

**CALIFORNIA AND THE
CALIFORNIANS
AND THE ALPS OF
KING-KERN DIVIDE**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649324019

California and the Californians and the Alps of King-Kern Divide by David Starr Jordan

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BY
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NEW EDITION

San Francisco

The Whitaker-Ray Company
Incorporated

1908

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Editor of the Atlantic Monthly

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1773

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Mrs. F. W. Kelsey
6-1-32

PREFATORY NOTE.

This essay was first published in the Atlantic Monthly for November, 1898. It is here reprinted by the kind permission of the publishers of the Atlantic Monthly, Houghton, Mifflin & Co., and of the editor, Mr. Walter H. Page.

CALIFORNIA AND THE CALIFORNIANS

*BY DAVID STARR JORDAN
PRESIDENT OF STANFORD UNIVERSITY*

The Californian loves his state because his state loves him, and he returns her love with a fierce affection that men of other regions are slow to understand. Hence he is impatient of outside criticism. Those who do not love California cannot understand her, and, to his mind, their shafts, however aimed, fly wide of the mark. Thus, to say that California is commercially asleep, that her industries are gambling ventures, that her local politics is in the hands of professional pickpockets, that her small towns are the shabbiest in Christendom, that her saloons control more constituents than her churches, that she is the slave of corporations, that she knows no such thing as public opinion, that she has not yet learned to distinguish enterprise from highway robbery, nor reform from blackmail,—all these things and many more the Californian may admit in discussion, or may say for himself, but he does not find them acceptable from others. They may be more or less true, in certain times and places, but the conditions which

have permitted them will likewise mend them. It is said in the Alps that "not all the vulgar people who come to Chamouny can ever make Chamouny vulgar." For similar reasons, not all the sordid people who drift overland can ever vulgarize California. Her fascination endures, whatever the accidents of population.

The charm of California has, in the main, three sources—scenery, climate, and freedom of life.

To know the glory of California scenery, one must live close to it through the changing years. From Siskiyou to San Diego, from Mendocino to Mariposa, from Tahoe to the Farallones, lake, crag, or chasm, forest, mountain, valley, or island, river, bay, or jutting headland, every one bears the stamp of its own peculiar beauty, a singular blending of richness, wildness, and warmth. Coastwise everywhere sea and mountains meet, and the surf of the cold Japanese current breaks in turbulent beauty against tall "rincones" and jagged reefs of rock. Slumbering amid the hills of the Coast Range,

"A misty camp of mountains pitched tumultuously,"

lie golden valleys dotted with wide-limbed oaks, or smothered under over-weighted fruit trees. Here, too, crumble to ruins the old Franciscan missions, each in its own fair valley, passing monuments of California's first page of written history.

Inland rises the great Sierra, with spreading