. The Californians had often tried to smelt this rock in a blacksmith's fire, thinking it to be silver or some other precious metal. But Castillero, who was an intelligent man and a native of Spain, at once recognized it as quicksilver, and noted its resemblance to the cinnabar in the mines of Almaden. A company was immediately formed to work it, of which Castillero, Castro, Alexander Forbes, and others were members. The discovery of quicksilver at this time seems providential in view of its absolute necessity to supplement the imminent discovery of gold, which stirred and waked into new life the industries of the world.

It is a question whether the United States could have stood the shock of the great rebellion of 1861 had the California gold discovery not been made. Bankers and business men of New York in 1864 did not hesitate to admit that but for the gold of California, which monthly poured its five or six millions into

that financial center, the bottom would have dropped out of everything. These timely arrivals so strengthened the nerves of trade and stimulated business as to enable the government to sell its bonds at a time when its credit was its life-blood and the main reliance by which to feed, clothe and maintain its armies. Once our bonds went down to thirty-eight cents on the dollar. California gold averted a total collapse, and enabled a preserved Union to come forth from the great conflict with only four billions of debt instead of a hundred billions. The hand of Providence so plainly seen in the discovery of gold is no less manifest in the time chosen for its accomplishment.

Fremont in the Conquest of California

In the autumn of 1845 Fremont came on his second exploring expedition to California. This time he divided his party east of the Sierra Nevadas and sent the greater portion to come in through a gap supposed to exist farther to the south, while he followed substantially what is now the emigrant road, or Truckee route, and came direct to Sutter's Fort with about eight or nine men. At that time I was in charge of Sutter's Fort and Sutter's business, he being absent at the bay of San Francisco. Fremont camped on the American river about three miles above the fort. The first notice of his return to California was his sudden appearance, with Kit Carson, at the fort. He at once made known to me his wants, namely, sixteen mules, six pack-saddles, some flour and other provisions, and the use of a blacksmith's shop to shoe the mules, to enable him to go in haste to meet the others of his party. I told him precisely what could and could not be furnished—that we had no mules, but could let him have horses, and could make the pack-saddles; that he might have the use of a blacksmith's shop, but we were entirely out of coal. He became reticent, and, saying something in a low tone to Kit Carson, rose and left without saying good-bye, and returned to his camp. As they mounted their horses to leave, Fremont was heard to say that I was unwilling to accommodate him, which greatly pained me; for, of course, we were always glad of the arrival of Americans, and especially of one in authority. Besides, I knew that Captain Sutter would do anything in his power for Fremont. So I took with me Dr. Gildea, a recent arrival from St. Louis, across the plains, and hastened to Fremont's camp and told him what had been reported to me. He stated, in a very formal manner, that he was the officer of one government and Sutter the officer of another; that difficulties existed between those governments; and hence his inference that I, representing Sutter, was not willing to accommodate him. He reminded me that on his first

arrival here, in 1844, Sutter had sent out and in half an hour had brought him all the mules he wanted. I protested my willingness to do anything in my power, but was obliged to plead inability to do more than stated, telling him that in 1844 Sutter was in far better circumstances; that on that occasion a man named Peter Lassen had just arrived with a hundred mules, of which Sutter had bought what Fremont needed. But he had not been able to pay for them, because Fremont's drafts had to go east before Sutter could realize on them the money which had been promised to Lassen. In a few days Sutter returned but could not furnish anything more than I offered. Then Fremont concluded to go down to the bay and get supplies. He went with his little party of eight or nine men, including Kit Carson, but without success; so he sent the men back to Sutter's Fort to go, as best they could, to find the main party. Meanwhile he himself had made his way to Monterey to see the American consul, Thomas O. Larkin. After several weeks Fremont and his entire party became united in the San Joaquin Valley. His men in the mountains had suffered considerably. Fremont had given positive orders for them to wait at a certain gap or low divide till he should meet them with supplies, but the place could not be found. The men got out of provisions and bought from the Indians. The kind they most relished was a sort of brown meal, which was rich and spicy, and came so much into favor that they wanted no other. After a while the Indians became careless in the preparation of this wonderful meal, when it was discovered to be full of the broken wings and legs of grasshoppers! It was simply dried grasshoppers pounded into a meal. The men said it was rich and would stick to the mouth like gingerbread, and that they were becoming sleek and fat. But after the discovery they lost their appetites. How hard it is sometimes to overcome prejudice! While at Monterey Fremont had obtained permission from Jose Castro, the commandant-general, to winter in the San Joaquin Valley, away from the settlements, where the men would not be likely to annoy the people. He had in all in the exploring party about sixty well-armed men. He also had permission to

extend his explorations in the spring as far south as the Colorado river.

Accordingly, early in the spring (1846) Fremont started south with his party. When Castro gave him permission to explore toward the Colorado river he no doubt supposed he would go south or southeast from where he was camped in the San Joaquin Valley, and on through the Tejon Pass and the Mojave desert; but, instead, Fremont with his sixty armed men started west and southwest through the most thickly settled parts of California, namely, the Santa Clara, Pajaro and Salinas Valleys. As he was approaching the last valley, Castro sent an official order by an officer warning Fremont that he must leave, as his action was illegal. The order was delivered March 5th. Fremont took possession of an eminence called Gavilan Peak, and continued to fortify himself for several days, perhaps a week or more, Castro meantime remaining in sight and evidently increasing his force day by day. Fremont, enraged against Castro, finally abandoned his position in the night of March 9th, and, gaining the San Joaquin Valley, made his way rapidly northward up the Sacramento Valley and into Oregon, leaving Sutter's about March 24th.

A little over four weeks after Fremont left I happened to be fishing four or five miles down the river, having then left Sutter's service with the view of trying to put up two or three hundred barrels of salmon, thinking the venture would be profitable. An officer of the United States, Lieutenant A. H. Gillespie, of the marines, bearing messages to the explorer, came up the river in a small boat and at once inquired about Fremont. I told him he had gone to Oregon. Said he: "I want to overhaul him. How far is it to the fort?" And receiving my reply, he pushed rapidly on. He overtook Fremont near the Oregon line. Fremont, still indignant against Castro, who had compelled him to abandon his explorations south, returned at once to California. It so happened that Castro had sent Lieutenant Arce to the north side of the bay of San Francisco to collect scattered government horses. Arce had secured about one hundred and fifty and was taking them to the south

side of the bay, via Sutter's Fort and San Joaquin Valley. This was the only way to transfer cattle and horses from one side of the bay to the other, except at the Straits of Carquinez by the slow processes of swimming one at a time, or of taking one or two, tied by all four feet, in a small boat or launch. Arce, with the horses and seven or eight soldiers, arrived at Sutter's Fort, stayed over night as the guest of Sutter, and went on his way to the Consumne river, about sixteen or eighteen miles, and camped for the night.

Fremont's hasty departure for Oregon and Gillespie's pursuit of him had been the occasion of many surmises. Fremont's sudden return excited increased curiosity. People flocked to his camp; some were settlers; some hunters; some were good men and some about as rough specimens of humanity as it would be possible to find anywhere. Fremont, hearing that the horses were passing, sent a party of these promiscuous people and captured them. This, of course, was done before he had orders or any positive news that war had been declared. When Gillespie left the United States, as the bearer of a despatch to Larkin and Fremont, and of letters to the latter, war had not been declared. The letters included one from Senator Benton, who had the confidence and knew the purposes of the administration. As Gillespie had to make his way through Mexico, he committed the despatch and his orders to memory, destroyed them, and rewrote them on the vessel which took him, via the Sandwich Islands, to the coast of California. There had been no later arrival, and therefore no later despatches to Fremont was possible. Though Fremont was reticent, whatever he did was supposed to be done with the sanction of the United States. Thus, without giving the least notice even to Sutter, the great friend of Americans, or to Americans in general, scattered and exposed as they were all over California, he precipitated the war.

Sutter was always outspoken in his wish that some day California should belong to the United States; but when he heard that the horses had been taken from Arce, (who made no resistance, but with his men and with insulting messages was permitted to go on his way to Castro at Santa Clara), he ex-

pressed surprise that Captain Fremont had committed such an act without his knowledge. What Sutter had said was reported to Fremont, perhaps with some exaggeration.

As soon as the horses arrived at Fremont's camp, the same party—about twenty-five in number—were sent to Sonoma. By this party, General Vallejo, the most prominent Californian north of the bay, his brother Salvador, his brother-in-law, Jacob P. Leese, and Victor Prudon, were surprised at night, taken prisoners, and conveyed to Fremont's camp, over eighty miles distant by the traveled route on the Sacramento river. The prisoners were sent to Sutter's Fort, Fremont arriving at the same time. Then Sutter and Fremont met, face to face, for the first time since Fremont, a month before, had passed on his way toward Oregon. I do not know what words passed between them; I was near, but did not hear. This, however, I know: that Sutter had become elated, as all Americans were, with the idea that what Fremont was doing meant California for the United States. But in a few minutes Sutter came to me greatly excited, with tears in his eyes, and said that Fremont had told him he was a Mexican, and that if he did not like what he (Fremont) was doing he would set him across the San Joaquin river and he could go and join the Mexicans. But, this flurry over, Sutter was soon himself again, and resumed his normal attitude of friendship toward Fremont, because he thought him to be acting in accordance with instructions from Washington. For want of a suitable prison, the prisoners were placed in Sutter's parlor—a large room in the southwest corner of the second story of the two-story adobe house, which had but one door, and this was now guarded by a sentinel. (This adobe house is still standing, within the limits of the city of Sacramento, and is the only relic left of Sutter's Fort. It was built in 1841, the first then, the last now). Fremont gave me special directions about the safety of the prisoners, and I understood him to put them under my special charge. Some of Fremont's men remained at the fort.

Among the men who remained to hold Sonoma was William B. Ide, who assumed to be in command. In some way, perhaps

through an unsatisfactory interview with Fremont which he had before the move on Sonoma, Ide got the notion that Fremont's hand in these events was uncertain, and that Americans ought to strike for an independent republic. To this end nearly every day he wrote something in the form of a proclamation and posted it on the old Mexican flagstaff. Another man left at Sonoma was William L. Todd, who painted, on a piece of brown cotton, a yard and a half or so in length, with old red or brown paint that he happened to find, what he intended to be a representation of a grizzly bear. This was raised to the top of the staff, some several feet from the ground. (More than thirty years afterwards I chanced to meet Todd on the train coming up the Sacramento Valley. He had not greatly changed, but appeared considerably broken in health. He informed me that Mrs. Lincoln was his own aunt, and that he had been brought up in the family of Abraham Lincoln). Native Californians looking up at it were heard to say "Coche," the common name among them for pig or shoat.

The party at Sonoma now received some accessions from Americans and other foreigners living on the north side of the bay. Rumors began to reach them of an uprising on the part of the native Californians, which indeed began under Joaquin de la Torre. Henry L. Ford and other Americans to the number of thirty met De la Torre—whose force was said to number from forty to eighty—near the Petaluma ranch, and four or five of the Californians were said to have been killed or wounded. The repulse of the Californians seems to have been complete, though reports continued alarming, and a man sent from Sonoma to Russian river for powder was killed. A messenger was sent in haste to Sacramento for Fremont, who hurried to Sonoma with nearly all his exploring party and scoured the country far and near, but found no enemy.

I tried to make the prisoners at Sacramento as comfortable as possible, assisting to see that their meals were regularly and properly brought, and sometimes I would sit by while they were eating. One day E. M. Kern, artist to Fremont's exploring expedition, called me out and said it was Fremont's

orders that no one was to go in or speak to the prisoners. I told him they were in my charge, and that he had nothing to say about them. He asserted that they were in his charge, and finally convinced me that he had been made an equal, if not the principal custodian. I then told him that, as both of us were not needed, I would go over and join Fremont at Sonoma. Just at this time Lieutenant Washington A. Bartlett of the United States Navy arrived from the bay, inquiring for Fremont. The taking of the horses from Arce, the capture of the prisoners, and the occupation of Sonoma, had been heard of, and he was sent to learn what it meant. So he went over to Sonoma with me.

On our arrival Fremont was still absent trying to find the enemy, but that evening he returned. The Bear Flag was still flying, and had been for a week or more. The American flag was no where displayed. There was much doubt about the situation. Fremont gave us to understand that we must organize. Lieutenant Gillespie seemed to be his confidential adviser and spokesman, and said that a meeting would be held in San Francisco the next day at which Fremont would make an address. He also said that it would be necessary to have some plan of organization ready to report to the meeting; and that B. P. Reading, W. B. Ide and myself were requested to act as a committee to report such a plan. We could learn nothing from Fremont or Gillespie to the effect that the United States had anything to do with Fremont's present movements.

In past years rumors of threats against Americans in California had been rather frequent, several times causing them and other foreigners to hasten in the night from all places within one or two hundred miles to Sutter's Fort, sometimes remaining a week or two, drilling and preparing to resist attack. The first scare of this kind occurred in 1841, when Sutter became somewhat alarmed; the last in 1845. But in every case such rumors had proved groundless, so that Americans had ceased to have apprehensions, especially in the presence of such an accessible refuge as Sutter's Fort. And now, in 1846, after so many accessions by immigration, we felt en-

tirely secure, even without the presence of a United States officer and his exploring force of sixty men, until we found ourselves suddenly plunged into a war. But hostilities having been begun, bringing danger where none before existed, it now became imperative to organize. It was in everyone's mouth (and I think must have come from Fremont) that the war was begun in defense of American settlers! This was simply a pretense to justify the premature beginning of the war, which was henceforth to be carried on in the name of the United States. (So much has been said and written about the "Bear Flag" that some may conclude it was something of importance. It was not so regarded at the time; it was never adopted at any meeting or by any agreement; it was, I think, never even noticed, perhaps never seen, by Fremont when it was flying. The naked old Mexican flagstaff at Sonoma suggested that something should be put on it. Todd had painted it, and others had helped to put it up, for mere pastime. It had no importance to begin with, none whatever when the stars and stripes went up, and never would have been thought of again had not an officer of the navy seen it in Sonoma and written a letter about it.)

Under these circumstances on the Fourth of July our committee met. We soon found that we could not agree. Ide wished to paste together his long proclamations on the flagstaff, and make them our report. Reading wrote something much shorter, which I thought still too long. I proposed for our report simply this: "The undersigned hereby agree to organize for the purpose of gaining and maintaining the independence of California." Unable to agree upon a report, we decided to submit what we had written to Lieutenant Gillespie, without our names, and asked him to choose. He chose mine. The meeting took place, but Fremont's remarks gave us no light upon any phase of the situation. He neither averred nor denied that he was acting under orders from the United States government. Some men had been guilty of misconduct in an Indian village and he reprimanded them; said he wanted nothing to do with the movement unless the men would conduct them-

selves properly. Gillespie made some remarks, presented the report, and all present signed it.

The organization took place forthwith, by the formation of three companies. The captains elected were Henry L. Ford, Granville P. Swift and Samuel J. Hensley. Thus organized, we marched into the Sacramento Valley. The men who had not been at Sonoma signed the report at the camp above Sutter's Fort, except a few who soon after signed it at the Mokelumne river on our march to Monterey. This was, as far as I know, the last seen or heard of that document, for Commodore Sloat had raised the American flag at Monterey before our arrival, and soon it waved in all places in California where American influence prevailed.

As yet Fremont had received advices from Washington no later than those brought by Gillespie. His object in going to Monterey must have been to confer with Commodore Sloat and get positive information about the war with Mexico, which proved to be a reality, as we learned even before our arrival there. There was now no longer uncertainty; all were glad. It was a glorious sight to see the stars and stripes as we marched into Monterey. Here we found Commodore Sloat. The same evening, or the next, Commodore Stockton, a chivalrous and dashing officer, arrived around Cape Horn to supersede him. Plans were immediately laid to conquer California. A California battalion was to be organized, and Fremont was to be lieutenant-colonel in command. Stockton asked Fremont to nominate his own officers. P. B. Reading was chosen paymaster, Ezekiel Merritt quartermaster, and, I think, King commissary. The captains and lieutenants chosen at Sonoma were also commissioned. Though I did not aspire to office, I received a commission as a second-lieutenant.

Merritt, the quartermaster, could neither read nor write. He was an old mountaineer and trapper, lived with an Indian squaw, and went clad in buckskin fringed after the style of the Rocky Mountain Indians. He chewed tobacco to a disgusting excess, and stammered badly. He had a reputation for bravery because of his continual boasting of his prowess in killing In-

dians. The handle of the tomahawk he carried had nearly a hundred notches to record the number of his Indian scalps. He drank deeply whenever he could get liquor. Stockton said to him: "Major Merritt (for he was now major), make out a requisition for some money, say two thousand dollars. You will need about that amount at the start. Bring your requisition on board, and I will approve, and direct the purser to honor it." Major Reading wrote the requisition and Merritt got the money, two thousand Mexican silver dollars. That afternoon I met him in Monterey nearly as drunk as he could be. He said: "Bidwell, I am rich; I have lots of money," and putting both hands into the deep pockets of his buckskin breeches he brought out two handfuls of Mexican dollars, saying, "Here, take this, and if you can find anything to buy, buy it, and when you want more money come to me, for I have got lots of it."

Merritt was never removed from his office or rank, but simply fell into disuse, and was detailed, like subordinate officers or men, to perform other duties, generally at the head of small scouting parties. Merritt's friends—for he must have had friends to recommend him for quartermaster—in some way managed to fix up the accounts relating to the early administration of his office. In fact, I tried to help them myself, but I believe that all of us together were never able to find, within a thousand dollars, what Merritt had done with the money. How he ever came to be recommended for quartermaster was to everyone a mystery. Perhaps some of the current theories that subsequently prevailed might have had in them just a shade of truth, namely that somebody entertained the idea that quartermaster meant the ability and duty to quarter a beef!

The first conquest of California, in 1846, by the Americans, with the exception of the skirmish at Petaluma and another toward Monterey, was achieved without a battle. We simply marched all over California, from Sanoma to San Diego, and raised the American flag without opposition or protest. We tried to find an enemy but could not. So Kit Carson and Ned Beale were sent east, bearing despatches from Commodore Stockton announcing the entire conquest of California by the

United States. Fremont was made governor by Stockton at Los Angeles, but could not enter upon the full discharge of the duties of his office until he had visited the upper part of California and returned. He sent me to take charge of the mission at San Luis Rey, with a commission as magistrate over the larger portion of the country between Los Angeles and San Diego. Stockton and all his forces retired on board of their vessels. Fremont went north, leaving part of the men at Los Angeles under Gillespie, part at Santa Barbara under Lieutenant Talbot, and some at other points. Pio Pico and Jose Castro, respectively the last Mexican governor and commander-in-chief, remained concealed awhile and then withdrew into Mexico.

Suddenly, in about a month, Fremont being in the north and his troops scattered, the whole country south of Monterey was in a state of revolt. (Royce, in his History of California, says that the immediate cause of the revolt was the intolerant and exasperating administration of affairs by Gillespie at Los Angeles). Then for the first time there was something like war. As there were rumors of Mexican troops coming from Sonora, Merritt was sent by Gillespie to reconnoiter towards the Colorado river. Gillespie was surrounded at Los Angeles, and made to capitulate. I fled from San Luis Rey to San Diego. Merritt and his party, hearing of the outbreak, also escaped to San Diego. Meanwile, Fremont enlisted a considerable force (about four hundred), principally from the large Hastings immigration at Sacramento, and marched south. Commodore Stockton had landed and marched to retake Los Angeles, and failed. All the men-of-war, and all the scattered forces except Fremont's new force, were then concentrated at San Diego, where Commodore Stockton collected and reorganized the forces, composed of sailors, marines, men of Fremont's battalion under Gillespie and Merritt, volunteers at San Diego, including some native Californians and that portion of the regular troops under General S. W. Kearney that had escaped from the field of San Pascual—(Time does not permit me to do more than allude to the arrival at San Diego of General Kear-

ney with one hundred soldiers, and with Kit Carson and Beale, from New Mexico; or to his repulse at San Pascual)—in all between seven and eight hundred men. Of these forces I was commissioned and served as quartermaster. This work of preparation took several months. Finally, on the 29th day of December, 1846, the army set out to retake Los Angeles. It fought the battles of San Gabriel and the Mesa, which ended the insurrection. The enemy fled, met Fremont at San Fernando, and surrendered to him the next day. The terms of surrender were so lenient that the native Californians from that time forth became the fast friends of Fremont.

Unfortunate differences regarding rank had arisen between Stockton and Kearney. Fremont was afterwards arrested in California by Kearney for refusing to obey his orders, and was taken to Washington and court-martialed. Stockton, however was largely to blame. He would not submit to General Kearney, his superior in command on land, and that led Fremont to refuse to obey Kearney, his superior officer. Fremont's disobedience was no doubt owing to the advice of Stockton, who appointed him governor of California. (Charles H. Shinn says that General Vallejo in one of his letters tells of having received on the same day communications from Commodore Stockton, General Kearney and Colonel Fremont, each one signing himself "Commander-in-Chief of California.")

The war being over, nearly all of the volunteers were discharged from the service in February and March, 1847, at Los Angeles and San Diego. Most of us made our way up the coast by land to our homes. I had eleven horses which I swam, one at a time, across the Straits of Carquinez at Benicia, which J. M. Hudspeth, the surveyor, was at that time laying out for Dr. Robert Semple, and which was then called "Francisca," after Mrs. Vallejo, whose maiden name was Francisco Benicia Carrillo.

Early California Reminiscences

[For more than half a century John Bidwell was one of the foremost citizens of California—not by any accident of birth or happy business venture, but mainly by the sheer force of righteousness, using the word in its larger meaning. Coming here years before the golden magnate had given its first tug hitherward at the hearts of adventurers the world over, he saw the Mexican province wrenched from the hands that held till then and molded into a State, which was to weigh powerfully in shaping the social and economic future of the Republic. In the development of that State his voice and hand were potent factors for fifty years. Through all that time he preserved upon his own estate the patriarchal traditions of the older day, as did few other Americans. To all within its borders, he was guide, counsellor and friend; its gate swung wide in limitless hospitality; its storehouses were gladly open to every opportunity of benevolence.

Near the close of his life this clear-visioned, clean-hearted, high-souled Californian recorded some personal recollections of the days when California was in the making. In publishing these, they will be treated with the respect due to historical "sources"—that is to say, without editing or alteration, except for slight changes in punctuation and arrangement.—Ed.]

On November 28, 1841, we arrived at Sutter's Fort—that is, at the station. There was no fort yet, but merely a station for the convenience of the hunters and fur-traders. Agriculture was in an embryo state, for no crops had been raised yet. Some of the settlers had sown grain, but owing to the unprecedented dry season, the crop was a total failure. There was no such a thing as bread, so we must eat beef, varying it with an occasional game dinner consisting of elk, deer, antelope and geese or ducks. Our Christmas dinner was entirely of ducks. Cranes, beaver and otter also abounded. Grizzly bear were almost an hourly sight, in the vicinity of the streams, and it was not uncommon to see from thirty to forty a day.

A dozen or more of our party reached Sutter's in December. Robert Livermore had charge of the stock, cattle and horses, of which Sutter had about 2000 head. This same Livermore had a farm in Livermore Valley, to which valley he gave his name. He was a runaway English sailor boy, who had grown up in the country and understood the Spanish laws, and

knew the customs almost as well as the natives themselves. Without imputing dishonesty to the natives, cattle and horses were so abundant that the distinctions of the civil courts were not strictly observed by them. The boundaries between ranches were, in many cases imaginary. Stock roamed at will and herds became mixed. If one happened to kill the bullock of another, it was hardly worth noticing, for it would be strange if at some time or another that neighbor had not killed a bullock belonging to him. Livermore was told by a friend one day that a neighbor had just killed one of his bullocks, and that if he would hurry he would find him in the act of skinning it. Livermore said, "No, I'm too busy taking the skin off of one of his bullocks."

At that time there was no settlement east of the farm of Salvador Vallejo, where Napa City now is, except an Indian village at Suisun, and the country was entirely without roads, except those made by wild game.

Vallejo was the commander-in-chief of the military forces. The commandante general had one hundred soldiers, and could by proclamation raise from two to three or even five hundred.

In the winter of 1841-42 was one of the most remarkable floods, the oldest inhabitant having seen nothing like it, following, as it did, one of the driest years in the memory of the oldest inhabitant.

My first occupation in California was for Sutter at Bodega and Fort Ross, in removing the property purchased from the Russians to Sacramento. When all the cattle (wild cattle I mean, for all the cattle were considered wild, except a few which had been broken in to milk or to work as oxen) had been removed to Sacramento, there still remained from 150 to 200 head so wild that they seldom could be seen in the day time. Late in the evening, when it was almost dark, they would emerge from their impenetrable hiding places to eat grass. They were wilder than any deer, buffalo, elk or antelope, possessing the keenest vision and hearing. It was almost impossible to kill them, the country being so hilly and brushy. They were so wild that for a year I never killed one because

the deer, antelope, etc., would get between me and the game, and if I scared a deer, they knew that meant danger, and ran. I thought I had seen wild animals, but I confess they were the wildest I had ever seen.

All these cattle had been brought here from Mexico. Of horses there were thousands in the San Joaquin Valley. I have seen herds twenty miles long on the west side. The men at Sutter's Fort were very orderly, showing that when men are beyond the law and the customs of civilization, there springs up a common law among themselves. There was no law by which to regularly govern the men, yet there was no trouble except with a degraded set of mountaineers hovering around the Indian rancheria, trading beads and whiskey, and sleeping in the rancheria. There was no such thing as murder till as late as 1845. Sutter had a distillery in 1845.

On my way home some of my horses strayed away and I borrowed a mule and a horse from from a man Manuel Vaca at what is now Vacaville. Subsequently my horses returned, but Vaca's mule and horse had been stolen from me and he wanted \$50 for the mule and \$25 for the horse. These figures seemed amazing, for, in fact, the best horses sold from \$5 to \$10 and the best mules from \$10 to \$15. It would take me three months to earn the \$75 at the salary I was getting, and I decided to scour the valley for these wonderful animals. Peter Lassen, whose name now attaches to Lassen Peak and Lassen county, Joe Bruheim, a German living at what is now Nicolus, accompanied me. We heard that a party had started for Oregon and decided to overtake them, as in those days it was deemed a wise precaution to look out for your horses when a party left for Oregon.

Approaching Butte Creek, where we camped for the first time after leaving Hock Farm, we had an episode among the grizzly bears. In the spring of the year they lived principally on the plains, and especially in the little depressions on the plains. The first we saw made for the timber two or three miles distant, soon another, and another and more, all bounding away toward the creek. At one time there were sixteen in the

drove. Of course we chased them, but had no desire to overtake them; there were too many. As they advanced, one of the largest diverged to the left, and I pursued him alone. He was the largest I had ever seen, and his hair was long and shaggy, and I had the keenest desire to shoot him. I rode almost onto him, but every time I raised the gun the horse commenced bucking. My desire to shoot the bear became so great that it overcame my prudence, and I charged as near as I dared and dismounted, intending to get a shot, and mount again before he could get me. But the moment I was on the ground it was all I could do to hold the horse, which jumped and plunged and sawed my hands with the rope. When I could look toward the bear, I found he had stopped, reared, and was looking toward me and the horse. My hair, I think, stood straight up, and I was delighted when the bear turned and ran from me. I soon mounted the horse, and saw him plunge into the timber and make off.

Horses and mules are always frightened at the sight and smell of grizzly bears. It was difficult to keep our horses, as they snorted and tried to get away all night.

The next morning we were early in the saddle, and on our way, and in a few miles ride took further lessons in the pastime of chasing grizzly bears. I pursued a large one and a very swift one. When following you must run by the side and not immediately behind him, for he can more easily catch you if you do.

I was chasing too directly behind him and before I could turn, so close was I, that when he turned and struck, his claws touched the tail of my horse, and for a hundred yards at every jump he struck my horse's tail. Coming to better ground we soon left the bear in the distance, and as soon as he turned I turned after him. I heard him plunge into a stream and swim across it. Stationing myself where I could see him when he came out, as he stood on his hind feet, I shot. The blood spurted out of his nostrils two or three feet high, and he bounded about one hundred yards and died. These scenes were common—of daily and almost hourly occurrence.

Hastening up the valley we struck the trail of the Oregon Company on what is now known as Chico Creek, Rancho Chico, and to me one of the loveliest of places. The plains were covered with scattered groves of spreading oaks; there were wild grasses and clover, two, three and four feet high, and most luxuriant. The fertility of the soil was beyond question, and the waters of Chico Creek were clear, cold and sparkling; the mountains were lovely and flower-covered, a beautiful scene. In a word, this chase was the means of locating me for life. I never was permanently located till I afterward located here. It was early in March, 1843, when we reached Chico Creek.

It is not easy to conceive and understand the change in the condition of the country caused by the extensive pasture of the horses and cattle on these plains. We seldom or never were out of sight of game, deer, elk, antelope and grizzly bear. The snow-capped mountains on each side of the valley seen through the clear atmosphere of spring, the plains brilliant with flowers, the luxuriant herbage, all truly combined to lend enchantment to the view. In fact, the valley, with two or three unimportant exceptions, was as new as when Columbus discovered America.

We were now on the trail of the Oregon company, which lay on the east bank of the Sacramento river. The streams flowing into it, with the exception of Butte Creek, had at that time, not been named. Seeing some of the Sabine pine on a stream where we camped, we named it Pine Creek. The next stream we came to was beautiful and clear, and came swiftly from the mountains in considerable volume. On its banks appeared deer in great numbers; they seemed to be in droves; and so we named it Deer Creek. The next flowing stream some ten or twelve miles beyond, having still more fall where we crossed it, suggested its value as fine water power, so we named it Mill Creek. The next fine stream presented not only its well-timbered borders, but also fertile, grass-covered plain, over which roamed innumerable antelope, so the creek received that name.

Crossing Antelope Creek, and following the trail of the Oregon party, we came to the Sacramento river opposite the site of Red Bluff. Here the company had crossed the river and

were encamped on the opposite bank. They had no wagons, simply pack animals. The stream at that time was considerably swollen, deep, swift and cold. With simply a small hatchet, scarcely larger than a tomahawk, I set about making a raft to cross, which was no easy task to construct of a dry willow brush and such dead sticks as we could secure with our means. At last it was completed, being sufficient merely to hold me above water; however, to secure a dry passage if possible, a second story was built on it, consisting of fine, dry brush, tied securely. In size it resembled somewhat a small load of hay. Fearing that I could not manage it alone, I persuaded a wild Indian to go with me. He consented to go with great reluctance, but a few beads and a cotton handkerchief were so tempting that he could not resist. The only things we could get to propel the raft were willow poles, and none of them were long enough to touch the bottom when we got started into the stream; so we had to use them as paddles. We were high and dry when we started, but the displacement of the water by the brush was so little, and the material became so quickly water-logged, that the raft was soon under water. The swift current carried us so rapidly down that it was with difficulty we got over at all, but we finally got across one or two miles below. The most of the time we were up to our arms in cold water, and only knew by the brush under our feet that we were on the raft at all. If men ever labored for their lives we did. Safely on land, however, I soon made my way to the camp of the Oregon company. Several of the party which had come across the plains were in the Oregon company, notably Ben. Kelsey, Andrew Kelsey and Dawson, generally called "Bear" Dawson, from a circumstance which occurred in the Rocky Mountains. I at once made known my object which was to find the mule and the horse, which I had lost at Sacramento. These men at once declared that if the animals were there, and if I could identify them, I could have them, but nearly all protested that there were no such animals there, and they all agreed to drive up all the horses and mules they had for my inspection. As a result I soon found my animals and demanded their surrender. There

was some opposition, but Ben Kelsey, a very resolute man, and on this occasion a very useful one to me, declared that I should have them. Then all opposition being withdrawn, the animals were driven to the river and made to swim across.

My object being accomplished, I at once set out upon my return. Peter Lassen was a very singular man, very industrious, very ingenious, and very fond of pioneering, in fact, stubbornly so. He had great confidence in his powers as a woodman, but strangely enough he always got lost. As we passed the Butte Mountains on our way to Sutter's Hock farm he contended we should go south to reach it. Our Indian vaquero, who knew the country well, pointed to the east. We followed the Indian and Lassen kept on and landed in a tule marsh. Now, if you want to see the humor of a man is in after spending a night in a tule marsh full of mosquitoes you ought to have seen Lassen when he reached the Hock farm the next morning. He was so mad he would not speak to us, and, I think, never forgot or forgave us. Yet he was a man who had many good qualities. He was a good cook in camp and would do anything and everything if the others attempted to assist him; if not they at once became the target of the best style of grumbling that any man born in Denmark is capable of. But of course each one would attempt to assist, and that was all that was necessary to do, for Lassen would drive them away, and do it all himself, even to the staking of the tent.

After our arrival from the trip, I sketched, as best I could, the country visited, laying down and naming the streams by the names they have ever since borne.

Lassen selected, as a place to locate a ranch, the country on both sides of Deer Creek, now the Stanford ranch at Vina.

I engaged with Sutter to take the Hock farm. I remained there a year, and made most of the improvements seen by people within the historic period, which is said to commence at the close of the Mexican war, in the spring of 1847.

In 1843 a company came by land from Oregon. This party had men with it, two at least, who might be styled "Indian killers," and on their way they frequently fired at Indians seen

in the distance. The better portion tried to dissuade them from this, but with only partial success. At Red Bluff the company camped early in the day, intending to remain over night. One of the Indian shooters, seeing an Indian on the opposite bank of the river, swam over, carrying a butcher knife in his mouth. The Indian allowed him to approach until he was very near, but at last ran. The man with the knife threw a stone and crippled him, and then killed him with the knife. The company, fearing the Indians, concluded to travel on. After a few miles an Indian was seen following them—no doubt out of curiosity, not having heard of the killing. One of the Indian killers hid in the brush 'until the Indian came up, and then shot him.

The company pushed on in haste, feeling insecure lest the Indians, who were very numerous in the Sacramento Valley at that time, should be hostile on account of what had occurred. Next morning, as they were packing to leave camp, one of the Indian killers missed his bridle, and swore that "some of the damned Indians" had stolen it (an unreasonable thing, as the Indians had no horses). He fired at an Indian who stood near a tree 100 yards or so distant. The Indian fell back into the brush and all the other Indians in sight fled in terror. The company became alarmed and hastened away, but before they had started the man found his bridle under some blankets. All that day the Indians on the east side of the river were in a state of great excitement, as the company passed along the west side. For more than forty miles, at that time, there was no place where the horses could reach the water to drink, the banks being either steep or so grown up with timber and grapevines as to render it impossible to reach the water.

The day after, the company camped and reached water at the place now called Colusa. The excitement among the Indians had preceded them, and a considerable number of them had gathered on the opposite bank of the river. When the horses were led down to water, in an almost famished condition, the Indians fired at them with arrows. No one was hurt or hit. For some unaccountable reason, when the party

reached Sutter's establishment a few days later and reported what had happened, Sutter came to the conclusion that the Indians where the arrows had been shot across the river were hostile and should be punished.

Let me say here that the Indian village on the present site of Colusa was one of the largest in the valley, but there were many other villages on both sides of the river in the vicinity of the Colusa village, and both above and below it. I believe I can truthfully say that the number of Indians within ten miles of that point amounted to not less than 1500 to 2000. They lived largely on fish, mostly salmon, which they caught in great numbers in the river. For the purpose of fishing they formed a fish-weir at a point some miles above Colusa, by using willow poles, the ends of which were rounded and sharpened, and then made in some manner to penetrate the sandy bottom to a depth sufficient to resist the force of the current. By the use of cross-sticks lashed with grapevine, the structure formed a bridge not less than eight or ten feet wide, for men to pass and repass upon. At this point the river was very wide and the bottom very sandy, and the water perhaps not more than four or five feet deep.

I heard the story of the emigrants. Some thought the Indians where the shooting was done were hostile, but most of them, and the best informed as I thought, did not blame the Indians in view of the previous occurrence. Sutter, however, concluded to punish them, and went with fifty men and attacked the Indians at daylight. His forces were divided, part having gone above and crossed on the Indian bridge, so that they would be ready simultaneously at daybreak to begin the attack. The Indians fled and mostly jumped into the river, where they were fired upon and great numbers of them killed. After that time the Indians in that part of the valley were never known to be hostile to the whites.

Here I mention another fact which might have had some relation to the present county of Colusa. A part of the aforesaid Oregon company had left the main body and arrived at Sacramento before the campaign against the Indians just de-

scribed occurred. It was under the leadership of L. W. Hastings, who was ambitious and desired to organize a republic here and become its first president. Not knowing how long it might take to establish a republic, and having an eye to business, he at once took the preliminary steps with the intention of securing a large tract of land of ten or twelve square leagues lying on the west side of the Sacramento river, between Colusa and Knight's Landing, and to that end employed me to make a map of it. This was to be kept a profound secret.

In 1842 snails six inches long covered the country for a radius of several miles, so thick that we could scarcely step without stepping on them. They stayed only a few days.

For food we had in those days chiefly beef, game, butter and fish. Salmon came from the ocean up the streams. When the streams had gone down the salmon would remain in the deeper places, which were not more than three or four feet deep; often less. They were caught by taking a cord, making a noose at one end, putting it carefully over the salmon's tail and jerking him out. We sent Indians to the sandy places and they brought us strawberries by the bushel. When the time came we picked and dried huckleberries. From the Russian orchard at Fort Ross, apples and peaches were dried, and cider made, and through the favor of Captain W. A. Richardson, captain of Yerba Buena, or San Francisco, whose two sons lived with me in order to learn English, I was able to get occasionally a little of the luxury known as brown sugar, generally known in Mexico as *panoche*. I had more luxuries than any one.

Thomas O. Larkin was a prominent American in California when I arrived in 1841. He lived in Monterey and had a store there, probably the largest in California. His children were Americans, the father and mother both Americans, (the wife being the only American woman in California, except Mrs. Kelsey, who came with our party.) He wished to obtain for them from the Mexican government a grant of land of ten or twelve square leagues. For this purpose I engaged to find him a tract, and began explorations about July, 1844. I ascended the valley

on the west side of the Sacramento as far as Colusa, having with me one man only, and he an Indian who had been civilized in Mission San Solano, in Sonoma Valley. I encamped for the night on a slough some miles west of Colusa. Before reaching camp I had killed a large female grizzly bear, and carried with me the only part fit to eat—the foot. The next day we went directly west over the wide plains. The day was hot—terribly so. We found no water until toward night, and that was so salt that neither ourselves nor our animals could drink it, and we were obliged to sleep without water.

We saw deserted Indian villages, deserted because the springs had dried up (I should mention the fact that the summer of 1844 was a very hot one, because the previous winter had been almost rainless). We were in our saddles at daylight making our way toward the high mountains that lay to the southwest, feeling sure of finding water there. About 10 or 11 o'clock in the morning, from the top of a ridge, we saw a glorious sight, a large, clear, flowing stream. This we reached as soon as possible, and our nearly famished horses plunged into the middle of it. We saw at the same time a great number of Indians, men, women and children in a state of flight, running and screaming. Unsaddling our horses under a wide-spreading oak, they began to eat the wild oats, which were abundant. We were absolutely obliged to give them rest.

In less than an hour, the Indians that we had seen fleeing from us, the men I mean, were seen coming toward us from many directions. The Indian with me became alarmed. I had a gun but he had none. By certain signs, I gave them to understand that they must not approach us, but still large numbers had come very near. We saddled our horses, jaded as they were, so as to be ready if obliged to retreat.

Four or five of the Indian chiefs, or head men, came nearer than the others. They understood no Spanish, but my Indian, who came originally from the country between Sonoma and Clear Lake, was able to understand a few words from a very old Indian. They asked what we came for. They said they had never seen white men before. Here I felt obliged to let

them know what I could do by showing them what I had done, and so I pointed to the foot of the grizzly bear which I had with me, and told them I wanted to kill grizzly bear. The grizzly bear was looked upon by the valley Indians with superstitious awe, also by the coast Indians. They were said to be people, but very bad people, and I have known Indians to claim that some of the old men could go in the night and talk with the bears. I told them I did not want to kill Indians, because they were good people; but I wanted to kill grizzly bears, because they were bad people. Under the circumstances, however, I thought it prudent to mount our horses and go on, and we followed the beautiful stream down (that is to say, almost due north, that being its natural direction), knowing that it must find its way into the Sacramento Valley. To our surprise the number of Indians increased to many hundreds. In one-half day we passed seventeen large villages. They evidently came from the permanent villages and made temporary ones on this flowing stream. These Indians certainly proved anything but hostile. They were evidently in great awe of us, but showed no signs of hostility.

Hundreds were before and behind us, and the villages were made aware of our approach before we reached them. I generally found the ground carpeted with branches and weeds, and made ready for me as a place to stop and talk. Women ran in great haste and brought baskets full of provisions of all kinds, apparently to pacify me, supposing, perhaps, that I was hungry and came to lay in a supply of provisions. In fact, I found myself almost barricaded with baskets full of acorn bread, grasshoppers, various kinds of seeds, etc. Among them, however, I found a kind of meal, made by pounding the cone or berries of juniper, which made a kind of yellowish meal, very good, and resembling gingerbread in taste. Its Indian name I well remember, viz: Mun.

The sun began to go down over the mountains and we were still traveling in the midst of a vast multitude of Indians, and every village added to the number. The old Indian before mentioned I took care to keep near me, so that through him I could

communicate with the other Indians. I should mention that before, at our first talk with the Indians, I tried to present each of the chiefs with a few beads and fancy cotton handkerchiefs (things I always carried for that purpose when among them). Seeing a conical hill, I determined to make that my camp for the night. I told the old Indian I was going there to sleep and that all the Indians must go to their villages and not come near me in the night, as it would make me very angry if any Indians approached me in the night. In great obedience the Indians were soon all out of sight. I made a barricade near the top of the hill by piling rocks around us, and tied our horses near us. The Indian lay awake one-half of the night, and I the other half, but not an Indian appeared during the night. But soon after daylight the mountain seemed to be alive with Indians, and we thought it best to continue our journey down the stream, passing, as before, many large villages. At noon we came to the largest of all the permanent villages. There the Indians had built a large dance-house in the usual Indian style, using long poles for rafters, and were finishing the roof, the house being circular in form, by covering with earth in the usual way.

Here for the first time and the last time in my life I saw that the Indians had procured poles for rafters of the house by cutting down cottonwood and willow trees with stone axes, leaving the stumps a mass of bruised, woody fibers resembling well worn brooms. The stone axes bruised rather than cut.

This 4th of July, 1844, seemed to be a gala day with the Indians, or else for my benefit they made it so. Male and female were in the gayest costumes, wearing ornaments of feathers and beads. To cap the climax, they got up the largest and gayest dance and the best singing I've ever witnessed among the Indians. I still carried the bear's foot, and thought it best to tell the Indians that my desire was to kill bear. They wanted to know what I killed the bears with, and of course I told them "with the gun." Then they wanted to see me shoot it. This I declined to do, because I did not wish to frighten them or injure them, and bidding them good-bye, that evening

I reached the Sacramento Valley. The above mentioned stream proved to be what is now known as Stony Creek. The Indian name was Capay (Capi), and by this name it went until Peter Lassen and William C. Moon, in 1845, made grindstones from material found upon one of its branches, after which it gradually became known as Stony Creek.

The next day, July 5, 1844, I reached the Sacramento River and met Ed A. Farwell, with two canoes, coming up the river to begin occupation of a grant located on the east side of the river and south of Chico Creek.

Finding no considerable extent of level land in the mountains, I mapped out the Larkin grant on the Sacramento River above Colusa (the location is well known) in Colusa county.

On my return to Sutter's Fort and describing the country seen and the streams along the Coast Range Mountains, the trappers believed that it was a good country in which to trap beaver. A man named Jacob Meyers raised a company of twenty or more and went to trap beaver.

The first thing they did, however, was to become alarmed at the number of Indians, and considering them hostile without proper cause, made war on them and killed a great number. I asked why they shot the Indians, who were so friendly to me, and he said that they wore white feathers in their head-dresses or caps, and that they made a great noise, and that he considered these a sign of hostility. He said he had seen an Indian with a white feather and had shot him. I told him they ran and screamed and showed white feathers when I was there, but no one showed any sign of hostility. They caught some beaver, but not many on account of the Indians.

Before the party went out for beaver, I had made another trip, going up on the east side and returning on the west side, and having five or six white men with me. During that trip we explored to some extent the north and west forks of Stony Creek, and saw some Indians, but found them friendly. Peter Lassen started in the fall of 1843 to take possession of the ranch he selected on Deer Creek, but did not get there on account of rains until January or February of the following year.

Nearly all the grants of land by the Mexican government in the Sacramento Valley were made in the year 1845, and that was the year when nearly all the settlements were either begun or contemplated, but many interruptions and obstacles occurred in those days. One of them was the insurrection which resulted in the expulsion of the Mexican governor, Manuel Micheltorena, in the spring of 1845.

Early history of California under the Mexican rule will show that it was almost a rule of the native chiefs of California to make insurrection and expel the governors sent from Mexico. To do this, almost any pretext would answer, and very little military demonstration would suffice, as the governors had nothing that they could call an army with which to make resistance. The Mexican governors were to the native chiefs of Spanish descent a kind of foreign rulers, and it did not take long after a governor was sent out to deprive him of the public revenues such as they were, and make him long for even loaves and fishes. With the exception of the priests in charge of Missions, to whom tithes were sometimes paid, the only revenue of a public nature were duties on goods sent to the coast by Boston vessels to trade for hides and tallow. These duties probably amounted per year to the nominal sum of \$200,000 or \$400,000, paid not on goods, but in the very goods upon which duties are levied. Four to six vessels per year came thus laden with goods. The Mexican tariff on a cargo of goods which cost in Boston six cents per yard, \$30,000 to \$40,000, being the first cost of the cargo, would be about the same sum, and the goods were counted out in payment of duties, as I am informed, to the Mexican officials, at 25 to 40 cents per yard, and doubtless other goods in like proportion. Small as were these revenues, the goods thus received were greatly needed and desired by the hungry officials.

Governor Micheltorena came from Mexico, as before stated, in 1843, bringing with him some 500 soldiers, well knowing, as did every intelligent Mexican, that he could not rely on the native Californians. However, his rule was eminently just, displaying no partiality between native and naturalized citi-

zens. To sustain these soldiers and pay other expenses of administration of course used up all the scanty revenues, so grants of land were made to all native and naturalized citizens alike, who desired to settle and improve the country.

Sutter and ninety men with rifles and one hundred and twenty Indians joined the governor and marched south to quell the insurrection in December, 1844. The rebels barricaded the coast near San Buena Ventura and detained us three weeks. On the 22d of February we met and gave them battle at Cahuenga, twelve miles this side of Los Angeles. This aroused all of Los Angeles in favor of Castro and Alvarado, and Captain Bill O'Fallen, with a trapping party of thirty trappers, joined their side. I was aide-de-camp. When we saw the Americans there, we said the Mexicans and the Indians could fight it out. The Americans would not fight. I told the governor that the Americans would not come. I was made a prisoner and made to pull ropes of cannon, but I mounted a horse and ran away. They wounded five or six horses with grape shot. Sutter and I joined the governor, and they took us prisoners. Castro met Sutter and kissed him and was glad to see him. He sent us to Los Angeles. Our men kept their word, but the other hunters and trappers fought against the governor and made him capitulate, and compelled him to leave the country. This was known as the Micheltorena war.

Pio Pico went in as governor and so remained until the Mexican war. Alvarado had been governor in 1841. It was now the spring of 1845. Pico made Los Angeles his capital. Governor Pico and the native Californians, for the time being, seemed satisfied with their achievement in expelling the governor, and expressed a desire to be friendly with us, and permitted all to go to Sacramento with arms, ammunition, horses and equipments. Some of our people retraced their steps by the coast route by which we went, and some of us crossed into the Mojave Desert, and then over the mountains through the Tejon Pass into the San Joaquin Valley.

At the place now known as Tejon was a large Indian village. The Indians, all or most of them, had been at the Mission and

spoke Spanish. The country was beautiful, the vegetation most luxuriant, the landscape brilliant with innumerable flowers, and the air laden with their fragrance.

Traveling along the San Joaquin Valley, we encountered vast numbers of wild horses. At this time and for many years previously there had been tribes of Indians inhabiting the Sierra Nevada Mountains for a considerable distance, from the Mokelumne River on the north and extending a great distance toward the south. On this journey of ours up the San Joaquin Valley, we encountered a band of tame horses, nearly 100 in number, and took them from the Indians who were driving them into the mountains. Such raids by the Indians into the settlements were of frequent occurrence. In the winter of 1844-5, the first settlement in the San Joaquin Valley was begun by a man named Lindley, who was engaged to begin occupation on a grant of land made to William Gulnac of San Jose, on the east bank of the San Joaquin river. He constructed a cabin on the present site of Stockton, but when we passed the cabin was empty. The Indians had killed him. Not long after, at Sacramento, Sutter, finding out that Indians had committed the murder, sent a force to punish them, and succeeded in breaking up their village and killing fifty of them.

Fremont's arrival in March, 1844, may be called an event of some interest. He had explored in the Rocky Mountains, especially the region near Salt Lake, in the year 1843. Till then, Salt Lake had never been correctly laid down upon any map. Its existence was known, especially to the trappers of the Rocky Mountains, at an early day, and the early maps, some at least, indicated a body of water in that region, but much larger than Salt Lake really was. Some of them went so far as to show two great rivers, one from the south end, running southwesterly, and one from the north end, running northwesterly, into the Pacific ocean.

Fremont cleared away once and forever those mysterious rivers, and, leaving the Rocky Mountains, found his way into Oregon, and in the winter of 1843-4, extended his explorations southward and east of the Sierra Nevadas opposite the bay of

San Francisco and reached the Sacramento Valley at Sutter's Fort in March, 1844. Fremont in 1844 had no time to go to the coast, though many said to him: "Go and see the double redwood tree 72 feet in circumference." On that occasion I had my big tree story to tell. I told Fremont of the big trees I had seen in the Sierra Nevadas. I was the first white man to see the mammoth trees of California, the *Sequoia Gigantea*.

Under Pio Pico's administration in 1845, the granting of land to the naturalized citizens was not wholly, but to a large extent, stopped. There even were many rumors that under the influence of Jose Castro, who was the commander-in-chief of the military forces, an effort might be made to expel all Americans who had unlawfully come into the country. Such danger was by no means imminent, for there were too many Americans already here for the weak government, in this distant Mexican province, to make any such attempt. I estimate the number of Americans in California at the time to be not less than 250, scattered all along the coast from Sonoma to San Diego, and in the Sacramento Valley.

There was some talk at that time (in the fall of 1845) that the Mexican government would purchase Sutter's Fort and pay \$50,000 for it.

In 1844 there were no settlements in Colusa county. In 1845 a grant of two leagues was made where the town of Colusa now is, and there was no house built until 1846 and that was built for Thomas O. Larkin by John H. Williams. I think it was in the fall of 1846. I know Williams was there in the summer of 1847, and when I visited the place and found him with a cat and horse on the grant, he had done some cultivating, notably a fine garden, abounding in watermelons of the Black Spanish variety; these I vividly remember.

In those early California days stories were frequently circulated to the effect that mines of gold were known to the missionaries, the knowledge having been communicated by Indians, and that the missionaries suppressed all such information, believing mining to be adverse to the great missionary enterprises. I placed no credence in it. My experience has shown

me that man, under all circumstances, is thinking about, or looking for gold. When we reached California the same ideas were current everywhere. It was talked that gold and silver existed in the mountains, and on the sea coast at Bodega. I remember seeing great quantities of yellow mica, almost as brilliant as gold, and I went so far as to test it to see whether or not it was gold. Before the mine at the place now called New Almaden was known to be quicksilver, the story was current that quicksilver existed in California, and one story in regard to it was this: A man hunting on Mt. Diablo became thirsty and seeing something shining, which he thought was water, hastened to it and attempted to drink it. It disappeared mysteriously. Relating the circumstance, the conclusion was general that it was quicksilver.

When speaking of the discovery of gold in California, people generally have reference to the discovery by Marshall, in 1848, and lose sight of the former discovery, in 1841, in the mountains lying between the Mojave Desert and Mission San Fernando.

That the discovery of gold by Marshall was the result of an accident does not lessen the fact that it gave impetus to trade, commerce, immigration, and almost everything else throughout the world, and was brought about by two men of most peculiar characteristics—Sutter, so confiding as to believe Marshall's report of the feasibility of making a saw-mill where I feel sure no sane man would advise, in the light of a profitable lumber enterprise; and Marshall, so wild and erratic in judgment about such matters as to select a site most difficult, impracticable and unprofitable. Yet the two together by this means turned the world upside down. Of course, I believe the matter was providential.

FINIS.









