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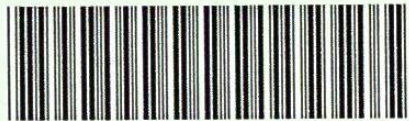
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# LOS GRINGOS:

OR,

AN INSIDE VIEW OF MEXICO AND CALIFORNIA, WITH WANDERINGS IN PERU, CHILL, AND POLYNESIA.

BY LIEUT. WISE, U.S.N.

NEW YORK:

BAKER AND SCRIBNER,  
145 NASSAU STREET AND 36 PARK ROW.

1849.



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FONDO  
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## PREFACE.

THE title—*Los Gringos*—with which this volume has been christened, is the epithet—and rather a reproachful one—used in California and Mexico to designate the descendants of the Anglo-Saxon race; the definition of the word is somewhat similar to that of Greenhorns, in modern *parlance*, or Mohawks in the days of the Spectator. Although many of the scenes were passed in those countries, yet the narrative takes a wider range, and embraces portions of the South American Continent in Brazil, Chili, and Peru,—together with visits to some of the groups of the Pacific at the Sandwich, Marquesas and Society Islands.

The sketches embodied in the narrative were all written on the field of their occurrence; the characters incidentally mentioned are frequently *noms de mer*.

It is not expected by the Author that even the most charitable reader will wholly overlook the careless style and framing of the work, or allow it to pass without censure; nor has it been his object to deal in statistics, or any abstract reflections, but merely to compile a pleasant narrative, such as may perchance please or

interest the generality of readers; and in launching the volume on its natural element—the sea of public opinion—the Author only indulges in the aspiration—whether the reader be gentle or ungentle—whether the book be praised or condemned—that at least the philanthropy of the Publishers may be remunerated, wherein lies all the law and the profits.

NEW YORK, *October*, 1849.

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It was on the last day of summer, 1846, that a large vessel of war lay in the stream of Boston Harbor; presently a dirty little steam tug, all bone and muscle, came burroughing alongside. The boatswain and his mates whistled with their silver pipes, like Canary birds, and the cry went forth, to heave up the anchor. Soon the ponderous grappell was loosened from its hold, and our pigmy companion clasping the huge hull in his hempen arms, bore us away towards the ocean; by and by, the unbleached canvas fell in gloomy clouds from the wide-spread spars—the sails swelled to the breeze—friends were tumbling over the side—light jokes were made—hats waved—cheers given, whether from the heart, or not, was a problem, and then there came a short interval in the hoarse roar of steam, as the pigmy's fastenings splashed in the water—then all was silent; and the stately ship, dashing the salt tears from her eyes, turned her prow, in sadness, from her native land.

There were many, no doubt, of those six hundred souls on board, who leaving home with the sweet endearments of domestic life fresh upon them, were looking forward with blanched cheeks and saddened hearts, to years of distant wanderings. And there