

1896-

the foremost orange raising counties.

EL CAJON.

Such may be considered a general sketch of the county, and the attention is naturally turned to the many rich valleys from which so great a variety of products proceed. One of the most important of these is El Cajon. This valley is only 18 miles to the east of the city of San Diego, and is one of the largest and richest in the county. It has at present but a small population, but is filling up rapidly, greatly owing to the efforts of settlers whose success in raising grain, fruit and the raisin grapes, has brought it prominently into notice. At the present time there is an hotel, store, postoffice, with tri-weekly mail, a fine two story school house and a Presbyterian church organization, which contemplates at once building a church and obtaining a pastor.

1,000 ACRES IN FRUIT AND VINES.

Of the acreage of valley lands 1,000 acres are already in fruit trees and vines. Among the largest owners of orchards and vineyards may be mentioned Geo. A. Cowles, Maj. Levi Chase, R. G. Clark, Uri Hill, A. W. Hawley, M. Sherman, J. M. Asher, B. P. Hill, S. W. Barrett, and Messrs. McKoon, Cox and White. Most of the plantings are of recent date. The orchard and vineyards, now in bearing, produce the very finest flavored fruits, showing a range of profitable production embracing the orange, olive, raisin, grape, fig, apricot, peach, French prune, Japanese persimmon, apple, pear, and all the small fruits. The raisins, grown and made in the Cajon, have no equal in the State. They are fine, large clusters, thin skin, small seed and especially sweet, leaving a delicious flavor in the mouth long after eating. They have been pronounced by H. K. Thurber & Co. of New York, to be superior to the Malaga of Spain. The olive has proved to be a fast grower and profitable bearer, producing a fine paying crop in six years from cuttings. The Zinfandel wine made from the Sherman place has been analyzed by Prof. Hilgard of the State University and others, and pronounced second to none and superior to most made in the State. The Cajon Land Company are offering lands in 10-acre tracts and upwards. With the genial climate of this interior valley, distant only 13 miles from the coast, its pleasant surroundings, and the profitable productions grown, people looking for homes embracing all of these advantages cannot do better than cast their lot among these people. The following note, from one of the most experienced horticulturists in the State, in El Cajon, contains interesting information:

WHAT A HORTICULTURIST SAYS:

"I visited R. G. Clark last evening. He tells me his old vineyard returned \$85 per acre, gross, the 3d year; \$100 the 4th; \$150 the 5th; \$160 the 6th, and \$150 the 7th. His large early apricots, (Royal) at five years, yielded at the rate of \$500 per acre. One year a few rods of sweet potatoes yielded at the rate of 1,200 bushels per acre and sold at the rate of \$2,000 or over per acre. His eucalyptus grove was planted in 1877, and he estimates that the best acre would give 150 cords of stove wood. I am buying stove wood of him at \$5 per cord and hauling it myself; so you see his estimate would give \$750 per acre, gross. When I lived at the Brewster place, Paradise Valley, National Ranch, I planted orange trees 24 feet apart each way, and planted peach trees between them; the peach trees were the cuttings, left after others had bought the best; 18 months after

little over \$500 for the two acres. Here in the Cajon I have no definite data of the return of my peaches, but my early peaches brought a good price, and some of the trees gave as high as \$2.50 to \$3 each, at 3 years old. My 10-acre vineyard, the 2d year, gave me \$370 for fruit and \$40 for cuttings."

PRICE OF LANDS.

Lands are rated at present at \$5 to \$60 per acre according to location, but with the growing inquiry for land in this and similar valleys in this prosperous county, they must quickly rise in value.

THE BEST VALLEY.

This, the best valley in this county, is a long sweep of broad, level land, needing no clearing all ready broken by the plow, with no pioneer work to be done, or hardship or privation to be endured. A town is growing up rapidly, and a narrow-gauge railway has been surveyed from there to National City—the bay terminus of the California Southern Railroad.

Like every other good valley in this country, El Cajon (pronounced *Catone*) under a Mexican grant years before the cession of California to the United States. It contains about 48,000 acres, of which about 18,000 acres are valley land—all arable, rich, smooth and clear of brush or rocks. The main valley, where the town is laid out, is from five to six miles long and from three to four miles wide—forming a broad and beautiful plain, containing less waste land than any other plan of equal size in this county, or some of the adjoining ones. From this main valley run numerous branches—some of them, such as the valley of the San Diego river, being in themselves large enough for quite a settlement. The elevation is about 300 feet above sea level, and the whole is sunk in a girdle of hills 800 to 2,000 feet above the valley.

CELEBRATED RED LAND.

The land throughout the main valley is an uninterrupted sweep of the celebrated red land of California—a soil as rich as any kind, easily worked, retaining moisture better and therefore needing less water than adobe or sandy soils, and unanimously pronounced by the experience of all California to be the best of all soils for many kinds of fruit trees, and above all the natural home of the grape. Along the river the soil is a deep, fine alluvium, alternating in places with red land, and there is little to be found of the heavy adobe, which—though rich, is difficult to work.

GOOD FOR ARBORICULTURE.

The tract aforesaid embraces several miles of the bed of the San Diego river from which inexhaustible supply of mountain water for city purposes may be easily taken, and enough even for irrigation on a large scale may be had at less expense than it has taken to supply some of the colonies of Los Angeles county. Along the river for miles is a broad belt of cottonwood, willow and sycamore—affording, simply by topping and trimming, all the wood that a large settlement can need. The driftwood alone has for years more than supplied the needs of settlers for miles around, and fuel will be cheap for years to come. Along the whole length of the river new timber can be grown with surprising rapidity, if needed.

GOOD ROADS.

Good roads, with short and easy grades, already connect the valley with San Diego and National City, and all the adjacent valleys, while its situation—so near the bay and on the Julian and Valle de las Viejas roads—makes it the least isolated of all the valleys in the

and vine culture in Southern California for the last few years leaves beyond all doubt the result of prudence and work. The daily widening of the markets of the world—the daily increasing demands for California productions—the fast increasing popularity of its wines, and especially its raisins—the giant strides with which the tin can is overrunning the whole world—all leave no doubt as to the demand of the future. Increase of supply will only widen the market; and though prices may in time fall enough to prevent the very heavy profit of the present, they will never fall enough to prevent industry and care reaping a fair profit. The market-reports of New York city for the present year point clearly away from any such danger.

SPLENDID CLIMATE.

One great advantage of fruit and vine culture in Southern California is that it affords a light, easy and pleasant means of living by out-of-doors employment in a land where out-of-doors is for 350 days in the year more comfortable than the house. Most of the fruit and vine-growers of this immense section of the Pacific are men of some means, weary of the long struggle with ice, slush, snow and blow in the Eastern States—either without means enough to rest upon their oars, or preferring still to keep up their activity, yet without the thought or taste for general farming is the class who have made Southern California bloom. It is daily on the increase—it must increase without end. For such El Cajon affords advantages second to no other part of California. Bold as this statement may seem, it is made in full confidence that it will be verified by a full and careful examination by anyone who can rid himself of all prejudice acquired elsewhere. It is conceded that some other places at present enjoy the advantages of denser population, proximity to markets and water, but a careful examination of what has been done at El Cajon and its natural advantages, will show that it is inferior to nothing else and that the difference in price in land and water, and the working of the land will alone offset all these.

BEAUTY OF SCENERY.

All that the wildest enthusiast has ever cared of the beauty of California, seems tame and flat when the hills and plains of El Cajon put on their spring finery. It has long been known as the flower garden of Southern California, and no place is better adapted for the making of elegant and profitable homes by men having some means and plenty of industry at command.

NO IRRIGATION NEEDED.

Land in the valley being so near to water needs no surface irrigation. Without irrigation land can still be had from one-fourth to one-tenth the price of irrigable land. Three times the quantity of it can be worked with the same amount of labor. There is no expense or trouble with ditches, and the land is entirely free from Malaria of which no trace is found away from irrigated ground, but which on heavy soils irrigation will sometimes produce. The difference in the quality of the fruit may alone offset the other advantages of irrigation over non-irrigation.

Aside from the mere question of flavor, un-irrigated fruit possesses other advantages. It takes less time to dry and is less apt to be damaged by handling when it contains less water. It also contains about the same amount of solid matter, so that irrigated fruit may have no advantage for drying or canning. Of un-irrigated grapes 2½ to 3½ pounds will make a pound of raisins, while it takes 3 to 3½ pounds of irrigated grapes to make the same; so the irrigation increased the yield of the vine 33½ per cent. there would be no gain, to nothing of the difference in the cost of the water, working of the vineyard, and the quantity of ground that could be kept in vines. For wine-