

NOBLESSE OBLIGE.

PREFACES, it is said, are rarely read. This one will be, if for no other reason than to see what possible apology the author can have, or give, for attempting a segregation, much less a definition, of the Society of San Francisco and vicinity. It is rather an odd and interesting undertaking. The Bostonian can go back with his lineage to the ragged refugees who landed on Plymouth Rock; the New Yorker can trace his aristocratic blood direct to the Dutch market gardener knocking about among the cabbage patches of Manhattan Island; the Virginian is proud of his pedigree direct from the gentle dame sold on the auction-block in Jamestown for plug tobacco; the Louisianan can still see, beneath his tingling finger-tips, the tinge of the Creole tide; the Carolinian tells of the Huguenot parent driven from pillar to post; the Washingtonian can prate of the beauty and the chivalry developed by the politician's potent touch, and Kentucky's proud flesh, as we all know, is nothing but blue grass; but where in the name of reason, and research, is the fountain-head of Californian refinement and respectability? Pending the solution of the problem the reader's attention is respectfully and hopefully directed to the contents of this little volume, termed, for the want of a more fitting title, an "Élite Directory." It is simply a thing of convenience—a society handy-volume—a book of reference, written and compiled and published without any intention to draw any hard and fast lines of respectability or fashion, or to discriminate in any way between the social