

he thought necessary to divide amongst his followers and the sailors ; he also assigned a sum for the captain and mates, which, as they did not think it prudent to offend him, they received, but returned on their arrival at San Blas. On the arrival of the vessel at this port which had also declared for Santa Anna, the serjeant and his soldiers were received by their compatriots with open arms, and the remainder of the money which he chose to deliver up to the authorities, was thankfully received, leaving this worthy character to appropriate to himself what he pleased. The ship after repairing her damages, getting some fresh stores, and spending a long time on the coast, at last proceeded to La Paz, where the friars once more embarked, and finally arrived at their destination.

Notwithstanding this indication of following up the old system, a law was soon after passed by the general congress of Mexico for entirely removing the missionaries, dividing the lands and cattle amongst the Indians and settlers, and appropriating their funds in Mexico to the use of the state. The democratic party then in power, soon after the passing of the law, named commissioners amongst their own friends to carry it into execution, and empowered them to engage emigrants in Mexico to accompany them, and to whom the pay of half a dollar a day was assigned till their arrival in Cali-

fornia, with a free passage and provisions during their voyage. Nearly three hundred people engaged on those terms, consisting of men, women, and children. They were of every class of persons except that which could be useful ;—for there was not one agriculturist amongst them. They were chiefly from the city of Mexico, and consisted of artizans and idlers who had been made to believe that they would soon enrich themselves in idleness in this happy country. There were to be seen goldsmiths proceeding to a country where no gold or silver existed, blacksmiths to where no horses are shod or iron used, carpenters to where only huts without furniture were erected, shoemakers to where only sandals of raw hide were worn, tailors to where the inhabitants only covered themselves with a blanket, doctors to where no one gets sick ; there were also engravers, printers, musicians, gamblers, and other nameless professors, all bound on this hopeful crusade, which their enthusiastic leaders assured them would procure unalloyed felicity and unbounded riches. The projectors and leaders of this colony had also formed and published a magnificent plan of a public company which they entitled “ The Cosmopolite Company” (*compania cosmopolitana*). It embraced the three great branches of agriculture, manufactures and commerce, which were to be carried on upon a scale of great magnitude. Gover-



nors, directors, secretaries, clerks, inspectors of accounts, administrators, major-domos, and all the other multifarious officers so well understood in Spanish undertakings, and so necessary in such projects, were provided in profusion, and the most minute regulations specified for their government: none of our celebrated companies of 1825 could possibly surpass them in the extent of their views, or the exactness of their detail. To carry this scheme into execution, subscription shares were opened for the emigrants and others, and it is said that about eight thousand dollars (£1,600) were obtained. Doubtless if this colony and company had been allowed to put their plan of spoliation of the missions in execution, it might not have turned to so bad account. But immediately after their leaving San Blas, General Santa Anna assumed the government, displacing Gomez Farias, the leader of the democrats; and one of his first acts was to dispatch a messenger over land by the way of the Rio Colorado and round the head of the Gulf of California, in order to prevent the Californian Commissioners from carrying their projected plan against the missions into execution. The commissioners and emigrants having embarked at San Blas in two vessels, had a long passage, and allowed Santa Anna's messenger to arrive before them; so that General Figueroa refused to admit of their

commission, but assigned them lands on which they might settle as emigrants: this was remonstrated against most violently, but they were obliged to submit, and they retired to a spot on the bay of San Francisco, where they were for a time supported on provisions from the nearest mission. They endeavoured to settle themselves among the other colonists, but being accused of views contrary to the existing state of things, they were banished from the country; and in the month of May, 1835, the leaders of this colony, together with many of their followers, returned to Mexico, landing in a vessel at San Blas.

Thus ended the first attempt made by the Mexican republic to augment the population and to alter the state of California. Its termination has been such as was to be expected from such an ill-concerted plan. This foolish scheme cost a very large sum of money at a time when the government could ill spare it. However, had this money been applied in a proper manner, and had industrious agricultural settlers been sought for and introduced judiciously, the result both to the country and to the settlers would have been highly beneficial; whereas it has only brought misery on the emigrants, and loss and ridicule on the government.

It is perhaps advantageous for California that it should remain a part of the Mexican republic, in as



much as it reaps the advantage of disposing of its produce in the Mexican ports free of foreign duties. This advantage is, however, at present, but nominal; for, in the first place, it sends little or no produce to that country; and, in the second place, the coasting duty is exorbitant, being twelve per cent on the selling price where the articles are landed. But when a wiser policy is adopted, and when California becomes an exporting country, this advantage would be of much consequence. California, however, is quite a distinct country from Mexico, and has nothing in common with it except that the present inhabitants are of the same family; it is therefore to be apprehended, that on any cause of quarrel between the two countries, it will be apt to separate itself from the parent state. This from its distant situation, and the difficulty of conveying troops from Mexico, would be easily effected; and although the present population is inadequate to form permanently an independent nation, yet the fashion of splitting countries into small independent portions has become so prevalent in the late Spanish possessions, that an attempt to realise such a project may not be so improbable as it should now seem. The situation and natural resources of California are so favourable, that a small number of inhabitants could resist any attacks made upon it by such a nation as Mexico, or it might even soon overawe the coast

of Mexico itself; and force the government of that country to grant it such terms as it should demand. The shores of the Mexican republic on the Pacific are ill calculated for maintaining any maritime force; it has none at present; and from its unhealthy situation, scarcity of materials, and want of sailors or maritime enterprize, it is not likely ever to have on the Pacific any formidable navy. On the contrary, California is calculated, in an eminent degree, to become a maritime power; its coasts are healthy, its harbours excellent, and its capacity to produce materials for ship-building and marine stores is almost without limits. If, therefore, there should ever exist a sufficient population to maintain a separate sovereignty, or the occupiers of the country be of a quality and character capable of taking advantage of those resources, Mexico, instead of being able to reduce California, would be obliged to succumb to it.

Any foreign power if disposed to take possession of California could easily do so; but the happy state of peace which reigns at present in the world, and the just principles which the great powers of Europe have adopted of not interfering with the possessions of others, put any fear of that kind out of the question. The settlement of the Russians at Bodega is, strictly speaking, in the Mexican territory; but it has conducted itself so quietly that no



attempt has been made to disturb it, although suspicions have been entertained that at some future day the whole of Upper California would fall into their hands.

A latent jealousy, also, exists in the minds of some of the Mexican politicians, that if foreign emigrants were admitted in great numbers into California, they might set up for themselves, and cause the loss of the country; this however is but an imaginary contingency; and if the Mexican government would adopt a wise system of colonization laws, and a liberal general policy, under which their citizens could live happily, no fears on that account, for a great length of time, need be entertained; under the present system it is of little consequence to whom it belongs. If, indeed, a future Cochrane should visit the shores of California, and make common cause with its inhabitants, as our hero did with the Chilinos, the period might not be remote when it should make the Mexican shores tremble as Chili did those of Peru. And, truly, there seems no alternative except to admit foreign emigrants or to allow the country to remain stationary; for the character of the present population leaves no probability of its rapid increase either in number or enterprize; and nothing can be expected of emigration from the other Mexican states which are themselves but too thinly peopled,

and whose inhabitants are but ill fitted for such a country as California.

[The preceeding part of this chapter, as well as the whole of the present work, was finished and sent to England in the year 1835. The following additional particulars are given from a recent letter received by the editor from the author, and are too important to be suppressed.]

In the year 1836, the inhabitants of Monterey and the vicinity rose, and, declaring themselves independent, attacked the garrison and forced the commandant and troops to capitulate. At a public meeting of the inhabitants called subsequently, on the 7th November, at Monterey, the following Resolutions were passed as the basis of a provisional government:—

1st.—Upper California is declared to be independent of Mexico during the non-re-establishment of the Federal system which was adopted in the year 1824.

2nd.—The said California shall be erected into a free and governing state, establishing a Congress which shall dictate all the particular laws of the country and elect the other supreme powers necessary, declaring the actual "Most Excellent Deputation" constituent.

3rd.—The Religion shall be the Roman Catholic



Apostolic, without admitting the exercise of any other; but the government will not molest any persons for their particular religious opinions.

4th.—A Constitution shall regulate all the branches of the Administration “provisionally,” in conformity, as much as possible, with the expressed declaration.

5th.—Until what is contained in the foregoing articles be put in execution, Senor Don Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo shall be called on to act as Commandant General.

6th.—The President of the “Most Excellent Deputation” shall pass the necessary communications to the municipalities of the territory.

They followed up these proceedings by expelling the whole officials of the Mexican government, and all the troops from the country, and transporting them to the Mexican territory.

On receiving notice of this revolution, the Mexican government immediately had recourse to their usual mode of warfare, fulminating furious proclamations and addresses to the citizens, appealing to their patriotism, and ordering to be prepared, without delay, a formidable expedition to proceed against such audacious and unnatural sons of the Republic, whom it was incumbent on them to put down and chastise as their treason deserved. The first patriotic ebullition however soon subsided; no expedition

was prepared, California was soon forgotten, and it has remained for nearly two years to do as it pleases, to have a government of its own manufacture, or to live without a government at all. Being thus left to the freedom of their own will, the Californians, true to the spirit which has animated all the Spanish American colonies since their emancipation, immediately began to divide themselves into parties; and although there are only about five thousand Spanish creoles in the whole country, they had their party of the north, which declared for an entire independence on Mexico, and the party of the south, which adhered to Mexico on certain conditions. The want of frequent communication with Mexico renders it quite uncertain what may at present (June, 1838) be the state of the country; but it is, at least, evident now, if there was any doubt formerly, that it is at this moment in a state which cannot prevent its being taken possession of by any foreign force which may present itself. The British government seem lately to have had some suspicion that California would be encroached upon, if not taken entire possession of, by the Russians who are settled so close upon its northern frontier; but by the latest accounts no encroachment has been made, nor has any augmentation been made either in the number of people in the colony, or in the fortifications. The danger does not lie there. There is another restless and enterprising neighbour from



whom they will most probably soon have to defend themselves, or rather to submit to: for although the frontiers of North America are much more distant than the Russians, yet to such men as the Back-settlers, distance is of little moment, and they are already well acquainted with the route. The northern American tide of population must roll on southward, and overwhelm not only California, but other more important states. This latter event, however, is in the womb of time: but the invasion of California by American settlers is daily talked of; and if Santa Anna had prevailed against Texas, a portion of the inhabitants of that country, sufficient to over-run California, would now have been its masters.

There have been some thoughts of proposing to the Mexican government that it should endeavour to cancel the English debt—which now exceeds fifty millions of dollars—by a transfer of California to the creditors. This would be a wise measure on the part of Mexico, if the government could be brought to lay aside the vanity of retaining large possessions. The cession of such a disjointed part of the republic as California would be an advantage. In no case can it ever be profitable to the Mexican republic, nor can it possibly remain united to it for any length of time, if it should even be induced to rejoin this state, from which at present it is to all intents and purposes separated. Therefore, by

giving up this territory for the debt, would be getting rid of this last for nothing. But would the English creditors accept of it? I think they might, and I think they ought. They have lately displayed an inclination to treat and to receive lands as a part of the debt where no land exists belonging to Mexico. In the settlement made with Lizardi and Co. as agents for the Mexican government in London, lands are stipulated to be delivered at a certain price per acre, in Texas in which Mexico does not possess an acre, in the state of New Mexico which is many hundred leagues inland in Sonora, and God knows where. To the good fortune however of the English creditors this contract has been disapproved of by the Mexican government, and it is hoped that some more rational scheme will be hit upon to give the creditors some sort of tangible security for at least a part of what they have been so scandalously fleeced out of. If California was ceded for the English debt, the creditors might be formed into a company, with the difference that they should have a sort of sovereignty over the territory, somewhat in the manner of the East India company. This in my opinion would certainly bring a revenue in time which might be equal to the interest of the debt, and under good management and with an English population, would most certainly realize all that has been predicted of this fine country.