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FATHER JUNIPERO AND HIS WORK.

A SKETCH OF THE FOUNDATION, PROSPERITY, AND RUIN OF THE FRANCISCAN MISSIONS IN CALIFORNIA. I.

AMONG the treasures of the Franciscan College in Santa Barbara, California, is an old daguerreotype, taken from a portrait painted more than a hundred years ago at the College of San Fernando, in Mexico. The face is one, once seen, never to be forgotten; full of spirituality, tenderness, and unutterable pathos; the mouth and chin so delicately sensitive that one marvels how such a soul could have been capable of heroic endurance of hardship; the forehead and eyes strong, radiant with quenchless purpose, but filled with that solemn, yearning, almost superhuman sadness, which has been in all time the sign and seal on the faces of men born to die for the sake of their fellows. It is the face of Father Junipero Serra, the first founder of Franciscan Missions in South California.

Studying the lineaments of this countenance, one recalls the earliest authentic portrait of Saint Francis, the one painted by Pijano, which hangs in the sacristy of the Assisi Church. There seems a notable likeness between the two faces; the small and delicate features, the broad forehead, and the expression of great gentleness are the same in both. But the saint had a joyousness which his illustrious follower never knew. The gayety of the troubadour melodies which Francis had sung all through his youth never left his soul. Serra's first songs, and only, were the solemn chants of the Church; his first lessons in a convent, his earliest desire to become a priest.

He was born of lowly people, in the island of Majorca, and while he was yet a little child, sang as chorister in the Convent of San Bernardino. He was but sixteen when he entered the Franciscan order, and before he was eighteen he had taken the final vows. This was in the year 1730. On becoming a monk, his baptismal name, Michael Joseph, he laid aside, and took the name of Junipero, after that quaintest and drollest of all Saint Francis's early companions; him of whom the saint jocosely said, "Would that I had a whole forest of such Junipers."

It is recorded that during the months when Saint Francis went up and down the streets of Assisi, carrying in his delicate, unused hands the stones for rebuilding the St. Damiano Chapel, he was continually singing psalms, breaking forth into ejaculations of gratitude, his face beaming as that of one who saw visions of unspeakable delight.

How much of the spirit or instinct of prophecy there might have been in his exultant joy, only he himself knew; but it would have been strange if there had not been vouchsafed to him at least a partial revelation of the splendid results which must of necessity follow the carrying out in the world of the divine impulses which had blazed up in his soul like a fire.

As Columbus, from the trend of imperfectly known shores and tides, from the mysterious indications of vague, untracked wilds, could deduce the glorious certainty of hitherto undreamed continents of westward land, so might the ardent spiritual discoverer see with inextinguishable faith the hitherto undreamed heights which must be surely reached and won by the path he pointed out. It is certain that very early in his career Francis had the purpose of founding an order, whose members, being utterly unselfish in life,

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should be fit heralds of God and mighty helpers of men. The absoluteness of self-renunciation which he inculcated and demanded startled even the thirteenth century's standard of religious devotion. Cardinals and Pope alike doubted its being within the pale of human possibility; and it was not until after much entreaty that the Church gave its sanction to the "Seraphic Saint's" band of "Fratri Minores," and the organized work of the Franciscan Order began. That was in 1208. From then until now the Franciscans have been, in the literal sense of the word, helpers of men.

Others of the orders in the Catholic Church have won more distinction, in the way of learning, political power, marvelous suffering of penances and deprivation; but the record of the Franciscans is in the main a record of lives and work, like the life and work of their founder; of whom a Protestant biographer has written:

"So far as can be made out, he thought little of himself, even of his own soul to be saved, all his life. The trouble has been on his mind, how sufficiently to work for God and to help men."

Under the head of helping men come all enterprises of discovery, development, and civilization which the earth has known: and in many more of these than the world generally suspects, this order has been an influence dating back to the saint of Assisi.

America preëminently stands his debtor. Of the three to whom belongs the honor of its discovery, one, Juan Perez de Marchena, was a Franciscan friar; the other two, Queen Isabella and Columbus, members of Saint Francis's third order; and of all the wondrous development and splendid promise on the California coast to-day, Franciscan friars were the first founders.

At the time when Junipero Serra entered the Majorca convent, three other young monks were studying there—Palon, Verger, and Crespi. The four became intimate and affectionate companions. The friendship thus early begun never waned, and no doubt their hearty and loving coöperation had much to do with the success of the great enterprises in which afterward they jointly labored, and to which, even in their student days, they looked forward with passionate longing. New Spain was, from the beginning, the goal of their most ardent wishes, and all their conversations turned on this theme.

To the eighteenth century's spiritual enthusiast, a wilderness full of savage souls in danger of hell was a stronger lure than unconquered worlds to an Alexander. It is impossible at this distance of time to get any complete realization of the halo of exalted sentiment and rapture which then invested undertakings of this kind. It reached from the highest to the lowest, the oldest to the

OLD ENGRAVING OF A SHIP FOR AN ANCIENT MAP, MADE BY A BENEDICTINE MONK ABOUT 1740.

FATHER JUNIPERO SERRA.

youngest. Every art was lent to its service; every channel of expression was stamped with its sign. Even on the wide charts and atlases of the day were pictures of monks embarking in ships of discovery: the Virgin herself looking on, from the skies, with the motto above, "Matre Dei Monstrante viam," and on the ships' sails, "Unus non sufficit orbis."

Long years of delay and monastic routine did not dampen the ardor of the four friends. Again and again they petitioned to be sent as missionaries to the New World, and again and again were disappointed. At last, in 1749, there assembled in Cadiz a great body of missionaries, destined chiefly for Mexico, and Palon and Serra received permission to join the band. Arriving at Cadiz, and finding two vacancies still left in the party, they pleaded warmly that Crespi and Verger be allowed to go also. At the very last moment this permission was given, and the four friends set sail, joyful, in the same ship.

In the memoir of Junipero Serra, written by his friend Palon, are many interesting incidents of their voyage to Vera Cruz. It lasted ninety-nine days. Provisions and water fell short; starvation threatened; terrific storms nearly wrecked the ship; but through all Father Junipero's courage never failed. "Remembering the end for which they had come," he said, he felt no fear. He performed mass each morning, and cheered the sinking spirits of all on board by psalms and exhortations; by humorous sayings also, announcing one day with great gravity that he had discovered "the secret of keeping free from thirst." It was to "eat little and speak less."

For nineteen years after their arrival in Mexico, Serra and his companions were kept at work there, under the guidance and control of the College of San Fernando, in founding missions and preaching.

On the suppression of the Jesuit Order in 1767, and its consequent expulsion from all the Spanish dominions, it was decided to send a body of Franciscans to take charge of the Jesuit missions in California. These were all in Lower California, no attempt at settlement having yet been made in Upper California. Once more the friends, glad and exultant, joined a missionary band, bound to new wildernesses. They were but three now, Verger remaining behind in charge of the College of San Fernando. The band numbered sixteen. Serra was put in charge of it, and was appointed president of all the California missions.

OLD MILL BUILT BY INDIANS AT SAN ANTONIO.

His biographer says he received this appointment "unable to speak a single word for tears." It was not strange, on the realization of a hope so long deferred. He was now fifty-six years old; and from boyhood his longing had been to labor among the Indians on the western shores of the New World.

It was now the purpose of the Spanish Government to proceed as soon as possible to the colonization of Upper California. The passion of the Church allied itself gladly with the purpose of the State; and the State itself had among its statesmen and soldiers many men who were hardly less fervid in religion than were those sworn exclusively to the Church's service. Such an one was Joseph de Galvez, who held the office of Visitor-General and Commander, representing the person of the King, and inspecting the working of the Government in every province of the Spanish empire. Upon him rested the responsibility of the practical organization of the first expedition into Upper California. It was he who ordered the carrying of all sorts of seeds of vegetables, grains, and flowers; everything that would grow in old Spain he ordered to be planted in New. He ordered that two hundred head of cattle should be taken from the northernmost of the Lower California missions, and carried to the new posts. It was he also, as full of interest for chapel as for farm, who selected and packed with his own hands sacred ornaments and vessels for church ceremonies. A curious letter of his to Palon is extant, in which he says laughingly that he is a better sacristan than Father Junipero, having packed the holy vessels and ornaments quicker and better than he. There are also extant some of his original instructions to military and naval commanders which show his religious ardor and wisdom. He declares that the first object of the expedition is "to establish the Catholic religion among a numerous heathen people, submerged in the obscure darkness of paganism, to extend the dominion of the King our Lord, and to protect this peninsula from the ambitious views of foreign nations."

With no clearer knowledge than could be derived from scant records of Viscayno's voyage in 1602, he selected the two best and most salient points of the California coast, San Diego and Monterey, and ordered the founding of a mission at each. He also ordered the selection of a point midway between these two, for another mission, to be called Buena Ventura. His activity, generosity, and enthusiasm were inexhaustible. He seems to have had humor as well; for, when discussing the names of the missions to be founded, Father Junipero said to him, "But is there to be no mission for our Father St. Francis?" he replied, "If St. Francis wants a mission, let him show us his post, and we will put one there for him!"

The records of this first expedition into California are full of interest. It was divided into two parts, one to go by sea and one by land; the sea party in two ships, and the land party in two divisions. Every possible precaution and provision was thought of by the wise Galvez; but neither precaution nor provision could make the journey other than a terrible one. Father Junipero, with his characteristic ardor, insisted on accompanying one of the land parties, although he was suffering severely from an inflamed leg, the result of an injury he had received twenty years before in journeying on foot from Vera Cruz to the city of Mexico. Galvez tried in vain to detain him; he said he would rather die on the road than not go, but that he should not die, for the Lord would carry him through. However, on the second day out, his pain became so great that he could neither sit, stand, nor sleep. Portalá, the military commander of the party, implored him to be car-

ried in a litter; but this he could not brook. Calling one of the muleteers to him, he said:

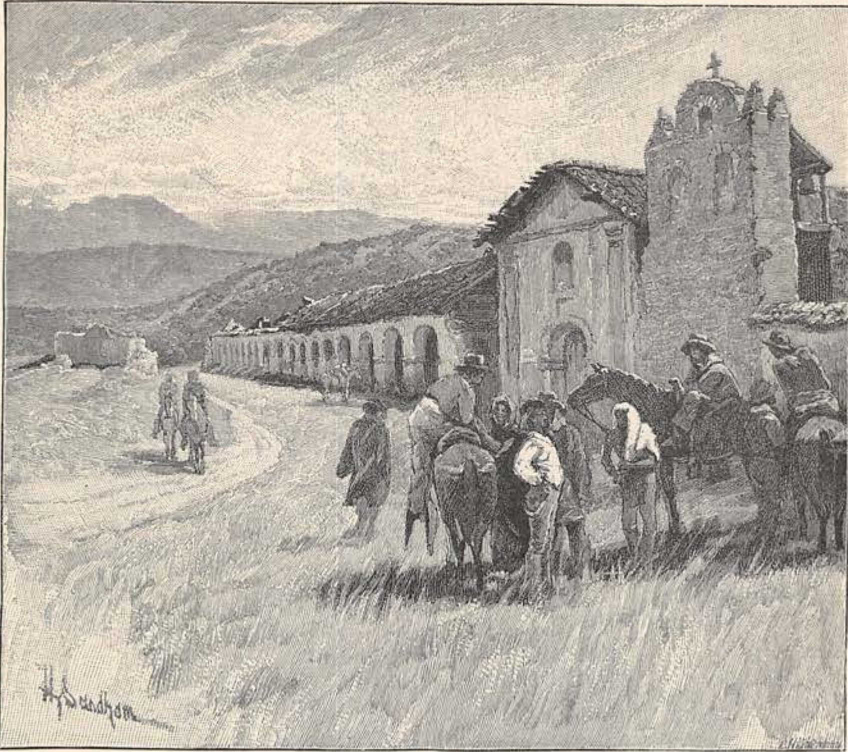
"Son, do you not know some remedy for this sore on my leg?"

"Father," replied the muleteer, "what remedy can I know? I have only cured beasts."

"Then consider me a beast," answered Serra; "consider this sore on my leg a sore back, and give me the same treatment you would apply to a beast."

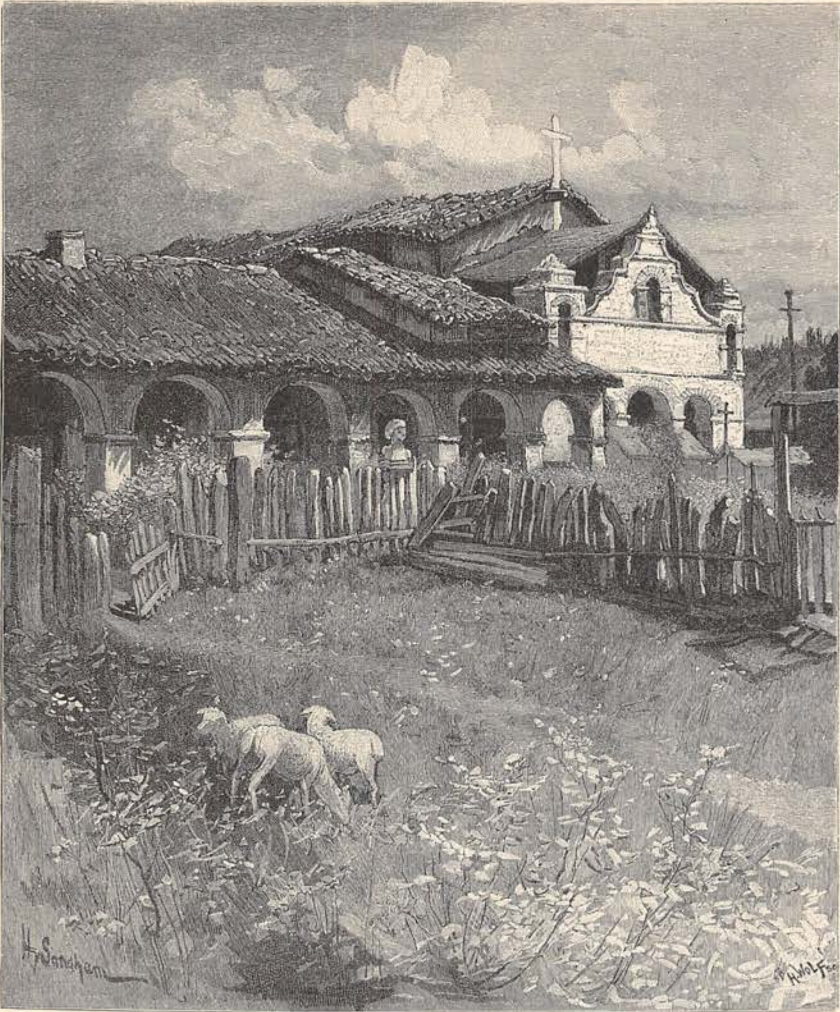
Thus adjured, the muleteer took courage, and saying, "I will do it, Father, to please you," he proceeded to mix herbs in hot tallow, with which he anointed the wound, and so reduced the inflammation that Father Junipero slept all night, rose early, said matins and mass, and resumed his journey in comparative comfort. He bore this painful wound to the end of his life; and it was characteristic of the man as well as of the abnormal standards of the age, that he not only sought no measures for a radical cure of the diseased member, but, obstinately accepting the suffering as a cross, allowed the trouble to be aggravated in every way, by going without shoes or stockings, and by taking long journeys on foot.

A diary kept by Father Crespi on his toilsome march from Velicatá to San Diego is full of quaint and curious entries, monotonous in its religious reiterations, but touching in its simplicity and unconscious testimony to his own single-heartedness and patience. The



SANTA YNEZ MISSION.

nearest approach to a complaint he makes is to say that "nothing abounds except stones and thorns." When they journey for days with no water except scanty rations from the precious casks they are carrying, he always piously trusts water will be found on the morrow; and when they come to great tracts of impenetrable cactus thickets, through which they are obliged to hew a pathway with axes, as through a forest, and are drenched to the skin in cold rains, and deserted by the Christian Indians whom they had brought from Lower California as guides, he mentions the facts without a murmur, and has even for the deserters only a benediction: "May God guard the misguided ones." A far more serious grievance to him is that toward the end of the journey he could no longer celebrate full mass because the wafers had given out. Sometimes the party found themselves hemmed in by mountains, and were forced to halt for days while scouts went ahead to find a pass. More than once, hoping that at last they had found a direct and easy route, they struck



SAN ANTONIO MISSION.

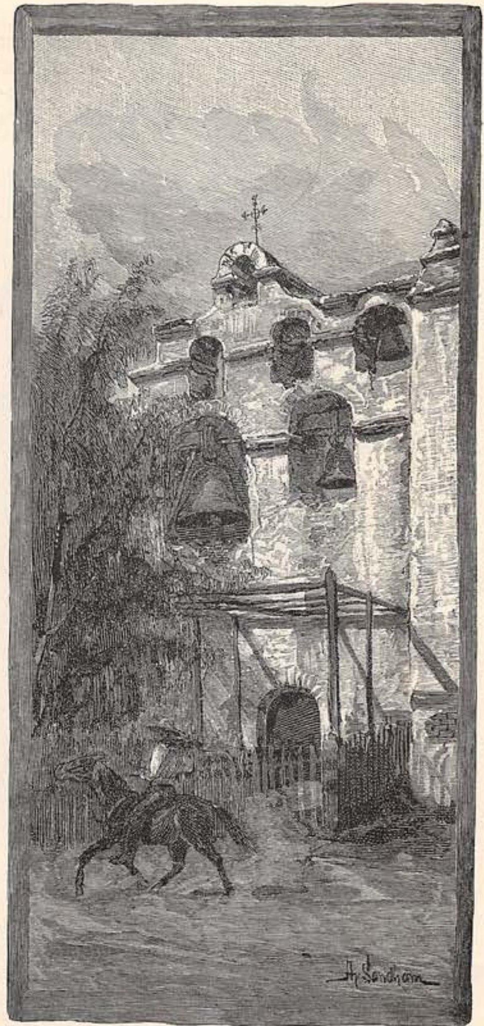
down to the sea-shore, only to discover themselves soon confronted by impassable spurs of the coast range, and forced to toil back again up into the labyrinths of mesas and cactus plains. It was Holy Thursday, the 24th of March, when they set out, and it was not until the 13th of May that they reached the high ground from which they had their first view of the bay of San Diego, and saw the masts of the ships lying at anchor there—"which sight was a great joy and consolation to us all," says the diary.

They named this halting-place "Espiritu Santo." It must have been on, or very near, the ridge where now runs the boundary line between the United States and Mexico, as laid down by the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. It is a grand promontory, ten miles south-east of San Diego, thrusting out to sea; bare of trees, but matted thick with the dewy ice-plant, and in early spring carpeted with flowers. An ugly monument of stone stands there, bearing the names of the American and Mexican commissioners who established this boundary line in October, 1849. It would seem much more fitting to have there a monument bearing the names of the heroic men—friars and soldiers of Spain—who on that spot, on May 14, 1769, sang the first Easter hymn heard on California shores.

It was a sore grief for Father Crespi that the commandant of the party would not wait here for him to say a mass of thanksgiving: but, with the port in sight, impatience could not be restrained, and the little band pushed on. As soon as the San Diego camp was seen, the soldiers discharged a salute of fire-arms, which was answered instantly from

shore and ship. Great joy filled every heart. The friars who had come by sea ran to meet and embrace their brothers. The gladness was dampened only by the sad condition of the ships' crews, many of whom were dead or dying. They had been four months, with their poor charts and poorer ships, making their way from La Paz up to San Diego; and, in consequence of insufficient and unwholesome food, the scurvy had broken out among them. It was a melancholy beginning for the new enterprise. When, six weeks later, the second land party with Father Junipero arrived, eager to proceed to the establishing of the mission, they found that their first duty was to the sick and dying of their own people. In fifteen days twenty-nine of the sailors and soldiers died. The Indians, who at first had been gentle and friendly, grew each day more insolent and thievish, even tearing off the clothes of the sick lying helpless in the tents or tule huts on the beach. At last, on the 16th of July, a cross was set up facing the port, and in a rude booth of branches and reeds, mass was celebrated and the grand hymn of "Veni Creator" was sung, the pilgrims "supplying the want of an organ by discharging fire-arms," says the old record, and with only the "smoke of muskets for incense." Thus was founded the Mission of San Diego; and thus was laid the corner-stone of the civilization of California on July 16, 1769.

Two days before this the indefatigable Crespi had set off with another overland party, Portalá at its head, to find Monterey. On this journey, also, Father Crespi kept a diary,—little suspecting, probably, with how much interest it would be studied a century later. It was not strange that, with only a compass and seventeenth century charts to guide them along the zigzagging labyrinths of bays, headlands, and sand-hills which make the California shore, they toiled to no purpose seeking the Monterey harbor. It is pitiful to read the record of the days when they were close upon it, setting up a cross on one of its hills, and yet could not see it; even querying, so bewildered and lost were they, if it might not have been filled up with sands since Viscayno's time. Forty leagues north of it they went, and discovered the present bay of San Francisco, which they at once recognized by Viscayno's description; and recalling the speech of Galvez in regard to Saint Francis pointing out a port if he wanted a mission of his own name, the pious fathers thought it not unlikely, that the saint himself had hidden Monterey from their sight, and led them to his own harbor. Month after month passed, and still they were wandering. They were foot-sore, weary, hungry, but not disheartened. Friendly Indians everywhere greeted them kindly, gave them nuts, and shell-fish, and bread made from acorn flour. At one time seventeen of the party were too ill to travel. Twice they halted and held council on the question of abandoning the search. Some were ready to continue as long as the provisions held out, then to eat their mules, and go back on foot. Fathers Crespi and Gomez volunteered to be left behind alone.



BELLS OF THE SAN GABRIEL MISSION.

At last, on the 11th of November, it was decided to return by the route by which they had come. On the 20th, finding that their flour had been stolen by the soldiers, they divided the remainder into equal parts, giving to each person enough to last him two days. On Christmas Day, they had a present of nuts from friendly Indians, and on New Year's Day they had the luck to kill a bear and three

cubs, which gave them a feast for which they offered most devout thanksgivings. For the rest, they lived chiefly on mussels, with now and then a wild goose. On the 24th of January they came out on the table-lands above San Diego, six months and ten days from the time of their departure. Firing a salute, they were answered instantly by shots from the camp, and saw an eager crowd running to meet them, great anxiety having been felt at their long absence.

INDIAN BOOTH AT PACHUNGA IN WHICH MASS IS CELEBRATED.

It is worth while, in studying the history of these Franciscan Missions, to dwell on the details of the hardships endured in the beginning by their founders. Only narrow-minded bigotry can fail to see in them proofs of a spiritual enthusiasm and exaltation of self-sacrifice which are rarely paralleled in the world's history. And to do justice to the results accomplished, it is necessary to understand thoroughly the conditions at the outset of the undertaking.

The weary, returned party found their comrades in sorry plight. The scurvy had spread, and many more had died. Father Junipero himself had been dangerously ill with it; provisions were running low; the Indians were only half friendly, and were not to be trusted out of sight. The supply-ships looked for from Mexico had not arrived.

A situation more helpless, unprotected, discouraging, could not be conceived, than that of this little, suffering band, separated by leagues of desert and leagues of ocean from all possible succor. At last, an examination showed that there were only provisions sufficient left to subsist the party long enough to make the journey back to Velicatá. It seemed madness to remain longer; and Governor Portalá, spite of Father Junipero's entreaties, gave orders to prepare for the abandonment of the missions. He fixed the 20th of March as the last day he would wait for the arrival of the ship. This was St. Joseph's Day. On the morning of it, Father Junipero, who had been praying night and day for weeks, celebrated to St. Joseph a high mass, with special supplications for relief. Before noon a sail was seen on the horizon. One does not need to believe in saints and saints' interpositions, to feel a thrill at this coincidence, and in fancying the effect the sudden vision of the relief-ship must have produced on the minds of devout men who had been starving. The ship appeared for a few moments—then disappeared; doubtless there were some who scoffed at it as a mere apparition. But Portalá believed, and waited; and, four days later, in the ship came!—the *San Antonio*, bringing bountiful stores of all that was needed.

Courage and cheer now filled the very air. No time was lost in organizing expeditions to go once more in search of the mysteriously hidden Monterey. In less than three weeks

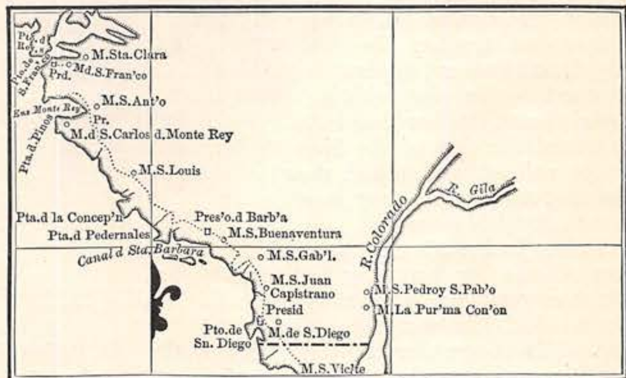
two parties had set off—one by sea in the *San Antonio*. With this went Father Junipero, still feeble from illness. Father Crespi, undaunted by his former six months of wandering, joined the land party, reaching the Point of Pines, on Monterey Harbor, seven days before the ship arrived. As soon as she came in sight bonfires were lighted on the rocks, and the ship answered by firing cannon. It was a great rejoicing. The next day, June 1st, the officers of the two parties met, and exchanged congratulations; and on the third they took formal possession of the place: first, in the name of the Church, by religious ceremonies; secondly, in the name of the King of Spain, unfurling the royal standard, and planting it in the ground, side by side with the cross.

To one familiar with the beauty of the Monterey shore in June, the picture of this scene is vivid. The sand-dunes were ablaze with color; lupines in high, waving masses, white and yellow; and great mats of the glittering ice-plant, with myriads of rose-colored umbels, lying flat on the white sand. Many rods inland, the air was sweet with their fragrance, borne by the strong sea-wind. On long cliffs of broken, tempest-piled rocks stood ranks upon ranks of grand old cypress-trees,—gnarled, bent, twisted, defiant, full of both pathos and triumph in their loneliness, in this the only spot on earth to which they are native.

The booth of boughs in which the mass was performed was built under a large oak, on the same spot where Viscayno had landed and his Carmelite monks had said mass one hundred and sixty-seven years before. The ceremonies closed with a ringing Te Deum,—sailors, soldiers, monks, alike jubilant.

When the news of the founding of this second mission reached the city of Mexico, there was a furore of excitement. The bells of the city were rung; people ran up and down the streets telling each other; and the viceroy held at his palace a grand reception, to which went all persons of note, eager to congratulate him and Galvez. Printed proclamations, giving full accounts, were circulated, not only in Mexico but throughout Spain. No province so remote, no home so lowly, as to fail to hear the good news. It was indeed good news to both state and church. The fact of the occupation of the new country was accomplished; the scheme for the conversion and salvation of the savage race was fairly inaugurated; Monterey and San Diego being assured, ultimate possession of the whole of the coast line between would follow. Little these gladdened people in Spain and Mexico realized, however, the cost of the triumph over which they rejoiced, or the true condition of the men who had won it.

The history of the next fifteen years is a history of struggle, hardship, and heroic achievement. The indefatigable Serra was the mainspring and support of it all. There seemed no limit to his endurance, no bound to his desires; nothing daunted his courage or chilled his faith. When, in the sixth year after the founding of the San Diego Mission, it was attacked by hostile Indians, one of the fathers being most cruelly murdered, and the buildings burned to the ground, Father Junipero exclaimed, "Thank God! The seed of the Gospel is now watered by the blood of a martyr; that mission is henceforth established"; and in a few months he was on the spot, with money and materials, ready for rebuilding; pressing sailors, neophytes, soldiers, into the service; working with his own hands also, spite of the fears and protestations of all, and only desisting on positive orders from the military commander. He journeyed, frequently on foot, back and forth through the country, founding a new mission whenever, by his urgent letters to the College of San Fernando and to the Mexican viceroys, he had gathered together men and money enough to do so. In 1772, when perplexities seemed inextricably thickened and supplies had fallen so short that starvation threatened the missions, he took ship to San Blas. With no companion except one Indian boy, he toiled on foot from San Blas to Guadalajara, two hundred and forty miles. Here they both fell ill of fever, and sank so low that they were supposed to be dying, and the Holy Viaticum was administered to them. But they recovered, and, while only partly convalescent, pushed on again, reaching the city of



MAP OF THE COAST LINE, DRAWN IN 1787.

SOME OF THE WINDOWS AT SAN CARLOS.

Mexico in February, 1773. Hard-hearted indeed must the Mexican viceroy have been to refuse to heed the prayers of an aged man who had given such proofs as this of his earnestness and devotion. The difficulties were cleared up, money and supplies obtained, and Father Junipero returned to his post with a joyful heart. Before leaving, he kissed the feet of the friars in the college, and asked their blessing, saying that they would never behold him more.

Father Junipero's most insatiable passion was for baptizing Indians, the saving of one soul thus from death filled him with unspeakable joy. His biographer illustrates this by the narrative of the first infant baptism attempted at the San Diego Mission. The Indians had been prevailed upon to bring an infant to receive the consecration. Everything was ready: Father Junipero had raised his hand to sprinkle the child's face; suddenly heathen terror got the better of the parents, and in the twinkling of an eye they snatched their babe and ran. Tears rolled down Father Junipero's cheeks: he declared that only some unworthiness in himself could have led to such a disaster; and to the day of his death he could never tell the story without tears, thinking it must be owing to his sins that the soul of that particular child had been lost.

When he preached he was carried out of himself by the fervor of his desire to impress his hearers. Baring his breast, he would beat it violently with a stone, or burn the flesh with a lighted torch, to enhance the effect of his descriptions of the tortures of hell. There is in his memoir a curious engraving, showing him lifted high above a motley group of listeners, holding in his hands the blazing torch and the stone.

In the same book is an outline map of California as he knew it. It is of the coast line from San Diego to San Francisco, and the only objects marked on it are the missions and dotted lines showing the roads leading from one to another. All the rest is a blank.

There were nine of these missions, founded by Serra, before his death in 1784. They were founded in the following order:

San Diego, July 16, 1769; San Carlos de Monterey, June 3, 1770; San Antonio de Padua, July 14, 1771; San Gabriel, September 8, 1771; San Luis Obispo, September 1, 1772; San Francisco (Dolores), October

9, 1776; San Juan Capistrano, November 1, 1776; Santa Clara, January 18, 1777; San Buena Ventura, March 31, 1782.

The transports into which Father Junipero was thrown by the beginning of a new mission are graphically told by the companion who went with him to establish the mission of San Antonio. With his little train of soldiers, and mules laden with a few weeks' supplies, he wandered off into the unexplored wilderness sixty miles south of Monterey, looking eagerly for river valleys promising fertility. As soon as the beautiful oak-shaded plain, with its river swift and full even in July, caught his eye, he ordered a halt, seized the bells, tied them to an oak bough, and fell to ringing them with might and main, crying aloud: "Hear, hear, O ye Gentiles! Come to the Holy Church! Come to the faith of Jesus Christ!" Not a human creature was in sight, save his own band, and his companion remonstrated with him. "Let me alone," cried Father Junipero. "Let me unburden my heart, which could wish that this bell should be heard by all the world, or at least by all the Gentiles in these mountains"; and he rang on till the echoes answered, and one astonished Indian appeared — the first instance in which a native had been present at the foundation of a mission. Not long afterward came a very aged Indian woman named Agreda, begging to be baptized, saying that she had seen a vision in the skies of a man clad like the friars, and that her father had repeated to her in her youth the same words they now spoke.

SAN CARLOS MISSION.

The history of this San Antonio Mission justified Father Junipero's selection. The site proved one of the richest and most repaying, including, finally, seven large farms with a chapel on each, and being famous for the best wheat grown and the best flour made in the country. The curious mill in which the flour was ground is still to be seen — a most interesting ruin. It was run by water brought in a stone-walled ditch for many miles, and driven through a funnel-shaped flume so as to strike the side of a large water-wheel, revolving horizontally on a shaft. The building of this aqueduct, and the placing of the wheel, were the work of an Indian named Nolberto, who took the idea from the balance-wheel of a watch, and did all the work with his own hands. The walls are broken now; and the sands have so blown in and piled around the entrance, that the old wheel seems buried in a cellar; linnets have builded nests in the dusky corners, and are so seldom disturbed that their bright eyes gaze with placid unconcern at curious intruders.

Many interesting incidents are recorded in connection with the establishment of these first missions. At San Gabriel; the Indians

INTERIOR OF SAN CARLOS MISSION, SHOWING ORIGINAL SPRING OF ROOF AND CURVE OF WALLS.

gathered in great force, and were about to attack the little band of ten soldiers and two friars preparing to plant their cross; but on the unfurling of a banner with a life-size picture of the Virgin painted on it, they flung away their bows and arrows, came running toward the banner with gestures of reverence and delight, and threw their beads and other ornaments on the ground before it, as at the feet of a suddenly recognized queen.

The San Gabriel Indians seem to have been a superior race. They spoke a soft, musical language, now nearly lost. Their name for God signified "Giver of Life." They had no belief in a devil or in hell, and persisted always in regarding them as concerning only white men. Robbery was unknown among them, murder was punished by death, and marriage between those near of kin was not allowed. They had names for the points of the compass, and knew the North Star, calling it Runi. They had games at which they decked themselves with flower garlands, which wreathed their heads and hung down to their feet. They had certain usages of politeness, such as that a child, bringing water to an elder, must not taste it on the way; and that to pass between two who were speaking was an offense. They had song contests, often lasting many days, and sometimes handed down to the next generation. To a people of such customs as these, the symbols, shows, and ceremonies of the Catholic Church must needs have seemed especially beautiful and winning.

The records of the founding of these missions are similar in details, but are full of interest to one in sympathy either with their spiritual or their historical significance. The

routine was the same in all cases. A cross was set up; a booth of branches was built; the ground and the booth were consecrated by holy water and christened by the name of a saint; a mass was performed; the neighboring Indians, if there were any, were roused and summoned by the ringing of bells swung on limbs of trees; presents of cloth and trinkets were given them to inspire them with trust, and thus a mission was founded. Two monks (never, at first, more) were appointed to take charge of this cross and booth, and to win, baptize, convert, and teach all the Indians to be reached in the region. They had for guard and help a few soldiers, and sometimes a few already partly civilized and Christianized Indians; several head of cattle, some tools and seeds, and holy vessels for the church service, completed their store of weapons, spiritual and secular, offensive and defensive, with which to conquer the wilderness and its savages. There needs no work of the imagination to help this picture. Taken in its sternest realism it is vivid and thrilling; contrasting the wretched poverty of these single-handed beginnings with the final splendor and riches attained, the result seems well-nigh miraculous.

From the rough booth of boughs and reeds of 1770 to the pillars, arched corridors and domes of the stately stone churches of a half-century later, is a change only a degree less wonderful than the change in the Indian, from the naked savage, with his one stone tool, grinding acorn-meal in a rock bowl, to the industrious tiller of soil, weaver of cloth, worker in metals, and singer of sacred hymns. The steps of this change were slow at first. In 1772, at the end of five years' work, five missions had been founded, and four hundred and ninety-one Indians baptized. There were then, in these five missions, but nineteen friars and sixty soldiers. In 1786, La Perouse, a French naval commander, who voyaged along the California coast, leaves it on record that there were but two hundred and eighty-two soldiers, and about one hundred officers and friars, all told, in both Upper and Lower California, from Cape Saint Lucas to San Francisco, a line of eight hundred leagues. At this time there were five thousand one hundred and forty-three Indians, in the missions of Upper California alone. In the year 1800 there were, at the mission of San Diego, fifteen hundred and twenty-one Indians; and the San Diego garrison, three miles away from the mission, numbered only one hundred and sixty-seven souls,—officers, soldiers, servants, women, and children. Such figures as these seem sufficient refutation of the idea sometimes advanced, that the Indians were converted by force and held in subjection by terror. There is still preserved in the archives of the Franciscan College at Santa Barbara, a letter written by Father Junipero to the Viceroy of Mexico, in 1776, imploring him to send a force of eighty soldiers to be divided among seven missions. He patiently explains that the friars, stationed by twos, at new missions, from sixty to a hundred miles distant from each other, cannot be expected to feel safe without a reasonable military protection; and he asks pertinently what defense could be made, "in case the enemy should tempt the Gentiles to attack us." That there was so little active hostility on the part of the savage tribes, that they looked so kindly as they did to the ways and restraints of the new life, is the strongest possible proof that the methods of the friars in dealing with them must have been both wise and humane.

During the first six years there was but one serious outbreak,—that at San Diego; no retaliation was shown toward the Indians for this: on the contrary, the orders of both friars and military commanders were that they should be treated with even greater kindness than before; and in less than two years the mission buildings were rebuilt, under a guard of only a half-score of soldiers with hundreds of Indians looking on, and many helping cheerfully in the work. The San Carlos Mission at Monterey was Father Junipero's own charge. There he spent all his time, when not called away by his duties as president of the missions. There he died, and there he was buried. There, also, his beloved friend and brother, Father Crespi, labored by his side for thirteen years. Crespi was a sanguine, joyous man, sometimes called El Beato, from his happy temperament. No doubt, his gayety made Serra's sunshine in many a dark day; and grief at his death did much to break down the splendid old man's courage and strength. Only a few months before it occurred, they had gone together for a short visit to their comrade, Father Palon, at the San Francisco Mission. When they took leave of him, Crespi said, "Farewell forever; you will see me no more." This was late in the autumn of 1781, and on New Year's Day, 1782, he died, aged sixty years, and having spent half of those years in laboring for the Indians. Serra lived only two years longer, and is said never to have been afterward the same as before. For many years he had been a great sufferer from an affection of the heart—aggravated, if not induced, by his fierce beatings of his breast with a stone, while he was preaching. But physical pain seemed to make no impression on his mind. If it did not incapacitate him

for action, he held it of no account. Only the year before his death, being then seventy years old, and very lame, he had journeyed on foot from San Diego to Monterey, visiting every mission and turning aside into all the Indian settlements on the way. At this time there were on the Santa Barbara coast alone, within a space of eighty miles, twenty-one villages of Indians, roughly estimated as containing between twenty and thirty thousand souls. He is said to have gone weeping from village to village because he could do nothing for them.

He reached San Carlos in January, 1784, and never again went away. The story of his last hours and death is in the old church records of Monterey, written there by the hand of the sorrowing Palon the second day after he had closed his friend's eyes. It is a quaint and touching narrative.

Up to the day before his death, his indomitable will upholding the failing strength of his dying body, Father Junipero had read in the church the canonical offices of each day, a service requiring an hour and a half of time. The evening before his death he walked alone to the church to receive the last sacrament. The church was crowded to overflowing with Indians and whites, many crying aloud in uncontrollable grief.

Father Junipero knelt before the altar with great fervor of manner, while Father Palon, with tears rolling down his cheeks, read the services for the dying, gave him absolution, and administered the Holy Viaticum. Then rose from choked and tremulous voices the strains of the grand hymn "Tantum Ergo."

> Tantum ergo Sacramentum
> Veneremur cernui,
> Et antiquum documentum
> Novo cedat ritui;
> Præstet fides supplementum
> Sensuum defectui.
>
> Genitori genitoque
> Laus et jubilatio,
> Salus, honor, virtus quoque
> Sit et benedictio;
> Procedenti ab utroque
> Compar sit laudatio.

A startled thrill ran through the church as Father Junipero's own voice, "high and strong as ever," says the record, joined in the hymn. One by one the voices of his people broke down, stifled by sobs, until at last the dying man's voice, almost alone, finished the hymn. After this he gave thanks, and, returning to his cell-like room, spent the whole of the night in listening to penitential psalms and litanies, and giving thanks to God: all the time kneeling or sitting on the ground supported by the loving and faithful Palon. In the morning, early, he asked for the plenary indulgence, for which he again knelt, and confessed again. At noon, the chaplain and the captain of the bark *St. Joseph*, then lying in port at Monterey, came to visit him. He welcomed them, and, cordially embracing the chaplain, said, "You have come just in time to cast the earth upon my body." After they took their leave, he asked Palon to read to him again the Recommendations of the Soul. At its conclusion he responded earnestly, in as clear voice as in health, adding, "Thank God, I am now without fear." Then with a firm step he walked to the kitchen, saying that he would like a cup of broth. As soon as he had taken the broth, he exclaimed, "I feel better now; I will rest"; and, lying down, he closed his eyes, and without another word or sign of struggle or pain, ceased to breathe; entering indeed into a rest of which his last word had been solemnly prophetic.

Ever since morning the grief-stricken people had been waiting and listening for the tolling death-bell to announce that all was over. At its first note they came in crowds, breathless, weeping, and lamenting. It was with great difficulty that the soldiers could keep them from tearing Father Junipero's habit piecemeal from his body, so ardent was their desire to possess some relic of him. The corpse was laid at once in a coffin which he himself had ordered made many weeks before. The vessels in port fired a salute of one hundred and one guns, answered by the same from the guns of the presidio at Monterey—an honor given to no one below the rank of general. But the hundred gun salutes were a paltry honor in comparison with the tears of the Indian congregation. Soldiers kept watch around his coffin night and day till the burial, but they could not hold back the throngs of the poor creatures who pressed to touch the hand of the Father they had so much loved, and to bear away something, if only a thread, of the garments he had worn.

His ardent and impassioned nature and his untiring labors had won their deepest affection and confidence. It was his habit when at San Carlos to spend all his time with them, working by their side in the fields, making adobe, digging, tilling, doing, in short, all that he required of them. Day after day he thus labored, only desisting at the hours for performing offices in the church. Whenever an Indian came to address him, he made the sign of the cross on his forehead, and spoke to him some words of spiritual injunction or benediction. The arbitrariness, or, as some of his enemies called it, haughty self-will, which brought Serra at times into conflict with the military authorities when their purposes or views clashed with his own, never came to the

surface in his spiritual functions, or in his relation with the Indian converts. He loved them, and yearned over them as brands to be snatched from the burning. He had baptized over one thousand of them with his own hands; his whole life he spent for them, and was ready at any moment to lay it down if that would have benefited them more. Absolute single-heartedness like this is never misunderstood by, and never antagonizes equally single-hearted people, either high or low. But, to be absolutely single-hearted in a moral purpose is almost inevitably to be doggedly one-ideaed in regard to practical methods, and the single-hearted, one-ideaed man, with a great moral purpose, is sure to be often at swords' points with average men of selfish interests and mixed notions. This is the explanation of the fact that the later years of Serra's life were marred by occasional collisions with the military authorities in the country. No doubt the impetuosity of his nature made him sometimes hot in resentment and indiscreet of speech. But, in spite of these failings, he yet remains the foremost, grandest figure in the missions' history. If his successors in their administration had been equal to him in spirituality, enthusiasm, and intellect, the mission establishments would never have been so utterly overthrown and ruined.

Father Junipero sleeps on the spot where he labored and died. His grave is under the ruins of the beautiful stone church of his mission — the church which he saw only in ardent and longing fancy. It was, perhaps, the most beautiful, though not the grandest of the mission churches, and its ruins have to-day a charm far exceeding all the others. The fine yellow tint of the stone, the grand and unique contour of the arches, the beautiful star-shaped window in the front, the simple yet effective lines of carving on pilaster and pillar and door-way, the symmetrical Moorish tower and dome, the worn steps leading up to the belfry,—all make a picture whose beauty, apart from hallowing associations, is enough to hold one spell-bound. Reverent nature has rebuilt with grass and blossoms even the crumbling window-sills, across which the wind blows free from the blue ocean just beyond; and on the day we saw the place, golden wheat, fresh reaped, was piled in loose mounds on the south slope below the church's southern wall; it reminded me of the tales I had heard from many aged men and women of a beautiful custom the Indians had of scattering their choicest grains on the ground at the friars' feet, as a token of homage.

The roof of the church long ago fell in; its doors have stood open for years; and the fierce sea-gales have been sweeping in, piling sands until a great part of the floor is covered with solid earth on which every summer grasses and weeds grow high enough to be cut by sickles. Of the thousands of acres which the Mission Indians once cultivated in the San Carlos valley, only nine were finally decreed by the United States Government to belong to the church. These were so carelessly surveyed that no avenue of approach was left open to the mission buildings, and a part of the land had to be sold to buy a right of way to the church. The remnant left makes a little farm, by the rental of which a man can be hired to take charge of the whole place, and keep it, if possible, from further desecration and ruin. The present keeper is a devout Portuguese, whose broken English becomes eloquent as he speaks of the old friars whose graves he guards.

"Dem work for civilize," he said, "not work for money. Dey work to religion."

In clearing away the earth at the altar end of the church, in the winter of 1882, this man came upon stone slabs evidently covering graves. On opening one of these graves, it was found to hold three coffins. From the minute description, in the old records, of Father Junipero's place of burial, Father Carenova, the priest now in charge of the Monterey parish, became convinced that one of these coffins must be his. On the opposite side of the church is another grave, where are buried two of the earliest governors of California.

It is a disgrace to both the Catholic Church and the State of California that this grand old ruin, with its sacred sepulchers, should be left to crumble away. If nothing is done to protect and save it, one short hundred years more will see it a shapeless, wind-swept mound of sand. It is not in our power to confer honor or bring dishonor on the illustrious dead. We ourselves, alone, are dishonored when we fail in reverence to them. The grave of Junipero Serra may be buried centuries deep and its very place forgotten, yet his name will not perish, nor his fame suffer. But, for the men of the country whose civilization he founded, and of the Church whose faith he so glorified, to permit his burial-place to sink into oblivion, is a shame indeed!

H. H.

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FATHER JUNIPERO AND HIS WORK.

A SKETCH OF THE FOUNDATION, PROSPERITY, AND RUIN OF THE FRANCISCAN MISSIONS IN CALIFORNIA. II.

If the little grief-stricken band of monks who stood weeping around Junipero Serra's grave in 1784 could have foreseen the events of the next thirty years, their weeping would have been turned into exultant joy. But not the most daring enthusiast among them could have dreamed of the harvest of power destined to be raised from the seed thus sown in weakness.

Almost with his dying breath Father Junipero had promised to use "all his influence with God" in behalf of the missions. In the course of the next four months after his death more converts were baptized than in the whole three years previous; and it became at once the common belief that his soul had passed directly into heaven, and that this great wave of conversions was the result of his prayers. Prosperity continued steadily to increase. Mission after mission was successfully founded, until, in 1804, the occupation of the sea-coast line from San Francisco to San Diego was complete, there being nineteen mission establishments only an easy day's journey apart from each other.

The ten new missions were founded in the following order: Santa Barbara, December 4, 1786; La Purissima, December 8, 1787; Santa Cruz, September 25, 1791; Soledad, October 9, 1791; San José, June 11, 1797; San Juan Bautista, June 24, 1797; San Miguel, July 25, 1797; San Fernando Rey, September, 8, 1797; San Luis Rey de Francia, June 18, 1798; Santa Inez, September 7, 1804.

Beginnings had also been made on a projected second line, to be from thirty to fifty miles back from the sea, and this inland chain of settlements and development promised to be in no way inferior to the first. The wealth of the mission establishments had grown to an almost incredible degree. In several of them massive stone churches had been built, of an architecture at once so simple and harmonious that, even in ruins, it is to-day the grandest in America; and it will remain, so long as arch, pillar, or dome of it shall stand, a noble and touching monument of the patient Indian workers who built, and of the devoted friars who designed, its majestic and graceful proportions.

In all of the missions were buildings on a large scale, providing for hundreds of occupants, for all the necessary trades and manufactures, and many of the ornamental arts of civilized life. Enormous tracts of land were under high cultivation; the grains, and cool fruits of the temperate zone, flourishing, in the marvelous California air, side by side with the palm, olive, grape, fig, orange, and pomegranate. From the two hundred head of cattle sent by the wise Galvez had grown herds past numbering; and to these had been added vast flocks of sheep, and herds of horses. In these nineteen missions were gathered over twenty thousand Indians, leading regular and industrious lives, and conforming to the usages of the Catholic religion.

A description of the San Luis Rey mission, written by De Mofras, an attaché of the French Legation in Mexico in 1842, gives a clear idea of the form, and some of the methods of the mission establishments.

"The building is a quadrilateral, four hundred and fifty feet square; the church occupies one of its wings; the façade is ornamented with a gallery. The building is two stories in height. The interior is formed by a court ornamented with fountains, and decorated with trees. Upon the gallery which runs around it open the dormitories of the monks, of the major-domos, and of travelers, small work-shops, school-rooms and store-rooms. The hospitals are situated in the most quiet parts of the mission, where also the schools are kept. The young Indian girls dwell in halls called monasteries, and are called nuns. Placed under the care of Indian matrons, who are worthy of confidence, they learn to make cloth of wool, cotton, and flax, and do not leave the monastery until they are old enough to be married. The Indian children mingle in schools with those of the white colonists. A certain number chosen among the pupils who display the most intelligence learn music, chanting, the violin, flute, horn, violoncello, or other instruments. Those who distinguish themselves in the carpenters' shops, at the forge, or in agricultural labors, are appointed alcaldes or overseers, and charged with the directions of the laborers."

Surrounding these buildings, or arranged in regular streets upon one side of them, were the homes of the Indian families. These were built of adobe, or of reeds, after the native fashion. The daily routine of the Indians' life was simple and uniform. They were divided into squads of laborers. At sunrise, the Angelus bell called them to mass. After the mass they breakfasted, and then dispersed to their various labors. At eleven, they were

again summoned together for dinner, after which they rested until two, when they went again to work, and worked until the evening Angelus just before sunset. After prayers and supper, they were in the habit of dancing and playing games until bedtime. Their food was good. They had meat at noon accompanied by *posale*, a sort of succotash made of corn, beans, and wheat, boiled together. Their breakfast and supper were usually of porridge made from different grains, called *atole* and *pinole*.

The men wore linen shirts, pantaloons, and blankets. The overseers and best workmen had suits of cloth like the Spaniards. The women received every year two chemises, one gown, and a blanket. De Mofras says:

> "When the hides, tallow, grain, wine, and oil were sold at good prices to ships from abroad, the monks distributed handkerchiefs, wearing apparel, tobacco, and trinkets among the Indians, and devoted the surplus to the embellishment of the churches, the purchase of musical instruments, pictures, church ornaments, etc.; still they were careful to keep a part of the harvest in the granaries to provide for years of scarcity."

The rule of the friars was in the main a kindly one. The vice of drunkenness was severely punished by flogging. Quarreling between husbands and wives was also dealt with summarily, the offending parties being chained together by the leg till they were glad to promise to keep peace. New converts and recruits were secured in many ways; sometimes by sending out parties of those already attached to the new mode of life, and letting them set forth to the savages the advantages and comforts of the Christian way; sometimes by luring strangers in with gifts; sometimes, it is said, by capturing them by main force; but of this there is only scanty evidence, and it is not probable that it was often practiced. It has also been said that cruel and severe methods were used to compel the Indians to work; that they were driven under the lash by their overseers, and goaded with lances by the soldiers. No doubt there were individual instances of cruelty; seeds of it being indigenous in human nature, such absolute control of hundreds of human beings could not exist without some abuses of the power. But that the Indians were, on the whole, well treated and cared for, the fact that so many thousands of them chose to remain in the missions is proof. With open wilderness on all sides, and with thousands of savage friends and relatives close at hand, nothing but their own free will could have kept such numbers of them loyal and contented. Forbes, in his history of California, written in 1832, says:

> "The best and most unequivocal proof of the good conduct of the fathers is to be found in the unbounded affection and devotion invariably shown toward them by their Indian subjects. They venerate them not merely as friends and fathers, but with a degree of devotion approaching to adoration."

The picture of life in one of these missions during their period of prosperity is unique and attractive. The whole place was a hive of industry: trades plying indoors and outdoors; tillers, herders, vintagers by hundreds, going to and fro; children in schools; women spinning; bands of young men practicing on musical instruments; music, the scores of which, in many instances, they had themselves written out; at evening, all sorts of games of running, leaping, dancing, and ball-throwing, and the picturesque ceremonies of a religion which has always been wise in availing itself of beautiful agencies in color, form, and harmony.

At every mission were walled gardens with waving palms, sparkling fountains, groves of olive trees, broad vineyards, and orchards of all manner of fruits; over all, the sunny, delicious, winterless California sky.

More than mortal, indeed, must the Franciscans have been, to have been able, under these conditions, to preserve intact the fervor and spirit of self-abnegation and deprivation inculcated by the rules of their order. There is a half-comic pathos in the records of occasional efforts made by one and another of the presidents to check the growing disposition toward ease on the part of the friars. At one time, several of them were found to be carrying silver watches. The watches were taken away, and sent to Guadalajara to be sold, the money to be paid into the Church treasury. At another time, an order was issued, forbidding the wearing of shoes and stockings in place of sandals, and the occupying of too large and comfortable rooms. And one zealous president, finding that the friars occasionally rode in the carts belonging to their missions, had all the carts burned, to compel the fathers to go about on foot.

MUSIC SCORE FROM OLD CHOIR-BOOK PRINTED BY MISSION INDIANS.

BELL-POST AND CORRIDOR AT SAN MIGUEL MISSION.

The friars were forced, by the very facts of their situation, into the exercise of a constant and abounding hospitality, and this of itself inevitably brought about large departures from the ascetic *régime* of living originally preached and practiced. Most royally did they discharge the obligations of this hospitality. Travelers' rooms were kept always ready in every mission; and there were even set apart fruit orchards called "travelers' orchards." A man might ride from San Diego to Monterey by easy day's journeys, spending each night as guest in a mission establishment. As soon as he rode up, an Indian page would appear to take his horse; another to show him to one of the travelers' rooms. He was served with the best of food and wine, as long as he liked to stay, and when he left, he might, if he wished, take from the mission herd a fresh horse to carry him on his journey. All the California voyagers and travelers of the time speak in glowing terms of this generous and cordial entertaining by the friars. It was, undoubtedly, part of their policy as representatives of the State, but it was no less a part of their duty as Franciscans.

Some of the highest tributes which have been paid to them, both as men and as administrators of affairs, have come from strangers who, thus sojourning under their roofs, had the best opportunity of knowing their lives. Says Forbes:

"Their conduct has been marked by a degree of benevolence, humanity, and moderation probably unexampled in any other situation."

"I have never heard that they have not acted with the most perfect fidelity, or that they ever betrayed a trust, or acted with inhumanity."—FORBES's "California."

This testimony is of the more weight that it comes from a man not in sympathy with either the religious or the secular system on which the friars' labors were based.

The tales still told by old people of festal occasions at the missions sound like tales of the Old World rather than of the New. There was a strange difference, fifty years ago, between the atmosphere of life on the east and west sides of the American continent: On the Atlantic shore, the descendants of the Puritans, weighed down by serious purpose, half grudging the time for their one staid yearly Thanksgiving, and driving the Indians farther and farther into the wilderness every year, fighting and killing them; on the sunny Pacific shore, the merry people of Mexican and Spanish blood, troubling themselves about nothing, dancing away whole days and nights like children, while their priests were gathering the Indians by thousands into communities, and feeding and teaching them.

The most beautiful woman known in California a half-century ago, still lives in Santa Barbara, white-haired, bright-eyed, eloquent-tongued to-day. At the time of her marriage, her husband being a brother of the superior of the Santa Barbara mission, her wedding banquet was spread on tables running the whole length of the outer corridor of the mission. For three days and three nights the feasting and dancing were kept up, and the whole town was bid. On the day after her wedding came the christening or blessing of the right tower of the church. She and her husband, having been chosen godfather and godmother to the tower, walked in solemn

procession around it, carrying lighted candles in their hands, preceded by the friar, who sprinkled it with holy water and burned incense. In the four long streets of Indians' houses, then running eastward from the mission, booths of green boughs, decorated with flowers, were set up in front of all the doors. Companies of Indians from other missions came as guests, dancing and singing as they approached. Their Indian hosts went out to meet them, also singing, and pouring out seeds on the ground for them to walk on. These were descendants of the Indians who, when Viscayno anchored off Santa Barbara in 1602, came out in canoes, bringing their king, and rowed three times around Viscayno's ship, chanting a chorus of welcome. Then the king going on board the ship, walked three times around the deck, chanting the same song. He then gave to the Spaniards gifts of all the simple foods he had, and implored them to land, promising that if they would come and be their brothers, he would give to each man ten wives.

A CAPACIOUS FIRE-PLACE — SAN LUIS REY.

With the increase of success, wealth, and power on the part of the missions came increasing complexities in their relation to the military settlements in the country. The original Spanish plan of colonization was threefold — religious, military, and civil. Its first two steps were a mission and a presidio, or garrison; the presidio to be the guard of the mission; later was to come the pueblo * or town. From indefiniteness in the understanding of property rights, and rights of authority, as vested under these three heads, there very soon arose confusion, which led to collisions — collisions which have not yet ceased, and never will, so long as there remains a land-title in California to be quarreled over. The law records of the State are brimful of briefs, counter-briefs, opinions, and counter-opinions regarding property issues, all turning on definitions which nobody has now clear right to make, of old pueblo and presidio titles and bounds.

In the beginning there were no grants of land; everything was done by royal decree. In the form of taking possession of the new lands, the Church, by right of sacred honor, came first, the religious ceremony always preceding the military. Not till the cross was set up, and the ground consecrated and taken possession of, in the name of God, for the Church's purposes, did any military commander ever think of planting the royal standard, symbolizing the king's possession. In the early days, the relation between the military and the ecclesiastical representatives of the king were comparatively simple; the soldiers were sent avowedly and specifically to protect the friars; moreover, in those earlier days, soldiers and friars were alike devout, and, no doubt, had the mission interests more equally at heart than they did later. But each year's increase of numbers in the garrisons, and of numbers and power in the missions, increased the possibilities of clashing, until finally the relations between the two underwent a singular reversal; and the friars, if disposed to be satirical, might well have said that, however bad a rule might be which would not work both ways, a rule which did was not of necessity a good one, it being now the duty of the missions to support the presidios; the military governors being authorized to draw upon the friars not only for supplies, but for contributions of money, and for levies of laborers.†

On the other hand, no lands could be set off or assigned for colonists without consent

* The term pueblo answers to that of the English word town, in all its vagueness and all its precision. As the word town in English generally embraces every kind of population from the village to the city, and also, used specifically, signifies a town corporate and politic, so the word pueblo in Spanish ranges from the hamlet to the city, but, used emphatically, signifies a town corporate and politic.—" Dwinelle's Colonial History of San Francisco."

† In the decade between 1801 and 1810 the missions furnished to the presidios about eighteen thousand dollars' worth of supplies each year.

of the friars, and there were many other curious and entangling cross-purpose powers distributed between friars and military governors quite sufficient to make it next to impossible for things to go smoothly.

The mission affairs, so far as their own internal interests were concerned, were administered with admirable simplicity and system. The friars in charge of the missions were responsible directly to the president or prefect of the missions. He, in turn, was responsible to the president or guardian of the Franciscan College in San Fernando, in Mexico. One responsible officer, called procurador, was kept in the city of Mexico to buy supplies for the missions from stipends due, and from the drafts given to the friars by the presidio commanders for goods furnished to the presidios. There was also a syndic or general agent at San Blas, who attended to the shipping and forwarding of supplies. It was a happy combination of the minimum of functionaries with the maximum of responsibility.

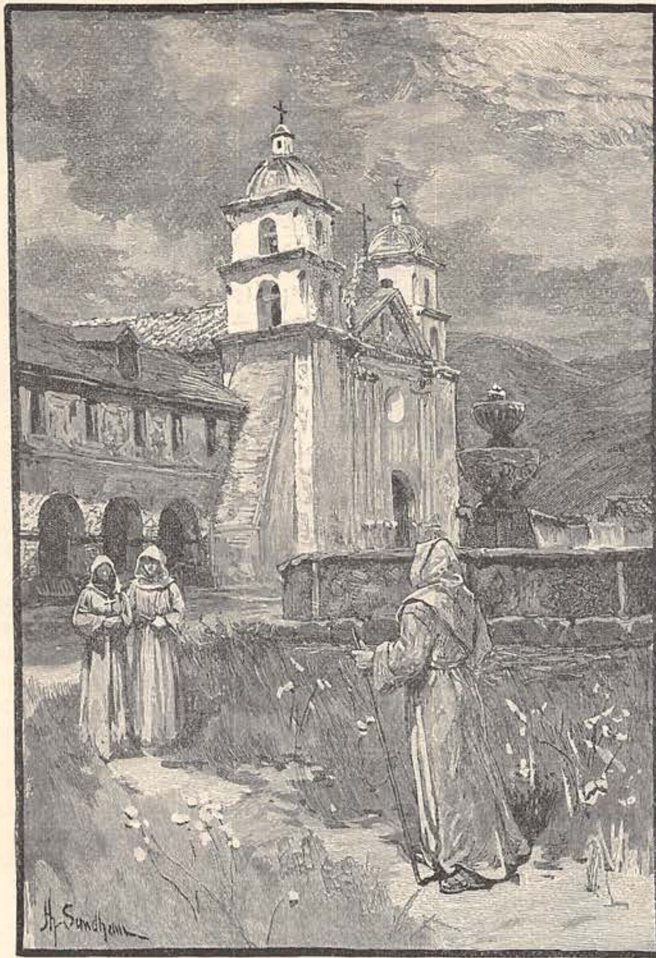
The income supporting the missions was derived from two sources, the first of which was a fund, called the "Pious Fund," originally belonging to the Jesuit Order, but on the suppression of that order, in 1868, taken possession of by the Spanish Government in trust for the Church. This fund, begun early in the eighteenth century, was made up of estates, mines, manufactories, and flocks—all gifts of rich Catholics to the Society of Jesus. It yielded an income of fifty thousand dollars a year, the whole of which belonged to the Church, and was to be used in paying stipends to the friars (to the Dominicans in Lower as well as to the Franciscans in Upper California), and in the purchasing of articles needed in the missions. The missions' second source of income was from the sales of their own products; first to the presidios—these sales, paid for by drafts on the Spanish or Mexican Government; second, to trading ships, coming more and more each year to the California coast.

As soon as revolutionary troubles began to agitate Spain and Mexico, the income of the missions from abroad began to fall off. The Pious Fund was too big a sum to be honestly administered by any government hard pressed for money. Spain began to filch from it early, to pay the bills of her wars with Portugal and England; and Mexico, as soon as she had the chance, followed Spain's example vigorously,—selling whole estates, and pocketing their price; farming the fund out for the benefit of the State treasury; and, finally, in Santa Anna's time, selling the whole outright to two banking-houses. During these troublous times, the friars not only failed frequently to receive their regular stipends allotted from the interest of this Pious Fund, but their agent was unable to collect the money due them for the supplies furnished to the presidios. The sums of which they were thus robbed by two governments—that, being ostensibly of the Catholic faith, should surely have held the Church's property sacred—mounted up in a few years to such enormous figures, that restitution would have been practically impossible, and, except for their own internal sources of revenue, the missions must have come to bankruptcy and ruin.

However, the elements which were to bring about this ruin were already at work—were, indeed, inherent in the very system on which they had been founded. The Spanish Government was impatient to see carried out, and to reap the benefit of, the pueblo feature of its colonization plan. With a singular lack of realization of the time needed to make citizens out of savages, it had set ten years as the period at the expiration of which the Indian communities attached to the missions were to be formed into pueblos,—the missions to be secularized, that is, turned into curacies, the pueblo being the parish. This was no doubt the wise and proper ultimate scheme, the only one, in fact, which provided either for the entire civilization of the Indian or the successful colonization of the country. But five times ten years would have been little enough to allow for getting such a scheme fairly under way, and another five times ten years for the finishing and rounding of the work. It is strange how sure civilized peoples are, when planning and legislating for savages, to forget that it has always taken centuries to graft on or evolve out of savagery anything like civilization.

Aiming toward this completing of their colonization plan, the Spanish Government had very early founded the pueblos of Los Angeles and San José. A second class of pueblos, called, in the legal phrase of California's later days, "Presidial Pueblos," had originated in the settlement of the presidios, and gradually grown up around them. There were four of these—San Diego, Monterey, Santa Barbara, and San Francisco.

It is easy to see how, as these settlements increased, of persons more or less unconnected with the missions, there must have grown up discontent at the Church's occupation and control of so large a proportion of the country. Ready for alliance with this discontent was the constant jealousy on the part of the military authorities, whose measures were often—and, no doubt, often rightly—opposed by the friars. These fomenting causes of disquiet reacted on the impatience and greed in



CHURCH AND FOUNTAIN, SANTA BARBARA.

Spain; all together slowly, steadily working against the missions, until, in 1813, the Spanish Cortes passed an act decreeing their secularization. This was set forth in sounding phrase as an act purely for the benefit of the Indians, that they might become citizens of towns. But it was, to say the least of it, as much for Spain as for the Indians; since, by its provisions, one-half of the mission lands were to be sold for the payment of Spain's national debt. This act, so manifestly premature, remained a dead letter; but it alarmed the friars, and with reason. It was the tocsin of their doom, of the downfall of their establishments, and the ruin of their work.

Affairs grew more and more unsettled. Spanish viceroys and Mexican insurgents took turns at ruling in Mexico, and the representatives of each took turns at ruling in California. The waves of every Mexican revolution broke on the California shore. The College of San Fernando, in Mexico, also shared in the general confusion, and many of its members returned to Spain.

From 1817 to 1820 great requisitions were made by the Government upon the missions. They responded generously. They gave not only food, but money. They submitted to a tax, per capita, on all their thousands of Indians, to pay the expenses of a deputy to sit in the Mexican Congress. They allowed troops to be quartered in the mission buildings. At the end of the year 1820 the outstanding drafts on the Government, in favor of the missions, amounted to four hundred thousand dollars.

It is impossible, in studying the records of this time, not to feel that the friars were, in the main, disposed to work in good faith for the best interests of the State. That they opposed the secularization project is true; but it is unjust to assume that their motives in so doing were purely selfish. Most certainly, the results of the carrying out of that project

IN THE MISSION GARDEN, SAN JUAN BAUTISTA.

were such as to prove all that they claimed of its untimeliness. It is easy saying, as their enemies do, that they would never have advocated it, and were not training the Indians with a view to it; but the first assertion is an assumption, and nothing more; and the refutation of the second lies in the fact that, even in that short time, they had made the savages into "masons, carpenters, plasterers, soap-makers, tanners, shoe-makers, blacksmiths, millers, bakers, cooks, brick-makers, carters and cart-makers, weavers and spinners, saddlers, ship hands, agriculturists, herdsmen, vintagers; —in a word, they filled all the laborious occupations known to civilized society."* Moreover, in many of the missions, plots of land had already been given to individual neophytes who seemed to have intelligence and energy enough to begin an independent life for themselves. But it is idle speculating now as to what would or would not have been done under conditions which never existed.

So long as Spain refused to recognize Mexico's independence, the majority of the friars, as was natural, remained loyal to the Spanish Government, and yielded with reluctance and under protest, in every instance, to Mexico's control. For some years President Sarria was under arrest for refusing to take the oath of allegiance to the Mexican republic. Nevertheless, it not being convenient to remove him and fill his place, he performed all his functions as president of the missions through that time. Many other friars refused to take the oath, and left the country in consequence. During three years the secularization project was continually agitated, and at intervals measures initiatory to it were decreed and sometimes acted upon.

The shifting governors of unfortunate California legislated for or against the mission interests according to the exigencies of their needs or the warmness or lukewarmness of their religious faith.

* Special Report of the Hon. B. D. Wilson, of Los Angeles, Cal., to the Interior Dept. in 1852.

An act of one year, declaring the Indians liberated, and ordering the friars to turn over the mission properties to administrators, would be followed a few years later by an act restoring the power of the friars, and giving back to them all that remained to be rescued of the mission properties and converts. All was anarchy and confusion. During the fifty-five years that California was under Spanish rule she had but nine governors. During the twenty-four that she was under Mexican misrule she had thirteen. It would be interesting to know what the Indian populations thought, as they watched these quarrelings and intrigues among the Christians who were held up to them as patterns for imitation.

In a curious pamphlet left by one of the old friars, Father Boscana, is told a droll story of the logical inferences some of them drew from the political situations among their supposed betters. It was a band of San Diego Indians. When they heard that the Spanish viceroy in the city of Mexico had been killed, and a Mexican made emperor in his place, they forthwith made a great feast, burned up their chief, and elected a new one in his stead. To the stringent reproofs of the horrified friars they made answer: "Have you not done the same in Mexico? You say your king was not good, and you killed him. Well, our captain was not good, and we burned him. If the new one turns out bad, we will burn him, too,"—a memorable instance of the superiority of example to precept.

At last, in 1834, the final blow fell on the missions. The Governor of California, in compliance with instructions received from Mexico, issued an authoritative edict for their secularization. It was a long document, and had many significant provisions in it. It said that the Indians were now to be "emancipated." But the 16th article said that they "should be obliged to join in such labors of community as are indispensable, in the opinion of the political chief, in the cultivation of the vineyards, gardens, and fields, which for the present remain unapportioned." This was a curious sort of emancipation, and it is not surprising to read, in the political records of the time, such paragraphs as this: "Out of one hundred and sixty Indian families at San Diego, to whom emancipation was offered by Governor Figueroa, only ten could be induced to accept it." The friars were to hand over all records and inventories to stewards or administrators appointed. Boards of magistrates were also appointed for each village. One-half of the movable property was to be divided among the "emancipated persons," and to each head of a family was to be given four hundred square yards of land. Everything else—lands, movable properties, property of all classes—was to be put into the hands of the administrator, to be held subject to the Federal Government. Out of these properties the administrators were to provide properly for the support of the father or fathers left in charge of the church, the church properties, and the souls of the "emancipated persons." A more complete and ingenious subversion of the previously existing state of things could not have been devised, and it is hard to conceive how any student of the history of the period can see, in its shaping and sudden enforcing, anything except bold and unprincipled greed hiding itself under specious cloaks of right.

"Beneath these specious pretexts," says Dwinelle, in his "Colonial History," "was undoubtedly a perfect understanding between the Government of Mexico and the leading men in California, that in such a condition of things the Supreme Government might absorb the Pious Fund, under the pretense that it was no longer necessary for missionary purposes, and thus had reverted to the State as a quasi escheat, while the co-actors in California should appropriate the local wealth of the missions, by the rapid and sure process of administering their temporalities."

Of the manner in which the project was executed, Dwinelle goes on to say: "These laws, whose ostensible purpose was to convert the missionary establishments into Indian pueblos, their churches into parish churches, and to elevate the Christianized Indians to the rank of citizens, were after all executed in such a manner that the so-called secularization of the missions resulted in their plunder and complete ruin, and in the demoralization and dispersion of the Christianized Indians."

It is only just to remember, however, that these laws and measures were set in force in a time of revolution, when even the best measures and laws could have small chance of being fairly executed, and that a government which is driven, as Mexico was, to recruiting its colonial forces by batches of selected prison convicts, is entitled to pity, if not charity in our estimates of its conduct. Of course, the position of administrator of a mission became at once a political reward and a chance for big gains, and simply, therefore, a source and center of bribery and corruption.

Between the governors—who now regarded the mission establishments as state property, taking their cattle or grain as freely as they would any other revenue, and sending orders to a mission for tallow, as they would draw

checks on the treasury—and the administrators, who equally regarded them as easy places for the filling of pockets, the wealth of the missions disappeared as dew melts in the sun. Through all this the Indians were the victims. They were, under the administrators, compelled to work far harder than before: they were ill-fed, and ill-treated; they were hired out in gangs to work in towns or on farms, under masters who regarded them simply as beasts of burden; their rights to the plots of land which had been set off for them were, almost without exception, ignored. A more pitiable sight has not often been seen on earth than the spectacle of this great body of helpless, dependent creatures, suddenly deprived of their teachers and protectors, thrown on their own resources, and at the mercy of rapacious and unscrupulous communities, in time of revolution. The best comment on their sufferings is to be found in the statistics of the mission establishments after a few years of the administrators' reign.

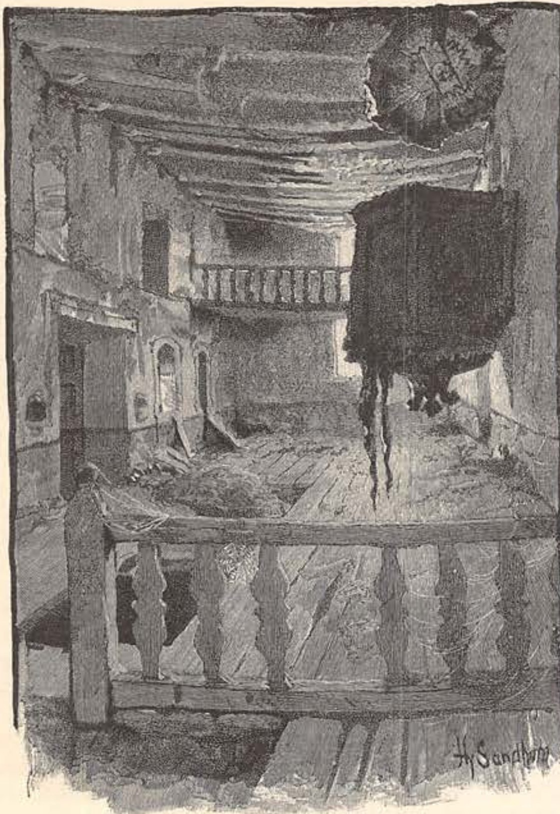
In 1834 there were, according to the lowest estimates, from fifteen to twenty thousand Indians in the missions. De Mofras's statistics give the number as 30,620. In 1840 there were left, all told, but six thousand. In many of the missions there were less than one hundred. According to De Mofras, the cattle, sheep, horses, and mules, in 1834, numbered 808,000; in 1842, but 6320. Other estimates put the figures for 1834 considerably lower. It is not easy to determine which are true; but the most moderate estimates of all tell the story with sufficient emphasis. There is also verbal testimony on these points still to be heard in California, if one has patience and interest enough in the subject to listen to it. There are still living, wandering about, half-blind, half-starved, in the neighborhood of the mission sites, old Indians who recollect the mission times in the height of their glory. Their faces kindle with a sad flicker of recollected happiness, as they tell of the days when they had all they wanted to eat, and the padres were so good and kind: "*Bueno tiempo! Bueno tiempo*," they say, with a hopeless sigh and shake of the head.

Under the new régime the friars suffered hardly less than the Indians. Some fled the country, unable to bear the humiliations and hardships of their position under the control of the administrators or major-domos, and dependent on their caprice for shelter and even for food. Among this number was Father Antonio Peyri, who had been for over thirty years in charge of the splendid mission of San Luis Rey. In 1800, two years after its founding, this mission had three hundred and sixty-nine Indians. In 1827 it had two thousand six hundred and eighty-six; it owned over twenty thousand head of cattle, and nearly twenty thousand sheep. It controlled over two hundred thousand acres of land, and there were raised in its fields in one year three thousand bushels of wheat, six thousand of barley, and ten thousand of corn. No other mission had so fine a church. It was one hundred and sixty feet long, fifty wide, and sixty high, with walls four feet thick. A tower at one side held a belfry for eight bells. The corridor on the opposite side had two hundred and fifty-six arches. Its gold and silver ornaments are said to have been superb.

When Father Peyri made up his mind to leave the country, he slipped off by night to San Diego, hoping to escape without the Indians' knowledge. But, missing him in the morning, and knowing only too well what it meant, five hundred of them mounted their ponies in hot haste, and galloped all the way to San Diego, forty-five miles, to bring him back by force. They arrived just as the ship, with Father Peyri on board, was weighing anchor. Standing on the deck, with outstretched arms, he blessed them amid their tears and loud cries. Some flung themselves into the water and swam after the ship. Four reached it, and, clinging to its sides, so implored to be taken that the father consented, and carried them with him to Rome, where one of them became a priest.

There were other touching instances in which the fathers refused to be separated from their Indian converts, and remained till the last by their side, sharing all their miseries and deprivations. De Mofras, in his visit to the country in 1842, found, at the mission of San Luis Obispo, Father Azagonais, a very old man, living in a hut, like the Indians, sleeping on a rawhide on the bare ground, with no drinking-vessel but an ox-horn, and no food but some dried meat hanging in the sun. The little he had he shared with the few Indians who still lingered there. Benevolent persons had offered him asylum, but he refused, saying that he would die at his post. At the San Antonio mission, De Mofras found another aged friar, Father Gutierrez, living in great misery. The administrator of this mission was a man who had been formerly a menial servant in the establishment; he had refused to provide Father Gutierrez with the commonest necessaries, and had put him on an allowance of food barely sufficient to keep him alive.

At Soledad was a still more pitiful case. Father Sarria, who had labored there for thirty years, refused to leave the spot, even



INTERIOR OF LA PURISSIMA MISSION.

after the mission was so ruined that it was not worth any administrator's while to keep it. He and the handful of Indians who remained loyal to their faith and to him lived on there, growing poorer and poorer each day; he sharing his every morsel of food with them, and starving himself, till one Sunday morning, saying mass at the crumbling altar, he fainted, fell forward, and died in their arms, of starvation. This was in 1838. Only eight years before, this Soledad Mission had owned thirty-six thousand cattle, seventy thousand sheep, three hundred yoke of working oxen, more horses than any other mission, and had an aqueduct, fifteen miles long, supplying water enough to irrrigate twenty thousand acres of land.

For ten years after the passage of the Secularization Act affairs went steadily on from bad to worse with the missions. Each governor had his own plans and devices for making the most out of them, renting them, dividing them into parcels, for the use of colonists, establishing pueblos on them, making them subject to laws of bankruptcy, and finally selling them. The departmental assemblies sometimes indorsed and sometimes annulled the acts of the governors. In 1842, Governor Micheltorena proclaimed that the twelve southern missions should be restored to the Church, and that the Government would not make another grant of land without the consent of the friars. This led to a revolution or rather an ebullition, and Micheltorena was sent out of the country. To him succeeded Pio Pico, who remained in power till the occupation of California by the United States forces in 1846. During the reign of Pio Pico, the ruin of the mission establishments was completed. They were at first sold or rented in batches to the highest bidders. There was first a preliminary farce of proclamation to the Indians to return and take possession of the missions if they did not want them sold. These proclamations were posted up in the pueblos for months before the sales. In 1844, the Indians of Dolores, Soledad, San Miguel, La Purissima, and San Rafael* were thus summoned to come back to their missions—a curious bit of half conscience-stricken, half politic recognition of the Indians' ownership of the lands, the act of the Departmental Assembly saying that if they (the Indians) did not return before such a date, the Government would declare said missions to be "without owners," and dispose of them accordingly. There must have been much bitter speech in those days when news of these proclamations reached the wilds where the mission Indians had taken refuge.

At last, in March, 1846, an act of the Departmental Assembly made the missions liable to the laws of bankruptcy, and authorized the governor to sell them to private persons. As by this time all the missions that had any pretense of existence left had been run hopelessly into debt, proceedings in regard to them were much simplified by this act. In the same year, the President of Mexico issued an order to Governor Pico to use all means within his power to raise money to defend the country against the United States; and under color of this double authorization the governor forthwith proceeded to sell missions right and left. He sold them at illegal private sales; he sold them for insignificant sums, and for sums not paid at all; whether he was, to use the words of a well-known legal

* The missions of San Rafael and San Francisco de Solano were the last founded; the first in 1819, and the latter in 1823—too late to attain any great success or importance.

CHURCH AND GRAVE-YARD OF SAN LUIS REY.

brief in one of the celebrated California land cases, "willfully ignorant or grossly corrupt" there is no knowing, and it made no difference in the result.

One of the last acts of the Departmental Assembly, before the surrender of the country, was to declare all Governor Pico's sales of mission property null and void. And one of Governor Pico's last acts was, as soon as he had made up his mind to run away out of the country, to write to some of his special friends and ask them if there were anything else they would like to have him give them before his departure.

On the 7th of July, 1846, the American flag was raised in Monterey, and formal possession of California was taken by the United States. The proclamation of Admiral Sloat, on this memorable occasion, included these words: "All persons holding title to real estate, or in quiet possession of lands under color of right, shall have those titles and rights guaranteed to them." "Color of right" is a legal phrase, embodying a moral idea, an obligation of equity. If the United States Government had kept this guarantee, there would be living in comfortable homesteads in California to-day many hundreds of people that are now homeless and beggared — Mexicans as well as Indians.

The army officers in charge of different posts in California, in these first days of the United States' occupation of the country, were perplexed and embarrassed by nothing so much as by the confusion existing in regard to the mission properties and lands. Everywhere men turned up with bills of sale from Governor Pico. At the San Diego Mission, the

A GLIMPSE OF THE BULL RING, SAN JUAN.

ostensible owner, one Estudillo by name, confessed frankly that he "did not think it right to dispose of the Indians' property in that way, but, as everybody was buying missions, he thought he might as well have one."

In many of the missions, squatters, without show or semblance of title, were found; these the officers turned out. Finally, General Kearney, to save the trouble of cutting any more Gordian knots, declared that all titles of missions and mission lands must be held in abeyance till the United States Government should pronounce on them.

For several years the question remained unsettled, and the mission properties were held by those who had them in possession at the time of the surrender. But in 1856 the United States Land Commission gave, in reply to a claim and petition from the Catholic Bishop of California, a decision, which, considered with reference to the situation of the mission properties at the time of the United States possession, was perhaps as near to being equitable as the circumstances would admit. But, considered with reference to the status of the mission establishments under the Spanish rule, to their original extent, the scope of the work, and the magnificent success of their experiment up to the time of the revolutions, it seems a sadly inadequate return of property once rightfully held; still, it was not the province of the United States to repair the injustices or make good the thefts of Spain and Mexico; and any attempt to clear up the tangle of confiscations, debts, frauds, and robberies in California, for the last quarter of a century before the surrender, would have been bootless work.

KITCHEN CHIMNEY, SAN JUAN.

The Land Commissioner's decision was based on the old Spanish law which divided church property into two classes, sacred and ecclesiastical, and held it to be inalienable, except in case of necessity, and then only according to provisions of canon law; in the legal term, it was said to be "out of commerce." The sacred property was that which had been in a formal manner consecrated to God—church buildings, sacred vessels, vestments, etc. Ecclesiastical property was land held by the Church, and appropriated to the maintenance of divine worship, or the support of the ministry; buildings occupied by the priests, or necessary for their convenience; gardens, etc. Following a similar division, the property of the mission establishments was held by the Land Commission to be of two sorts—mission property, and church property: the mission property, embracing the great tracts of land formerly cultivated for the community's purpose, it was decided, must be considered as government property; the church property, including with the church buildings, houses of priests, etc., such smaller portions of land as were devoted to the im-

OLD DOOR AND CORRIDOR ARCHES, SAN JUAN.

mediate needs of the ministry, it was decided must still rightfully go to the Church. How many acres of the old gardens, orchards, vineyards, of the missions, could properly be claimed by the Church under this head, was of course a question; and it seems to have been decided on very different bases in different missions, as some received much more than others. But all the church buildings, priests' houses, and some acres of land, more or less, with each, were pronounced by this decision to have been "before the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo solemnly dedicated to the use of the Church, and therefore withdrawn from commerce"; "such an interest is protected by the provisions of the treaty, and must be held inviolate under our laws." Thus were returned at last, into the inalienable possession of the Catholic Church, all that were left of the old mission churches, and some fragments of the mission lands. Many of them are still in operation as curacies; others are in ruins; of some, not a trace is left—not even a stone.

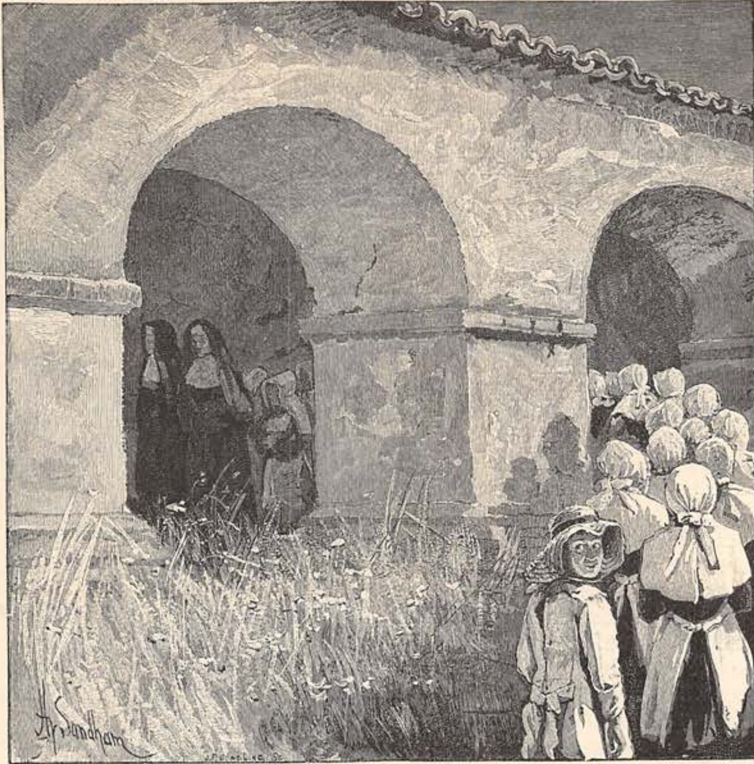
At San Diego, the walls of the old church are still standing, unroofed, and crumbling daily. It was used as a cavalry barracks during the war of 1846; and has been a sheepfold since. Opposite it is an olive orchard, of superb hoary trees still in bearing: a cactus wall twenty feet high, and a cluster of date palms, are all that remain of the friars' garden.

At San Juan Capistrano, the next mission to the north, some parts of the buildings are still habitable. Service is held regularly in one of the small chapels. The priest lives there, and ekes out his little income by renting some of the moldering rooms. The church is a splendid ruin. It was of stone, a hundred and fifty feet long by a hundred in width, with walls five feet thick, a dome eighty feet high, and a fine belfry of arches in which four bells rang. It was thrown down by an earthquake in 1812, on the day of the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. Morning mass was going on, and the church was thronged; thirty persons were killed and many more injured.

INDIAN WORK AT SAN JUAN.

OLD PADRE'S CHAIR AT SAN JUAN.

The little hamlet of San Juan Capistrano lies in harbor, as it were, looking out on its glimpse of sea, between two low spurs of broken and rolling hills, which in June are covered with shining yellow and blue, and green, iridescent as a peacock's neck. It is worth going across the continent to come into the village at sunset, of a June day. The peace, silence, and beauty of the spot are brooded over and dominated by the grand gray ruin, lifting the whole scene into an ineffable harmony. Wandering in room after room, court after court, through corridors with red-tiled roofs and hundreds of broad Roman arches, over fallen pillars, and through carved door-ways, whose untrodden thresholds have sunk out of sight in summer grasses, one asks himself if he be indeed in America. On the interior walls are still to be seen spaces of brilliant fresco-work, in Byzantine patterns of superb red, pale green, gray and blue; and the corridors are paved with tiles, large and square. It was



SAN JUAN BAUTISTA.

our good fortune to have with us, in San Juan Capistrano, a white-haired Mexican, who in his boyhood had spent a year in the mission. He remembered as if it were yesterday its bustling life of fifty years ago, when the arched corridor ran unbroken around the great court-yard, three hundred feet square, and was often filled with Indians, friars, officers, and gay Mexican ladies looking on at a bull-fight in the center. He remembered the splendid library, filled from ceiling to floor with books, extending one whole side of the square: in a corner, where had been the room in which he used to see sixty Indian women weaving at looms, we stood ankle-deep in furzy weeds and grass. He showed us the door-way, now closed up, which led into the friars' parlor. To this door, every Sunday, after mass, came the Indians, in long processions, to get their weekly gifts. Each one received something, a handkerchief, dress, trinket, or money. While their gifts were being distributed, a band of ten or twelve performers, all Indians, played lively airs on brass and stringed instruments. In a little baptistry, dusky with cobweb and mold, we found huddled a group of wooden statues of saints, which once stood in niches in the church: on their heads were faded and brittle wreaths, left from the last occasion on which they had done duty. One had lost an eye; another a hand. The gilding and covering of their robes were dimmed and defaced. But they had a dignity which nothing could destroy. The contours were singularly expressive and fine, and the rendering of the drapery was indeed wonderful — flowing robes, and gathered and lifted mantles, all carved in solid wood.

There are statues of this sort to be seen in several of the old mission churches. They were all carved by the Indians, many of whom showed great talent in that direction. There is also in the office of the justice or alcalde, as he is still called, of San Juan Capistrano, a carved chair of noticeably bold and graceful design made by Indian workmen. A few tatters of heavy crimson brocade hang on it still, relics of the time when it formed part of a gorgeous paraphernalia and service.

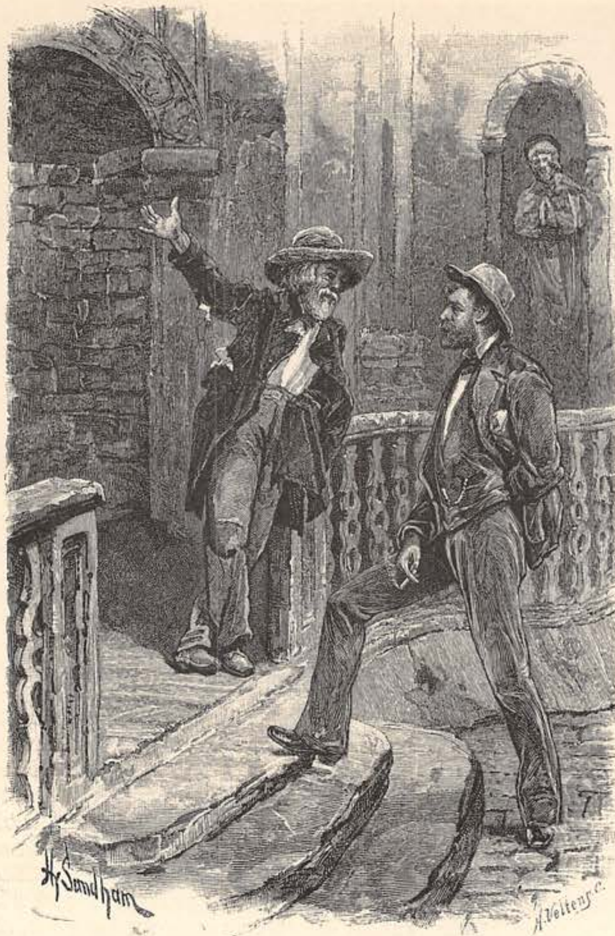
Even finer than the ruins of San Juan Capistrano are those of the church at San Luis Rey. It has a perfectly proportioned dome over the chancel, and beautiful groined arches on either hand and over the altar. Four broad pilasters on each side of the church are frescoed in a curious mixing of blues, light and dark, with reds and black, which have faded

AT SANTA BARBARA MISSION.

and blended into a delicious tone. A Byzantine pulpit hanging high on the wall, and three old wooden statues in niches, are the only decorations left. Piles of dirt and rubbish fill the space in front of the altar, and grass and weeds are growing in the corners; great flocks of wild doves live in the roof, and have made the whole place unclean and foul-aired. An old Mexican, eighty years old, a former servant of the mission, has the ruin in charge, and keeps the doors locked still, as if there were treasure to guard. The old man is called "alcalde" by the village people, and seems pleased to be so addressed. His face is like wrinkled parchment, and he walks bent into a parenthesis, but his eyes are bright and young. As he totters along, literally holding his rags together, discoursing warmly of the splendors he recollects, he seems indeed a ghost from the old times.

The most desolate ruin of all is that of the La Purisima mission. It is in the Lompoc valley, two days' easy journey north of Santa Barbara. Nothing is left there but one long, low adobe building, with a few arches of the corridor; the doors stand open, the roof is falling in: it has been so often used as a stable and sheep-fold, that even the grasses are killed around it. The painted pulpit hangs half falling on the wall, its stairs are gone, and its sounding-board is slanting awry. Inside the broken altar-rail is a pile of stones, earth, and rubbish, thrown up by seekers after buried treasures; in the farther corner another pile and hole, the home of a badger; mud-swallows' nests are thick on the cornice, and cobwebbed rags of the old canvas ceiling hang fluttering overhead. The only trace of the ancient cultivation is a pear-orchard a few rods off, which must have been a splendid sight in its day: it is at least two hundred yards square, with a double row of trees all around, so placed as to leave between them a walk fifty or sixty feet wide. Bits of broken aqueduct here and there, and a large, round stone tank overgrown by grass, showed where the life of the orchard used to flow in; it has been many years slowly dying of thirst. Many of the trees are gone, and those that remain stretch out gaunt and shriveled boughs, which, though still bearing fruit, look like arms tossing in vain reproach and entreaty; a few pinched little blossoms seemed to heighten rather than lessen their melancholy look.

At San Juan Bautista there lingers more of the atmosphere of the olden time than is to be found in any other place in California. The mission church is well preserved; its grounds are inclosed and cared for; in its garden are still blooming roses and vines, in the shelter of palms, and with the old stone sun-dial to tell time. In the sacristy are oak chests, full of gorgeous vestments of brocades, with silver and gold laces. On one of these robes is an interesting relic. A lost or worn-out silken tassel had been replaced by the patient Indian workers with one of fine-shredded rawhide; the shreds wound with silver wire, and twisted into tiny rosettes and loops, closely imitating



THE OLD ALCALDE, SAN LUIS REY.

the silver device. The church fronts south, on a little green-locust walled plaza—the sleepiest, sunniest, dreamiest place in the world. To the east the land falls off abruptly, so that the paling on that side of the plaza is outlined against the sky, and its little locked gate looks as if it would open into the heavens. The mission buildings used to surround this plaza; after the friars' day came rich men living there; and a charming inn is kept now in one of their old adobe houses. On the east side of the church is a succession of three terraces leading down to a valley. On the upper one is the old grave-yard, in which it is said there are sleeping four thousand Indians.

In 1825 there were spoken at this mission thirteen different Indian dialects.

Just behind the church is an orphan girls' school, kept by the Sisters of the Sacred Heart. At six o'clock every morning the bells of the church ring for mass as they used to ring when over a thousand Indians flocked at the summons. To-day, at the sound, there comes a procession of little girls and young maidens, the black-robed sisters walking before them with crossed hands and placid faces. One or two Mexican women, with shawls over their heads, steal across the faint paths of the plaza, and enter the church.

I shall always recollect the morning when I went, too. The silence of the plaza was in itself a memorial service, with locust blossoms swinging incense. It was barely dawn in the church. As the shrill yet sweet childish voices lifted up the strains of the Kyrie Eleison, I seemed to see the face of Father Junipero in the dim lighted chancel, and the benediction was as solemn as if he himself had spoken it. Why the little town of San Juan Bautista continues to exist is a marvel. It is shut out and cut off from everything; only two or three hundred souls are left in it; its streets are grass-grown; half its houses are empty. But

it has a charm of sun, valley, hill, and seaward off-look unsurpassed in all California. Lingering out a peaceful century there are many old men and women, whose memories are like magic glasses, reproducing the pictures of the past. One such we found—a Mexican woman eighty-five years old, portly, jolly, keen-tongued, keen-eyed; the widow of one of the soldiers of the old mission guard. She had had twelve children; she had never been ill a week in her life; she is now the village nurse, and almost doctor. Sixty years back she remembered. "The Indians used to be in San Juan Bautista like sheep," she said, "by the thousand and thousand." They were always good, and the padres were always kind. Fifty oxen were killed for food every eight days, and everybody had all he wanted to eat. There was much more water then than now, plenty of rain, and the streams always full. "I don't know whether you or we were bad, that it has been taken away by God," she said, with a quick glance, half humorous, half antagonistic.

The Santa Barbara Mission is still in the charge of Franciscans, the only one remaining in their possession. It is now called a college for apostolic missionary work, and there are living within its walls eight members of the order. One of them is very old—a friar of the ancient régime; his benevolent face is well known throughout the country, and there are in many a town and remote hamlet men and women who wait always for his coming before they will make confession. He is like St. Francis's first followers: the obligations of poverty and charity still hold to him, the literal fullness of the original bond. He gives away garment after garment, leaving himself without protection against cold, and the brothers are forced to lock up and hide from him all provisions, or he would leave the house bare of food. He often kneels from midnight to dawn on the stone floor of the church, praying and chanting psalms, and when a terrible epidemic of small-pox broke out some years ago, he labored day and night, nursing the worst victims of it, shriving them, and burying them with his own hands. He is past eighty and has not much longer to stay. He has outlived many things beside his own prime: the day of the sort of faith and work to which his spirit is attuned has passed by forever.

The mission buildings stand on high ground, three miles from the beach, west of the town and above it, looking to the sea. In the morning the sun's first rays flash full on its front, and at evening they linger late on its western wall. It is an inalienable benediction to the place. The longer one stays there the more he is aware of the influence on his soul, as well as of the importance in the landscape of the benign and stately edifice.

On the corridor of the inner court hangs a bell which is rung for the hours of the daily offices and secular duties. It is also struck whenever a friar dies, to announce that all is over. It is the duty of the brother who has watched the last breath of the dying one to go immediately and strike this bell. Its sad note has echoed many times through the corridors.

One of the brothers said, last year:

"The first time I rang that bell to announce a death, there were fifteen of us left. Now there are only eight."

The sentence itself fell on my ear like the note of a passing bell. It seems a not unfitting last word to this slight and fragmentary sketch of the labors of the Franciscan Order in California.

Still more fitting, however, are the words of a historian, who, living in California and thoroughly knowing its history from first to last, has borne the following eloquent testimony to the friars and their work:

> "The results of the mission scheme of Christianization and colonization were such as to justify the plans of the wise statesman who devised it and to gladden the hearts of the pious men who devoted their lives to its execution.
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> "At the end of sixty years, the missionaries of Upper California found themselves in the possession of twenty-one prosperous missions, planted on a line of about seven hundred miles, running from San Diego north to the latitude of Sonoma. More than thirty thousand Indian converts were lodged in the mission buildings, receiving religious culture, assisting at divine worship, and cheerfully performing their easy tasks. * * If we ask where are now the thirty thousand Christianized Indians who once enjoyed the beneficence and created the wealth of the twenty-one Catholic missions of California, and then contemplate the most wretched of all want of systems which has surrounded them under our own government, we shall not withhold our admiration from those good and devoted men who, with such wisdom, sagacity, and self-sacrifice, reared these wonderful institutions in the wilderness of California. They at least would have preserved these Indian races if they had been left to pursue unmolested their work of pious beneficence."—JOHN W. DWINELLE'S "Colonial History of San Francisco," pp. 44–87.

H. H.