

came forth to greet us, with an ample retinue of attendants, of many varieties of colour, from the darkest Indian to the pure white. The administrador is a kind, excellent old man, who has risen from being a corporal in the army, to his present post. I could not learn his original name. His wife belongs to one of the best families in the country; and on her marriage with the administrador, she insisted upon his taking her name, which is Aliza, one of the most distinguished in California in bygone days. This, I understood, was not unusual, as the old family pride still predominates among these people. To the old lady we were soon introduced; her countenance and appearance bespoke her excellent character, which is well known throughout California. Nothing could be cleaner or more tidy than her house. Señor Aliza was too unwell to attend upon us, but his deputy acted as a substitute for that purpose. Shortly after our arrival, breakfast was announced, of which, after the ride we had had on our hard horses, we gladly partook.

This meal was considered by us as rather a light one, and consisted principally of fruit, and small ollas, peppers, &c. What it lacked in quantity was made up in quality. This was according to the usage of the country, and although Don Miguel wished to speak to Señora Aliza, with reference to a larger supply, we refused to give her any more trouble than could be avoided. She had prepared the whole with her own hands, and prided herself on her admirable management and cookery. Few certainly could equal her in the preparation of stews and delicate high-flavoured dishes; but of each there was but a mouthful, and the deputy took good care to have more than his fair proportion. After breakfast, I strolled around the premises, and saw our good hostess busily engaged in directing her domestic concerns. The rear of the mission forms a quadrangle of low sheds, in which the domestic manufacture of candles, preserves, baking, and a variety of other duties, are performed. In these were some ten or fifteen Indians busily employed, and although clean, they did not excel so much in this respect as the interior of the main building, which appeared to be entirely under her own keeping.

Don Miguel proposed to us to make a visit to Padre Mercador, and that he might not be taken by surprise, a messenger was sent to ask at what hour he would be ready to receive us. This ceremony is deemed necessary, for the duties of the padre are considered here to be of such a nature as to preclude intrusion. Our messenger speedily returned with an intimation that he would be glad to have us pay him our visit at once. We were soon ushered into the small study