

CALIFORNIA.

ITS GEOGRAPHY, TOPOGRAPHY, AREA, CLIMATE AND RESOURCES.

California, the Golden State of the Union, ranks as the Empire State of the Pacific Coast, and as such takes precedence among her sisters, as first noticed in this number of the PACIFIC COAST BUSINESS DIRECTORY. To a certain extent California is a representative of the body of States and Territories west of the Rocky Mountains, from the peculiarities of the seasons, the mineral resources, the grandeur of the scenery, etc., as contradistinguished from the Atlantic slope. The lofty Cordillera constitutes the backbone of the continent, and parallel ranges give feature to the scenery and character to the climate. The year is divided into the seasons of Wet and Dry, rather than Winter, Spring, Summer and Autumn. The mountains reach into eternal snow, and the valleys possess an equable climate, bordering on perpetual Summer. Extremes of fertility and barrenness are found in various sections. Forests of incomparable grandeur and rocky peaks; broad fertile plains and forbidding deserts are contiguous. The precious and the useful metals are found in every quarter, and no section, however barren in its outward appearance, can safely be condemned as valueless. Beneath the verdant meadow is the glittering gold, and the rocks of the desert are veined with silver and lead and other valuable minerals. These facts have been made known through exploration and toil, and the development continues. From year to year discoveries are made and new resources opened, and thus, as we proceed, are hopes encouraged.

In laying before the readers of the PACIFIC COAST BUSINESS DIRECTORY this sketch of California, we shall attempt instruction without speculation, and a simple statement of facts without rhetorical advocacy of its general merits or of particular interests, leaving conclusions to be formed by others. The information presented is derived from every available source, and digested through many years of residence, explorations and careful study.

For several years after the occupation of the country by the Americans, the State was regarded as valuable only for its mines and for the rearing of stock; its peculiar climate forbidding the culture of the soil excepting to a very limited extent. This belief was only dispelled by successive and increasing experiments. Facts alone have slowly removed the prejudice which eloquence founded on theory, enthusiasm, or self-interest, could never affect. By the dry detail of statistics and unembellished description the truth is made impressive, and the real wealth of California, its advantages and disadvantages, its extent and its capacity are made known.

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES.

California extends from latitude 32° 32' as its southern limit to the forty-second parallel, with its southern extremity lying between 114° 30' and 117° 6' longitude, and its northern extremity between 120° and 124° 15', giving it a northwest and southeast course along the coast of about seven hundred and fifty miles, with a breadth from one hundred and eighty to two hundred and eighty miles, comprising an area of 154,116 square miles. The State is bounded north by the State of Oregon, east and northeast by the State of Nevada, and the southern portion east by the Territory of Arizona, south by the Mexican Territory of Lower California, and west and southwest by the Pacific Ocean. Capital, Sacramento. Chief commercial city, San Francisco. The other principal towns are San Diego, San Bernardino, Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, Salinas, Monterey, Santa Cruz, San Jose, Oakland, Stockton, Vallejo, Petaluma, Napa, Santa Rosa, Eureka, Folsom, Grass Valley, Marysville, Colusa, Chico, Red Bluff, Yreka, and others thriving and growing into importance. The great cañon of Yosemite, the Big Trees of Mariposa and Calaveras, Lake Bigler, Donner Lake, Calistoga, the Geysers, the beach at Santa Cruz, and the numerous hot and medicinal springs in various parts of the State, are attractive Summer resorts, visited, by large numbers of tourists from all quarters of the Union, seeking health and recreation. The distinguishing physical features are the towering Sierra Nevada on the east and the Coast Range of Mountains on the west, enclosing the broad valley of the Sacramento and the San Joaquin; the capacious bays of San Francisco, Monterey and San Diego, and the extensive waste of the Colorado Desert. Numerous subordinate ranges of mountains and lofty peaks are named, and smaller streams and valleys without number.

In presenting the area of California, a comparison may be made with the section composing the Atlantic seaboard. The forty-second parallel, marking its northern limit, also marks the northern limit of Pennsylvania and Connecticut, and 32° 20', the latitude of San Diego, is south of the city of Charleston, in South Carolina, and the trend of the coast is about the same, but northeast instead of northwest. Our State, thus, would cover the principal portion of the Atlantic coast States of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North and South Carolina, and Georgia, the coast lines corresponding to each other, and the Sierra Nevada occupying the position of the Alleghany Mountains. The eastern coast presents numerous indentations in bays, rivers and sounds, while the western is broken only in very few places. With fewer harbors, however, the latter is subject to a less number of storms, and the dreaded Cape Hatteras has no counterpart on the Pacific. The prevalence of fogs in Summer and an occasional southeast storm at the beginning of the rainy season are all that render navigation dangerous, and notwithstanding the rigidity of the coast, secure landings are found almost at every point business or necessity demand.

HARBORS.

The natural harbors of California are the Bays of San Diego, Monterey, San Francisco and Humboldt, with roadsteads and landings at a score or more of places along the coast, safe at most seasons and at some localities, by the aid of the engineer could, without great expense, be made perfect.

The Bay of San Diego, the most southern, is a small but completely landlocked sheet of water, the portion available for a harbor covering an area of about twenty-five square miles, and is of easy access. It lies in latitude 32° 40', longitude 117° 12'. A deep channel connects it with the ocean and the bar at the mouth carries a depth of four to five fathoms of water, affording passage to the largest