

procure, I shall proceed to speak more particularly of our operations in the country, and intercourse with the inhabitants.

On the 20th of August, Lieutenant-Commandant Ringgold left the Vincennes with six boats, accompanied by Dr. Pickering, Lieutenants Alden and Budd, Passed Midshipman Sandford, Midshipmen Hammersly and Elliott, and Gunner Williamson, with provisions for thirty days, accompanied by an Indian pilot. They first passed the islands of Angelos and Molate, next the points of San Pedro and San Pablo, and then entered the bay of San Pablo.

This bay is of a form nearly circular, and ten miles in diameter; many small streams enter it on all sides, from the neighbouring hills. On the east side of this bay, the river Sacramento empties into it through the Straits of Kaquines. The land is high, and the sandstone rock on each side of the straits resembles that seen about the Straits of De Fuca. The hills are thickly covered with wild oats, which were ripe, and the landscape had that peculiar golden hue before remarked. The contrast of this with the dark green foliage of the scattered oaks, heightens the effect, which, although peculiar, is not unpleasing to the sight. The trees all have an inclination towards the southeast, showing the prevalence and violence of the bleak northwest winds, producing on them a gnarled and mountain character. This feature is general throughout the coast of California, and gives the trees a singular appearance, the flat tops having the air of being cut or trimmed after the manner of box trees. The tops are bent to one side, and the larger branches hidden by the numerous twigs which compose the mass. The only place where a similar character was observed by us impressed upon the foliage, was at Terra del Fuego.

After passing the straits, the delta of the Sacramento opened to view. The Tula marshes, which are overflowed by the river above, are very extensive, and are said to be the resort of a vast number of beavers, which, in consequence of the nature of the ground, are difficult to catch, many more traps being necessary than in other localities.

The party took the southeast arm of the Sacramento, and proceeded up the stream for the distance of three miles, where they encamped, without water, that of the river being still brackish. The soil was hard, from being sunburnt, and the foot-marks of the cattle, which had been made during the last rainy season, still remained.

In the morning, they discovered that they had taken the wrong branch of the river, for this led immediately into the San Joachim. They, in consequence, returned to the entrance, where they began their survey. On the 23d, they reached the residence of Captain Suter, and encamped on the opposite bank.