

THE
CALIFORNIAN
HOAX,

IN WHICH ARE CONTRASTED THE
GOOD AND BAD EFFECTS
TO BE DERIVED FROM
A VOYAGE TO CALIFORNIA;
SHOWING THE
DEPRIVATION TO BE ENDURED,
WITH THE UTTER
IMPOSSIBILITY OF OBTAINING FOOD,
IN THE GOLDEN REGION.

LONDON:

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bandaged ; and from neglect gangrene had supervened, and the child's leg, from his foot to his knee, was in a state of putrefaction. He was so much enfeebled by his sufferings that death was stamped on his countenance, and I was satisfied that he could not live twenty-four hours, much less survive an operation. I so informed the mother stating to her that to amputate the limb would only hasten the boy's death, and add to his pains while living, declining at the same time peremptorily, all participation in a proceeding so useless and barbarous under the circumstances. She implored me, with tears and moans, not to give up her child without an effort. I told her again, that all efforts to save him would be useless, and only add to the anguish of which he was now dying.

A very pretty prospect this for persons taking children with them for the purpose of obtaining gold,—as many hundreds have done of late.

We think we have now said enough, and given sufficient proof that Emigration to California, like Emigration anywhere else, is neither more nor less than a hoax, and put forth to the public to bring cash into the pockets of those who do not want it ; while it takes it from those who are next akin to starving.

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THE
CALIFORNIAN HOAX.

A short time ago, within the memory of all our present readers, EMIGRATION TO AUSTRALIA was all the rage. A still shorter time ago, EMIGRATION TO AMERICA was considered to be beneficial and advantageous, that is to say, by money getting and enterprising individuals ; we mean those parties who get money by sending, or advising other people to go, out of the Mother Country.

NOW EMIGRATION TO CALIFORNIA is all the rage. It is really surprising how men, and men of business, calling themselves gentlemen, can have the conscience nay the audacity, to first recommend one thing and then another, and so on, as being the best thing the

are at all likely to obtain any such necessities as "a plough and yoke of oxen," or if they could is there one mechanic in a thousand, possesses "a reasonable outline of Agricultural Chemistry?" Echo answers "No."

We will now give the following Extract from the CAMBRIAN, which we think is to be relied on, the circumstance being witnessed as it was by thousands of spectators:—

"The other day, Swansea was quite enlivened in consequence of the arrival of several waggon loads of luggage, attended by some scores of the bold peasantry of Carmarthenshire, and almost an equal number of the inhabitants of horthys and the surrounding districts; together with their families.

The formidable party were nearly all Latter day Saints, and came to this town for the purpose of proceeding to Liverpool in the TROUBADOUR Steamer; where a ship is in readiness to transport them next week to California. Amongst the number who came, the ages varied from 70 to 90 years of age, and whose hoary locks "proclaimed not only their lengthened years," but render it very improbable they will live to see America. Yet so deluded are the poor and simple Saints, that they believe that every one amongst them, however infirm and old they may be, will as surely land in California safely as they started from Wales.

"Their faith is most extraordinary. On Wednesday morning, after having been addressed by their leader, (who is known as Captain Dan Jones,) all repaired on board in admirable order, and with extraordinary resignation.

"Their departure was witnessed by hundreds of spectators, and whilst the steamer was gaily passing down the river, the saints commenced singing a favorite hymn. On entering the piers, however, they abruptly stopped singing, and lustily responded to the cheering with which they were greeted by the inhabitants."

The above, no doubt, is the effect of persons reading so many Emigration-advising periodicals. It is one of those circumstances which any right-thinking person can plainly see more harm than good is to be derived from.

public can do, merely for the sake of obtaining "paltry lucre." Does it stand to reason that EVERY thing can be the BEST. How is it that so many people have emigrated to Australia with £50, or £100 in their pocket, and then, return home, in a few months penniless.

The following statement is given WITHOUT AUTHORITY, in one of the California Emigration advising publications.—

"Of one thing, every person may be certain—there is gold in California, and to be had, too, merely for the digging. A plough a yoke of oxen, and a ready will, with a reasonable knowledge of the discoveries in agricultural chemistry, are sufficient to ensure any young or middle aged man who goes to California, a golden and peaceful competency for his old age, and a legacy for his children in the surplus of his labours."

In another part of the same publication is the following :—

"What an advantage it would be to a score or two of our Blacksmiths, Wheelwrights, Carpenters, Builders, Shoemakers, Hatters, Tailors, &c. &c.. If they could suddenly be transported to the middle of the New El Dorado! It would, indeed, be a region of gold to them for they could realise enough to set them up comfortably and respectably, and to render the remainder of life's journey comparatively easy to themselves, their wives, and their children."

As will be seen from the last extract, such persons Carpenters, Shoemakers, Hatters, &c. are recommended to Emigrate, and yet in the previous extract it is stated that, "a plough, a yoke of oxen," and a reasonable knowledge of agricultural Chemistry, are requisite; now does it stand to reason that such people as "Carpenters, Hatters, Shoemakers &c."

But as we do not wish to be the precursors of preventing people from going to the "Golden Regions," to "obtain a peaceful competency for their old age, and a legacy for their children,"—we will give, in support, of our views, the following extract from a letter written by Mr. Thomas Douglas, formerly of New London, Connecticut, and now of California. It rather tends, we think, to somewhat damp the ardour of our gold-seekers:

"The rush of people here is immense.... *Very many of the rich deposits have been already drained.* The business is already precarious, depending very much upon luck, in finding a rich place. *Before persons can arrive from the States, it will, in all probability, become less lucrative.* They need not, however, fear but that they can do well, if they are healthy, industrious, and prudent. On the coast of the country it is healthy, but on some of the rivers there is considerable sickness."

The above assertion is made by a gentleman who no doubt knows the country well, and whose word is to be taken.

Let us now, however, contrast it with an assertion made by one of our Emigration schemers:

"The gold is found in an extent of country four-hundred miles long, by one-hundred and fifty miles wide; and no particular portion seems more productive than another. In the river and on the flat lands the gold-dust is found; but among the rocks and in the high-lands it is found in lumps, *from the size of a man's hand to the size of an ordinary duck-shot, ALL OF WHICH IS SOLID,* and presents the appearance of having been thrown up by a volcanic eruption. So plentiful is the gold, that little care is paid to the washing of it by those engaged, the consequence of which is, great quantities are thrown away.... A man, by ordinary labour, may procure from fifty to two-hundred dollars per day. With regard to the climate, it is so salubrious as at no time being so cold as to require more than a light blanket to sleep under."

What a contradictory account is this, to that

given by a man who has spent his whole life-time in the vicinity.

We will now give a description of the Bay of San Francisco, which is the central point for Californian emigrants, and which is extracted from a well-written work on the subject, by Mr. T. J. Farnham :—

“ Its mouth lies in latitude 37 deg. 58 sec. The water on the bar is eight fathoms at low tide. The mountains on either hand rise several hundred feet above the sea, and form fine land marks in foggy weather to point out the bar and the channel into the harbour. .

“ The capes at the ocean’s edge are about two miles apart; this passage is about five miles in length. Four and half miles from the capes it narrows considerably, and presents a hold point north and south.

“ On the southern one stands the Presidio or fort, on which this mighty harbour condescends to depend for protection. The fort is in ruins. A dozen old rusty guns in the care of thirty or forty half-clad half-bred soldiers, usually foraging in squads of five or ten among the neighbouring missions; one side of its walls tumbled down, and another strongly disposed to plunge into the sea, and not the tenth of a true soldier’s heart beating for a hundred miles around, is a true summing up of its present strength.

“ The house of the commandant, situated in one corner, is a respectable whitewashed pile of mud and bricks. On the other corner of the same side is the chapel, also built of mud, a filthy place for worship. On another side are artificial shops and a prison.”

“ The two other sides are broken down—not by the flying metal of brave conflict, but by the gentle pattering of the rains; the ruins covered with bones ;—not the bones of the fearless men, who have fallen in the breach, throwing their gushing blood in the face of a conquering foe; but the bones of the bees that have been gnawed by the garrison during years of valorous eating. Densely manned, also are these piles of adobe and osseous ruins, not with rank and file of mailed warriors, but with dogs, vultures, and jackals. This is Fort San Francisco, one of the strongest posts in the Californias. Heaven help its dogs, vultures, and jackals, in case of a siege!

The southern half of the bay varies from fourteen to fifteen, the northern half from four to twenty miles in width.

“ In the N. W. corner of the bay is the inlet of the Rio Sacramento. It is about one and three-fourth miles wide for the distance of seven miles, and then spreads out into a bay seven miles wide, and twelve in length, when it narrows down to four miles for the distance of two

miles and a half, then widens to seven or eight miles the distance of eleven miles, with islands in the centre, then narrows to three miles, and then it widens into a bay about twenty miles north and south, and about the same distance east and west, studded with nine islands.

On the east of it, between the mouth of the Sacramento and the bay lies one about fifteen miles in length, N.E. and S.W.; and of a breadth varying from three miles to ten. *All these islands are low and marshy.*

On the southern point of this large island comes in the Rio San Joaquin, and on the northern point of it is the northern mouth of the Sacramento.

The bar, which springs from the northern headlands, and running beneath the blue waters of the Pacific from five to nine fathoms, causes a belt of surf to roll across the mouth. must be passed.

A breeze must bear your bark over and along the dangerous rocks three quarters of a mile inside on the right, quarrelling with the surges; and onward four miles between the projecting cliffs overhanging peaks, and verdant woodlands filled with starting deer and other game, to the harbour at the narrows beneath the fort; and thence onward still past the fort and the islands lying across the entrance, and the bay is seen!—a broad sheet of water stretching off, north and south, the largest harbour on the earth, surrounded by a country partly wooded, and partly disposed in open glades. Amid the hills of the south and east are Santa Clara, El Pueblo San Jose, and Mission San Jose; and on the southern peninsula, five miles wide, is San Francisco, Yerba Bueno, the trading house of Hudson Bay Fur Company, the Presido and the Castillo; on the northern peninsula is San Rafael, and in the north San Francisco Salano—;—a group of beauty and grandeur that knows no superior in any clime.”

The above account is certainly very beautiful and romantic. But it does not hold out, in our estimation, a very tempting prospect to mechanics, with families, to leave their mother-country, in the hope of obtaining gold. More especially after reading the account by Mr. Douglas.

Having thus described this fortune-making (?) country, we think it our duty to give the public some description of the hardships they are likely to have to endure. And lest we should be charged with exaggeration, we will extract an account of a voyage by water from the “Morning Chronicle :—

"Men are leaving their families to go to California, in the hope of returning in a year or so as rich as Croesus. The movement is like the impulse of a mania—a crusade? It is probable that great suffering will be encountered by those who are anxious to reach the gold region by the shortest route and in the quickest time, namely, by Chagres and across the Isthmus of Panama. Chagres is about fourteen days' (by steam), twenty-two to thirty days' sailing, from New York or Philadelphia. Then fifty-two miles by land, across the Isthmus, in the most intense tropical heats, (say three or four days' journey by mules); and then 3,500 miles by sea, in the Pacific, to San Francisco. From San Francisco, five or six days inland to the Rio de las Plumas (Feather River), a tributary of the Sacramento. The difficulty by this route will be chiefly experienced at Panama, where there will not, cannot be, for many months, vessels enough to convey the vast number of eager emigrants so soon expected to assemble. Unless such adventurers are abundantly supplied with money, they will not be able to live in the hot desolations of the tropics, where life is but little valued, and where death is even less regarded. At our last accounts, 2,000 persons were waiting a conveyance—a prey to pestilence and 'the hope deferred that maketh the heart sick.' The bones of many will whiten the sands of Panama. The entire route by sea, (round Cape Horn,) is little short of 17,000 miles, with a voyage of five months; yet this route is cheaper, safer, and in the end probably quite as short as *via* Panama."

Is not the above sufficient to deter any reasonable man, especially these who have families, from entering on such a speculation? But, for fear we should be considered guilty of only giving one side of the question, we will extract the following account of a land-passage from the "Emigrant's Journal:"

"Our system of travel is thus:—The whole encampment is raised by the sound of a trumpet at or before sunrise. Breakfast, which has hitherto consisted of bread, fried bacon, and coffee, is discussed as soon as possible, usually by six o'clock, when the morning cattle-guard is summoned, to drive the oxen into the corral, preparatory to 'catching up' or yoking. This occupies an hour or more, and at seven or half-past seven o'clock our march commences. Between twelve and one o'clock the train is halted in the road for the oxen to breathe. There is a delay of an hour, during which each person partakes of such refreshment as has been provided for him before leaving the camp in the morning. The march is then resumed, and continued

according to circumstances, in reference to grass, water, and wood, until five or six o'clock in the afternoon, when our corral is formed, our tents pitched and our evening meal provided.

• • • • •
 "One incident of travel was a quarrel between two emigrants, the one owning a team of oxen, and the other a wagon: the owner of the oxen having attempted to unharness his team, and leave the wagon, and its owner in the lurch, a scuffle was the consequence. The affair was referred to the committee of arbitration, but had nearly resulted in bloodshed. The result of this affair was the separation of the Oregon and Californian emigrants, by a unanimous vote of the Californians.

• • • • •
 On this long and tiresome journey, during which it is impossible to suspend the march for any length of time, doses of exhausting medicines should never be administered to the patient. If they are, the consequences most frequently must result in death. The fatigues of the journey are as great as any ordinary constitution can bear; and the relaxing and debilitating effects of medicines injudiciously prescribed, in large quantities, are often, I believe, fatal, when the patient might recover."

The following will be found a novel sort of treatment likely to be received by persons meeting with accidents.

An accident having happened to a boy, a person went for the purpose of examining him, when

"he found the accident had occurred nine days previously; that a person professing to be "doctor," had wrapped some linen loosely about the leg, and made a sort of trough, or plank-box, in which it had been confined. In this position the child had remained, without any dressing of his wounded limb, until last night, when he called his mother and told her that he could 'feel worms crawling in his leg!'

"This, at first, she supposed to be absurd; but, the boy insisting, an examination of the wound for the first time was made, and it was discovered that gangrene had taken place, and that the limb of the child was swarming with maggots! They then immediately dispatched their messengers for me. I made an examination of the fractured limb, and ascertained that what the mother had stated was correct. The limb had been badly fractured, and had never been