

Mercury Watchman & State Journal.

BY E. P. WALTON & SON.

MONTPELIER, THURSDAY, APRIL 18, 1850.

VOL. XLIV, NO. 23.—WHOLE NO. 2270.

Watchman & State Journal.

PUBLISHED EVERY THURSDAY MORNING.

TERMS—\$1.50 in advance; \$2.00 if payment is not made in advance; interest always charged from the date of the year.

Miscellaneous.

REPORT OF HON. T. BUTLER KING, ON CALIFORNIA.

ITS POPULATION, CLIMATE, SOIL, PRODUCTS, PUBLIC DOMAIN, AND METALLIC AND MINERAL WEALTH.

WASHINGTON, March 23d, 1850.

Sir:—In obedience to your instructions, dated the 3d of April last, I proceeded to California by way of the Isthmus of Panama, and arrived at San Francisco on the 4th of June.

The steamer in which I took passage was the first conveyance that reached California with intelligence of the inauguration of President Taylor, and the appointment of his Cabinet, and that Congress had failed to aid the Executive in providing a government for the people of that territory. The greatest anxiety was naturally felt and manifested to ascertain the cause of this neglect on the part of the Government of the United States, and what steps duty to themselves required them to take, in the painful and embarrassing position in which they were placed, for their protection and welfare.

A brief sketch of their position will explain the cause of this anxiety.

The discovery of the gold mines had attracted a very large number of citizens of the United States to that territory, who had never been accustomed to any other than American law, administered by American courts. There they found their rights of property and person subject to the uncertainty, and frequently most oppressive, operations of laws written in a language they did not understand, and founded on principles, in many respects, new to them. They complained that the alcaldes, or judges, most of whom had been appointed or elected before the immigration had commenced, were not lawyers by education or profession; and, being Americans, they were, of course, unacquainted with the laws of Mexico, or the principles of the civil law on which they are founded.

As our own laws, except for the collection of revenue, the transmission of the mails, and establishment of post offices, had not been extended over that Territory, the laws of Mexico, as they existed at the conclusion of the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, regulating the relations of the inhabitants of California with each other, necessarily remained in force; yet, there was not a single volume containing those laws, as far as I knew or believe, in the whole territory; except, perhaps, in the Governor's office, at Monterey.

The magistrates, therefore, could not procure them, and the administration of justice was, necessarily, as unequal and fluctuating as the opinions of the judges were conflicting and variable.

There were no fee-bills to regulate costs, and, consequently, the most cruel exactness, in many instances, was practiced.

The greatest confusion prevailed respecting titles to property, and the decision of suits, involving the most important rights, and very large sums of money depended upon the dictation of the judge.

The sale of the territory by Mexico to the United States had necessarily cut off or dissolved the laws regulating the granting or procuring titles to land; and, as our own land-laws had not been extended over it, the people were compelled to receive such titles as were offered to them, without the means of ascertaining whether they were valid or not.

Litigation was so expensive and precarious, that injustice and oppression were frequently endured, rather than resort to so uncertain a remedy.

Towns and cities were springing into existence—many of them without charters of any legal right to organize municipal authorities, or to tax property or the citizens, for the establishment of a police, the erection of prisons, or providing any of those means for the necessary in all civilized communities, and especially among a people mostly strangers to each other.

Nearly one million and a half of dollars had been paid into the custom houses, as duty on imported goods, before our revenue laws had been extended over the country; and the people complained bitterly that they were thus heavily taxed without being provided with a government for their protection, or laws which they could understand, or allowed the right to be represented in the councils of the nation.

While anxiously awaiting the action of Congress, oppressed and embarrassed by this state of affairs, and feeling the pressing necessity of applying such remedies as were in their power and circumstances seemed to justify, they resolved to substitute laws of their own for the existing system, and to establish tribunals for their proper and faithful administration.

In obedience, therefore, to the extraordinary exigencies of their condition, the people of the city of San Francisco elected members to form a Legislature, and clothed them with full power to pass laws.

The communities of Sonoma and of Sacramento also followed the example.

Thus were three legislative bodies organized, the two most distant being only 130 miles apart.

Other movements of the kind were threatened; and doubtless would have followed, in other sections of the territory had they not been arrested by the formation of a State government.

While the people of California were looking to Congress for a Territorial Government, it was quite evident that such an organization was daily becoming less suited to their condition, which was entirely different from that of any of the Territories out of which the new States of the Union had been formed.

Those Territories had been at first slowly and sparsely peopled by a few hunters and farmers, who penetrated the wilderness, or traversed the prairies in search of

game or a new home; and, when thus gradually their population warranted it, a government was provided for them. They, however, had no foreign commerce, nor anything beyond the ordinary pursuits of agriculture and the various branches of business which usually accompany it, to induce immigration within their borders. Several years were required to give them sufficient population and wealth to place them in a condition to require or enable them to support a State Government.

Not so with California. The discovery of the vast metallic and mineral wealth in her mountains had already attracted to her, in the space of twelve months, more than one hundred thousand people; an extensive commerce had sprung up with China, the ports of Mexico on the Pacific, Chili and Australia.

Hundreds of vessels from the Atlantic ports of the Union, freighted with our manufactures and agricultural products, and filled with our fellow citizens, had arrived, or were on their passage round Cape Horn; so that in the month of June last there were more than three hundred sea-going vessels in the port of San Francisco.

California has a border on the Pacific of 10 degrees of latitude, and several important harbors which have never been surveyed; nor is there a buoy, a beacon, a light-house, or a fortification on the whole coast.

There are no docks for the repair of national or mercantile vessels nearer than New York, a distance of some twenty thousand miles round Cape Horn.

All these things, together with the proper regulations of the gold region, the quicksilver mines, the survey and disposition of the public lands, the adjustment of land titles, the establishment of a mint and marine hospitals, required the immediate formation of a more perfect civil government than California then had, and the fostering care of Congress and the Executive.

California had, as it were by magic, become a State of great wealth and power.—One short year had given her a commercial importance but little inferior to that of the most powerful of the old States. She had passed her minority at a single bound, and might justly be regarded as fully entitled to take her place as an equal among the sisters of the Union.

When, therefore, the reality became known to the people of that Territory that the Government had done nothing to relieve them from the evil and embarrassments under which they were suffering, and seeing no probability of any change on the subject, which divided Congress, they adopted, with most unexampled unanimity and promptitude, the only course which lay open to them—the immediate formation of a State Government.

They were induced to take this step not only for the reason that it promised the most speedy remedy for present difficulties, but because the great and rapidly growing interests of the Territory demanded it; and all reflecting men saw, at a glance, that it ought not to be any longer, and could not under any circumstances, be much longer postponed.

They not only considered themselves best qualified, but that they had the right to decide, as far as they were concerned, the embarrassing question which was shaking the Union to its centre, and had thus far deprived them of a regularly organized civil government. They believed that, in forming a constitution, they had a right to establish or prohibit slavery, and that in their action as a State, they would be sustained by the North and the South.

They were not unmindful of the fact, that while Northern statesmen had contended that Congress has power to prohibit slavery in the Territories, they had always admitted that the States of the Union had the right to abolish or establish it at pleasure.

On the other hand, Southern statesmen had almost unanimously contended that Congress has not the constitutional power to prohibit slavery in the Territories, because they have not the power to establish it; but that it is the people in forming a government for themselves, who have the right to do either. If Congress can rightfully do one, they can certainly do the other.

This is the doctrine put forth by Mr. Calhoun, in his celebrated Resolutions of 1847, introduced into the Senate of the United States, among which is the following:

Resolved, That it is a fundamental principle in our political creed, that a people in forming a constitution have the unconditional right to form and adopt the Government which they may think best calculated to secure their liberty, property, and happiness; and in conformity thereto, no other condition is imposed by the Federal Constitution on a State, in order to be admitted into the Union, except that its constitution shall be republican; and that the imposition any other by Congress would not only be in violation of the Constitution, but in direct conflict with the principle on which our political system rests.

President Polk, in his annual message, dated 5th December, 1848, uses the following language:—

"The question as to whether slavery ever can or would exist in any portion of the acquired territory, even if it were left to the option of the slaveholding States themselves. From the nature of the climate and productions in much the larger portion of it, it is certain it could never exist; and in the remainder, the probabilities are that it would not."

But however this may be, the question, in voting, as it does, a principle of equality of rights of the separate and several States, as equal copartners in the confederacy, should not be regarded.

"In voting among governments over these Territories, no duty is imposed on Congress by the Constitution requires that they should legislate on the subject of slavery, while their power to do so is not only seriously questioned, but denied by many of the soundest exponents of that instrument."

"Whether Congress shall legislate or not the people of the acquired Territories, when assembled in convention to form State constitutions, will possess the sole and exclusive power to determine for themselves whether slavery shall or shall not exist within their limits."

In taking this step they proceeded with all regularity which has ever characterized the American people in discharging the great & important duties of self-government.

As already stated, I arrived at San Francisco on the morning of the fourth of June.

The steamer in which I was passenger did not stop at Monterey; I therefore did not see General Riley, nor had I any communication with him until about the middle of the month, when he came to San Francisco. A few days after my arrival, his State Constitution, dated the 3d of June, was received.

The people acted in accordance with what they believed to be the views of Congress, and conformably to the recommendations of the proclamation; and proceeded, on the day appointed, to elect members to a convention for the purpose of forming a constitution, to be regularly submitted to the people, for their ratification or rejection; and, if approved, to be presented to Congress, with a prayer for the admission of California, as a State, into the Union.

I desire here to make a brief and emphatic reply to the various unjust and most extraordinary accusations and insinuations which have been made respecting the movements of the people of California in forming their State government.

I had no secret instructions, verbal or written, from the President, or any one else, what to say to the people of California, on the subject of Slavery; nor was it ever hinted or intimated to me that I was expected to attempt to influence their action in the slightest degree on that subject.

That I never did, the people of California will bear me witness. In that territory there was none of the machinery of party or of the press, and it is even more absurd to suppose that any secret influences, for or against slavery, could have been used there, than it would be to believe that they could be successfully employed in Maryland or Georgia.

I therefore declare all assertions and insinuations that I was secretly instructed to, or that I did in any way, attempt to influence the people of California to exclude slavery from their Territory, to be without foundation.

The election of delegates to the convention proceeded regularly in pursuance of the proposed mode of holding it, and as far as I am informed, no questions were asked whether a candidate was a Whig, or Democrat, or whether he was from the North or South. The only object seemed to be, to find competent men who were willing to make the sacrifice of time which a proper discharge of their duties would require.

As soon after my arrival at San Francisco as the arrangements of General Smith would permit, I proceeded with him to the interior of the country, for the purpose of examining the gold region, and other interesting and important portions of it. I did not return until the 16th of August. The elections had taken place when I was in the mountains. I was taken ill on the 30th of that month, and was confined to my bed and my room more than two months.

The convention met on the 1st of September. So it will be seen that I was not present when any election was held, and had nothing to do with selecting or bringing out candidates; and my illness is sufficient proof that I did not, and could not, had I been disposed, exercise any influence in the convention, which was sitting one hundred and thirty miles from where I was.

Some intimations or assertions, as I am informed, have been thrown out that the South was not fairly represented in the convention. I am told by two of the members of Congress elected from California, who were members of the Convention, that of the thirty-seven delegates designated in General Riley's proclamation, sixteen were from slaveholding States, and eleven were citizens of California under the Mexican government, and that ten of those eleven came from districts beyond 30° 30'. So that there were in the Convention twenty-six of the thirty-seven members from the slaveholding States, and from places south of the Missouri compromise line.

It appears on the journal of the convention that themselves, have the right to do either. If Congress can rightfully do one, they can certainly do the other.

I now proceed to give you the result of my inquiries, observations, and reflections, respecting the population, climate, soil and productions—the general character of grants of land from Mexico—the extent and condition of the public domain—the commercial resources and prospects—the mineral and metallic wealth of California.

Humboldt, in his Essay on New Spain, states the population of Upper California, in 1822, to have consisted of—

Converted Indians,	15,562
Other classes,	1,390
	\$16,952

Alexander Forbes, in his history of Upper and Lower California, published in London, in 1839, states the number of converted Indians in the former to have been, in 1831, 18,687.

Of all other classes, at 4,342

He expresses the opinion that this number had not varied much up to 1835, and the probability is, there was very little increase in the white population until the emigrants from the United States began to enter the country in 1838.

They increased from year to year, so that in 1846, Colonel Fremont had little difficulty in calling to his standard some five hundred fighting men.

At the close of the war with Mexico, it was supposed that there were, including discharged volunteers, from ten to fifteen thousand Americans and Californians, exclusive of converted Indians, in the Territory. The immigration of American citizens, in 1849, up to the 1st of January last, was estimated at eighty thousand—of foreigners, twenty thousand.

The population of California may be safely set down at 115,000 at the commencement of the present year.

It is quite impossible to form any thing like an accurate estimate of the number of Indians in the Territory. Since the commencement of the war, and especially since the discovery of gold in the mountains, their number at the missions and in the valleys near the coast, have very much diminished. In fact the whole race seems to be rapidly disappearing.

The remains of a vast number of villages in all the valleys of the Sierra Nevada, and among the foothills of that range of mountains, show that at no distant date there must have been a numerous population, where there is not now an Indian to be seen.—There are a few still retained in the service of the old Californians, but these do not amount to more than a few thousand in the whole Territory. It is said that there are large numbers of them in the mountains and valleys about the head waters of the Sierra, and in the northern part of the Territory, and that they are hostile. A number of Americans were killed by them during the last summer in attempting to penetrate high up the rivers in search of gold; they also drove one or two parties from Trinity river. They have, in several instances, attacked persons coming from returning to Oregon, in the section of country which the late General Riley and Warner were examining when he was killed.

It is quite impossible to form any estimate of the number of these Mountain Indians. Some suppose there are as many as three hundred thousand in the Territory, but I should not be inclined to believe that there can be one-third of that number. It is quite evident that they are hostile, and that they ought to be chastised for the murders already committed.

The small bands with whom I have met, scattered through the lower portions of the foothills of the Sierra, and in the valleys between them and the coasts, seemed to be almost the lowest grade of human beings. They live chiefly on acorns, roots, insects, and the kernel of the pine burr—occasionally they catch fish and game. They use the bow and arrow, but are said to be too lazy and effeminate to make successful hunters. They do not appear to have the slightest inclination to cultivate the soil, nor do they ever attempt it, as far as I could obtain information, except when they are induced to enter the service of the white inhabitants. They have never pretended to hold any interest in the soil, nor have they been treated by the Spanish or American immigrants as possessing any.

The Mexican government never treated with them for the purchase of land, or the relinquishment of any claim to it whatever. They are lazy, idle to the last degree, and although they are said to be willing to give their services to any one who will provide them with blankets, beef and bread, it is with much difficulty that they can be made to perform labor enough to reward their employers for these very limited means of comfort.

Formerly, at the missions, those who were brought up and instructed by the priests, made very good servants. Many of these now attached to families seem to be faithful and intelligent. But those who are at all in a wild and uncivilized state, are most degraded objects of filth and idleness. It is possible that government might, by collecting them together, teach them, in some degree the arts and habits of civilization; but, if we may judge of the facts of the past, they will disappear from the face of the earth as the settlements of the whites extend over the country. A very considerable military force will be necessary, however, to protect the emigrants in the northern and southern portions of the Territory.

CLIMATE.

The climate of California is so remarkable in its periodical changes, and for the long continuance of the wet and dry seasons, dividing as they do, the year into about two equal parts, which have a most peculiar influence on the labor applied to agriculture and the products of the soil, and, in fact, connect themselves so inseparably with all the interests of the country, that I deem it proper briefly to mention the causes which produce these changes, and which, it will be seen, as this report proceeds, must exercise a controlling influence on the commercial prosperity and resources of the country.

It is a well established theory, that the currents of air under which the earth passes in its diurnal revolutions follow the line of the sun's greatest attraction. These currents of air are drawn towards this line from great distances on each side of it; and as the world revolves from west to east they blow from northeast and southeast, meeting, and of course causing a calm, on the line.

Thus, when the sun is directly, in common parlance, over the equator, in the month of March, these currents of air blow from some distance north of the tropic of Cancer, and south of the tropic of Capricorn, in an oblique direction towards this line of the sun's greatest attraction, and forming what are known as the northeast and southeast tradewinds.

As the earth, in its path round the sun, gradually brings the line of attraction north, in summer these currents of air are carried with it; so that about the middle of May the current from the northeast has extended as far as the 38th or 39th degree of north latitude, and by the twentieth day of June, the period of the sun's greatest northern inclination, to the northern portions of California and the southern portion of Oregon.

These northeast winds, in their progress across the continent, towards the Pacific ocean, pass over the snow-capped ridges of the Rocky mountains and the Sierra Nevada, and are of course deprived of all moisture which can be extracted from them by the low temperature of those regions of eternal snow, and consequently no moisture can be precipitated from them, in the form of dew or rain, in a higher temperature than they therefore, pass over the hills and plains of California, where the temperature is very high in summer, in a very dry state; and so far from being charged with moisture, they absorb, like a sponge, all that the atmosphere and surface of the earth can afford, until both become, apparently perfectly dry.

The process commences, as I have said, when the line of the sun's greatest attraction comes north in the summer, bringing with it these vast atmospheric movements and on their approach, produced the dry seasons in California, which governed by these laws, continues until some time after the sun repasses the equator in September, when, about the middle of November, the climate being relieved from these northeast currents of air, the southwest winds set in from the ocean charged with moisture—the

trains commence and continue to fall, not constantly, as some persons have represented, but with sufficient frequency to designate the period of their continuance from about the middle of November until the middle of May, in the latitude of San Francisco, as the wet season.

As follows, as a matter of course, that the dry season commences first, and continues longest in the southern portion of the Territory and the climate of the northern part is influenced in a much less degree, by the causes which I have mentioned, than any other section of the country. Consequently we find that as low down as lat. 30° deg. rains are sufficiently frequent in summer to render irrigation quite unnecessary to the perfect maturity of any crop which is suited to the soil and climate.

There is an extensive ocean current of cold water which comes from the northern regions of the Pacific, or, perhaps, from the Arctic, and flows along the coast of California. It comes charged with ice and emits in its progress, air, which appears in the form of fog when it comes in contact with a higher temperature on the American coast, as the gulf stream of the Atlantic exhales vapor when it meets, in any part of its progress, a lower temperature. This current has not been surveyed, and therefore, its source, temperature, velocity, width, and course, have not been accurately ascertained.

It is believed by Lieut. Maury, on what he considers sufficient evidence—and no high authority can be cited—that this current comes from the coast of China and Japan, flows northward to the peninsula of Kamtschatka, and making a circuit to the eastward strikes the American coast in about latitude 41 or 42°. It passes thence southwardly, and finally loses itself in the tropics.

Below latitude thirty-nine, and west of the foot hills of the Sierra Nevada, the forests of California are limited to some scattering groves of oak in the valleys and along the borders of the streams, and of red wood on the ridges and in the gorges of the hills—sometimes extending into the plains. Some of the hills are covered with dwarf shrubs, which may be used as fuel. With these exceptions, the whole territory presents a surface without trees or shrubbery. It is covered, however, with various species of grass, and for many miles from the coast with wild oats, which in the valleys, grow most luxuriantly. These grasses and oats mature and ripen early in the dry season, and soon cease to protect the soil from the scorching rays of the sun. As the summer advances, the moisture in the atmosphere and the earth, to a considerable depth, soon becomes exhausted; and the radiation of heat, from the extensive naked plains, and hill sides, is very great.

The cold dry currents of air from the northeast after passing the rocky mountains and the Sierra Nevada, descend to the Pacific, and absorb the moisture of the atmosphere, to a great distance from the land. The cold air from the mountains, and that which accompanies the great ocean current from the northwest, thus becomes united, and vast banks of fog are generated, which, when driven by the wind, has a penetrating or cutting effect on the human skin, much more uncomfortable than would be felt in the humid atmosphere of the Atlantic at a much lower temperature.

As the sun rises from day to day, week after week, and month after month, in unclouded brightness during the dry season, and pours down his unbroken rays on the dry, unprotected surface of the country, the heat becomes so much greater inland than it is on the ocean, that an under current of cold air, bringing the fog with it, rushes over the coast range of hills, and through their numerous passes, towards the interior.

Every day, as the heat inland, attains a sufficient temperature, the cold, dry wind from the ocean commences below. This is usually from eleven to one o'clock; and as the day advances the wind increases and continues to blow till late at night. When the vacuum is filled, or the equilibrium of the atmosphere restored, the wind ceases; a perfect calm prevails until about the same hour the following day, when the same process commences and progresses as before, and these phenomena are of daily occurrence, with few exceptions, throughout the dry season.

These cold winds and fogs render the climate at San Francisco, and all along the coast of California, except the extreme southern portion of it, probably more uncomfortable, to those not accustomed to it, in summer than in winter.

A few miles inland, where the heat of the sun modifies and softens the wind from the ocean, the climate is moderate and delightful. The heat in the middle of the day is not so great as to retard labor, or render exercise in the open air uncomfortable. The nights are cool and pleasant. This description of climate prevails in all the valleys along the coast range, and extends throughout the country, north and south, as far eastward as the valley of the Sacramento and San Joaquin. In this vast plain the sea-breeze loses its influence, and the degree of heat in the middle of the day, during the summer months, is much greater than is known on the Atlantic coast in the same latitudes. It is dry, however, and probably not more oppressive. On the foot-hills of the Sierra Nevada, and especially in the deep ravines of the streams, the thermometer frequently ranges from 110 deg. to 115 deg. in the shade, during three or four hours of the day, from eleven until three o'clock. In the evening, as the sun descends, the atmosphere from the mountains spreads over the whole country, and renders the nights cool and invigorating.

I have been kindly furnished by Surgeon General Lawson, U. S. army, with thermometer observations, taken at the places in California, viz: At San Francisco, for six months, embracing the last quarter of 1847, and the first quarter of 1848. The monthly mean temperature was as follows: October, 57°; November, 49°; December, 50°; January, 49°; February, 50°; March, 51°.

At Monterey, in latitude 36° 38' N. North and longitude 121° West, on the coast, about one degree and a half South of San Francisco, by Assistant Surgeon W. S. King, for seven months, from May to November inclusive. The monthly mean tem-

perature was; May, 56°; June, 59°; July, 62°; August, 59°; September, 58°; October, 60°; November, 56°; December, 60°.

At Los Angeles, latitude 33° 7' N. longitude west 118° 7' M. by Assistant Surgeon John S. Griffin, for ten months—from June, 1847, to March, 1848, inclusive.—The monthly mean temperature was: June, 73°; July, 74°; August, 75°; September, 75°; October, 69°; November, 59°; December, 60°.

This place is about forty miles from the coast.

At San Diego, latitude 32° 45' M., longitude west 117° 11' M., by Assistant Surgeon J. D. Summers, for the following three months of 1849, viz: July, monthly mean temperature, 71°; August 75°; September, 70°.

At Sutterville, on the Sacramento river, latitude 38° 32' N., longitude west 121° 34' M., by Assistant Surgeon R. Murray, for the following months of 1849; July, monthly mean temperature 73°; August, 70°; September, 65°; October, 65°.

These observations show a remarkably high temperature at San Francisco during the six months from October to March inclusive; a variation of only eight degrees in the monthly mean, and a mean temperature for the six months of 51 degrees.

At Monterey we find the mean monthly temperature from May to November, inclusive, varying only six degrees, and the mean temperature of the seven months to have been 58°. If we take the three Summer months, the mean heat was 60°. The mean of the three Winter months was a little over 49°; showing a mean difference on that part of the coast, of only 11° between Summer and Winter.

The mean temperature of San Francisco, for the three winter months, was precisely the same as at Monterey—a little over 49°.

As these cities are only about one degree and a half distant from each other, and both situated near the ocean, temperature at both, in summer, may very reasonably be supposed to be as nearly similar as the thermometer shows it to be in winter.

The mean temperature of July, August and September, at San Diego, only 3° 53' south of Monterey, was 72°. The mean temperature of the same months at Monterey was a little over 59°, showing a mean difference of 13°.

This would seem to indicate that the cold ocean current is thrown off from the southern part of the coast by Point Conception, and the Islands south of it; and consequently its influence on the climate of San Diego is much less than at Monterey and San Francisco.

At Los Angeles, 40 miles distant from the coast, the mean temperature of the three months is 74°; of the three autumn months 67°; of the three winter months 57°.

At Sutterville, about 130 miles from the ocean, and 4° north of Los Angeles, the mean temperature of August, September, and October was 67°. The mean temperature of the same months at Monterey was 59°; showing a difference of 8° between the sea-coast and the interior, on nearly the same parallel of latitude. A much greater difference would undoubtedly appear if we had observation for the Spring and Summer months at Sutterville and the gold mines.

These variations in the climate of California account for the various and conflicting opinions and statements respecting it.

A stranger arriving at San Francisco in Summer is annoyed by the cold winds and fogs, and pronounces the climate intolerable. A few months will modify if not banish his dislike, and he will not fail to appreciate the beneficial effects of a cool, bracing atmosphere. Those who approach California, therefore, through the passes of the mountains, find the heat of Summer, in the middle of the day, greater than they have been accustomed to, and therefore many complain of it.

Those who take up their residence in the valleys which are situated between the great plain of the Sacramento and San Joaquin and the coast range of hills, find the climate, especially in the dry season, as healthful and pleasant as it is possible for any climate to be which possesses sufficient heat to mature the cereal grains and edible roots of the temperate zone.

The division of the year into two distinct seasons—dry and wet—impresses those who have been accustomed to the variable climate of the Atlantic States unfavorably. The dry appearance of the country in summer and the difficulty of moving about in winter, seem to impose serious difficulties in the way of agricultural prosperity, while the many and decided advantages resulting from the mildness of Winter, and the bright clear weather of Summer, are not appreciated. These will appear when I come to speak of the productions of California.—We ought not to be surprised at the dislike which the immigrants frequently express to the climate. It is so unlike that from which they come, that they cannot readily appreciate its advantages, or become reconciled to its extremes of dry and wet.

If a native of California were to go to New England in Winter, and see the ground frozen and covered with snow, the streams with ice, and find himself in a temperature many degrees colder than he had ever felt before, he would probably be as much surprised that people could or would live in so inhospitable a region, as any immigrant ever has been at what he has seen of felt in California.

So much are our opinions influenced by early impressions, the vicissitudes of the seasons with which we are familiar, love of country, home and kindred, that we ought never to hazard a hasty opinion, when we come in contact with circumstances entirely different from those to which we have all our lives been accustomed.

The valleys which are situated parallel to the coast range, and those which extend eastwardly in all directions among the hills towards the great plain of the Sacramento, are of unsurpassed fertility.

They have a deep black, alluvial soil, which has the appearance of having been deposited when they were covered with water. The idea is strengthened by the fact that the rising grounds on the borders of these valleys, and many hills of moderate elevation have a soil precisely like that of the adjoining plains.

This soil is so porous, that it remains perfectly unbroken by gullies, notwithstanding the great quantity of water which falls in it annually during the wet season. The land in the northern part of the territory on the Trinity and other rivers, and on the borders of Clear Lake, as far as it has been examined, is so remarkably fertile.

The great valley of the Sacramento and San Joaquin has evidently been, at some remote period, the bed of a Lake; and those rivers which drain it, present the appearance of having cut their channels through the alluvial deposit after it had been formed. In fact it is not possible that they could have been instrumental in forming the plain through which they pass. Their head waters come from the extreme ends of the valley, north and south; and were it not for the supply of water received from the streams which flow into them from the Sierra Nevada, their beds would be almost, if not quite dry in the summer months. The soil is very rich, and with a proper system of drainage and embankment, would undoubtedly, be capable of producing any crop, except sugar cane, now cultivated in the Atlantic States.

There are many beautiful valleys and rich hill sides among the foot-hills of the Sierra Nevada, which, when the profits of labor in mining shall be reduced so as to cause its application to agriculture, will probably support a large population. There is said to be a rich belt of well-timbered and watered country extending the whole length of the gold region between it and the Sierra Nevada, some twenty miles in width. There is no information sufficiently accurate respecting the eastern slope of the great snow range to enable us to form any opinion of its general character or soil. Some of its valleys have been visited by miners, who represent them as equal to any portion of the country to the westward of it.

The great Valley of the Colorado, situated between the Sierra Nevada and the Sierra Nevada, is but little known. It is inhabited by numerous tribes of savages, who manifest the most decided hostility toward the whites, and have hitherto prevented any explorations of their country, and do not permit emigrants to pass through it. The Indians of California, on their way to California, are compelled to make a circuit of near a thousand miles northward to the Salt Lake, or about the same distance southward by the route of the Gila. Although this valley is little known, there are indications that it is fertile and valuable. The name of the River "Colorado" is descriptive of its waters; they are deeply colored as those of the Missouri or Red River, while those of the Gila, which we know flows through barren lands, are clear.

It would seem possible for a large river to collect sediment enough in a sandy, barren soil to color its waters so deeply as to give it a name among those who first discovered and have since visited its shores. The probability, therefore, is that this river flows through an alluvial valley of great fertility, which has never been explored. This course is strengthened by the fact that the Indians who inhabit it are hostile, and oppose, as far as they can, all persons who attempt to enter or explore it. This has been their uniform course of conduct respecting all portions of the continent which have been fertile, abounding in game and the spontaneous productions of the earth.

As this valley is situated in the direct route from Santa Fe to California, its thorough exploration becomes a matter of very great importance, especially as it might cover an area as nearly as I can estimate, of between fifty and sixty thousand square miles, and would, under a proper system of cultivation, be capable of supporting a population equal to that of Ohio or New York at the present time.

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS.

Previous to the treaty of peace with Mexico, and the discovery of gold, the exportable products of the country consisted almost exclusively of hides and tallow. The Californians were a pastoral people, and paid much more attention to the raising of horses and cattle than to the cultivation of the soil.

Wheat, barley, maize, beans and edible roots, were cultivated in sufficient quantity for home consumption, but as far as I am informed, not for exportation. At that time a full grown ox, steer or cow, worth about two dollars, best quality, delivered on the navigable waters of the bay of San Francisco, are now worth from \$20 to \$30 per head; horses, formerly worth from \$5 to \$10, are now valued at \$60 to \$150. The destruction of cattle for their hides and tallow has not entirely ceased, and the demand for beef cattle, with its natural increase. This is a very important matter, as connected with the amount of supply which that country will ultimately require from the Atlantic States of the Union. There is no other country on earth which has, or will possess, the means of supplying so great a demand.

It is now a well established fact among the emigrants to California, that oxen possess greater powers of endurance than mules or horses; that they will perform the distance with loaded wagons in less time,