Two years before the mast (1840) [exerpts]

by Richard Henry Dana, Jr

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Chapter 19: Sandwich Islanders

Here was a change in my life as complete as it had been sudden. In the twinkling of an eye, I was transformed from a sailor into a "beach-comber" and a hide-curer; yet the novelty and the comparative independence of the life were not unpleasant. Our hide-house was a large building, made of rough boards, and intended to hold forty thousand hides. In one corner of it, a small room was parted off, in which four berths were made, where we were to live, with mother earth for our floor. It contained a table, a small locker for pots, spoons, plates, etc., and a small hole cut to let in the light. Here we put our chests, threw our bedding into the berths, and took up our quarters. Over our head was another small room, in which Mr. Russell lived, who had charge of the hide-house; the same man who was for a time an officer of the Pilgrim. There he lived in solitary grandeur; eating and sleeping alone, (and these were his principal occupations,) and communing with his own dignity. The boy was to act as cook; while myself, a giant of a Frenchman named Nicholas, and four Sandwich Islanders, were to cure the hides. Sam, the Frenchman, and myself, lived together in the room, and the four Sandwich Islanders worked and ate with us, but generally slept at the oven. My new messmate, Nicholas, was the most immense man that I had ever seen in my life. He came on the coast in a vessel which was afterwards wrecked, and now let himself out to the different houses to cure hides. He was considerably over six feet, and of a frame so large that he might have been shown for a curiosity. But the most remarkable thing about him was his feet. They were so large that he could not find a pair of shoes in California to fit him, and was obliged to send to Oahu for a pair; and when he got them, he was compelled to wear them down at the heel. He told me once, himself, that he was wrecked in an American brig on the Goodwin Sands, and was sent up to London, to the charge of the American consul, without clothing to his back or shoes to his feet, and was obliged to go about London streets in his stocking feet three or four days, in the month of January, until the consul could have a pair of shoes made for him. His strength was in proportion to his size, and his ignorance to his strength-"strong as an ox, and ignorant as strong." He neither knew how to read nor write. He had been to sea from a boy, and had seen all kinds of service, and been in every kind of vessel: merchantmen, men-of-war, privateers, and slavers; and from what I could gather from his accounts of himself, and from what he once told me, in confidence, after we had become better acquainted, he had even been in worse business than slave-trading. He was once tried for his life in Charleston, South Carolina, and though acquitted, yet he was so frightened that he never would show himself in the United States again; and I could not persuade him that he could never be tried a second

time for the same offence. He said he had got safe off from the breakers, and was too good a sailor to risk his timbers again.

Though I knew what his life had been, yet I never had the slightest fear of him. We always got along very well together, and, though so much stronger and larger than I, he showed a respect for my education, and for what he had heard of my situation before coming to sea. "I'll be good friends with you," he used to say, "for by-and-by you'll come out here captain, and then you'll haze me well!" By holding well together, we kept the officer in good order, for he was evidently afraid of Nicholas, and never ordered us, except when employed upon the hides. My other companions, the Sandwich Islanders, deserve particular notice.

A considerable trade has been carried on for several years between California and the Sandwich Islands, and most of the vessels are manned with Islanders; who, as they, for the most part, sign no articles, leave whenever they choose, and let themselves out to cure hides at San Diego, and to supply the places of the men of the American vessels while on the coast. In this way, quite a colony of them had become settled at San Diego, as their headquarters. Some of these had recently gone off in the Ayacucho and Loriotte, and the Pilgrim had taken Mr. Mannini and three others, so that there were not more than twenty left. Of these, four were on pay at the Ayacucho's house, four more working with us, and the rest were living at the oven in a quiet way; for their money was nearly gone, and they must make it last until some other vessel came down to employ them.

During the four months that I lived here, I got well acquainted with all of them, and took the greatest pains to become familiar with their language, habits, and characters. Their language, I could only learn, orally, for they had not any books among them, though many of them had been taught to read and write by the missionaries at home. They spoke a little English, and by a sort of compromise, a mixed language was used on the beach, which could be understood by all. The long name of Sandwich Islanders is dropped, and they are called by the whites, all over the Pacific ocean, "Kanakas," from a word in their own language which they apply to themselves, and to all South Sea Islanders, in distinction from whites, whom they call "Haole." This name, "Kanaka," they answer to, both collectively and individually. Their proper names, in their own language, being difficult to pronounce and remember, they are called by any names which the captains or crews may choose to give them. Some are called after the vessel they are in; others by common names, as Jack, Tom, Bill; and some have fancy names, as Ban-yan, Fore-top, Rope-yarn, Pelican, etc., etc. Of the four who worked at our house one was named "Mr. Bingham," after the missionary at Oahu; another, Hope, after a vessel that he had been in; a third, Tom Davis, the name of his first captain; and the fourth, Pelican, from his fancied resemblance to that bird. Then there was Lagoda-Jack, California-Bill, etc., etc. But by whatever names they might be called, they were the most interesting, intelligent, and kindhearted people that I ever fell in with. I felt a positive attachment for almost all of them; and many of them I have, to this time, a feeling for, which would lead me to go a great way for the mere pleasure of seeing them, and which will always make me feel a strong interest in the mere name of a Sandwich Islander.

Tom Davis knew how to read, write, and cipher in common arithmetic; had been to the United States, and spoke English quite well. His education was as good as that of three-quarters of the Yankees in California, and his manners and principles a good deal better, and he was so quick of apprehension that he might have been taught navigation, and the elements of many of the sciences, with the most perfect ease. Old "Mr. Bingham" spoke very little English-almost none, and neither knew how to read nor write; but he was the besthearted old fellow in the world. He must have been over fifty years of age, and had two of his front teeth knocked out, which was done by his parents as a sign of grief at the death of Kamehameha, the great king of the Sandwich Islands. We used to tell him that he ate Captain Cook, and lost his teeth in that way. That was the only thing that ever made him angry. He would always be quite excited at that; and say-"Aole!" (no.) "Me no eat Captain Cook! Me pikinini-small-so high-no more! My father see Captain Cook! Me-no!" None of them liked to have anything said about Captain Cook, for the sailors all believe that he was eaten, and that, they cannot endure to be taunted with.-"New Zealand Kanaka eat white man;-Sandwich Island Kanaka,-no. Sandwich Island Kanaka ua like pu na haole-all 'e same a' you!"

Mr. Bingham was a sort of patriarch among them, and was always treated with great respect, though he had not the education and energy which gave Mr. Mannini his power over them. I have spent hours in talking with this old fellow about Kamehameha, the Charlemagne of the Sandwich Islands; his son and successor Riho Riho, who died in England, and was brought to Oahu in the frigate Blonde, Captain Lord Byron, and whose funeral he remembered perfectly; and also about the customs of his country in his boyhood, and the changes which had been made by the missionaries. He never would allow that human beings had been eaten there; and, indeed, it always seemed like an insult to tell so affectionate, intelligent, and civilized a class of men, that such barbarities had been practised in their own country within the recollection of many of them. Certainly, the history of no people on the globe can show anything like so rapid an advance. I would have trusted my life and my fortune in the hands of any one of these people; and certainly had I wished for a favor or act of sacrifice, I would have gone to them all, in turn, before I should have applied to one of my own countrymen on the coast, and should have expected to have seen it done, before my own countrymen had got half through counting the cost. Their costumes, and manner of treating one another, show a simple, primitive generosity, which is truly delightful; and which is often a reproach to our own people. Whatever one has, they all have. Money, food, clothes, they share with one another; even to the last piece of tobacco to put in their pipes. I once heard old Mr. Bingham say, with the highest indignation, a Yankee trader who was trying to persuade him to keep his money to himself-"No! We no all same a' you!-Suppose one got money, all got money. You;-suppose one got money-lock him up in chest.-No good!"-"Kanaka all 'e same a' one!" This principle they carry so far, that none of them will eat anything in the sight of others without offering it all round. I have seen one of them break a biscuit, which had been given him, into five parts, at a time when I knew he was on a very short allowance, as there was but little to eat on the beach.

My favorite among all of them, and one who was liked by both officers and men, and by whomever he had anything to do with, was Hope. He was an intelligent, kind-hearted

little fellow, and I never saw him angry, though I knew him for more than a year, and have seen him imposed upon by white people, and abused by insolent officers of vessels. He was always civil, and always ready, and never forgot a benefit. I once took care of him when he was in, getting medicines from the ship's chests, when no captain or officer would do anything for him, and he never forgot it. Every Kanaka has one particular friend, whom he considers himself bound to do everything for, and with whom he has a sort of contracts-an alliance offensive and defensive,-and for whom he will often make the greatest sacrifices. This friend they call aikane; and for such did Hope adopt me. I do not believe I could have wanted anything which he had, that he would not have given me. In return for this, I was always his friend among the Americans, and used to teach him letters and numbers; for he left home before he had learned how to read. He was very curious about Boston (as they call the United States); asking many questions about the houses, the people, etc., and always wished to have the pictures in books explained to him. They were all astonishingly quick in catching at explanations, and many things which I had thought it utterly impossible to make them understand, they often seized in an instant, and asked questions which showed that they knew enough to make them wish to go farther. The pictures of steamboats and railroad cars, in the columns of some newspapers which I had, gave me great difficulty to explain. The grading of the road, the rails, the construction of the carriages, they could easily understand, but the motion produced by steam was a little too refined for them. I attempted to show it to them once by an experiment upon the cook's coppers, but failed; probably as much from my own ignorance as from their want of apprehension; and, I have no doubt, left them with about as clear idea of the principle as I had myself. This difficulty, of course, existed in the same force with the steamboats and all I could do was to give them some account of the results, in the shape of speed; for, failing in the reason, I had to fall back upon the fact. In my account of the speed I was supported by Tom, who had been to Nantucket, and seen a little steamboat which ran over to New Bedford.

A map of the world, which I once showed them, kept their attention for hours; those who knew how to read pointing out the places and referring to me for the distances. I remember being much amused with a question which Hope asked me. Pointing to the large irregular place which is always left blank round the poles, to denote that it is undiscovered, he looked up and asked-"Pau?" (Done? ended?)

The system of naming the streets and numbering the houses, they easily understood, and the utility of it. They had a great desire to see America, but were afraid of doubling Cape Horn, for they suffer much in cold weather, and had heard dreadful accounts of the Cape, from those of their number who had been round it.

They smoke a great deal, though not much at a time; using pipes with large bowls, and very short stems, or no stems at all. These, they light, and putting them to their mouths, take a long draught, getting their mouths as full as they can hold, and their cheeks distended, and then let it slowly out through their mouths and nostrils. The pipe is then passed to others, who draw, in the same manner, one pipe-full serving for half a dozen. They never take short, continuous draughts, like Europeans, but one of these "Oahu puffs," as the sailors call them, serves for an hour or two, until some one else lights his

pipe, and it is passed round in the same manner. Each Kanaka on the beach had a pine, flint, steel, tinder, a hand of tobacco, and a jack-knife, which he always carried about with him.[note 1]

That which strikes a stranger most peculiarly is their style of singing. They run on, in a low, guttural, monotonous sort of chant, their lips and tongues seeming hardly to move, and the sounds modulated solely in the throat. There is very little tune to it, and the words, so far as I could learn, are extempore. They sing about persons and things which are around them, and adopt this method when they do not wish to be understood by any but themselves; and it is very effectual, for with the most careful attention I never could detect a word that I knew. I have often heard Mr. Mannini, who was the most noted improvisatore among them, sing for an hour together, when at work in the midst of Americans and Englishmen; and, by the occasional shouts and laughter of the Kanakas, who were at a distance, it was evident that he was singing about the different men that he was at work with. They have great powers of ridicule, and are excellent mimics; many of them discovering and imitating the peculiarities of our own people, before we had seen them ourselves.

These were the people with whom I was to spend a few months; and who, with the exception of the officer, Nicholas the Frenchman, and the boy, made the whole population of the beach. I ought, perhaps, to except the dogs, for they were an important part of our settlement. Some of the first vessels brought dogs out with them, who, for convenience, were left ashore, and there multiplied, until they came to be a great people. While I was on the beach, the average number was about forty, and probably an equal, or greater number are drowned, or killed in some other way, every year. They are very useful in guarding the beach, the Indians being afraid to come down at night; for it was impossible for any one to get within half a mile of the hide-houses without a general alarm. The father of the colony, old Sachem, so called from the ship in which he was brought out, died while I was there, full of years, and was honorably buried. Hogs, and a few chickens, were the rest of the animal tribe, and formed, like the dogs, a common company, though they were an known and marked, and usually fed at the houses to which they belonged.

I had been but a few hours on the beach, and the Pilgrim was hardly out of sight, when the cry of "Sail ho!" was raised, and a small hermaphrodite brig rounded the point, bore up into the harbor, and came to anchor. It was the Mexican brig Fazio, which we had left at San Pedro, and which had come down to land her tallow, try it all over, and make new bags, and then take it in, and leave the coast. They moored ship, erected their try-works on shore, put up a small tent, in which they all lived, and commenced operations. They made an addition to our society, and we spent many evenings in their tent, where, amid the Babel of English, Spanish, French, Indian, and Kanaka, we found some words that we could understand in common.

The morning after my landing, I began the duties of hide-curing. In order to understand these, it will be necessary to give the whole history of a hide, from the time it is taken from a bullock until it is put on board the vessel to be carried to Boston. When the hide is

taken from the bullock, holes are cut round it, near the edge, by which it is staked out to dry. In this manner it dries without shrinking. After they are thus dried in the sun, they are received by the vessels, and brought down to the depot at San Diego. The vessels land them, and leave them in large piles near the houses.

Then begins the hide-curer's duty. The first thing is to put them in soak. This is done by carrying them down at low tide, and making them fast, in small piles, by ropes, and letting the tide come up and cover them. Every day we put in soak twenty-five for each man, which, with us, made an hundred and fifty. There they lie forty-eight hours, when they are taken out, and rolled up, in wheelbarrows, and thrown into the vats. These vats contain brine, made very strong; being sea-water, with great quantities of salt thrown in. This pickles the hides, and in this they lie forty-eight hours; the use of the sea-water, into which they are first put, being merely to soften and clean them. From these vats, they are taken, and lie on a platform twenty-four hours, and then are spread upon the ground, and carefully stretched and staked out, so that they may dry smooth. After they were staked, and while yet wet and soft, we used to go upon them with our knives, and carefully cut off all the bad parts:-the pieces of meat and fat, which would corrupt and infect the whole if stowed away in a vessel for many months, the large flippers, the ears, and all other parts which would prevent close stowage. This was the most difficult part of our duty: as it required much skill to take everything necessary off and not to cut or injure the hide. It was also a long process, as six of us had to clean an hundred and fifty, most of which required a great deal to be done to them, as the Spaniards are very careless in skinning their cattle. Then, too, as we cleaned them while they were staked out, we were obliged to kneel down upon them, which always gives beginners the back-ache. The first day, I was so slow and awkward that I cleaned only eight; at the end of a few days I doubled my number; and in a fortnight or three weeks, could keep up with the others, and clean my proportion-twenty-five.

This cleaning must be got through with before noon; for by that time they get too dry. After the sun has been upon them a few hours, they are carefully gone over with scrapers, to get off all the grease which the sun brings out. This being done, the stakes are pulled up, and the hides carefully doubled, with the hair side out, and left to dry. About the middle of the afternoon they are turned upon the other side, and at sundown piled up and covered over. The next day they are spread out and opened again, and at night, if fully dry, are thrown upon a long, horizontal pole, five at a time, and beat with flails. This takes all the dust from them. Then, being salted, scraped, cleaned, dried, and beaten, they are stowed away in the house. Here ends their history, except that they are taken out again when the vessel is ready to go home, beaten, stowed away on board, carried to Boston, tanned, made into shoes and other articles for which leather is used; and many of them, very probably, in the end, brought back again to California the shape of shoes, and worn out in pursuit of other bullocks, or in the curing of other hides.

By putting an hundred and fifty in soak every day, we had the same number at each stage of curing, on each day; so that we had, everyday, the same work to do upon the same number: an hundred and fifty to put in soak; an hundred and fifty to wash out and put in the vat; the same number to haul from the vat and put on the platform to drain; the

same number to spread and stake out and clean; and the same number to beat and stow away in the house. I ought to except Sunday; for, by a prescription which no captain or agent has yet ventured to break in upon, Sunday has been a day of leisure on the beach for years. On Saturday night, the hides, in every stage of progress, are carefully covered up, and not uncovered until Monday morning. On Sundays we had absolutely no work to do, unless it was to kill a bullock, which was sent down for our use about once a week, and sometimes came on Sunday. Another good arrangement was, that we had just so much work to do, and when that was through, the time was our own. Knowing this, we worked hard, and needed no driving. We "turned out" every morning at the first signs of daylight, and allowing a short time, about eight o'clock, for breakfast, generally got through our labor between one and two o'clock, when we dined, and had the rest of the time to ourselves; until just before sundown, when we beat the dry hides and put them in the house, and covered over all the others. By this means we had about three hours to ourselves every afternoon; and at sundown we had our supper, and our work was done for the day. There was no watch to stand, and no topsails to reef. The evenings we generally spent at one another's houses, and I often went up and spent an hour or so at the oven; which was called the "Kanaka Hotel," and the "Oahu Coffee-house." Immediately after dinner we usually took a short siesta to make up for our early rising, and spent the rest of the afternoon according to our own fancies. I generally read, wrote, and made or mended clothes; for necessity, the mother of invention, had taught me these two latter arts. The Kanakas went up to the oven, and spent the time in sleeping, talking, and smoking; and my messmate, Nicholas, who neither knew how to read or write, passed away the time by a long siesta, two or three smokes with his pipe, and a paseo to the other houses. This leisure time is never interfered with, for the captains know that the men earn it by working hard and fast, and that if they interfered with it, the men could easily make their twenty-five hides apiece last through the day. We were pretty independent, too, for the master of the house-"capitan de la casa"-had nothing to say to us, except when we were at work on the hides, and although we could not go up to the town without his permission, this was seldom or never refused.

The great weight of the wet hides, which we were obliged to roll about in wheelbarrows; the continual stooping upon those which were pegged out to be cleaned; and the smell of the vats, into which we were often obliged to get, knee-deep, to press down the hides; all made the work disagreeable and fatiguing;-but we soon got hardened to it, and the comparative independence of our life reconciled us to it; for there was nobody to haze us and find fault; and when we got through, we had only to wash and change our clothes, and our time was our own. There was, however, one exception to the time's being our own; which was, that on two afternoons of every week we were obliged to go off and get wood, for the cook to use in the galley. Wood is very scarce in the vicinity of San Diego; there being no trees of any size, for miles. In the town, the inhabitants burn the small wood which grows in thickets, and for which they send out Indians, in large numbers, every few days. Fortunately, the climate is so fine that they had no need of a fire in their houses, and only use it for cooking. With us the getting of wood was a great trouble; for all that in the vicinity of the houses had been cut down, and we were obliged to go off a mile or two, and to carry it some distance on our backs, as we could not get the hand-cart up the hills and over the uneven places. Two afternoons in the

week, generally Monday and Thursday, as soon as we had got through dinner, we started off for the bush, each of us furnished with a hatchet and a long piece of rope, and dragging the hand-cart behind us, and followed by the whole colony of dogs, who were always ready for the bush, and were half mad whenever they saw our preparations. We went with the hand-cart as far as we could conveniently drag it, and leaving it in an open, conspicuous place, separated ourselves; each taking his own course, and looking about for some good place to begin upon. Frequently, we had to go nearly a mile from the hand-cart before we could find any fit place. Having lighted upon a good thicket, the next thing was to clear away the under-brush, and have fair play at the trees. These trees are seldom more than five or six feet high, and the highest that I ever saw in these expeditions could not have been more than twelve; so that, lopping off the branches and clearing away the underwood, we had a good deal of cutting to do for a very little wood. Having cut enough for a "back-load," the next thing was to make it well fast with the rope, and heaving the bundle upon our backs, and taking the hatchet in hand, to walk off, up hill and down dale, to the handcart. Two good back-loads apiece filled the hand-cart; and that was each one's proportion. When each had brought down his second load, we filled the hand-cart, and took our way again slowly back, and unloading, covering the hides for the night, and getting our supper, finished the day's work.

These wooding excursions had always a mixture of something rather pleasant in them. Roaming about in the woods with hatchet in hand, like a backwoodsman, followed by a troop of dogs; starting up of birds, snakes, hares and foxes, and examining the various kinds of trees, flowers, and birds' nests, was at least, a change from the monotonous drag and pull on shipboard. Frequently, too, we had some amusement and adventure. The coati, of which I have before spoken,-a sort of mixture of the fox and wolf breeds,-fierce little animals, with bushy tails and large heads, and a quick, sharp bark, abound here, as in all other parts of California. These, the dogs were very watchful for, and whenever they saw them, started off in full run after them. We had many fine chases; yet, although our dogs ran finely, the rascals generally escaped. They are a match for the dog,-one to one,-but as the dogs generally went in squads, there was seldom a fair fight. A smaller dog, belonging to us, once attacked a coati, single, and got a good deal worsted, and might perhaps have been killed had we not come to his assistance. We had, however, one dog which gave them a good deal of trouble, and many hard runs. He was a fine, tall fellow, and united strength and agility better than any dog that I have ever seen. He was born at the Islands, his father being an English mastiff, and his mother a greyhound. He had the high head, long legs, narrow body, and springing gait of the latter, and the heavy jaw, thick jowls, and strong fore-quarters of the mastiff. When he was brought to San Diego, an English sailor said that he looked, about the face precisely like the Duke of Wellington, whom he had once seen at the Tower; and, indeed, there was something about him which resembled the portraits of the Duke. From this time he was christened "Welly," and became the favorite and bully of the beach. He always led the dogs by several yards in the chase, and had killed two coati at different times in single combats. We often had fine sport with these fellows. A quick, sharp bark from a coati, and in an instant every dog was at the height of his speed. A few moments made up for an unfair start, and gave each dog his relative place. Welly, at the head, seemed almost to skim over the bushes; and after him came Fanny, Felicians, Childers, and the other fleet ones,-

the spaniels and terriers; and then behind, followed the heavy corps-bulldogs, etc., for we had every breed. Pursuit by us was in vain, and in about half an hour a few of them would come panting and straggling back.

Beside the coati, the dogs sometimes made prizes of rabbits and hares, which are very plentiful here, and great numbers of which we often shot for our dinners. There was another animal that I was not so much disposed to find amusement from, and that was the rattlesnake. These are very abundant here, especially during the spring of the year. The latter part of the time that I was on shore, I did not meet with so many, but for the first two months we seldom went into "the bush" without one of our number starting some of them. The first that I ever saw, I remember perfectly well. I had left my companions, and was beginning to clear away a fine clump of trees, when just in the midst of the thicket, not more than eight yards from me, one of these fellows set up his hiss. It is a sharp, continuous sound, and resembles very much the letting off of the steam from the small pipe of a steamboat, except that it is on a smaller scale. I knew, by the sound of an axe, that one of my companions was near, and called out to him, to let him know what I had fallen upon. He took it very lightly, and as he seemed inclined to laugh at me for being afraid, I determined to keep my place. I knew that so long as I could hear the rattle, I was safe, for these snakes never make a noise when they are in motion. Accordingly, I kept at my work, and the noise which I made with cutting and breaking the trees kept him in alarm; so that I had the rattle to show me his whereabouts. Once or twice the noise stopped for a short time, which gave me a little uneasiness, and retreating a few steps. I threw something into the bush, at which he would set his rattle agoing; and finding that he had not moved from his first place, I was easy again. In this way I continued at my work until I had cut a full load, never suffering him to be quiet for a moment. Having cut my load, I strapped it together, and got everything ready for starting. I felt that I could now call the others without the imputation of being afraid; and went in search of them. In a few minutes we were all collected, and began an attack upon the bush. The big Frenchman, who was the one that I had called to at first, I found as little inclined to approach the snake as I had been. The dogs, too, seemed afraid of the rattle, and kept up a barking at a safe distance; but the Kanakas showed no fear, and getting long sticks, went into the bush, and keeping a bright look-out, stood within a few feet of him. One or two blows struck near him, and a few stones thrown, started him, and we lost his track, and had the pleasant consciousness that he might be directly under our feet. By throwing stones and chips in different directions, we made him spring his rattle again, and began another attack. This time we drove him into the clear ground, and saw him gliding off, with head and tail erect, when a stone, well aimed, knocked him over the bank, down a declivity of fifteen or twenty feet, and stretched him at his length. Having made sure of him, by a few more stones, we went down, and one of the Kanakas cut off his rattle. These rattles vary in number it is said, according to the age of the snake; though the Indians think they indicate the number of creatures they have killed. We always preserved them as trophies, and at the end of the summer had quite a number. None of our people were ever bitten by them, but one of our dogs died of a bite, and another was supposed to have been bitten, but recovered. We had no remedy for the bite, though it was said that the Indians of the country had, and the Kanakas professed to have an herb which would cure it, but it was fortunately never brought to the test.

Hares and rabbits, as I said before, were abundant, and, during the winter months, the waters are covered with wild ducks and geese. Crows, too, were very numerous, and frequently alighted in great numbers upon our hides, picking at the pieces of dried meat and fat. Bears and wolves are numerous in the upper parts, and in the interior, (and, indeed, a man was killed by a bear within a few miles of San Pedro, while we were there,) but there were none in our immediate neighborhood. The only other animals were horses. Over a dozen of these were owned by different people on the beach, and were allowed to run loose among the hills, with a long lasso attached to them, and pick up feed wherever they could find it. We were sure of seeing them once a day, for there was no water among the hills, and they were obliged to come down to the well which had been dug upon the beach. These horses were bought at, from two, to six and eight dollars apiece, and were held very much as common property. We generally kept one fast to one of the houses every day, so that we could mount him and catch any of the others. Some of them were really fine animals, and gave us many good runs up to the Presidio and over the country.

[note 1] Matches had not come into use then. I think there were none on board any vessels on the coast. We used the tinder-box in our forecastle.

Chapter 20: The New-Comers

After we had been a few weeks on shore, and had begun to feel broken into the regularity of our life, its monotony was interrupted by the arrival of two vessels from the windward. We were sitting at dinner in our little room, when we heard the cry of "Sail ho!" This, we had learned, did not always signify a vessel but was raised whenever a woman was seen coming down from the town; or a squaw, or an ox-cart, or anything unusual, hove in sight upon the road; so we took no notice of it. But it soon became so loud and general from all parts of the beach, that we were led to go to the door; and there, sure enough, were two sails coming round the point, and leaning over from the strong north-west wind, which blows down the coast every afternoon. The headmost was a ship, and the other, a brig. Everybody was alive on the beach, and all manner of conjectures were abroad. Some said it was the Pilgrim, with the Boston ship, which we were expecting; but we soon saw that the brig was not the Pilgrim, and the ship with her stump top-gallant masts and rusty sides, could not be a dandy Boston Indiaman. As they drew nearer, we soon discovered the high poop and top-gallant forecastle, and other marks of the Italian ship Rosa, and the brig proved to be the Catalina, which we saw at Santa Barbara, just arrived from Valparaiso. They came to anchor, moored ship, and commenced discharging hides and tallow. The Rosa had purchased the house occupied by the Lagoda, and the Catalina took the other spare one between ours and the Ayacucho's, so that, now, each one was occupied, and the beach, for several days, was all alive. The Catalina had several Kanakas on board, who were immediately besieged by the others, and carried up to the oven, where they had a long pow-wow, and a smoke. Two Frenchmen, who belonged to the Rosa's crew, came in, every evening, to see Nicholas; and from them we learned that the Pilgrim was at San Pedro, and was the only other

vessel now on the coast. Several of the Italians slept on shore at their hide-house; and there, and at the tent in which the Fazio's crew lived, we had some very good singing almost every evening. The Italians sang a variety of songs-barcarollas, provincial airs, etc.; in several of which I recognized parts of our favorite operas and sentimental songs. They often joined in a song, taking all the different parts; which produced a fine effect, as many of them had good voices, and all seemed to sing with spirit and feeling. One young man, in particular, had a falsetto as dear as a clarionet.

The greater part of the crews of the vessel's came ashore every evening, and we passed the time in going about from one house to another, and listening to all manner of languages. The Spanish was the common ground upon which we all met; for every one knew more or less of that. We had now, out of forty or fifty, representatives from almost every nation under the sun: two Englishmen, three Yankees, two Scotchmen, two Welshmen, one Irishman, three Frenchmen (two of whom were Normans, and the third from Gascony,) one Dutchman, one Austrian, two or three Spaniards, (from old Spain,) half a dozen Spanish-Americans and half-breeds, two native Indians from Chili and the Island of Chiloe, one Negro, one Mulatto, about twenty Italians, from all parts of Italy, as many more Sandwich Islanders, one Otaheitan, and one Kanaka from the Marquesas Islands.

The night before the vessels were ready to sail, all the Europeans united and had an entertainment at the Rosa's hide-house, and we had songs of every nation and tongue. A German gave us "Och! mein lieber Augustin!" the three Frenchmen roared through the Marseilles Hymn; the English and Scotchmen gave us "Rule Britannia," and "Who'll be King but Charlie?" the Italians and Spaniards screamed through some national affairs, for which I was none the wiser; and we three Yankees made an attempt at the "Star-spangled Banner." After these national tributes had been paid, the Austrian gave us a very pretty little love-song, and the Frenchmen sang a spirited thing called "Sentinelle! O prenez garde a vous!" and then followed the melange which might have been expected. When I left them, the aguardiente and annisou was pretty well in their heads, and they were all singing and talking at once, and their peculiar national oaths were getting as plenty as pronouns.

The next day, the two vessels got under weigh for the windward, and left us in quiet possession of the beach. Our numbers were somewhat enlarged by the opening of the new houses, and the society of the beach a little changed. In charge of the Catalina's house, was an old Scotchman, who, like most of his countrymen, had a pretty good education, and, like many of them, was rather pragmatical, manical, and had a ludicrously solemn conceit. He employed his time in taking care of his pigs, chickens, turkeys, dogs, etc., and in smoking his long pipe. Everything was as neat as a pin in the house, and he was as regular in his hours as a chronometer, but as he kept very much by himself, was not a great addition to our society. He hardly spent a cent all the time he was on the beach, and the others said he was no shipmate. He had been a petty officer on board the British frigate Dublin, Capt. Lord James Townshend, and had great ideas of his own importance. The man in charge of the Rosa's house was an Austrian by birth, but spoke, read, and wrote four languages with ease and correctness. German was his native tongue,

but being born near the borders of Italy, and having sailed out of Genoa, the Italian was almost as familiar to him as his own language. He was six years on board of an English man-of-war, where he learned to speak our language with ease, and also to read and write it. He had been several years in Spanish vessels, and had acquired that language so well, that he could read any books in it. He was between forty and fifty years of age, and was a singular mixture of the man-of-war's-man and Puritan. He talked a great deal about propriety and steadiness, and gave good advice to the youngsters and Kanakas, but seldom went up to the town, without coming down "three sheets in the wind." One holyday, he and old Robert (the Scotchman from the Catalina) went up to the town, and got so cozy, talking over old stories and giving one another good advice, that they came down double-backed, on a horse, and both rolled off into the sand as soon as the horse stopped. This put an end to their pretensions, and they never heard the last of it from the rest of the men. On the night of the entertainment at the Rosa's house, I saw old Schmidt, (that was the Austrian's name) standing up by a hogshead, holding on by both hands, and calling out to himself-"Hold on, Schmidt! hold on, my good fellow, or you'll be on your back!" Still, he was an intelligent, good-natured old fellow, and had a chest-full of books, which he willingly lent me to read. In the same house with him was a Frenchman and an Englishman; the latter a regular-built "man-of-war Jack;" a thorough seaman; a hearty, generous fellow; and, at the same time, a drunken, dissolute dog. He made it a point to get drunk once a fortnight, (when he always managed to sleep on the road, and have his money stolen from him,) and to battle the Frenchman once a week. These, with a Chilian, and a half a dozen Kanakas, formed the addition to our company.

In about six weeks from the time when the Pilgrim sailed, we had got all the hides which she left us cured and stowed away; and having cleared up the ground, and emptied the vats, and set everything in order, had nothing more to do until she should come down again, but to supply ourselves with wood. Instead of going twice a week for this purpose, we determined to give one whole week to getting wood, and then we should have enough to last us half through the summer. Accordingly, we started off every morning, after an early breakfast, with our hatchets in hand, and cut wood until the sun was over the point,-which was our only mark of time, as there was not a watch on the beach-and then came back to dinner, and after dinner, started off again with our hand-cart and ropes, and carted and "backed" it down, until sunset. This, we kept up for a week, until we had collected several cords,-enough to last us for six or eight weeks-when we "knocked off" altogether, much to my joy; for, though I liked straying in the woods, and cutting, very well, yet the backing the wood for so great a distance, over an uneven country, was, without exception, the hardest work I had ever done. I usually had to kneel down and contrive to heave the load, which was well strapped together, upon my back, and then rise up and start off with it up the hills and down the vales, sometimes through thickets,-the rough points sticking into the skin, and tearing the clothes, so that, at the end of the week, I had hardly a whole shirt to my back.

We were now through all our work, and had nothing more to do until the Pilgrim should come down again. We had nearly got through our provisions too, as well as our work; for our officer had been very wasteful of them, and the tea, flour, sugar, and molasses, were all gone. We suspected him of sending them up to the town; and he

always treated the squaws with molasses, when they came down to the beach. Finding wheat-coffee and dry bread rather poor living, we dubbed together, and I went up to the town on horseback with a great salt-bag behind the saddle, and a few reals in my pocket, and brought back the bag fun of onions, pears, beans, water-melons, and other fruits; for the young woman who tended the garden, finding that I belonged to the American ship, and that we were short of provisions, put in a double portion. With these we lived like fighting-cocks for a week or two, and had, besides, what the sailors call "a blow-out on sleep;" not turning out in the morning until breakfast was ready. I employed several days in overhauling my chest, and mending up all my old clothes, until I had got everything in order-patch upon patch, like a sand-barge's mainsail. Then I took hold of Bowditch's Navigator, which I had always with me. I had been through the greater part of it, and now went carefully through it, from beginning to end working out most of the examples. That done, and there being no signs of the Pilgrim, I made a descent upon old Schmidt, and borrowed and read all the books there were upon the beach. Such a dearth was there of these latter articles, that anything, even a little child's story-book, or the half of a shipping calendar, appeared like a treasure. I actually read a jest-book through, from beginning to end, in one day, as I should a novel, and enjoyed it very much. At last, when I thought that there were no more to be got, I found, at the bottom of old Schmidt's chest, "Mandeville, a Romance, by Godwin, in five volumes." This I had never read, but Godwin's name was enough, and after the wretched trash I had devoured, anything bearing the name of a distinguished intellectual man, was a prize indeed. I bore it off, and for two days I was up early and late, reading with all my might, and actually drinking in delight. It is no extravagance to say that it was like a spring in a desert land.

From the sublime to the ridiculous-so with me, from Mandeville to hide-curing, was but a step; for

Wednesday, July 18th, brought us the brig Pilgrim from the windward. As she came in, we found that she was a good deal altered in her appearance. Her short top-gallant masts were up; her bowlines all unrove (except to the courses); the quarter boom-irons off her lower yards; her jack-cross-trees sent down; several blocks got rid of; running-rigging rove in new places; and numberless other changes of the same character. Then, too, there was a new voice giving orders, and a new face on the quarter-deck,-a short, dark complexioned man, in a green jacket and a high leather cap. These changes, of course, set the whole beach on the qui-vive, and we were all waiting for the boat to come ashore, that we might have things explained. At length, after the sails were furied and the anchor carried out the boat pulled ashore, and the news soon flew that the expected ship had arrived at Santa Barbara, and that Captain T -- -had taken command of her, and her captain, Faucon, had taken the Pilgrim, and was the green-jacketed man on the quarterdeck. The boat put directly off again, without giving us time to ask any more questions, and we were obliged to wait till night, when we took a little skiff, that lay on the beach, and paddled off. When I stepped aboard, the second mate called me aft, and gave me a large bundle, directed to me, and marked "Ship Alert." This was what I had longed for, yet I refrained from opening it until I went ashore. Diving down into the forecastle, I found the same old crew, and was really glad to see them again. Numerous inquiries passed as to the new ship, the latest news from Boston, etc., etc. S -- -had

received letters from home, and nothing remarkable had happened. The Alert was agreed on all hands to be a fine ship, and a large one: "Larger than the Rosa"-"Big enough to carry off all the hides in California"-"Rail as high as a man's head"-"A crack ship"-"A regular dandy," etc., ect. Captain T -- -took command of her, and she went directly up to Monterey; from thence she was to go to San Francisco, and probably would not be in San Diego under two or three months. Some of the Pilgrim's crew found old ship-mates aboard of her, and spent an hour or two in her forecastle, the evening before she sailed. They said her decks were as white as snow-holystoned every morining, like a man-of-war's; everything on board "shipshape and Bristol fashion;" a fine crew, three mates, a sailmaker and carpenter, and all complete. "They've got a man for mate of that ship, and not a bloody sheep about decks!"-"A mate that knows his duty, and makes everybody do theirs, and won't be imposed upon either by captain or crew." After collecting all the information we could get on this point, we asked something about their new captain. He had hardly been on board long enough for them to know much about him, but he had taken hold strong, as soon as he took command;-sending down the top-gallant masts, and unreeving half the rigging, the very first day.

Having got all the news we could, we pulled ashore; and as soon as we reached the house, I, as might be supposed, proceeded directly to opening my bundle, and found a reasonable supply of duck, flannel shirts, shoes, etc., and, what was still more valuable, a packet of eleven letters. These I sat up nearly all the night to read, and put them carefully away, to be read and re-read again and again at my leisure. Then came a half a dozen newspapers, the last of which gave notice of Thanksgiving, and of the clearance of "ship Alert, Edward H. Faucon, master, for Callao and California, by Bryant, Sturgis & Co." No one has ever been on distant voyages, and after a long absence received a newspaper from home, who cannot understand the delight that they give one. I read every part of them-the houses to let; things lost or stolen; auction sales, and all. Nothing carries you so entirely to a place, and makes you feel so perfectly at home, as a newspaper. The very name of "Boston Daily Advertiser" sounded hospitably upon the ear."

The Pilgrim discharged her hides, which set us at work again, and in a few days we were in the old routine of dry hides-wet hides-cleaning-beating, etc. Captain Faucon came quietly up to me, as I was at work, with my knife, cutting the meat from a dirty hide, asked me how I liked California, and repeated-"Tityre, tu patulae recubans sub tegmine fagi." Very apropos, thought I, and, at the same time, serves to show that you understand Latin. However, a kind word from a captain is a thing not to be slighted; so I answered him civilly, and made the most of it.

Saturday, July 11th. The Pilgrim set sail for the windward, and left us to go on in our old way. Having laid in such a supply of wood, and the days being now long, and invariably pleasant, we had a good deal of time to ourselves. All the duck I received from home, I soon made up into trowsers and frocks, and displayed, every Sunday, a complete suit of my own make, from head to foot, having formed the remnants of the duck into a cap. Reading, mending, sleeping, with occasional excursions into the bush, with the dogs, in search of coati, hares, and rabbits, or to encounter a rattlesnake, and now and then a visit to the Presidio, filled up our spare time after hide-curing was over for the day.

Another amusement, which we sometimes indulged in, was "burning the water" for craw-fish. For this purpose, we procured a pair of grains, with a long staff like a harpoon, and making torches with tarred rope twisted round a long pine stick, took the only boat on the beach, a small skiff, and with a torch-bearer in the bow, a steersman in the stern, and one man on each side with the grains, went off, on dark nights, to burn the water. This is fine sport. Keeping within a few rods of the shore, where the water is not more than three or four feet deep, with a clear sandy bottom, the torches light everything up so that one could almost have seen a pin among the grains of sand. The craw-fish are an easy prey, and we used soon to get a load of them. The other fish were more difficult to catch, yet we frequently speared a number of them, of various kinds and sizes. The Pilgrim brought us down a supply of fish-hooks, which we had never had before, on the beach, and for several days we went down to the Point, and caught a quantity of cod and mackerel. On one of these expeditions, we saw a battle between two Sandwich Islanders and a shark. "Johnny" had been playing about our boat for some time, driving away the fish, and showing his teeth at our bait, when we missed him, and in a few moments heard a great shouting between two Kanakas who were fishing on the rock opposite to us: "E hana hana make i ka ia nui!" "E pii mai Aikane!" etc., etc.; and saw them pulling away on a stout line, and "Johnny Shark" floundering at the other end. The line soon broke; but the Kanakas would not let him off so easily, and sprang directly into the water after him. Now came the tug of war. Before we could get into deep water, one of them seized him by the tail, and ran up with him upon the beach; but Johnny twisted round, turning his head under his body, and, showing his teeth in the vicinity of the Kanaka's hand, made him let go and spring out of the way. The shark now turned tail and made the best of his way, by flapping and floundering, toward deep water; but here again, before he was fairly off, the other Kanaka seized him by the tail, and made a spring towards the beach, his companion at the same time paying away upon him with stones and a large stick. As soon, however, as the shark could turn, he was obliged to let go his hold; but the instant he made toward deep water, they were both behind him, watching their chance to seize him. In this way the battle went on for some time, the shark, in a rage, splashing and twisting about, and the Kanakas, in high excitement, yelling at the top of their voices; but the shark at last got off, carrying away a hook and line, and not a few severe bruises.

Chapter 21: California and its Inhabitants

We kept up a constant connection with the Presidio, and by the close of the summer I had added much to my made vocabulary, besides having made the acquaintance of nearly everybody in the place, and acquired some knowledge of the character and habits of the people, as well as of the institutions under which they live.

California was first discovered in 1536, by Cortes and was subsequently visited by numerous other adventurers as well as commissioned voyagers of the Spanish crown. It was found to be inhabited by numerous tribes of Indians, and to be in many parts extremely fertile; to which, of course, was added rumors of gold mines, pearl fishery, etc. No sooner was the importance of the country known, than the Jesuits obtained leave to

establish themselves in it, to Christianize and enlighten the Indians. They established missions in various parts of the country toward the close of the seventeenth century, and collected the natives about them, baptizing them into the church, and teaching them the arts of civilized life. To protect the Jesuits in their missions, and at the same time to support the power of the crown over the civilized Indians, two forts were erected and garrisoned, one at San Diego, and the other at Monterey. These were called Presidios, and divided the command of the whole country between them. Presidios have since been established at Santa Barbara and San Francisco; thus dividing the country into four large districts, each with its presidio, and governed by the commandant. The soldiers, for the most part, married civilized Indians; and thus, in the vicinity of each presidio, sprung up, gradually, small towns. In the course of time, vessels began to come into the ports to trade with the missions, and received hides in return; and thus began the great trade of California. Nearly all the cattle in the country belonged to the missions, and they employed their Indians, who became, in fact, their slaves, in tending their vast herds. In the year 1793, when Vancouver visited San Diego, the mission had obtained great wealth and power, and are accused of having depreciated the country with the sovereign, that they might be allowed to retain their possessions. On the expulsion of the Jesuits from the Spanish dominions, the missions passed into the hands of the Franciscans, though without any essential change in their management. Ever since the independence of Mexico, the missions have been going down; until, at last, a law was passed, stripping them of all their possessions, and confining the priests to their spiritual duties; and at the same time declaring all the Indians free and independent Rancheros. The change in the condition of the Indians was, as may be supposed, only nominal: they are virtually slaves, as much as they ever were. But in the missions, the change was complete. The priests have now no power, except in their religious character, and the great possessions of the missions are given over to be preyed upon by the harpies of the civil power, who are sent there in the capacity of administradores, to settle up the concerns; and who usually end, in a few years, by making themselves fortunes, and leaving their stewardships worse than they found them. The dynasty of the priests was much more acceptable to the people of the country, and indeed, to every one concerned with the country, by trade or otherwise, than that of the administradores. The priests were attached perpetually to one mission, and felt the necessity of keeping up its credit. Accordingly, their debts were regularly paid, and the people were, in the main, well treated, and attached to those who had spent their whole lives among them. But the administradores are strangers sent from Mexico, having no interest in the country; not identified in any way with their charge, and, for the most part, men of desperate fortunes-broken down politicians and soldiers-whose only object is to retrieve their condition in as short a time as possible. The change had been made but a few years before our arrival upon the coast, yet, in that short time, the trade was much diminished, credit impaired, and the venerable missions going rapidly to decay. The external arrangements remain the same. There are four presidios, having under their protection the various missions, and pueblos, which are towns formed by the civil power, and containing no mission or presidio. The most northerly presidio is San Francisco; the next Monterey; the next Santa Barbara, including the mission of the same, St. Louis Obispo, and St. Buenaventura, which is the finest mission in the whole country, having very fertile soil and rich vineyards. The last, and most southerly, is San Diego, including the mission of the same, San Juan Capestrano, the Pueblo de los Angelos, the largest

town in California, with the neighboring mission of San Gabriel. The priests in spiritual matters are subject to the Archbishop of Mexico, and in temporal matters to the governor-general, who is the great civil and military head of the country.

The government of the country is an arbitrary democracy; having no common law, and no judiciary. Their only laws are made and unmade at the caprice of the legislature, and are as variable as the legislature itself. They pass through the form of sending representatives to the congress at Mexico, but as it takes several months to go and return, and there is very little communication between the capital and this distant province, a member usually stays there, as permanent member, knowing very well that there will be revolutions at home before he can write and receive an answer; if another member should be sent, he has only to challenge him, and decide the contested election in that way.

Revolutions are matters of constant occurrence in California. They are got up by men who are at the foot of the ladder and in desperate circumstances, just as a new political party is started by such men in our own country. The only object, of course, is the loaves and fishes; and instead of caucusing, paragraphing, libelling, feasting, promising, and lying, as with us, they take muskets and bayonets, and seizing upon the presidio and custom-house, divide the spoils, and declare a new dynasty. As for justice, they know no law but will and fear. A Yankee, who had been naturalized, and become a Catholic, and had married in the country, was sitting in his house at the Pueblo de los Angelos, with his wife and children, when a Spaniard, with whom he had had a difficulty, entered the house, and stabbed him to the heart before them all. The murderer was seized by some Yankees who had settled there, and kept in confinement until a statement of the whole affair could be sent to the governor-general. He refused to do anything about it, and the countrymen of the murdered man, seeing no prospect of justice being administered, made known that if nothing was done, they should try the man themselves. It chanced that, at this time, there was a company of forty trappers and hunters from Kentucky, with their rifles, who had made their head-quarters at the Pueblo; and these, together with the Americans and Englishmen in the place, who were between twenty and thirty in number, took possession of the town, and waiting a reasonable time, proceeded to try the man according to the forms in their own country. A judge and jury were appointed, and he was tried, convicted, sentenced to be shot, and carried out before the town, with his eyes blindfolded. The names of all the men were then put into a hat and each one pledging himself to perform his duty, twelve names were drawn out, and the men took their stations with their rifles, and, firing at the word, laid him dead. He was decently buried, and the place was restored quietly to the proper authorities. A general, with titles enough for an hidalgo, was at San Gabriel, and issued a proclamation as long as the fore-top-bowline, threatening destruction to the rebels, but never stirred from his fort; for forty Kentucky hunters, with their rifles, were a match for a whole regiment of hungry, drawling, lazy half-breeds. This affair happened while we were at San Pedro, (the port of the Pueblo,) and we had all the particulars directly from those who were on the spot. A few months afterwards, another man, whom we had often seen in San Diego, murdered a man and his wife on the high road between the Pueblo and San Louis Rey, and the foreigners not feeling themselves called upon to act in this case, the parties being all

natives, nothing was done about it; and I frequently afterwards saw the murderer in San Diego, where he was living with his wife and family.

When a crime has been committed by Indians, justice, or rather vengeance, is not so tardy. One Sunday afternoon, while I was at San Diego, an Indian was sitting on his horse, when another, with whom he had had some difficulty, came up to him, drew a long knife, and plunged it directly into the horse's heart. The Indian sprang from his falling horse, drew out the knife, and plunged it into the other Indian's breast, over his shoulder, and laid him dead. The poor fellow was seized at once, clapped into the calabozo, and kept there until an answer could be received from Monterey. A few weeks afterwards, I saw the poor wretch, sitting on the bare ground, in front of the calabozo, with his feet chained to a stake, and handcuffs about his wrists. I knew there was very little hope for him. Although the deed was done in hot blood, the horse on which he was sitting being his own, and a great favorite, yet he was an Indian, and that was enough. In about a week after I saw him, I heard that he had been shot. These few instances will serve to give one a notion of the distribution of justice in California.

In their domestic relations, these people are no better than in their public. The men are thriftless, proud, and extravagant, and very much given to gaming; and the women have but little education, and a good deal of beauty, and their morality, of course, is none of the best; yet the instances of infidelity are much less frequent than one would at first suppose. In fact, one vice is set over against another; and thus, something like a balance is obtained. The women have but little virtue, but then the jealousy of their husbands is extreme, and their revenge deadly and almost certain. A few inches of cold steel has been the punishment of many an unwary man, who has been guilty, perhaps, of nothing more than indiscretion of manner. The difficulties of the attempt are numerous, and the consequences of discovery fatal. With the unmarried women, too, great watchfulness is used. The main object of the parents is to marry their daughters well, and to this, the slightest slip would be fatal. The sharp eyes of a duena, and the cold steel of a father or brother, are a protection which the characters of most of them-men and women-render by no means useless; for the very men who would lay down their lives to avenge the dishonor of their own family, would risk the same lives to complete the dishonor of another.

Of the poor Indians, very little care is taken. The priests, indeed, at the missions, are said to keep them very strictly, and some rules are usually made by the alcaldes to punish their misconduct; but it all amounts to but little. Indeed, to show the entire want of any sense of morality or domestic duty among them, I have frequently known an Indian to bring his wife, to whom he was lawfully married in the church, down to the beach, and carry her back again, dividing with her the money which she had got from the sailors. If any of the girls were discovered by the alcalde to be open evil-livers, they were whipped, and kept at work sweeping the square of the presidio, and carrying mud and bricks for the buildings; yet a few reals would generally buy them off. Intemperance, too, is a common vice among the Indians. The Spaniards, on the contrary, are very abstemious, and I do not remember ever having seen a Spaniard intoxicated.

Such are the people who inhabit a country embracing four or five hundred miles of sea-coast, with several good harbors; with fine forests in the north; the waters filled with fish, and the plains covered with thousands of herds of cattle; blessed with a climate, than which there can be no better in the world; free from all manner of diseases, whether epidemic or endemic; and with a soil in which corn yields from seventy to eighty fold. In the hands of an enterprising people, what a country this might be! we are ready to say. Yet how long would a people remain so, in such a country? The Americans (as those from the United States are called) and Englishmen, who are fast filling up the principal towns, and getting the trade into their hands, are indeed more industrious and effective than the Spaniards; yet their children are brought up Spaniards, in every respect, and if the "California fever" (laziness) spares the first generation, it always attacks the second.

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