

concerns the provinces, the government may be called, notwithstanding the officers, courts, &c., monastic. The priests rule, and frequently administer punishment, with their own hands, to either sex, of which an instance will be cited hereafter.

As soon as we could procure the necessary passports, which were obligingly furnished by the governor to "Don Russel Sturges y quatro Anglo Americanos," our party left Manilla for a short jaunt to the mountains. It was considered as a mark of great favour on the part of his excellency to grant this indulgence, particularly as he had a few months prior denied it to a party of French officers. I was told that he preferred to make it a domestic concern, by issuing the passport in the name of a resident, in order that compliance in this case might not give umbrage to the French. It was generally believed that the cause of the refusal in the former instance was the imprudent manner in which the French officers went about taking plans and sketches, at the corners of streets, &c., which in the minds of an unenlightened and ignorant colonial government, of course excited suspicion. Nothing can be so ridiculous as this system of passports; for if one was so disposed, a plan, and the most minute information of every thing that concerns the defences of places, can always be obtained at little cost now-a-days; for such is the skill of engineers, that a plan is easily made of places, merely by a sight of them. We were not, however, disposed to question the propriety of the governor's conduct in the former case, and I felt abundantly obliged to him for a permission that would add to our stock of information.

It was deemed at first impossible for the party to divide, as they had but one passport, and some difficulties were anticipated from the number being double that stated in the passport. The party consisted of Messrs. Sturges, Pickering, Eld, Rich, Dana, and Brackenridge. Mr. Sturges, however, saw no difficulty in dividing the party after they had passed beyond the precincts of the city, taking the precaution, at the same time, not to appear together beyond the number designated on the paper.

On the 14th, they left Manilla, and proceeded in carriages to Santa Anna, on the Pasig, in order to avoid the delay that would ensue if they followed the windings of the river in a banca, and against the current.

At Santa Anna they found their bancas waiting for them, and embarked. Here the scene was rendered animated by numerous boats of all descriptions, from the parao to the small canoe of a single log.

There is a large population that live wholly on the water: for the padrones of the paraos have usually their families with them, which,