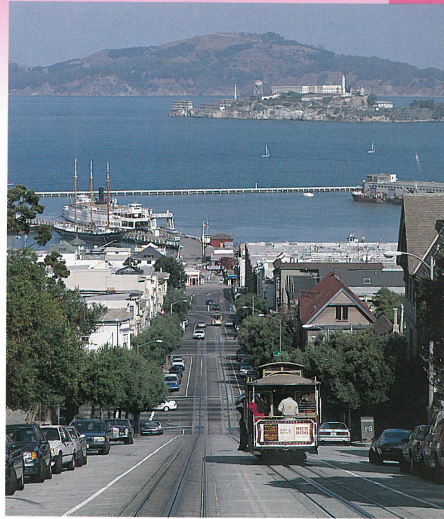


The Great Plains east of the Rocky Mountains are flat but high. Denver is nick-named 'Mile High City'. All of the Great Plains were once grass. Where there is enough rain, they have been ploughed up for crops of wheat and sweetcorn (maize). In drier areas the grassland remains and there are enormous cattle ranches.

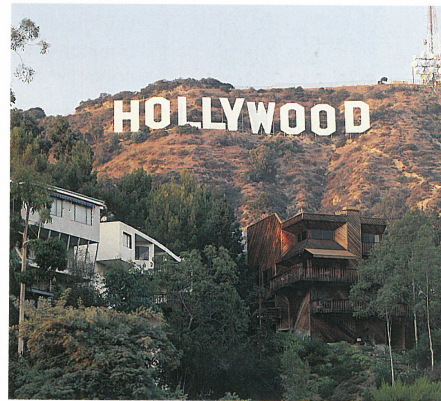
The Pacific coastlands of the north-west have plenty of rain and the climate is quite like north-west Europe. The mountains and valleys are thickly forested and timber is an important product. Seattle is on a sheltered inlet of the sea.

**CALIFORNIA**

California now has more people than any other state, and it is the USA's 'hi-tech' centre. It has many advantages. In the Central Valley, the climate is right for many crops: oranges from California are well known, and grapes grow well and are made into wine. The desert of the south is attractive to retired people – many people migrate here from all over the USA. But there is one big danger: earthquakes! So buildings have to be strengthened.



▲ **A street-car in San Francisco.** Street-cars still climb the steep hills in San Francisco, California. A moving cable runs beneath the street. The car is fixed to the cable and starts with a jerk! In the background you can see an inlet of the Pacific and Alcatraz – once a top-security prison island.



▲ **Hollywood** is a suburb of Los Angeles. Rich film-stars live here in expensive houses. The clear blue skies and lack of rain were helpful to film-makers. But now, Los Angeles has so many cars there is more smog from pollution than clear skies.

