

ashes; some of the defenceless old men, who from their infirmities could not escape, were put to death, and forty or fifty women and children carried off as prisoners. This was not all: these prisoners were apportioned as slaves to various families, with whom they still remain in servitude, and receive very harsh treatment. Smarting under such wrongs, it is not surprising that the Indians should retaliate. They openly assert that after taking all the horses, they will commence with families; and many of those which are situated on the frontiers, experience much alarm. In June 1841, an Englishman was shot by an arrow at the door of his house, early in the evening. The Indians enticed him out by making a noise near by, and the moment he opened the door, with a candle in his hand, an arrow was sent through his heart.

The Indians at present rarely steal any thing but horses; but so daring are they, that they not unfrequently take them out of the enclosures near the pueblos. Their reason for confining themselves to this description of property is, that with them they are able to avoid pursuit, which would not be the case if they took cattle. The Californians, on detecting and apprehending the aggressors, show them no mercy, and their lives are made the forfeit. This constant foray on one side or the other keeps up a continual embitterment, and as long as the present imbecile government lasts, this state of things must every day grow worse, and will undoubtedly tend to affect the value of property, as well as to prevent immigration, and settlement in the country.

To all strangers but those of the Spanish race, the Indians seem in general well disposed, as they have usually received from the former considerate and kind treatment. The character of these Indians is not represented as savage, and they were little disposed to trouble the whites until they had been themselves ejected from the missions, and forced to consort with those who are yet in a wild state. The knowledge they have of the Californians, of the missionary establishments, and the manner of conducting them, enables them to act more effectively; and if it were not for the presence of the English and Americans, they would either drive the Spanish race out of the country, or confine them to the narrow limits of their villages.

The number of Indians is variously stated, at from twelve to fifteen thousand; but it is believed by some of the best informed, that their number, since the small-pox made its ravages among them, is not much more than one-half of this number, or eight or nine thousand. The principal part of these are the tribes on the Sacramento.

In like manner, there has been an exaggeration in the computation