



WESTERN RURAL

AND LIVE STOCK WEEKLY

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Camping Among the Orange Groves

WHERE THE FLOWERS BLOOM PERPETUALLY AND THE BEST FRUITS GROW

Report from Our January 9th Excursion---Letters from Old and New Settlers, Etc.

LETTER FROM OUR EXCURSION MANAGER.

Sacramento, Cal., Jan. 17, 1896.

James W. Wilson, Chicago, Ill.

My Dear Mr. Wilson: Another Eastern party has seen and been delighted with the beauties and possibilities of Fair Oaks. I will briefly give you the details of our trip at this time, having been too busy to write you before.

We left Chicago on Thursday, of the 9th inst., and with only about twenty-five on board bound for the Sunset land. We rapidly added to our number as we sped along the rolling prairies of Illinois and Iowa, so that by the time we had reached Omaha our party numbered nearly two score. We were joined at Columbus, Nebraska, by a delegation from St. Paul and Minneapolis, who had made up their minds to leave the frigid regions of the North, and cast their lot in the land where flowers and fruits

nouncement about the magnificent ice palace which was at Truckee, he immediately got up and dressed, and sure enough he saw the Ice Palace, and insisted that we all get up and view the magnificent spectacle. Some of the ladies of our party insisted that it was a mile long and as high as the Sierras. Brilliantly lighted by electricity, it was a sight once seen never to be forgotten.

The management of the Southern Pacific Company very kindly consented to set off our car at three o'clock in the morning at Colfax, so that we could be taken down by the local train leaving there at 7:45, in order that we might see the rugged foothill orchards on the way down into the Sacramento valley.

Mr. Edwin K. Alsip, our Western manager, met us at Colfax, and had previously arranged for our train to be met by a dozen carriages or more at Ben Ali in the center of the Haggin & Tevis Grant. We were driven over to Fair Oaks. A gentle, California



A GROUP OF ONE OF OUR EXCURSION PARTIES IN CAMP AT FAIR OAKS.

There is no fairer spot in California for camping or for a home than Fair Oaks. It seems like sacrilege to cut down the beautiful evergreens and other oaks with which it is covered. The majority of them must give way, however, to the equally beautiful but more useful orange, lemon, olive, fig, etc. We ask the woodman to spare as many as possible, however. The man with the gun will find plenty of game. The woods are full of squirrels, rabbits, quail, woodcock, etc.

bloom perpetually. At Cheyenne we were joined by Mr. and Mrs. T. H. Watson and Mr. and Mrs. W. R. Gore and Miss Hortense Gore, all from Springfield, Illinois.

A jollier and better class of people never crossed over the arid and desolate regions of Wyoming, Utah and Nevada into California, than those who left their homes with a view to visiting and investing at Fair Oaks.

We arrived at Truckee, which is just over the California line and is situated in the heart of the Sierra Nevadas at an altitude of six thousand feet, at about 12 o'clock midnight. Our party was awakened from a deep slumber by the cry of the festive "hot tomale man." D. W. Whipple, a jolly old pioneer from Michigan, heard the cry and translated "hot tomales" into "Ice Palace, ice palace." Thinking that someone was making an an-

winter rain was falling, and a mild breeze came from the southwest, that fanned our cheek with as soothing an effect as the mildest of May winds in the middle States. Vegetation was fairly springing from under our feet as we sped along over this magnificent property. Notwithstanding the fact that the weather was cloudy and gloomy, our party was charmed and delighted with what Nature had done for this country.

A splendid dinner was served at Hotel Fair Oaks, after which many of our party rode to Orangevale; all except Mr. Samuel O'Neil of Philadelphia, who said: "Mr. Hubbs, I cannot wait to see Orangevale, but must decide upon a tract of this land immediately. I want to feel that I own some of this magnificent property." Whereupon I had the pleasure of taking him out and showing him three beautiful tracts of an aggregate acreage of

forty-three acres, which he immediately purchased, and is going to plant and improve, and will start his building in a very few days. We returned to camp, where we were joined at six o'clock by the rest of our party who had returned from Orangevale. Shortly after supper several members of our party came to us and wanted to close on certain pieces of property, almost without seeing it. Two or three very nice sales were made that evening. Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday were consumed in showing our party the property, and in making selections. Almost every one who arrived with us has made a purchase up to the present time. The following is a partial list of our new investors: N. T. Harris, Hart, Michigan, five acres in the town site; L. E. Kale, Willis, Kansas, thirty acres; W. E. Seath, Freeborn, Minn., ten acres; G. M. Clark, South Euclid, Ohio, eleven acres; Geo. F. Ingraham and wife of South Dakota, twenty acres; R. Fritseke, Chicago, ten acres; Neils Monson, Benton, Wisconsin, ten acres; D. W. Whipple, Michigan, valuable town lot; Mr. Samuel O'Neil and Mrs. Mary O'Neil, Philadelphia, forty-three acres; Jesse Dorsch, South Euclid, Ohio, eleven acres; G. R. Morrell, town lot; H. P. Watson (merchant), and

Total sales, three hundred and seventy-seven sixty-eight one-hundredths acres, besides over \$2,000 worth of town lots.

There are as yet several people on the property in charge of Mr. Olson, who have not selected, but expect to do so very soon.

Nearly all of these investors are going to build homes and make nice improvements immediately. I can assure you that each and every one of them are a class of people whom you will be delighted to meet on your next trip to Fair Oaks. I know that I am looking forward with a great deal of gratification to the time when I shall be able to take up my abode with such surroundings and associations as will be found at Fair Oaks.

Those who remained from our Nov. 14 excursion say they are better pleased with the country every day they stay. You would be surprised with the progress made. Upwards of thirty dwellings and stores are now in process of construction. Two general stores are stocked with goods. The sound of the ax and hammer is heard on all sides.

Yours truly,
A. M. Hubbs.



YOUNG ORANGE GROVE AND FRUIT. PHOTOGRAPHED NOV. 21. A. C. KELLOGG'S GROVE, FAIR OAKS.

Mr. Kellogg values this ten-acre grove, now seven years old, at \$15,000. It is, in fact, yielding him from ten to fifteen per cent interest on that amount. Aside from the increase in value it is paying him about 100 per cent on the original investment. This section of California known as the "warm gold belt," in which Fair Oaks is located, has proved to be the best orange and lemon section of the State. While other sections have been damaged, a frost to injure oranges has never been known in the vicinity of Fair Oaks. The earliness of the crop also makes it possible to market it before the season of damaging frosts, should one chance to occur. The crop ripens five weeks earlier than in the southern part of the State. For this reason a market is also found for all the product on the coast at much higher prices. Regarding the quality and earliness of the fruit in this locality, Mr. E. T. Earle, of the Earle Fruit Company, writes: "Oranges are doing very well on this land, and are of excellent quality. These oranges come in early in the season and ahead of the oranges in Southern California, thus making them very desirable for the Pacific Coast trade." Other fruits are also all of a month earlier. All fruits are early at Fair Oaks and seem to grow with equal perfection.

wife, Springfield, Illinois, twenty-one acres; D. R. Gore (merchant) and wife, Springfield, Illinois, twenty acres; J. F. Baker, Rutherford, N. J., ten acres; John J. Houser (merchant), Meadville, Penn., twenty acres; A. M. Phoenix, fifteen acres; H. H. Pierce, from Minnesota, ten acres; E. L. Hunskaar, Spencer, So. Dak., ten acres; W. H. Adams, New York city, twelve and ninety-two one hundredths acres; N. R. Smith, Barclay, Kan., thirty acres; Levi Walthall, Barclay, Kan., fourteen eighty-eight one hundredths acres; B. Cales, Nebraska, ten acres; W. H. Jordan, Chicago, twenty-two ninety-six one hundredths acres; Caroline B. S. Wilcox, twenty acres; John W. Cleave, New York, ten ninety-two one hundredths acres.

LETTER FROM AN OLD SETTLER.

The following letter is from Mr. K. Raaf, an experienced horticulturist and orchardist of California, who is a graduate of the horticultural and engineering schools of Sweden. We publish it for the information and advice it contains to those who contemplate making their homes or planting orchards in California:

Fair Oaks, Cal., Dec., 1895.

To-day the sun is shining brightly, and our new neighbors in the Sunset Colonies are enjoying it while taking in the sights and testing some of the fruit; doubtless drawing contrasts in their minds with the snow-clad eastern homes, where old Jack

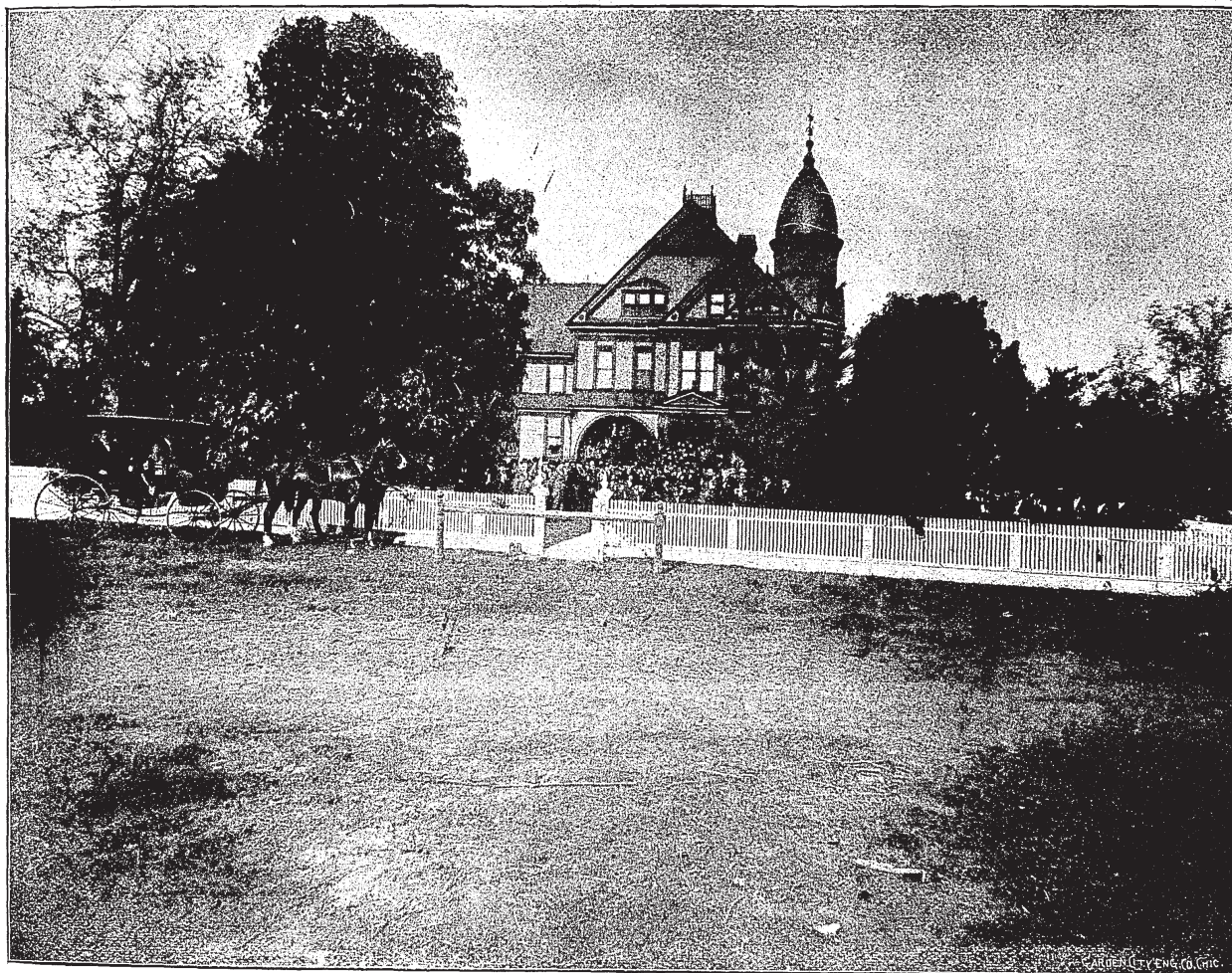
Frost reigns supreme. They have come here to enjoy the health and luxuries this goodly state has to offer them.

To-day they are picking for themselves, fresh from the trees, oranges, lemons, persimmons, and from the vines grapes and ripe strawberries, while enjoying the flavor of the fruit and the fragrance from the flowers still in bloom in great profusion. The time is near when all these small hills and valleys in the Sunset Colonies will be covered with orange, lemon and other trees and vines laden with delicious fruits, and amongst the trees, dotted here and there, will be found nicely finished and furnished cottages, embowered with roses and honeysuckles, surrounded with the perpetual bloom of flowers and inhabited with a happy, industrious people, enjoying the health and luxury which nature will abundantly bestow upon them. With a little stretch of the imagination, we can see the change a few years will bring forth. This beautiful, natural park of oaks will then be transformed into useful orchards and gardens—none the less beautiful and attractive from being useful.

During the past month, while you have been so industriously advertising Fair Oaks, I have been asked many questions concerning this location, both face to face and through the mail.

state. You can have anything you want here in the line of fruits, vegetables or flowers. In mid-winter, when Jack Frost has a grip on the east, your garden may be full of roses in bloom, lilies of all sorts, daisies and violets, and even flowers of the more tender sort, the palm growing like big pines, and even that tender plant, camelia, which, at your eastern home, you can hardly remove from one window to the other without dropping its buds. Here you will find big bushes of them, from ten to twenty feet high, covered all over with beautiful blossoms. Surely it is more pleasant to live in such a country than to be shut up over gassy stoves or wrestling with the snow and blizzards of your eastern homes.

For the benefit of prospective California settlers, I will say get your ground ready for your garden spot as early as possible. Let that be your first thought. Then sow radishes, lettuce, beets, onions and peas. Don't mind if it is December or January; they will grow and fruit all the same. You will soon enjoy fresh vegetables from your own garden. If you have ever had any experience with growing your own vegetables and getting them fresh from the garden, you know that they taste better than the wilted stuff you get at a grocery store, and also



RESIDENCE OF HON. R. D. STEPHENS ACROSS THE RIVER FROM FAIR OAKS.

The Nov. 14 special train excursion party in the front yard. The large tree in the foreground is a fig tree from which fresh, ripe figs were gathered Nov. 20. Mr. Stephens has become moderately wealthy from the products of forty acres of orchard and vineyard.

Some want to know whether I would advise them to come to California; is the climate healthy; is there any money in raising fruit. To all these questions I answer invariably 'yes,' and my answer is based on my own experience and that of many with whom I am acquainted. I say to them, 'if you want a change of climate, if you want to build you a nice home, if you want health, and if you want a place where it is easier to make a livelihood, come to California.' As to the healthfulness of this climate, I am sure it cannot be surpassed. I had poor health before I came here. This was also the case with my wife, but we are both now robust. I say, however, to those who expect to pick money off the bushes without work, 'don't come out here with the expectation of within a few years becoming a J. Gould or a Rockefeller, but if you come determined to overcome all obstacles and build yourself a beautiful home, not thinking that because you come to California you can fold your arms and everything will come to you, you can succeed much better than at most places in the east.'

As to the colony land: It is as good as can be found in the

that it will constitute a large part of your living, saving much money. Plant your strawberry vines now, and you will have ripe berries in May. Plant blackberries and raspberries, and you can eat the fruit from them next summer. This is just the time for that sort of work.

Now is also the time for planting trees. 'What shall I plant?' that is the question, 'and how shall I plant it?' Let me give you some advice. Bury your old ideas under the snow of your eastern country, and come here with your mind like the open pages of an unprinted book—ready to receive any impressions. Learn from those who have had experience, not indeed the unsuccessful ones, but those who have made a success in fruit culture. As for what to plant in this locality: Oranges, lemons, olives, almonds, cherries and apricots seem to pay the best. They also are well suited to the high ground, with the deep, warm soil, such as is found at Fair Oaks. On low ground, should you have any, with heavy soil, plant grapes, pears, quinces or plums, the later grafted on Mary Bolan stock. Before beginning to plant, see that your tract is laid out correctly—so that it

is pleasing to the eye. Do not let your planting to Tom, Dick and Harry because he is the lowest bidder. There are shoddy trees and shoddy planters just the same as there is shoddy in other things. If you wish to have your work done right, and there will be nothing more fatal to your success than to have it done otherwise, you had best go to some reliable man or firm, even though it should cost you a little more at the beginning. By all means have the best varieties of trees from reliable nurseries. It will surely pay you in the end. Another thing, I would recommend that you club together to buy your trees. By thus buying in quantities, you can get them cheaper. By all means avoid the tree peddler, and get your trees direct from the nursery whose long-standing reputation is above reproach. There are many nurserymen, even in this neighborhood, who will treat you fairly and give you reliable stock.

When ready to plant, dig the holes not less than two feet wide and two feet deep. Then when you put in the trees fill some of the top soil in the bottom of the hole. Spread out the roots

well pleased with everything pertaining to our new homes. I have not heard one speak otherwise than in the happiest of terms of their new home here.

Since I came I have built my house, cleared my land, and have the honor of setting out the first trees in the colony. I have a variety of them, viz.: Orange, lemon, figs, prunes, plums, pears, peaches, apples, apricots, olives, cherries, almonds, etc. Tea and coffee do well here.

Orange trees two years old bud on four-year-old stock, only 25 cents. Only think of it! I paid two dollars and fifty cents for the same kind of a tree at Auburn four years ago. I lived at Auburn thirteen years, and there formed the acquaintance of Arthur M. Hubbs, who belongs to the same church and was a very active and esteemed member. I can say from personal knowledge of all of the business members of this colonizing firm that they are men of the highest type of integrity, and those who come here can rest assured they are not being misled or swindled in the least.



LEMON GROVE, FAIR OAKS, CAL. PHOTOGRAPHED NOV. 21.

On close inspection the tree will be seen to be loaded with fruit in all stages of growth. The lemon is one of the most profitable fruit crops, if not the most profitable. The area in which it can be grown is very limited. Fair Oaks land is well adapted to lemon culture. It is a perpetual bearer, yielding its fruit every day in the year, buds, blossoms, green and ripe fruit being found on the same tree at the same time. Bare land in Southern California suited to lemons sells for from \$300 to \$500 an acre. For lemon culture Fair Oaks is unsurpassed. It costs only \$200 an acre to get a grove planted and cared for three years, including the land.

carefully and fill in soil around the roots, and press it down firmly with your feet. Do not put the trees down deeper than to the bud. If you do, you are liable to injure the trees. In selecting the trees, see that you get a good root system and well formed buds on the lower part of the stem. By a 'good root system' I mean plenty of small roots or feeders, because it is these that support the trees. After the trees are planted, cut them back to within eighteen inches of the ground. The object of this is to make them low branching. This rule applies to deciduous fruits and nuts. Oranges and lemons should only be pruned, as a rule, just a little, for the purpose of making a good

K. Raaf.

LETTER FROM A PIONEER.

Fair Oaks, Cal., Jan. 18th, 1896.

Dear Friends: I write you to let you know how we are getting along since we came here a few weeks ago. We are all

This is truly the heart of California, and fair Italy cannot boast of a better climate than this. I came here from Maine in 1875 on account of consumption, of which four of my family had died, and in this pure and even climate many others, as well as myself, have been fully restored. It is the best climate in the state for consumptives and asthmatics. The location here will speak for itself. Houses, stores and buildings of all kinds are fast being built, while the beautiful oak trees are falling like grass before the sturdy woodchoppers. The beautiful rolling lands are now covered with a carpet of green grass and soon will be more beautiful with wild flowers, which are so abundant here. I will mention here that I have heard it often remarked that they never saw a finer or more select lot of tourists than have arrived here from the east, all of them buying land. We have the advantage over many California towns, that of never allowing liquors sold inside the colony, where we can bring our children up away from those influences which infest most of California towns, and cause many eastern families to regret settling among such influences, causing them to sell out and

return east. We are organizing a church, and with good prospects of having it built in a few months, and our schools will be running by spring. In the meantime, we are not deprived of schools, for our colony joins Orange Vale, a tract set out by a similar organization to ours seven years since, who now are raising oranges by the car-load, and we can send children to their schools now.

Yours truly,
Francis J. Folsom.

FROM A TRANSPLANTED EASTERNER.

The following letter is from John E. Kirk, well known to our readers as the inventor of the Acme hay harvester, and for many years the president and manager of the Acme Harvester Co., of Peoria, Ill. Mr. Kirk has his home and large interests in California. He speaks, therefore, as one having had experience:

Peoria, Ill., Dec. 29, '95.

Mr. J. W. Wilson, Chicago.

Dear Sir: Your letter of 26th inst. duly received, also several copies of the F. & F. giving full account of your last excursion to Fair Oaks, Cal., all of which I read with much interest and pleasure.

I am indeed glad to see that you have succeeded in interesting so many good people in your colony at Fair Oaks. "Let the good work go on."

I have talked your colony to many interested persons and distributed all the literature sent me, where I am sure some of it will bear fruit ere long.

Getting people to go from this cold, dreary, malarial climate to the sunny and health-giving climate on the western slope of the Sierra Nevada mountains, I regard as truly a missionary work—reward for which we get in the next world, if, indeed, not in this.

Wishing you a happy New Year and hoping to meet you in the land of fruits and flowers, I beg to remain,

Very truly yours,

Jno. E. Kirk.

WHAT'S IN A NAME.

Among the sales reported from our western office is that of lot 4 in block 46 to Prof. Jean Joseph Lazare Marie Jules Honore Charles Alphonse Louis Chateaufort and to Mrs. Adele Leonie Chateaufort. This gentleman is from Pasadena. Our scribe is still at work on the deed.

THE EARLY FRUIT BELT.

The advantage gained by being the first in the market is fully appreciated by all fruit- and vegetable-growers.

The first fruits command the highest prices.

This feature of earliness with those of a richer soil, less liability to damaging frosts, a greater range of production, more abundant water supply, better markets, cheap fuel, cheaper land and cheaper building material sum up the advantages of this American River district; otherwise called the "Early Fruit Belt" and "the Warm Gold Belt" over others—in particular the Southern portion of the State.

California home-seekers and prospective investors will do well to weigh these points well before making up their minds as to locality.

An investor in Fair Oaks, Dr. H. E. Forrester, of Lyons, N. Y., made a very thorough investigation along these lines before purchasing. Among others, he wrote Mr. Thos. Bakewell of Riverside, California, asking him a number of questions. Mr. Bakewell is resident agent of the Fire Association of Philadelphia. He is not interested in land but has a thorough knowledge of the State. We will also say that we know nothing of him other than that we have received a copy of his letter to Dr. H. E. Forrester, of which the following is a copy:

Dear Sir: Yours of the 12th is at hand, and in reply I would say that oranges, almonds and olives can be grown at Riverside; though the first will not always grow where the others flourish. Oranges in the Northern section ripen before those in the South, for reasons that I cannot explain. Here the oranges ripen and are shipped from Christmas until the Fourth of July, and then again in October. The navel being the first to ripen and the Valencia the last, with many varieties coming between the dates first mentioned. Navels brought this year \$1.50; Valencias, \$2.30, and other varieties .36 to \$1 per box; delivered at the several packing houses.

Bare land, suitable for oranges, with the water right can be bought from \$400 to \$500 per acre; for alfalfa, from \$75 to \$150 per acre. I have ten acres planted, groves varying in the ages of the trees from six to fifteen years, with and without buildings, at prices varying from \$700 to \$1,500 per acre, and which will yield at the prices gotten by the exchange this year, not less than ten per cent. for the first year. The crop increasing, as you know, as the trees grow year by year. I should be pleased to hear again from you if you care to consider the matter further. I can send you specific descriptions of the places I have for sale. In this case I would like to have your idea of about how much money you will have to invest in an orange grove.

I think I have answered all your questions, and hope to have early reply; with kind regards, I am,

Yours truly,
(Signed) Thos. Bakewell.

Our readers will see that this is a remarkable confirmation of what we have said in the "Heart of California" and also in these

columns in reference to oranges and the price of land as between central and southern California. It will be seen that Mr. Bakewell says that for some inexplicable reason the oranges in the northern section ripen before those in the South.

They are in fact five weeks earlier, while deciduous fruits are all of four weeks earlier. The advantage in this earliness, so far as oranges are concerned, is seen in the fact that a ready market is found for the whole product of this region on the coast; thus not only saving the expense of the long haul to the eastern markets, but getting much better prices. For deciduous fruits those from this region are the first in market, both on the coast and in the East.

Geo. D. Kellogg of Newcastle, an extensive grower and shipper of fruit, in a letter published in the Christmas issue of the San Francisco Call, says of this feature of earliness as applied to oranges and lemons:

"Oranges and lemons are yielding a handsome income in this locality to the producer, owing to the fact of our crops being so much earlier than those grown in the larger orchards of Southern California, the higher prices for earlier fruits being obtained by the fact that our harvest of this fruit covers the three great National holidays of Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's."

EARLY OLIVES.

Another party seeking information on olives, Mr. A. W. Shaffer of Austin, Ill., wrote Mr. J. L. Howland of Pomona, Cal., asking various questions and received in reply the following very instructive letter:

Pomona, Cal., Jan. 3d, 1895.

Mr. A. W. Shaffer,

Dear Sir: In answer to your letter, would say that I have been in the olive orchard business for thirteen years, and have 200 acres in olive orchards. The olives at New Castle, I think, would ripen a little earlier than here or Santa Barbara. My trees bore me a paying crop on four years from the planting. Of course, location and variety has something to do with these early bearing. The Mission and Nevadillo Blanco are very slow in coming into bearing. For oil and pickles combined, the Columella, Manzanillo and Mission. The Columella is a very early bearer and a regular one. For oil alone, the Pendulina Oblonga, Uvaria and Ruha are the earliest and most regular bearers. What I have written you has been my experience in my own orchards, not as a nurseryman's experience to sell just what kind of stock he has the most of.

Yours,

J. L. Howland.

What we ask our readers to particularly note is, the admission that "The olive at Newcastle ripens a little earlier than here or at Santa Barbara."

This early ripening is of double importance. The only danger to the olive crop is that of early frosts, which injure the delicate fruit. This danger is entirely avoided at Fair Oaks through the feature of early ripening. Like other things, also, the first olives on the market get the best prices.

The difference in the cost price of bare land with water is also well illustrated in Mr. Bakewell's letter: "Bare lands," he says, "suitable for oranges and lemons, can be bought at from \$400 to \$500 an acre." This is with water conveyed in open ditches. Also for lands not so naturally rich as those of Fair Oaks; but which must needs be fertilized. Bare lands suitable for oranges and lemons at Fair Oaks with water right, the water being piped to each tract is sold at \$100 an acre.

The difference in the value of groves is also an important item. Mr. Bakewell says that groves at Riverside, varying in ages from six to fifteen years, can be had at prices varying at from \$700 to \$1,500. Measure this with Mr. A. C. Kellogg's ten-acre grove at Fair Oaks which, at six years old, he values at \$15,000, or \$1,500 an acre; and which is paying him from ten to fifteen per cent. on that money.

This difference in value, which is estimated on the basis of profits produced, is due to the higher prices obtained for the fruit from this section on account of the earliness of the product.

A FINE TRACT OF COUNTRY.

The following is an extract from a letter from another "investigator", who has taken a similar method of pursuing his investigations.

"* * * If I can be in Fremont when you arrive there I will be pleased to meet you. We certainly will assist you all in our power to build up Fair Oaks, and I expect now to have a slice of it before the year is up. I will now make a quotation from a letter at hand, from a nephew of mine—a young man of eighteen summers that lives at Brighton Junction, a little south of Sacramento. I requested him to see Mr. Alsip for me, which he did, got plat of F. O. and sent me, with this:

"I have been on the F. O. Colony tract to see it for you. I report the soil good; a nice, rich loam, and little rolling; a fine

(Continued on page 201.)

SUBSCRIBE for this paper. Particulars of our Colonies printed weekly. Three months, 25 cents; six months, 50 cents; one year, \$1.00. Write for Premium List, with special offers.

Camping Among the Orange Groves

(Continued from page 197.)

tract of country, in my opinion; and you could not do better than come here and get a home—out of the snows and blizzards of Nebraska."

My brother, Rev. C. McKelvey, Superintendent Old People's Home, corner Pine and Pierce streets, San Francisco; says of it: "You will make no mistake settling at Fair Oaks. It's a fine country there, and the land is going cheap enough."

Well, Mr. Wilson, lest I tire your patience, I will close by wishing you and all the workers on the Western Rural and its family of subscribers a Happy New Year.

Yours truly, J. McKelvey.

FROM AN OLD CALIFORNIAN.

The following letter from B. Wilson, of Sacramento, Cal., to his nephew, Lucien Button, of Austin, Ill., is in answer to a letter from the latter making inquiries about the Fair Oaks settlement. Mr. Wilson left Geneva, Ill., some twenty-five years ago, going to California for his health. For many years he conducted a farm nine miles out of Sacramento. His advice, therefore, is based on many years experience. We publish it for the information it contains about the settlement, as viewed from a citizen of Sacramento, and about markets for fruits, etc.

Jan. 14th, 1896.

Mr. Lucien Button.

My dear nephew: Your letter of Jan. 8th and 9th was received yesterday, and I was very glad to hear from you after your long silence, and that you are determined to commence the new year by writing to me. Good for you! * * * You allude to the colony excursion. Yes, I went out with them and stopped there from Tuesday until Friday, and had a good time. I rode with the colonists on their special train to Folsom, 22 miles; the train stopping several times on the way to let excursionists off to view fruit ranches and the Natoma vineyard and winery. We took dinner at Folsom, and then visited the dam and power house, where the dynamos develop the electricity that supplies our city with light and power for manufacturing purposes, running street cars, etc. We also visited the great state prison. Then teams were provided for over 100 persons to ride to Fair Oaks. We crossed the river (American) on an iron bridge at Folsom, and in about two miles came to Orange Vale, and passing several fine orange orchards loaded with fruit, we turned westward for Fair Oaks, where we arrived some time after sunset. I should judge the distance from Folsom to be some seven or eight miles to headquarters, and some fifteen or sixteen from there to Sacramento on the north side of the river. We found a two-story building there to serve as hotel, fitted up with a long table in the centre to accommodate forty at one time; and temporary bunks all around the sides, furnished with bedding, etc. Outside there were eight tents also provided; also stables and provender for horses. Everything was far better than I expected. The following day was spent in showing the colonists Orange Vale, as proof of what the land and climate produces. The teams were all hitched up, and we all took a ride up to and through Orange Vale. We went through one orchard of 7,000 trees loaded with oranges, and many others of less size and of later planting, giving promise of doing equally well, as the young trees, only three and four years from planting, were well loaded. The soil of Fair Oaks is as good, if not better, than that of Orange Vale. Of course, the climate is the same. You ask my opinion about the colony, etc. You know that facts are stubborn things and cannot be set aside very lightly. What can be done at Orange Vale can be done at Fair Oaks, under the same circumstances. Land is as good, climate the same, water supply for irrigation promises to be better, and with labor and good judgment exercised in selecting and planting the proper kinds of fruit, there is no reason why Fair Oaks should not be a success. You ask about markets. No fear

about markets at present, and what the future will be no one can tell. So far as the orange is concerned, there is prospect for a good home market for a long time to come. San Francisco, the states of Oregon and Washington, too far north to grow the orange, lemon and fig, will always have to draw their supply from other places. Sacramento is the great shipping point for green and dried fruits to eastern and northern markets. And there will always be a steady demand for them in the states of Nevada, Utah, Wyoming, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, etc., before the eastern market proper is reached. And as these states increase in population the demand will be greater. Also the fact that oranges ripen earlier here by some weeks than in southern California, a higher price is obtained. Fair Oaks is a wooded district—lots of fine live and other oak trees, which will give you firewood for many years. The electric road is to be built this year, and will go through Fair Oaks to Orange Vale, carrying both passengers and freight. This will be a great advantage to settlers, as it will practically bring the colony within less than an hour of Sacramento. I do not see any risk in your coming. The sooner the better. I would advise you to come with the next excursion to see the land for yourself, and if suited, select your lot, have it cleared and put into order. For the sooner planted the quicker the trees will bear and become profitable. It would be so nice to see you and others of the one faith, settled near each other, away from the turmoil of city life, cultivating and living on the fruits of the ground. It would seem like a return to Edenic life. I could then easily visit you all. As you are a carpenter, you could build your own house, and work for others. There will be much building going on for years, as there will be a town there in the near future. A number of buildings have been erected already—some fifteen to twenty—and only two months gone since the excursion. The excursion you mention as leaving last Thursday night, Jan. 9th, came yesterday, and were immediately transferred to the colony. There were also some twelve to fifteen came by regular train on or about Christmas day. So hurry up, before you will never have a better chance. We have undoubtedly a good climate—some say the best in the world—and you cannot get an old Californian to exchange it for an eastern one. As you are dissatisfied with Chicago at present, and think things are not likely to be better, I say get up and leave, and strike out for something better, and within your reach. Now is the time and your chance. I may say that in my opinion if you were to buy a lot of ten or twenty acres of land in Fair Oaks, properly selected, you would make no mistake; for every day's work put on it would add to its value. But as you would want it for a home, it would be worth more to you than anybody else. I submit these thoughts and suggestions for your due consideration.

Edwin and wife took a buggy ride up to colony on Sunday last. He says there are many buildings gone up already. He thinks it will grow rapidly, and be an important settlement. Please write me again soon, and let me know whether I have met your inquiries. Give my love to my brother and your wife, and accept the same yourself, and believe me, as ever,

Yours affectionately,

1115 11th St., Sacramento, Cal.

B. Wilson.

THE NEXT EXCURSION.

The next excursion will go out March 4th. This will be a particularly attractive time of the year to visit California. We shall also have reduced rates. We shall be glad to hear from all who will go.

TO KEEP POSTED on Colony matters, subscribe for this paper. One year, \$1.00; six months, 50 cents; three months, 25 cents.

SEEDS FREE.

The new free delivery system inaugurated by Peter Henderson & Co., of New York, secures to any one who orders seeds from them the free delivery at Catalogue prices to any post office in the United States.

Messrs. Peter Henderson & Co. issue this year a beautiful and entirely new catalogue for 1896, which illustrates and describes the grandest assortment of seeds on this continent. This 'new catalogue' they mail on receipt of a two-cent stamp, or to those who will state in what paper they saw their advertisement it will be mailed free.

Full particulars of this offer will be found in Messrs. Peter Henderson & Co.'s advertisement in another portion of this paper.

EAGLE CLAW FODDER FORK.

Lingley, Iowa, Jan. 20, 1896.

Randleman & Son, Carlisle, Iowa.

Dear Sirs: I write you to tell you how well pleased I am with your Eagle Claw Fodder Fork. I have been using the fork about four years. I find that there is no tool used on the farm any better adapted to its purpose made for, than the Fodder Fork. It is a labor saver,

health preserver and saves more than its cost in the wearing out of clothes and mitts in one fodder feeding season, to say nothing about the comfort and condensing time in handling the rasping fodder. We cut our corn, throw it in piles, let it cure half a day, take the fodder fork grab the fodder just above the ears and set it in shock nearly as fast as two men will to, grabble the fodder the old way with hands; hence, we save the twine in binding in bundles only to bother in untying in husking and rettying. The Eagle Claw makes no blurks; it gets its claw full, no matter how tangled or in the loose snow. No matter how the fodder is hauled the fork is needed to feed the fodder; no matter if in barn or bulk, the man that uses one will never regret his purchase money.

Yours truly,

W. M. Hicks, Stock Feeder.

Onions GOOD or Onions POOR—that's the question. Good, brittle, mild sorts that cook quickly can only be grown from best seeds and sets planted early in very rich, finely pulverized soil. Use wood-ashes or nitrates. More about Onions, in fact—ALL about Onions can be learned from Vaughan's new seed catalogue just issued from their Chicago and New York

Stores, free to Western Rural readers. See their remarkable Onion Seed Offer advertised in this issue.

IMMIGRATION TO THE SOUTH: HOMESEEEKERS' EXCURSIONS.

February 11th and March 10th, 1896, Land Seekers' Excursion tickets will be sold from all points in the Northwest over the Big Four Route and Chesapeake & Ohio Ry. to Virginia and North and South Carolina, at one fare plus two dollars. Virginia has a perfect climate, no blizzards, good markets and cheap transportation. Send for rates, and free descriptive pamphlet of Virginia lands. U. L. Truitt, N. W. P. A., 234 Clark St., Chicago, Ill.

—It may be said that Edgar L. Wakeman has walked pretty nearly all over the civilized world. He always takes his time; speed is a matter of no moment to him. He goes among people and cities and countries to study them as they are, to convey to our readers as faithful an idea of what he sees and hears, and the feelings awakened, as is possible to language.—Sacramento Record-Union.