

in order to procure a fresh stock of water and to recover their crew, many of whom were already affected with scurvy. The captain then gave up his plan of pursuing this route, and proceeded by the usual course to the northward. After a long passage they made the coast of California and put into Monterey, where they laid in a fresh stock of water and provisions and refreshed their crew; they then left that port and proceeded to San Blas. The whole time occupied in the voyage from Manilla to San Blas was eleven months; but as a great proportion of the voyage to Lima was still to be performed, and as there were rumours of English vessels being in the Pacific, the captain petitioned the viceroy of Mexico to be allowed to discharge his cargo at San Blas, which was granted, and a termination put to this eventful voyage. At the present time a voyage from Manilla to San Blas is performed in about seventy days, and from Manilla to Lima in three months. If the good ship *Philipina* had proceeded to Lima her ultimate destination, her voyage could not have been shorter than fourteen or fifteen months. This vessel remained a year at San Blas, where her expenses amounted to 72,000 Spanish dollars, and then returned to Manilla.

A friend of mine has often told me that he was the first who owned a square rigged Mexican vessel

on the Pacific. He arrived at San Blas in 1802, in a vessel belonging to the Philippine company, and having obtained liberty to remain in the country, set about constructing a vessel at that port, for the purpose of trading on the coast. After an infinity of difficulties he succeeded in launching and rigging his vessel, which he called the *Guadalupe* in honour of the Patron Saint of Mexico. This vessel was of the burden of 26 tons and brig-rigged. The owner was not a little proud of his enterprise and of his vessel, with which he proceeded to trade in the gulf of California. He had also the honour to be the first who entered the port of Guaymas with a sailing vessel, although it is now so much frequented by vessels of all descriptions. On approaching this fine harbour he had his doubts if there was sufficient water to admit the *Guadalupe*, for she drew no less than four feet and a half; but by keeping the lead constantly going, and approaching under easy sail he anchored in safety, and found that a 74 gun ship might have done so along side of him. This vessel being the first of that class which was ever seen on that part of the coast, created great curiosity and wonder; and on the report of her arrival reaching the interior, the country people flocked to see her, the most respectable families coming from a great distance to Guaymas for that purpose.

Although what has been said may in some measure account for the backwardness and want of enterprise which was so remarkable in all the Spanish colonies of America, yet another great cause sprung from the immense field which every one found unoccupied in his immediate neighbourhood, and which presented at home more objects than his industry or his capital could embrace, and prevented him from embarking in maritime enterprises to distant parts, with which he had few or no commercial relations, and of which he had little geographical knowledge. A Spanish creole of Peru had much more knowledge of the land of Canaan or Palestine, than of Mexico or California.

The separation however of the colonies from the mother country, and consequently from the Spanish monopoly, opened a wide field to all sort of enterprise; but the native inhabitants were without knowledge or means to profit by the circumstance, in as far as regarded the navigation and commercial facilities of these coasts. The want was at first almost entirely supplied by strangers who resorted to these countries on the opening of the ports, and by them the coasting trade was at first exclusively carried on. The vessels were owned by strangers, and the crews consisted of foreign seamen. This however was soon looked on with jealousy by the new republics, although some of the more enlightened

saw that the only way to create a marine was to admit foreign sailors, foreign vessels, and foreign capital, in order to breed up their own people to a seafaring life, and to give time for native artisans and native capital to grow up, so as to enable them to have ships and a coasting trade by degrees. Chili seemed to adopt this principle, as it has done every other liberal one, in a much greater degree than any of the other states; but Mexico, which is the least maritime of all the others and ought to admit foreign seamen with most freedom, has adopted the old-fashioned and exclusive measures, as if it were a first rate maritime nation of the old school; decreeing that all Mexican vessels shall be commanded and officered by Mexicans, and that two thirds of their crews shall be native seamen. This wise decree was made when there was not one Mexican captain, officer, or seaman, on the whole Pacific coast of the Mexican republic! Mexico, in this as well as in all other matters of commercial regulation, has adhered more than any of her sister republics to the old Spanish regimen; and like her maternal prototype has succeeded in putting herself almost out of the list of commercial countries. While the government is continually talking of the country's regeneration and of its determination to adopt a liberal system, and particularly to protect the coasting trade, it is daily issuing some absurd

law founded on the jealousy of strangers interfering; by which it manages to put the country almost on the same footing as it was in the time of the Spanish monopoly. If the laws now in existence on paper were rigidly enforced, there would not at this moment be a single coasting vessel on all the Mexican coast of the Pacific. There is not a single vessel at this moment commanded by a Mexican, nor are there any officered or manned by natives; yet decrees are thundered out against abuses and contraband and infractions of laws, as bulls are from the Vatican, and are as much attended to. The miserable and antiquated commercial policy of Mexico has rendered the merchants in her dominions a set of smugglers; her custom-house officers their abettors; and has reduced her trade and the revenues from her custom-houses to a point almost of insignificance.

From what has been said it will not appear strange that the intercourse between California and Mexico has never been very active: it has not improved much since the separation of the countries from Spain. The communication between the two is still very infrequent, and the commercial transactions of no importance whatever. California holds hardly the relation of even a colony to Mexico: Mexico has more intercourse with China than with California. Even at the time I am writing, advices

are not received in Mexico from Monterey above once or twice in a year. The last deputy elected by California to the Mexican congress informed me that during the two years he served, he only received two letters from California, while in Mexico. It remains to be seen whether the new order of things in this country will lead to more enlightened views, and greater commercial enterprize. The new project, also, of a line of communication by steamers along the whole coast of the Pacific, if ever carried into effect, will doubtless modify considerably the present state of things; but nothing can permanently benefit California until she possesses inhabitants of more enlightened views, and consents to remodel her internal economy, civil and political.

Although no further connected with the subject of the present chapter, than in having reference to navigation, I cannot help mentioning in this place two circumstances of recent occurrence, which have come to my notice, and which may by some be considered as illustrating the very difficult and long-contested question of the first peopling of America.

The British brig, *Forester*, bound from London to the river Columbia, and commanded by Mr. John Jennings, fell in with, in the year 1813, a Japanese junk of about 700 tons burden, one hundred

and fifty miles off the north west coast of America, and abreast of Queen Charlotte's Island, about 49° of N. latitude. There were only three persons alive on board, one of whom was the captain. By the best accounts captain Jennings could get from them, they had been tossing about at sea for nearly eighteen months: they had been twice in sight of the land of America and driven off. Some beans still remained on which they had been maintaining themselves, and they had caught rain water for their drink. This vessel had left the northern coast of Japan, loaded with timber for some of the islands to the southward, and had been blown off the coast by gales of wind. She had no masts standing, but was in other respects not much injured. Captain Jennings took the survivors on board of his vessel, and delivered them at the Russian settlement of Norfolk Sound; the governor of which, owing to the friendship existing between Russia and the Japanese, sent a vessel on purpose with them to their own country. In the course of ages many such circumstances might happen; and if a vessel in a like situation having some women on board should have been driven on shore on the American coast, the origin of a race would have been the result. And considering the high antiquity of the Japan empire, and the number of ages which navigation has been known to them, it

is quite probable that many such contingencies should have happened; particularly when it is considered that in these latitudes the prevailing winds blow from the westward, and consequently directly from the coast of Japan to that of America.

The other circumstance is the recent arrival of a Japanese junk at the Sandwich Islands, and of which I have received the following account. "On the first of January, 1833, a Japanese junk appeared off those islands, and anchored on the west side of Waohoo, when a native of China living on the island went on board and found four men alive, but only one able to walk. The account they gave was, that they had left Japan about eleven months before, with a crew of eight people; that they were driven off the coast; that they had been living on salt fish and rain water; and that the other four men had died of starvation. This vessel was only of about 80 tons burden, and was lost in attempting to get her into a harbour in Waohoo." This is a proof that the islands in the Pacific might have been, at least, peopled from the same quarter; although the arrival of vessels from Japan at these islands must have been more rare than on the north coast of America,—because they are situated more southerly, and not in the tract of the prevailing westerly winds, but on the contrary within the easterly trade winds. The present circumstance, however, re-

moves all doubt of the possibility of such arrivals, and is the more remarkable, as the Sandwich Islands are amongst the most easterly, and consequently most distant from the Asiatic continent, so that the arrival of vessels at the other less remote islands is still more probable.

REVENUE.—From what has been stated, in this and the preceding chapter, of the agriculture and and commerce of California, its revenue cannot be supposed to be of much consequence. It may be said, indeed, that before the revolution it produced no national revenue whatever. The tithes which belonged to the government were collected from the free settlers, but as the missions were exempted, their value was a mere trifle. On the opening of the ports in 1821, and for some years after, the collectors of the customs were officers appointed by the different presidios to receive such duties as might be obtained from any vessels arriving in their respective districts; and although a commissioner was sent from Mexico in 1825 little was done by him. The same practice continued till 1828, when Don José Maria Echandia was named commandant general, who appointed a collector and comptroller of the custom-house to reside at San Diego, and to have subordinate officers at Monterey. Since that time some order has been introduced in the collection of the duties. About this time it

was conceded by the Mexican government, that owing to the poverty of California, and to encourage its settlement, two-fifths of the duties established by the general Mexican Tariff should be deducted on all goods landed in both Californias; but on being re-exported to the other Mexican states these two-fifths should be exacted on the goods so re-exported: this regulation still exists. The Mexican duties are charged by a Tariff which fixes the rates on every different article. This Tariff was promulgated in 1828, and discovers the utter incapacity of its framers for such a task. The whole of the imports are fixed at a most exorbitantly high rate, which causes a duty of not less, in most cases, than from a hundred and fifty to two hundred per cent on the first cost. But ridiculous distinctions are formed in order to protect the imaginary interests of their native manufactures, and fruits of their soil, as well as many prohibitions with the same object. The modern governments of the world are at last discovering their errors and striving to explode the old fashioned and ruinously illiberal system of protecting duties and national preference to manufactures and arts not adapted to their soil or circumstances, and which has contributed so much to the alienation of one people from another; as if they had distinct interests, and as if they ought to contribute to the discomfort of their neighbours

for the purpose of securing some imaginary advantage to themselves.

The Mexicans, however, still see nothing but wisdom and the sources of political prosperity in all the antiquated prohibitions, protections, and exorbitant duties, of the most barbarous age of commerce! This outrageous system, so contrary to sound policy, and so opposite to the modern and enlightened doctrines of political economy, has reduced the revenue from her custom-houses to a trifle, and her treasury to bankruptcy. The old colonial system, however much decried by the new republics, seems so rooted in their natures, that nothing but what savours of its ancient principles seems good policy. The same organization of the custom-houses, the same divisions of duties under different denominations and per-centages which create an interminable set of accounts and documents, the same number of officers,—in short, the same confusion and facilities for contraband, still exist in their revenue department in all the perfection of the olden time. These and their necessary appendages of Alcavalas and custom-houses in every inland town, which rendered the fiscal laws and practices of Spain and her colonies so intolerable, still flourish in all their vigour and place the new republics almost out of the pale of enlightened commercial communities, and at the same time

make them so remarkable for their bad financial credit. The whole of the new republics which have arisen out of the old Spanish colonies, have strictly imitated their parent, in putting their finances in a state of bankruptcy; in which under their present systems they are likely to remain.

I should be exceedingly sorry by the foregoing general observations, to inculcate the whole of the statesmen in those new countries now erected into republics; I know that many of them are of the most liberal and enlightened views and capable of governing their country on better principles; and I also know that supposed circumstances of necessity oblige a great proportion of their best informed citizens to yield to the policy which they know to be mischievous, in the hope that in better times wiser measures may be adopted. But it unfortunately has happened, particularly with Mexico, of which country I am now speaking, that its government has been hitherto controuled by persons who have not put in practice not even the rudiments of an enlightened policy in its commercial laws, nor made one step to the reform of its ruined and bankrupt finances. Unfortunately, the great bulk of the people think, that instead of reducing the duties, abating the eternal custom-houses, and simplifying the absurd classifications of duties at the maritime custom-houses, in order to augment their

prosperity and better their revenue; they have only to impose higher duties, multiply officers of the customs, pass restrictive measures for the encouragement of native manufactures which do not exist, and to fulminate decrees and issue moral precepts against unfaithful employés, and smuggling citizens, and foreigners. In this manner the Mexican government has gone on through all its changes in the steady course of heaping duties upon duties, multiplying restriction and augmenting offices, till its mercantile system has become a monstrosity not to be paralleled in any corner of the world.

The general Mexican tariff applies equally to California as to the other parts of the republic, except the abatement of two-fifths already mentioned; but as this is only a temporary measure it is liable to be recalled at any time the government may think fit. Many of the regulations and prohibitions of this tariff are quite absurd as applied to California, for its productions are entirely different from those of the tropical climates of Mexico for which it is adapted: but nothing has been attempted to modify its provisions so as to fit it to the peculiar circumstances of that country.

The following account of the financial state of Upper California in 1831 may be depended on: it was furnished to me by a friend well acquainted with the subject.

The expense of the presidial companies—according to the late regulations is estimated at ninety-one thousand dollars per annum, to which must be added the pay of the commandant general, sub-inspector, auxiliary troops of the squadron of Mazatlan, maintenance of the convicts, and other various charges; which altogether may be reckoned at forty thousand dollars. This will make the whole charges borne by the general Mexican government amount to one hundred and thirty-one thousand dollars. The nett amount of the revenue does not exceed thirty-two thousand dollars, thus making a deficiency of about one hundred thousand dollars annually to be borne by the Mexican treasury, over the revenue produced in the territory of Upper California.

This is the state of the revenue of Upper California, to which Mexico would have, if it paid its debts and its soldiers, to remit one hundred thousand dollars annually; but as the Mexican treasury is not in the habit of satisfying very punctually the demands against it, and as it has quite as urgent claims from other quarters of the republic nearer home, California is left to bear the deficiency the best way it can. Instead of money, military officers and placemen are sent, with reams of laws and orders to repair the system, and to apply the current nostrums of the day to heal all maladies

—leaving as heretofore the soldiers in rags and the employés without pay : the result of the whole is, that all parties have to recur to the missions and the friars for their daily maintenance to prevent them from starvation. The debt owing by the government to the missions for such supplies, amounted in 1831 to four hundred and fifty thousand dollars.*

* No alterations have been made in this chapter since it was first written : it must, consequently, be understood to refer to the state of things previously to the late revolution.—ED.

CHAP. VIII.

UPPER CALIFORNIA CONSIDERED AS A FIELD FOR FOREIGN COLONIZATION.

IT would not be supposed *a priori*, that men would select for their abode either the extreme northern regions, where the fruits of the earth are scarce, and the labour required to produce them great, and where all manner of privations are excessive ; or the burning climes of the tropics, where dangers and discomforts of a very different kind, but equally great, abound : and, yet, however inexplicable it may be, we find human beings who seem to prefer for their habitations the frozen regions of the higher latitudes, and the scorching plains of the torrid zone. We find people clinging to a soil which does not yield them sufficient subsistence, and to a climate which threatens to freeze them to death : we find human beings in Patagonia, who have to support life by eating raw fish taken from the sea, or the flesh of wild animals, whose skins serve to preserve them from perishing of cold. We