



MISSION OF SAN CARLOS and BAY OF CARMEL, UPPER CALIFORNIA.

## CHAP. V.

ACCOUNT OF THE MISSIONARY ESTABLISHMENTS.—PRESENT STATE OF THE INDIANS IN THEM.—REMARKS ON THE MISSIONARY SYSTEM GENERALLY, AND ON THE CONVERSION OF INFIDELS.

From the feeble and mild physical and moral characters of the aboriginal natives of California, as described in the preceding chapter, the success of the missionaries in subjecting them to their temporal and spiritual dominion, although certainly remarkable, is yet very easily understood. Much credit is unquestionably due to them, and the result exhibits in a striking point of view, the efficacy of the system followed by the Fathers, more especially when compared with that adopted by missionaries in other countries. Still, it will hardly be believed that had the Jesuits of Lower California or the Franciscans of the upper province (and the same may be said of the Jesuits in Paraguay) been set down amid many of the other tribes of the same continent, and yet more, among the fierce races of the islands and continents in the southern hemisphere, they would never have succeeded in civilizing—or to avoid dispute, domesticating them, but would have been destroyed or driven from the country in



a short space of time. Their lot, however, was fortunately different; and assuredly there are few events in history more remarkable on the whole, or more interesting, than the transformation, on the great scale, wrought by the Jesuits and Franciscans in Paraguay and California. In the present chapter, I purpose giving an account of the Indians in their converted or domesticated state; but must previously detail the progress of the different missionary establishments and their actual condition.

Humboldt says that in 1776 there were eight villages or missions; and in 1790, eleven; and in 1802, eighteen. According to La Pérouse (who visited California in that year) there were ten missions in 1786, and the number of converted or domesticated Indians was 5143. One of the missions, Santa Barbara, was only just founded and contained no converts. Vancouver visited the coast in 1793, and found that several new missions had been founded since the visit of Pérouse; viz. Santa Cruz, Santa Rosa, and La Soledad.

The following authentic document, supplied by Humboldt, gives the names of the missions, and dates of their foundation respectively, and the population in the year 1802, or rather, the number of the *Converted Indians*—the other classes not being mentioned. It is extracted from the Essay on New Spain:—

## MISSIONARY ESTABLISHMENTS.

Foundation	Missions.	Males.	Females.	Total.
1769 ..	San Diego	737	822	1559
1798 ..	San Luis Rey	256	276	532
1776 ..	San Juan Capistrano	502	511	1013
1771 ..	San Gabriel	532	515	1047
1797 ..	San Fernando	317	297	614
1782 ..	Santa Buenaventura	436	502	938
1786 ..	Santa Barbara	521	572	1093
1787 ..	La Purissima Conception	457	571	1028
1772 ..	San Luis Obispo	374	325	699
1797 ..	San Miguel	309	305	614
1791 ..	La Soledad	296	267	563
1771 ..	San Antonio de Padua	568	484	1052
1770 ..	San Carlos	376	312	688
1797 ..	San Juan Bautista	530	428	958
1794 ..	Santa Cruz	238	199	437
1777 ..	Santa Clara	736	555	1291
1797 ..	San José	327	295	622
1779 ..	San Francisco	433	381	814
Total		7945	7617	15562

Humboldt informs us that he could not ascertain the numbers of the other classes of the population in 1802 whether whites, mestizos, or mulattoes, either in the presidios or in the service of the fathers; but he believed the whole number did not exceed 1300. This would give the whole population of Upper California, at that time at something less than 17,000 (16,862).

The number of missions founded to the present time is twenty-one: and the total amount of the Indian population in these, in the year 1831, was 18,683. The number of other classes, exclusive of the Indians, that is, of the garrison and free settlers, was 4,342,—making a total of 23,025 for the whole



country. The following table gives an accurate statement of all classes of the population, and in every locality, in the year just mentioned: the enumeration will hold nearly good for the present time (1835).

Names of the Jurisdictions, Missions, and Towns.		PEOPLE OF ALL CLASSES AND AGES.				
		Men.	Women.	Boys.	Girls.	Total
JURISDICTION OF S. FRANCISCO.	PRESIDIO OF S. FRANCISCO	..124..	85..	89..	73..	371
	Town of San José de Guadalupe	..166..	145..	103..	110..	524
	Mission of S. Francisco Solano	..285..	242..	88..	90..	705
	id. of S. Rafael	..406..	410..	105..	106..	1027
	id. of S. Francisco	..146..	65..	13..	13..	237
	id. of Santa Clara	..752..	491..	68..	60..	1371
	id. of S. José	..823..	659..	100..	145..	1727
	id. of Santa Cruz	..222..	94..	30..	20..	366
JURISDICTION OF MONTEREY.	PRESIDIO OF MONTEREY	..311..	190..	110..	97..	708
	Village of Branciforte	..52..	34..	27..	17..	130
	Mission of S. Juan Bautista	..480..	351..	85..	71..	987
	id. of S. Carlos	..102..	79..	34..	21..	236
	id. of Na. Sa. de la Soledad	..210..	81..	23..	20..	334
	id. of S. Antonio	..394..	209..	51..	17..	671
	id. of S. Miguel	..349..	292..	46..	61..	748
JURISDICTION OF STA. BARBARA.	id. of S. Luis Obispo	..211..	103..	8..	7..	329
	PRESIDIO OF STA. BARBARA	..167..	120..	162..	164..	613
	Mission of La Purissima	..151..	218..	47..	34..	450
	id. of Sta. Ines	..142..	136..	82..	96..	456
	id. of Sta. Barbara	..374..	267..	51..	70..	762
	id. of Buenaventura	..383..	283..	66..	59..	791
	id. of S. Fernando	..249..	226..	177..	181..	833
JURISDICTION OF S. DIEGO.	Town of la Reyna de los Angeles	..552..	421..	213..	202..	1388
	PRESIDIO OF S. DIEGO	..295..				
	Mission of S. Gabriel	..574..				
	id. of S. Juan Capistrano	..464..				
	id. of S. Luis Rey	..1138..				
	id. of S. Diego	..750..	520..	162..	146..	1575
Totals		10,272	7632	2623	2498	23,025

\* We are unable to give these latter details accurately, the Copy having accidentally caught fire when in the hands of the Printer.

In illustration of the preceding table, as well as to exhibit the general economy of the missions, it is necessary to give some account of the various departments or classes in which the population is distributed.

**PRESIDENCIES OR PRESIDIOS.**—Upper California is divided into four military districts, the headquarters of which are respectively denominated the *Presidio* of the district or jurisdiction. At each of these, troops are stationed under the authority of a military commandant. These presidencies, as seen in the table, are San Francisco, Monterey, Santa Barbara and San Diego. The buildings at the different stations, are nearly all of the same class and dimensions; they consist of a square of about one hundred yards each side, enclosed by a wall of unburnt bricks called *adobes* of about four yards in height; within which are the residence of the commandant; lodging for the troops; the church; warehouses; &c. A short distance from the presidios are what they choose to call the *castillos* or forts. That of San Francisco, which is thought to be the most formidable, is about a mile distant from the presidio; it is however of little use, both from its bad construction and too elevated situation. It is meant to protect the entrance to the harbour; but in its present state it can neither protect nor annoy any thing. That of Monterey, although its situation



is good for commanding the anchorage, yet as it has no parapet and only a few guns of small calibre, and in very bad condition, is of no consequence. At Santa Barbara two old guns lie on an esplanade, but are quite unserviceable. The castillo of San Diego is about five miles from the presidio; its locality renders it of no use, but there are good situations in the intricate entrance to the harbour which could be fortified so as easily to prevent the entrance of an enemy. Those fortifications resemble the innumerable others which the Spaniards thought necessary to erect in all their colonies. A fort was always thought absolutely necessary at every supposed vulnerable point; but so that a castillo was once erected, with a few guns generally of heavy metal—the duty of the government and the commandant for the time being was considered as fulfilled; and the rot and the rust were for ever after left to their natural province of destruction. It is nearly a century since any thing has been done for the castillos of California. A good practical illustration of the strength of these forts was afforded in the year 1819, when a pirate vessel from Buenos Ayres landed a few men at Monterey, captured the fort, destroyed most of its guns and pillaged and burnt the town.

In each of the presidios there are a certain number of soldiers stationed, who have always been

troops of an inferior description. Those that went with the first settlers were a sort of militia raised on the Indian borders of Sonora and denominated "*compañias de cueros*," literally *Hide companies*, from their wearing a sort of cuirass of hides (*cuero*) in order to defend them from the arrows of the Indians. The number of troops assigned to each presidio was two hundred and fifty, but this number was never complete: they consisted entirely of horse. They were always badly clothed and worse paid, so that their appearance was that of tattered ragamuffins; and from their undisciplined state and idle habits they were good for nothing except to retake any of the miserable Indians who might escape from the missions, which was indeed their chief employment. The policy of the missionaries always was to prevent the increase of any considerable population except at their own missions; and the soldiers were not allowed to marry except by express permission from the king, and this was of course not easily obtained; so that those men lived in a sort of celibacy which corresponded with the other monastic establishments. In the present day things are somewhat altered, but not much for the better; for whatever soldiers are sent to California are the refuse of the Mexican army, and most frequently are deserters, mutineers, or men guilty of military crimes. Those presidios are also appropriated as



receptacles, for transported felons; so that California is the Botany-bay of Mexico.

**RANCHIOS OR NATIONAL FARMS.**—In the neighbourhood of each presidios and generally at the distance of four or five leagues, certain farms, called "*Ranchios*," are set apart for the use of the soldiers. These, on their first establishment, were also meant to be depositories of tithes to be collected in cattle and grain by the government; but as the missions have never been liable to tithes, and the other settlements are of small value, this branch of revenue was never of much consequence, and those ranchios only contain a few cattle belonging to the presidios. They are under the direction of the commandants of the respective presidios.

**TOWNS OR "PUEBLOS."**—There are only three free towns independent of the missions and presidios in all Upper California. These towns owe their origin to the retirement of the old Spanish or Creole soldiers in the service of the missions, who, after a certain length of service, become entitled to exemption from any further military services and have permission either to return to their native land or to settle in the country. Most of these soldiers are married and have families; and when the retirement of the pueblos is preferred, grants of land with some necessary articles are given them to commence their new occupation of husbandry,

which, with the aid of the natives, they generally cultivate successfully. The most fertile spots have been generally chosen for the pueblos; and the produce of these not only supports the inhabitants of the place, but supplies the wants of the neighbouring mission and presidio.

The principal pueblo is *Nuestra Senora de los Angeles*; situated about eight miles from the mission of San Gabriel, and about twenty miles from a roadstead on the Pacific called San Pedro. The population of the town is about fifteen hundred. It has an alcalde or mayor, three regidores and a syndico: this composes its "*Ayuntamiento*" or Town Council. The vicinity is occupied by vineyards and maize fields; and as the lands are level and highly fertile, it is capable of great agricultural improvement. This town has been proposed as the capital of the country; and as the Spaniards have in their colonies always chosen an inland situation for their capital towns, this scheme might have been adopted if the country had remained in their hands; but it is to be presumed that Monterey, will, under the present circumstances, be considered as the capital until a population shall arise on the bay of San Francisco, when, from its superiority as a harbour, the capital town will ultimately, no doubt, be fixed there.

The second town is *San José*, situated about a league from the mission of Santa Clara, and twenty



leagues from the bay of San Francisco. A small river, or rather large rivulet passes by it, and discharges itself into that bay. The inhabitants amount to about six hundred, and it has its alcalde and council the same as Los Angeles. The inhabitants occupy themselves in the cultivation of wheat and other grain; they have a considerable number of cattle, and trade in the skins and tallow of deer which are found in great numbers in this district. The situation of this town is in a very extensive plain, and in a part of the country highly adapted for the cultivation of wheat; but in some places it is deficient in water, at least for the purpose of irrigation, which in many parts of California is necessary for successful cultivation, owing to the long droughts which are experienced at certain seasons of the year. In this neighbourhood there are still large tracts of fine land unoccupied by the missions.

The third town is called *Branciforte*: it is about a mile distant from the mission of Santa Cruz, a mile and a half from the shore of the bay of Monterey, and eighteen leagues from the Presidio of that name. Its inhabitants do not much exceed a hundred and fifty, and their occupation is rural labour. This town has also its Alcalde, but is dependent on the military commandant of Monterey.

This account of the few free towns or rather, villages, that exist in Upper California, shows how lit-

tle progress population has made in this country by free settlers. This arises not only from the inaptitude of the Spaniards for colonizing a country of this description, but also from the jealousy of the missionaries, who arrogated to themselves the property of almost the whole of the land, so that settlers could only establish themselves by their toleration. By this means only a select number were admitted, and these firm adherents of the missionaries, who would blindly obey their mandates; which mandates, with the inquisition in their neighbourhood, were not to be trifled with. The whole of the free settlers even at this time do not exceed five thousand. In this number is included the whole population of white and mixed casts who live in the country, in the free villages, and at the missions and presidios, exclusive of the Indians bound to the missions. Of these free settlers many live at the missions and on their lands, and can hardly be said to be independent of them. It is obvious that it is from the free white and creole races and from the introduction of fresh colonists, the future population of California must proceed; for the enslaved Indians are already on the decline, and, on the dissolution of the missionary system, they will dwindle away and soon become almost extinguished.

Nothing can be more remarkable than the physi-