

A GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY lies upon the northern shore of the Bay of Monterey, and, although territorially one of the smallest counties of the State, in the importance of its manufactures, it is second only to the County of San Francisco. It is bounded by San Mateo on the North; on the South by the Bay and County of Monterey; by Santa Clara County on the East, and on the West by the Pacific Ocean. In outline it is long and narrow, being thirty-four miles in length, by fourteen in breadth. Following the conformation of the coast, it has a sea-line fifty miles in extent. The entire county lies between the summits of the Gavilan, or Santa Cruz mountains, and the sea, and is one of the most mountainous of the coast counties. In its area are about 304,640 acres. Of this 40,000 acres are of the richest bottom land, lying between the mountain ranges. The irrigation is natural and perfect; constantly running streams keep up their murmur throughout the summer, and announce themselves with a dash and roar after the inaugural of winter rains. The terraced plateaus, formed by the repeated uprisings of the land, extending along the entire coast, and inland to the skirt of the woodland, present 50,000 acres of good agricultural land, easily accessible to cultivation. It is true it varies somewhat in degree of fertility, but generally speaking, amply repays the husbandman. The residue of the county, in extent some 200,000 acres, is either grazing or forest land. The cleared hill land is well suited to the purpose of stock-raising, while the timber land is densely covered with magnificent growths of Redwood, Oak, Pine, and the beautiful Madrona. The most important water courses within the county are the San Lorenzo River, the Soquel, the Aptos, Sal Si Pudes, Pajaro, (or bird) which flows along the boundary of Monterey County, and the Pescadero. Of these, the San Lorenzo is the largest, passes nearly through the centre of the county, and empties into the Bay of Monterey at Santa Cruz. The Soquel enters the bay about four miles further South, while the Sal Si Pudes and Aptos, discharge their waters into the bay from a point still South of the Soquel. The climate is exceedingly varied. Places separated but by a distance of a few miles, differ as materially in temperature and productions, as do the climate and productions of the North differ from those of the South of France. In localities sheltered from the biting breezes of the sea, we have seen the rarest flowers and tenderest plants, luxuriating in the open air, healthy in growth, delicate in coloring, delicious in perfume; while at a distance of not half a mile was a bleak barren knoll, guiltless of even the most remote attempt at vegetation, vigorous or otherwise. Grains and fruits which grow in other parts of the State flourish here, if we except those tropical in nature—the orange, fig and olive. The vine must overcome an elevation of seven hundred feet, above the sea level, before it can hope to flourish. This seems no misfortune, and is surely no drawback upon the industry of the viniculturist, if we heed the vine-growers of Europe, and consider that years upon years of experience gives weight of added wisdom to man's words. Old world vine-growers say that uplands are better adapted to the culture of the grape: that the vine is more productive and the flavor of the fruit far preferable to that grown in the valley.

The population of Santa Cruz County amounts to nine thousand three hundred, while the taxable value of its real estate reaches \$4,038,621.

The principal valley of the county is the Pajaro, or El Pajaro, as it was originally designated. This, prior to the advent of Americans, under the ancient regime of the Mexican, was used exclusively for cattle-grazing. In 1851 its total population did not exceed 50 persons.

The adobe hut was the only kind of architecture to be met within the radius of the valley, and the branding or the slaughter of their cattle furnished the only occasions when the almost