

professionals where the story of so many lives has been told, poured into the ears of the listening *padres*. Time seems to stand still within these mission walls now, and we stand there as within a resurrected past, with all its silence filling the dim spaces. There are candles burning before the altar, and the aisles have been worn by the tread of many feet. The light comes stealing in from the high windows far above our heads just as it came a hundred years ago, when a different people knelt before these altars in daily worship.

San Buenaventura is putting on a good many modern airs. She has good sidewalks of artificial stone, on her principal streets, and is well lighted by electric lights; has good hotels, one daily and two weekly newspapers, numerous pretty homes, made charming by their garden-like surroundings. Mrs. J. S. Briggs, who is stopping at the Rose Hotel, very kindly drove me about the town and pointed out to me the places of interest. Driving out Ventura avenue for some distance beyond the city limits, she called my attention to a notable spot, perhaps fifty feet or more square, upon which nothing can ever be made to grow. Vegetation is green and luxuriant all about it and splendid harvests will be gathered, but that spot lifts up its gray, bare face, as if death claimed it.

"How do you account for it?" I inquired.

"By the presence of natural gas," was the response. "The odor of it is strong, and the owner will commence boring for it soon, and all the indications are that he will be successful."

It will be a fine thing for Ventura if natural gas should be found in large quantities. The town has an abundance of water and the sprinkling cart does good service. The soil is rich and the outlying fields and orchards yield abundant harvests.

The bean crop is now being gathered and the harvest this year will be excellent. Ventura county, like other sections of Southern California, will reap golden returns from her soil this year, and the pockets of her fruit-growers and farmers will be well-filled. She is surrounded by an extensive and productive agricultural district, and like the other leading towns of this section, has a promising future before her.

E. A. O.

SAN BUENAVENTURA.

Pen Points on the Ancient Town by the Seashore.

San Buenaventura is a nobby little town, and seen from her heights, she is most delightful to look down upon. One rarely finds a more charming perspective. There she sits with her background of hills, varied infinitely in form and altitude, filling the width of the pretty valley to the sea, and with a wealth of tree growth that always imparts to her a look of freshness and coolness, even in the warmest summer days.

The old mission fronts the sea, looking with solemn face across the channel to where Anacapa's isles lift their high fronts wrapped in robes of royal purple.

I went into the old mission, upon one side of which is the ancient Spanish graveyard, now the picture of desolation. There are great piles of useless and broken tiles in one corner, which once evidently covered the old roof, but have been replaced by newer ones. Underneath the eaves the swallows were building their nests in broken crevices of the walls. But in the enclosure weeds and dead grasses have overgrown everything, and from the street behind the brick wall there are no tombstones to be seen by the passer-by. And yet the lady who viewed the spot with me informed me that it was reported that there the dead are buried twelve deep. Generations have come and gone and been laid to rest in that consecrated ground, and over them is only the dry earth and the blue and sun-filled skies.

Well, what matters it? They have crumbled back to their native dust, and they rest as well as if marble monuments were piled upon their last resting place. There is no cold stone to shut out the light and the warmth of the penetrating sunlight from their narrow beds.

The cemetery is shut in by a high brick wall and the busy life of today goes on outside but it does not disturb their slumber.

The interior of the church is well preserved, and its walls are still ornamented by the rude frescoing of its early builders. Numerous old paintings of purgatory, the crucifixion and the saints also adorn the walls, and the sacred images look down upon the visitor from their high niches, as if they would murmur benedictions of peace.

There, too, are the quaint old con-