

instead of a grain country, more especially on the west.

About 200 miles further and we reach the Landing of Chico—but we have already described the town on page 196, so we will pass on. On the right-hand side, the shores are low and sedgy most of the way, fit only for grazing when the floods have subsided; yet we pass intervals of grain fields till we arrive at Red Bluffs—270 miles from Sacramento, at the head of navigation. See description of the town on page 197.

We will now return to the city of Sacramento, and there take another route.

Down the Sacramento River.

Stepping on board of a large passenger and freight boat, we start down the river towards San Francisco. The plains stretch away on either hand, and there is little to be seen except the gardens and farms along the banks on the higher ground, the wide waste of "tuiles," and the plains and mountains beyond. On the left—away in the dim distance, the hills succeed the plains, the mountains the hills, until the vast pile towers among the clouds.

Winding around curves, where the stern of the boat is swept by the willows on the shore, we glide down the river, past sloughs, creeks, and tuile swamps, until we pass FREEPORT, 12 miles from the city, a little hamlet of half a dozen dwellings.

Floating along between the low banks, covered with willow and shrub, we pass MISSISSIPPI BEND—24 miles from Sacramento. Here the river makes one of its numerous curves, almost doubling back on itself.

To the left is the little town of RICHLAND, containing a half-dozen dwellings. Now the Nevada Mountains fall behind, and we have one vast plain around us. We pass the outlet of Sutter's Slough, and then the Hog's Back—a long sand-bar, which stretches diagonally across the river. The water here is very shoal. A wing dam has been built from the western shore, half way across the channel, which throws the water into a narrow compass, giving greater depth to the bar. Next comes Cache Creek Slough, on which large quantities of grain are shipped to San Francisco via Sacramento River, from Yolo and Solano counties. Now we are passing along by the Rio Vista hills, which come close to the water's edge on the right-hand shore. These hills are the first we have seen near the river since leaving the city. They

consist of one long, low ridge, broken into hillocks on its crest. These hills are excellent wheat land, yielding an abundant harvest. The land is very valuable, though but a few years have passed since it was sold for 25 cents per acre. The town of RIO VISTA is situated on the slope of the foot-hills, and contains about 300 inhabitants. Formerly the town stood on the low ground, near the river bank, but the flood of '62 washed it away, carrying from 40 to 60 houses down the river. The people fled to the high lands, where they remained until the passing steamers took them away. For days the little steamer Rescue was plying up and down the river, running far out over the submerged plains, picking up the "stragglers," who were surrounded by the waters. Some were found on the house-roofs, with the flood far up the sides of their dwellings, and others were rescued from the branches of trees, which afforded them the only resting-place above the waters. The flood of '62 will long be remembered by those who then dwelt on the banks of the Sacramento.

We next pass COLLINGSVILLE, a long wharf on the right-hand side of the river, with a house or two standing close by. It is a point of shipment of considerable freight, for the country, and grain for the city. A little below this point, the San Joaquin River unites with the Sacramento, entering from the left, forming *Suisun Bay* (pronounced Soo-e-soon).

ANTIOCH—just across the bay—is in Contra Costa county; population, 500. Three miles south, by railroad, are the Mount Diablo coal mines, which yield large quantities of coal.

There are several manufactories of pottery in the town—the clay in the vicinity being a very superior article. The *Ledger*, a weekly paper, is published here. Attention has lately been attracted to the silk culture, and many thousand mulberry trees have been planted.

Passing on down the bay, we enter the Straits of Carquinez, when a long, low wharf on the right attracts our attention. It is fronting the town of

BENICIA—formerly the capital of the State, at the head of ship navigation, and contains about 2,000 inhabitants. It is a charming, quiet, rambling old town, with little of the noise and bustle of the busy seaport. The *New Era*, a weekly paper, is published here.