

APPENDIX.

I.

REMARKS ON THE HARBOURS OF CALIFORNIA, WITH
DIRECTIONS FOR NAVIGATING THEM. BY CAPT. JOHN
HALL. (EXTRACT OF A LETTER TO THE EDITOR.)

* * * * * The following particulars are extracted from my journal of a voyage made to the coasts of California, in the year 1822. I give them literally as set down in my log-book at the time.

LA BODEGA.—On the 8th of June we entered the port of this the most southern settlement of the Russians on the west coast of California. It lies in lat. $38^{\circ} 19'$ North, and is only about 58 miles N.W. of San Francisco—the most northern of the Spanish missions on that coast. On the following day we were visited by the Russian Governor, who came from the town, which is situated about 30 miles north, on the coast. He brought with him two fine fat sheep, a large tub of butter and some milk, which were very acceptable after a long voyage, and gave us proof, at once, of his hospitality and of the abundance and cheapness of provisions. The price of a bullock at this time was only twelve dollars, and of a fine sheep two dollars. Vegetables were also plentiful in their proper season.

To sail into this port, when the winds are from the N.W. (and these are the prevailing winds throughout nearly the

whole year, with the exception of the winter months), a vessel coming from the Northward should pass between the point and the rock; as a dangerous shoal lies immediately off the south end of the rock. We anchored with the rock bearing W. by S. distant three-quarters of a mile. The bottom is good holding ground all throughout, being a mixture of clay and sand. In port, a vessel is sheltered from all winds but the South and S.W. The watering place is situated in the small bay where the Russian store-house stands, and the water is good and easy of access.

On the 14th of June we sailed from La Bodega, proceeding southward for the adjoining Mexican port of San Francisco, which we entered on the 17th, having been detained on account of the thick foggy weather and light winds which caused us to anchor frequently.

SAN FRANCISCO.—In entering this port, which is one of the best and most interesting, from its security and magnitude, in the world, great attention must be paid to the tides, which, during the full and change of the moon, run very rapid, and, I should think, in mid-channel, at the rate of six miles per hour. A vessel going in, would do well to keep in the middle of the stream, as on both sides there are very strong eddies in which you are apt to lose the command of the helm, and consequently are obliged to anchor. After getting within the heads, keep *Fort Blanco* about a point on the starboard bow. Passing the fort, the anchorage is situated in a small bay, immediately abreast of the *Presidio*, where a vessel will find good holding ground in five fathoms, about a cable's length from the beach. Provisions are cheap; a bullock costs only six dollars, and eggs are two dollars per hundred: the harbour also abounds

with fish, which can be procured with a net in great quantities.

MONTEREY.—On the 20th, we weighed for Monterey, where we came to on the 24th, saluting the fort with five guns, which were returned by the same number. As a harbour, Monterey is extremely inferior to San Francisco; however, it is quite protected from the South and S.W. winds; and by anchoring well under the point, a vessel may also be protected from the N.W., although the N.W. winds send in a very heavy swell. Fish here also is plentiful, as are likewise provisions generally, including *good bread*.

On the 27th of the same month, we took our departure for Santa Barbara, where we came to an anchor on the 29th.

SANTA BARBARA.—This bay is only sheltered from the N.W. winds, being exposed to the South and S.W. The anchorage is not very good, being hard sand, and overgrown with sea-weed. We had such a quantity of this on our anchor, when we hove it up, that it entirely impeded the ship's progress until we got it clear. We found no tide nor currents; but there appeared to be a rise and fall, in-shore, of about two feet. All kinds of provisions are cheap here, as also fruits, viz. grapes, pears, apples and plums, in their season.

SAN PEDRO.—We sailed from Santa Barbara on the 6th of July, and anchored in the bay of San Pedro, on the 8th, in the evening. We found the anchorage good, and a safe landing place, about three-quarters of a mile South of the small Rock or Island, marked in the chart. The mission of San Gabriel, is about ten leagues distant from the landing place, which latter is called San Pedro. This name

can be only applicable to the *anchorage*, as the shore at the time we visited it had no houses erected upon it, nor were there any cultivated grounds adjoining.

SAN JUAN.—On the 13th we sailed for San Juan, where we anchored on the following day (it being distant only about 30 miles) in five fathom water. In coming into this bay, from the North, care must be taken to give the bluff Point a wide berth, as some dangerous rocks lie off it, distant about a mile or more. Here, provisions, fruits, vegetables and fish are plentiful. Good wine can also be procured from the Friars, both white wine and red; the latter being of a peculiarly fine flavour.

SAN DIEGO.—On the 18th we got under weigh again, for the neighbouring port of San Diego, where we arrived on the following day, anchoring in ten fathoms, about a mile wide of the point. We found the tide setting out at the rate of one and a half mile per hour. A vessel should always keep the North shore aboard, as we found the deepest water there. Grapes here are in great abundance and good wine is produced from them.

The ports of *La Bodega*, *San Francisco*, *Monterey*, *Santa Barbara*, *San Pedro* and *San Diego* are so accurately delineated in the chart, by Mr. Arrowsmith, now before me,* that any further remarks would be superfluous; and it is needless to dilate upon the minor ports both of Upper and Lower California, which, although the seats of *missions*, are yet of little mercantile importance; always, however, excepting the port of San Quintin, lat. 30° 23' N.

When we arrived on the coast, the country had only a few

* The map attached to this volume.—ED.

weeks before declared itself independent of Spain; we were consequently received on our entrance to every new port in a hostile manner, or with great suspicion, until they satisfied themselves that we were not a Spanish cruizer.

We were surprised to find a *Russian establishment* so far South as *La Bodega*, but the inhabitants all along the coast considered it as an intrusive settlement within the boundaries of Mexico, and threatened to drive them (the Russians) out whenever they should have sufficient force. By the latest accounts the Russians are still there, and increasing.

In conclusion I would remark that California viewed as a maritime station is unrivalled by any other section of the western coast of America. The ports of San Francisco, San Diego and San Quintin, afford the most secure anchorage for numerous fleets, with facilities for establishing wharfs, docks and arsenals of all descriptions. The climate is one of the best and most healthy I have ever visited, and the country is one of the most fertile. Exclusive of Lower California, this country contains upwards of 430,000 square miles, and, allowing only fifty inhabitants to each, is capable of supporting a population of twenty-one millions of people. From its geographical position it possesses very great advantages on account of the expeditious and easy intercourse which it can maintain with Japan, China, the Phillipine Islands, India, Australia, and all the Islands in the Pacific. In the above computation of space and population that small part of territory occupied by the Russians is included, as I believe, neither by treaty nor by conquest, can they allege any right to its possession.

I am, Sir, your obedient Servant,

JOHN HALL.

Home Cottage, Blackheath, Dec. 15, 1838.