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# Andrew Wilson's "Jottings" on Civil War California

*Transcribed, with Introduction and Notes,*

By JOHN HASKELL KEMBLE

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INTRODUCTION.—On April 25, 1861, the American clipper ship *Bald Eagle* arrived in San Francisco Bay, 41 days out of Hong Kong. She brought over four hundred Chinese coolies in her steerage, as well as a few white passengers in the cabin. Among the latter was Andrew Wilson, a young British journalist on his way from China to England by way of the United States. He had just quitted the editorship of the *China Mail*, principal English newspaper of Hong Kong, and, ten days after landing in San Francisco, he dispatched a letter back to this paper in which he described the voyage across the Pacific, and his first impressions of San Francisco. His shortest route east from California, insofar as time was concerned, lay south to the Isthmus of Panama by steamer, thence to the Atlantic by rail, and by steamer once more to New York. Wilson chose this route, but instead of taking the first steamer, which would have been the *Golden Age* on May first, he stayed over one ship and sailed in the *Sonora* on the eleventh. This gave him more time in San Francisco, permitted a visit to Sacramento, and a journey on the Sacramento Valley Railroad to Folsom, the end of track. Before leaving California, Wilson wrote three more letters back to the *China Mail*, describing his travels and his impressions of early Civil War days in this state. He showed particular interest in the newspapers of California, the conduct of politics, and the conditions under which the Chinese lived. His next letter was written from New York on June 5, 1861, three days after his arrival on the S.S. *Northern Light*, and described the journey from San Francisco by way of Panama.

Before sailing for England, Wilson passed some weeks in the United States, and two more letters appeared in the *China Mail* which were written during this visit. Both bore New York date lines, but one was mainly devoted to visits to wartime Baltimore and Washington, and the

other centered around a second-hand account of the First Battle of Bull Run and reactions to this defeat as Wilson observed them in New York. The series of published letters stopped here, and apparently Wilson's Hong Kong readers had no further account of his travels. Together, then, the letters covered a span of less than three months; but, ranging as they do from a trans-Pacific voyage to California, then to Panama, and finally to New York and Washington, they included glances at travel and conditions of life which were of more than ordinary interest.

Letters written on such a hurried trip could scarcely be expected to contain much serious commentary on the places visited. Brief visits frequently produce the most vivid impressions, however, and Wilson's writings were no exception to this generalization. He was a keen observer, a man of wide travel experience, and he knew how to write. His reactions to affairs in California and in the United States generally were lively, and sometimes they reflected sharp insight. The views which he put forward as to the Civil War and the qualities of Union and Confederate leadership were those frequently held by upper middle-class Britishers of his day. Granting their highly subjective qualities, these letters are vivid and often amusing commentaries on significant places and times.

Andrew Wilson (1831-1881) was the son of John Wilson (1804-1875), a Scottish missionary to Bombay who, himself, had something of a literary reputation as an orientalist. The son was trained at the universities of Edinburgh and Tübingen, and began his journalistic career when he took charge of the *Bombay Times* during the absence of its editor. While in India, Wilson also commenced a distinguished career as a traveler by a tour to Baluchistan. Returning to England, he began to contribute prose and verse to *Blackwood's Magazine*, thus initiating a literary connection which was to continue throughout his life.

Wilson went to the Far East once more in the latter 1850's, and became editor of the Hong Kong *China Mail*. His editorial duties can hardly have bound him very closely since, during a rather short sojourn, he traveled extensively in the countryside of southern China, and made a trip to Tientsin and Japan. During this period, he sent contributions to the London *Daily News* and the *Fall Mall Gazette*, as well as to *Blackwood's*. In 1860 Wilson published a pamphlet entitled *England's Policy in China*, which advocated policy changes later carried out by British diplomats and military men.

Leaving Hong Kong in mid-March 1861, Wilson journeyed back to

England, the trip which is partly described in the letters published here. The years until about 1873 he spent in Britain, writing for various papers and magazines. He published his first considerable book in 1868. It was called *The 'Ever-Victorious Army': a History of the Chinese Campaigns under Lt. Col. C. G. Gordon, C.B., R.E., and of the Suppression of the Tai-Ping Rebellion*. Treating of events in China between 1860 and 1864, it was based on Gordon's then-unpublished private journal, and for long it was regarded as the best account of the subject.

Andrew Wilson returned to India once more, and took up the editorship of the *Times of India* and the *Bombay Gazette*. Although he was in frail health, he made an arduous trip along the northern frontiers of India, and published in 1875 a book called *The Abode of Snow, Observations on a Journey from Chinese Tibet to the Indian Caucasus, through the Upper Valleys of the Himalaya*. A second edition appeared in 1876. Before his final departure from India, Wilson made an excursion into the wild state of Kathiawar. His last contribution to *Blackwood's* was written in the spring of 1877, and was a retrospective article on African travel. The last years of Wilson's life were spent in the Lake District of England, and he died at Howton-on-Ullswater on June 9, 1881.

The *China Mail*, the newspaper in which these letters were published between July 11 and November 1, 1861, was founded in 1845. Three years later, in 1848, a weekly edition, the *Overland China Mail*, began to appear. The "overland" in its title referred to the route to England by way of the Isthmus of Suez, in contrast to the all-water route around Africa. It was intended primarily for distribution outside Hong Kong, and, like so many other weekly editions of nineteenth-century newspapers, world news was largely eliminated and local news and original material predominated. It was from the *Overland China Mail* that these letters were transcribed. They appeared under headings "Jottings from an Old Pen," and "American Notes" — the latter a popular title with British commentators, being used by Charles Dickens after his first visit to America in 1842, and adopted later by Rudyard Kipling for his impressions of the country in 1889. The dates at the ends of all but the last two of Wilson's letters refer to the time of publication in the *Daily China Mail*, from which they were reprinted in the *Overland China Mail*.

Except for indicated omissions (in the interest of space) and obvious errors of press-room composition, the text has been reproduced as it

appeared. Corrections for the obvious errors have been supplied in square brackets. Microfilms of the numbers of the *Overland China Mail*, in which the Wilson letters appeared, have kindly been made available by the Library of Congress, whose collection contains a file of this newspaper. I am grateful to my father, Ira Oscar Kemble, for aid in proof reading.

#### THE WILSON LETTERS

San Francisco, May 3 [1861].

We were what the Americans call a "stag party" in the ship *Bald Eagle*, across the broad waters of the Pacific: that is to say, there were no ladies on board, not even Chinese ones, though of Chinese passengers there were upwards of four hundred.<sup>1</sup> Notwithstanding that slight drawback, we had a most pleasant passage over of only forty-one days, under the gentlemanly direction of Captain Edward Nickels, who is too well and too favorably known on the coast of China to require further commendation.<sup>2</sup>

Leaving Hongkong about the middle of March, it becomes pretty coldish off the coast of Japan, in fact about as chill as the feeling between Japanese and foreigners, or the love subsisting between Mr. Alcock and Mr. Harris.<sup>3</sup> Hail storms are not uncommon, and warm clothes become a necessity. We had a good deal of head wind in the first part of the passage, but the latter half was different, for we bowled over in twenty days from the coast of Japan to San Francisco, or 'Frisco, as some of the sailors call it. Give me a Captain who carries all sail he possibly can, and a mate, like Mr Brown, who takes the most cheerful view of things, and invariably insists that "everything is all right." I am sure if anything had happened to the *Bald Eagle*, and she had gone down head foremost, the last thing heard would have been the voice of Mr Brown crying, "Never fear, Sir, she'll be up again directly." I am sorry I cannot say as much good of the crew of the ship. A supply of proper seamen for vessels of the merchant service is a subject which requires much to be looked after. The half of our crew were very slight Manilamen, some of them diseased and unfit for work; two of the white men proved to be run-away British *soldiers*; and the few really efficient seamen on board had too much thrown upon them. We could not have met any emergency where our safety would have depended on smart handling of the ship, though the crew was superior, both in number and quality, to those of many other vessels which sail now-a-days. If ships

are to be manned by mere "bush-whackers," their loss will greatly increase.

With the exception of the cooks, few of the Chinese passengers deserted themselves on deck, and their principal occupation appeared to be hunting after a small species of animal which is not averse to man, however much man may be to him. The Emigration Act requires that when no European Surgeon can be had at a reasonable fee, there should be placed on board a Chinese doctor and a box of *European* medicines; but of what use are the European medicines to the Chinese? He ought to have *Chinese* Medicines, which he knows how to administer. It was amusing to notice the puzzled air with which the Doctor, who knew not a word of English, surveyed the row of bottles in his medicine chest, and examined the mysterious hieroglyphics on the weights. Luckily there was very little sickness on board, and I came to his aid. We had a daily talk and consultation over vocabularies and dictionaries in regard to the state of his flock; but whether it was that they all got well under my treatment, or were disgusted with some large doses of a certain balsamic oil which I insisted on being swallowed, our consultations almost ceased. Latterly one of my fellow-passengers administered some brandy to a Chinaman who had received an external injury, and the applications for that kind of medicine continued to the last, though seldom responded to. On the whole, there was very little sickness among the Chinese, and no deaths. There was far more serious illness among the crew than among the four hundred emigrants.

There was a little fight occurred on board, which possibly suggested to us how easily serious conflicts might occur in the ships to Havana, where the coolies and the crew regard each other with mutual suspicion and dislike.<sup>5</sup> The emigrants of the *Bald Eagle* were there indubitably of their own free will, and they had full confidence in the good feeling of the Captain, mate, and passengers; but, when none of us were out to see the origin of it, a fight occurred between them and some of the sailors, in which one of the Chinamen was severely cut about the head with a spade, and another struck with a knife upon the jaw. As is usual in such cases, the blood was smeared over the faces of the wounded men, and they were laid down on deck as if dead, presenting a ghastly enough spectacle. The Chinamen then began swarming up from below decks, looking very black at the sight of their comrades, and crying out "*Ta, ta,*" brick bats (from the cooking-places) and pieces of wood were rapidly exchanged between them and the sailors; a little Manilaman came

rushing along the deck like a tiger, with a knife in his hand, and there was as fair a prospect of a serious fight as could well be. It was only prevented by the active interference of the Captain and passengers, more particularly of Mr Edwards, of Hongkong and San Francisco, who occupied an unenviable position between the contending parties, and exposed to the missiles of both.<sup>6</sup> We were not afraid of the Chinamen hurting us, and so were able to quiet them down; but if the interference had been made by a hot-headed young American skipper, with a revolver in his hand, and afraid of the coolies taking the ship, the result would have been very different and bloody. These difficulties usually arise from little quarrels among the Chinese themselves, which it is best to leave them to settle in their own way, but which the crew like to put down by force. Our passengers had just cause of complaint against the Contractor for their provisions, on account of the character of the beef he had placed on board, and so they were incensed against the Chinaman who represented him. Barrel after barrel of this beef was thrown overboard, as unfit for use; and I would suggest that all provisions put on board for Chinese passengers should be certified as good by the Master of the vessel, who has great interest in seeing that they really are so, while the Harbour Master, who passes them at present, has no time for a sufficiently detailed examination. There are other matters too in which the Captain should have more power, as in the fitting up of cooking-places, &c., which are now left to the indiscretion of the Chinese Broker, who is bent on economy, and scarcely knows what allowance to make for the accidents of the sea. The way in which the berths and cooking-places were put up in the *Bald Eagle* was disgraceful to the Broker. Many of them broke down, to the risk of heads and limbs; and the latter were so constructed that some days, when the weather was bad, the emigrants got no food, as no cooking could be done, and they could not eat raw pork and unboiled rice. It was a wonder that the whole cooking appa[ra]tus was not carried away altogether, in which case we should have been in a quandary indeed. There is much resemblance at present between the Chinese emigration to Australia and California, and that which formerly used to prevail from England, when ships were taken up by contractors, who were greedy economists, and provided insufficient food and accommodation.

I think many sick people who are sent from China in a crowded steamer, to run the gauntlet of the Red Sea, and perhaps leave their bones to be picked by Egyptian vultures, would do much better to start

from Hongkong in a comfortable clipper ship for San Francisco. The expenses of this way to England are as follows: —

Hongkong to San Francisco . . . . .	\$150
San Francisco to New York, via Panama . . . . .	200
New York to Britain, via Glasgow line . . . . .	75
Total . . . . .	<u>\$425,</u>

which, you see is considerably less than what is charged by the P. & O. Company, though the incidental expenses will be greater. The atmosphere of the Pacific Ocean is very dry for a sea air, and is particularly favourable for invalids. On board a large sailing vessel with only three or four passengers, there is that quiet and rest which the invalid so much requires, and which is so impossible of attainment in a crowded steamer; and in the climate of California we have one of the most efficient health-restorers in the world. But I shall be able to write you more on this subject by-and-by.

Pleasant as the voyage was across the Pacific, it was still pleasanter to see the green tinge which indicates the neighbourhood of land — and to feel that we had crossed the great Ocean, and were in the presence of a new Continent destined to contain the most stupendous development of the human race. We struck the coast of California some sixty or seventy miles North of San Francisco, and saw fine wooded hills, the abode of Indians and grizzly bears, and with fine open green spaces, like English parks, scattered amongst them. Towards the capital, the coast became more precipitous and the hills more barren. The pilot who came to conduct us into the harbour was in a small schooner, riding beautifully on the heavy swell; and after crossing the bar where the waves rose high, we entered the Golden Gate, marked on the one side by a natural arch in the rock, and on the other by a noble light-house, and sailed into the fine large harbour just in time to drop our anchors by dusk.<sup>7</sup>

A boat took three of us ashore that night, a space of about two or three hundred yards, for the immoderate sum of a dollar a head, which, considering that we had but one boatman and had to steer ourselves, was a pretty tall sum, and could hardly have been much out of the way, as both my companions were well acquainted with the country. Having been introduced to the Union Club, I put up there, in preference to a big hotel, which would be intolerable after the quiet of China.<sup>8</sup> Before retiring, I took a stroll with a friend along the principal street, and dropped into a restaurant in order to try the far-famed oysters of the

country. There I saw a little boy, about seven or eight years old, sitting on the counter, with a flushed face, drinking miniature cocktails, and talking politics, — saying, “Damn these Secessionists! What *I* say is, that we have stood a great deal too much.” Shortly after a gentleman, with a rather raised look, said to me, “Will you join us, Sir? We’re going to take a Union drink all round? [”] — Then I began to realise that I was in California and the Disunited States.

But more anon.

*China Mail*, July 11 [1861].

*Supplement to the Overland China Mail*, No. 240. Hongkong, 27 July 1861. n.p.

Sacramento, 7th May, 1861.

This is at present the Capital of California, and contains the Capitol of the state — a large brick building, where Legislators and Senators do congregate, and where one of the latter, a few days ago, declared that he meant “to deal” with “the false-hearted and hollow-headed member for San Francisco,” — immediately after illustrating his meaning by tapping that member on the head with a heavy stick, which stretched him on the floor of the house.<sup>9</sup> I am bound to say, however, that when I was in the Senate, there was an amount of business quietly transacted which would have astonished the Legislative Council of Hongkong, and driven Mr Cleverly to despair.<sup>10</sup> Each member had a desk before him, and very frosty looking diggers dropped in and out of the public space in a manner calculated to shew their independence. In many respects the order of nature is here reversed from Hongkong. There, the Editor must go to the Governor, but here the latter waits upon the former. I saw Dr Downey, the Governor of California, come into the office of the *Alta California* newspaper as a man and a brother; and one person told me (though I do not believe it) that, ten years ago, this Governor borrowed ten dollars of him to get up to the diggings.<sup>11</sup> Notwithstanding the want of ceremony and occasional violent scenes in these Legislatures, there is much good strong sense in them, and they afford a fine field for men of energy and talent. So long as a man here pays his way and shews any special capacity, the fields of wealth and power are as open to him as to all.

I had the pleasure of dining [here] with a rather celebrated character in California politics — Mr Nugent, who was run, nearly with success, by the Democratic party for the United States Senate at last election.<sup>12</sup> This gentleman was for many years Editor of the San Francisco *Herald*, and was described to me as having fought more duels than any man of



his age, and as having been almost shot to pieces. I found Mr Nugent to be a smooth-faced, young-looking, pleasant and genial person, that most people would have been the last to fix upon as a fire-eater, and he would not admit having fought more than three duels. He had some slight Milesian traits, and another Senator to whom he introduced me was unmistakably a Scotchman, though an altra [ultra] anti-nigger man. There has been, of course, great excitement here about the preservation of the Union, and every stranger arriving in Sacramento is eagerly scanned. As I had the fortune to fall among a set of politicians, on whom — rightly or wrongly — some suspicion rested, I had the pleasure of hearing it stated in the street next day that I was a Secessionist, and the statement was coupled with some wholesome advice as to what a Secessionist need expect if he lifted his little finger in Sacramento. Mr Nugent is not at all alone in his experience. One editor in San Francisco told me that a duel was an editorial baptism in California; and I may mention, that this gentleman had a fierce air, wrote with a large pen about the thickness of a man's thumb, and told me that he had been both in the United States army and also captain of a merchant vessel. If he had added that he had also been a bucanier [*sic*], I should not have been in the least surprised. A severe law was passed against duelling, but it has never been put in execution, and the very member who proposed the law fought a duel three weeks after doing so. The progress of events, however, and the death of Mr Broderick, have rather discouraged this habit, and, as regards it, California is now no worse than the majority of the United States, and is better than some of those in the South.<sup>13</sup> Still the idea remains that a man ought to defend himself; and when, a few days ago, a Member of the Senate was knocked down, though a Committee was appointed on the offender, and it was universally acknowledged that no cause had been given for the offence, yet nothing came of it, and the matter was allowed to drop.

Sacramento is rather farther from San Francisco than Canton from Hongkong, and similarly situated with the former city — on a low plain traversed by streams. The steamers which run up to it are even more splendid than the *White Cloud*, and the passage costs only One Dollar, the same sum being charged for dinner; but one draw back to the competition which has reduced the price is, that the steamers race against one another, and an explosion has been prophesied in the papers for several days.<sup>14</sup> The dinner is excellent, but no wine, beer, or spirits are to be seen at it, only tea and coffee; and the bar, where all the drinking

is done standing, is so ingeniously placed, that few will be at the trouble of paying it a second visit; and so, disreputable characters having once got into it, usually remain there until the steamer reaches its destination or they are turned out. Indeed, to all outward appearance, California is an extremely sober country, and has quite lost the character it had in this respect in former years. The people are naturally so excitable, that they are compelled to do all in their power to repress drinking habits. They are naturally "tight," and so do not require stimulants. Still there are occasional indications that the old leaven of unrighteousness is not entirely lost. There is such a thing as an "eye-opener" sometimes taken before breakfast; and stalwart figures from the mines are to be seen wandering about the streets of Sacramento, in a condition of bottled speech, while their legs still perform their usual functions. It is a remarkable fact, too, that there are what are called "Asylums for the Inebriate" in this country.

The passage up the river is one of great interest and beauty. In the upper part of the bay the shores are often slices, as it were, of bright green grass running into the water; while willowy hills with large villages, or perhaps a solitary ranch, at the foot, rise beyond, and stretch into large round swelling hills tufted with dark bushes and dead oaks, — all under a most brilliant sky, ever changing its wonderful tints. On the right hand, just after entering the river, Monte Diablo rises up in towering grandeur; and on the left we have the town of Benicia, famous for its illustrious "Boy."<sup>15</sup> Further up the river, their [thick?] forests line the bank, and broad cattle lands stretch away, bounded, high in the distance, by the magnificent snowy range of the Sierra Nevada.

A Railway runs from Sacramento to Folsom, a village among what are called "the foot hills," or the hills at the bottom of the Sierra.<sup>16</sup> The rail runs over level land, scattered with oaks, and with an occasional cart trotting over it, on no track and in no particular direction. Little wooden houses are seen here and there, something like the wooden caravans to be seen at fairs in England, and which contain the Albino lady, the little dwarf, and the bloated giant on whom we expended our youthful tuppence. These, you must know, are the homes of the land, and very pretty some of them look, though most of them suggest the reverse of the idea of infinity. I have seldom seen a finer sight than the Sierra presented as we rattled over this plain. Their white summits blended with the white clouds, which shone gloriously above them against the evening sunlight, like the land of Beulah to the pilgrim's entranced gaze.

The village of Folsom is a very fair instance of a Californian settlement.<sup>17</sup> You will have it by imagining fifty or sixty of these caravan wooden houses on the side of a low hill crowned with some fine trees and a rural church, also of wood;— a front street, with half-a-dozen stores and as many grog-shops;— an hotel;— a railway station; and a yellow river sweeping round below, with its banks all gutted and tunnelled, as if a million colossal rabbits had made it their warren. That is Folsom; and if you want to see one of the houses, imagine one of the aforementioned caravans, with a German or Irish servant in a large coal-scuttle bonnet, washing clothes at the backdoor;— a young mother, with pretty full form and not unpleasing countenance, mending clothes in the lilliputian verandah in front, while a chubby infant is rolling on the ground beside her;— and a long cart, with two fine horses, driving up, in which is the father, a tall spare figure, standing very upright in a pair of long dirty boots. Float around a lucent air, of which every breath is exhilarating; look through mighty oak trees on green swelling hills, with snowy mountains flashing in the distance, — and you have a Californian scene exactly as it lies before me.

*Supplement to the Overland China Mail, No. 242.* Hongkong, 28 August 1861.  
n.p.

San Francisco, 10th May, 1861.

Walking the streets of this city, the first thing which attracts attention is, that almost every man is dressed in handsome black clothing, and there is a superficial appearance of Piccadilly about the whole population. On looking a little deeper, however, there are certain characteristics which show that the handsome clothing partakes of the nature of varnish. In fact, pick out the man with the most glossy hat and boots, and the most superfine broadcloth in San Francisco, and you will find that his fingers have been conversant with the shovel or the hoe, or that he has got a bowie-knife somewhere about his waist, or a revolver in the pocket of his surtout. On examining these extra well dressed people, you will remark a certain wildness about the eyes, showing that life is at high pressure, and a few of those grey hairs which are so abundant here.

But without meaning to insult any person, I hope I may be allowed to say, that the stranger from China will be most struck by the Bread-and-butter of San Francisco. *Bread-and-butter* — I don't want to mince matters, or come in with sneaking encomiums. The bread-and-butter of San Francisco is so good, that I have done little else than eat it since I came here. Now I realize how we are starved in Hongkong in regard to

these essentials, and how we are, consequently, driven, *per force*, to take out our quota of the staff of life in the shape of grain which has been distilled into some of those liquids of which you may gain information by applying to Messrs Lane, Crawford & Co.<sup>18</sup> There must be some saw-dust in the bread of Hongkong, or else the wheat is most miserable. Here we have a decided advantage as regards food. The mutton is nearly as good as that of Shanghai, the pork is inferior to that of China; but then the beef, the venison, the bear, the lamb, the fowls, the salmon, the game, the vegetables, and the fruits. And the strawberries! I give the strawberries a sentence to themselves, because it is worth while coming over here from China only to taste them. Rosy, soft, and sweet as any virgin's mouth — who can describe them? Even bear-steak is not at all bad. The "grizzlies" feed chiefly on the vegetable kingdom, so their flesh has none of that rank flavour which belongs to a tiger-chop. I am afraid these grizzlies are rather ill-treated persons. They live on roots; they never attack any person who does not meddle with them; and if they get a little wild when a conical ball is fired into them, they are surely not to blame.

You will want to know something about the price of living here; and, in order to introduce that subject, I may remark, that the Americans are not so frank as Englishmen, and have got a way of speaking at you rather than to you. To illustrate: — Coming down in one of the river boats, two persons placed themselves beside me, apparently passenger and touter, when the following colloquy took place: —

*Touter.* — Are you going to our Hotel, Sir?

*Passenger.* — Most decidedly; it is the quietest, best conducted, and cheapest house in San Francisco.

*Touter.* — Well, Sir, we *do* try (he says this in a deprecating manner) to do all we can for our friends.

*Passenger.* — What I like about it is, that it is a temperance house, and there is never any disturbance in it.

*Touter.* — (Turning to me) Would you allow me, Sir, to give you our card?

You will remark how thoroughly these employés understood their man in recommending the hotel to me as a temperance house. I think its terms were a dollar a day; but the best class of hotels here and at Sacramento charge two dollars and a half a day for board and lodging, the two going almost invariably together. Everything in these large hotels is conducted systematically, and almost by machinery, but they are

very dreary places, and I strongly advise every stranger coming to San Francisco to put up at the "Union Club," if he can get an introduction to it, and in that there is no difficulty for any gentleman. It is in a most central situation, in Montgomery Street, above the office of Wells Fargo & Co., the Express Agents. The expense is less than that of an hotel, the cooking is much better, the wines are good, the society is on an easy friendly footing, and Mr Belden the Manager has not forgot the *bonhommie* of his native Derry, while he is able to post you in the mysteries of San Francisco; and he will arrange for the introduction to the Club of any passing visitor of respectability.<sup>19</sup>

I know of five daily papers published in San Francisco, and there may be several more.<sup>20</sup> The leading newspapers at present are the *Evening Bulletin* and the *Alta California*, the former of which, like more than half of the newspapers over the world, is under the direction of a Scotsman.<sup>21</sup> The use of both of these papers dates from the time when their respective Editors were killed, one in a duel, and the other, I think, in the street.<sup>22</sup> That is rather a novel way of increasing the circulation of a paper, but it is nevertheless a fact; and so a dead Editor is sometimes of more use than a living one. The explanation is, that the public was determined not to give its countenance to such violent attempts to restrain the freedom of discussion. These papers have a circulation of between five and seven thousand, and are printed at steam presses which throw off about sixty copies per minute, and are not entirely exempt from that tendency towards explosion for which the steam engines of America are noted. The proprietor of one of them informed me, when I called upon him, that the *China Mail* was "the star paper of China," with which statement I modestly acquiesced; but star papering it is a more arduous occupation in San Francisco than it is in Hongkong. Good compositors make from thirty to forty dollars per week, but they get through a great deal more work than compositors in the East can; and three associated papers pay six hundred dollars a month for telegraphic news from the Eastern States across the plains.

Let no one come to San Francisco with the notion that it is the uncivilized town of ten years ago. The streets are crowded with ladies, many of them beautiful, and with a rosy complexion such as we look for in vain in the East. Society is now organized and settled. There are theatres, lectures, many handsome churches, and as much civilization as most men can admire. Almost the whole state of California is in a quiet settled condition; and an exentric [*sic*] English Colonel who came to it

lately, left in extreme disgust at having made the mistake of visiting such a confounded civilized country. If things go on at this rate, there will soon be no corner of the world left for the men of nature to retire to when they want a little privacy for communing with her.

*China Mail*, August 29 [1861].

*Overland China Mail*, Hongkong, No. 243, 12 September 1861, pp. 970-971.

*(To be concluded)*

#### NOTES

1. The *Bald Eagle* was an extreme clipper ship built by Donald McKay at East Boston in 1852. Her dimensions were: tonnage 1703.62, length 215.8 feet, beam 41.2 feet, depth 23.6 feet. She was owned throughout her career by George B. Upton of Boston. After four round voyages between New York and San Francisco in 1852-56, she entered the China and trans-Pacific trades. On the voyage after that described here, she sailed from Hong Kong for San Francisco on Oct. 15, 1861, with a full cargo of rice, sugar, and tea, as well as \$100,000 in treasure, and was never heard from again. No traces of wreckage were found, and it has been supposed that she foundered in a typhoon in the China Sea.

2. Edward C. Nickels, a famous captain of American sailing ships, commanded the *John Q. Adams* from 1844 to 1850, the *Flying Fish* from 1851 to 1859, and went to the *Bald Eagle* in 1860. He left the ship when she returned to Hong Kong after the voyage described here, and later died there of yellow fever.

3. Rutherford Alcock was then British consul-general at Yedo, and Townsend Harris was United States minister-resident in Japan. They differed in both personality and policy; during the period 1859-62, when they were both in Japan, it was difficult for them to carry out any program of diplomatic cooperation. See, for example, *Alta California*, Apr. 29, 1861, "The Troubles in Japan," including letter from Harris dated Feb. 12, 1861.

4. The Emigration Act contained the Hong Kong regulations governing conditions aboard ships carrying Chinese emigrants.

5. At this time, large numbers of coolies were being imported into Cuba as plantation labor. In this, and in other trades where Chinese were sent under contract in what amounted to conditions of slavery, there were occasional outbreaks of violence among the coolies aboard ship.

6. H. F. Edward was a member of the firm of Edward and Balley, commission merchants.

7. The *Bald Eagle's* arrival in San Francisco on Apr. 25, 1861, was reported in the *Alta California* of Friday the 26th. On the 27th, under "Personal," appeared

this item: "Mr. A. Wilson, editor of the *China Mail* newspaper of Hongkong, is in this city on his way to London."

8. The Union Club occupied rooms at the northwest corner of Montgomery and California streets.

9. On April 25, 1861, during a discussion in the state assembly on the reform-school bill, D. L. Haun of Yuba used language toward James A. Banks of San Francisco which resulted in his temporary arrest by the sergeant-at-arms. After adjournment, while Banks still sat at his desk on the floor of the assembly, Haun approached him and struck him on the head with a heavy hickory cane, laying open a gash over an inch long. Bystanders intervened and prevented a second blow. A special committee was appointed by the assembly to investigate the incident. Banks was a Republican and Haun a well-known Secessionist.

10. Charles St. George Cleverly was surveyor general of Hong Kong in 1861 and an active member of the legislative council.

11. John G. Downey was governor of California from Jan. 14, 1860, to Jan. 10, 1862.

12. John Nugent was one of the founders of the San Francisco *Daily Herald* in 1850. He fought duels in 1852 and 1853, both arising out of his editorial policy. In each of them he was injured. Nugent was the candidate of the pro-slavery or "chivalry" Democrats for the gubernatorial nomination in 1859 and was runner-up for election to the U. S. senate in 1861.

13. David C. Broderick, U. S. senator from California, fought a duel with David S. Terry, chief justice of the supreme court of California, on Sept. 13, 1859. He was mortally wounded and died on Sept. 16.

14. The *White Cloud* was a wooden, side-wheel steamer of 520 tons, built in New York by Thomas Collyer in 1858-59 for service in China. She was owned by J. M. Forbes. Sailing from New York on March 2, 1859, she arrived in Hong Kong on June 7 of the same year, and entered the trade between Hong Kong and Canton.

At the time of Wilson's visit to California, there was brisk competition in the San Francisco-Sacramento trade. The well-established California Steam Navigation Co. had the *Chryso polis* and *Antelope* in service, and the "opposition" line was running the *Nevada* and *John T. Wright*. Passenger fares were \$1 cabin and \$0.25 deck with freight \$1 a ton. The steamers raced with enthusiasm; nevertheless, no boiler explosion occurred in that particular trade that year.

15. John Carmel Heenan, the "Benicia Boy," a prize-fighter, was at the height of his fame in 1861.

16. The Sacramento Valley Railroad was completed from Sacramento to Folsom in 1856. It was absorbed by the Central Pacific Railroad in 1865, and eventually became a part of the Placerville Branch of the Southern Pacific.

17. Folsom was laid out in 1855 by Theodore D. Judah as the temporary terminus of the Sacramento Valley Railroad.

18. Lane, Crawford & Co. was a Hong Kong firm of general storekeepers and importers of all manner of American and European goods.

19. Francis C. Belden.

20. There were 14 daily newspapers in San Francisco in 1861.

21. C. O. Gerberding, James W. Simonton, and George K. Fitch were editors and proprietors of the *Daily Evening Bulletin* in 1861.

22. Edward Gilbert, editor of the *Alta California*, was killed in a duel with J. W. Denver in Aug. 1852. On May 14, 1856, James King of William, editor of the *Bulletin*, was shot in the street by James P. Casey. King died on May 20.



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# Andrew Wilson's "Jottings" on Civil War California

*Transcribed, with Introduction and Notes,*

By JOHN HASKELL KEMBLE

*(Concluded)*

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San Francisco, 11th May, 1861.

You know how difficult it is to get any general information from Chinamen, and how they nearly drove the Interpreters mad, last year at the North, with their answers to the questions put to them. They are nearly as bad as that Arab Sheik who, when Mr Layard made inquiries of him as to the trade of a certain town, replied, — "Many camels come and go, but how many, and what they bring, is known to Allah alone."<sup>23</sup> The Chinese, however, often conceal their knowledge purposely. The front of stupidity which they present is often assumed as a protection to themselves, and assumed, at times, with much profound policy.

Such an appearance of stupidity is especially common among the Chinese in California, because they are there held down with a very strong hand, and feel somewhat depressed. As an Englishman, they were more ready to talk to me than to Americans; for, however it may be at Canton, here in California the "Ameli kee" man is by no means regarded as a benevolent friend by John Chinaman. But, of course, the information I could gather from the Chinese themselves as to their condition, could only be got incidentally, and they were a little alarmed when at first I began incautiously to ask them questions.

There is no doubt that there is a great "down" upon the Chinese in California, but I think that the capitalists of the country are favourable to the introduction of them, and that the prejudice against them is softening rather than increasing.<sup>24</sup> Their timidity and aversion to fighting is one reason why they are despised in a new country, where personal courage is of so much importance and is so highly valued. One of the hits which caused most laughter in the theatre I was at last night, was

made by the actor who represented the coward of the piece, and who, on being forced to fight, cried out in pidgin English — “No can fightee: can wash clothes.” This was received with shouts of laughter; but I am told that the Chinese are beginning to use knives and revolvers, when they are too much “put upon”; and the up-country papers often contain little paragraphs headed “Fight with Chinese,” which abundantly shew that John is beginning to learn some of the characteristics of the bolder and manlier race among whom his lot has here been thrown.

I was much obliged to the Rev. Mr Loomis, a missionary to the Chinese in this place, for his kindness in taking me about among them, and acting, when necessary, as an interpreter.<sup>25</sup> They may be divided into two classes: The merchants who carry on the trade with China and with the gold districts, and the labourers who are on their way to and from the mines. These last are to be found in the “Kumpanee Houses,” of which there are a number in San Francisco, each house being usually filled with men from some particular district or of some particular clan.<sup>26</sup> Thus the people of Sunon — the district of Kwang-tung opposite you in Hongkong — have got a house of their own, and you would meet there faces that had perhaps become familiar to you on shooting excursions.

On entering one of these houses, we at once see that John Chinaman, like John Bull, carries his country about with him wherever he goes. Instead of the uncorking of beer-bottles, we meet the odour of the opium-pipe; and I was told at the Custom House that about six hundred thousand dollars’ worth of prepared Opium came last year to San Francisco, besides what may have been smuggled. There, also, are the little *c’ha-pui* from which the Chinaman drinks his sugarless tea, the chopsticks, the rice-bowls; and see if that dirty cook in the corner is not cutting up the identical pieces of pork-fat which forms such a stumbling-block to the European debutant in Chinese chow-chow. There is also a joss-house, richly ornamented, as it ought to be in this land of gold; and the sleeping rooms are the same little wooden boxes in which we have spent so many pleasant nights when there was scarcely room for us and the mosquitoes in them together.

The grand complaint raised by the Californians against the Chinese is, that they are most of them coolies held to servitude — in fact *Slaves*, who unfairly compete with free labour; but I could find no ground for this allegation. The head of the “Kumpanee Houses,” the lodgers in the houses, and the respectable merchants, agreed in giving a different ac-

count of the state of matters. They said — and this you in Hongkong know to be the case — that nearly all the Chinese who come over to California have had some little property of their own sufficient to pay their passage, or else have been able to raise the necessary sum on the security of their friends. It frequently happens that they reach San Francisco without funds, or are reduced to poverty by some unfortunate speculation at the diggings. In these circumstances the “Kumpanee Houses” are prepared to advance money if the poor Chinaman can get a friend or two to indorse the bill. The rates of interest thus charged vary considerably, according to the character and prospects of the borrower, and run up sometimes so high as ten per cent per mensem. A very respectable and pleasant Chinese merchant, who wished his countrymen to stand well in my estimation, was at pains to explain that the high rates of interest charged were necessitated, not so much by any tendency to unfaithfulness on the part of the debtors, but because their lives and their earnings in the diggings were so insecure, that many of them were unable to pay up.

But the Chinamen who thus borrow are not engaged to the company as labourers. They are free to go where they please, and to work as they please, so long as they pay the percentage. As a general rule the work done by Chinamen at the mines is of such a kind that it does not require much combination amongst them. Capital will of course exercise its legitimate influences — here and there a wealthy Chinaman will hire a few labourers of his own race — and all men who are in debt must work at a disadvantage (to their employers, I believe, as well as to themselves), but white miners are in the same position; the most extensive works for obtaining gold have been undertaken by wealthy capitalists, and are carried out by means of white hired labourers. So far as I could discover, there were no indications of any “peculiar institution” among the Chinese in California in regard to ordinary labour different from the ordinary influence of capital in this and other free countries.

There is, however, one species of slavery among the Chinese here, as well as in Hongkong, which gives colour to the allegations brought against them. I allude to that unfortunate class of females who are really held as slaves, and of whom the very dregs are imported into California. As a general rule, Attai is not very beautiful; but the California Attai — ugly, pock-pitted, not young, and diseased, is an object to fill gods and men with shuddering and pity. Being, as I have said, the very lowest of this unfortunate class of women, they are often treated by the Chinese

with great inhumanity; and when — from whatever cause — no longer able to serve the purpose of bringing money to their masters or mistresses, they are flung aside to die miserably in any corner, without any alleviation of their sufferings. Cases of this kind, brought before the police, create much indignation against the Chinese, and naturally support the idea that Chinese coolies are worked on a system to which no white labourers would submit, and which secures them toleration and the ordinary offices of humanity only so long as they are profitable by being under-worked. This feature of the Chinese system and character brings its own punishment in this part of the world.

I have said that there is a disposition among capitalists to favour the introduction of Chinamen, and little disposition amongst the people to make a crusade against them. Several intelligent men, possessing farms and gold claims, told me that they were desirous of seeing more Chinese brought over, and that the cry got up against them a few years ago, and which resulted in an illegal law prohibiting their importation, was more the work of a few cunning politicians than an expression of the feelings of the people.<sup>27</sup> The few gold miners with whom I had the opportunity of conversing, and who were working in the vicinity of Chinese, spoke of these latter with no dislike, and with no wish to get rid of them. One man complained that the Chinese were given to pilfering; “but, Sir,” he continued, [“]when we miss anything, we just go and take its value from the first Chinaman we come across; and so that puts everything square again.” Under this comprehensive judicial system, I do not see that the white miners can have any objections to the neighbourhood of pilfering Chinese; and the question of competition is settled in an equally summary manner. Whenever the white man finds the Chinaman entering into competition with him, and threatening to under-work him, he simply requests John to make tracks; and if he delays quickly drives him out to some other field of labour. Washing clothes and selling China goods appear, by common consent, to be given over to Chinamen in San Francisco; but when Irish Bidy has appeared there in sufficient strength, I question whether she will allow John to dabble in soap-suds. The Chinese work at a woolen manufactory near this, and are found to be admirably suited for that kind of labour; but I suspect that the other emigrants to California do not much care about being shut up in a close factory, when they, perhaps, get large sums at the mines, or 30 dollars a month, with their keep at a ranch, and when such advertisements as the following appear in the papers: —

“To Republicans — Wanted, four good men, *of any politics*, to split rail fences at four dollars a day.”

When they are kept from competing in the fields which white labour arrogates to itself, the influx of Chinese to this new country, where labour is so scarce and so highly valued, cannot but be advantageous to all the parties concerned. There are numerous sources of development which are left untouched just from the want of labour. Thus, from want of labour, whole crops of peaches are allowed to rot upon the ground, while preserved peaches are largely used, imported from the Eastern States, where labour is cheap; and almost all the gold procured by Chinamen is got from places which have been dug over and deserted by white men. The objection that the Chinese carry gold out of the country is thus met; for it is gold that would otherwise be unprofitably reposing in the ground; and they do spend large quantities in the country. They travel in steamboats and railways, and are fond of riding about in carriages. The clothes they wear, the implements they use, the food they eat, are in great part purchased here; they themselves, with the rice and tea they use, are brought over in American ships; at the mines they pay a monthly tax of four dollars a head; they are robbed frequently by white rowdies; they pay highly for house-rent; they use a certain quantity of wine and of other European luxuries; and — viewed in every light, the objection that they carry money out of the country is one of the most ridiculous ever advanced, and I doubt very much of their doing so in any considerable quantity. I suppose, too, that some money — aye, vast sums — is “carried out of the country” to England, to Germany, and to the Eastern States, without any outcry being raised. But, oh John! unhappy friend! until you learn to fight in a civilized and manly manner, even Political Economy will fail to do you justice.

On entering a shop in San Francisco or Sacramento, the Chinaman is a great favourite. It is all — “Good John! buy this: good John! buy that.” He is patted on the back, and asked high prices, it being known that he never tries to beat down; but if he fails to find what he wants, or does not meet the expectations of the owner, then the scene is changed with a vengeance, and the “dirty stinking Chinaman” is very ignominiously dismissed. I rather think, however, that, as a general rule, the Chinaman is not ill-treated so long as he does not interfere with white labour. There is a good deal of strong feeling among the people of California against the ill-treatment of Chinamen; it is not thought right or manly to do so; and in American communities this public feeling has

more power than among ourselves. The respectable merchants of San Francisco complain much of their not being allowed to bear witness in Courts of Justice. When the Bishop of Victoria (Hongkong) was here, he published a letter in the local papers, eloquently calling on Californians to allow the Chinese to make statements in Courts of Justice against white men leaving it to the judge and jury to attach what value they pleased to these statements.<sup>28</sup> To this proposal there could be no reasonable objection; but nothing has come of it yet. The question is too much mixed up with that relating to Negroes to be settled on its own merits. It would scarcely do to allow the Chinese coolie to testify against a white man, and to refuse the same privilege to an intelligent negro. Many of the Californians consider the Chinaman to be "a little lower," and some of them "a damned sight lower, than the negro"; so they are indisposed to grant him privileges which they would never dream of granting to the black. Another matter in which these two races are classed together, along with the Indian, is that of marriage. A law has been introduced lately forbidding what are called "mixed marriages"; that is to say, marriages of white persons with black, yellow, or copper-coloured. The absurdity of such legislation scarcely merits exposure, and could only be tolerated where much prejudice and ignorance exists on the subject. In Australia, the Chinaman often takes an Irish wife unto himself, and no evil, but some good, has resulted from the practice; but here, where he is prohibited from marrying white women, there are scarcely any whites of a class likely to marry him, so the prohibition is in every case uncalled for.

On the whole, the conclusion to which we must come in regard to the state of the Chinese in California is, that they are very much kept down, and have not a fair field for the employment of their energies or the development of their character. They struck me as much more stupid and impassive than men of the same class in China. Their numbers here are estimated at about fifty thousand, and at present they are on the increase.

*China Mail*, September 5 [1861]

*Overland China Mail*, Hongkong, No. 243, 12 September 1861, p. 971.

New York, 5th June, 1861.

Those persons in China who may entertain the idea of going home to England by San Francisco, will be interested in an account of the treat-

ment they may expect on board the vessels of the Pacific Mail Company.

I was wrong in setting down the first-class fare from San Francisco to New York at \$200. It is \$233 or \$258, according to whether you have an inner or an outer state-room, and that difference is of very little importance, as all the state-rooms are airy. This sum covers passage and board, but does not provide beer or wines. These are retailed on board at high prices: — *e. g.*, sherry, \$2 a bottle; claret, \$1 or \$1.50; beer, \$1, or 25 cents the glass. Baths also are charged extra, so that twenty-five additional dollars may be safely added to the probable expense.

Owing to the dread of our being taken by privateers, there were only about a quarter of the usual passengers when I made the voyage. This dread was scarcely an imaginary one, as more than a hundred letters of marque had been issued by the Southern Confederacy, and a California steamer, with its freight of gold, afforded a most desirable object to the numerous desperate and reckless characters still to be found on the Spanish main, the old haunt of bucaniers. After leaving Aspinwall, we were careful to avoid every sail which hove in sight, and sometimes ran at night without lights, when any suspicious-looking craft were in our neighbourhood.<sup>29</sup> There being few passengers, the voyage was made very comfortably; but the traveler from San Francisco to New York in the spring and early summer may usually calculate on a large number of fellow-passengers, and the steamers from New York are usually very much crowded at all seasons. We passed one which was quite frightful to contemplate, appearing a perfect mass of human beings: there could not have been less than twelve hundred persons on board, and of these nearly one-half were females. The steamers are admirably constructed for a tropical climate, having hurricane decks running their whole length, and either the saloon, or else a large number of sleeping berths, on the upper deck. The passengers also, I am bound to say, are very respectable and well-behaved. The roughs on board are kept in their proper place, and even a very quiet person will have no difficulty in getting along peaceably. California is no longer the wild country that it was in its early years. Perhaps a sense of its former character makes it pay extra attention to the respectabilities of life, just as the reformed rowdy is of all men the most particular about his conduct.

The food given on board these steamers is on the whole as excellent as any one has a right to expect. There are three meals a day, and the following bill of fare will give you an idea of the dinner on the Panama side: —

## PACIFIC MAIL STEAMSHIP Co.'s STEAMER

"SONORA."<sup>30</sup>

## Bill of Fare.

*Soup* — Barley.*Fish*. — Fried Salmon.*Boiled* — Leg Mutton, Corned Pork, Corned Beef, Turnips, Pea Pudding, Cabbage.*Entrées* — Fresh Tongue, Tomatoe Sauce; Beave's Heart, and Olives; Maccaroni, Italian; Pork and Beans; Currie and Rice; Beef Pot Pie.*Roast* — Beef, Pork, Mutton.*Vegetables* — Potatoes, plain and mashed; Rice; Cauliflower; Parsnips; Turnips.*Pastry* — Rice Pudding; Fruit Pies.*Dessert* — Almonds; Raisins; Prunes; Coffee and Tea; Crackers and Cheese.

The cookery was fair; but I should like to have seen the look of a P. & O. purser when tasting the curry. On the Aspinwall side the fare was much the same, but the cookery was greatly superior. Everything was very nice indeed, and better than what is met with on board some P. & O. steamers.

The passage of the Isthmus of Panama is made with great ease and comfort. We left the *Sonora* — on board of which Captain Baby had done everything in his power to make the passage pleasant — by daylight, being conveyed to the shore in a small steamer at the Company's expense.<sup>31</sup> A walk of twenty yards brought us to the railway cars, and in four hours we reached Aspinwall, on the other side, where the steamship *Northern Light* was in waiting to convey us to New York.<sup>32</sup> The Isthmus presented magnificent tropical scenery, and it was not at all hot in these early hours of the morning. The only disagreeable thing about the transit was, being hurried through so rapidly, without an opportunity of examining Panama, or lingering a little under the shade of the huge tropical trees. At Aspinwall we remained on shore for about a couple of hours, but there is nothing to interest one there. I should mention, that only 50 lb. of baggage is allowed to each passenger, and he has to pay ten cents for every extra pound to the railway company. The



arrangements, however, in regard to baggage are very convenient. It is all weighed — except what the traveler chooses to carry in his hand — the day before landing at Panama. You get tickets for your portmantaus, and so have no trouble about them until they are safely on board the steamer at Aspinwall.

Between San Francisco and Panama the steamer stops to coal at the beautiful harbour of Acapulco in Mexico, and the traveler will do well to go on shore and visit the miserable little village there, and observe the mixture of Negro, Indian, and Spanish blood. There is no difficulty about boats, the charge being Half-a-dollar for the passage either way; and the luxuries of the place are the fruit, and the species of pigeon called “squabs,” to be had at the hotel *Eldorado*. From Acapulco downwards, and from Aspinwall to Florida, it is pretty hot at all seasons of the year, though many of the American passengers continued to wear uncomfortable black clothes.

I had intended to go from San Francisco to this place across the Rocky Mountains, but did not find any one about to make the journey, and the carriage express was not running. It is to be resumed, however, next month, and the expense of going that way is about the same as by Panama. The transit occupies about twenty days, going day and night; but the traveler may stop at any of the stations he selects, and take his chance of getting on by the next mail.

*China Mail*, September 12. [1861]

*Supplement to the Overland China Mail*, No. 244. Hongkong, 15 October 1861.

This concludes the letters, written by Andrew Wilson to the *China Mail*, that have California and the Pacific as their main interest. Those dated 22 and 26 July 1861 from New York (both published in the *Supplement to the Overland China Mail* of 1 Nov. 1861) are descriptive of Civil War conditions in Baltimore, Washington, and New York, and are not included in the present series. [Ed.]

#### NOTES

23. The reference is probably to Austen H. Layard, a 19th-century British archeologist and traveler.

24. Anti-Chinese sentiment in California reached its height over a decade after Wilson's visit.

25. Augustus W. Loomis lived at the northwest corner of Sacramento and Stockton streets. He is listed in the San Francisco *Directory* for 1861 as a “Chinese missionary.”

26. These organizations are generally known as the Chinese Six Companies.

27. Legislative activity in California looking toward the limitation of Chinese immigration began in 1852, but no law to this effect had been passed prior to Wilson's visit. For a discussion of the subject, *see* Paul S. Taylor, "Foundations of California Rural Society," this QUARTERLY, XXIV (Sept. 1945), 202 ff.

28. The California Statutes of 1850 excluded Indians, Negroes, or Mulattoes from giving testimony for or against a white person in either civil or criminal cases at law. In 1854, the California State Supreme Court interpreted the term "Indian" to include all Mongolian peoples, and therefore to place the Chinese in the same category.

29. None of the merchant steamers operating on the Pacific was attacked by Confederate cruisers or privateers during the Civil War. On the Atlantic, the steamer *Ariel* was captured by the *C.S.S. Alabama* on December 7, 1862, but was released under bond. As she was southbound, she carried little treasure.

30. The *Sonora* was a wooden, side-wheel steamer of 1617 tons, 269 feet length, 36 feet 2 inches beam, and 24 feet depth. She was built in New York for the Pacific Mail S.S. Co. in 1853, and operated regularly between San Francisco and Panama for these owners from 1854 until 1863. She was dismantled and broken up at Sausalito in 1868. Wilson sailed from San Francisco in her on May 11, 1861, and reached Panama on May 24. There were 106 passengers aboard on that trip.

31. The *Sonora* was commanded by Capt. Frank T. Baby.

32. The *Northern Light* was a wooden, side-wheel steamer. Her dimensions were: length 253 feet 6 inches, beam 38 feet 2 inches, and depth 22 feet 6 inches. Her tonnage was 1768. Built in New York in 1851, she was on the run between New York and Nicaragua or Aspinwall (now Colón) intermittently from 1852 until 1866. She was broken up in 1875. Wilson sailed in her from Aspinwall on May 25, 1861, and arrived in New York on June 2. There were 87 passengers aboard.