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INTRODUCTION TO VOLUME 14

THE geographical limits of this volume include an extensive area marked by great physical contrasts. Its borders extend on the coast from San Francisco bay nearly to Humboldt bay, and in the interior from Mount Shasta to the Tehachapi range. Within these boundaries are the redwood forests on the western slopes of the Coast range; the fertile valleys of Napa, Sonoma, and Mendocino counties lying between two branches of the range; the vast valley of the Sacramento and the San Joaquin, shut in by the Coast range on the west, the Sierra Nevada on the east, Shasta and the Siskiyous on the north, and Tehachapi range on the south. Besides a large part of the redwood forests and the vast agricultural domain of the interior valley, the area comprises the agricultural and stock-raising counties north of San Francisco bay and the placer gold counties of the Sierras, including the romantic "mother-lode" region.

The aboriginal population of this territory is of course a matter of conjecture. It has been estimated that the entire state may have held 150,000 Indians, and probably a third of the total were within these limits. Had the natives of California possessed the self-protective instinct of the Plains tribes, the early history of the state, and in fact of the United States, would read quite differently. The winning of the West would be another story. But the native population was divided into many small local groups lacking the instinct for tribal organization and speaking different languages and numerous dialects. Furthermore, the high mountain regions, covered with an undergrowth all but impenetrable and cut by impassable gorges, prevented communication and association. These conditions would have tended to prevent a concentrated stand against encroachment, even if the people had been warlike. As it was, they fell easy prey to the greed of civilization.

Robbed of their lands by treaties unkept or unratified, they became what the state and the Federal Government term a problem. The situation is a striking illustration of the recognized fact that the only Indians who received anything like fair treatment were the fighters, the tribes that killed ruthlessly and brutally. The peaceful Indians were driven from their lands, killed or outraged on the slightest provocation.

From time to time the Government has purchased small and usually barren tracts of ground for these homeless Indians. Some of the

purchases seem to have been more profitable to the sellers than to the Indians. The result of such treatment is that the majority of the natives are gypsy-like field hands, moving from place to place where work in planting or harvesting can be had.

There are included in this volume representatives of four linguistic stocks: Athapascan, Yukian, Hokan, and Penutian. In general there is much cultural similarity throughout the entire region. Ceremonies were but poorly developed, clothing was of the simplest sort, implements were not numerous nor ingenious. Fish and game were plentiful, and in most localities a fairly reliable harvest of acorns and seeds was available.

The field work was done in the years 1915, 1916, 1922, 1924.

In collecting and preparing the material for this volume I have had the continued assistance and collaboration of Mr. W.E. Myers.

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