GRIDLEY.

Brief Sketch of this Enterprising Place.

A MINIATURE CITY.

Some of Its Leading Industries and Enterprises.

ITS CHURCHES, SCHOOLS, ETC.

Unprecedented Fertility and Productiveness of the Soil.

VARIED AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS.

The Wonderful Variety and Excellent Quality of Fruits Grown and Their Markets.

BUTTE COUNTY—ITS INDUSTRIES.

General Bidwell's Celebrated Ranch Chico—Description of the Cherokee Hydraulic Mining Property—Lumber Supply, Etc.

Situated on the line of the California and Oregon Railroad, in Butte county, about 70 miles from Sacramento, and nestling pleasantly among groves of the largest live oaks in California, lies the town of Gridley, with a population of about 1,500, composed of perhaps the most energetic and enterprising citizens of any town of its population on the Pacific coast. Its primitive condition of beauty has not been destroyed or marred by reducing it to cultivation and improvement, as has too often been done by pioneers in their haste to utilize the land. The immense live oaks of the primeval forest, with their huge boles and large spreading branches clothed with bright evergreen foliage, have been allowed to remain, both in town and country, giving grateful shade and relieving the glittering whiteness of the houses of the town and dotting the fields like the parks of Europe, as often represented in paintings, both ideal and real. And not for beauty alone have they been left. The dense shade they throw affords much grateful protection to stock when turned into the stubble fields in the fall after the grain has been harvested, when the sun shines with burning fierceness in the midday of the late summer. Then, too, they look to the future when this section shall have become thickly settled, and all the lands cleared; firewood, now so abundant, shall have become scarce, then, by removing a tree occasionally, they can keep

THEMSELVES PLENTIFULLY SUPPLIED,

And save both the cost and time of hauling it from the Feather river, from which their future supply will be drawn, when they have exhausted the supply in their neighborhood. But this eventuality need not be taken into account by this generation, nor even by the next, so abundant are the trees remaining standing and so large their size. Not a resident lot in the city but has several in their yards, and even in the streets, where they are close to the sidewalks and do not impede travel, they are trimmed and allowed to remain.

But while it gives such a quiet and sylvan beauty to the town, it leads the casual visitor to believe the place much smaller than it is, as only by threading its many streets can one determine how great a population it contains. On close examination, Gridley presents many metropolitan characteristics seldom observed in rural towns. Its business houses are concentrated on one or two streets, and connected together and built in blocks mostly of brick, and evidently constructed for the business for which they are used. Its streets are neat and clean, free from rubbish, cans, old boots, etc., so noticeable in many mining towns. Its sidewalks are plank, of an average breadth of twelve feet, and all built on a single grade. Trees of different varieties—locust, California walnut, maple, elm, etc., are planted along the outer edge of the sidewalks. In fact, it is

A MINIATURE CITY.

Another noticeable feature is the entire absence of unemployed persons in the town. Everyone is employed at their trades or in business. The musical clang of the blacksmith's hammer, or the ripping of the carpenter's saw is constantly heard, and the buzzing noise of the whirling machinery of the flour mill dispels all the quiet of the typical country village, and forces one almost to imagine that he is in a manufacturing town. The whistling of the mill as it marks the hours of the relays of its employes deepens the impression. And this time of year, too, we are told is the most quiet, for all the farmers with their men and teams are busily engaged in summer-fallowing. In harvest time it indeed must be a lively and bustling town when the crews of the harvesting machines are in this vicinity and have their days off.

The styles of architecture of its business houses, residences and churches are neat, tasteful and appropriate. The old California pioneer style, modeled, we think, from a dry goods box, with boards set on end and battens nailed on the cracks, is nowhere seen. On the contrary, many of the buildings would be considered ornate even in a city, and all of them have a pleasing appearance, indicative of the prosperity and taste of the owners. Nor are the surroundings neglected, nearly all of them being inclosed with white painted pickets, while some have the more costly scroll-work fence. The yards, too, bear every trace of care and attention. In them can be found

FRUIT TREES OF EVERY DESCRIPTION

From every clime; the orange, lemon, Japanese persimmon, sandwiched in between the peach, apricot, almond, pear, apple, etc., all neatly trimmed and with vigorous healthy growth, proving practically the perfect adaption of both soil and climate for their production. Vegetables of every description are cultivated for domestic use, and their advanced growth at this season of the year was a marvel to one from the lower Sacramento basin. Beans, tomatoes, corn and other vegetables which are liable to injury from heavy frosts are seldom planted in the open air before April 10th in this locality. Gridley, however, has no such fears. Beans in abundance are now seen in their gardens more than a foot high and in blossom, plainly proving that they had been planted more than six weeks or two months previously. And their flowers, too, have a most beautiful and inviting appearance. Not a house but has its climbing roses or honeysuckle, and on many both the pillars and cornices of the porches were entirely hidden from view, while the beds in the dooryards were brilliant with petunias, verbenas, marigolds, etc., all no doubt under the fostering care of good ladies of the homes. One will travel far and observe closely before he will discover another town with natural and artificial attractive features as great as the town of Gridley.

THE NAME OF GRIDLEY.

From Whence the Name was Chosen—Some Facts about the Place.

Much misapprehension exists as to the man in whose honor the town of Gridley was named. It has been often published, and generally believed, that it was so called to perpetuate the name of Gridley, who made himself so famous in his efforts, during the late war, to aid the Sanitary Commission by the means of traveling throughout this State with a sack of flour, which would be auctioned off, then returned, resold, and so on, the entire proceeds being given to the Commission, which finally swelled to hundreds of thousands of dollars. But, however noble a monument it would have been, such is not the fact. It was named after George W. Gridley, a native of Cazenovia, N. Y., born in 1818. With his relatives, when a child, he removed to Illinois, and after having been engaged in the auctioneering business with success, in 1850, having become infected with the gold fever, he migrated to California, settling in Sacramento, where he engaged in the same business. He returned to Illinois in 1852, and again migrated to California in 1853, settling in Butte county, four miles north of the Buttes. Gradually by purchase and otherwise he became possessed of about 8,000 acres, including the present town site of Gridley. He also engaged largely in the sheep business, was remarkably successful, and became one of the wealthiest men in Northern California. He met with some reverses, however, before his death, which occurred in March, 1881, materially lessening the value of his estate. His wife and family are now living four miles west of Gridley, on the adobe lands, still possessed of many hundreds of acres.

ITS SITUATION.

To the depot in Gridley, Butte county, according to railroad surveys, it is exactly distant from Sacramento 69.6 miles. According to United States surveys, it is described as occupying a portion of section 1, township 17 north, range 2, and a portion of section 36 in township 18. In 1870 the town was laid out by the railroad company about the time the road was completed to that point. The site, we were informed, is one mile long, parallel with the railroad, north and south, and one-half mile wide, east and west, measuring about 320 acres. The railroad passes through the center, running north and south. The western side contains nearly all the business houses and manufacturing establishments, besides a large majority of the residences. The lumber yards and many residences and one church lie to the east of the railroad. It is about two and one-half miles north of the boundary line which divides Butte and Sutter counties; two and one-quarter miles from Feather river, which is crossed by a splendid bridge, mentioned elsewhere; three miles south of the town of Biggs, and about twelve miles northeast of the Buttes, the most prominent landmark in the Sacramento valley.

PLAN OF GRIDLEY.

Gridley is laid out on the modern plan, with streets crossing each other at right angles, making the squares about 240 feet. An alley twenty feet wide passes through the center of each square, running north and south. The streets running north and south are alphabetically named, and those east and west numerically. This plan we believe was first adopted in laying out the city of Washington, D. C., and has since been adopted by many of the new and most thriving cities of the country, our own among the number. It is certainly more simple and less entangling to a stranger than the old plan where streets were named from some local celebrity, or physical characteristics which improvements often make meaningless, and have no connection or sequence in their adjustment. The railroad company reserved enough land for their purposes—depot, wood-yard, coal-bins, etc.—and then offered the remaining lots for sale, which were eagerly sought for, until now a very few remain in the hands of the company. The first dwelling and store was erected by L. C. Stone, who also was the first agent for the railroad company and Wells, Fargo & Co., and the first Postmaster. He is still a resident of Gridley and one of its wealthiest citizens.

ITS GOVERNMENT.

The government of Gridley, is simple, economical, and owing to the good qualities and law-abiding character of its citizens, effective and ample for all its present needs. It consists of two Justices of the Peace and two Constables. It is not an incorporated town, and therefore only subject to county and State taxes, which averages less than $1 50 per hundred. The road tax appears to be ample, for its streets are in such perfect condition that any city might be proud of them. The people are neither litigious nor pugnacious, and larcenies are almost unknown. Consequently the Justices and Constables have neither troublesome nor lucrative positions. To be sure, such a state cannot last much longer, as the population increases, and even if no boom should reach Gridley the natural increase of population, which her vast resources must bring her, will compel her to apply for a charter and assume all the added expenses of an incorporated city. When the time does come we trust her citizens will have the foresight to steer clear of the rocks which have so nearly wrecked so many otherwise prosperous cities—an incorporated debt without ample provision for its funding and liquidation at no distant day.

BUSINESS AND MANUFACTURES.

Some of the Leading Industries of Gridley—Numerous Enterprises.

A stranger visiting this place is at once struck with surprise at the number and diversity of the occupations of its citizens. In addition to the usual occupations of the people of rural towns, we see them engaged in what might be called metropolitan trades. And every one seems to be busy, too—not loitering about taverns or saloons to discuss politics, weather, price of grain, etc, in all of which they have and take great interest, but engaged in their various occupations.

THE FLOUR MILL.

One of the most prominent buildings in the town, on account of its hight and location near the railroad, is the Gridley steam flour mill, now run by Sperry & Co. It was originally erected in 1875 by a joint stock company, with five run of stone, and had a grinding capacity of 250 barrels per day. It has since been changed to the all-roller system, and now turns out 300 barrels per day of first-class flour. The building is of frame, painted white, four stories high, about 50 by 100 feet, with an annex on the northern and southern sides 20 by 100 feet. A most beautiful view of the surrounding country can be obtained from the top of this mill. In addition, this mill has two warehouses, not many feet removed, capable of holding thousands of tons of wheat and flour. It gives employment to about fourteen men, and is run night and day.

FOUNDRY AND MACHINE SHOP.

Last week was made the first casting in the Gridley foundry. A competent mechanic and iron-worker named Standish, who had been located in the town of Pacheco, Contra Costa county, visited this section to see what where the opportunities for obtaining work at his trades, and what inducements would be offered him to locate here. The citizens, ever alive to aid anything that will advance their town, donated a lot 80 by 110 feet, and sufficient cash besides to aid him in paying freight on his heavy plant and erect suitable buildings. He has just completed his foundry, and last Wednesday made his first castings. The foundry has a steam engine and boiler, two steam lathes and two drills, furnaces, mold-boxes and everything complete to do any work needed in this community. He was immediately started casting a patent horse power by Mr. Beebe, the patentee, a citizen of Gridley, and on the iron work for windmills. As only anthracite coal or English coke can be used in casting, he finds the freight the only drawback to his location, but this is offset by the freight charges on castings brought from elsewhere. Besides he gets all the old cast-iron of this and adjoining neighborhoods at a lower rate than his metropolitan brothers pay for the same. A good bed of molding sand was found on the Feather river, so that he is greatly pleased with his location.

BRICKMAKING.

The molding and burning of bricks is not a new industry in Gridley, whole blocks of buildings, warehouses, etc., having been built out of bricks burned here. The clay is found close to or even at the surface, by removing a foot or two of the top soil, which contains pieces of wood and leaves. It is one of the best proofs of the uniform distribution of the clay in the soil that such good hard bricks are made. Sand, which is so necessary in brick-making, for use in the mold boxes, to prevent the clay sticking in the molds, is found at the depth of six feet. The wood, live oak, which is here also at hand, for burning, is cheap and of the best quality, and the bricks which we examined were thoroughly burned and very hard. A kiln is now in progress of 400,000, and while most of them will be used in Gridley in the erection of projected buildings, a surplus will remain to supply the wants of adjacent towns. With such advantages bricks are made cheaper here than in any place in the State, the cost of molding, placing in kiln and burning being about $5 per thousand. Bricks of the same quality are now selling in San Francisco at the rate of $10 and $11 per thousand, and are very scarce. This industry will develop into large proportions as the town grows and the country settles up.

OPERA HOUSE.

Gridley has a large, neat and complete theater, built expressly for the purpose, and rewarding its enterprising owner most munificently for the money he has invested in it. It has a frontage of 50 feet, and runs the length of a lot to the alley 110 feet. Has high ceiling; the walls, ceiling and windows tinted blue. Has a neat stage with dressing-rooms underneath, and about 20 shifting scenes. The floor is smooth, well waxed, so that it can be used as a dancing hall. Chairs are used instead of benches, and would seat, we think, upwards of 700.

THE NEWSPAPER.

Gridley is possessed of one of the best weekly newspapers in Northern California. It was established some eight years ago by C. N. Reed, one of the live men of the place, and to whose energy and push the town is greatly indebted for her prosperity and enterprise. He is a young man, about 38 years old, a thorough and competent printer, a vigorous writer, a true gentleman, a man of family, has a pleasant home, and is a firm believer in the great future of his section, and works assiduously in aid of all things that may help to develop this country.

BUSINESS AND TRADES.

There is more diversity in the occupations of the residents of Gridley than one would expect to find in a small town. In fact, one is surprised at their number and extent. But its people are aiming to make it a city and the commercial and manufacturing center of a large section. The stock of goods carried by many of the merchants are as large as found in cities of ten times the population, and the arrangement of the stores on business streets and goods displayed attractively in large show-windows give the place a decided metropolitan look. Below we give a list of the most prominent business houses and trades of the town:

General merchandise, 4; hardware, 2; drugs and medicines, 1; boots and shoes, 1; variety stores, 2; jewelry store, 1; barber shop, 1; barber shop and baths, hot and cold, 1; butcher shop, 1; harness and saddlery, 1; livery stables, 2; millinery, 1; shoemaking, 2; furnishing goods and clothing, 1; merchant tailor, 1; furniture and undertaker, 1; tin shop, 1; feed stable, 1; hotels, 2; restaurants, 1; lodging-house, 1; lumber yards, 2; carpenter shops, 5; saw and planing mill, 1; barley mill, 1; hay and feed store, 1; warehouses (brick), 3; warehouses (wood), 3; hay barns (storage), 4; paint shops, 3; wagonmaking and wheelright, 3; soda and extract factory, 2; broom and brush factory, 2; wood yard, 1; white laundry, 1; wellborers, 2; bakery, 1; photograph gallery, 1; vegetable garden (white), 1; water works (private), 3; contractor and builder, 1; insurance agents, 3; grain-buyers, 2; real estate agents, 2; stationery store, 1; dressmaking, 3; nurseryman, 1; bricklayers, 4; plasterer, 1; saloons, 7.

In addition to the above there are offices of the Postal and Western Union Telegraph Companies, Wells, Fargo and Co.'s express, a bank (branch of Rideout & Co.), Gridley *Herald*, a music teacher, vocal and instrumental, two physicians, one Deputy Sheriff, two attorneys-at-law, one dentist, a brass band of ten pieces, string band of four pieces, two Justices of the Peace, two Constables, and many others.

Besides all those which are in active operation there is in contemplation the erection of a fruit cannery. Already the fruit industry is assuming proportions to justify one. There are immense orchards on the Feather only a few miles distant, many orchards of from five to ten acres in size close to the town are now in bearing, many more are being planted, and perhaps by next year it will prove an absolute necessity in order to prevent a glut in the market of green fruit. A brewery, too, is in contemplation and will be erected shortly; some of the brick now being placed in kiln are to be used for that purpose.

PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS.

The Churches, Public Schools and Various Organizations.

In proportion to its population, judging from the number of organized churches and active membership, Gridley must be the most religious community on the coast. It already has four church edifices erected, and six congregations organized. Additional churches will be built this season to accommodate those without a building of their own.

The most ornate church in the place and the only one with a bell is the Presbyterian church, Rev. Mr. Wallace, pastor, (who resides in town in a handsome residence), with an active membership of 22. The building cost $4,000 and is entirely clear of debt.

The Catholic church is a handsome edifice, costing over $3,000. Rev. J. J. Hynes, who resides in Chico, ministers to the wants of his parishioners at least once a month. The congregation numbers about 40.

The Methodist church is jointly used by the Northern and Southern branches, each, however, having their own minister, Rev. Mr. Simmons officiating for the Northern, and Rev. Mr. Booher for the Southern church. The membership of each is about 30.

The United Brethren have a very neat Church, which they also permit to be used by the Christian Church until they erect one of their own. Brother Shuck is the officiating minister, and has a congregation of about 20.

The Christian Church is the latest organization in the place, and as yet have no church of their own. It has, however, we were informed, the largest congregation, and will shortly build a church, using for the present the United Brethren's church.

THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

Gridley has two school-houses located on the same lot, close to each other. Each building is 40 by 60 feet, two stories high, built of frame, painted white, costing over $3,000, and presents a neat and attractive appearance. The school lot, which is amply large for a playground for the scholars, is covered with native live oaks, affording an abundance of shade during the summer to the pupils during their sports. The attendance averages 165, and are taught by three teachers. The course includes grammar, intermediate and primary grades. On account of its excellent school facilities, many farmers of the adjacent country have built homes in Gridley, and permanently reside there for the purpose of educating their children. This is not because there is not a sufficiency of schools in the neighborhood, but on account of the better classification and more advanced studies pursued than in the ordinary country schools.

ORGANIZATIONS.

Gridley has all the fraternal and benevolent organizations common to the cities of California, and the membership of each in proportion to the population, is extremely large. There is a fine brick hall in the town, upstairs over the business houses, constructed expressly for meeting purposes. The Lodge of Masons has a membership of 40, Odd Fellows 40, Good Templars 20, Ancient Order of United Workmen 44, Native Sons 26, Chosen Friends 50, Rebekah Degree Lodge 25, Order of Eastern Star 30, and Band of Hope 50.

The Board of Trade is an organization recently formed, composed of the principal capitalists, business men and property-owners, for the purpose of advancing the interests of the town and building up the surrounding country. They meet frequently, and are often called together specially, when anything of importance needs immediate action. Through their instrumentality manufacturers have been induced to locate in Gridley, and their recent attempt to induce the Commissioners to locate the Normal School here, and munificent propositions offered were entirely owing to its exertions. By subscriptions, they proposed to donate twenty acres of land contiguous to the town, at the lowest valuation being worth $100 per acre—$2,000—and to give 1,000,000 brick or more to aid in its construction. The brick, at the ruling quotation in San Francisco, would be worth $11,000. This is but a sample of the energy, enterprise and liberality of this people in their endeavors to build up this section, and, though the Commissioners did not accept the generous offer, yet it speaks volumes in their favor. The membership is sixty-eight, all active and live business men. Their place of meeting is the Town Hall, a large room, 32 by 60 feet, up stairs in the principal business block.

In addition, for social and amusement purposes, there is a dramatic troupe, a baseball club of twenty-five members, a gymnastic club of fifteen, a brass band of ten pieces, and a string band of four pieces.

THE CEMETERY.

Gridley has a neat, well-laid out cemetery just on the outskirts of the town, surrounded by a neat picket fence painted white. The entire plat is about ten acres in extent, but only two acres are at present improved. It is used for interment by a large section of surrounding country, Biggs even burying her dead here.

RAILROAD FACILITIES.

The California and Oregon Railroad is at present the chief means of communication. Two trains pass out of the town every day, going north and south. With the completion of this road additional markets will be opened up for many of the products of Gridley. The depot is too small for the transaction of the present volume of business, but a new one is promised more commensurate in size with the importance of the place. Good corrals for the shipment of stock, graveled to the depth of a foot to prevent being tramped into a mud-hole in the winter time, affords all the facilities needed. Wood is shipped in large quantities to both Marysville and Sacramento, 500 cords being sent to the latter place this season. The railroad company have large coal-bins here for their own convenience.

THE SOIL ABOUT GRIDLEY.

Its Peculiar Quality and the Cause of Its Wonderful Productiveness.

The soil upon which Gridley is located and immediately surrounded is without doubt the best agricultural land for all purposes—grain, vegetables and fruit trees, in the State. That which is known as the live-oak land extends in a direction north and south about eight miles and east and west six miles, having an area of about 50 square miles, or 32,000 acres. The soil is a sandy loam mixed with small, fine gravel, and with an abundance of fine argillaceous clay, but not enough to make it sticky and muddy. The presence of mica in abundance shows it to be of granitic origin, and an examination shows it to contain an abundance of humus caused by the decomposition of the leaves, woods, grasses, etc., with which it was so abundantly clothed in its primeval condition. It is chocolate in color, being considerably darker than the contiguous red lands, and from which it differs very materially, being much coarser. When in right condition it plows splendidly, being very friable and falling from the mold-board of the plow in fine condition. Its coarseness makes it peculiarly adapted for all kinds of trees, as the original growth testifies, and the presence of clay in such abundance makes it one of the best grain-growing sections in the State. Its coarseness permits the water to sink rapidly away after the heaviest rains, and the sand, small gravel and mica rapidly absorbing the sun's heat rays, makes it, we believe,

THE WARMEST AND EARLIEST SECTION

For fruit and vegetables in the State. Wheat in many places at the present time is headed out, and all the vegetables show a growth advanced from a month to six weeks over any other section we have visited. Notwithstanding that it has been continually cropped with grain in many places for the last ten years, no diminution of the yield has as yet been observed. This cannot be said of many sections, even the bottom lands, supposed to be practically inexhaustible, showing deterioration after the lapse of years. The coarseness and porosity of the soil gives ample opportunity for the roots of both trees and vines to search over a large area for their necessary food, and at the same time anchor themselves securely against any gale of wind which might blow.

The native vegetation would indicate all this, for in its original state the whole country was so thickly covered with live-oak brush and large trees as to be practically impenetrable. Fruit trees, wherever planted, show a magnificent growth, and in one orchard of ten acres which we were shown not one tree had failed. The trees all have an extremely healthy appearance, not a sign of scale having ever been discovered in this locality, and no lichens or mosses to disfigure or injure the bark of the trunks and limbs of the trees. Its immunity from late frosts is also owing to the peculiarity of its soil as well as its geographical position. Being so porous that the water sinks rapidly to its

SUBTERRANEAN DRAINAGE,

And not cooled by evaporation like heavier clay soils, and its sandy and gravelly particles absorbing as they do the heat of the sun and atmosphere during the daytime, and then radiating the same slowly back during the night, prevents the formation of frost at the surface of the ground, even though the superincumbent atmosphere may have reached that degree of cold. It is well known that frost never forms while the atmosphere is in motion, only when it is calm, and that the heat radiated from the soil rises, which, passing upward through the branches and foliage of both trees and vines, would prevent the atmosphere reaching the frost temperature, thus giving such perfect and ample natural protection against losses from frost which sometimes afflict even the most favored portions of the State. Great as is its adaptation to the growth of grain, which is wonderful, wheat yielding on average every year since the land has been reduced to cultivation of thirty-five to sixty bushels per acre, we believe that trees and vines will find their natural habitat in its soil. It is well known that the reason why so large a portion of the earth's surface is treeless, and where the soil is fertile and water abundant, is not caused by any climatic conditions or lack of distribution of the seeds, but by

THE PECULIARITIES OF THE SOIL.

The prairies of the United States, the Llanos of South America and the Steppes of Russia and Asia are all very fine soils, admirably adapted for the growth of grasses, grains and vegetables, but their compactness forbidding the growth of trees save where planted and and fostered by man. On the contrary, wherever the soil is coarse and moisture abundant the country is always clothed with trees and vines. It has been said that a person can tell in the night-time in such countries as Illinois whether he is in the woodland or prairie land by simply feeling of the soil, the difference is so marked and pronounced.

It is well illustrated in this State where the adobe lands, which are fine clay, are always in the natural state treeless, but admirably adapted to the grains, grasses, etc. The original vegetation on such land was the wild oat, and it takes all the skill of the farmer to cultivate a few trees for shade on such lands. They have never been planted in orchards, and should not be. But for wheat and barley they are ranked as the strongest and most prolific of our soils.

WHY WHEAT IS GROWN.

The cause of the land being so largely devoted to wheat and not to fruits is that the farmers were satisfied with the money they are making in grain, much the same reason why the fruit men on the Sacramento river, near Courtland, who are considered the best horticulturists in the State, have not entered more extensively into orange growing for the market. We asked one of the best known and most successful orchardists near Courtland why he had not engaged in orange growing long ago. He answered, "What is the matter with peaches, Bartlett pears, apricots, etc.? Have we not made yearly from $500 to $1,500 per acre from our lands? Would oranges do better than that?"

So with the farmers of Gridley. "What is the matter with wheat?" they say. "Have we not had good crops every year and fair prices? Made money out of it and are prosperous? Look at our farms and houses, barns, fences, stock. Do they not all indicate thrift?" To be sure it takes many acres, but they have them. But a new era is about to dawn upon them. Their land has become too valuable to be devoted exclusively to grain. When it was held at $20 to $40 per acre that was good enough remuneration on the investment. But now that their lands have risen to $75 to $100 per acre, and its capacity demonstrated by actual trial, the returns from wheat growing are not sufficient. Those who do not desire to engage in horticulture can

EASILY DISPOSE OF THEIR LANDS

At a price that will enable them to purchase two or three times the quantity of good grain land in other sections, equally as well situated as Gridley is for cheap transportation, but whose soil have not the peculiar character that will enable them to engage in diversified agriculture. Those who will remain will dispose of a portion of their numerous acres and concentrate their attention and labor on a few. Ten acres in fruit, nuts, or grapes in the live-oak lands will give a greater gross and net yield than 160 acres in grain, besides increasing the value of the land, building up the town of Gridley into a city, etc. Already a beginning, and a large one, has been made. Trees and vines are being planted by the acre, and the proposition of building a cannery is under discussion. But the market for their green fruit will be a good one, and they will get the cream of it, too. Their fruits will ripen as early, if not in advance of the famed Vacaville region. They are further removed from the cold air from the ocean by nearly 150 miles, their altitude is not greater above sea level—being only sixty-nine feet—while their soil, owing to its peculiar formation and unsurpassed subsoil drainage, is, we think, much warmer.

NO IRRIGATION FOR ANY TREE,

Vine or vegetable will ever be necessary here. When the rain water sinks into the soil it goes down but twelve or fourteen feet to a quicksand, which acts as the drain, and in which there is perennial water. The warm soil on the surface, especially where well cultivated, will cause evaporation to take place, and will draw by capillary attraction upon this vast subterranean source. The vegetables too, which will be raised here, will be no small item. Tomatoes, melons, beans, etc., will be so early, and bring such remunerative prices as will enable them to bear the freight charges, which, as a matter of course, are necessarily more than those who are closer to San Francisco, and leave larger margins of profits. All farmers know that there is more profit in 100 pounds of fruit or vegetables, if placed in the market early when they are scarce, than in 2,000 pounds when all sections can raise them and glut the market. Not only will they be able to compete successfully in the San Francisco market with our section, but in many of their own markets in the mountains and upper country they

WILL HAVE A PRACTICAL MONOPOLY

And be without a competitor. Grapes, too, will play a very important part in its products, both for wine and raisins. While nearly every section can raise grapes for the press, it has been demonstrated that the granitic soils make the very best wines. For the curing of raisins by the sun, which so far, we believe, has proven to be the best, this section is unapproachable. The moist-laden air which comes from the ocean as it passes up the Sacramento valley has nearly all of its humidity either absorbed by the soil or driven high up in the atmosphere by the heat, and by the time it reaches Gridley it is as dry as air is in any locality. When the sun sinks and the air becomes cooled the moisture descends, and if the temperature of the soil should be low enough dew would be deposited, and any grapes that were being dried would be injured. But the warm soil would again act as a protection, as it would be warmed owing to its porosity and sandy nature to a great depth, and would have during the daytime stored enough heat to radiate back and prevent the deposition of dew. It is owing to the dryness of the atmosphere that

NO SCALE INSECTS HAVE EVER BEEN SEEN IN THIS VICINITY,

And even if they were introduced on trees from some infected nursery, could not survive. Scale can only live and propagate its species where it is warm and moist. Heat and dryness is fatal to its propagation or even existence. Its limits are bounded, and we believe that where lichens and mosses of certain varieties will not thrive would be fatal to the scale. It has been often observed by those who visit San Francisco, that all the unpainted fences and barns are soon covered with lichens, many of them being of a pale green and yellow, covering all kinds of wood, both alive and dead, with their singular verdure. It is also noticeable even in this vicinity on some old decaying fences and trees. In such localities the scale thrives.

At Gridley or vicinity we could not see the slightest vestige, though we looked for them, of any such variety of cryptogamous plant. Even the large live-oaks, whose huge trunks and immense branches gave token of great age, were without the slightest evidence of them. We believe that Gridley has a natural protector in its warm, dry atmosphere against all kinds of scale insects. And this should count as a large sum in favor of the value of their lands, not only in the cost of the appliances and materials used in combating scale insects elsewhere, but also in the greater yield, and size and appearance of fruit raised on trees which have never been attacked by insects.

SUBSOIL DRAINAGE.

We have no statistics as to the annual rainfall in this section of the State, but judging from the general contour of the country, the Sierras on the east and the proximity of the Buttes on the west, together with the number of trees with which the country is studded, and the fact that a failure of crops has never been known, all prove that the average precipitation must be greater there than in Sacramento—perhaps twenty inches or upward. But what becomes of it? A traveler through this country looks in vain for some dry creek or arroyo or other drainage line to carry off the surplus rainfall. Neither are there sloughs or low depressions, so often seen on our plain lands, to which the water might drain on the surface or percolate through the soil, and then be removed by evaporation. An examination of the soil, and conversation with those who have examined the substrata, by means of digging wells, solves the problem. The soil is so porous and open that after a rain of 48 hours' duration in half an hour

THE SURFACE IS PERFECTLY DRAINED

And ploughing can be immediately commenced. No water remains in the soil to keep it chilled by slow evaporation, or passing along its surface bake the land when dry. The water sinks gradually in the soil to the depth of twelve or fourteen feet, where it encounters a bed of quicksand, and through which a constant stream is passing, and thence carried either subterraneously to Feather river, distant two and a half miles, or in the direction of the Buttes westward. If the latter it would account for the water being so near the surface, about six feet, necessitating the construction of broad shallow ditches to the lower basin of Butte creek for drainage. Underneath the bed of quicksand is an impervious bed of hardpan, and then cobbles, well water-worn.

No doubt Feather river once had its channel where these cobbles now are, and in the many changes which water-courses always make in alluvial valleys, shifted its channels to its present position. Were all the materials given to man to construct soil pre-eminently adapted to all the wants of diversified agriculture, he could not improve upon the plan. He might adopt it, as has been done in portions of the Eastern States, accounts of which, with its enormous productions, have recently been published in many papers. The plan was to select a hillside with a gentle slope, dig tranverse ditches connected with each other, and after removing the soil again fill the ditch, placing the larger stones on the bottom, smaller on top to prevent the soil clogging the interstices, and on top of all placing the finer soil. Water was then let into the ditch at the top, which gradually percolated to the ditches lower down, the water rising to the surface by means of evaporation and capillary attraction. Nature has done precisely the same here in the distant ages and without cost to man, only the soil instead of being only a foot or two in depth, is many. That

SUCH A SOIL IS IMMENSELY PRODUCTIVE

When supplied with the proper amount of humus, and adapted to all the demands which the agriculturist or horticulturist may draw upon it, should be apparent. And nature has not been neglectful to apply the humus. When the first settlers arrived here, and up to about ten years ago, the whole country was covered with dense thickets and large trees, chiefly live-oaks. So matted, indeed, were the thickets, that it was not deemed suitable even for sheep pasture. The leaves from those trees falling (for live-oaks shed their leaves every three to five years, according to the species), and the trees themselves falling and decaying, together with their roots in the grounds, aided by the different native plants with which the country was covered, has given it a supply that it will take years to reduce so as to be noticeable in the crops. After an examination of the soil, its geological formation and

MAGNIFICENT SUBSOIL DRAINAGE,

One is not surprised at the luxuriant growth of grains, vegetables, trees and vines. That the ground is humid can be told by the original vegetation which now remains. We have seen an elder tree growing in a neglected corner, and a wild native grapevine clambering along a fence; and as we have no native variety of upland grape, only the riparia Californica, which, as its name implies, belongs to the moist banks of streams, it is the surest sign of moistness of the underlying soils. The elder berry also belongs to the bottoms of rivers. The farmers of the lower Sacramento always take advantage of the signs which nature displays, and invariably select the red willow land for the choicest peach orchards. The soil has always been noticed to be not only moist, but also very rich, where the wild grapevine grows, as it is well known to be a rank feeder.

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS.

The Wonderful Variety and Quality of Grains, Etc., Grown.

Grain-growing has been and is still the principal product of the agriculturists of this region since the California and Oregon Railroad traversed their county. Prior to that time wool-growing was the chief occupation, which has now been almost abandoned since its adaptability to the growth of the cereals has been clearly demonstrated. Wheat was first grown on the adobe lands lying to the westward, no previous preparation or clearing of the land standing in the way of the pioneers in this industry. All they had to do was to plow the ground, harrow, sow the seed and await a bounteous harvest. They are still devoted to that purpose, and being very rich, strong lands, have not perceptibly deteriorated, and are still very valuable, though not held at as high figure as such productive lands would be held in other portions of the State. They yield in favorable seasons equally as well as the live-oak lands, but are not so sure, though we believe the grain-growers have never met with a total failure. The live-oak lands were next brought under cultivation, though it required a great deal of time and money to clear them, but the expenditure was more than offset by the sale of wood, Marysville always being

A GOOD MARKET

For its disposal. We were shown a tract of 40 acres adjoining the town from which 1,100 cords of wood were cut. Just who the pioneer wheat-grower was in the live-oak lands we could not learn; possibly there were several at the same time. Any farmer examining the soil and the natural vegetation with which it was covered, could easily see that it was splendid grain land, and when a market was found for the wood which could be cut therefrom, at remunerative prices, it was not long till the whole country was cleared and planted in grain. The yield has been steady and sure, no total failures ever being known. To be sure, like all wheat lands all over the globe, they have some years more favorable than others, when the land yields 60 bushels of wheat to the acre, and in an off year falls as low as 25 bushels. In fact, it is just what one would expect from an examination of the country. On account of its certainty of production, this character of land is held at the highest figure of all the lands of this region; but when its adaptability to fruit trees of every description and vines have been more clearly shown by actual trial and practical tests, we predict that they will be the most valuable lands on the coast. The Feather river bottoms have not been used for wheat growing, being better adapted for alfalfa, broom corn and yellow corn, and for which they are mostly used.

Barley is not raised so extensively as wheat, but it yields on such lands enormously—80 bushels to the acre often being reported.

VEGETABLES, CORN, ETC.

Every variety of vegetable grown in California here reaches its greatest development, and many too are grown profitably which in other sections only meet with partial success. It is well known that corn will not properly mature where the nights are cold, retarding its growth. This section has no such drawback, and corn is profitably cultivated by the hundreds of acres, chiefly on the bottoms of Feather river. Broomcorn, too, is extensively cultivated and shipped in large quantities, besides what is used in the local factory.

COTTON GROWING.

It is many years since the first culture of cotton was attempted in this State. In the early days of the late war the Legislature of California offered a large bonus for the first fifty bales of ginned cotton that would be produced in this State. Parties in this city entered into its cultivation to gain the prize, selecting a piece of land in the pocket on the river this side of Freeport for their operations. The seed was planted, properly cultivated, and the growth was all that could be desired, success seemed certain, but at the time when the ball was about half open further development was apparently checked, a gum formed in the stem of the ball, the cotton could not be picked, and disaster overwhelmed the parties. It was generally conceded that the cool nights was the cause of the failure, and that if a location had been selected higher up the valley, removed from the influence of trade winds and resultant cool nights, success would have been certain.

Since then cotton has been most successfully grown near Nicolaus, Sutter county, where it matured to perfection, and yielded a quality of staple, both in length and fineness, equal to the best ever raised in any of the Southern States. Samples of it were exhibited at the recent citrus fair in this city, and was thus pronounced by old cotton-growers and dealers, who examined it. Butte county, lying still further from the influence of the trade winds, may therefore be regarded as the natural home for the cotton plant. The loose, porous soil would absorb the sun's heat to a great depth, it having been demonstrated by thermometrical tests often to the depth of twenty feet in similar soils, and then warm nights, aided by the heat in the soil, would mature the growth of the plant to its greatest perfection. Cotton has been tested on a small scale on the opposite side of the river, in Colusa county, successfully.

ALFALFA.

This wonderfully productive forage plant, often called Chile clover, was originally brought from Spain, where it is called lucerne, to South America, and from thence to this State, where, until recently, it has been exclusively cultivated on the bank lands of streams where no irrigation is needed. Of late years it has been planted in large tracts in Southern California and irrigated, where it yields prodigiously. Ten or twelve years ago alfalfa was thought to be of such little value, that pressed into bales and shipped to San Francisco, it was almost unsalable, selling the lowest of all hays, often for one-half that of barley and wheat hay, and in the markets was denominated as "cow hay," it not being thought fit for horse feed. How ideas and prices have changed! Now it is considered the equal of the best hay, and in quotations is never more than a dollar a ton below the very best wheat and wild oat hay. The Feather river bottoms are largely devoted to its culture, where it is used as a pasture, cut green and fed to stock, and cured as hay and fed to beef cattle. We do not believe there is a single dairy on the Feather river, but in speaking with some of the farmers, they announced their intention of engaging in butter-making shortly. The famous gilt edge butter of the farmers of the Sacramento, which commands the highest prices in the markets, is made from alfalfa fed cows, and while the lands adapted to the growth of alfalfa on the Sacramento is generally restricted to a narrow strip of land lying along the banks of the river, often only a few rods in width, thus giving comparatively but a few acres to each farmer, the lands suitable for alfalfa on Feather river is miles in width, extending up and down the stream for long distances. On the Ord ranch, which lies along the river, and contains 1,100 acres, we are informed there are 700 acres devoted to alfalfa. The Larkin ranch adjoining, and lying below the Ord ranch, has hundreds of acres in alfalfa. We do not believe such large tracts of alfalfa, raised without irrigation, can be seen elsewhere in the State. Experiments are being made in raising alfalfa on the live-oak lands near Gridley, and from the appearance of the patches which we were shown we should

PRONOUNCE THEM A SUCCESS.

On a small patch particularly that we were shown, we never saw a better stand, and an advantage that it possessed over the bottom lands was that it was entirely free from the numerous varieties of weeds with which all bottom lands are infested. With perennial water at a depth of twelve to fourteen feet from the surface, and an open, porous soil, we cannot see how it can help being successfully raised. On the banks of rivers which are planted in alfalfa, and where the banks have become perpendicular by caving, caused by the erosion of the current of the stream, we have seen roots of alfalfa more than twenty feet in length, extending to the water line, and that, too, through the thick, compact clay soil of which the banks are formed. As moisture is the all-needful for successful alfalfa culture, we can see no reason why it cannot be successfully grown on the lands surrounding Gridley, and without irrigation.

FRUIT-GROWING.

The Choicest Kinds of Fruit Grown to the Greatest Perfection.

It is well known that the almond is one of the most shy bearing trees we have in cultivation. Even in its native home, Persia, where it it is supposed to have been brought from, it is not regular in its fruitage. But so profitable is its crop, that even if it bears but once in three years, it is yet deemed one of the best paying of our many orchard trees. There is a grove of almonds near Gridley, now several years old, and of luxuriant growth, which, since it has come into bearing, has never missed a crop. It is the easiest crop for the farmer to handle when removed a distance from market; not liable to a glut, on account of the restricted localities where it will produce at all, and also that the farmer can stow his crop, and await a rise in the market should it be low. The Pacific coast, besides, has almost a monopoly in growing this nut, so few places are there suitable for its fructification. The only drawback we can see to its culture at Gridley at the present time is the number of woodpeckers, whose tastes, though artificially acquired, run strongly toward almonds, from the time they set till they are ripened and harvested. But the small boy (and they are plenty here, too), with a shotgun, will soon remove this evil.

PEACH-GROWING.

Peach growing, like other fruits, is yet in its infancy, but those that have been raised are of an exceptionally fine flavor, size and appearance. The character of the soil has everything to do with the color, etc. In other localities it has been thoroughly proven by practice that dark clay soils, while producing peaches in abundance, and of great size, fail to give to them that rich golden color and reddish blush so typical of the perfect peach, and that for some reason peaches raised on dark clay soil have an excess of acid which destroys the peculiar peach flavor which makes them one of the most delicious of all fruits. Sandy or light-colored, rich, well-drained, warm soils are pre-eminently the home of the peach, and where it reaches its greatest perfection, precisely the kind of soil, drainage, etc., that we find here at Gridley. It is well known that the peach is almost as semi-tropical in its characteristics as the orange, needing a warm climate to bring it to perfection, especially at the time of ripening. Gridley possesses all these in a greater degree than any portion of the State. Other parts may have one or more, but it is rarely that any section has them all so harmoniously combined. The number of bearing peach trees in this vicinity, on the live-oak lands, at present is not very great, but those which are producing come fully up to what would be expected from a locality so beneficently endowed. Peach orchards for market purposes are now being set out on a large scale, acres of which will come into bearing the first time this season. The trees all have a splendid growth, are perfectly straight and symmetrical, no lean being observed on any of the trees, to indicate from what direction the prevailing winds blow. Their cultivation is perfection, the friability of the soil and absence of weeds making easy work for the farmer.

FINE APRICOTS.

This is another fruit for which California is singularly well adapted, reaching the greatest perfection in many portions. It has been tested satisfactorily in this region, though not on a large scale, and the fruit hangs well on the tree till ripe. One of the great objections to the more extensive cultivation of this fruit is its liability to falling from the trees after setting. Some varieties have this failing so many years in succession as to necessitate their removal and the abandonment of apricot culture. We do not know the variety cultivated here, but from those who have raised them we have heard no complaint of not producing abundantly and constantly.

APPLES, PEARS, ETC.

In this vicinity many apple and pear trees are planted out, but not in large numbers, or in orchards, wheat having absorbed nearly all the attention of the farmers. The trees of all varieties are doing excellently, and not having any of the scales to retard their development, make luxuriant growth. We heard of but one drawback to their successful culture, and that was their liability to be sunburned on the trees, caused, we are informed, by the hot winds from the adjacent plains. We think, however, that is not the reason, but it is caused by the radiated heat from the soil underneath the trees ascending upwards, and believe if they were trained to branch low, like a bush, thus shading the ground underneath the tree, the cause would be removed.

ORANGES.

There appears to be at the present time a wild enthusiasm in favor of this fruit, and the papers are constantly teeming with the enormous returns from bearing orchards, and lands which will produce this fruit are held at fabulous sums in the southern counties. We believe if the statistics were shown of the gross yields and net profits of some of our well-cultivated peach and Bartlett pear orchards for the last ten years it would throw into the shade any authenticated profit that has ever been made from orange orchards, and that, too, without waiting such a number of years for a return. Butte county is famed for having the best citrus lands in the State, entirely exempt from injurious frosts, as trees of more than a quarter of a century's growth will show, and besides maturing them from six weeks to two months earlier than the southern counties can. This has been proven by the shipments to markets for years. Nearly every door-yard in Gridley has its orange tree, and some as high as a dozen or more, all presenting a healthy appearance, free from all scales, and of a vigorous growth. In fact, when an orange tree is brought from the southern counties all covered with black scales and set out here, in a short time the scale disappears, the climate, as we have elsewhere shown, being alike fatal to its existence and propagation. All the oranges raised here are perfectly clean and ready for the market when gathered, without the expense of polishing, which detracts so much from their keeping qualities. There is an orange orchard on Mr. Campbell's place, near Feather river, about four miles distant, of 625 trees, coming into bearing, and next year double as many more will be planted on the same place. Many others will also engage in their cultivation, the only deterring cause being the length of time they will have to wait before getting full crops. The town of Gridley being very young had no orange trees of large growth. To obviate this defect of youthfulness they had two large orange trees about 25 years old and 20 inches in circumference transplanted here from Marysville at a great expense of time, trouble and money. The trees were in nowise injured by their removal, now showing thrifty new branches, and are expected to produce a large crop the coming season. Last year one of them bore more than 3,000 oranges of a good quality.

GRAPES AND VINEYARDS.

The future wealth and prosperity of California we believe to be inseparably bound up with viticulture. It will be to us what the vine has been to France. Our markets will be the whole civilized world. The experimental stage has long since been passed, and the only questions to be settled in the future are which districts will produce the best wines and raisins. Irrigated vines can never compete in quality with those which draw their supply of moisture from the water in the soil. That has been settled beyond all question. The best raisins in the world are dried in the sun on the ground, radiated heat no doubt playing a very important part in the process. The atmosphere, too, should be dry to gain the most perfect results. No portion of the State possesses equal advantages to the region surrounding Gridley. She has the soil and climate, and only needs the hands of experienced men to properly direct them. A beginning has already been made, not a farm but can boast of a few acres, and some as high as twenty. And everywhere they are doing splendidly and are receiving care and attention. A few successes in viticulture will change the whole system of agriculture and land holdings in this vicinity. The big grain ranches will have to go, and instead of a population of three or four to the square mile there will be hundreds. Every evidence of the impending change is apparent. The land that will produce wine and raisin grapes as this land will is too valuable to be seeded to grain. In less than five years from now we do not expect to see a single acre in grain in the live-oak lands. Grain growing will be relegated to the adobe lands, for which they are so peculiarly adapted.

FIG CULTURE.

There are a number of fig trees scattered about the town, but so far they have been set out only for family use. But the success met with by a gentleman in the town of Bangor, Butte county, may induce others to follow his example. To dry the common black California fig and place it on the market in a merchantable condition has, we think, never been successfully accomplished, though often attempted. But this gentleman has done so, and in the following manner: He places some protection on the ground underneath the trees, to prevent the figs when they fall from being bruised or abraided, and from being soiled by the sand and dirt. He allows the figs to remain upon the tree until they fall, being then thoroughly ripe and partially dry. He then exposes them to the sun until cured and the fig sugar covers them, presses them into boxes and they are ready for market. Last year he shipped one and one-half tons to Chicago, where they sold for eight cents per pound. At six cents per pound he says they are the best crop he could raise. We tasted them, found they were sweet and well preserved, the only objection being the thick skin. Other varieties with a thin skin, thus treated, will fill all the requirements of a merchantable fig, we believe.

COMMUNICATION.

Facilities for Traveling and the Marketing of Products—Etc.

Gridley is possessed of many advantages of communication, both in number and character, not exceeded by any inland town in California. To be sure it has the Postoffice, for that is vouchsafed to even the smallest of hamlets and cross-roads, but it has, in addition, an agency of Wells, Fargo & Co., Western Union and Postal Telegraph facilities and the private telephone line of Rideout & Co., which extends to numerous points all over Northern California, including Sacramento and Marysville. The California and Oregon Railroad gives it both cheap and rapid communication twice a day north and south. By county roads, and good ones, too, it is connected with a vast extent of country extending clear to the Buttes on the west, which uses Gridley as its shipping point, and from which it draws all its supplies. This country is entirely under cultivation, not one waste acre in a drive of over twenty miles to be seen, and thickly settled for an exclusively grain-growing section. Pennington, a small town lying north of the Buttes, and with all its feeders, is also tributary to Gridley for railroad communication. To the eastward lies the Feather river with its rich bottom lands covered with alfalfa-fields and fruit and vegetable farms, and from which alone were shipped 35,000 sacks of yellow corn in one season, besides broomcorn in vast quantities, fruit, hay, etc. There is a proposition now on foot to build

A RAILROAD TO MOORE'S STATION,

Which lies about fifteen miles to the eastward, and thus enlarge their field in that direction. Another project is on the tapis to construct a railroad to Pennington, distant westward about twelve miles, in order to tap large sections there which now haul their grain to Marysville and there obtain their supplies. Nor are either of these projects chimerical. There is not the slightest obstacle intervening between Pennington and Gridley. The country is almost perfectly level, with a very slightly descending grade through the adobe lands towards the Buttes, which we believe is not more than three feet to the mile, as evidenced by the water we saw running in the ditches which