pacious, and its dimensions were an evidence of the exuberant fertility of the soil, when properly cultivated under the superintendence of the *padres*. The calaboose is a miserable dark room of two apartments, one with a small loophole in the wall, the other a dungeon without light or ventilation. The stocks, and several other inventions for the punishment of offenders, are still standing in this prison. I requested permission to examine the interior of the church, but it was locked up, and no person in the mission was in possession of the key. Its length I should suppose is from one hundred to one hundred and twenty feet, and its breadth between thirty and forty, with small exterior pretensions to architectural ornament or symmetry of proportions.

Returning from our rambles about the mission, we found that our landlady had been reinforced by an elderly woman, whom she introduced as "*mi madre*," and two or three Indian *muchachas*, or girls, clad in a costume not differing much from that of our mother Eve. The latter were obese in their figures, and the mingled perspiration and filth standing upon their skins were any thing but agreeable to the eye. The two señoras, with these handmaids near them, were sitting in front of the house, busily engaged in executing some needlework.

Supper being prepared and discussed, our landlady informed us that she had a husband, who was absent, but would return in the course of the night, and if he found strange men in the house, he would be much offended with her. She had therefore directed her *muchachas* to sweep out one of the deserted and half-ruined rooms on the opposite square, to which we could remove our baggage, and in which we could lodge during the night; and as soon as the necessary preparations were made, we retired to our dismal apartment. The "compound of villanous smells" which saluted our nostrils when we entered our dormitory for the night, augured unfavorably for repose. The place had evidently been the abode of horses, cattle, pigs, and foul vermin of every description. But with the aid of a dark-colored tallow-candle, which gave just light enough to display the murkiness and filth surrounding us, we spread our



beds in the cleanest places, and laid down to rest. Distance travelled, 18 miles.

## CHAPTER XXV.

Armies of fleas—Leave the mission—Clover—Wild mustard—A carreta—Family travelling—Arrive at Pueblo de San José—Capt. Fisher—Description of the Pueblo—The embarcadero—Beautiful and fertile valley of the Pueblo—Absence of architectural taste in California—Town squirrels—Fruit garden—Grapes—Tropical fruits—Gaming rooms—Contrast between Californian and American gamesters—Leave San José—Beautiful avenue—Mission of Santa Clara—Rich but neglected lands—Effects of a bad government—A señora on the road-side—Kindness of Californian women—Fast riding—Cruel treatment of horses—Arrive at the mission of San Francisco—A poor but hospitable family—Arrive at the town of San Francisco—W. A. Leidesdorff, Esq., American vice-consul—First view of the Bay of San Francisco—Muchachos and Muchacas—Capt. Montgomery—U. S. sloop-of-war Portsmouth—Town of San Francisco; its situation, appearance, population—Commerce of California—Extortion of the government and traders.

Sept. 19.—Several Californians came into the mission during the night or early this morning; among them the husband of our hostess, who was very kind and cordial in his greetings.

While our man Jack was saddling and packing the mules, they gathered around us to the number of a dozen or more, and were desirous of trading their horses for articles of clothing; articles which many of them appeared to stand greatly in need of, but which we had not to part from. Their pertinacity exceeded the bounds of civility, as I thought; but I was not in a good humor, for the fleas, bugs, and other vermin, which infested our miserable lodgings, had caused me a sleepless night, by goring my body until the blood oozed from the skin in countless places. These ruinous missions are prolific generators, and the nurseries of vermin of all kinds, as the hapless traveller who tarries in them a few hours will learn to his sorrow. When

these bloodthirsty assailants once make a lodgment in the clothing or bedding of the unfortunate victim of their attacks, such are their courage and perseverance, that they never capitulate. "Blood or death" is their motto;—the war against them, to be successful, must be a war of extermination.

Poor as our hostess was, she nevertheless was reluctant to receive any compensation for her hospitality. We, however, insisted upon her receiving a dollar from each of us, (*dos pesos,*) which she finally accepted; and after shaking us cordially by the hand she bade us an affectionate *adios,* and we proceeded on our journey.

From the Mission of San José to the Pueblo of San José, the distance is fifteen miles, for the most part over a level and highly fertile plain, producing a variety of indigenous grasses, among which I noticed several species of clover, and mustard, large tracts of which we rode through, the stalks varying from six to ten feet in height. The plain is watered by several *arroyos,* skirted with timber, generally the evergreen oak.

We met this morning a Californian *carreta,* or travelling-cart, freighted with women and children, bound on a pleasure excursion. The *carreta* is the rudest specimen of the wheeled vehicle I have seen. The wheels are transverse sections of a log, and are usually about 2½ feet in diameter, and varying in thickness from the centre to the rim. These wheels are coupled together by an axletree, into which a tongue is inserted. On the axletree and tongue rests a frame, constructed of square pieces of timber, six or eight feet in length, and four or five in breadth, into which are inserted a number of stakes about four feet in length. This frame-work being covered and floored with raw hides, the carriage is complete. The *carreta* which we met was drawn by two yokes of oxen, driven by an Indian vaquero, mounted on a horse. In the rear were two *caballeros,* riding fine spirited horses, with gaudy trappings. They were dressed in steeple-crowned, glazed *sombreros, serapes* of fiery colors, velvet (cotton) *calzoneros,* white cambric *calzoncillos,* and leggins and shoes of undressed leather. Their spurs were of immense size.



The party halted as soon as we met them, the men touching their heavy *sombreros,* and uttering the usual salutation of the morning, "*Buenos dias señores,*" and shaking hands with us very cordially. The same salutation was repeated by all the señoras and señoritas in the *carreta.* In dress and personal appearance the women of this party were much inferior to the men. Their skins were dark, sallow, and shrivelled, and their costume, a loose gown and *reboso,* were made of very common materials. The children, however, were all handsome, with sparkling eyes and ruddy complexions. Women and children were seated, *à la Turque,* on the bottom of the *carreta,* there being no raised seats in the vehicle.

We arrived at the Pueblo de San José about 12 o'clock. There being no hotels in California, we were much at loss where to apply for refreshments and lodgings for the night. Soon, however, we were met by Captain Fisher, a native of Massachusetts, but a resident of this country for twenty years or more, who invited us to his house. We were most civilly received by Señora F., who, although she did not speak English, seemed to understand it very well. She is a native of the southern Pacific coast of Mexico, and a lady of fine manners and personal appearance. Her eldest daughter, about thirteen years of age, is very beautiful. An excellent dinner was soon set out, with a variety of the native wines of California and other liquors. We could not have felt ourselves more happy and more at home, even at our own firesides and in the midst of our own families.

The Pueblo de San José is a village containing some six or eight hundred inhabitants. It is situated in what is called the "Pueblo valley," about fifteen miles south of the southern shore of the Bay of San Francisco. Through a navigable creek vessels of considerable burden can approach the town within a distance of five or six miles. The *embarcadero,* or landing, I think, is six miles from the Pueblo. The fertile plain between this and the town, at certain seasons of the year, is sometimes inundated. The "Pueblo valley," which is eighty or one hundred miles in length, varying from ten to twenty in breadth, is

well watered by the Rio Santa Clara and numerous *arroyos*, and is one of the most fertile and picturesque plains in California. For pastoral charms, fertility of soil, variety of productions, and delicious voluptuousness of climate and scenery, it cannot be surpassed. This valley, if properly cultivated, would alone produce breadstuffs enough to supply millions of population. The buildings of the Pueblo, with few exceptions, are constructed of adobes, and none of them have even the smallest pretensions to architectural taste or beauty. The church, which is situated near the centre of the town, exteriorly resembles a huge Dutch barn. The streets are irregular, every man having erected his house in a position most convenient to him. Aqueducts convey water from the Santa Clara river to all parts of the town. In the main plaza hundreds, perhaps thousands, of squirrels, whose abodes are under ground, have their residences. They are of a brownish color, and about the size of our common gray squirrel. Emerging from their subterraneous abodes, they skip and leap about over the plaza without the least concern, no one molesting them.

The population of the place is composed chiefly of native Californian land-proprietors. Their ranchos are in the valley, but their residences and gardens are in the town. We visited this afternoon the garden of Señor Don Antonio Suñol. He received us with much politeness, and conducted us through his garden. Apples, pears, peaches, figs, oranges, and grapes, with other fruits which I do not now recollect, were growing and ripening. The grape-vines were bowed to the ground with the luxuriance and weight of the yield; and more delicious fruit I never tasted. From the garden we crossed over to a flouring-mill recently erected by a son-in-law of Don Antonio, a Frenchman by birth. The mill is a creditable enterprise to the proprietor, and he will coin money from its operations.

The Pueblo de San José is one of the oldest settlements in Alta California. Captain Fisher pointed out to me a house built of adobes, which has been standing between 80 and 90 years, and no house in the place appeared to be more substantial or in better repair. A garrison, composed of marines from



the United States ships and volunteers enlisted from the American settlers in the country, is now stationed here. The post is under the command of Purser Watmough, of the United States sloop-of-war Portsmouth, commanded by Captain Montgomery. During the evening I visited several public places, (bar-rooms,) where I saw men and women engaged promiscuously at the game of *monte*. Gambling is a universal vice in California. All classes and both sexes participate in its excitements to some extent. The games, however, while I was present, were conducted with great propriety and decorum so far as the native Californians were concerned. The loud swearing and other turbulent demonstrations generally proceeded from the unsuccessful foreigners. I could not but observe the contrast between the two races in this respect. The one bore their losses with stoical composure and indifference; the other announced each unsuccessful bet with profane imprecations and maledictions. Excitement prompted the hazards of the former, avarice the latter.

September 20.—The morning was cloudy and cool; but the clouds broke away about nine o'clock, and the sun shone from a vaporless sky, as usual. We met, at the Pueblo, Mr. Grove Cook, a native of Gerrard county, Ky., but for many years a resident of California. He is the proprietor of a rancho in the vicinity. We determined to leave our mules in charge of Mr. Cook's vaquero, and proceed to San Francisco on hired horses. The distance from the Pueblo de San José to San Francisco is called sixty miles. The time occupied in performing the journey, on Californian horses at Californian speed, is generally six or seven hours. Procuring horses for the journey, and leaving our baggage, with the exception of a change of clothing, we left the Pueblo about eleven o'clock, A. M.

The mission of Santa Clara is situated about two and a half miles from the town. A broad *alameda*, shaded by stately trees, (elms and willows,) planted by the *padres*, extends nearly the entire distance, forming a most beautiful drive or walk for equestrians or pedestrians. The motive of the *padres* in planting this avenue, was to afford the devout señoras and señoritas

a shade from the sun, when walking from the Pueblo to the church at the mission to attend mass. A few minutes over the smooth, level road, at the rapid speed of our fresh Californian horses, brought us to the mission, where we halted to make our observations. This mission is not so extensive in its buildings as that of San José, but the houses are generally in better repair. They are constructed of adobes. The church was open, and entering the interior, I found the walls hung with coarse paintings and engravings of the saints, etc., etc. The chancel is decorated with numerous images, and symbolical ornaments used by the priests in their worship. Gold-paper, and tinsel, in barbaric taste, are plastered without stint upon nearly every object that meets the eye, so that when on festive occasions the church is lighted, it must present a very glittering appearance.

The rich lands surrounding the mission are entirely neglected. I did not notice a foot of ground under cultivation, except the garden enclosure, which contained a variety of fruits and plants of the temperate and tropical climates. From want of care these are fast decaying. Some excellent pears were furnished us by Mrs. Bennett, an American lady, of amazonian proportions, who, with her family of sons, has taken up her residence in one of the buildings of the mission. The picture of decay and ruin presented by this once flourishing establishment, surrounded by a country so fertile and scenery so enchantiug, is a most melancholy spectacle to the passing traveller, and speaks a language of loud condemnation against the government.

Proceeding on our journey, we travelled fifteen miles over a flat plain, timbered with groves and parks of evergreen oaks, and covered with a great variety of grasses, wild oats, and mustard. So rank is the growth of mustard in many places, that it is with difficulty that a horse can penetrate through it. Numerous birds flitted from tree to tree, making the groves musical with their harmonious notes. The black-tailed deer bounded frequently across our path, and the lurking and stealthy *coyotes* were continually in view. We halted at a small cabin, with a *corral* near it, in order to breathe our horses, and refresh ourselves. Captain Fisher had kindly filled a small sack with bread, cheese, roasted beef, and a small jug of excellent schiedam. Entering the cabin, the interior of which was cleanly, we found a solitary woman, young, neatly dressed, and displaying many personal charms. With the characteristic ease and grace of a Spanish woman, she gave the usual salutation for the hour of the day, "*Buenas tardes señores caballeros;*" to which we responded by a suitable salutation. We requested of our hostess some water, which she furnished us immediately, in an earthen bowl. Opening our sack of provisions, we spread them upon the table, and invited the señora to partake of them with us, which invitation she accepted without the slightest hesitation, and with much good-nature, vivacity, and even thankfulness for our politeness. There are no women in the world for whose manners nature has done so much, and for whom art and education, in this respect, have done so little, as these Hispano-American females on the coast of the Pacific. In their deportment towards strangers they are queens, when, in costume, they are peasants. None of them, according to our tastes, can be called beautiful; but what they want in complexion and regularity of feature, is fully supplied by their kindliness, the soul and sympathy which beam from their dark eyes, and their grace and warmth of manners and expression.



While enjoying the *pic-nic* with our agreeable hostess, a *caballada* was driven into the *corral* by two *vaqueros*, and two gentlemen soon after came into the house. They were Messrs. Lightson and Murphy, from the Pueblo, bound for San Francisco, and had stopped to change their horses. We immediately made ready to accompany them, and were soon on the road again, travelling at racehorse speed; these gentlemen having furnished us with a change of horses, in order that we might be able to keep up with them.

To account for the fast travelling in California on horseback, it is necessary to explain the mode by which it is accomplished. A gentleman who starts upon a journey of one hundred miles, and wishes to perform the trip in a day, will take with him ten fresh horses and a *vaquero*. The eight loose horses are placed

under the charge of the *vaquero*, and are driven in front, at the rate of ten or twelve miles an hour, according to the speed that is required for the journey. At the end of twenty miles, the horses which have been rode are discharged and turned into the *caballada*, and horses which have not been rode, but driven along without weight, are saddled and mounted and rode at the same speed, and so on to the end of the journey. If a horse gives out from inability to proceed at this gait, he is left on the road. The owner's brand is on him, and if of any value, he can be recovered without difficulty. But in California, no one thinks of stopping on the road, on account of the loss of a horse, or his inability to travel at the rate of ten or twelve miles an hour. Horseflesh is cheap, and the animal must go as long as he can, and when he cannot travel longer he is left, and another horse is substituted.

Twenty-five miles, at a rapid gait over a level and fertile plain, brought us to the rancho of Don Francisco Sanchez, where we halted to change horses. Breathing our animals a short time, we resumed our journey, and reached the mission of San Francisco Dolores, three miles from the town of San Francisco, just after sunset. Between the mission and the town the road is very sandy, and we determined to remain here for the night, *corraling* the loose animals and picketing those we rode. It was some time, however, before we could find a house to lodge in. The foreign occupants of the mission buildings, to whom we applied for accommodations for the night, gave us no satisfaction. After several applications, we were at last accommodated by an old and very poor Californian Spaniard, who inhabited a small house in one of the ruinous squares, formerly occupied by the operative Indians. All that he had (and it was but little) was at our disposal. A more miserable supper I never sat down to; but the spirit of genuine hospitality in which it was given, imparted to the poor viands a flavor that rendered the entertainment almost sumptuous—in my imagination. A cup of water cheerfully given to the weary and thirsty traveller, by him who has no more to part with, is worth a cask of wine grudgingly bestowed by the stingy or



the ostentatious churl. Notwithstanding we preferred sleeping on our own blankets, these poor people would not suffer us to do it, but spread their own pallets on the earth floor of their miserable hut, and insisted so strongly upon our occupying them, that we could not refuse.

September 21.—We rose at daylight. The morning was clear, and our horses were shivering with the cold. The mission of San Francisco is situated at the northern terminus of the fertile plain over which we travelled yesterday, and at the foot, on the eastern side, of the coast range of mountains. These mountains are of considerable elevation. The shore of the Bay of San Francisco is about two miles distant from the mission. An *arroyo* waters the mission lands and empties into the bay. The church of the mission, and the main buildings contiguous, are in tolerable repair. In the latter, several Mormon families, which arrived in the ship Brooklyn from New York, are quartered. As in the other missions I have passed through, the Indian quarters are crumbling into shapeless heaps of mud.

Our aged host, notwithstanding he is a pious Catholic and considers us as heretics and heathens, gave us his benediction in a very impressive manner when we were about to start. Mounting our horses at sunrise, we travelled three miles over low ridges of sand-hills, with sufficient soil, however, to produce a thick growth of scrubby evergreen oak, and brambles of hawthorn, wild currant and gooseberry bushes, rose-bushes, briers, etc. We reached the residence of Wm. A. Leidesdorff, Esq., late American vice-consul at San Francisco, when the sun was about an hour high. The morning was calm and beautiful. Not a ripple disturbed the placid and glassy surface of the magnificent bay and harbor, upon which rested at anchor thirty large vessels, consisting of whalemen, merchantmen, and the U. S. sloop-of-war Portsmouth, Captain Montgomery. Besides these, there were numerous small craft, giving to the harbor a commercial air, of which some of the large cities on the Atlantic coast would feel vain. The bay, from the town of San Francisco due east, is about twelve miles in breadth. An elevated range of hills bounds the view on the opposite side. These slope

gradually down, and between them and the shore there is a broad and fertile plain, which is called the *Contra Costa*. There are several small islands in the bay, but they do not present a fertile appearance to the eye.

We were received with every mark of respectful attention and cordial hospitality by Mr. Leidesdorff. Mr. L. is a native of Denmark; was for some years a resident of the United States; but subsequently the captain of a merchant vessel, and has been established at this place as a merchant some five or six years. The house in which he resides, now under the process of completion, is the largest private building in the town. Being shown to a well-furnished room, we changed our travel-soiled clothing for a more civilized costume, by which time breakfast was announced, and we were ushered into a large dining-hall. In the centre stood a table, upon which was spread a substantial breakfast of stewed and fried beef, fried onions, and potatoes, bread, butter, and coffee. Our appetites were very sharp, and we did full justice to the merits of the fare before us. The servants waiting upon the table were an Indian *muchachito* and *muchachita*, about ten or twelve years of age. They had not been long from their wild *rancherias*, and knew but little of civilized life. Our host, however, who speaks, I believe, nearly every living language, whether of Christian, barbarian, or savage nations, seemed determined to impress upon their dull intellects the forms and customs of civilization. He scolded them with great vivacity, sometimes in their own tongue, sometimes in French, Spanish, Portuguese, Danish, German, and English, in accordance with the language in which he was thinking at the moment. It seemed to me that the little fat Indians were more confused than enlightened by his emphatic instructions. At the table, besides ourselves and host, was Lieutenant W. A. Bartlett, of the U. S. sloop-of-war Portsmouth, now acting as alcalde of the town and district of San Francisco.

The Portsmouth, Commander Montgomery, is the only United States vessel of war now lying in the harbor. She is regarded as the finest vessel of her class belonging to our navy.



By invitation of Lieutenant Bartlett, I went on board of her between ten and eleven o'clock. The crew and officers were assembled on deck to attend Divine service. They were all dressed with great neatness, and seemed to listen with deep attention to the Episcopal service and a sermon, which were read by Commander Montgomery, who is a member of the church.

In the afternoon I walked to the summit of one of the elevated hills in the vicinity of the town, from which I had a view of the entrance to the Bay of San Francisco, and of the Pacific ocean. A thick fog hung over the ocean outside of the bay. The deep roar of the eternally restless waves, as they broke one after another upon the beach, or dashed against the rock-bound shore, could be heard with great distinctness, although some five or six miles distant. The entrance from the ocean into the bay is about a mile and a half in breadth. The waters of the bay appear to have forced a passage through the elevated ridge of hills next to the shore of the Pacific. These rise abruptly on either side of the entrance. The water at the entrance and inside is of sufficient depth to admit the largest ship that was ever constructed; and so completely land-locked and protected from the winds is the harbor, that vessels can ride at anchor in perfect safety in all kinds of weather. The capacity of the harbor is sufficient for the accommodation of all the navies of the world.

The town of San Francisco is situated on the south side of the entrance, fronting on the bay, and about six miles from the ocean. The flow and ebb of the tide are sufficient to bring a vessel to the anchorage in front of the town and to carry it outside, without the aid of wind, or even against an unfavorable wind. A more approachable harbor, or one of greater security, is unknown to navigators. The permanent population of the town is at this time between one and two hundred,* and is composed almost exclusively of foreigners. There are

* This was in September, 1846. In June, 1847, when I left San Francisco, on my return to the United States, the population had increased to about twelve hundred, and houses were rising in all directions.

but two or three native Californian families in the place. The transient population, and at present it is quite numerous, consists of the garrison of marines stationed here, and the officers and crews attached to the merchant and whale ships lying in the harbor. The houses, with a few exceptions, are small adobes and frames, constructed without regard to architectural taste, convenience, or comfort. Very few of them have either chimneys or fireplaces. The inhabitants contrive to live the year round without fires, except for cooking. The position of San Francisco for commerce is, without doubt, superior to any other port on the Pacific coast of North America. The country contiguous and tributary to it cannot be surpassed in fertility, healthfulness of climate, and beauty of scenery. It is capable of producing whatever is necessary to the sustenance of man, and many of the luxuries of tropical climates, not taking into the account the mineral wealth of the surrounding hills and mountains, which there is reason to believe is very great. This place is, doubtless, destined to become one of the largest and most opulent commercial cities in the world, and under American authority it will rise with astonishing rapidity. The principal merchants now established here are Messrs. Leidesdorff, Grimes & Davis, and Frank Ward, a young gentleman recently from New York. These houses carry on an extensive and profitable commerce with the interior, the Sandwich Islands, Oregon, and the southern coast of the Pacific. The produce of Oregon for exportation is flour, lumber, salmon, and cheese; of the Sandwich Islands, sugar, coffee, and preserved tropical fruits.

California, until recently, has had no commerce in the broad signification of the term. A few commercial houses of Boston and New York have monopolized all the trade on this coast for a number of years. These houses have sent out ships freighted with cargoes of dry goods and a variety of *knick-knacks* saleable in the country. The ships are fitted up for the retail sale of these articles, and trade from port to port, vending their wares on board to the rancheros at prices that would be astonishing at home. For instance, the price of common brown cotton cloth



is one dollar per yard, and other articles in this and even greater proportion of advance upon home prices. They receive in payment for their wares, hides and tallow. The price of a dry hide is ordinarily one dollar and fifty cents. The price of tallow I do not know. When the ship has disposed of her cargo she is loaded with hides, and returns to Boston, where the hides bring about four or five dollars, according to the fluctuations of the market. Immense fortunes have been made by this trade; and between the government of Mexico and the traders on the coast, California has been literally *skinned*, annually for the last thirty years. Of natural wealth the population of California possesses a superabundance, and are immensely rich; still, such have been the extortionate prices that they have been compelled to pay for their commonest artificial luxuries and wearing apparel, that generally they are but indifferently provided with the ordinary necessaries of civilized life. For a suit of clothes, which in New York or Boston would cost seventy-five dollars, the Californian has been compelled to pay five times that sum in hides at one dollar and fifty cents; so that a *caballero*, to clothe himself genteelly, has been obliged, as often as he renewed his dress, to sacrifice about two hundred of the cattle on his rancho. No people, whether males or females, are more fond of display; no people have paid more dearly to gratify this vanity; and yet no civilized people I have seen are so deficient in what they most covet.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

Climate of San Francisco—Periodical winds—Dine on the Portsmouth—A supper party on shore—Arrival of Commodore Stockton at San Francisco—Rumors of rebellion from the south—Californian court—Trial by jury—Fandango—Californian belles—American pioneers of the Pacific—Reception of Commodore Stockton—Sitga—Captain Fremont leaves San Francisco for the south—Offer our services as volunteers.

From the 21st of September to the 13th of October I remained at San Francisco. The weather during this period was

uniformly clear. The climate of San Francisco is peculiar and local, from its position. During the summer and autumnal months, the wind on this coast blows from the west and northwest, directly from the ocean. The mornings here are usually calm and pleasantly warm. About twelve o'clock, M., the wind blows strong from the ocean, through the entrance of the bay, rendering the temperature cool enough for woollen clothing in midsummer. About sunset the wind dies away, and the evenings and nights are comparatively calm. In the winter months the wind blows in soft and gentle breezes from the southeast, and the temperature is agreeable, the thermometer rarely sinking below 50°. When the winds blow from the ocean, it never rains; when they blow from the land, as they do during the winter and spring months, the weather is showery, and resembles that of the month of May in the same latitude on the Atlantic coast. The coolness of the climate and briskness of the air above described, are confined to particular positions on the coast, and the description in this respect is not applicable to the interior of the country, nor even to other localities immediately on the coast.

On the 21st, by invitation of Captain Montgomery, I dined on board of the sloop-of-war Portsmouth. The party, including myself, consisted of Colonel Russell, Mr. Jacob, Lieutenant Bartlett, and a son of Captain M. There are few if any officers in our navy more highly and universally esteemed, for their moral qualities and professional merits, than Captain M. He is a sincere Christian, a brave officer, and an accomplished gentleman. Under the orders of Commodore Sloat, he first raised the American flag in San Francisco. We spent the afternoon most agreeably, and the refined hospitality, courteous manners, and intelligent and interesting conversation of our host, made us regret the rapidly fleeting moments. The wines on the table were the produce of the vine of California, and having attained age, were of an excellent quality in substance and flavor.

I attended a supper-party given this evening by Mr. Frank Ward. The party was composed of citizens of the town, and



officers of the navy and the merchant and whale ships in the harbor. In such a company as was here assembled, it was very difficult for me to realize that I was many thousand miles from home, in a strange and foreign country. All the faces about me were American, and there was nothing in scene or sentiment to remind the guests of their remoteness from their native shores. Indeed, it seems to be a settled opinion, that California is henceforth to compose a part of the United States, and every American who is now here considers himself as treading upon his own soil, as much as if he were in one of the old thirteen revolutionary states. Song, sentiment, story, and wit, heightened the enjoyments of the excellent entertainment of our host, and the jovial party did not separate until a late hour of the night. The guests, as may be supposed, were composed chiefly of gentlemen who had, from their pursuits, travelled over most of the world,—had seen developments of human character under every variety of circumstance, and observed society, civilized, barbarous, and savage, in all its phases. Their conversation, therefore, when around the convivial board, possessed an unhackneyed freshness and raciness highly entertaining and instructive.

On the 27th of September, the U. S. frigate Congress, Captain Livingston, bearing the broad pennant of Commodore Stockton, and the U. S. frigate Savannah, Captain Mervine, anchored in the harbor, having sailed from Monterey a day or two previously. The arrival of these large men-of-war produced an increase of the bustle in the small town. Blue coats and bright buttons (the naval uniform) became the prevailing costume at the billiard-rooms and other public places, and the plain dress of a private citizen might be regarded as a badge of distinction.

On the 1st of October a courier arrived from the south with intelligence that the Californians at Los Angeles had organized a force and rebelled against the authority of the Americans,—that they had also captured an American merchant-vessel lying at San Pedro, the port of the city of Angels, about thirty miles distant, and robbed it of a quantity of merchandise and specie.

Whether this latter report was or was not true, I do not know —the former was correct. The frigate Savannah sailed for Los Angeles immediately.

Among those American naval officers whose agreeable acquaintance I made at San Francisco, was Mr. James F. Schenck, first-lieutenant of the frigate Congress, brother of the distinguished member of congress from Ohio of that name,—a native of Dayton, Ohio,—a gentleman of intelligence, keen wit, and a most accomplished officer. The officers of our navy are our representatives in foreign countries, and they are generally such representatives as their constituents have reason to feel proud of. Their chivalry, patriotism, gentlemanlike deportment, and professional skill, cannot be too much admired and applauded by their countrymen. I shall ever feel grateful to the naval officers of the Pacific squadron, for their numerous civilities during my sojourn on the Pacific coast.

Among the novelties presented while at San Francisco, was a trial by jury—the second tribunal of this kind which had been organized in California. The trial took place before Judge Bartlett, and the litigants were two Mormons. Counsel was employed on both sides. Some of the forms of American judicial proceedings were observed, and many of the legal technicalities and nice flaws, so often urged in common-law courts, were here argued by the learned counsel of the parties, with a vehemence of language and gesticulation with which I thought the legal learning and acumen displayed did not correspond. The proceedings were a mixture, made up of common law, equity, and a sprinkling of military despotism—which last ingredient the court was compelled to employ, when entangled in the intricate meshes woven by the counsel for the litigants, in order to extricate itself. The jury, after the case was referred to them, were what is called "hung;" they could not agree, and the matters in issue, therefore, remained exactly where they were before the proceedings were commenced.

I attended one evening a *fandango* given by Mr. Ridley, an English gentleman, whose wife is a Californian lady. Several of the señoras and señoritas from the ranchos of the vicinity



were present. The Californian ladies dance with much ease and grace. The waltz appears to be a favorite with them. Smoking is not prohibited in these assemblies, nor is it confined to the gentlemen. The *cigarita* is freely used by the señoras and señoritas, and they puff it with much gusto while threading the mazes of the cotillon or swinging in the waltz.

I had the pleasure of being introduced, at the residence of Mr. Leidesdorff, to two young ladies, sisters and belles in Alta California. They are members of an old and numerous family on the Contra Costa. Their names are singular indeed, for if I heard them correctly, one of them was called Donna Maria Jesus and the other Donna Maria Conception. They were interesting and graceful young ladies, with regular features, symmetrical figures, and their dark eyes flashed with all the intelligence and passion characteristic of Spanish women.

Among the gentlemen with whom I met soon after my arrival at San Francisco, and whose acquaintance I afterwards cultivated, were Mr. E. Grimes and Mr. N. Spear, both natives of Massachusetts, but residents of this coast and of the Pacific Islands, for many years. They may be called the patriarchs of American pioneers on the Pacific. After forming an acquaintance with Mr. G., if any one were to say to me that

"Old Grimes is dead, that good old man,"

I should not hesitate to contradict him with emphasis; for he is still living, and possesses all the charities and virtues which can adorn human nature, with some of the eccentricities of his namesake in the song. By leading a life of peril and adventure on the Pacific ocean for fifty years he has accumulated a large fortune, and is a man now proverbial for his integrity, candor, and charities. Both of these gentlemen have been largely engaged in the local commerce of the Pacific. Mr. S., some twenty-five or thirty years ago, colonized one of the Cannibal Islands, and remained upon it with the colony for nearly two years. The attempt to introduce agriculture into the island was a failure, and the enterprise was afterwards abandoned.

On the evening of the third of October, it having been announced that Commodore Stockton would land on the fifth, a public meeting of the citizens was called by the alcalde, for the purpose of adopting suitable arrangements for his reception, in his civic capacity as governor. The meeting was convened in the *plaza*, (Portsmouth-square.) Col. Russell was appointed chairman, and on motion of E. Bryant a committee was appointed to make all necessary and suitable arrangements for the reception of his excellency, Governor Stockton. The following account of this pageant I extract from the "Californian" newspaper of October 24th, 1846.

"Agreeable to public notice, a large number of the citizens of San Francisco and vicinity, assembled in Portsmouth-square for the purpose of meeting His Excellency Robert F. Stockton, to welcome his arrival, and offer him the hospitalities of the city. At ten o'clock, a procession was formed, led by the Chief Marshal of the day, supported on either hand by two aids, followed by an excellent band of music—a military escort, under command of Captain J. Zeilen, U. S. M. C.—Captain John B. Montgomery and suite—Magistracy of the District, and the Orator of the day—Foreign Consuls—Captain John Paty, Senior Captain of the Hawanian Navy—Lieutenant-Commanding Ruducoff, Russian Navy, and Lieutenant-Commanding Bonnett, French Navy. The procession was closed by the Committee of Arrangements, Captains of ships in port, and a long line of citizens.

"General Mariano Guadaloupe Vallejo, with several others who had held office under the late government, took their appropriate place in the line.

"The procession moved in fine style down Portsmouth-street to the landing, and formed a line in Water-street. The Governor-General landed from his barge, and was met on the wharf by Captain John B. Montgomery, U. S. N., Judge W. A. Bartlett, and Marshal of the day, (Frank Ward,) who conducted him to the front of the line, and presented him to the procession, through the orator of the day, Colonel Russell, who addressed the Commodore."



When the governor and commander-in-chief had closed his reply, the procession moved through the principal streets and halted in front of Captain Leidesdorff's residence, where the governor and suite entered, and was presented to a number of ladies, who welcomed him to the shores of California. After which a large portion of the procession accompanied the governor, on horseback, to the mission of San Francisco Dolores, several miles in the country, and returned to an excellent collation prepared by the committee of arrangements, at the house of Captain Leidesdorff. After the cloth was removed, the usual number of regular toasts prepared by the committee of arrangements, and numerous volunteer sentiments by the members of the company, were drank with many demonstrations of enthusiasm, and several speeches were made. In response to a complimentary toast, Commodore Stockton made an eloquent address of an hour's length. The toasts given in English were translated into Spanish, and those given in Spanish were translated into English. A ball in honor of the occasion was given by the committee of arrangements in the evening, which was attended by all the ladies native and foreign in the town and vicinity, the naval officers attached to the three ships of war, and the captains of the merchant vessels lying in the harbor. So seductive were the festivities of the day and the pleasures of the dance, that they were not closed until a late hour of the night, or rather until an early hour in the morning.

Among the numerous vessels of many nations at anchor in the harbor, is a Russian brig from Sitca, the central port of the Russian-American Fur Company, on the northwestern coast of this continent. She is commanded by Lieutenant Ruducoff of the Russian navy, and is here to be freighted with wheat to supply that settlement with breadstuff. Sitca is situated in a high northern latitude, and has a population of some four or five thousand inhabitants. A large portion of these, I conjecture, are christianized natives or Indians. Many of the crew of this vessel are the aborigines of the country to which she belongs, and from which she last sailed. I noticed, however, from an inscription, that the brig was built at Newbury-

port, Massachusetts, showing that the autocrat of all the Russias is tributary, to some extent, to the free Yankees of New England for his naval equipment. On the 11th of October, by invitation of Lieutenant Ruducoff, in company of Mr. Jacob and Captain Leidesdorff, I dined on board this vessel. The Russian customs are in some respects peculiar. Soon after we reached the vessel and were shown into the cabin, a lunch was served up. This consisted of a variety of dried and smoked fish, pickled fish-roe, and other hyperborean pickles, the nature of which, whether animal or vegetable, I could not determine. Various wines and liquors accompanied this lunch, the discussion of which lasted until an Indian servant, a native of the north-pole, or thereabouts, announced dinner. We were then shown into a handsomely-furnished dining cabin, where the table was spread. The dinner consisted of several courses, some of which were peculiarly Russian or Sitcan, and I regret that my culinary knowledge is not equal to the task of describing them, for the benefit of epicures of a more southern region than the place of their invention. They were certainly very delightful to the palate. The afternoon glided away most agreeably.

On the 12th of October, Captain Fremont, with a number of volunteers destined for the south, to co-operate with Commodore Stockton in the suppression of the reported rebellion at Los Angeles, arrived at San Francisco from the Sacramento. I had previously offered my services, and Mr. Jacob had done the same, to Commodore Stockton, as volunteers in this expedition, if they were necessary or desirable. They were now repeated. Although travellers in the country, we were American citizens, and felt under obligations to assist in defending the flag of our country wherever it had been planted by proper authority. At this time we were given to understand that a larger force than was already organized, was not considered necessary for the expedition.



## CHAPTER XXVII.

Leave San Francisco for Sonoma—Sonoma creek—"Bear men"—Islands in the bay—Liberality of Uncle Sam to sailors—Sonoma—Beautiful country—General Vallejo—Señora Vallejo—Thomas O. Larkin, U. S. Consul—Signs of rain—The seasons in California—More warlike rumors from the south—Mission of San Rafael—An Irish ranchero—Sausolito—Return to San Francisco—Meet Lippincott—Discomfort of Californian houses.

October 13.—This morning the United States frigate Congress, Commodore Stockton, and the merchant-ship Sterling, employed to transport the volunteers under the command of Captain Fremont, (one hundred and eighty in number,) sailed for the south. The destination of these vessels was understood to be San Pedro or San Diego. While these vessels were leaving the harbor, accompanied by Mr. Jacob, I took passage for Sonoma in a cutter belonging to the sloop-of-war Portsmouth. Sonoma is situated on the northern side of the Bay of San Francisco, about 15 miles from the shore, and about 45 miles from the town of San Francisco. Sonoma creek is navigable for vessels of considerable burden to within four miles of the town.

Among the passengers in the boat, were Mr. Ide, who acted so conspicuous a part in what is called the "Bear Revolution," and Messrs. Nash and Grigsby, who were likewise prominent in this movement. The boat was manned by six sailors and a cockswain. We passed Yerba Buena, Bird, and several other small islands in the bay. Some of these are white, as if covered with snow, from the deposite upon them of bird-manure. Tens of thousands of wild geese, ducks, gulls, and other water-fowls were perched upon them, or sporting in the waters of the bay, making a prodigious cackling and clatter with their voices and wings. By the aid of oars and sails we reached the mouth of Sonoma creek about 9 o'clock at night, where we landed and encamped on the low marsh which borders the bay