

a league. On leaving the gully, they gradually ascended until they reached the ranchos at Jaquel, at the foot of the mountain where the mines were situated. It being too late to make the ascent to the mines that night, the running streams in the neighbourhood were visited, but nothing was found. They were entirely destitute of fluviatile shells and mollusca. Other objects of interest were, however, obtained, in the classes of insects and reptilia, which will be described in the reports of these different departments. At sunset the snowy mountains exhibited a magnificent sight; lighted up and glistening in the sunshine, it appeared as though some tremendous conflagration had broken out. After this, the progress of night produces a peculiar effect. It was quite dark in the valley, while the lofty summits were yet tinged by the setting sun. The limit of darkness was distinctly seen advancing upwards like a dark wall, and as it ascended, peak after peak became lost to view, until the whole was enshrouded in obscurity.

The part of this valley where the ranchos are situated is called La Vega of Jaquel. This is the principal smelting-place, the ore being brought here by mules from the foot of the mountain, down whose sides it is thrown from the mines. The descent is about two thousand feet, and very steep. Mr. Alderson stated that it took thirty seconds for the ore to descend. The face of the mountain from long usage in this way is worn quite smooth. The ranchos at the mine, about six hundred feet below the summit, on the steep mountain side, are visible from the smelting huts. The Jaquel valley is said to contain a few sulphur springs, which are reported as poisonous. Our gentlemen had not time to visit them. The temperature, before leaving San Felipe, at six o'clock, A. M., was  $45^{\circ}$ , at 10 A. M.,  $54^{\circ}$ ; at Jaquel, three hundred feet above the sea, at 5<sup>h</sup> 30<sup>m</sup>, it was  $55^{\circ}$ , at 11 P. M.  $51^{\circ}$ .

Mr. Newman had previously lost much property here by the burning of his whole establishment, excepting two buildings, fire having been communicated to the thatched roof by the sparks from the furnace, during a tornado that passed over. So rapidly had the flames spread, that it was with difficulty that Mr. Newman and his agent saved their lives. Besides the loss of buildings, a large quantity of machinery, lately imported from England, was destroyed.

On the 21st May, they set out on mules for the mines, accompanied by Mr. Alderson, and reached them about ten o'clock. Their first act was to change their boots for a pair of raw-hide shoes, such as are used by the miners, in order to insure a safer footing. They now entered the principal gallery, which was about seven feet high and five broad, excavated for about twenty yards horizontally; it then divides