

# FRESNO HEART OF CALIFORNIA

## METROPOLIS ADORNS VALLEY WHERE ONCE WAS DESERT WASTE

### Cosmopolitan Community Finds Prosperity, Peace and Happiness in Center of the San Joaquin

The first man who went to Fresno sold water for a livelihood. He pitched a tent for a dwelling, bored a well and built a trough. He capitalized the thirst of the horses and cattle that passed his way, and he made money. The first woman in Fresno capitalized the hunger of the miners and shepherds and sold pies. From the pie and the water trough Fresno had its beginning. Today it has the largest irrigation system in America and it furnishes the fruits for the pies of a considerable portion of the world.

Fresno has grown up upon these two infant industries. It hasn't taken very long, either. If you ask the Fresno citizen to unfold the romance of the city's history he will tell you politely that Fresno's romance lies in its destiny, not in its past. That may seem somewhat unusual to those true Californians who trace all things back to the date of the Mission. The good padres did not wander down the limitless stretches of the San Joaquin valley. But Fresno, deprived of this inspiration, has not neglected the spiritual. In fact, it is unique among cities in its public union services, held in the open every summer Sunday night under the elms of the courthouse square. The people gather reverently and sit quietly through the sermon and the concert that follows.

The city is mindful of the divine source of the blessings that providence has bestowed. It is a perennial thanksgiving for the bounty of God.

When all Fresno meets in public assembly it is, in truth, a gathering of the nations. Here are collected the peoples of 30 countries. Dreams of universal peace, proclaimed for eternity, seem nearer to realization than elsewhere. The races of all the globe meet and prosper. There is the same lure for all—the mothering spirit that the union of earth and warmth and water have created, and the soft blue sky, arching from the crown of snow in the distant Sierra to the sun baked plains that melt into the horizon. American, Greek and Scandinavian, Japanese, Basque and Armenian, Dutchman and Italian, find it the realm of their desire and dwell in harmony. And the man of the valley, and for that matter the boy and the girl, read their bible with a rare appreciation, for they are on familiar terms with the wine and the fig and the olive of which the scriptures tell.

It was only 35 years ago that Charles Crocker sent his surveyors down the line of the Central Pacific, then groping its way across the great sparsely inhabited region with instructions to stake out a town every five miles. So about 17 miles south of the San Joaquin river it happened that a paper city was brought into being. Indians had passed over the spot in their roving, and had grazed on the blades that sprouted from the sand of the desert. Little willows fringed a miniature basin and translating the shrubbery into the Spanish tongue, the shepherds had called the place "Fresno."

**JAIL LEFT BEHIND**

While the land started in vacancy at the sun a mining settlement had sprung into being in the foothills. It was Fort Miller and it was the county seat. But when the railroad went through it ignored Millerton, as the camp known. So an election was called, the people decided to adjourn the county seat to the railroad, and Fresno, the town of the little willows, was chosen. All Millerton moved down with the exception of the county jail. And still stands, a relic of an abandoned Fort Miller. Thus it is that the pioneers are pleased to tell how sin was debarr'd from Fresno.

Fresno emerged quickly from the paper era. In 25 years it had become the center of life, the market place, the focus of activity of the San Joaquin valley and the heart of California. A granite shaft in a Fresno alley bears scientific testimony as to the exact geographical center of the state.

The 25 years have brought the water venter and the pie woman 30,000 neighbors. The spires and domes of a great city break the sky line where, only a generation ago, the white earth lay in unbroken expanse. Mighty industries have arisen. The land that could provide but scant living for a shepherd's herd now ships of its abundance to other worlds.

**CONTRADICTIONS ABOUND**

And Fresno's garden of the gods lies about her. The fruits and vines of ancient Palestine bring their plenteous harvest with each succeeding season. Nutritious grasses and abundant blossoms suggest the Eden of the past. And this has come in 35 years. What will the future bring? This is the romance of prophecy.

Fresno has been pretty generally known as the Raisin City. It happens to supply the world's needs in this respect. But raisins constitute but one-tenth of the county's yearly output. Less than 10 per cent of the land capable of intensive cultivation has been developed. The figures suggest what the future will unfold.

Fresno is a region of contradictions. It is generally described as "a smooth, level plain," but the county is not as uneven a piece of geography as ever left the fashioning hands of Mother Nature. Mount Whitney to the east is the highest thing in America. It pokes its nose 14,950 feet into the clouds, standing sentinel on the eastern side of the county, the warder of the treasury of riches below. But if Fresno county can aspire to the high heavens, it can, be it said in all truthfulness, penetrate the intricacies of deep hell. Wells in the Coalinga field have been driven 4,000 feet and more in successful search for the black ooze. From the snow ridge of the Sierras one may pass, wholly within the county, to the thermal belt of the valley, and still on to the slopes of the Coast range, swept by the breezes from the sea. There is everything in Fresno that there is anywhere else in California excepted.

**WATERLESS IRRIGATION**

In its list of contradictions Fresno irrigates without water. This is the contrivance that stupified James Bryce, the British ambassador. The water from district canals has, by seepage, laved the land leagues away.

"Yes," Bryce was told during his visit here last year, "we irrigate without water."

"Very interesting, to be sure," replied the ambassador, "but if you don't mind I'd just like to see it for myself, you know."

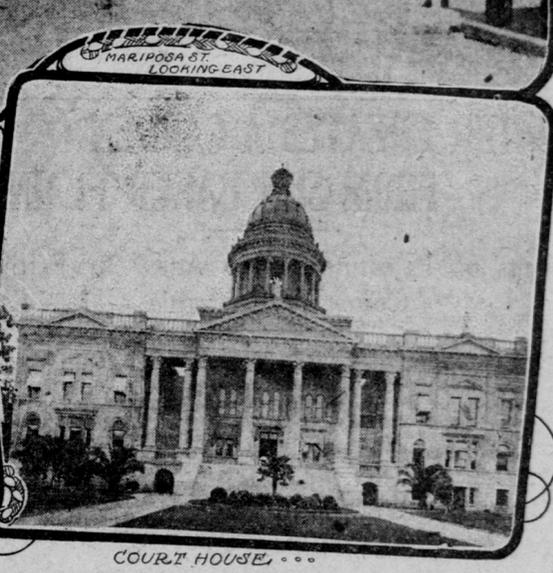
He was escorted to the vineyards heavy with muscat, and there saw for himself the roots penetrating into the moistened soil and not a canal in sight. The marvel was treated in a special report to the British government.

The Fresno farmer is, in truth, a Luther Burbank in his own way. He generally manages to get what he wants from his soil and his seed, if not in one way, in another. Irrigating without water is not his sole accomplishment in the ledger of agriculture. He can blast for peaches, and what's more, he gets them. It happens that some of the land to the west is broken by a hardpan near the surface. For some years this section was

View of Fresno street, the high school and the court house, showing the high character of both private and public buildings.



FRESNO HIGH SCHOOL



COURT HOUSE

## FRESNO TAKES A HIGH LACE AMONG CITIES

Industries Proclaim It One of the State's Big Market Centers

Serves as Distributing Point for a Large and Prosperous Country

### Progressive People Build Thriving Municipality Where Once Was Desert

(Prepared for The Call by A. L. Hobbs, president of the Fresno chamber of commerce, and William Robertson, secretary of the Fresno chamber of commerce.)

Fresno city is the county seat of Fresno county and is situated in the exact center of the state of California.

As a city its growth has been phenomenal, it having become one of the largest shipping centers in the state, and also the distributing point for a large district and rapidly increasing population. The business part of the city is composed of modern buildings and the stores are conducted on a scale of efficiency that is metropolitan. The stocks are large, varied and well selected, enabling store patrons to make choice selections of merchandise that are not usually to be found outside of large cities such as San Francisco and Los Angeles. The merchants have maintained a keen, healthy competition, which has kept prices reasonable and has been a great factor in drawing an immense patronage from other points throughout the San Joaquin valley.

The courthouse is a handsome structure, beautifully situated in its extensive grounds, which are thickly planted with shade trees, that from underneath are inviting, as shelter and resting places. The city hall is also a splendid building, erected five years ago at a cost of \$70,000. It is of solid construction, ornate in appearance, convenient in its interior arrangements and a fitting monument to the enterprise of the people of this great community.

**FINE PUBLIC BUILDINGS**

A handsome federal building also graces one of the principal city corners, in which are housed the postoffice and other departments of the federal service.

The city also possesses a public library, which cost \$30,000, the gift of Andrew Carnegie, containing 10,000 volumes, and a Young Men's Christian association building splendidly equipped, which cost \$45,000.

There are five commercial banks in the city, with deposits averaging close upon \$7,000,000; also one People's savings bank, which combines with it a strong building and loan society.

There are three daily newspapers, one morning and two evening.

The industrial interests of the city are rapidly increasing, among which are a large flour mill, three planing mills, two macaroni factories, a large brewery, several agricultural machinery and wagon manufacturing works, a large number of machine works, several iron foundries, eight garages, three soda water works, several cigar factories, a large fruit packing houses, two ice manufacturing plants, three large creameries, a co-operation with an extensive manufacturing capacity, a large brick and tile works and a large number of other enterprises of various kinds.

Fresno possesses good hotel accommodations, the demand for which is constantly increasing. There are at present four large hotels, and a fifth is in process of construction, the estimated cost of which is \$300,000.

The city also has an unlimited supply of the purest and best water in the state. Among its other utilities are an excellent gas and electric light supply and efficient telephone service.

Electric car lines extending over 12 miles supply the city with transportation facilities. There is also an interurban road running seven miles east of the city, and one in course of construction which will serve a large part of the southwestern part of the county and reach into Hanford, the county seat of Kings county.

**MANY CITY PARKS**

Fresno is well supplied with city parks, foremost among which is the famous Roeding park, the gift of Frederick Roeding, and which forms a splendid exposition of the landscape gardener's art. The park commission, headed by Charles Chambers, deserve the thanks of the community for the splendid work in transforming an arid sand hill into one of the most beautiful parks in California.

There are also Commercial park, Hobart park and Recreation park, the latter supplied with open air theater, and various attractions suited to outdoor amusements. Zapp's park is also a favorite place of amusement, containing many interesting exhibits of birds and animals, and a lake for boating. The famous Courthouse park, to which we have already referred, covers many acres in extent and is a favorite resting place, especially in the hottest term, because of its being beautifully wooded and provided with every accommodation for the comfort of visitors.

Few cities excel Fresno in the architectural character of its residences, and if petty homes, well kept lawns, good sidewalks and clean streets are any evidence of wealth and refinement, Fresno city certainly shows them.

There are 40 churches in Fresno, representing almost every shade of religious belief.

The educational advantages of the city are excellent and of a high standard. There are 12 schools with an aggregate attendance of 5,000 pupils. The high school is accredited to the University of California.

Fresno is famed for its ladies' clubs, the extent and character of their work being of a very high order. The building owned by the Ladies' Parlor lecture club is a handsome and convenient structure, well suited to the purposes for which it was designed.

Fresno is also rich in fraternal or-

Continued on Page 21, Col. 1, 2 and 3

## GREAT PROJECTS FORETELL A BRIGHT ERA FOR FRESNO

### Drainage District Planned for Vast Territory Covering 65,000 Acres

Among the great projects which are now under way in the vicinity of Fresno is the establishment of a gigantic drainage district to cover about 65,000 acres.

Drainage is one of the serious problems now facing the people of the San Joaquin valley, especially in the country surrounding Fresno, and the need for practical co-operative drainage has become so great that at last steps are to be taken in this direction. By drainage, thousands of acres of land now useless because of their alkali formation caused by surface water, will be reclaimed and that portion of the country, which is now a desert, will be turned into the best of agricultural land. Experiments have already shown that this can be done.

The drainage district now proposed will be 20 miles long and six miles wide. With one open drainage canal running through the center of the district the cost of forming the district will be about \$200,000. If laterals are installed, the cost will be about \$1,300,000. While the latter figure seems to be exceedingly high, it is believed that when the results of the big

ditch are shown, land owners will immediately begin to install laterals.

**TO BUILD BOULEVARD**

A map of the proposed district has already been prepared and the city engineer of Fresno is now making estimates as to the exact cost.

To secure this drainage a district will be formed similar to the Modesto and Turlock irrigation districts. The government of this district will be entirely separate from any county government, although it will be under the direct supervision of the board of supervisors. The city of Fresno will not be included in the proposed district.

Other projects which are now under way include the building of a big boulevard on both sides of Dry creek, a stream of water running along the northern boundary of the city. It is the intention of the promoters to make this a park boulevard, and already practically all the deeds for a right of way have been secured. This drive will be one of the scenic features of this city.

Plans are also being formulated for the building of a Catholic boys' college in this city. The site for the college has already been purchased and plans are now being drawn for the proposed buildings. It is expected that the construction of the college buildings will start this summer.

**HOTELS FOR FUTURE**

The erection of two large hotels within the city are two other big enterprises now under way. One of these hotels will be six stories in height and will cost about \$200,000. The construction of the Fresno-Hanford interurban railroad, an electric line, is a matter of only a few months. Rights of way are also being secured for an electric interurban line to Coalinga.

The city of Fresno has just voted a bonds for a big convention hall to accommodate the many conventions which now assemble in this city.

Not only are the people and the city of Fresno planning many large propositions, but the two railroads now operating here are also planning big extensions.

The Santa Fe now has under construction new freight yards which will be among the largest in the west, while the Southern Pacific is now erecting two mammoth sheds to accommodate the great freight traffic which is handled through Fresno.

These are some of the larger projects which are under way in this city, but there are numerous smaller ones, also of great importance to the future of the city.

## BEAUTIFUL RESIDENCES LINE AVENUES AND BOULEVARDS

### Dwellings Equipped With Spacious Verandas and Artistic Pergolas

Gazing across the San Joaquin valley from the heights of the Sierras or from the undulating roll of the Coast range, one is impressed in summer by the vast, even sweep of the plains, blotched here and there by white streaks of alkali and spotted with clusters of green marking some hidden town on the river's bank. In winter, in spring and in autumn dead gray, green and brown hold their respective season's sway. Hidden in the mist of the distance are the many rough creases and gentle rolling knolls made by the winds in ages past, when sand and silt were blown into mounds and banks on the desert and shoals.

Come down from the mountains on to the floor of the valley and you will see why nature wrought during the years to form these great ripples in the soil. Come into the very heart of the San Joaquin, the center of California, and you will see how people sought them out to build a city, the city of Fresno about and over them.

Fresno, that is, the city proper, lies for the most part on the floor of the valley, but to the east and to the north are the residence districts—Arlington Heights on the one hand and North Park on the other—the two wings of the city, where are the beautiful homes of her people. It is not that the residences stand aloof from the valley, for the rise is imperceptible, but when one gazes toward the west the difference is realized.

Fresno in an atmosphere as distinctive as that of San Francisco.

Spacious homes of imposing architecture line the avenues. The houses are ornamented with low beamed pergolas and deep comfortable porches which hold a coolness in the shadow and recesses even on the hottest day in summer. Well kept lawns are everywhere about, most inviting to the eye with a gloss not unlike the sheen of satin. Trim little gardens hold a world of surprises at every turn with clinging vines and clustered shrubbery. Gracefully drooping from many a low broad porch pergola are the heavy scented blossoms of the wistaria in appealing profusion, the delicately tinted masses of color blending with the green of the foliage and the soft brown of weather-stained shingles. There is scarce a home, whether it be of brick, or shingles or painted white, that does not reflect an artistic spirit. The people of Fresno have solved a problem. They have built beautiful homes in a spot seemingly designed for them by nature and have avoided the tragedy of rows of houses in which similarity marks monotony.

**NEW DISTRICTS ADDED**

Ten years ago the city limits were at Nielsen avenue, easily visible from the center of town. They were extended in time and but a fortnight ago were advanced again, taking in 340 acres more, every lot valued at \$300. Lots that price were to be had 10 years ago on the line of the old town limit. Lots in that district are now selling for \$1,900.

To the northwest of the North park district lies Roeding park, a beautiful city garden. A dot here and there apart from the residence section indicates where one day a swarm of houses will spread about the park.

**HOMES OF RARE BEAUTY**

Starting from the busy hustling center of the city, broad open boulevards spread out and are lost in the distance, lined on either side with glistening rows of the stately poplar or graceful beech. Things are flat, but there is a beauty, a peace over all that shrouds

## FRESNO'S PROSPERITY TOLD IN FIGURES

|                           |              |
|---------------------------|--------------|
| Population of city        | 30,000       |
| Population of county      | 60,000       |
| County assessment         | \$55,000,000 |
| Land irrigated (acres)    | 400,000      |
| County's production, 1909 | \$35,000,000 |
| Per capita production     | 600          |
| Annual raisin crop        | 5,000,000    |
| Oil production, 1909      | 6,250,000    |
| Wine output               | 2,500,000    |
| Lumber                    | 2,500,000    |
| Wheat, barley, corn       | 3,500,000    |
| Alfalfa                   | 2,000,000    |
| Milk, cream, butter       | 2,000,000    |
| Cattle                    | 1,750,000    |
| Peaches                   | 1,250,000    |

## LUTHER BURBANK'S OPINION OF FRESNO

"The Fresno region is a beautiful country, but in reality it is hardly developed at all. It seems to me that it has not been touched. Its greatest stage of development is before it. I think the land will be found valuable for products which the people do not think of now."