

oldest being nine and ten years. They are harvesting regularly good crops of a fine quality of fruit, and have already (two weeks ago) been picking and sending them to market, and selling them at Sacramento and San Francisco at \$4.50 a box.

As an evidence that the people who are residing there have faith in the future of orange culture, at all of these points, let me say that many of the ranches are being planted with orange trees between the rows of their different kinds of deciduous trees, letting them grow together until the orange trees come to maturity, when it is their purpose, as some have already done, to take up their old deciduous trees and leave their grove planted entirely with oranges. It seems to me that this constitutes one of the best evidences as to the practicability of raising citrus fruits in that locality.

I saw at Newcastle on the ranch of Mr. Smith, an old forty-nine, an orange tree which was planted by him in 1864. In 1894 this tree produced 5,600 oranges, which were sent as a contribution to a citrus fair at Sacramento in the winter of that year. Mr. Smith stated to me that since the tree came into bearing it had never missed giving him a crop. This is what is known as the "seedling," a variety of budded fruit, the trees of which never grow so large and consequently never yield so large a quantity of fruit, but the fruit is of a better and more marketable quality.

At the present writing everything at Fair Oaks is very crude. Many purchasers are having their tracts planted either by the Farm, Field and Fireside people or by private contracts with outside parties, expecting to have them cared for until they come into bearing, before they shall take up their residence there. There are a few good houses on the tract as well as on the townsite, and the promoters anticipate that quite a number of nice houses will be built this year, both upon the ranches and townsite. The water system is in and giving an abundant supply of water, which is necessary to the raising of citrus fruit. Deciduous fruit and the olive, however, can be produced without irrigation at Fair Oaks. The roads have not been graded as yet, but this is contracted to be done before June of the coming year.

I met the parties who are expected to build the electric railway from Sacramento to Fair Oaks and Orangevale, and they assured me that there was a good degree of certainty that the line will be built. I also learned that in the event that the present promoters fail there are others who stand ready to build the road, and I have no question but what in the near future it will be built. For myself I am satisfied that I have made a good venture. Have already consummated contract for the clearing of my land and planting and caring for the same for three years.

I do not know that I have answered all the questions that you will be inclined to ask, but should be glad to contribute any other information of which I may be possessed. With kindest regards, I am, very truly yours,  
Geo. E. King.

## Colony News

### From Fair Oaks, California

The following is an extract from a letter by Mr. Geo. E. King, Assistant General Passenger Agent of the Michigan Central Railway, to his friend, Mr. L. K. Scofield, of Kansas City, Mo., regarding Fair Oaks. We have omitted only that which is of a personal character: Dec. 11, 1896.

Mr. L. K. Scofield, Kansas City, Mo.

Dear Sir:—Mrs. King and I had the pleasure of spending an evening with your family early in the week, and of course one of the subjects of conversation was the report of my recent trip to California.

One of the purposes for which I visited California was to assure myself as to the desirability of Fair Oaks as a place in which to locate a future home. California would have but little attraction for me in the way of ranching unless I could engage in the propagation of citrus fruits. It was especially on this point that I desired to make further investigation. My purpose was to ascertain whether it had been practically demonstrated that Northern California was the proper place for one to stake a venture in the planting of oranges, lemons, etc. In making these researches I went north of Sacramento some eighty-eight miles, visiting Oroville and Palermo, where I found extensive orange and lemon groves as well as large tracts planted in olives, all in a flourishing condition. In my various trips through Southern California or Florida I have never seen more healthy trees and which were apparently free from smut and scale and other diseases. It looked as if the trees and leaves could be handled with a kid glove without soiling it. The crop (middle of November) was just ripening, and they expected to begin their picking within a few days. The crop here is from four to six weeks earlier than in Southern California.

From these points I worked down nearer to the Fair Oaks tract, visiting Auburn and Newcastle. These two places are on the main line of the Southern Pacific Company, on their through tracks east and west. Newcastle is across the country about twelve miles from Fair Oaks. At both of these points the orange and lemon culture is being propagated successfully. None of the groves, however, have attained a great age, the

### A Garden of Eden

We suggest to those who want to read an impartial article on California to secure a copy of the December Century and read the article entitled "Our Great Pacific Commonwealth," by Wm. E. Smythe. We would have published this article as a whole, but it is copyrighted and the Century Company refused us permission to do so. It is strongly confirmatory of what we have written in reference to the state, and especially upholds our judgment in the selection of Fair Oaks, or at least that portion of the state in which Fair Oaks is located, as the best part of the state for fruit culture and for generally desirability as a locality in which to build an ideal community, such as we purpose Fair Oaks shall be.

Fair Oaks is only a trifle over a year old. It had its beginning with our November, 1895, excursion. We reached the tract on the twentieth of that month. At that time there was not a house on the land except an old ranch house. Now there are some fifty or sixty dwellings, two general stores, meat market, blacksmith shop, with a postoffice and school established. Many of the dwellings, of course, are only temporary. Their owners expect to build larger and finer houses in a short time. Some are already doing so. We have sold to many wealthy people, as will be seen by our list of purchasers, who will in the near future build good homes. In fact, Fair Oaks will be the ideal community for those who want to break loose from the worries and cares of business life and retire to the more pleasant occupation of fruit raising, or who wish to retire and live upon their income. We know of no investment that will yield larger returns for the money than a piece of Fair Oaks land planted in the valuable varieties of fruits which are produced there. A grove of oranges, olives or lemons, or a combination of the three, a few years hence will bring an ample and constantly growing income, while, at the same time, affording an easy and pleasant occupation to the owner.

When God first made man he placed him in a fruit orchard to tend it, and to this day we know of no occupation which comes so near to the ideal as that of tending a fruit orchard, where all the different varieties of fruit, such as we would naturally conclude were planted by the Lord in the Garden of Eden, may be produced, and where insect life and other diseases destructive to the growth of fruit are the least known.