tary and commercial adventurers who visited their country before the Jesuits; and more especially by the traffickers for pearls, by whom the Indians were frequently kidnapped and forcibly compelled to act as divers. Yet it was remarkable that, from the beginning, they showed little unwillingness to be present at or even to share in the ceremonies of the Catholic religion, (which were seldom lost sight of by the adventurers of those days, however stained with crimes) or to benefit from the supplies of food which they derived from their visiters. At the period of the landing of the Jesuits, the natives seem to have been in precisely the same condition as to civilization, as when first visited by Grijalva one hundred and sixty years before. They were little advanced from the rudest state of barbarism. Properly speaking, they had neither houses nor clothes, although they made use of temporary huts formed of boughs of trees and covered with reeds, and the women wore girdles or imperfect petticoats formed also of reeds: the men were entirely naked except that they wore ornaments for the head composed of feathers, shells or seeds. They lived by hunting and fishing and on the spontaneous produce of the soil. They cultivated no species of grain or esculent vegetable, and they seemed to possess no other arts than what were necessary for the manufacture of nets and bows and arrows for catching prey by sea

and land, and for the construction of their imperfect clothing and ornaments. Some of the tribes had a few vessels of clay, but their chief articles for containing both solids and liquids were constructed of reeds. Even their means of transport on the water, were rude rafts formed of bulrushes, no boats or canoes of wood or hides being found among them. They seem scarcely to have had any fixed forms of government or religion; although the different villages and tribes submitted, on important occasions, to the direction and rule of some one or more who were distinguished by their age, strength or other natural gifts; and there were also a class of persons among them, who were the ministers of some superstitious observances, and the pretenders to preternatural powers in the prediction or production of future events and in the infliction or cure of diseases. These people were termed Sorcerers (Hechiceros) by the Missionaries; although Father Venegas has the boldness to assert that "it cannot be thought that these poor creatures had any commerce or entered into a compact with apostate spirits, or that they received any instructions from them." It is, however, very true, that whether deluded or deluding, these sorcerers or priests exerted a powerful influence over the minds of their countrymen. This influence was greatly heightened by their being the exclusive professors

and practisers of the important art of healing. "What greatly strengthened their authority (says Venegas) was their being the only physicians from whom they could hope to be relieved in their pains and distempers: and whatever was the medicine, it was always administered with great ostentation and solemnity. One remedy (he continues) was very remarkable; and the good effect sometimes produced by it, greatly heightened the reputation of the operator. They applied to the suffering part of the patient's body the Chacuaco, which is a tube formed out of a very hard black stone, and through this they sometimes sucked and at other times blew, but both as hard as they were able, supposing that thus the disease was either exhaled or dispersed. Sometimes the tube was filled with cimarron or wild tobacco lighted, and the smoke was either blown out or sucked in according to the doctor's direction. This powerful caustic (adds the historian) sometimes, without any other remedy, has been known entirely to remove the disorder." Of this fact such of our modern surgeons, as are in the habit of prescribing local irritation or scarification, by inflammable substances termed moxas, will entertain no doubt.

At the time California was visited by the Jesuits, the whole of the country explored by them from cape San Lucas as far north as the 28th degree of north latitude, was thinly and irregularly peopled

by numerous tribes more or less stationary in their rude villages or encampments, differing very little in their general habits and condition, yet sufficiently marked to be distinguished by fixed names, and speaking different languages or different dialects of the same. The best informed among the fathers, particularly Father Taraval, of whom we shall hereafter have occasion to speak, believed that although there were many varieties of dialect, there were only three languages, decidedly differing from one another so as to constitute natural distinctions. These in their respective spheres, extended, as might be supposed, from sea to sea, dividing the peninsula lengthwise into three nations; the Pericues occupying the southern division as far north as the bay of La Paz, about the 25th degree of latitude; the Monquis the middle space extending a little to the north of Loreto in about the 26th degree; and the Cochimis, to the nothward of this, as far as the country was explored. As would naturally happen, in such a rude state of society, the limits of these countries were not at all definite, and even the different people had quite different names given them by their own or other tribes. In particular, it would seem that the people of the south were as commonly termed Edues as Pericues, or those of the north as often Laymones as Cochimis. Each of these great divisions contained clans or tribes who

professed to be distinct from their neighbours, calling themselves by different names, using a somewhat different speech and demonstrating their nationality by incessant feuds and petty wars with their neighbours; but it would be worse then useless to follow our authorities in taking any notice of these, as this could only tend to confuse the reader.

The country inhabited by these people was and is one of the most barren and unattractive to be found in the temperate or hotter regions of the earth. The peninsula of California is seven or eight hundred miles in length, and varies in breadth from thirty to one hundred miles, the medium breadth being from fifty to sixty. It consists of an irregular chain or broken groups of bare rocks, and hills interspersed with tracts of a sandy soil nearly as unproductive. The greatest height of this mountain ridge is rather less than 5000 feet. In some sheltered spots where the soil has been left safe from the torrents, there is a fertile mould; but such spots are very rare and of small extent. Water is also very scarce. There are only two or three small streams in the whole country, and springs of good water are extremely infrequent. It would seem as if the action of the heavy rains from the central ridge of rocky hills and the encroachments of the ocean on both its shores, had gradually washed away the mould and soil from its surface, except where it

was of such a ponderous quality as sand, or where it was penned up by a barrier of rocks on all sides. In some places of this last kind, the soil was found remarkably fertile, and when they chanced to be in the vicinity of water, which was but seldom the case, the produce extracted from them by the industry of the new comers was sometimes marvellously great. Such oases were of no especial use to the natives, except in as far as they furnished the chief localities for the growth of the trees and plants which supplied them with nuts and berries. The extreme barrenness of the soil prevented the growth of trees of any magnitude, except in a very few spots of insignificant extent, insomuch that the missionaries were obliged, as we shall see hereafter, to send to the opposite coast of Cinaloa for the materials for constructing houses.

In this region, however, the fertility of the sea seemed to make amends for the barrenness of the land. The shores of California abound in the greatest variety of excellent fish, although from ignorance or stupidity the natives derived much less benefit from this exhaustless storehouse, than it was capable of affording. In one respect, indeed, this storehouse was too productive for their happiness; since it was the fame of its pearls which, ever since its first discovery, had attracted so many adventurers to its shores, bent on enriching themselves and alto-

gether regardless of the welfare or even lives of the natives. "Great numbers (says Father Venegas) resort to this fishery from the continent of New Spain, New Galicia, Culiacan, Cinaloa and Sonora; and the many violences committed by the adventurers, to satiate if possible their covetous temper, have occasioned reciprocal complaints; nor will they ever cease (adds the good Father) while the desire of riches, that bane of society, predominates in the human breast.*" And nothing can show more strongly the pure and disinterested motives of the Jesuits than the law which they obtained, after much trouble, from the Mexican government, viz. that all the inhabitants of California, including the soldiers, sailors, and others under their command, should be prohibited not only from diving for pearls but from trafficking in them. This law was the cause of great and frequent discontent among the military servants of the Fathers, and even threatened the loss of their conquest; but it was nevertheless rigidly enforced by them during the whole period of their rule. Fishing for pearls was not, indeed, prohibited in the Gulf and along the shores of California, but it was carried on by divers brought from the opposite shores by the adventurers engaged in it.

Before returning to the history of Father Salva-

* Vol. i. p. 50.

tierra and his little band, I must be permitted to make one remark. If the reader should be disposed to smile at the minuteness with which, now or hereafter, we may dwell on the humble proceedings of the Fathers, and their children the Indians, or may detail the puny wars of their Lilliputian armies, we can only offer the excuse preferred by the good Father Venegas in similar circumstances. "These particulars (he says) may possibly appear trifles not worth mentioning; but let me entreat the reader to try their value in the balance of reason. Let him reflect what an agreeable sight it must be, even in the eyes of the divine Being himself, to see men who might have acquired a large fortune by secular employments, or lived in quiet and esteem within the Order they had chosen, voluntarily banish themselves from their country and relations, to visit America; and when there, resign employments and leave a tranquil life for disappointments and fatigues; to live among savages, amidst distress and continual danger of death, without any other motive, than the conversion of the Indians. At least let every one ask himself, whether any worldly interest whatever could induce him to employ himself in such low and obscure actions and amid such privations and dangers, and he will be convinced of the importance and dignity which actions, contemptible in the eyes of men, receive from the sublimity of the motives

which inspire them."* It is, indeed, impossible to read the accounts of the settlement of the two Californias by the Spanish Missionaries without feeling the greatest admiration and reverence for the bold and pious men who undertook and accomplished the most arduous task of civilizing and christianizing these savage countries. It may be true that the means they adopted to effect their ends were not always the wisest; that the Christianity they planted was often more of form than substance, and the civilization, in some respects, an equivocal good: still it cannot be denied that the motives of these excellent men were most pure, their benevolence unquestionable, their industry, zeal, and courage indefatigable and invincible. Not only did they suffer every hardship without repining, but they shrunk not from death itself, which more than once thinned their ranks; and it is the crowning glory of their benevolent justice that they were as zealous in protecting the poor Indians from the oppression and cruelties of the Spanish soldiers, as they were in endeavouring to subject them to their own spiritual domination:

> And Charity on works of love would dwell
> In California's dolorous regions drear.†

* Vol. i. p. 230.

† Southey.

CHAP. II.

Progress of the Jesuits to the Death of Father Kino.—Mode of Converting the Indians.

No sooner was the little settlement, described in the last chapter, made, than Father Salvatierra set about his office of converting the Indians. He began by endeavouring to learn their language and sought to gain their good will by all sorts of kindness and unsuspicious familiarity; rewarding all such as would consent to be catechised and to repeat prayers, with daily largesses of boiled maize, or pozzoli, of which the Indians were very fond. Indeed the pozzoli was more attractive than the Latin prayers, and they soon began to seek for the one without the other; and this being refused, they set about considering whether they might not obtain their ends by force. Accordingly, after some smaller attempts, such as stealing the good Father's horse and his goats, both for food, they made a regular attack on the camp on the 13th November. On this occasion it was thought that no less than 500 of the Indians assaulted their little entrenchments which were defended only by ten men; and