

are shipped by the hundreds of tons, while the annual crop of wine and brandy produced is over 300,000 gallons.

Placerville contains a goodly number of schools, and churches of almost every denomination, including a "Joss House." The different secret orders are well represented, and two newspapers, the *Democrat* and the *Republican*, make their appearance every week.

Placerville is situated in what is known as the FOOT-HILLS as the chain of broken land is called, which lies between the Sierra Mountains and the plains, extending from Fresno county on the south, through Tuolumne, Calaveras, Amador, El Dorado, Placer, Nevada, Yuba, Butte to Tehama, on the north, comprising nearly one-fourth of the arable land of the State. The soil is altogether different from that of the valleys, being generally of a red, gravelly clay and sandy loam. In the little valleys which are found among these hills, the soil is generally a black loam—the product of the mountain washings. Experiments, however, have decided the fact that these foot-hills are the natural vineyards of California. In El Dorado and Placer counties, on these sandy foot-hills are now the finest vineyards in the State, from which are manufactured fine wines and raisins. Here among these hills are as cozy homes as one could wish to have, where grain, vegetables and all kinds of fruit are raised in abundance, while thousands of acres are lying vacant awaiting the emigrant.

The mulberry tree and the silkworm are cultivated to some extent in the foot-hills, and this branch of industry is lately receiving considerable attention.

Again we return to the TRANS-CONTINENTAL, which we left at Brighton.

**Florin**—is four miles from Brighton. The many new buildings the well-cultivated fields, the raisin grape vineyards, all denote a spirit of progress in the settlers, that would seem to say, "*We have come here to live.*"

The traveler has probably noticed several windmills along the road, before arriving at this station. The CALIFORNIA WINDMILL is a great institution in its way. It seems to have been brought to a greater state of perfection on this coast than anywhere else. From this place we will find their numbers to increase until we get to the "Windmill City," as Stockton is often called, where they can be seen in great

numbers, in every direction. Many times the water is pumped into reservoirs built on the tops of the houses, resembling a cupola, from which pipes take the water to the different rooms throughout the house and grounds; the waste water is conducted into the gardens and fields for irrigating purposes. These mills are numerous in San Francisco and throughout the State. From Florin it is 6.2 miles to

**Elk Grove**—Here, too, many recent improvements are noticeable. In a clear day the snow-capped Sierras, on the left can be plainly seen, and away to the south 60 miles distant,

MOUNT DIABLO rising clear and grand from out the plains, an unerring pilot to those who wandered across these once trackless plains that now are teeming with life and industry. It is situated in the Contra Costa range of mountains, and is the meridian point in the land surveys of the State. Elevation 3,876 feet. The view from the summit includes the country and towns around San Francisco, San Pablo and Suisun bays, and the valleys of the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers. It is reached by steamboats from either San Francisco, Stockton or Sacramento.

The beautiful valley through which the road passes is now spreading out before us, and we begin to realize that nature has done much for this "sunset land."

**McConnell's**—is a small station 3.5 miles from Elk Grove. Near are large fields, where cattle and sheep are fed and fattened for market.

Before reaching the next station, we cross Cosumnes River, which rises in the mountains to the northeast. The bottom lands are very wide, and covered with both white and live oaks, and near the stream with willows. The water gets very high in the spring-time, and very low in the summer.

**Galt**—a station with a few dozen buildings, large warehouses, big cattle pens, and shutes for loading cattle and sheep—is 7.7 miles from McConnell's. At this station we find the

### **Amadore Branch Railroad,**

Let us "change cars," and note the result. Leaving the station, our course is north a short distance, and then northeast towards the mountains, over a section of country devoted pretty generally to stock-raising—sheep principally.

**CICERO**—is the first station, 8.8 miles