

A GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF

LAKE COUNTY

Incidents of Travel, Adventures, Etc.

LAKE COUNTY, so called from its numerous lakes, is bounded as follows : On the north by Mendocino and Colusa; on the south by Sonoma and Napa; on the east by Colusa and Yolo, and on the west by Mendocino and Sonoma. It covers an area of about 1,200 square miles, being 20 miles wide and 60 miles long, and lies between two ranges of mountains; on the west are the Mayacamas; on the east the Bear Mountains. The first white settlers were two cattle-raisers, Kelsey and Stone, who arrived there in 1847, and were killed by the Indians in 1849, near the spot now called Kelseyville. The cause of the trouble between the Indians and Kelsey and Stone is not known, as they were always on a friendly footing previous to the time of the murder. In 1851 some United States troops were sent to Clear Lake. They fought the Indians successfully and afterwards made a treaty with them which yet exists. There are still a number of Indians in the County though friendly toward the whites. Lake County was organized in 1861 up to that time it formed a portion of Napa County and in 1868 contained a population of about 4,000, including children. To-day the resident population numbers 7,180—3,791 males and 3,389 females. The assessed value of taxable property in 1873 amounted to \$1,670,723.

The important sources of wealth of the County are stock-raising, farming and mining. The principal minerals are quicksilver, sulphur and borax, of which more will be said hereafter. Viniculture and fruit growing are as yet unimportant, but are expected to become extensive when the means of communication with the large commercial centers will be more rapid and less expensive. There are some large dairies in the district which produce great quantities of butter and cheese.

Mineral springs are very numerous and of different curative properties; we shall have occasion to allude to them separately. The principal towns of Lake County are Lakeport, Kelseyville, Lower Lake, Middletown and Upper Lake. Their full description will be given in these pages. The climate is in all respects similar to that of Napa County; the heat during summer is never oppressive, even at mid-day, and the mornings and evenings are always cool. Snow falls very seldom in the valleys, but the mountains are frequently white-capped, though not for any long period. We will now make a tour of Lake County as we did of Napa, and carry our reader to every point of interest: Leaving San Francisco by steamer to Vallejo at 7 A. M., we reach Calistoga at about noon. It is unnecessary to describe this portion of our journey, as we already did so when passing through Napa County on our first trip. At Calistoga we must remain over night if we wish to take the daily stage which leaves at 7 A. M., but preferring a private conveyance, as it affords us the privilege of stopping when we please, a buggy and a pair of good horses will be engaged. We will, first of all, take dinner, then provide ourselves with the usual little delicacies, and start at half past 1 P. M.

The first portion of the road lies in a north-easterly direction toward Mount St. Helena, which we cross, keeping the road, however, and not going off to the side, as we did on a previous occasion. After a drive of about two hours we reach the shoulder of the mountain, and now begins our descent into the valley below—to us as yet unknown. On our previous excursion, the reader will recollect, we only ascended Mount St. Helena, but did not continue into Lake County; this time we shall make a round trip, returning by this road to Calistoga.

The scenery here is very picturesque, the road good, the air very pure, and we can keep up a rapid gait without fatiguing our horses, as the heat is not oppressive. The first settlement we come to is the camp of the "Great Western Quicksilver Mining Company," having a population of about 320, including 300 China-