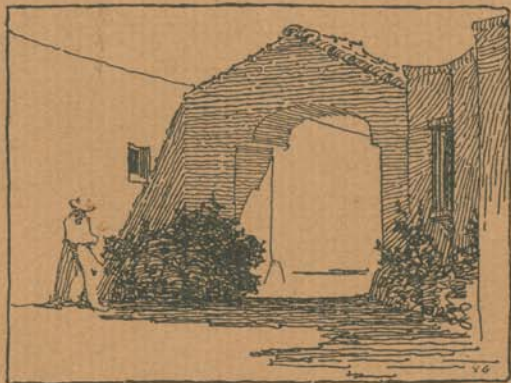


The ENDLESS
MIRACLE OF
CALIFORNIA





JOHN Steven McGroarty, who has written the following sketch of Rancho Santa Fe, is doubtless the best known and perhaps

the best loved of all Californian writers and authors.

Mr. McGroarty has rendered incalculable service to California in his capacity as a literary man. His great book "California: Its History and Romance," is the most popular of all books written on this fascinating subject. His Mission Play,

which has been given annually for the past thirteen years at the old Mission San Gabriel near Los Angeles, is the world's best known and most successful pageant drama, with the possible exception of the Passion Play of Oberamargau. In addition to the Mission Play he has written and successfully produced a second Californian drama called "La Golondrina" (The Swallow), and he has in preparation a third play to be known as "El Dorado." This trilogy of historical plays will immortally preserve the glamorous history and romance of California.

Mr. McGroarty's vivid impressions of his recent visit to Rancho Santa Fe are so characteristic that this little book is issued for the enjoyment of our friends.

The Endless Miracle
of California by John
Steven McGroarty,
❧❧ author of the
"Mission Play" ❧



If you will turn
in from the
high road of
the Coast at a
pass through
the hills just
before you
come to Del
Mar on the

journey to San Diego you will soon find yourself within the boundaries of what is now known as "Rancho Santa Fe."

And you will there see—working its way out of the centuries and the ages—the endless miracle of California.

First of all, the way that this great domain came to be a white man's country was that it was a grant from the King of Spain to Don Juan Maria Osuna—a principality of almost two square leagues of brown rolling land with a friendly little river winding through it. The gift from the King to his liegeman was known as the San Dieguito Grant. History keeps the record of it on its deathless pages.

Those were brave days in California—brave old days of happiness and con-

tentment, of peace and plenty. The far-off king sat secure upon his purple throne sceptered to rule half the world. With the mere nod of his head he could grant a domain in California and elsewhere to his loyal subjects.

And so it befell that in the old times of the king, Don Juan Maria Osuna found himself the happy possessor of this bright valley of the south, set snug and warm in the loving clasp of sunny hills that sheltered it from the sea but which still did not shut it out from the sea's deep voices nor from the life-giving breath of its billows.

Old Don Juan Maria was a good chooser. He could take which spot he would—the king told him to fare forth

and locate a league square of land wherever it pleased him best to do so.

And so Don Juan Maria Osuna chose the king's grant of the Rancho San Dieguito which is now the Rancho Santa Fe. And it would seem that we need no better answer than this as to whether the spot is a fine place or not upon which now to raise a roof-tree.

Don Juan was the first alcalde of San Diego; he was the king's man, the king was good to him.

So it was that there in the sheltered clasp of the sunny hills, where they would be snug and cozy always, and with the tang of the sea to stir their blood, the Osunas reared the rafters of what they dreamed would come to be



the ancestral
home of their strong clan
throughout the generations that were to
follow.

First of all, Don Juan Maria set his house on a high bench of land that overlooks the little green valley toward the south. It was a fine vantage point from every angle. From his windows he

could have warning of the approach of friends, and of enemies, too, in case enemies would, in the uncertain mutations of life, rise up to molest him. The creaking caravans making their slow, dusty journeys to the missions that were set a day's travel apart the one from the other between San Diego and San Francisco would pass in his view. And back of him would be his flocks and herds grazing on the rolling lomas, always easily in his sight.

Of thick-walled adobe was the house builded. And, though now long deserted and neglected, it still stands as sturdily as the day it was made. Rain and wind and sun have been futile to even weaken its brave fabric.



ELOQUENT of the faithful character of the adobe house is this old dwelling place of the Osunas—the adobe house which old Don Carlos Lummis says is the best house in the world. Cool in summer and warm in winter is the adobe house. And it will last practically forever if given anything like decent care. Of adobe is the stately Mission of San Luis Rey not far distant from this rancho of the San Dieguito which is now the Rancho Santa Fe. And, although for forty years it was utterly abandoned and wholly neglected, San Luis Rey is as good as ever. It is as good as when the blessed Fray Antonio Peyri

set first its domes and towers under a blue sky more than a century and a quarter ago.

As we follow the story of the Osunas we find it never failing in interest. It is the same with the story of so many other of the old Spanish families of California—the first overlords of the land. Romance has no more golden nor glamorous pages. But, it is a story too long to be told here.

To make the story short there is only this to tell, that as Don Juan grew old upon the trails of the happy, contented years, he builded him a newer house on the west side of the little green valley, and then he gave the first house to a son whose name was Leandro. And,



—“grown old upon the trails of the happy years, he builded
him a newer house”—

in due time, Don Juan gave up the ghost and was laid away somewhere in the holy ground, doubtless at San Diego where there was a Padre, a book and bell, and candles to light souls to heaven.

Then came the American invasion of California as a result of the war against Mexico. And Leandro Osuna took horse and lance and rode forth in defense of his country with Flores and Andres Pico. He was in the battle of San Pasqual, where he bore himself right gallantly. But, his cause lost, and when the deep hour of its despair overwhelmed him, he put a bullet through his head with his own hand.

Thus ends sadly indeed the story of the Osunas. And when you stand on the



—with its own intimate yet ample life.—

bright plateau of the San Dieguito you will think of old Don Juan Maria and of his son Leandro, surely—and maybe you will feel their fine old spirits whispering to you of the past when summer stars hang low and night winds stir among the branches of ancient pepper trees that hands long since folded planted in the springtime of hope when life was young.

Yet the world did not end for the San Dieguito when the story of the Osunas ended. Nor did the miracle of California end, as we are now to see.



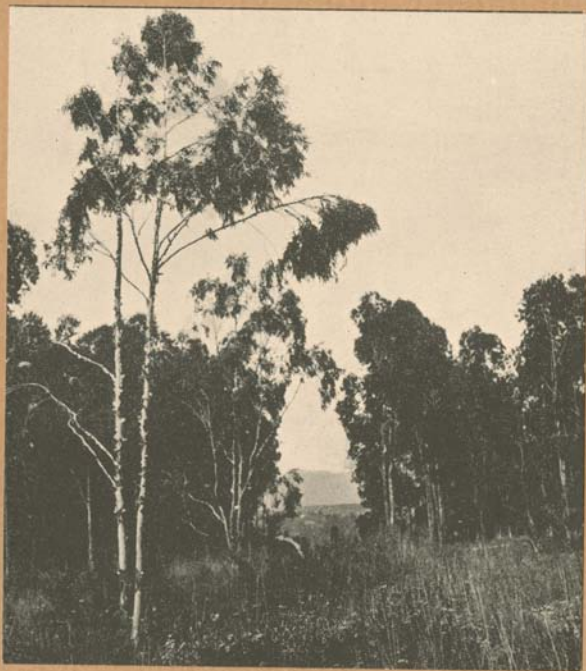
SOMEWHAT more than ten years ago the directing forces of the great Santa Fe Railway system which banded a continent with its steel rails, conceived the idea of planting eucalyptus trees in California for the purpose of growing its own railroad cross-ties. They put the experiment into action by the purchase of this old rancho of the San Dieguito, the ancestral home of the Osunas.

Many acres of eucalypti, now flourishing in strength and beauty upon the hills and slopes and valleys of the rancho, are the result of this idea—but it was found, after all, that the project was not feasible.

And so, for several years the great domain which came to be known as the Rancho Santa Fe lay idle and lonely and profitless to its owner.

Came then upon a fate-blest day a long time lover of California, W. E. Hodges, Vice-President of the Santa Fe, inspired to weave imperishably into the vast fabric of his beloved railway the romance and the beauty of this historic region. And seeking expression, found another lover of California who was and is still a prophet of its incalculable potentialities, L. G. Sinnard, who knew for many years in his heart and soul, as a devotee knows his prayers, the endless miracle of California.

Sinnard laid before Mr. Hodges and his

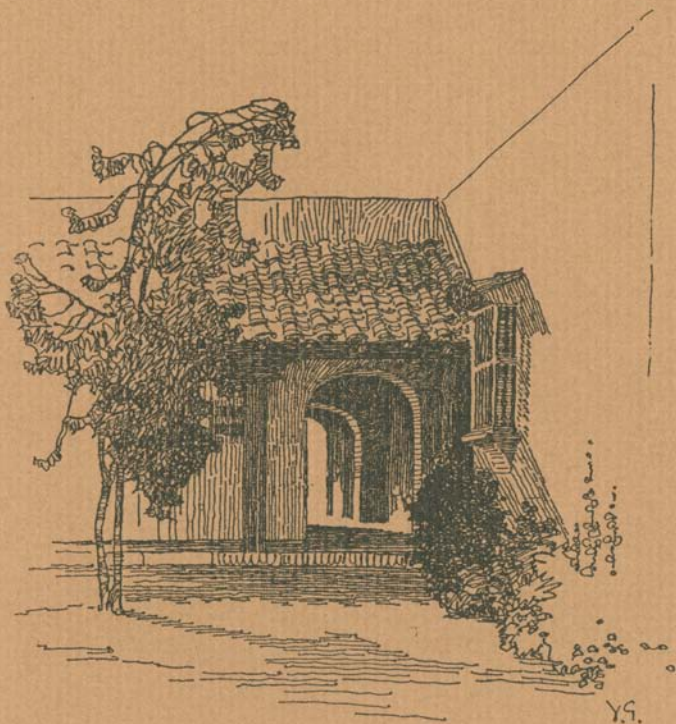


—“waiting in splendid solitude for the footsteps of the dreamer”—

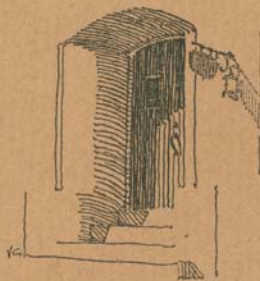
associates of the Santa Fe his inspiration concerning the abandoned Rancho of old Don Maria Osuna, waiting in its splendid solitude for the footsteps of the dreamer.

For, like Theodore Judah who dreamed the first railway across the high Sierras, Sinnard had his own great dream tucked away in a sunny corner of his soul. And, if you will do yourself the kindness to turn in from the high coast road through the gap of the hills when you are near Del Mar, you will see the wondrous dream coming true. Already it has taken shape and form.

The brown rolling lomas of the San Dieguito and its luring little valleys have been given newly "a local habitation and a name."



"Already it has taken shape and form."



IN the footsteps of the dreamer follow those who help him to make his dreams come true. And so the wise and understanding heads of the great Santa Fe Railway, swept away by Sinnard's vast and splendid vision, gave him engineers, soil experts, architects, and every scientific helper that he could ask.

Surveys of soils were made; studies of water system; elevations of valleys and slopes for plantings; landscape features were marked for the preservation and enhancement of the natural beauty and practical advantages of the domain; roads to make driving and walking a pleasure,

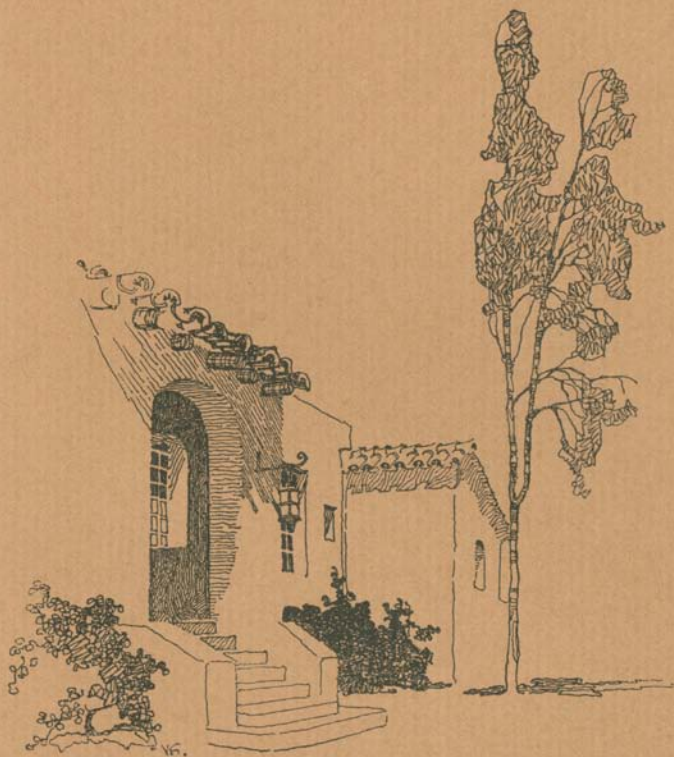
as well as to give accessibility and desirability to frontages were surveyed and engineered. Thought was given to the location of the pleasant homesites that were to be—and many of which now are—as the keystone of the whole vast and lovely dream.

In brief, the vision of Sinnard was that there would rise upon the sunny hills and winding valleys of the old lordly domain of the Osunas a model community, the like of which perhaps has not yet been seen in all the world. There was and is a vision of smiling orchards, beautiful homes, luring roads and forest aisles; of lawns and gardens. A community that shall be sufficient unto itself, with its own intimate yet ample life, a

civic center of its own, and every other needful provision for its perpetuation and success. In a way, the project is an anomaly because it is as eminently practical as it is intensely idealistic.

After two years of vast expenditures of money and of patient and loving study and effort, the splendid scope of the project is visible and in a form to be grasped almost at a glance.

In the first place, the bright waters of the San Dieguito River which were running happily though unprofitably to the sea were caught and conserved between the solid rock walls of a deep canyon bringing into existence the Lake Hodges Dam. It has well been called "a monument to the wisdom of far-sighted men."



— "what might be called practical dreams"—



—“eminently practical as it is intensely idealistic”—

The structure towers 157 feet above bed rock, holding back 37,700 acre-feet of life-giving water. More than a million and a half of dollars were spent to acquire water rights and build the Lake Hodges Dam, but it was well worth the expenditure, for, without ample water for irrigation the Rancho Santa Fe could never have come into its own.



THE old mission Fathers who carried civilization and Christianity to California were dreamers of what might be called practical dreams. They came into the desolation of a wilderness and made it blossom as the rose. And there were always three things that they took into consideration, namely, soil, water, and people. Soil and water being found, they were still rejected unless there were aborigines nearby to be converted to Christianity and taught the trades, the arts and crafts of the white man's civilization.

Now we see history repeating itself on the Rancho Santa Fe. Sinnard found

soil and water in abundance, and now he is finding people—people to rear their sunny rooftrees and to fling their glowing orchard slopes where once a Spanish overlord ruled his rude domain in unchallenged mastery.

It seems futile and almost useless to attempt to describe in words on a printed page a project so vital, so far-reaching and splendid as this project of the Rancho Santa Fe is. It is so much more distinctive, so much more a place apart from any other that has ever been seen, that I feel like saying that no matter who you are or what your business in life may be, you cannot afford to miss a visit to the place. And when you are there, seated on the wide terrace of "La



—“to rear sunny rooftrees and fling glowing orchard slopes”—

Morada," the guest house, looking down the wide parked highway that strikes through the beauty of the already constructed civic center to the distant mountain passes, your heart will be satisfied and your soul will be content.

It is not for me in this brief story to talk of business details. You will find on the spot an expert organization ready and glad to tell you all that you would want to know. And, I am glad to say, you will find awaiting you a courteous welcome and a tireless hospitality, which, it seems to me, goes with the place as a natural inevitable heritage of the good days of old.





"the inevitable heritage of the good days of old — a fireless hospitality"