

THE PACIFIC COAST: A PSYCHOLOGICAL STUDY OF INFLUENCE

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HAVE been asked to describe some of the principal physical aspects of California, and to indicate the way in which they have been related to the life and civilization of the region. The task is at once, in its main outlines, comparatively simple, and in its most interesting details hopelessly complex. The topography of the Pacific slope, now well known to most travellers, is in certain of its principal features extremely easy to characterize. The broad landscapes, revealing very frequently at a glance the structure of wide regions, give one an impression that the meaning of the whole can easily be comprehended. Closer study shows how difficult it is to understand the relation of precisely such features to the life that has grown up in this region. The principal interest of the task lies in the fact that it is our American character and civilization which have been already moulded in new ways by these novel aspects of the far western regions. But we stand at the beginning of a process which must continue for long ages. Any one interested in the unity of our national life and in the guiding of our destinies by broad ideals, desires to conceive in some fashion how the physical features of the Pacific Coast may be expected to mould our national type. Yet thus far we have, as it were, only the most general indications of what the result must be.

In endeavoring to distinguish between what has already

resulted from physical conditions and what has been due to personal character, to deliberate choice, or to the general national temperament, or to what we may have to call pure accident, one is dealing with a task for which the data are not yet sufficient. We can but make a beginning.

I.

The journey westward to California is even now, when one goes by rail, a dramatic series of incidents. From the wide plains of the states immediately west of the Mississippi one passes at first through richly fertile regions to the more and more arid prairies of the eastern slope of the Rocky Mountains. Then come either the steep ranges or the wide passes, and at last what used to be called the Great American Desert itself, that great interior basin of the rugged, saw-tooth ranges, where the weirdly dreary landscape at once terrifies the observer by its desolation, and inspires him by the grandeur of its loneliness, and by the mysterious peacefulness of the desert wherein, as one at first feels, nothing like the complex and restless life of our eastern civilization will ever be possible.

As one travels by the familiar central route still further west, one reaches the valley of the Humboldt River, that kindly stream whose general westerly trend made the early overland migration possible. At the end of this portion of the route rises the vast wall of the Sierra Range, and the traveller's heart thrills with something of the strange feeling that the early immigrants described when, after their long toil, they reached the place where, just beyond this dark and death-like wall, the land of heavenly promise was known to lie. Abrupt is the ascent of this great range; slower on the other side, the descent, amidst the magnificent canons of the western slope, to the plains of the Sacramento Valley. From the foot-hills of the Sierra one used to the journey could easily get at many points a wide outlook into the region beyond. The Coast Range in the far distance bounds

with its blue summits the western view, and seems to hide the ocean for whose shore one already looks, as in childhood I, who then lived in the Sierra foot-hills and had never seen the sea, used longingly to look. Through the valley beneath winds the Sacramento, fed by numerous tributaries from the Sierra. At length, as one continues the railway journey, one reaches the plains of the Sacramento Valley themselves, and enters that interesting region where the scattered oaks, separated from one another by wide distances, used to seem, I remember in the old days, as if set out by God's hand at the creation in a sort of natural park. One crosses the valley,—the shore of San Francisco Bay is reached. If one is travelling in summer, the intensely dry heat of the Sacramento Valley suddenly gives place to the cold winds of the coast. Mist and the salt air of the sea greet you as you approach the rugged hills about the Golden Gate, and find your way by ferry to San Francisco.

The region that to-day is so swiftly and so easily entered was of old the goal of an overland tour that might easily last six months from the Missouri River, and that was attended with many often recorded dangers. Yet the route that in this brief introductory statement we have followed, is nearly identical with the one which first guided the immigrants to the new land. And in part this route was identical, namely, as far as Fort Hall, with the once familiar Oregon Trail.

II.

Oregon and California, the Canaan which long formed the only goal of those who travelled over these intermediate regions, are determined as to their characters and climate by the presence beyond them of the great ocean, and by the trend northwards and southwards of the elevated ranges of mountains which lie west of the central basin. On all the continents of the world, in the latitudes of the temperate zones, the countries that lie on the lee side of the ocean receive the world's prevailing winds tempered

by a long course over the water. Accordingly, those countries very generally enjoy a relatively steadier climate than those which lie in the same latitudes but on the lee side of the great continental areas; that is, towards the east. But other influences join themselves, as secondary causes, in a number of cases, to this general consequence of the prevailing west winds of the temperate zones. The good fortune of Oregon and California as to their climate depends, in fact, as the meteorologists now recognize, partly upon the steadying influence of the vast masses of water that there lie to windward, partly upon the influence of the mountain masses themselves in affecting precipitation, and finally upon certain great seasonal changes in the distribution of the more permanent areas of high and low pressure,—changes which have been elaborately studied in the report of Lieutenant Glassford on the climate of California and Nevada, published as a government document in 1891.

During the summer months, the entire region west of the high Sierra Range and of its continuation, the Cascade Range, is comparatively free, and in the southern portion almost wholly free, from storm disturbances. The moisture-laden winds of the ocean are then deflected by areas of high pressure, which persist off the coast, and the moister winds are prevented from coming into close relation to the mountains and discharging their moisture. On the other hand, during the months from November to March, and in Oregon still later, storm areas are more frequent, and their behavior along the coast, by reason of certain areas of high pressure which are then established in the regions east of the Sierra, are rendered different from the behavior more characteristic of the well known storms of our eastern coast. The resulting conditions are sometimes those of long continued and decidedly steady precipitation on the Coast Range of California, and on the western slope of the Sierra, as well as throughout the Oregon region. Thus arise the longer rains of the California wet season. At other times in the rainy season the storm areas, moving back

and forth in a more variable way along the coast, but still unable to pass the area of high pressure that lies further inland, produce conditions of a more gently and variably showery sort over a wide extent of country; as the rainy season passes away in March and April, these showers grow less frequent in California, though they continue in Oregon much later. That portion of Oregon which lies east of the Cascade Range belongs, once more, to the decidedly dry regions of the western country; on the other hand, western Oregon has a much moister climate than California.

In consequence the climate, throughout this entire far western region, is characterized by a very sharp distinction between the wet and dry seasons; while otherwise, within the area of Oregon and California, there exist very wide differences as to the total amount of annual precipitation. Wide extents of country, as for instance the San Joaquin Valley in California, have needed the development of elaborate methods of irrigation. The relative variability of rainfall in the more northern regions has in some years beset the Sacramento Valley with severe floods. And still further north, at places on the Oregon and Washington coast, the annual precipitation reaches very high figures indeed. If one then returns to the other extreme, in far southeastern California, one is altogether in a desert region. Normally the wet season of central and southern California, even where the rainfall is considerable, is diversified by extended intervals of beautifully fair and mild weather. But, nowhere on the Pacific Coast has the variation of seasons the characters customary in the eastern country. A true winter exists, indeed, in the high Sierra, but even here this season has a character very different from that of the New England winter. Enormous falls of snow on the upper Sierra slopes are, indeed, frequent. But on the other hand, there are many places in the Sierra where an early spring very rapidly melts away these masses of snow from the upper foot-hills, and leads by a swift transition to the climate of the California dry season, in a dramatic fashion that happens to be prominent amongst my own childhood memories.

In general, then, in California and Oregon, with the great western ocean so near, the routine of the year's climate is much more definite and pre-determined than in our Atlantic states. In western Oregon where, as we have said, the climate is far more moist, the rains begin about the end of September and continue with more or fewer intermissions until May or June. The dry season then lasts steadily for three or four months. In California the dry season grows longer, the rainy season less persistent and wealthy in watery gifts, the further south we go, until in the far south, except on the coast, there is often a very short intermission in the year's drought.

So much for the climate of this region as a whole. Meanwhile, there are numerous local varieties, and amongst these more distinctly local influences that modify the climate both in the wet and in the dry seasons, the Coast Range of California plays a very important part. This range, separated, as we have seen, from the Sierra by the Sacramento and San Joaquin Valleys, joins its masses with those of the Sierra both at the northern end of the Sacramento Valley and at the southern extremity of the San Joaquin Valley. These two rivers, the Sacramento and the San Joaquin, flowing the one southwards and the other northwards, join their waters and find an exit to the sea through San Francisco Bay, which itself opens into the ocean through the Golden Gate. The Sacramento Valley is thus bounded on the east by a range that varies in height from seven thousand to fourteen thousand feet. The Coast Range on the west has an elevation varying from two thousand to four thousand, and in some cases rising to five thousand feet. The elevation of the Coast Range is thus sufficient to affect; in the rainy season, the precipitation in some localities, although the greatest rainfalls of the rainy season in California are due to the influence of the Sierra upon the moisture-laden winds of the sea during the passage of the areas of low pressure. But decidedly more marked is the influence of the Coast Range, during the summer months,

upon the determination of local climate along the northern Californian coast. Here the summer, from Monterey northwards, is along the coast decidedly cold,—sea-breezes and frequent mists marking the days of the entire dry season, while at night the winds usually fall, and the cold may not be so severely felt. But frequently only a few miles will separate these cold regions of the coast from the hot interior of the Sacramento Valley or from the smaller valleys on the eastern slope of the Coast Range.

To sum up the total result of all these conditions, one may say that the main feature of the whole climate, apart from its mildness, is the relatively predictable character of the year's weather. In the dryer regions of the south, wherever irrigation is possible and has been developed, the agriculturist often feels a superiority to weather conditions which makes him rejoice in the very drought that might otherwise be regarded as so formidable. In central California one is sure, in advance, of the weather that will steadily prevail during all the summer months. Agricultural operations are thus rendered definite by the knowledge of when the drought is coming, and by the freedom from all fear of sudden storms during the harvest season.

That this climate is delightful to those who are used to its routine will be well known to most readers. That it is not without its disagreeable features is equally manifest to every tourist. Nor can one say that this far western country is free from decided variations in the fortunes of different years. Where irrigation is not developed, great anxiety is frequently felt with regard to the sufficiency of the annual rain supply of the rainy season. Years of relative flood and of relative drought are as well known here as elsewhere. Nor is one wholly free, within any one season, from unexpected and sometimes disagreeably long-continued periods of unseasonable temperature. A high barometer over the region north and east of California occasionally brings to pass the well known California "northers." These have, in the rainy season, a character that in some respects reminds

one of the familiar cold-wave phenomena of the east, although the effect is very much more moderate. Frosts may then extend throughout northern California, may beset the central Coast Range, and may on occasion extend far into the southern part of California itself. But when the "northers" come during the dry season, they are frequently intensely hot winds, whose drought, associated with hill or forest fires, may give rise to very memorable experiences. But these are the inevitable and minor vicissitudes of a climate which is, on the whole, remarkably steady, and which is never as trying as the well known variations of our own northeastern climate. The generally good effect upon the health of such a climate is modified in certain cases by the possibly over-stimulating character of the coast summer, which, as for instance at San Francisco, permits one to work without thought of holidays all the year round. In my own boyhood it used often to be said that there were busy men in San Francisco who had reached that place in 1849, and who had become prominent in mercantile or other city life, and who had never taken vacations, and never left San Francisco even to cross the bay, from the hour of their coming until that moment. Of course, such men can be found in almost any busy community, but these men seemed rather characteristic of the early California days and suggested the way in which a favorable climate may on occasion be misused by an ambitious man to add to the strains otherwise incident to the life of a new country.

If one now turns from the climate to the other aspects of our region, the general topography at once suggests marked features that must needs be of great importance to the entire life of any such country. California and Oregon are sharply sundered from one another by the ranges north of the Sacramento Valley. The Washington region, about Puget Sound, is destined to still a third and decidedly separate life, by reason of its relation to those magnificent inland waters, and by reason of the two high ranges which bound the shores of the American portion of Puget Sound.

And, in fact, the country of the whole Pacific Coast may be regarded as geographically divided into at least four great regions : the Washington region, in the neighborhood of Puget Sound ; the Oregon region with the valley of the Columbia ; the northern and central California region, including the coast and bay of San Francisco, together with the great interior valley ; and, finally, the southern region of California. Both the social development and the material future of these four great sections of the Pacific Coast, must always be mutually somewhat distinct and independent. The northern and central California region, the third of those just enumerated, is in possession of the largest harbor between Puget Sound and the southern boundary of the United States. It is, therefore, here that the civilization of the west was destined to find its first centre. Nor can this province ever have a social destiny independent of that of San Francisco itself. The southern California region, while not separated from central and northern California by any very high barrier, is still marked off by certain features due to the amount of precipitation, and to the smaller harbors which here lie on the Pacific Coast.

I have already mentioned more than once the breadth of landscape characteristic especially of central California, but often visible elsewhere on the Pacific Coast. Here is a feature that has to do at once with the materially important and with the topographically interesting features of this land. When you stand on Mount Diablo, a mountain about three thousand eight hundred feet high, and some fifteen miles east of San Francisco Bay, you look in one direction down upon the ocean and upon San Francisco Bay itself, while in the other direction you have in full sight the Sierra Range beyond the great valley, and vast reaches of the interior valley itself. Similarly, from the upper foot-hills of the Sierra, every chance elevation that overtops its neighbors a little, gives you far-reaching views of the interior valley. The normally clear air of a great part of the year determines the character and sharp outlines of these broad views. The

young Californian is thus early used to a country that, as it were, tells its principal secrets at a glance, and he sometimes finds his eye pained and confused either by the monotonous landscapes of the prairies of our middle west, or by the baffling topography of many parts of New England or of our middle states, where one small valley at a time invites one to guess what may be its unseen relations to its neighbors. The effect of all this breadth and clearness of natural scenery on mental life cannot be doubted.

III.

Of climate and topography this very summary view must now suffice. We turn from nature towards life, and ask ourselves what bearing these geographical features have had upon the still so incomplete social development of California.

In 1846, at the outset of our war with Mexico, the Mexican province of California extended towards the interior, at least on paper, so far as to include the present Nevada and Utah; but only the California coast itself was really known to its inhabitants. California was seized by the American fleet at the outset of the war. Its value to our country had been earlier made known partly through the New England traders who dealt on that coast, and partly through the appearance in the territory of American settlers. The famous report of the expedition of 1844, made by Lieutenant Fremont, brought to a focus the popular interest in the importance of the entire territory, and prepared the way for the excitement aroused by the discovery of gold in 1848.

The gold excitement determined the entire future history of California; and here of course the immediate influence of the physical upon the social conditions is the best known fact about the state. The golden period of California may be regarded as filling all the years between 1848 and 1860. Or perhaps a still better dividing line might be made in the year 1866, when the government first surveyed the mineral lands of California and

parted with its title to these lands, so that the conditions of mining ownership were thenceforth no longer primitive. Up to that time the miners of California had worked by government consent upon land to which they could acquire no title, so that their right to hold land was entirely due to miner's custom and to occupation, both of which were recognized by the courts of the state in dealing with conflicts amongst miners. With the close of the distinctively mining period, begins the agricultural period of California. Gold mining has of course continued until the present day, but the development of agriculture soon surpassed in importance that of all other industries in the state.

Nevertheless, the civilization of the agricultural period has been of course determined in large part, despite the change of material conditions, by the traditions of the more romantic golden period. The California pioneers are gradually passing away; but as the fathers and the early Puritans determined in many respects the future of New England, so the miners, together with their peers, the merchants of early San Francisco, lived a life whose traditions, directly due to the physical conditions under which they worked, are sure to be of long continued, perhaps of permanently obvious influence in the development of the civilization of California.

If one attempts to describe in what way the civilization either of the golden days or of the later agricultural period has been affected by the geographical conditions, a student of my own habits and prejudices feels at once disposed to pass directly to the inner life of the Californian and to ask himself what influence the nature and climate of such a region seem to have upon the life of the individual mind and body, and indirectly, upon the social order. Here of course one treads upon ground at once fascinating and enormously difficult. Generalization is limited by the fact of great varieties of personal character and type with which we are dealing. But after all, I think that in California literature, in the customary expressions of Californians in speaking to one another, and, to a very limited degree, in the inner con-

sciousness of any one who has grown up in California, we have evidence of certain ways in which the conditions of such a region must influence the life and, I suppose in the end, the character of the whole community. I feel disposed, then, to try to suggest very briefly how it feels to grow up in such a climate, to live in such a region, thus separated by wide stretches of country from other portions of our own land and from the world at large, thus led by the kindliness of nature into a somewhat intimate, even if uncomprehended relation to the physical conditions, and thus limited to certain horizons in one's experience. I speak of course as a native Californian, but I also do not venture to limit even for a moment my characterization by reference to my own private experience. Californians are rather extraordinarily conscious of the relation between their home and their lives. Newcomers who have grown up elsewhere are constantly comparing their natural surroundings with those that they knew before. The natives, for reasons that I shall suggest in a moment, are put into a relation with nature which, whether they are students of nature or not, and whether they are observant or not, is in feeling a peculiarly intimate relation. The consequence may, as I have already suggested, be best understood by a reference to some of the wealthy and varied literature that California has already produced.

Every one is familiar with that reflection of the change of seasons in poetical literature which we find first in the classic English literature, which we find again gradually appearing in new forms in adaptation to the more special conditions of our American climate. New England nature has now been perhaps almost too frequently characterized in literary art. We are here to ask how the nature of California comes to be characterized. Let me appeal at once to some of the poets to tell us.

The most familiar account of the California climate in literature is Bret Harte's characterization of the seasonal changes in his poem, "Concepcion Argüello." The scene is here at the

Presidio at San Francisco, close by the Golden Gate, where the heroine waited for her lover during the long years that the poem describes.

“Day by day on wall and bastion beat the hollow empty breeze—
 Day by day the sunlight glittered on the vacant, smiling seas ;
 Week by week the near hills whitened in their dusty leather cloaks—
 Week by week the far hills darkened from the fringing plain of oaks ;
 Till the rains came, and far-breaking, on the fierce southwester tost,
 Dashed the whole long coast with color, and then vanished and were lost.
 So each year the seasons shifted, wet and warm and drear and dry ;
 Half a year of clouds and flowers—half a year of dust and sky.”

The nature which is thus depicted has of course many other aspects besides this its fundamental rhythm; but prominent in all the literary descriptions is the stress laid upon the coming of the rains,—an event which occupies, very naturally, the same place in the California poet's mind that the spring occupies elsewhere. Only what this springtime breaks in upon in California is not in general cold but drought. It is here not the bursting away of any iron barrier of frost, but the clearing of the hazy air, the introduction of a rich and sudden new life, the removing of a dull and dry oppression from the heart,—it is such things that first come to mind when one views this change. A student of the University of California in the year 1878, a lady who has won success in more than one branch of literature, Miss Milicent Shinn, published in a college paper of that time the following sonnet, under the title of “Rain.” The poem deserves to be recalled here, just as a suggestion of the relation between nature and the individual mind under such conditions:—

“It chanced me once that many weary weeks
 I walked to daily work across a plain,
 Far-stretching, barren since the April rain ;
 And now, in gravelly beds of vanished creeks,
 November walked dry shod. On every side

Round the horizon hung a murky cloud,—
 No hills, no waters ; and above that shroud
 A wan sky rested shadowless and wide.
 Until one night came down the earliest rain ;
 And in the morning, lo, in fair array,
 Blue ranges crowned with snowy summits, lay
 All round about the fair transfigured plain.
 Oh, would that such a rain might melt away
 In tears the cloud that chokes my heart with pain.'

The heavy air of the close of the dry season, the weary waiting for the autumn rains, the quick change as the new life came,—all these things bring characteristically before one the nature life of central California,—a region of the half arid type, where the conditions are far enough from true desert conditions, while at moments they simulate the latter. Yet not merely this fundamental rhythm of the climate so easily impressive to every sojourner, arouses the sensitive attention of the life-long inhabitant. The dwellers by the shores of San Francisco Bay see these seasonal changes in the midst of a highly varied landscape. From the hill slopes on the eastern shores of that great harbor one looks towards the Golden Gate. North of the Gate rise the rugged heights of Mount Tamalpais, to a point about twenty-six hundred feet above the sea-level. South of the Gate, San Francisco itself adds its smoke to the ocean mists, and its hilly summits to the generally bold landscape. The wide expanse of water, stretching north and south in the bay, changes color under the daylight in the most varied manner, according as cloud and sunshine, or as dawn, morning, afternoon, and sunset pass before you. In the summer time the afternoon ocean mists enter, along with the steadily rising daily wind which falls only with the twilight. One of California's most successful poets, Miss Coolbrith, pictures this scene in her poem entitled "Two Pictures."

MORNING.

“As in a quiet dream,
The mighty waters seem :
Scarcely a ripple shows
Upon their blue repose.

The sea-gulls smoothly ride
Upon the drowsy tide,
And a white sail doth sleep
Far out upon the deep.

A dreamy purple fills
The hollows of the hills ;
A single cloud floats through
The sky's serenest blue ;

And far beyond the Gate,
The massed vapors wait—
White as the walls that ring
The City of the King.

There is no sound, no word ;
Only a happy bird
Trills to her nestling young,
A little, sleepy song.

This is the holy calm ;
The heavens dropping balm ;
The Love made manifest,
And near ; the perfect rest.

EVENING.

The day grows wan and cold :
In through the Gate of Gold
The restless vapors glide,
Like ghosts upon the tide.

The brown bird folds her wing,
Sad, with no song to sing.
Along the streets the dust
Blows sharp, with sudden gust.

The night comes, chill and gray ;
 Over the sullen bay,
 What mournful echoes pass
 From lonely Alcatraz !

O bell, with solemn toll,
 As for a passing soul !
 As for a soul that waits,
 In vain, at heaven's gates.

This is the utter blight ;
 The sorrow infinite
 Of earth ; the closing wave ;
 The parting, and the grave."

Such is the daily drama of the dry season at the bay. On the other hand, the rainy season itself contains some tragedies that in no wise belong to the eastern winter. There are the northers, with their periods of relative chill and their swift winged sternness ; and these northers have often been celebrated in California verse. But apart from such colder periods, the loud roaring storms and heavy rains are often likely to stand in a curious contrast to the abounding life of vegetation which the rains themselves have aroused. It is possible to cultivate roses in one's garden throughout the greater part of the year. These, the rainy season, will generally encourage in their blooming. On the other hand, the stormy wind will from time to time destroy them with its own floods of cruelty. Miss Coolbrith depicts such a scene in the poem entitled, "My 'Cloth of Gold.'" As in tropical countries, so here the long storms seem often much darker and drearier by reason of their warfare with the rich life amidst which they rage.

IV.

Such are a few of the many instances that might be given of the emotional reactions of sensitive minds in the presence of California nature. But now the outer aspect of nature unquestion-

ably moulds both the emotions and the customs of mankind, insensibly affects men's temperaments in ways which, as we know somehow or other tend to become hereditary, however we may view the vexed question concerning the heredity of acquired characters. Moreover, the influence of nature upon custom which every civilization depicts, is precisely the kind of influence that from moment to moment expresses itself psychologically in the more typical emotions of sensitive souls. Thus, one may observe that if we are considering the relation between civilization and climate, and are endeavoring to speculate in however vague a manner upon the future of a society in a given environment, we may well turn to the poets, not for a solution of our problem, but for getting significant hints. Or, to put the case somewhat boldly otherwise, I should say that the vast processes which in the course of centuries appear in the changes of civilization due to climate, involve, as it were, tremendously complex mathematical functions. If it were possible for us to state these stupendous functions, we should be possessed of the secret of such social changes. Of such a stupendous function, a group of poems, expressing as they do momentary human changes, might be called, if you like, a system of partial, and I admit very partial differential equations. I do not hope to integrate any such system of equations, or to gain an exact view of the types of the functions from a consideration of them, and of course I admit with readiness that I am using only a very rough mathematical metaphor. But to translate the matter once more into literal terms, the tendencies of the moment are in their way indications of what the tendencies of the ages are to be.

Now what all this poetry in general psychologically means, quite apart from special moods, is that the Californian of necessity gains a kind of sensitiveness to nature which is different in type from the sensitiveness that a severer climate would inevitably involve and different too in type from that belonging to climates mild but moist and more variable. In the first place as you see,

such a climate permits one to be a great deal out of doors in the midst of nature. To permit wide views, where the outlines are vast and in general clear. As, when you are on a steamer, it is a matter of some skill to understand what are the actual conditions of wind and sea, while, when you are on a sailing vessel, you constantly feel both the wind and the sea with a close intimacy that needs no technical knowledge to make it at least appreciated, so, in the case of such a climate as the one of California, your relations with nature are essentially intimate, whether you are a student of nature or not. Your dependence upon nature you feel in one sense more, and in another sense less,—more because you are more constantly in touch with the natural changes of the moment; less, because you know that nature is less to be feared than under severer conditions. And this intimacy with nature means a certain change in your relations to your fellow men. You get a sense of power from these wide views, a habit of personal independence from the contemplation of a world that the eye seems to own. Especially in country life the individual Californian consequently tends towards a certain kind of independence which I find in a strong and subtle contrast to the sort of independence that, for instance, the New England farmer cultivates. The New England farmer must fortify himself in his stronghold against the seasons. He must be ready to adapt himself to a year that permits him to prosper only upon decidedly hard terms. But the California country proprietor can have, during the drought, more leisure, unless, indeed, his ambition for wealth too much engrosses him. His horses are plenty and cheap. His fruit crops thrive easily. He is able to supply his table with fewer purchases, with less commercial dependence. His position is, therefore, less that of the knight in his castle and more that of the free dweller in the summer cottage, who is indeed not at leisure, but can easily determine how he shall be busy. It is of little importance to him who his next neighbor is. At pleasure he can ride or

drive a good way to find his friends ; can choose, like the southern planter of former days, his own range of hospitality ; can devote himself, if a man of cultivation, to reading during a good many hours at his own choice, or, if a man of sport, can find during a great part of the year easy opportunities for hunting or for camping both for himself and for the young people of his family. In the dry season he knows beforehand what engagements can be made, without regard to the state of the weather, since the state of the weather is predetermined.

The free life and interchange of hospitality, so often described in the accounts of early California, has left its traces in the country life of California at the present day. Very readily, if you have moderate means, you can create your own quiet estate at a convenient distance from the nearest town. You may cover your house with a bower of roses, surround yourself with an orchard, quickly grow eucalyptus as a shade-tree, and with nearly equal facility multiply other shade trees. You become, on easy terms, a proprietor, with estate and home of your own. Now all this holds in a sense of any mild climate. But in California the more regular routine of wet and dry seasons modifies and renders more stable the general psychological consequences. All this is encouraging to a kind of harmonious individuality that already tends in the best instances towards a somewhat Hellenic type.

A colleague of my own, a New Englander of the strictest persuasion, who visited California for a short time when he was himself past middle life, returned enthusiastic with the report that the California countrymen seemed to him to resemble the ancient yes, even the Homeric Greeks, of the Odyssey. The Californians had their independence of judgment ; their carelessness of what a barbarian might think, so long as he came from beyond the border ; their apparent freedom in choosing what manner of men they should be ; their ready and confident speech. All these things my friend at once noticed as characteristic. Thus different in type are these country proprietors from the equally indi-

vidual, the secretly independent, the silently conscientious New England villagers. They are also quite different from the typical southern proprietors. From the latter they differ in having less tendency to respect traditions, and in laying much less stress upon formal courtesies. The Californian, like the westerner in general, is likely to be somewhat abrupt in speech, and his recent coming to the land has made him on the whole quite indifferent to family tradition. I myself, for instance, reached twenty years of age without ever becoming clearly conscious of what was meant by judging a man by his antecedents, a judgment that in an older and less isolated community is natural and inevitable, and that, I think, in most of our western communities, grows up more rapidly than it has grown up in California, where the geographical isolation is added to the absence of tradition. To my own mind, in childhood, every human being was, with a few exceptions, whatever he happened to be. Hereditary distinctions I appreciated only in case of four types of humanity. There were the Chinamen, there were the Irishmen, there were the Mexicans, and there were the rest of us. Within each of these types, every man to my youthful mind was precisely what God and himself had made him, and it was distinctly a new point of view to attach a man to the antecedents that either his family or his other social relationships had determined for him. Now, I say, this type of individuality, known more or less in our western communities, but developed in peculiarly high degree in California, seems to me due not merely to the newness of the community, and not merely to that other factor of geographical isolation that I just mentioned, but to the relation with nature of which we have already spoken. It is a free and on the whole an emotionally exciting, and also as we have said, an engrossing and intimate relation.

In New England, if you are moody, you may wish to take a long walk out of doors, but that is not possible at all or even at most seasons. Nature may not be permitted to comfort you. In

California, unless you are afraid of the rain, nature welcomes you at almost any time. The union of the man and the visible universe is free, is entirely unchecked by any hostility on the part of nature, and is such as easily fills one's mind with wealth of warm experience. Our poets just quoted have laid stress in the few instances quoted upon the directly or symbolically painful aspects of the scene. But these are sorrows of a sort that mean precisely that relation with nature which I am trying to characterize, not the relation of hostility but of closeness. And this is the sort of closeness determined not merely by mild weather, but by long drought and by the relative steadiness of all the climatic conditions.

Now, I must feel that such tendencies are of vast importance, not merely to-day but for all time. They are tendencies whose moral significance in the life of California is of course both good and evil, since man's relations with nature are in general a neutral material upon which ethical relations may be based. If you are industrious, this intimacy with nature means constant coöperation, a coöperation never interrupted by frozen ground and deep snow. If you tend to idleness, nature's kindliness may make you all the more indolent, and indolence is a possible enough vice with the dwellers in all mild climates. If you are morally careless, nature encourages your freedom, and tends in so far to develop a kind of morale frequently characteristic of the dwellers in gentle climates. Yet the nature of California is not enervating. The nights are cool, even in hot weather; owing to the drought the mildness of the air is not necessarily harmful. Moreover, the nature that is so uniform also suggests in a very dignified way a regularity of existence, a definite reward for a definitely planned deed. Climate and weather are at their best always capricious, and as we have seen, the variations of the California seasons have involved the farmers in much anxiety, and in many cases have given the farming business, as carried on in certain California communities, the same sort of gambling tendency that

originally vitiated the social value of the mining industry. But on the other hand, as the conditions grew more stable, as agriculture developed, vast irrigation enterprises introduced once more a conservative tendency. Here again for the definite deed nature secures a definite return. In regions subject to irrigation, man controls the weather as he cannot elsewhere. He is independent of the current season. And this tendency to organization,—a tendency similar to the one that was obviously so potent in the vast ancient civilization of Egypt, is present under Californian conditions, and will make itself felt.

Individuality then, but of a peculiar type, and a tendency despite all this individualism towards agricultural conservatism and a definite social organization—these are already the results of this climate.

V.

I have spoken already several times of the geographical isolation of this region. This has been a factor that was felt of course in the social life from the very outset, and more in the early days than at present. To be sure, it was never without its compensating features. It shows its influences in a way that varies with pretty definite periods of California history. In the earliest days, before the newcomers in California supposed that agriculture was possible on any large scale, nearly everything was imported. Butter, for instance, was sent around the Horn to San Francisco. And throughout the early years most of the population felt, so to speak, morally rooted in the eastern communities from which they had sprung. This tendency retarded for a long time the development of California society, and made the pioneers careless as to the stability of their social structure; encouraged corrupt municipal administration in San Francisco; gave excuse for the lynching habit in the hastily organized mining communities. But a reaction quickly came. After the general good order which as a fact characterized the year 1849,

had gradually given place with the increase of population to the disorders of 1851 and to the municipal errors of the years between 1850 and 1856 in the city of San Francisco, there came a period of reform and of growing conservatism which marked all the time of the later mining period and of the transition to the agricultural period. During these years many who had come to California without any permanent purpose, decided to become members of the community, and decided in consequence to create a community of which it was worth while to be a member. The consequence was the increase of the influence of the factor of geographical isolation in its social influence upon the life of California. The community became self-conscious, independent, indisposed to take advice from without, very confident of the future of the State and of the boundless prosperity soon to be expected; and within the years between 1860 and 1870 a definite local tradition of California life was developed upon the basis of the memories and characters that had been formed in the early days. The consequence was a provincial California, whose ideals at last assumed that form of indifference to the barbarians beyond the border which my friend noticed as surviving even to the time of the visit of which I have spoken.

But the completion of the trans-continental railway in 1869 introduced once more the factor of physical connection with the east, and of commercial rivalry with the investors of the Mississippi valley who now undertook along with the capitalists of California to supply the mining population of the still newer Rocky Mountain regions. On the whole, I should say that for a good while the provincial California, in the rather extremer sense of the tradition of the sixties and early seventies, held its own against the influence of the railway. But the original railway did not remain alone. Other trans-continental lines developed. The southern portion of the state, long neglected during the early days, became in the beginning of the eighties, the theatre of a new immigration and of a new and on the whole decidedly more eastern civilization. The

result has been that since that time a third stage of California life and society, a stage marked by a union of the provincial independence of the middle period with the complex social influences derived from the east and from the world at large. The California of to-day is still the theatre of the struggle of these opposing forces.

VI.

It remains necessary to characterize more fully the way in which the consequences of the early days, joined to the geographical factors upon which we have already laid stress, have influenced the problems of California life and society. From the very outset, climate and geographical position, and the sort of life in which men were engaged have encouraged types of individuality, whose subtle distinction from those elsewhere to be found we have already attempted in a very inadequate fashion to suggest. Accordingly, from the first period down to the present time, the California community has been a notable theatre for the display of political and financial, and on occasion, of intellectual individuality, of decidedly extraordinary types. The history of both earlier and later California politics has been a very distinctly personal history. The political life of the years before the war had as their most picturesque incident the long struggle for the United States Senatorship carried on between David Broderick and William Gwin. This contest involved personalities far more than principles. Gwin and Broderick were both of them extremely picturesque figures;—the one a typical Irish-American, the other a Southerner. The story of their bitter warfare is a familiar California romance. The tragic death of Broderick, in duel with the once notorious Terry, is a tale that long had a decidedly national prominence. Terry himself is an example of a type of individuality not elsewhere unknown in border life, but developed under peculiarly Californian conditions. Terry was, very frankly, a man of blood. Regarding him as a man of blood,

one finds him in many ways and within his own limits an interesting, even a conscientious and attractive personality. He was at one time upon the Supreme Bench of the State of California. He warred with the Vigilance Committee of 1856 in a manner that certainly wins one's respect for his skill in bringing that organization into a very difficult position. He carried on this warfare both as judge of the Supreme Court and as wielder of a bowie knife. When he slew Broderick, he did so in a fashion that, so far as the duelling code permitted, was perfectly fair. He lived for years with a disposition to take the unpopular side of every question, to fight bitterly for causes for which no other man cared, and it was precisely for such a cause that he finally died. His attempted assault upon Judge Field, and the controversy that led thereto, and that resulted in Terry's death, was, a few years since, in everybody's memory.

It would be wholly wrong to conceive California individuality as at all fairly represented by a border type such as Terry's. Yet when one looks about in California society and politics, one finds even at the present day picturesque personalities preserving their picturesqueness amidst various grades of nobility and baseness, in a fashion more characteristic, I think, than is customary in most of our newer communities. The nobler sort of picturesque personality may be the public benefactor, like Lick or Sutro. He may be the social reformer of vast ideals, like Henry George. Or again the baser individual may be the ignorant demagogue of the grade of Dennis Kearney. Your California hero may be the chief of the Vigilance Committee of 1856, or some other typical and admired pioneer, growing old in the glory of remembered early deeds. He may be the railway magnate, building a trans-continental line under all sorts of discouragements, winning a great fortune, and dying just as he founds a university. But in all these phases, he remains the strong individual type of man that in a great democracy is always necessary. It is just this type that, as some of us fear, the conditions of our

larger democracy in more eastern regions tend far too much to eliminate. In California, such individuality is by no means yet eliminated.

There is a symptom of this fact which I have frequently noted, both while I was a continuous resident of California and from time to time since. Individualistic communities are almost universally, and paradoxically enough, communities that are extremely cruel to individuals. It is so in a debating club, where individuality is encouraged, but where every speaker is subject to fierce criticism. Now, this is still so in California to an extent which surprises even one who is used to the public controversies of some of our eastern cities. The individual who by public action or utterance rises above the general level in California, is subject to a kind of attack which strong men frequently enjoy, but which even the stranger finds on occasion peculiarly merciless. That absence of concern for a man's antecedents of which I before spoke, contributes to this very mercilessness. A friend once remarked to me that in California, Phillips Brooks, had he appeared there before reaching the very height of his reputation, would have had small chance to win a hearing, so little reverence would have been felt for the mere form of the causes that he maintained. This remark was perhaps unfair, since a stranger preacher,—Thomas Starr King,—gained in early California days, at about the beginning of the war, a very great public reputation in a short time, received great sympathy, and had a mighty influence. But on the other hand, it is perfectly certain that the public man who intends to maintain his ideals in California will have to do so under fire, and will have to be strong enough to bear the fire. His family, or the clubs to which he belongs, the university that he represents, the church that supports him,—none of these factors will in such a community easily determine his standing. He works in a community where the pioneer tradition still remains,—the tradition of independence and of distrust towards enthusiasm. For one feels in California, very keenly, that enthusiasm may after

all mean sham, until one is quite sure that it has been severely tested. And this same community, so far as its country population is concerned, is made up of persons who, whether pioneers or newcomers, live in the aforesaid agricultural freedom, in easy touch with nature, not afraid of the sentiments of the crowd, although of course disposed, like other human beings, to be affected by a popular cry in so far as it attacks men or declares new ideals insignificant. It is much more difficult to arouse the enthusiastic sympathy of such people than it is, in case one has the advantage of the proper social backing, to affect the public opinion of a more highly organized social order, in a less isolated region.

And now we have seen the various ways in which this sort of individuality is a product of the natural features of the State as well as of those early conditions which themselves were determined by geographical factors. On the other hand, in addition to this prevalence of individuality and this concomitant severity of the judgment of prominent individuals, there are social conditions characteristic of San Francisco which can also be referred to geographical and climatic factors. Early in the development of San Francisco a difficulty in the education of the young appeared, which, as I fancy, has not yet been removed. This difficulty had to do with the easy development of vagrancy in city children. Vagrancy is a universal evil of cities, but the California vagrant can easily pass the night out-doors during the greater part of the year. A friend of mine who was connected with the management of San Francisco public schools for a number of years, laid stress upon this climatic factor and its dangers in official communications published at the time of his office. The now too well known name of "hoodlum" originated in San Francisco and is said to have been the name adopted by a particular group of young men. The social complications of the time of the sand-lot, when Dennis Kearney led laborers into a dangerous pass, were again favored by climatic conditions. Public meetings

out-of-doors and in the sand-lot could be held with a certain freedom and persistency in California that would be impossible without interruption elsewhere. While such factors have nothing to do with discontent, they greatly increase the opportunities for agitation. The new constitution of California, adopted in 1879, was carried at the polls by a combination of the working men of San Francisco with the dissatisfied farmers of the interior. This dissatisfaction of the farmers was no doubt due in the main to the inadequacy of their comprehension of the material conditing under which they were working. The position of California,—its geographical isolation again,—has been one complication factor for the California farmer, since as luxuriant nature easily furnished him, in case he should use wise methods, with a rich supply, while his geographical isolation made access to market somewhat difficult. This difficulty about the markets long affected California political life in the form of dissatisfaction felt against the railway, which was of course held responsible and which in fact for years was more or less responsible for an increase of these difficulties of reaching the market. Well, this entire series of complications, which in 1879 combined San Francisco working men with the farmers of the interior, and changed the constitution of the state, is an example of the complex way in which the geographical situation and the factors of climate have acted to affect social movements.

On the other hand, the individuality aforesaid, when brought into the presence of such social agitations, has frequently proved in California life a conservative factor of great importance. The mob may be swept away for a time by an agitating idea. But the individual Californian himself is suspicious of mobs. The agitations in question proved transient. Even the constitution, designed to give the discontented whatever they most supposed they wanted, proved to be susceptible of a very conservative construction by the courts, and public opinion in California has never been very long under the sway of any one illu-

sion. The individuality that we have described quickly revolts against its false prophets. In party politics, California proves to be an extremely doubtful state. Party ties are not close. The vote changes from election to election. The independent voter is well in place. Finally, through all these tendencies there runs a certain idealism, often more or less unconscious. This idealism is partly due to the memory of the romance due to the entire romance of the early days. It is also sustained by precisely that intimacy with nature which renders the younger Californians so sensitive. I think that perhaps Edward Rowland Sill, whose poems are nowadays so widely appreciated, has given the most representative expression to the resulting spirit of California, to that tension between individualism and loyalty, between shrewd conservatism and bold radicalism, which mark this community.

