

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

February 20, 1957

### **What Garland Saw**

Hamlin Garland made his first trip to the Pacific Coast in November of 1892. He was then a young literary radical, according to the text written by Lloyd A. Arvidson, the curator of the American Literature Collection in the library of the University of Southern California, for the Keepsake series of the Book Club of California.

Garland wrote his classic "Main Traveled Roads" in 1891, published it the same year and followed by four novels in succession. He came West to lecture on behalf of Henry George's Anti-Poverty Society, but he also brought his aged parents from their Dakota homestead to visit relatives in California.

The curator of the University of Southern California Library chose Garland's notebook of his impressions of California as the "Treasure of California Collections" from that library. In two dog-eared notebooks, eight and one-half by four inches, which have been preserved in the American Literature Collection, is the record by Garland. It is written in pencil as a personal reminder of his visit and intended for an historical record. All comments are fresh and frank and entertaining reading.

Garland came West by train. From Barstow he passed barren desert and mountains until his brain had "drunken full desolation" when suddenly "We burst out . . . among green orange and lemon trees and little cottages in minute little gardens. The air was very warm. We threw open our car windows and let it in in floods. The trees dusty, laden with fruit, were like July. The sun blazed nearly horizontally through the air and the whole effect was magically overwhelming. We moved out upon the walk like people in a dream."

In describing California Garland wrote, "The whole effect Was quite like that of a badly arranged, costly and elaborate garden."

The visitor liked Pasadena which he described: "It is a mixture of offending and incongruous elements. The whole appeal is lavish and without taste and harmony . . . all is new and ill-assorted but has a charm and freshness for all that."

Following a trip up the West Coast Garland returned to Southern California and attended Pasadena's fourth Tournament of Roses on New Year's Day 1893. His

account of this event in his notebook are the pages chosen as the favorite among the library's Californiana.

The cover illustration is from the picture collection of the California Historical Society.

The 10th annual meeting, or institute of the California History Foundation will be held at the College of the Pacific on March 8 and 9, 1957. An interesting and stimulating program has been arranged with Dr. Robert E. Burns, Dr. Malcolm R. Eiselen, Dr. Tully C. Knoles, Miss Asta Cullberg, Mrs. Arthur Van Deventer, Dr. George P. Hammond, Allan R. Ottley and W. H. Hutchinson as the chief participants. Aside from the annual banquet, Saturday luncheon, there will be a reception and tea at the Haggin Memorial Museum and Art Gallery; and a production by the Pacific 'Players, "The Lady's Not for Burning," at the Pacific Theater Saturday evening.

The third annual conference of the California Historical Societies will be held in San Diego from June 20 to 22.

The Tenth Annual College of the Pacific Mission Tour will be held, as usual, during the week preceding Easter - April 13 to 20. All of the 21 missions will be visited, and the history of this great movement told in lectures by Prof. J. Randolph Hutchins of the college. College credit - History 166, California Missions, (2 units) may be earned.