

Colony News

Fair Oaks and Christian Endeavor Excursion

Details are nearly arranged for the Special Excursion to Fair Oaks on June 22d next.

Special cars will leave New York, Boston, New Orleans, St. Louis, Ottumwa, Ia., Rock Rapids, Ia., St. Paul, Minn., and other points as parties are organized. We expect to stop at Denver and Salt Lake, reaching California in time to investigate Fair Oaks and the advantages of the "Early Fruit Belt," and then go on to the Convention. Write us to place your name on our Endeavor Excursion list and we will send you rates, particulars, etc., as soon as arrangements are completed.

Have you told your friend, the teacher, about the Olive Growers' Association, or about this Excursion? If not, you should do so at once. This Association provides means to spend the sunset days of life in ease in the Sunset land.

Sunset Letters--No. 3

The natural beauty of Fair Oaks townsite grows upon me as I wander over its hills and vales. I have traveled much through the South and West, and have visited most of the ideal towns and cities of California, especially those which are deservedly popular with tourists. I have seen none, however, where nature has done so much to begin with as at Fair Oaks. It remains now for man to supplement her work by building attractive homes with tasty grounds and surroundings. The shrubs, vines, flowers and trees of California are so infinite in variety, easy of culture, grow so rapidly and are so surpassingly beautiful that the man who does not utilize these royal gifts of nature to make his home attractive is sordid indeed.

It costs but little if any more to build a pretty home and tastily paint it than it does to build what may be aptly likened to an "overgrown dry goods box," such as too many people seem to be contented with.

A pretty home is not only an important factor in the education of the children who occupy or are raised in it, but it is an example which exerts an influence upon the whole neighborhood. One of the principal attractions of Los Angeles is her pretty homes. Even the cheap cottages of her workingmen are tastily built. Once the pace is set, the example is contagious. A pretty home with well kept grounds is an evidence of intelligence and taste on the part of the owner. Not only so but such a home is an indication of moral integrity. A man who loves the beautiful in nature is rarely an enemy of his kind. Very few of the criminal class are born and reared in such homes, but the slattern and the criminal are more than often found beneath the same skin.

If I was one of the promoters of Fair Oaks I would not sell a foot of land to any one in the townsite at least who did not first agree to build an attractive home thereon. I would be slow also to adopt every one's standard of what is meant by attractive, but would insist upon the plans being first submitted to a competent authority. It need not necessarily be expensive. A \$500 cottage can be made just as pretty as a palace, but it must be of pretty design and located on the most appropriate place on the lot, with a view to convenience and general effect.

If such a plan could be followed, and I believe all who contemplate building there would enter heartily into such an arrangement, Fair Oaks would soon become the prettiest and most attractive town or city in the state. Nature has done her part, let man intelligently do his. I learn that the promoters are seriously thinking of adopting such a rule. Let me urge them by all means to do so. As a prospective citizen of Fair Oaks they can depend upon my hearty support, and I know many others who think as I do.

In passing allow me to compliment the engineer, Mr. Stephen E. Kieffer, for the very attractive and convenient way in which he has platted the townsite. He is an artist as well as an engineer, and those who want their grounds tastily laid out will make no mistake in employing him to do the work. This applies to the orchard tracts as well as the town lots. He is also a judge of soils and knows how to adapt the fruit to the soil. Those who have secured his services for this work will find when their orchards are grown that they have made no mistake.

I am more and more impressed with the magnitude of the work which has been accomplished here in so short a time. Twelve hundred acres of forest has been laid low. The wood, from fifteen to twenty thousand cords, has been largely cut into stove lengths and carted off to Sacramento. The stumps have been grubbed out and the land planted to fruit trees. About thirty miles of water pipe have been laid and many miles of road graded. From eighty to one hundred dwellings and stores of various kinds have been erected, and are now occupied. All this has been accomplished in about fifteen months' time. Although done so rapidly, on close inspection I find that the work of planting has not been slighted.

I have seen contract planting done in the Southern part of the state where a shovel full of earth only was removed and trees

about the thickness of a lead pencil planted. The stock used by the Fair Oaks people I find to be strong, sturdy, well selected stock, while the holes for its reception, which are dug by the Japanese by contract, are by specification two feet across. The trees are thus deeply imbedded and the hole filled up with the surplus earth, that the young tree may have the benefit of the rich vegetable mold which it contains.

At the date of this writing, the first week in April, some thirty to forty teams are engaged in plowing between the trees of last year's planting. A thick growth of Alfalfa, a species of clover, has covered the ground between the trees. In places it is from two to three feet high. This is being turned under where, like a crop of clover turned under in the north or a crop of cow peas in the south of our eastern states, it becomes a valuable fertilizer, greatly enriching the soil.

The superintendent, Mr. Spencer, can not be too highly commended. The best ecomium we can pronounce is that he knows his business and attends to it. As my friend Mr. Hodge of Chicago said of him, "We thought we had some hustlers in Chicago but we have to come to California to learn what a genuine hustler looks like."

Let me advise the tenderfoot who visits Fair Oaks to be a little shy should Mr. Spencer invite him to take a ride with him in that buckboard of his when he is going somewhere to look after his men. He has an inconvenient disregard for horse-flesh or human flesh and stumps, ruts or good roads are all the same to him. When in addition there are several pounds of dynamite for blasting purposes in the rig, a tenderfoot can hardly be blamed if a spell of "that creepy feeling" does come over him.

I have been giving much study to the fruit question, especially as to what is most advisable to plant. After going into the matter thoroughly I think the company is making no mistake in recommending the olive as a leading specialty. I have great confidence in the future demand for this fruit. Eastern people do not know what an olive is. All they are acquainted with are the green pickled fruit which comes from Europe. There is as much difference between a green and a ripe olive as there is between a green and ripe apple or plum. The green olive is an indigestible pickle. Two or three is all a person wants at any time, while the ripe olive is a healthful food, both palatable and digestible. If known its consumption would be increased from ten to twenty fold.

Californians themselves are only just learning its value, and the demand for it is rapidly increasing in the state. As yet it consumes its entire product with the exception of some shipped east in the form of oil.

An incident of a restaurant here in Sacramento will serve as an example of the increase in demand. The proprietor had been accustomed to serve green olives, until one of his patrons asked him why he did not substitute the ripe olive. He did so. At first the experiment did not work, his customers not knowing what they were. Gradually, however, consumption increased until it exceeded the former demand for green olives twelve times. At one time he was unable to get the ripe olive and again substituted the green fruit, when he found no one touched them. When the ripe olive becomes known in the East, as it will surely be as they become known in the market, it can be safely depended on that the consumption will increase in like ratio.

The olive is also a safe fruit. The crop never fails. It is also hardy and will continue to yield its fruit under the most trying conditions.

As to its profitableness, there is no fruit excels it in California. There is a party just out of Sacramento who planted forty acres of deciduous fruits. Around the outer edge of his orchard he planted a row of olive trees for ornament. His outer row of olives is now yielding him more money than his entire orchard.

A Mr. D. Donahue, who has a farm just north of Fair Oaks, has ten olive trees, now twelve years old. He did not know until recently that the fruit was of any particular value, but was accustomed to let the hogs fatten on it as it fell from the trees. He woke up one day to find that it was worth \$90 per ton on the trees, that being the price paid at Marysville. As the crop ran from two to three tons, he discovered that he had a veritable bonanza. The hogs got no more.

The Fair Oaks land is well adapted to the olive. In fact, this is the olive belt of the state. When I plant my ranch at Fair Oaks, as I hope to another season, at least two-thirds of it will be planted to olives. Then when my trees come into bearing I am going to ship the fruit to Chicago myself and pack it there in neat boxes and sell it to the tenderfeet as a rare delicacy. They will pay me a big price for it.

A Wanderling Tourist.

From Green Cove Springs

Mr. W. F. Wells, conductor of the excursion to Green Cove Springs, Fla., April 6, reports a pleasant and successful trip. Two families went down to stay, Mr. Sherman, of Michigan, and Mr. J. O. Thompson, of Chicago.

The latter takes charge of the canning factory. Mr. Wells

says Mr. Thompson was already at work in the building. The steel roofing had been shipped from Cleveland and was daily expected.

Three others of the party were Mr. W. F. Porter, Secretary of State for Nebraska; Mr. H. A. Collins, Chicago, formerly of Canada; Mr. R. S. Ashton, from Ohio. These were homeseekers in the Sunny South. They all enjoyed the trip up the majestic St. John's by steamer. The contrast of this scenery and that about Green Cove Springs was so great as compared with Southern Georgia and other parts of the journey, that it was like the lifting of a cloud and the outburst of the clear, shining sun when they went ashore and began to look about the pleasant little city and the colony lands surrounding.

Mr. Wells states that the strawberries, vegetable gardens and other crops of our people are all looking better than they had at any previous visit. The promise of a good yield is encouraging and all with whom he conversed were, apparently, in the best of spirits.

Of those mentioned, who now for the first time saw Green Cove Springs, all decided to take land and make for themselves homes. Mr. Porter takes 40 acres; Mr. Collins 40 acres, and Mr. Arthur made a selection of 40 acres and hopes to induce friends and neighbors in Ohio to join with him in setting up a neighborhood of the denomination of Friends. Mr. Sherman and Mr. Thompson had made their purchases before, and now went down to stay. All these are in character and habits of industry adapted to make a prosperous community.