

from cold at Monterey, than in places of a much higher latitude. The climate thirty miles from the coast undergoes a great change, and in no part of the world is there to be found a finer or more equable one than in the valley of San Juan. It more resembles that of Andalusia, in Spain, than any other, and none can be more salubrious. The cold winds of the coast have become warmed, and have lost their force and violence, though they retain their freshness and purity. This strip of country is that in which the far-famed missions have been established; and the accounts of these have led many to believe that the whole of Upper California was well adapted for agricultural uses. This is not the case, for the small district already pointed out is the only section of country where these advantages are to be found. This valley extends beyond the pueblo of San Juan, or to the eastward of Monterey: it is of no great extent, being about twenty miles long by twelve wide.

The Sierra, which separates the valley of San Juan from that of Buena Ventura, is about one thousand five hundred feet high, barren and sandy. Pines cover its summit, and the climate is exceedingly dry and arid, though cooled by the fresh wind that passes beyond them. Next comes the central valley of Buena Ventura, which is a continuation of the Sacramento, and through which the San Joachim flows. Being confined within the two ranges of mountains, and not having the same causes operating to modify the temperature as the smaller valley of San Juan, the heats of its summer are oppressive, the thermometer ranging, it is said, higher than within the torrid zone, and the heat continuing without cessation.

Although the Californian Range is covered with snow in close proximity to this valley, it seems to have but little effect in modifying the climate, which is represented as tropical throughout the year. This valley extends as far south as the San Bernardino Mountain. The residents in California say that they have never known the wind to blow from the northeast within thirty miles of the coast.

This state of things may also prevail in the interior, and will naturally prevent the cool stratum of air from descending into the valley, it being carried to the interior by the prevailing winds from an opposite quarter.

In ordinary seasons these valleys are well watered by streams from the mountains, which vary very much in size: they are for some part of the year mere brooks, while during the rainy season, from November to February, they become in some cases impassable. The Sacramento is the largest river in California. One of its branches, Destruction river, takes its rise near Mount Shaste, and was examined throughout