

California Department.

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The Santa Clara Valley, Cal.

Since our "change of base" we have received several communication from readers of the HERALD in regard to this valley.

We have been in the valley but a short time, but have had some knowledge of its claims for several years, and therefore will give such items as we have been able to learn from actual sight, from the "oldest inhabitant," and other sources.

The valley lies nearly south of San Francisco. It is said to begin at San Francisco and extend south about 80 miles to the town of Gilroy, and varies in width from 3 to 25 miles. The valley is situated between spurs of the Coast Range mountains. Those on the west side of the valley are called the Santa Cruz mountains, and those on the east side are called the Coast Range. The land is rich throughout the valley, and produces almost everything. Just out of the lower end of the valley, near the town of Hollister, is an opening in the mountains that permits the moist laden clouds to pass through without condensation, hence the rain is not so abundant as in localities near by, but the soil is likewise rich, and when there is plenty of rain the crops are excellent. The Santa Clara valley proper is from Gilroy to Oakland, a distance of about 80 miles. This portion takes in, in all-probability, the garden of America. It has, through it, an arm of the San Francisco bay about 45 miles long, and from 1 to 8 miles wide, and along its course are several warehouses where grain and hay are delivered and carried to San Francisco by the schooners that visit these parts during the busy season. There are, however, three lines of railroad leading out from San Francisco, and centering at San Jose, the ideal city of this valley. One road is the narrow gauge, and hugs close to the east side of this arm of the bay, along its track a number of small villages have sprung up. Then there is a broad-gauge railroad about four or six miles east of the narrow gauge, and runs within three hundred yards of the campus of Washington College. Both of these roads start from the Oakland pier on the east

side of the Bay, three miles from San Francisco. The other railroad is the Southern Pacific, which starts from Townsend street, in the western part of San Francisco, and running down the west side of the bay-arm and valley, through some of the most charming villas that eye ever beheld. Along the route of this road many of the San Francisco magnates have their residences, beautified in the most artistic style. A part of this valley is the main land from which extends the peninsula on which the city of San Francisco is situated.

Bayard Taylor, one of the greatest travelers and writers on American scenery, says, "This valley is one of the noted valleys of the world." He says furthermore, that it is the second in the world, he only excepting the valley of Mexico, whose lakes and running streams not only assuage the tropical heat but permit nature to retain her verdant dress throughout the year. There are no drawbacks of climate. There are no tornadoes, no cholera, dog days, yellow fever, north winds, cyclones, but little fog, so that when the starry skirts of night are folded in the bridal chamber, the sun comes forth from his royal home, warm and gentle, clear and bright, so that the year round the fruits and grains have this advantage. Hence this valley is fast becoming one of the leading fruit districts of the State, and we doubt not that it will not be many years till the land will be entirely devoted to fruit culture, when the population will be twenty times what it is at present. Water is obtained at from 20 to 150 feet in depth, owing to the locality. There is one locality where they have found Artesian water in abundance by going to a depth of 200 and 300 feet. All the water is good, pure and palatable, and quite cool. One great advantage the valley possesses is that irrigation is not necessary, while most all fruits are produced with ease in great abundance. The warmest belt lies from Los Gatos to San Jose, where the mid-winter slight frosts occur, but not enough to injure limes or oranges. We saw in that district orange and lemon trees loaded with fruit during the holidays, and the Japan persimmon, large and luscious, with scarcely enough frost to ripen them as fast as was demanded; for we found their looks were very deceiving, and one not ripe enough shaped our mouth for the whistling

period of near 40 years ago, when we ate the unripe persimmon in Illinois. Oranges and lemons do pretty well in all parts of the valley, but not so well as in the southern portion of the State, but almost every one has orange trees and raise some of the fruit. Almost every kind of fruit grows well and yields great profits; blackberries, strawberries, currants and gooseberries also do well, and tons are raised every year. And thus far in the history of the valley such insects as injure the fruit are not very plentiful, whether it is something in the soil or air that is repulsive to them is not yet known.

The soil is mostly a rich black loam, in some places gravel washing intermingled—an occasional spot of alkali, also close to the foot hills the earth is a reddish clay. This clay land contains more or less sand gravel, enough of the silicate to make it sufficiently friable for all farming and gardening purposes. And some of the fruit farms near Los Gatos are of this kind of land, and are worth more than \$500 per acre, in fact, many do not want to sell.

Land used for grain raising which has not been planted in trees sells from \$125 to \$200 per acre, and will never be less, but will gradually advance, for persons will seek this locality to make pleasant homes.

Fruit raisers count each year's growth of a tree as one dollar more added to its value, till five years old.

The valley is so far south of the San Francisco bay that the fog and cold wind incident to a close proximity to the ocean, is not felt, which makes the climate even and most salubrious. The mountains on either side of the valley are from 1000 to 2000 feet high, hence it is said that the warm belt of this valley, that is, the lower portion, rivals Italy, but this warm belt is not very large. It is said there were over 20,000 persons settled in the valley during 1883, and its closeness to San Francisco, the metropolis of the Pacific coast, the rich and productive soil, with the pleasant climate will bring thousands every year, until its large farms are cut into small tracts, for fruits and pleasant homes. The manufacture of beet sugar has proved successful in the valley, and the manufactory last year, as an experiment, turned out 1,000,000 pounds last year. The works are

situated near the town of Alvarado. There are salt works, we are informed, in the same locality, which does its share of that business. Other enterprises that naturally arise from the demands of the valley, are carried on successful at other points.

On the east side of the valley, on the Coast Range mountains, about 25 miles south-east of San Jose, is Mount Hamilton, near 5,000 feet high, on which is situated the celebrated Lick Observatory, built in accordance with the will of James Lick, a California millionaire, who died some years ago. We hope to visit it at an early day.

The supply of wood to the valley is obtained from the smaller mountain valleys, and cost \$8 or \$10 per cord. A great deal of coal is burned as it is much cheaper, and the supply is ready. Near the lower end of the valley, in the Santa Cruz mountains, a good supply of petroleum has been found. It was discovered when cutting a way for the railroad through the mountains. The oil is being refined at a refining works near Oakland, in the upper end of the valley.

There are five congregations of Disciples at present in this valley, at Gilroy, Los Gatos, Saratoga, San Jose, Santa Clara and Washington. The congregations are all small except the one at San Jose, but the greater amount of mission work has been done during the last year. It is hoped that from the present prospect and general outlook that the better days for the church and brighter days for Christianity in this heaven-favored land, are dawning. We hope to plant the gospel banner in thousands of homes in this sunny vale. We will not feel that "well done" will be ours until every possible effort has been put forth to gladden the heart of this people with the gospel peace. Our brethren are settling in different parts, who, we hope, will form a nucleus for Christian work. In fact, we are sure of this if they are true, loyal subjects to the King of Kings. We hope and pray that in the same ratio as the Father sends us sunshine, showers, fruitful acres, beautiful vales, health-inspiring air, romantic mountain gists, that while such pleasant home-places has been laid at the feet of men, they should make a commensurate effort to beautify the home-life with immortal trained spirits for the heavenly habitations. This will take earnest, faithful, per-