



OVERLOOKING THE STREAM AND THE FERTILE LANDS BEYOND.

The Garden District of California

One hundred thousand acres of reclaimed lands in the delta of the Sacramento, and an approximately equal area lying along the San Joaquin, constitute the garden district of California. More fertile than the valley of the Nile, composed of the accumulated vegetable mould of countless centuries—the decay of a vegetation of tropical luxuriance—mingled near the stream and slough banks with a fine silt washed down from the mountain ranges which border this great interior valley of California, these lands are the richest on the American Continent. The natural fertility is enhanced by the advantages of California sunshine; this delta lies in the heart of this great State; it enjoys every advantage of typical California climate; in productiveness it has no equal; the range of products includes every orchard, farm and garden crop known to temperate and semi-tropic climates; rare and tender products are grown here on a vast scale, and ordinary crops afford yields that in most parts of this country would be phenomenal.

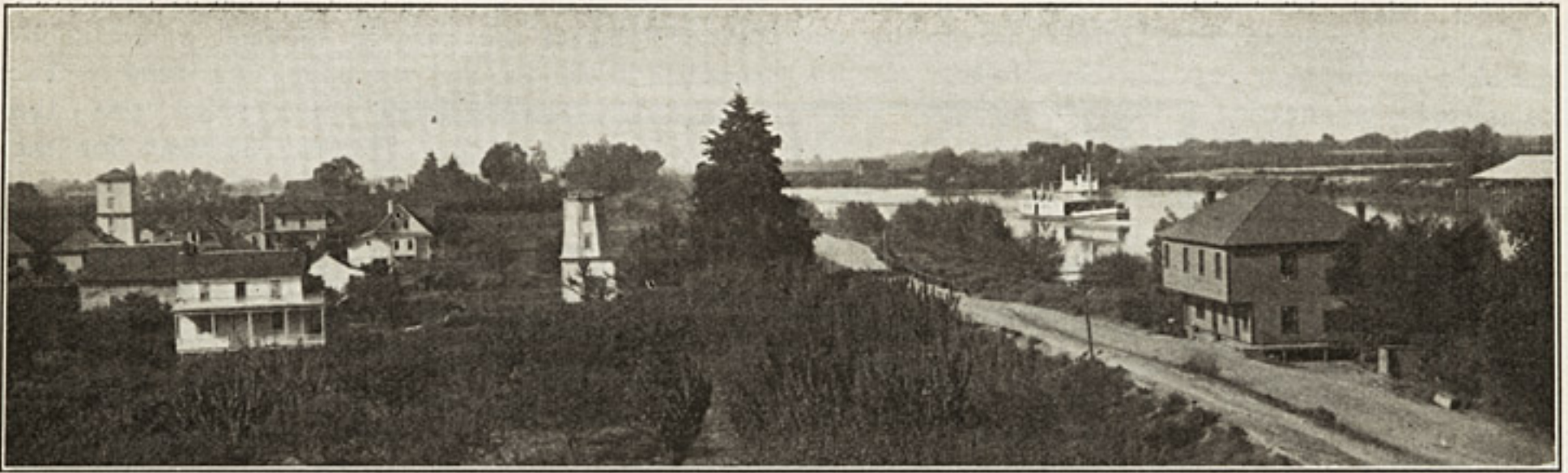
This delta region is famed for its products throughout the American Continent and in parts of the Old World. It is the asparagus garden of the United States, twenty thousand acres being planted to this vegetable alone; all the asparagus canneries of this country are grouped here. This is the principal Bartlett pear district of this country; nearly a million boxes of pears will be produced this year—half of the Bartlett pears grown in the State of California. Among the fruits that flourish in these fat lands are the apple, peach, pear, plum, cherry, fig, quince, orange, lemon, nectarine and pomegranate. This is one of the great bean districts in the world, fifty thousand acres being planted to this crop along the Sacramento River alone. Two million sacks of beans, nearly one hundred thousand tons, have been grown in a single year in the delta lands of Sacramento County alone, according to the report of the county statistician.

Other high class products of the delta lands include vegetables and fruits of many kinds. The acreage devoted to vegetables varies. These are grown in rotation and the planting is governed largely by the outlook for prices. According to conservative estimates there will be planted this year ten thousand acres of potatoes, three thousand acres of tomatoes, two thousand acres of onions, one thousand acres of canteloupes, five hundred acres of string beans, three thousand acres of other garden vegetables. There are four thousand acres of hops in the Sacramento delta. Another important and promising crop is hemp. Celery is grown extensively.

Alfalfa is a staple crop here as elsewhere in the valley portions of California. Ten thousand acres are devoted to this crop along the Sacramento River below this city and the annual hay crop tips the scales at one hundred thousand tons. Farm crops of every kind are grown to some extent. Barley is the principal cereal crop. The close proximity of the fields to deep water navigation reduces materially the cost of production. Grain grown in this delta has been placed, within 24 hours after cutting, in the holds of deep water ships for transportation to Liverpool. Barley is harvested early in June, and a second crop of beans is often grown on the same lands.

Great Basins That Await Reclamation.

No pen can adequately describe the manifold advantages of the improved lands of the California delta. One of the most delightful excursions in California is afforded by the river steamers which ply these streams. Orchards border the river in almost unbroken line, and beyond these are vast tracts devoted to vegetables of many kinds, alfalfa and other farm crops. The river is lined with handsome homes. The fancy cannot picture more delightful home sites than those upon the banks of this great river, overlooking the stream and the fertile lands beyond, with the dim blue of the distant mountain ranges rising



ORCHARDS BORDER THE RIVER IN ALMOST UNBROKEN LINE.

above the horizon. The trip from Sacramento to San Francisco is a constant delight; every bend of the stream brings into view new vistas of orchard, vineyard and garden. Almost every mile is marked by stately mansion or cozy cottage surrounded by comfortable shade trees, among which are the olive, the orange, the lemon and the fig. Throughout the journey one is favored with a continual revelation of the exuberant fertility of the delta lands, the productive possibilities of the California climate and the delights of the California home.

A Ten Million Dollar Crop.

The annual gross returns from delta crops is estimated conservatively at one hundred dollars per acre. One hundred thousand acres of reclaimed land lying near the Sacramento River below this city produces a return of ten million dollars a year. This is but a fraction of the lands capable of like intensive culture and extensive profits. It is estimated that there are in the great basins which lie on either side of the Sacramento River for nearly two hundred miles of its length, four hundred thousand acres of similar lands that are under water a large part of the year, a magnificent stretch of splendid soil that will some day yield bumper crops. The development of these submerged lands now practically unproductive, may be achieved when the Sacramento River is successfully controlled. The great values to be created by their reclamation from overflow are best appreciated in the light of the value of the lands already reclaimed. The submerged areas are for the most part similar to the lands of the

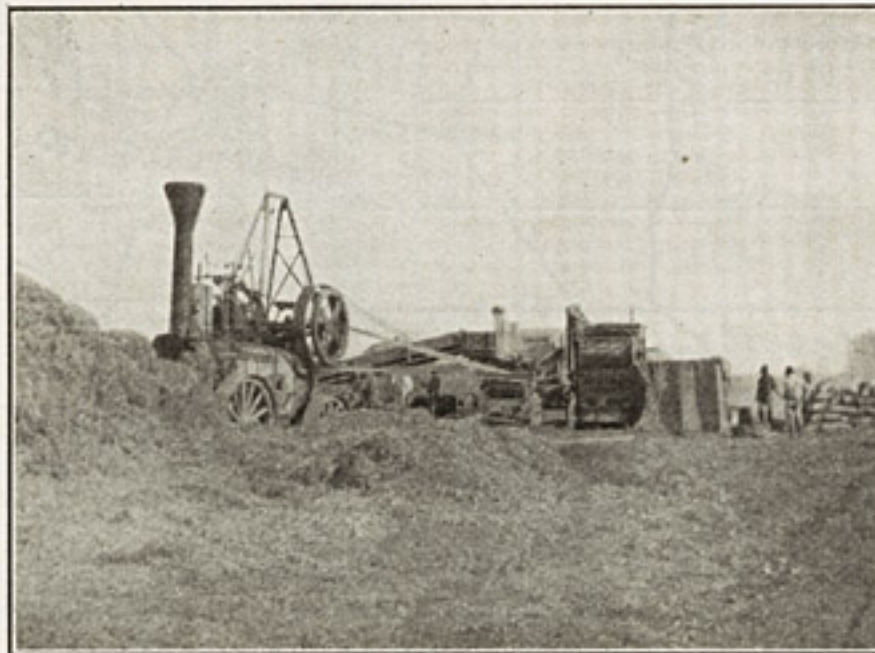
"island" districts here referred to. They are among the most fertile in the world. They are covered for the most part with a growth of tule, a native reed which attains a height of from ten to fifteen feet, and by its luxuriant growth attests the quality of the ground from which it grows.

The reclamation of these submerged lands and the insurance of a profitable agriculture on the portion of the basins subject to occasional or annual overflow, is the reward to be gained by the construction of a system of works that will effectively control the flood stages of the Sacramento River.

The Promise of a Greater Sacramento.

This reclaimable and fertile land, situated in the territory tributary to the City of Sacramento, is one of the most valuable assets of this city and is the largest factor in the promise of future growth. Its

reclamation and its development by a profitable agriculture may be expected to add forty millions a year to the commerce of this city. Developed in small farm units and devoted to intensive culture, these lands, which are now uninhabitable and unused, except for game preserves and summer grazing, may be expected to sustain a tributary population of a hundred thousand souls. A flood control project that will render secure the reclamation districts al-



A 40,000 Acre Crop of Beans Requires Many Threshers like this.

ready in existence will have the effect of adding materially to their population, for the reason that much of these lands cannot now be colonized and are necessarily held in large tracts. These lands will be reclaimed as rapidly as the development of a flood control project renders it feasible.

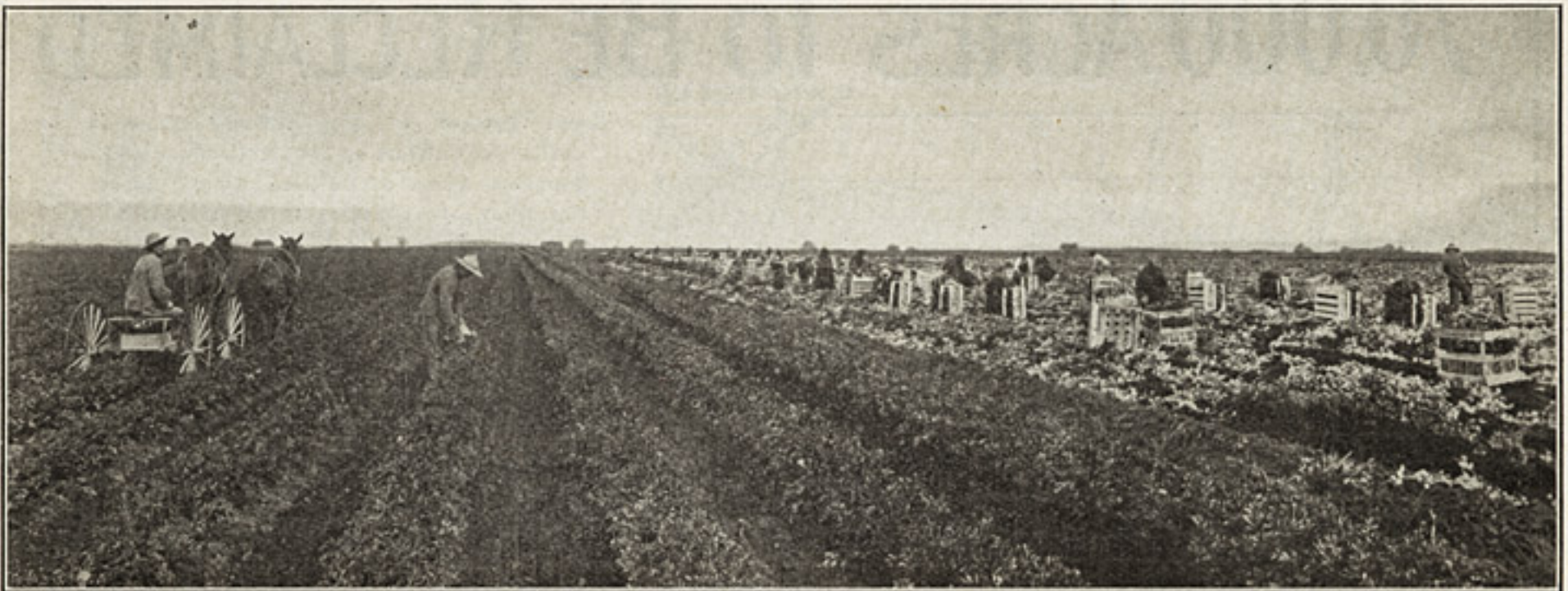
Several large reclamation projects are already in process of construction, others are to be undertaken in the near future. The projects recently completed, or nearing completion, include the Fair Ranch District of ten thousand acres near Knights Landing, the Farm Lands Investment Tract of fifteen thousand acres near Marysville, comprising practically the whole of the overflow lands lying on the left bank of the Feather River from the Yuba River to the Bear, and the Lovdal district in Yolo Basin, opposite Sacramento, comprising five thousand acres. Another reclamation district of large extent will be formed in the Sacramento Basin, the embankment of the Sacramento Southern Railway, now under construction, forming one of the protecting levees. The greatest project of all is that of the Natomas Consolidated of California, comprising seventy thousand acres of American basin immediately north of the City of Sacramento. This project is fully described in the following article. The principal cost of reclamation must of course be borne by the lands to be benefited. Neither the Federal Government nor the State can be expected to bear the cost of the reclamation of privately owned lands. Both the Federal Government and the State, however, have an interest in such development of natural resources, and a responsibility which can only be discharged by the development of a practical and effective

system of dealing with the river and its tributaries that will insure the passage of flood waters unobstructed to the sea and maintain a navigability that

will render this the great highway for the transportation of the products of these lands. The Federal Government is chiefly responsible for the presence in the river and some of its principal tributaries of vast quantities of mine debris which seriously complicates the problem of its control, and for this reason alone, if there were no other, should assume the principal responsibility for its improvement. The tule lands which await reclamation are approximately shown on the accompanying map. These lie in Colusa, Sutter, American, Yolo and Sacramento Basins and comprise, as before stated, in the neighborhood of 400,000 acres, the greater portion of which is typical delta land, more fertile than the Valley of the Nile. All of these lands lie immediately tributary to the City of Sacramento; the greater part are within forty miles of this city, the furthest point is only about seventy-five miles away. Sacramento is the natural and inevitable center for the financial, commercial and industrial activities certain to grow out of their development. The transportation systems that will serve this territory when it is reclaimed, the river, the railways and the electric lines, meet in a common center here. The interests of this city are most intimately connected with the development of a definite



MAP SHOWING APPROXIMATE SUBMERGED AREAS—400,000 ACRES OF GARDEN SOIL AWAITING RECLAMATION.

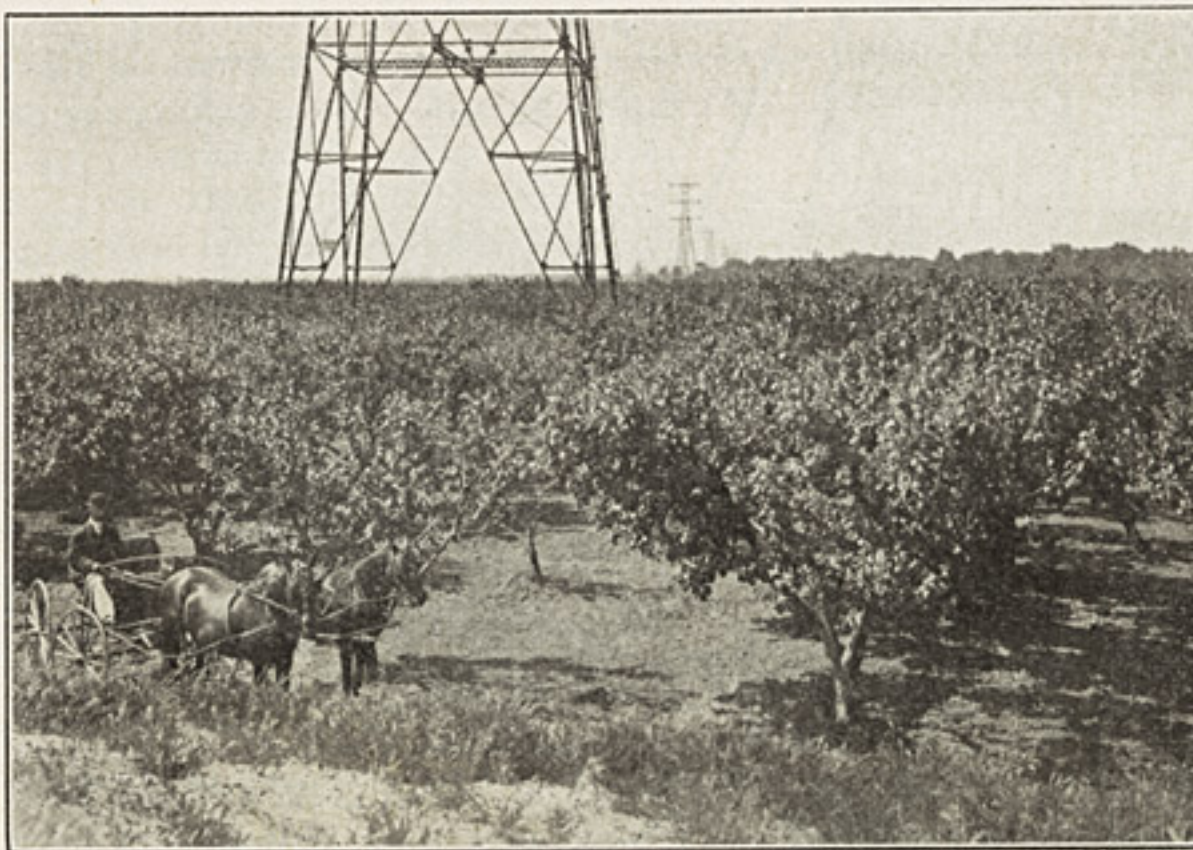


CELERY FIELD ON ROBERTS' ISLAND—SAN JOAQUIN DELTA.

and well conceived plan of dealing with the flood problem that will render possible the reclamation of all these basins. Such a plan, well conceived and ably executed, has been the need of the Sacramento delta from the beginning, but it was not possible in the early days because of the lack of accurate knowledge of the problem and of legal and other machinery with which to put it into effect. The greater part of the reclamation already effected has been through private initiative, each individual or district being concerned principally in the reclamation of comparatively small tracts. For several years a comprehensive flood control plan has been urged and a few years ago the State Legislature created a great reclamation district, comprising the entire area subject to annual or occasional overflow, a total of a million acres, and provided for its government by a Board of Trustees. The act creating this district, however, conditioned the powers granted to the Trustees upon the making of certain large appropriations by the State and Nation which have not been made, and their authority is, therefore, extremely limited. It now seems probable that an adequate flood control project will be developed and the garden

district of California increased by the addition of some of this 400,000 acres of tule land. The Federal Engineers are preparing the way by submitting detailed plans for a project that in their judgment will be sufficient to take care of the river at all seasons; great movements are on foot backed by enormous capital, looking to the reclamation of some of the basins, and there are rumors of projects for the reclamation of others. The reclamation of the American Basin is assured; separate movements now believed to be well advanced have for their object the reclamation of the Sutter and the Yolo Basins. The fact that great reclamation projects have been undertaken recently and others actively promoted has been an important factor in stimulating the present active interest in comprehensive flood control plans, and there is every reason to believe that if the plans of the engi-

neers for the treatment of the Sacramento River are carried out, it will be but a few years until the entire delta from Colusa to Suisun Bay, where now the tule flourish and water fowl make their home, will be a beautiful stretch of cultivated land, the largest and most productive garden tract to be found on the American Continent.



UNDER THE GREAT POWER LINE ON GRAND ISLAND.