

THE ATTITUDE OF CALIFORNIA TO THE CIVIL WAR



San Francisco in 1865 (Paul Getty Museum)

By Imogene Spaulding

SECESSION SENTIMENTS AND MOVEMENTS

At the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861, California occupied a position in the United States that was unique in many ways. Separated from the East by natural physical barriers in the Rocky Mountains and Great American Desert, and lacking telegraphic communication with the States about to go to war,¹ California had naturally come to have a feeling of remoteness with respect to her sister States. Economically, as interest throughout the United States was sectional rather than national in 1861, California had no connection with the growth of the middle-western, eastern or southern States; as a growing State, she was busy developing her own resources and building up her own budding industries. Politically, California was not interested from a material and selfish standpoint in the questions, which were tearing the Union asunder in 1861. She had no cause for grievance against the national government: the States Rights question had never been a disturbing element in her politics as it was in the East; slavery had always been forbidden. A comparatively new State, situated almost beyond the margin of the nation's life, and almost forgotten by her sister States in the anxious days of '61, it would seem that California would not play a role of any consequence in the great national drama of 1861-1865. That she did display a deep-seated interest in the struggle so far from her

¹ The Pony Express, established in 1859, was the quickest conveyor of war news at first. The Northern Overland Mail stage line was organized in 1861. The Southern stage by way of the Santa Fe Trail, El Paso, Yuma and Los Angeles to San Francisco had to be abandoned when the war began.

borders, and that she played a part which redounds to her honor, is especially noteworthy and remarkable.

California's interest in the Civil War may be attributed in part to the newness of the State and the fact that so many of her inhabitants had recently come from the States about to engage in the life-and-death struggle of the Union. Those who were from the northern States were unqualifiedly Union men in California, while those who were from slave States, or whose families, relatives or friends were living in the South, where - after the war began - homes were being ruined and devastated by war, were naturally bitter against the Union, and were hot-headed secessionists. Especially among the southern counties, keen partisan hostility was revealed; and sympathy with the Confederate States was only restrained from rendering active assistance to the Confederacy by the loyalty of State officers and the prompt action of the national military authorities.

The fact that there was so large a disloyal element in California at the beginning of the Civil War, Mr. Earle explains by pointing to California's cosmopolitan population at that time. The three elements, in his estimation, contributing to disorder were: (1) the large number of immigrants in the State who had come from southern States, and whose sympathies were therefore always with the Confederacy; (2) the large, adventurous, lawless element, so large a portion of which had come to California during the gold rush; and, (3) the large element of native Californians themselves, i. e., the mass of ignorant natives whose instincts socially and politically were Spanish rather than American, and who could not therefore assimilate or appreciate American ideals, American laws, etc. Few of the native Californians could be compared to the refined and cultivated De La Guerra. Few felt any ties binding them to the United States, - land troubles having left them none too loyal; hence they cared not whether they were to be allied to the Confederacy or to remain a part of the Union. Thus it was that disloyal sentiment was aroused and was continually seeking expression in various forms throughout the war. In the early part of the great struggle, the inactivity of the overconfident Union men allowed the secessionists to create more of a disturbance than they otherwise would have been allowed to do. General Sumner, commander of the Department of the Pacific after Johnston's recall, wrote to Washington in June of 1861: "*I believe there is a large majority of Union men in the State, but they are supine with confidence, while there is an active and zealous party of secessionists who will make all the mischief they can.*"

Slavery, as we have said, never was a legalized institution in California. In 1829, slavery was abolished from all Mexican territory, and by 1848 there were relatively few negroes in California. In 1849, the constitutional convention excluded slavery from California with practical unanimity, so that when Congress admitted the State into the Union, it came in as a free State. The sentiment of the Golden State in 1849-1850 against the institution of Slavery, however, did not wholly deter slave owners from bringing their slaves with them to California. At the beginning of the gold rush, in fact, quite a number of people from the South brought their slaves with them to work in the mines. Many hoped and believed that California would side with the **South** on the great slavery question. In 1850, there were nearly one thousand negroes in the State. In 1852, the number had increased to nearly two thousand two hundred, - many in virtual slavery, for contemporary evidence goes to show that many negroes continued in the state of slavery in California for shorter or longer periods after 1849, some not being released from this involuntary servitude until the period

of national emancipation.

The slavery laws in California were stringent. "*No other free State as the Union had such odious laws against negroes as had California.*"² Just after the State was admitted into the Union, a fugitive slave law was passed authorizing the extradition of slaves brought into the State voluntarily by their masters. Also, the legislature of 1852 enacted a law against negroes (which the legislatures of 1853, 1854, and 1855 reenacted), the intention being to legalize the kidnapping of free slaves as well as the arrest of fugitives.³ The Supreme Court in California in 1852 said that slavery was still a legal institution, i. e. that slaves brought to California before 1849 were still slaves when California was admitted to the Union.⁴ But in 1859, a case was decided reversing the former decision, and stating that only travelers or temporary visitors could lawfully hold slaves in California. Laws and judicial decisions, however, were not sufficient to prevent either the introduction or continuance of the institution; and they did not by any means abate the aggressive sentiment of the active and able pro-slavery minority in California, which dominated the politics of the State for the first decade of its existence, and which preached the delusive doctrine of Popular Sovereignty⁵ whenever opportunity offered.

The slavery question played a distinct part in the settlement of the boundaries of California in the constitutional convention of 1849, and in attempted divisions of the State later. In 1849, "*the southern faction led by Gwin made the eastern boundary of the inchoate state the crest of the Rocky Mountains. Gwin's plan was to make the area of the state so large that Congress would refuse to admit it as one state, and would divide it into two states on the line of the Missouri Compromise 36 degrees 30 minutes. The Northern men in the convention discovered Gwin's scheme and defeated it by a reconsideration of the boundary section at the very close of the convention.*"⁶ Up to the Civil War, the question of the State division repeatedly aroused the pro-slavery element, who "*reasoned that if a new state could be cut off from the southern portion, it could be made slave territory. Many pro-slavery men had settled in that section, and although slave labor might not be profitable, the accession of two pro-slavery senators would help to maintain the balance of power to the South in the Senate.*"⁷

The legislature of 1859, which was intensely pro-slavery, passed a bill, which the Governor approved, to set off six southern counties and form a separate territorial government for them; the people of these counties themselves voted 2,477 for, 828 against dismemberment, and the results of the vote and the act were sent to the President and Congress. But "*the intense national excitement over the questions which led to the Civil War delayed action,*"⁸ and nothing ever came of this

² Guinn, *A History of California*, I, 206.

³ *Ibid* I, 206.

⁴ In this "Andy Slave Case" decision of 1852, Judge Murray enunciated the same doctrine relating to the status of an African that Chief Justice Taney afterwards set forth in the Dred Scott decision. Cole, *Memoirs*, 94, 95, 96.

⁵ In the Charleston Democratic Convention in April, 1860, California and Oregon were the only free States that voted for the majority report (on the platform) in which this doctrine was enunciated. "*Congress has no power to abolish slavery in the Territories. ... The Territorial Legislature has no power to abolish slavery in any Territory, nor to prohibit the introduction of slaves therein, nor any power to exclude slavery therefrom, nor any power to destroy or impair the right of property in slaves by any legislation whatever.*"

⁶ Guinn, *How California Escaped State Division*, Publications of the Historical Society of Southern California, VI, 226.

⁷ *Ibid*, VI, 226.

⁸ Widney, *A Historical Sketch of the Movement for a Political Separation of the Two Californias, Northern and Southern, under both the Spanish and American Regimes*, Publications of the Historical Society of Southern

movement in the interests of the pro-slavery element in California.

This vexed slavery question was settling itself in California, however, because the geographical, social and economic conditions were not favorable to the continuance of the “peculiar institution” of the South. By 1860, an anti-slavery party had been formed, too, not strong in numbers at first, but containing in its roll many prominent names, such as C. P. Huntington, Cornelius Cole, Mark Hopkins, Leland Stanford, Edwin B. Crocker, Charles Crocker and others. David C. Broderick, United States Senator from California from 1857 to 1859⁹ also made his influence felt in the contest against the representatives of a slave oligarchy in California, which dominated the politics of the State at that time. Although a Democrat, Broderick was an unswerving anti-Lecompton Democrat who consistently fought slavery and slavery issues throughout his political career.

By 1860, natural political and economic conditions in California plus the strenuous efforts of prominent anti-slavery men had wrought a great change in the attitude of the majority of the people towards slavery. Cornelius Cole, who accompanied Stanford on an electioneering tour through the State in 1860, after Stanford had been nominated for Governor, said that they were given a respectful hearing on all occasions, notwithstanding the fact that Stanford and Cole were both active anti-slavery men, and slavery was one of the principal themes of discussion. And the result of the fall election in 1860 *“proved that the anti-slavery doctrines, urged with so much consistency in regions that seemed to give no token of respect for them, by Republican stump speakers and a portion of the press, not always without peril of insult, and for the orators showers of stale eggs, had taken unexpected hold of the interior; that the Northern sentiment was strengthening in the larger cities, that the quarrels of the Democracy and the corruption of a party that ran the State for its spoils, had worked out their legitimate result in the disgust of its more intelligent adherents.”*¹⁰

One way, however, in which secession sentiment found expression at the opening of the war was in the advocacy of a Pacific Republic. The “copperheads” (Northern men with Southern principles) especially favored the formation of a new government on the Pacific Coast. Governor Weller was not opposed to the idea. In fact, he said: *“If the wild spirit of fanaticism which now pervades the land should destroy the magnificent Confederacy - which God forbid - she (California) will not go with the south or north, but here upon the shores of the Pacific, found a mighty republic, which may in the end prove the greatest of all.”*¹¹ A year before the outbreak of the war, the project for the creation of a Pacific Republic was enthusiastically advocated by a number of prominent citizens and by several widely circulated newspapers. The *Sonora Democrat*, for example, said: *“We are for a Pacific Republic if unfortunately the Confederacy should be disrupted. We believe it to be the true policy of California in such an event, to cut loose from both sections and not involve herself in the general ruin. She has all the elements of greatness within her borders. Situated thousands of miles from the distracted States, she would be an asylum of peace and safety - and many thousands would flock to her shores - the effect of which would be to build upon the Pacific a mighty, prosperous and*

California, I, 21.

⁹ Senator Broderick was elected to serve in the Senate from 1857 to 1861, but he was killed in a duel with Judge Terry of the Supreme Bench in California

¹⁰ Tuthill, *The History of California*, 576.

¹¹ Hittell, *History of California*, IV, 255.

independent nation ... If the fond spirit of fanaticism (of the North) ... is to culminate with the destruction of the Confederacy, we would be loath indeed to see our young state arrayed on the side of injustice and oppression."

The advocates of a Pacific Republic¹², although "*confined to the extreme secession sympathizers in the ranks of the Breckinridge party*"¹³ were men whose influence could be felt far and wide. Governor Downey, instead of being actively opposed to a Pacific Republic, was uncertain. The entire Federal patronage and power on the coast, including the military arm, was absolutely in the hands of Southern sympathizers. California's representatives in Congress: Senator Milton S. Latham, Senator William M. Gwin, Representatives John C. Burch and Charles L. Scott, all favored the idea of the State remaining neutral, in the event of war breaking out in the East. Senator Gwin, who in the United States Senate had affirmed that the Southern States could secede violently or peaceably, "*violently if necessary*,"¹⁴ and successfully establish an independent government in California in which he was to figure prominently. Scott, in the House of Representatives in Washington, wrote to Charles Lindley, chairman of the State Central Democratic committee: "*If the Union is divided, and two separate confederacies are formed, I will strenuously advocate the secession of California, and the establishment of a separate republic on the Pacific ... If California links her destiny with the northern government, crippled and ruined as she must necessarily be by the separation and withdrawal of her southern allies, California, instead of being benefited and receiving aid from the northern Confederacy, will be heavily taxed to carry on the machinery of their government.*"¹⁵

Representative Burch in 1861 declared himself to be in favor of Union, and said it was the duty of those who were removed from the scene of strife to use their utmost exertions to prevent disunion. But should the Union be dissolved, he "*suggested that it would be well for the people of California, Oregon, New Mexico, Washington and Utah to seek refuge for themselves from the blighting effects of disunion and civil war by retiring and establishing a prosperous, happy and successful republic on the Pacific slope, to which they and our brethren here may look for peace and quiet for themselves and their children when such blessings are no longer tolerated near the Atlantic, along the Ohio, nor even in the broad valley of the Mississippi.*"¹⁶ He pictured a Pacific Republic in these glowing terms: "*The people of California and her neighbors should be of one mind on this subject, and be prepared for the emergency; and if the fates should force us to this last sad resort, let us, with a disposition to welcome all who come to us from our old homes seeking an asylum, raise aloft the flag of the 'bear', surrounded by the hydra-pointed cactus of the*

¹² The *Alta California*, Jan. 8, 1861, quotes this extract from the *Sonora Democrat* in an editorial. The *Alta* itself considered the plans for a Pacific Republic absurd and said on February 2, 1861: "*There is no talk of a Pacific Republic in any quarter except among those who now hold Federal appointments, and who have nothing to lose but everything to gain by a new shuffle of the political cards. There is not a paper in the State, which has had the hardihood to come out in favor of the new Utopia, but in the Sonora Democrat, and that journal has since found it necessary to modify its opinions very considerably. There is talk about secret movements and cabals, but we do not believe a word of it.*"

¹³ Davis, *History of Political Conventions in California*, 128.

¹⁴ Mr. Gwin said: "*I say that a dissolution of the Union is not impossible, that it is not impracticable, and that the Northern States are laboring under a delusion if they think that the Southern States cannot separate from them either violently or peaceably; violently if necessary. They can take possession of all the public property within their limits, and prepare against any aggression from the non-slaveholding States, or any other Power that may choose to infringe upon what they conceive to be their rights.*" Congressional Globe, 36th Congress., 1st Session, Pt. I. 125.

¹⁵ Bancroft, *History of California*, VII, 277. Scott later joined the Confederate army.

¹⁶ Davis, *History of Political Conventions in California*, 129.

western wilds, and call upon the enlightened nations of the earth to acknowledge our independence, and to protect us, the only waif from the wreck of our once noble nation, the youthful but vigorous Caesarian republic of the Pacific."¹⁷

Throughout the winter of 1860-61, the establishment of a Pacific Republic was talked about in a threatening manner. And when the Southern States seceded and the Civil War had actually begun, and it became evident that California could not by any possibility be carried over to join the seceded states, an extra effort was made to have California assume an attitude of neutrality between the North and South, although this meant, of course, resistance to Lincoln's administration, and virtual secession. The inside workings of the conspiracy to form a Pacific Republic, however, were not divulged. It is known that the "Knights of the Golden Circle," one of the secret pro-slavery organizations, helped carry on the idea. And enough came to be known of this movement at Washington to cause the President to recall Brigadier-General A. S. Johnston¹⁸ (a Southern man with pronounced sympathy for the Pacific), and to dispatch General Sumner to relieve him (April 25, 1861).

Overt acts on the part of advocates of a Pacific Republic were few and inconsequential - due usually to individual enthusiasm. A Pacific Republic flag was hoisted on board a surveying schooner at Stockton, January 16, 1861, creating much excitement and demonstrating the fact that "*it was not safe to trifle with the loyal sentiment of the people.*"¹⁹ The *Alta California* in commenting on this fiasco said, "*A few dozen men, all of them repudiated as leaders by the public opinion of the street, and most of them unknown and without influence, will hardly succeed in establishing a Pacific Republic! Any fool can buy a flag and burn powder.*"²⁰ In San Francisco, the palmetto flag was raised in February and hauled down. In May, the Bear Flag was raised at Los Angeles, and also for a short time, at Sonoma and San Bernardino. Rumors were afloat that the presidio and fort on Alcatraz Island would be captured, and the custom house, mint, post-office, and all United States property, after which the rebels would proceed to invade Sonora and add that territory to the Pacific Republic. If such a plot there was, it was revealed and nothing came of it.

The main danger in regard to the Pacific Republic movement was the inactivity of the loyal element of the population. General Sumner in April, 1861, wrote to the War Department that there was a strong Union feeling in the state, but that "*the secessionists are much the more active and zealous party, which gives them more influence than they ought to have from their numbers.*" The State Legislature, however, promptly and emphatically condemned the project to form a Pacific Republic - both branches adopting the following resolution, May 17, 1861: "*Resolved by the Senate, the Assemble concurring, that the people of California are devoted to the Constitution and Union now in the hour of trial and peril. That California is ready to maintain the rights and honor of the national government at home and abroad, and at all times to respond to any requisition that may be made upon her to defend the republic against foreign or domestic foes.*"²¹ Each latest

¹⁷ Ibid, 130.

¹⁸ Brigadier-General Johnston, it is now conceded, was incapable of betraying a trust - his integrity being so great he was not approached on the subject of a Pacific Republic. However, it was politic that he be removed from the very important position he held and a pronounced Unionist given the command. Johnston, after being relieved of his command, proceeded overland by way of Los Angeles to join the Confederate forces. He accepted a General's command in the Confederate army, and was killed at Shiloh.

¹⁹ Guinn, *A History of California*, I, 210.

²⁰ *Alta California*, Jan. 18, 1861.

²¹ Orton, *Records of California Men in the War of the Rebellion*, 5.

arrival of intelligence from the East added fresh impetus to the feeling of loyalty for the Union, so that within a few months after the outbreak of the war, all discussions of a Pacific Republic ceased. *“So it was that this digging, delving, half-foreign, rich young state was not after all able to keep out of the quarrel between the North and South. As the mails brought the reports of the disunion speeches of pro-slavery senators, and the disloyal acts of the Southern people, her nerves tingled and her blood was up. Disunion ? Never! A Pacific Republic ? Never.”*²²

Disloyalty was not extirpated, however, as the futility of the attempt to establish a Pacific Republic became manifest, but merely took another and more dangerous form: namely, the open manifestation of sympathy with the Southern States and their cause, and the formation of secret societies, pledged to aid them in their struggle. Two famous secret organizations were formed in California by the secessionists: “The Knights of the Golden Circle” and “The Knights of the Columbian Star.” They were extremely well organized throughout the state; their members numbered in the thousands; their leaders were bold, daring, talented men of indomitable will and courage, who exercised an unlimited control over their followers. The work done by these societies and the menace they were to the Union may be revealed by citing a letter written by William C. Kebbe, Adjutant-General of the State of California, to Major-General H.W. Halleck, General-in-Chief at Washington, September 10, 1862: *“It is represented and generally believed that there is a secret organization in this State, numbering from 20,000 to 30,000 men leagued together for the overthrow of our government, and whose purpose it is, if an opportunity should favor the scheme, to carry the State out of the Union. These men openly boast that their sympathies are with the traitors of the South, and that they are continually defaming the government from which they receive protection, and whose benefits they enjoy. They take pride in preaching their traitorous sentiments among loyal men, and do much to discourage enlistments. Loyal citizens have now no protection from the insults of these men, many of whom are wealthy and influential, and United States soldiers have been shot down in the streets of our towns for protesting against the free use of disloyal sentiments in their presence, and probabilities are that the deserving shall go unwhipped of justice. The actions of this league are positive, and there is no immunity to loyal men in our community from insult and wrong.”*²³ Major-General Kebbe said further that if the Union armies met with any serious reverses, he feared serious trouble would ensue on the Pacific Coast.

The organization of these societies, being as has been intimated, complex, it was difficult for the military authorities to get real information about them. Robert Robinson, Captain and Provost-Marshal, made an investigation of the “Knights of the Columbian Star,” and reported to Brigadier-General John S. Mason (Acting Assistant Provost Marshal-General in San Francisco), on August 10, 1864, the information he had obtained concerning the secret work of this association. He wrote he had obtained his information through Hiram Potter, one of their number, and even so, found it a tedious and slow business to learn of this secret society, because the whole system was so cloaked and guarded that but few of the members really knew anything about it. Robinson obtained the following data, however, concerning the organization of “The Knights of the Columbian Star.” There was a governor-general for the state, and a lieutenant governor for each locality, who had a deputy

²² Bancroft, *History of California*, VII, 273.

²³ Official Records of the War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. 50, Pt. II, 107.

lieutenant-governor-general to assist him. There were no large meetings held of their order in their capacity as an association, but only a few of the officers and the trusted members got together and initiated new members and devised the work to be carried out.

There were different degrees in this order, and it was a cardinal principle of the order that no member of an inferior degree was to know of a higher until he was prepared and expected to receive it. In the first degree, the candidate was examined and sworn in a very solemn manner, the substance of the obligation being: he would not support in any election or employ in business an abolitionist if any other person could he had; he would obey his officers in all things; he would resist the enforcement of any and all unconstitutional laws by the Administration, his officers being the judge of the unconstitutionality of the laws; he would furnish himself with a rifle or double-barreled shotgun if possible, and always keep on hand a supply of ammunition for a three days' hunt. After taking this obligation, the candidate was to be invested with the signs, password and grip. They also had signs of danger and distress, so as to be able to recognize one another at night, etc. The oath for the second degree was given only after the candidate had been fully examined concerning his political views, etc. This oath was long and elaborate, the substance of it being that the candidate would resist the election of Lincoln for President by all possible means, including force of arms; that he would adhere to and obey call of the governor-general of the State, and of the lieutenant-governor-general of his district in all cases and at all times; that he would adhere to and support the old States Rights doctrines; that he would support the right of each state to govern itself, and carry out the right to maintain slavery or any other domestic institution to which it was entitled, by force of arms, if necessary; that he would resist with arms any attempt on the part of United States authorities to execute any unconstitutional law of any kind or character, his officers being the judges of the unconstitutionality of the laws.

On August 10, 1864, it was estimated there were 24,000 men in the order who could be relied upon. Captain Robinson added that this order, plus "The Knights of the Golden Circle" and the men they could control would number 50,000 at least. Each member of the order paid money into the treasury, and when persons could not get arms, they were furnished them by the society, the intention being to have every person armed for instant service. Both orders talked freely of a prospective war in California, and were providing for it, so that whenever they felt strong enough to make resistance to the laws, they could do so. Meanwhile, they caused all the trouble they could, and sent money East (i. e., to the Confederates) regularly under pretense of giving to the rebel sanitary fund for rebel prisoners. A dangerous political organization they were, indeed!

Gustav Brown, Government Detective for the Southern District of California, made a report October 16, 1864, to Captain A. Jones Jackson, Provost Marshal of the Southern District of California, concerning "The Knights of the Golden Circle." Regarding this order, Brown found out that San Luis Obispo county had 242 members, all armed; Los Angeles county 253 members, of which Los Angeles itself had 54 - all armed. These men, he discovered, had picked out for a rendezvous a place in the mountains about one hundred and twenty miles from Los Angeles, called Rock Creek, well wooded and grassy, where they intended to unite in case of a draft being ordered. In Los Angeles, it was ascertained that the majority of the members of "The Knights of the Golden Circle" belonged to the sporting class, and

few of the upper class knew anything about the order. There were three grades in it: the Thirty-third, Fifty-fourth and Eighty-second; and again we find that the members of the lowest grade knew very little about the intentions of their leaders - the plots all coming from the highest grade. The detective further found out that men were going daily from Los Angeles, who represented themselves as miners going to Colorado. While in San Francisco a club was sending men to Texas by way of Mazatlan on every steamer that went to Mexico. The order was well organized and armed in Nevada; and there were thousands of Oregonians in it.

In San Francisco, "The Knights of the Golden Circle" during the early part of the war planned to take the presidio, mint, custom-house, navy yard at Mare Island, and the arsenal at Benicia. They did not expect to encounter serious difficulty, as every government position at this time - with a few exceptions - was held by a Southerner. So with every condition favorable to them, nearly 2,000 Southern sympathizers met in San Francisco and from that number 800 picked men were delegated to capture everything in sight. A delegation, headed by Senator William M. Gwin, of California, offered the leadership of the work to Colonel Doane, a Breckinridge Democrat, and a man thought to be an adherent of the Confederacy. Doane's feeling of loyalty to the Union, however, was stronger than his Southern sentiments, because he refused the position offered him; and informed General E. V. Sumner, who had arrived to take command of the presidio, of the secessionists' plot, so that Sumner kept strict watch over government property. Following out an order from Washington, all Oregon and Northern California troops were concentrated at San Francisco and the fortifications there strengthened. General Sumner felt there should have been 4,000 men stationed at San Francisco, but had to content himself with a few hundred. The soldiery, although few in numbers, exerted a wholesomely restraining influence on secessionists; and it is due to them in great measure that the secret organizations were kept from doing serious injury to the State and to the Union.

Besides expressing itself in the formation of secret organizations, secession sentiment was expressed in newspapers, public speeches, sermons and prayers from the pulpit, celebration of Confederate victories, toasts in bar-rooms, and open attempts, sometimes successful, to join the forces of the Southern States. The disloyal newspapers were an especially lively means of expressing and spreading disloyal sentiment. They hurled vituperation at the administration and President Lincoln; they praised Southern successes and kept alive sympathy for the Southern cause by every means possible. *The Visalia Equal Rights Expositor*, for example, on October 18, 1862, characterized President Lincoln as "a narrow-minded bigot, an unprincipled demagogue, and driveling, idiotic, imbecile creature." And on December 13, 1862, President Lincoln and his Cabinet were denounced as "the most tyrannical and corrupt crew that ever polluted the earth with their presences"²⁴ As early as 1862, Brigadier-General Wright (who was commanding the Department of

²⁴ Captain McLaughlin (of the Second Cavalry, California Volunteers) arrested the editors, L. P. Hall and L. J. Garrison of the *Equal Rights Expositor* on the charge of publishing objectionable articles; and when one of the editors refused to take the oath of loyalty, he was held in close confinement for some time. On March 5th of the same year, Major O'Neill (of the Second Cavalry, California Volunteers), exasperated by the continued support given by the *Expositor* to the rebellion, went to Visalia and completely destroyed the office of the *Expositor*, breaking the doors and windows of the building, breaking the press and throwing the type, paper and ink into the street. A strong force then patrolled the town to prevent disorder, and one citizen was arrested for inciting a riot by cheering for "Jeff" Davis. Official Records of the War of the Rebellion, Series, I, Vol. 50, Pt. II, 277, 341, 342.

the Pacific after Sumner was called back to the active scenes of the war in October, 1861) requested the postal agent on the coast to forbid the transmission through the mails and express offices of certain newspapers, as the *Los Angeles Star*, *Stockton Argus*, *Stockton Democrat*, *Visalia Post*, etc. - traitorous and disloyal sheets constantly denouncing the Government and all its acts, and tending to discourage enlistments and give aid and comfort to rebels. The result of this step was beneficial, - so much so that the restrictions were removed in 1863.²⁵

In San Francisco at the time of Lincoln's assassination, five newspapers,²⁶ virulent copperhead sheets, which had outraged the loyal element in the community for some time, by abusing the President and the administration, were destroyed by a mob. It is significant that the public did not condemn the proceeding. In fact, to prevent bloodshed, it was necessary to callout the troops to check the indignation of the Unionists, which was thus seeking expression. Following the attack of the mob, General McDowall caused the seizure, in the name of the United States, of the officers of four of these newspapers, which the mob had destroyed.²⁷ Disloyal sheets did not always utter unpatriotic sentiments with impunity, *we* perceive.²⁸ Nor did the number of disloyal newspapers ever become large, in comparison with the more numerous, more widely circulated and more influential patriotic papers, such as the *San Francisco Evening Bulletin*, *The Alta California*, *The Sacramento Bee*, *The Sacramento Union*, etc.

In several towns during the Civil War, the secessionists caused trouble to such an extent that the presence of federal troops was imperative at various times. Visalia, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, San Bernardino, and Los Angeles were among such cities. As early as 1861, General E. V. Sumner, commanding the regular forces in the Southwest, notified Washington that he felt it wise to call in the troops from Fort Mojave and Fort Tejon and place them at Los Angeles, as he said there was more danger of disaffection there than at any other place in the state. The population in Los Angeles at that time was mostly Spanish and Mexican, easily diverted into any course that promised excitement. Some of the leading citizens joined the army of the Confederacy, while (from Los Angeles) "*there was but one representative to the Union army, that is, one who was an actual resident of the city at the beginning of the war.*"²⁹ A company of native Californians recruited in Los Angeles, however, did service against the Indians in Arizona. And in 1861, a great number of citizens of Los Angeles County formed themselves into defensive or home guard to support the Constitution. No active hostilities of any moment occurred in Los Angeles; it was principally a "war of words." Nevertheless, when a United States commercial agent at La Paz (Lower California) wrote to the authorities at Washington, saying that the rebels were about to seize Lower California, seize Panama steamers and get enough treasure to carry the conquest into Alta California, all available troops were massed at Los Angeles, and the United States flag was raised over the courthouse, despite the threats posted throughout the town that anyone attempting to raise the flag would be shot. During the entire war, it was found necessary to have soldiers in

²⁵ Official Records of the War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. 50, Pt. II, 341-342.

²⁶ The Democratic Press Occidental Monitor, Franco-Américaine and News Letter: *The Echo du Pacifique* would have been destroyed had it not been in the same building with the *Alta California*.

²⁷ The Democratic Press, *Echo du Pacifique*, News Letter and Monitor.

²⁸ The *Los Angeles Star* went into eclipse (October, 1864) after its pugnacious and partisan Scotch-Irish editor was arrested for his severe criticisms on Lincoln and for his outspoken sympathy for the Confederates.

²⁹ Guinn, *A History of California*, I, 317.

Los Angeles to keep down the hostile, bold, defiant sentiment of secessionists, which flared up with brilliance after every Confederate victory in the East.

San Bernardino, as was mentioned, also had difficulty in fighting secession sentiment throughout the war. The character of the population there at that time explains most of the trouble. Major Carleton tells us that two-thirds of the people were Mormons, who at heart hated the United States troops and cause; and the remainder were principally outlaws and English Jews (who controlled the business of the town) - neither of whom cherished any love for the United States. Only a few respectable Americans really felt anything like patriotism.³⁰ Every prominent Union man was in danger of assassination when traveling alone in the different mountain trails around San Bernardino. While among one thousand men in the mines in Bear and Holcomb Valleys near San Bernardino, one-third were declared secessionists, two-ninths were neutral, and the remainder supposedly Union men, yet leaving room for doubt. Secessionists controlled elections, put their own men in office, and therefore could rob and steal with impunity, knowing they would be aided by those whose sworn duty it was to punish them. As Major Carleton wrote: "*A secession sheriff will not make arrests - gives warning in time for felons to provide for their safety; secession judges turn them loose.*"³¹ Non-Union sentiment, in short, prevailed and was daily augmented by the arrival of secessionists from the northern part of the State on their way to the South, - because San Bernardino was practically "*a way station on the road to the Southern Confederacy,*"³² being as it was an outlet towards Utah by the Mojave and towards Texas by the Colorado. Some of the Southern sympathizers who equipped themselves in California were successful in getting away and joining the Confederacy,³³ although to check such movements, General Wright made Fort Yuma a strong military prison and later required passports from the commander of the department before travelers could pass the frontier of California in the direction of Texas. Throughout the war, the military arm of the government was necessary in the southern counties of California, because secessionism there was "*strong, insidious, and specious, and far too crafty for the policy that would do nothing against it, unless it be a clear case of some overt act.*"³⁴

On Santa Catalina Island in 1863, a mining boom was brought to an unexpected end by the action of the government, suspicious as to the real meaning of so many miners coming there.³⁵ "*There were rumors that this mining rush was a blind to conceal a plot to seize the island and make it a rendezvous for Confederate privateers, - an entrepot from which these vessels could fit out and prey upon the commerce of the coast.*"³⁶ Although many of the miners were Southern sympathizers, it is uncertain whether such a plot was seriously contemplated. Be that as it may, Captain West (commanding the Post at Drum Barracks) following instructions received from the Department of the Pacific, issued an order December 25, 1863, notifying all persons on Catalina to leave before the first of the next February. The miners paid little attention to this proclamation "fired at long range,"

³⁰ Official Records of the War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. 50, Pt. I, 548, 549.

³¹ Ibid, Series I, Vol. 50, Pt. II, 447, 448.

³² Guinn, A History of California, I, 445.

³³ One party of men, eighteen in all, under the leadership of Daniel Showalter, was stopped (November 29, 1861) before they could do any harm or reach the Confederate States.

³⁴ Official Records of the War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. 50, Pt. 1, 996, 997.

³⁵ Over a thousand miners rushed to Catalina at that time.

³⁶ Guinn, *An Early Mining Boom on Santa Catalina*, Overland Mo., XVI, 478.

so that a second and more emphatic order was forthcoming, - this time issued on the Island itself.³⁷ The miners left and left immediately. Thus, any possible danger that might have ensued from the Southern sympathies of the prospectors was in this way averted by the prompt action of the government.

The pulpit was not always strong in the Union cause. The Methodist Church, says Bancroft, "*formed a factor in anti-war, anti-administration, and pro-slavery politics.*"³⁸ Different ministers in other denominations also uttered disloyal sentiment from their pulpits, - which, however, was not always received with acclaim. When - for instance - Dr. William Scott, pastor of the Calvary Presbyterian Church in San Francisco, began deliberately praying for all presidents and vice-presidents in the United States, great indignation was aroused. The following Sunday (September 22, 1861) an effigy with the inscription, "*Dr. Scott, the reverend traitor,*" was found hanging in front of his church: and when Scott arrived he found a crowd of from two to three thousand surrounding the church, hissing and hooting him as he entered. That Sunday he omitted praying for *both* presidents, but still the community felt outraged, and violence against the "reverend traitor" was only averted by city authority. Believing discretion to be the better part of valor, Dr. Scott resigned a few days later and left California.

Judges and political leaders also got into trouble for uttering secession sentiments from time to time. Judge James H. Hardy of the Sixteenth Judicial District, for example, was impeached, found guilty and removed from office (in 1862) for utterances of hostility to the United States government and for sympathy with the Southern Confederacy.³⁹ The Hon. C. L. Weller, chairman of the Democratic State Committee, was arrested and detained in custody for some time by military authorities, because of incendiary remarks made by him in San Francisco in a political meeting held during the presidential campaign of 1864. During that year, in fact, disloyalty was very outspoken, notwithstanding the vigilance of authorities, and the watchfulness of Union league and press.

THE LOYAL ATTITUDE OF CALIFORNIA TO THE UNION

Secession utterances and overt acts must not be taken to indicate the sentiment of the majority of the people in California during the Civil War. More truly do we get the real sentiment of the majority of the people - in one of its phases - in the results of State elections: the kind of governors chosen, the work of the State legislature, etc. These results reveal the loyal attitude California *as a State* took toward the Union in the Civil War. Upon investigating the administration in California from

³⁷ The second order issued by Captain West ran: "No person or persons other than owners of stock or incorporated companies' employees will be allowed to remain on the island or after this date (February 5, 1864) nor will any person be allowed to land until further instructions are received from Washington. I hereby notify miners prospecting or other persons to leave immediately." *Overland Mo.*, XVI, 479.

³⁸ Bancroft, *History of California*, VII, 300. In *Fifty Years of Methodism* it is stated that at the Ninth Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in California (September, 1861) a collection was taken up in behalf of two military companies about to depart from the city for service on the plains - by order of the United States Government; and that a committee appointed on The State of the Country reported in part as follows: "*Secession matured is anarchy ... We deplore the necessity of war as we do the necessity of executing a felon. But the destroyers of free government and the offenders against justice and liberty must be repulsed and punished whether robbers or rebels ... We are in favor of the most decisive blows, however painful their effects, as the most merciful solution of the dreadful problem which the seceding states have compelled us to grapple with*". Anthony, *Fifty Years of Methodism*, 231.

³⁹ One toast Judge Hardy gave was: "Here is to the Stars and Stripes; as to the Constitution, there's none: the Constitution is gone to hell."

1861-1865, we find that as a rule, loyal men were holding office, and legislatures were loyal without exception. These facts are remarkable when we consider political conditions in California at the opening of the Civil War.

*“When the Southern States began to secede, California was ruled by a Democratic Governor, a Democratic legislature occupied its capital, and four Democrats were its representatives in Congress. Her forts were garrisoned by men whose loyalty in so trying an hour could only be surmised.”*⁴⁰ All federal offices were in the hands of Southern sympathizers. The war, itself, though, wrought a political upheaval in California. *“Former political alliances were forgotten. Most of the Anti-Lecompton or Douglas Democrats arrayed themselves on the side of the Union.”*⁴¹ *The chivalry wing of the Democratic party were either open or secret sympathizers with the Confederates.”*⁴² While the Republicans dropped all but their name and came out unconditionally for the Union. And since they (the Republicans) triumphed at the polls in 1861, Union measures naturally prevailed.

California sometimes was unfortunate in choosing her representatives for Congress, but she tried to retrieve her mistakes whenever possible and to send out men who would truly represent her. Senator Milton S. Latham, for example, was not so loyal to the Union as his constituents had believed him to be. In 1860, when a vacancy occurred in the Senate, all in California felt the necessity of having a representative in fact, not merely of California or of a political party, but of the patriotic impulses of the people at large. Milton S. Latham, who had just been made governor of California, was called upon to resign and become a United States Senator - to fill the vacancy. He did so, and for the first year spoke for the cause of the Union, acting with the administration party in the Senate for that year. But as the war went on, his Southern sympathies assumed the ascendancy; he violently denounced abolition; and, as far as he dared, took part with the South. The part played by Senator Gwin in connection with the Pacific Republic has already been explained. James McDougall, who was elected to succeed Gwin (1861), proved to be a backslider, too. Coming to the Senate at a time when the administration was overwhelmed by the responsibility of repressing rebellion, he did not take a firm stand, but gave a half-hearted support to the government. This being unsatisfactory to California, his actions were repudiated in a concurrent resolution in the legislature of 1864. From 1863 to the end of the war, California's Senators, McDougall and Conness, - elected to succeed Latham in 1863, seemed to have a proneness to backslide.

In the House of Representatives, California fared much better in having Union men of uncompromising type to represent her. Such men as Cole, Higby, Shannon (1863-1865) were all earnest and faithful supporters of the Lincoln administration, as they should have been, because the popular vote at the national elections always indicated the existence of a substantial majority of loyal citizens in California.⁴³

⁴⁰ Tuthill, *The History of California*, 582. The *Alta California*, May 24, 1861, spoke of the military thus: “The extent of the disloyalty among officers of the United States army to their country and flag is hardly yet manifest. We learn that from the Sixth Regiment alone, which belongs to the Department of the Pacific, and two companies of which are now in barracks at Benicia, fully a third of the officers have resigned since the inauguration of President Lincoln.” Practically all left “with the avowed intention of taking positions in the Confederate Army.”

⁴¹ In the early summer of 1862, the Union Democrats united with the Republicans into one strong Union party.

⁴² Guinn, *A History of California*, I, 210.

⁴³ In the presidential election of 1860, for instance, the vote stood: 38,733 votes for Lincoln, 37,999 votes for Douglas; 9,111 votes for Bell, and 33,969 votes for Breckenridge, thus making an overwhelming Union vote. Davis, *History of Political Conventions in California*, 217.

Colonel E. D. Baker, although a Senator from Oregon (in 1861), was looked upon by Californians as being more a representative of their own state than of Oregon. And since he represented the loyal sentiment of the people of California more truly than California's own Senators did, he gave great satisfaction to all loyal citizens. He it was who explained to President Lincoln, a life-long friend of his, the importance of sending a loyal man of high military rank to relieve General Johnston, commanding the Department of the Pacific.⁴⁴ He it was who delivered "*what was supposed to be the greatest speech ever delivered in California*"⁴⁵ for Lincoln, in San Francisco just before the election in 1860. And it was the silver-tongued Baker who, in a famous debate in the Senate with Breckinridge of Kentucky, took the "liberty" of affirming that California would be true to the Union "*to the last of her blood and treasure*" and that "*they are offering through me - more to their own Senators, every clay, from California, and indeed from Oregon - to add to the legions of this country, by the hundred and the thousand.*"⁴⁶ When Colonel Baker's death at Ball's Bluff (October 21, 1861) - where he was Colonel of the Seventy-first Pennsylvania Infantry known as the "California Regiment"⁴⁷ - was made known, California as well as the whole nation, mourned. The Hon. Timothy J. Phelps, a member of Congress from California, declared in a Commemorative Session of Congress, that "*the whole country is indebted to him (Baker) in no small degree that California is today in the Union by her own act and choice.*"⁴⁸

The beginning of actual hostilities indeed changed many a wavering person into a strong Union advocate. When news reached California in April, 1861, that Sumter had been fired upon, the feeling against secession was intensified, and the Union sentiment of the great majority of the people became strong and demanded expression. Monster mass meetings were held throughout the State. In San Francisco in February 1861, nearly 12,000 persons assembled at a Union meeting. In May 1861, 25,000 were in attendance at a similar meeting, which "*was the largest and most complete and emphatic public demonstration that had ever been held on the Pacific Coast.*"⁴⁹ During this same month, San Francisco newspapers contained reports of Union meetings at Oakland, San Leandro, San Juan. Vallejo, Marysville, Eureka, Sonoma, Los Angeles, Placerville, Weaverville, Visalia, and numerous other smaller towns in various parts of the State. Throughout the war, news of federal victories always occasioned great rejoicings, especially in San Francisco. Bonfires, national salutes, fireworks, etc., helped express the general sentiment.

The "War Governors" of California were, as a rule, intensely loyal, although an exception must be made in the case of Governor Downey, whose Unionism was not of the kind which one would rely upon to save the Union. After he had broken away

⁴⁴ James McClatchy, editor of the *Sacramento Bee*, hearing of suspicions about General Johnston, sent word to Lincoln through Colonel Baker, urging the removal of General Johnston.

⁴⁵ Hittell, *History of California*, IV, 272.

⁴⁶ Kennedy, *The Contest for California in 1861*, Appendix I, 304.

⁴⁷ When Lincoln called for volunteers on April 15, 1861, a meeting of former citizens of California and Oregon was held in New York, nearly 300 being present. "*It was there resolved to raise and offer to the government a regiment to be composed as far as possible of persons at some time residents of California.*" The regiment formed was not entirely a New York nor a Pennsylvania regiment (much of the recruiting was done in Pennsylvania); it was finally credited to Pennsylvania, however, and designated as the Seventy-first Pennsylvania Infantry, although it was called the "California Regiment" throughout the war. Kennedy, *The Contest for California in 1861*, 257, 258, 259.

⁴⁸ Congressional Globe, 37th Congress, 2d Session, Pt. I. 63

⁴⁹ News that Sumter was fired upon reached California "per telegraph to St. Louis; thence by telegraph to Fort Kearny; thence by pony express to Fort Churchill; thence by telegraph to San Francisco." San Francisco Evening Bulletin, April 24, 1861.

from the “chivalry” democracy to a great extent, he still retained outgrown ideas concerning the slavery question. His whole attitude may be shown by his last message to the legislature in which he said *“that war had come, and it was the duty of the State to stand by the Congress of the United States, and if necessary, shed blood in their support. As for himself, though entertaining political proclivities at variance with the administration, no one would respond more promptly to its call for aid.”*⁵⁰ His political career closed with the end of his gubernatorial term in 1862.

In 1861, Leland Stanford, a man of broad views concerning public affairs, and one of the few leading spirits who formed the Republican party in California, was elected governor in the first State Republican victory that ever occurred in California. The rapidity with which public sentiment had changed since 1859, when Stanford was a candidate for governor, was marvelous, as the vote polled at the two different elections shows: in 1859, Stanford (Republican) received 10,110 votes, Latham (Lecompton Democrat) 62,255 votes, and Curry (Douglas Democrat) 31,298; in 1861, Stanford received 56,036 votes, Coness (Douglas Democrat) 30,944 votes, and McConnell (Breckinridge Democrat) 32,750 votes.⁵¹ The result of the election in 1861 was especially gratifying to all who were connected with the national administration, because it was pretty certain what attitude Stanford would take to the war.

Nor did he disappoint the expectations of loyal men. He became, in short, what Downey, by failing to interpret the spirit of the times correctly, was not: *the “War Governor”* of California. Throughout his administration, Stanford maintained frequent and unreserved correspondence with the heads of all departments at Washington, thus holding his State in close and sympathetic relations with the national government. In his inaugural address he expressed the feeling of loyal Californians by saying: *“None should ever forget that California is one of the United States; that she is loyal to the Union; that her citizens have quite recently unmistakably declared their devotion to our national unity, their recognition of the supremacy of the national government, and their determination to maintain both inviolate.”*⁵² Stanford had the proud satisfaction of seeing California occupy a front rank among the sisterhood of loyal states, - due in great measure to his unflinching enthusiasm. The legislature, realizing the beneficial effects of Stanford’s administration, bestowed on him, at the close of his term of office, the unusual compliment of a concurrent resolution, passed by a unanimous vote of all parties, in which it was: *“Resolved by the Assembly, the Senate concurring, that the thanks of the people of California are merited and are hereby tendered to Leland Stanford, for the able, upright, and faithful manner in which he has discharged the duties of governor of the State of California for the past two years.”*⁵³

In 1863, Frederick E. Low (Republican) was chosen over John G. Downey (Democrat) by a majority of over 20,000. (All state officers elected at this time in fact, were loyal Union men advocating the prosecution of the war.) Low, too, proved to be active in holding California true to the Union during the years that the war was raging; and this loyal activity of his gave great satisfaction not only to California, but also to the national government.

The majorities in the different legislatures in California, though not Republican,

⁵⁰ Hittell, *History of California*, IV, 286.

⁵¹ Blaine, *Twenty Years of Congress*, I, 303, 309.

⁵² Hittell, *History of California*, IV, 294.

⁵³ Shuck, *Representative and Leading Men of the Pacific*, 40.

were very strongly Union, and Union measures prevailed, in which were advocated unyielding prosecution of the conflict to the end - without reference to the length of time it would take or the amount of money it would cost. "*The legislatures for the years 1862, 1863 and 1864 vied with each other in the expression of the immovable determination of the people to sustain the Union at every hazard. Nothing more could be asked in the way of pledges.*"⁵⁴ The legislature of 1863 endorsed Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation as necessary if the government were to suppress the "desperate and wicked rebellion" and re-establish the authority of the national Union.⁵⁵ This legislature also passed acts making it a misdemeanor to display rebel flags, profess adherence to the enemy, defend or cheer any attempt of any person to subvert the authority of the United States; and they made it a felony for any one to fit out, arm or equip in any way within the State any vessel for privateering purposes, or to take part in any expedition hostile to the United States.⁵⁶ The legislature, which met in December 1863, adopted strong Union resolutions. The poll-tax was remitted to volunteers and a bounty - granted to men enlisting thereafter for three years of service during the war - of \$160 in installments to be paid every six months, and to honorably discharged veterans re-enlisting, an additional sum of \$140 paid in like manner. To meet these obligations, the Treasurer was directed to prepare bonds of the State to the amount of \$2,000,000 to redeem which a tax of 12 cents was levied on each \$100 valuation of property, real and personal. And yet no loyal citizen protested. The legislature of 1864, although endorsing "*all the measures of the administration for the purpose of subduing the present most wicked rebellion,*"⁵⁷ refused to repeal the "Specific Contract" law passed by the previous legislature, making nearly every kind of contract expressly payable "in gold coin." But this refusal cannot be construed as an act of disloyalty, because nearly all of the financial business of the Pacific Coast was in gold and silver coin, and the legal tender or greenback currency provided by the United States Treasury Department, if forced on California, would have worked almost unlimited harm.

As has been mentioned, the Golden State was very liberal with her gold in aiding the national cause. No claim or demand made by the national government was ever delayed or questioned. When Lincoln came to the Presidency, the finances of the country were in so deplorable a condition that Chase, Secretary of the Treasury, found it necessary to call on the people for contributions to keep the wheels of government in motion. California responded gladly and substantially. In all monetary matters - except the "Specific Contract" act, she (through the legislature) declared her devotion to the government; e. g., \$24,600 was appropriated by the legislature to aid recruiting officers in filling up volunteer regiments, \$100,000 to place the Coast in a more efficient state of defense, \$600,000 for a soldiers' relief fund, etc. Even the tax in 1864 on gold and silver bullion was patriotically paid

⁵⁴ Tuthill, *The History of California*, 592.

⁵⁵ The concurrent resolution passed in January 1863 read in part: "The loyal State of California received with earnest favor the recent proclamation of freedom issued by the president of the United States and commander-in-chief of the army and navy, regarding the measure as necessary for the success of the efforts of the government for the suppression of a desperate and wicked rebellion, and the re-establishment of its authority, consistent with the laws of war, and full of promise for the future permanence, unity and prosperity of the nation, and we hereby pledge to the measure the cordial and earnest support of the people of California." Davis, *History of Political Conventions in California*, 192.

⁵⁶ The attempt of the schooner J. M. Chapman to sail on a cruise in the service of the Confederacy was partly responsible for the passage of this act of legislature. See Hittell, *History of California*, IV, 342-347.

⁵⁷ Davis, *History of Political Conventions in California*, 202.

without murmur of objection. And, it is generally conceded that the war could not have been carried on by the North, had California not given of her wealth to the national treasury. General Grant, in fact, said: *“I do not know what we could do in this great national emergency, were it not for the gold sent from California.”*

Spontaneous contributions to the Sanitary Commission (of which California was the main support) show as well as any one thing how anxious California was to aid the Union cause. The Sanitary Commission was organized in New York under the Presidency of the Rev. Henry W. Bellows, a Unitarian clergyman; and as with most projects of the kind, it did not flourish financially at first. It was almost on the point of death from inanition when Bellows proposed to Thomas Starr King, *“the silver-tongued Unitarian clergy-man of San Francisco, whose voice had already been heard in eloquent favor of the Union Cause”*⁵⁸ that something in the same line be done in California. King threw himself into the project with his whole soul. The first meeting in California to raise money for the fund was held on September 6, 1862, at which time \$6,600 was at once contributed. Within ten days \$160,000 in gold was sent to Bellows; in October, \$100,000, and before the end of the year another \$100,000 was remitted. As California's contributions were in gold coin, they represented considerably over half a million in legal tender notes. In 1863, when Bellows again wrote, saying the Commission was almost going to pieces financially, California again came to the rescue, - San Francisco alone pledging \$200,000 for 1864, with the assurance that the rest of the State would doubtless make the sum \$300,000. At the close of the war, the report of the Commission showed that out of \$4,800,000 cash received, California had supplied \$1,234,257.31.

One should not tell of California's generous gifts to the Sanitary Commission without stopping to offer a word of praise to Thomas Starr King, to whom *“more than to all others, is due the glory of contributing so princely an amount to the treasury of the Commission that California now stands foremost in the sisterhood of states upon the score of generosity.”*⁵⁹ Since California was too far away to take an active part in the war, King ardently advocated the cause of the Sanitary Commission, believing it to be an admirable way to help the Union. Hence, *“for the purpose of keeping loyalty alive, and also for the purpose of advancing the cause of the Commission, he traveled through nearly every section of the State,”*⁶⁰ and wherever he went, the people gave liberally and willingly. Not only did Mr. King work for the Union cause in connection with the Sanitary Commission, but through the force of his eloquence, he was a vital and puissant force in encouraging and animating Union sentiment in California (1860-1864). Almost all of the clergy in San Francisco were strong Union men, and displayed the Stars and Stripes from their churches,⁶¹ but King's influence was the most effective of all. When the war began and loyalty was only a latent, not an active sentiment, and it was uncertain whether Unionism, a Pacific Republic, or Secessionism would prevail, *“the masses were undecided and wanted a leader. At this critical moment, and as if by the direct interposition of the Almighty, Mr. King stepped into the breach and became the champion of his country. ... He at once directed and controlled public sentiment. He*

⁵⁸ Hittell, *History of California*, IV, 348.

⁵⁹ Shuck, *Representative and Leading Men of the Pacific*, 195.

⁶⁰ Ibid, 195. King also visited Oregon, Nevada and Washington Territories.

⁶¹ The Catholic Archbishop Alemany, owing to the influence of his character and position, was especially serviceable to the Union cause.

lost no opportunity to strike a blow at the rebellion."⁶² At his death, the *San Francisco Evening Bulletin*, March 4, 1864, eulogized King thus: "*In this respect (i. e. striking at the issues of the rebellion) he has wielded a powerful influence, lending his aid to the preservation of harmony in a state which at the outset seemed likely to be divided, carrying the masses with him by that energy and eloquence which was given him as a birthright, and of which only the hand of Death could rob him.*" The legislature, also, to do honor to the value of King's life and works in California, adjourned from March 5th to the 8th, 1864, and ordered the flag on the capitol to be displayed at half-mast.

TROOPS FURNISHED TO THE UNION

It is evident that California produced able and loyal men during the national crisis from 1861-1865; that the vigilance and unceasing labor of these men kept the secessionists from establishing a Pacific Republic, or seceding from the Union or joining the Confederacy; that the secret societies formed by the secessionists were compelled to work in secret throughout the war, and in constant danger from the military forces in the State; that the people through their legislatures and governors loyally supported the Union both morally and materially; that gold from California flowed into the treasury of the Sanitary Commission, etc. The fact that California raised troops (although there was no draft in California) and that these troops were of great value to the Union cause, is also very important, and should be known by all who say that the part played by California in the Civil War was insignificant.

To be explicit, California furnished to the Union from 1861-1865, two full regiments of cavalry, eight full regiments of infantry, one battalion of native California cavalry,⁶³ one battalion of infantry called Mountaineers, and eight companies, enlisted as a part of what was known as the First Regiment of Washington Territory. And in addition to these troops - which rendered almost inestimable service in keeping down Indian revolts and driving rebel guerillas out of the States west of the Rocky Mountains, - about five hundred, anxious to engage in actual warfare in the East, were enlisted in California for active service and became a part of the quota of Massachusetts. All in all, California raised more than sixteen thousand men during the Civil War.⁶⁴ And many military men, such as Halleck, Sherman, Hooker, Grant, Farragut, Fremont, Baker, Mc-Pherson, Buell, Ord, Sumner, etc., who had made California their home at different times, went East and tendered their services at the outbreak of the war. "*It has been said that California cut no figure in the war, which assertion most assuredly was not true. California had few men on the battlefield, where most blood was spilt, not because they were not offered, but because they were not wanted there.*"⁶⁵ It was one of the great disappointments of the California troops, in fact, that they were not ordered East.

The first call for troops, made by the War Department, was sent out by the Pony Express on July 24, 1861, and was for one regiment of infantry and five companies

⁶² Shuck, *Representative and Leading Men of the Pacific*, 194.

⁶³ The *Alta California*, March 3, 1863, contains the following: "Forty members of the Native California Cavalry Company have arrived in town. This Company has been organized in San Jose, and is the first one of native-born citizens of California raised during the war. Among their novel weapons of offense are lassoes, which they are exceedingly expert at using on horseback."

⁶⁴ 15,725 volunteers and militia were furnished by California during the war. Official Records of the War of the Rebellion, Series III, Vol. 4, 1268.

⁶⁵ Bancroft, *History of California*, VII, 314.

of cavalry to guard the overland mail route from Carson City to Salt Lake and Fort Laramie. Recruiting went on briskly, and under that call, one full regiment of ten companies of infantry was raised, which became the First California Infantry, and five companies of cavalry which became the First Battalion of the First California Cavalry. In 1863, seven more companies of cavalry were raised, making the First Cavalry a full regiment of twelve companies.

Soon after the first call for troops in 1861, it was found that the Confederates contemplated seizing and securing New Mexico and Arizona, and if possible, gaining a foothold in California. With this in mind, a large Confederate force actually advanced through Texas, captured New Mexico, and penetrated Arizona nearly to the Colorado River. It was also ascertained that the rebels proposed, after securing New Mexico and Arizona, to seize and hold a large part of Mexico, especially Chihuahua, Sonora, and Lower California. Hence, the second call for troops in California. Under this call, the Second Cavalry, and the Second, Third, Fourth, and Fifth Regiments of Infantry were formed. General Sumner, commanding the Department of the Pacific, was ordered by General Scott to lead these forces on an expedition into Texas by way of Mazatlan, through Sonora and Chihuahua, with the object of thwarting the designs of the Confederates. Upon investigation, however, this plan was discovered not to be feasible, and the new troops were directed to be employed west of the Rockies, and especially in relieving companies of the regular army on the Pacific Coast, so the latter could be sent East to the seat of war. (All of the regulars in California, except the Ninth Infantry and four companies of the Third Artillery were ordered East. On October 21, 1861, Brigadier-General E. V. Sumner was recalled for duty in the East, too, and the command of the Department of the Pacific went to Colonel George Wright, a man prudent and prompt in the exercise of military authority).

In a little more detail, the work of the so-called "California Column" (the troops raised under the first call for troops, and placed under Colonel Carleton) in New Mexico, Arizona, and northwestern Texas, will now be examined. The Confederate government, as was stated, hoped to secure New Mexico, Arizona, and, if possible, to gain a foothold in California, in order to obtain supplies of men, horses, money, etc. Hence in February, 1862, we find the Confederate General, H. H. Sibley, and his men following the Great River northward; and since only a handful of regulars, Coloradoans and native New Mexicans, held the gateways of New Mexico - the Apache and Raton passes - the Confederate forces pushed their advance nearly to the Colorado river. The "California Column" - made up of the First Infantry (ten companies), First Cavalry (five companies), and a light battery of four brass field pieces of the Third Artillery - at this critical stage was placed under the command of Col. James H. Carleton, then a captain in the Sixth Regular Infantry stationed at Fort Tejon, and was ordered to rendezvous at Fort Yuma, (which it did in April, 1862), march across the desert, retake Arizona and New Mexico forts captured by Sibley, and hold them for the United States. General Sibley, hearing of the advance to be made by the "California Column," a small but bravely reckless army of 1,800 men, - and having lost most of his baggage and supplies - determined to evacuate the country, and so began his retreat.

The Column moved from Yuma to Pimos Villages, Picacho Pass, where the first California volunteers were killed in the war,⁶⁶ up the Gila to old Fort Breckenridge,

⁶⁶ The graves of Lieutenant Barret and two men may now be seen within twenty feet of the Southern Pacific

where the American flag was run up, and on to Tucson, which was occupied May 20, 1862, - the Confederates retiring to the Rio Grande. Crossing the Gila desert was a terrible march for the army. Colonel Carleton, in writing to Assistant Adjutant-General Drum, said of it: "*The march of the column from California across the Great Desert in the summer months, in the driest season that has been known for thirty years, is a military achievement creditable to the soldiers of the American army. ... That success was gained only by the high physical and moral energies of that peculiar class of officers and men who compose the column from California.*"⁶⁷ The soldiers were blistered by day, and shivered by night; and were nearly starved because of the difficulties encountered in obtaining supplies from the Indians. The best way to get supplies, it was found, was to offer the Indians presents, especially manta (white cotton cloth) and get in return wheat, flour, hay, etc.⁶⁸ But when the Indians, - i. e., the Pumas, Maricopas, etc. - had all the manta they wished, then there was an end to trading, and no amount of persuasion could make them exchange their grain, etc., for manta; so that the only alternative was to take what was necessary and give government vouchers in return. The troops had to fight the Apaches, hereditary enemies of the Pumas and Maricopas; and the Navajos were also warlike. From Tucson into New Mexico, in fact, the column had to fight its way through hostile Indians, who lurked in every mountain pass, and guarded every water hole.

Before pressing into New Mexico, Colonel Carleton placed Arizona under martial law, June 8, 1862. In July, he ordered the California Column to the Rio Grande; and on July 17, 1862, Lieutenant Colonel Frye, with the advance column of the California Column, crossed the Rio Grande and would have pursued the enemy into Texas, had not orders from General Canby, of the Department of New Mexico held him back (As it was, he managed to raise the American flag over four forts). On August 7, 1862, Carleton reached the Rio Grande, and by the 22nd, the California Column hoisted the Stars and Stripes over Fort Quitman. Carleton then returned to Las Cruces, New Mexico, and on to Santa Fe, where in September General Canby relinquished the command of the Department of New Mexico and Carleton assumed it. The companies of the Column were scattered (from 1862-1865) from the Rio Grande to "Picketwire." Some went with Colonel Kit Carson and fought the Kiowas and Comanche on the northern border; while others trailed the Apaches and the Navajos to the Texas line. Thousands of warring tribesmen were rounded up. Thus the Column guarded the southern border, kept back the fiery Texans, fought Indians, and held Kansas, Colorado, and the country west of the Rocky Mountains for the North.

The record of all the California troops, in fact, is one of which her sons and daughters can well be proud. In northern California, the First Battalion of Mountaineers kept down the hostile Indians. The Second Cavalry guarded the Overland mail-route in Utah, and kept clown the Snake and Shoshone Indians. Part of the Third Infantry, sent to Humboldt County, settled Indian troubles there. And Colonel Connor, sent with his regiment to Salt Lake City, kept the Mormons from

Railroad, as it goes through Picacho Pass.

⁶⁷ Orton, *Records of California Men in the War of the Rebellion*, 67.

⁶⁸ The following terms were agreed upon with the Indians: Four quarts of flour, weighing 4½ lbs., for 1 yd. of manta; 7 qts. of wheat, weighing 13 lbs., for 1 yd. of manta; 4 qts. of pinole, weighing 5½ lbs., for 1 yd. of manta; 50 lbs. of hay, or 150 lbs. of green fodder, for 1 yd. of manta, etc.

causing the Union trouble.⁶⁹ The “California Hundred” and “Battalion” troops raised in California, which became a part of the Second Massachusetts Cavalry, left a brave record after them in their active service in the East.⁷⁰ And the troops stationed throughout California during the entire war, rendered great service to the State, and to the Union in keeping down secessionists at home. To sum up the work of the Pacific Coast troops, and especially of the California troops, in the words of Bancroft: *“The population of the whole Pacific Coast, including Utah and Colorado, was not equal to one-fourth of the single State of Pennsylvania. Yet to the volunteers of this sparse population was entrusted the labor of awning avowed secession at home, guarding against foreign interference, and fighting numerous Indian tribes from Oregon in New Mexico.”*⁷¹

In conclusion, we may say that the loyal attitude, which California *as a State* took towards the Civil War, although a profound disappointment to the Confederacy,⁷² *“had a powerful effect upon the whole country. Nothing could have been more opportune or more effective.”*⁷³ Although the furthest off of all the states, the heartiness and readiness with which California responded to all requisitions made on her, her unhesitating and determined language in reference to the Union cause, the important services rendered by California troops, - in short, her whole attitude to the Civil War was as praiseworthy and of as much value to the Union as that of many a Northern State closer to the scene of action. Hence, considering all her services in the contest for freedom, it seems only just that California *“should share in the glory of having helped to preserve the integrity of the Union.”*⁷⁴

The CHAB is indebted to the Historical Society of California for allowing the association to reprint the above article that originally appeared in the 1912-1913 society's quarterly, volume IX, parts 1 & 2.

⁶⁹ The cordiality with which the Mormons looked upon the soldiers stationed near them may be deduced from the following remarks made by Brigham Young in the Tabernacle on March 8, 1863: *“Is there anything we would not do to show our loyalty to the government? Yes. If the present administration should ask us for one thousand men or even five hundred to go down there (meaning to fight the Rebels), I would see them damned first, and then they could not have them while these soldiers are in our vicinity.”* At the same place and on the same day, Heber Kimball, second President of the Mormon Church, said: *“We can defy the whole Federal Government.”* To which the congregation responded: *“That’s so, we can.”* Orton, *Records of California Men in the War of the Rebellion*, 511.

⁷⁰ The “California Hundred” and “Battalion” came into existence because there were so many young men in California who ardently desired to go East to join the armies there - after it was found that California volunteers were being kept on the Pacific Coast. Massachusetts at this time was paying large bounties for volunteers, in order to fulfill requisitions made on her. So a proposition was made to the State of Massachusetts to raise a company in California, take it East and credit it to the quota of Massachusetts if the expenses of its organization and transportation were guaranteed. The “California Hundred” were thus selected from the five hundred men who offered themselves for enrollment, and arrived in Readville, near Boston, on January 4, 1863 - booming Company “A” of the Second Massachusetts Cavalry. The “California Battalion” consisting of four companies was raised in a similar way and became Companies “E,” “F,” “L” and “M” of the Second Massachusetts Cavalry, which saw continuous, hard and active service in Virginia, Maryland, etc.

⁷¹ Bancroft, *History of California*, VII, 314.

⁷² Jefferson Davis had expected, with a confidence amounting to certainty, and based, as is believed, on personal pledges, that the Pacific Coast, if it did not actually join the South, would be disloyal to the Union, and would from its remoteness and its superlative importance, require a large contingent of the national forces to hold it in subjection. It was expected by the South that California and Oregon would give at least as much trouble as Kentucky and Missouri, and would thus indirectly, but powerfully, aid the Southern cause. The enthusiastic devotion which these distant States showed to the Union was therefore a surprise to the South and a most welcome relief to the national government. Blaine, *Twenty Years of Congress*, I, 308.

⁷³ Hittell, *History of California*, IV, 323.

⁷⁴ Bancroft, *History of California*, VII, 314.