

Captain Suter is a Swiss by birth, and informed them that he had been a lieutenant in the Swiss guards during the time of Charles X. Soon after the revolution of July, he came to the United States, and passed several years in the state of Missouri. He has but recently removed to California, where he has obtained from the government a conditional grant of thirty leagues square, bounded by the Sacramento on the west, and extending as far up the river as the Prairie Butes. The spot he has chosen for the erection of his dwelling and fortification, he has called New Helvetia; it is situated on the summit of a small knoll, rising from the level prairie, two miles from the east bank of the Sacramento, and fifty miles from its mouth. New Helvetia is bounded on the north by the American Fork, a small serpentine stream, which has a course of but a few miles. This river, having a bar near its mouth, no vessels larger than boats can enter it. At this place the Sacramento is eight hundred feet wide, and this may be termed the head of its navigation during the dry season, or the stage of low water.

Mr. Geiger, a young American from Newport, is now attached to Captain Suter's establishment; but he informed me that he intended to settle higher up the Sacramento, on the banks of the Feather river. When Captain Suter first settled here in 1839, he was surrounded by some of the most hostile tribes of Indians on the river; but by his energy and management, with the aid of a small party of trappers, has thus far prevented opposition to his plans. He has even succeeded in winning the good-will of the Indians, who are now labouring for him in building houses, and a line of wall, to protect him against the inroads or attacks that he apprehends, more from the present authorities of the land, than from the tribes about him, who are now working in his employ. He holds, by appointment of the government, the office of administrador, and has, according to his own belief, supreme power in his own district, condemning, acquitting, and punishing, as well as marrying and burying those who are under him. He treats the Indians very kindly, and pays them well for their services in trapping and working for him. His object is to attach them, as much as possible, to his interests, that in case of need he may rely upon their chiefs for assistance.

Although Captain Suter is, in general, in the habit of treating the Indians with kindness, yet he related to our gentlemen instances in which he had been obliged to fusilade nine of them; indeed, he does not seem to stand upon much ceremony with those who oppose him in any way. His buildings consist of extensive currals and dwelling-houses, for himself and people, all built of adobes. Labour is paid for