

its far-famed port; but I soon found, from the reports of the officers, after the trial they had had of it during the months of August and September, that their experience altogether contradicted the received opinion upon the first mentioned point. Many of them compared its climate to that of Orange Harbour, at Cape Horn, with its cold blustering winds and cloudy skies. This kind of weather prevails during the greater part of the year, and the comparison is literally true in relation to one portion of California—the sea-coast.

There is, perhaps, no other country where there is such a diversity of features, soil, and climate, as California. The surface exhibits the varieties of lofty ranges of mountains, confined valleys, and extensive plains. On the coast, a range of high land extends in length from Cape Mendocino to latitude 32° N., and in breadth into the interior from ten to twenty miles.

The valley of San Juan, of no great extent, lies between these hills and the Sierra, which is a low range of mountains. East of the Sierra is the broad valley of the Sacramento, which is prolonged to the south in that of Buena Ventura, as far as Mount San Bernardino, under the thirty-fourth parallel. Beyond this valley is the Californian Range, which is a continuation of the Cascade Range of Oregon, and whose southern summits are capped with snow. This range gradually decreases in height, until it declines into hills of moderate elevation. To the east of the Californian Mountains are the vast sandy plains, of which we know but little, except that they form a wide trackless waste, destitute of every thing that can fit it for the habitation of man or beast.

The soil is as variable as the face of the country. On the coast range of hills there is little to invite the agriculturist, except in some vales of no great extent. These hills are, however, admirably adapted for raising herds and flocks, and are at present the feeding-grounds of numerous deer, elk, &c., to which the short sweet grass and wild oats that are spread over them, afford a plentiful supply of food. No attempts have been made to cultivate the northern part of this section, nor is it susceptible of being the seat of any large agricultural operations.

The valley of the Sacramento, and that of San Juan, are the most fruitful parts of California, particularly the latter, which is capable of producing wheat, Indian corn, rye, oats, &c., with all the fruits of the temperate and many of the tropical climates. It likewise offers fine pasture-grounds for cattle. This region comprises a level plain, from fifteen to twenty miles in width, extending from the bay of San Francisco, beyond the mission of that name, north and south. This may be termed the garden of California; but although several small streams