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Kern and Tulare Counties Building

A short walk brings us to the Kern and Tulare Counties Building, in the style of a Spanish-American urban residence such as the Castilian hidalgo used to build; indeed, it resembles the Governor's Palace at Chihuahua, Mexico.

Kern County is larger than Connecticut, Rhode Island, and Delaware combined; it embraces 8,159 square miles. As one enters the building, the exhibits of this county are on the left. There is an attractive display of minerals, for this is one of the principal mineral-producing sections of California, possessing the largest gold mines in the State and the largest tungsten mines in the world. There are also copper, silver, antimony and coal mines; while sulphur, limestone, gypsum and fuller's earth are other mineral resources of this county. Then there is oil, Kern being the banner county of the State in this respect, supplying one-tenth of the world's petroleum. Its output last year was valued at \$36,025,000, and in 1913 its production of oil exceeded the State's production of gold by over \$5,500,000. Up to January 1, 1915, California had produced more than 743,000,000 barrels of oil, of which 397,000,000 were produced in Kern County. Its average yearly output for the past ten years has been 34,385,602 barrels. One of the exhibits is, quite appropriately, a miniature oil well in operation. Besides its valuable oil fields, it has the largest gas wells in the world, one of its wells having produced 67,000,000 cubic feet of gas every twenty-four hours for the past two years. There are 300,000 consumers of Kern gas in Los Angeles, 150 miles distant. As great as the mineral wealth of the country is, nevertheless its leading industry is agriculture, to describe the resources of which would occupy more space than we have at our command. It has ideal soil and climatic conditions, and plenty of water as well, possessing the largest artesian belt in this country, and having built 1500 miles of irrigating canals.

Tulare County's exhibits are on your left as you enter. This county has an area of 4,935 square miles. Its exhibits are confined mostly to a display of its agricultural and horticultural resources. The principal agricultural products of this county are: wheat, barley, alfalfa, rye, sugar beets, Egyptian and Indian corn, sweet and Irish potatoes, and other vegetables. This being an ideal alfalfa country, dairying and stock-raising are profitable. Its deciduous and citrus fruit industries are two of the important occupations of its ranchers, fruits of all kinds being produced in the highest perfection. There are 42,000 acres planted with orange and lemon trees, the 1913-14 crop from which filled 6000 cars. Besides the fresh fruit industry, that of the dried fruit is also important, 20,000,000 pounds of raisins being produced annually, while the cured prune crop amounted to 14,200,000 pounds recently. The English walnut and rice likewise promise to become two of this county's staple products, and during the past two years the sugar beet has been cultivated extensively. Within the limits of this county, moreover, there are some of Nature's great productions, such as Mt. Whitney (15,000 feet), the highest peak in the United States; Sequoia National Park (250 square miles), containing the largest forest of *sequoia gigantea* in existence, in which there are more than 3,000 trees over 45 feet in circumference, and one tree in particular, the "General Sherman," is said to be the largest tree in the world, being 80 feet in circumference over 100 feet from its base; Grant National Park, and to the northeast of that the Kern and Kings River Canyons, the latter of which is said by some to surpass the Yosemite in scenic beauty; then, too, there is Chagoopa Falls, 3000 feet high.