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THE REZANOV VOYAGE TO
NUEVA CALIFORNIA IN 1806

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No. 146

(Signed)

Thomas C. Russell



Иск. Даревца

Рис. Сивирова

NIKOLAI PETROVICH REZANOV

Nikolai Petrovich

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THE REZANOV VOYAGE TO NUEVA CALIFORNIA IN 1806

THE REPORT OF COUNT NIKOLAI PETROVICH
REZANOV OF HIS VOYAGE TO THAT PROVINCIA
OF NUEVA ESPAÑA FROM NEW ARCHANGEL

AN ENGLISH TRANSLATION
REVISED AND CORRECTED, WITH
NOTES ETC. BY THOMAS C. RUSSELL

ANNOTATED

THE COUNT REZANOV: THE RUSSIAN AMERICAN COMPANY, THE KRUSENSTERN
EXPEDITION, THE SETTLEMENTS IN ALASKA — THE DOÑA CONCEPCIÓN ARGÜELLO:
HER FAMILY, HER ROMANTIC AND PATHETIC HISTORY — EL PRESIDIO DE SAN
FRANCISCO, THE HISTORIC, TRAGIC, AND ALLURING SPOT BY THE GOLDENGATE

ILLUSTRATED

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA
THE PRIVATE PRESS OF THOMAS C. RUSSELL
SEVENTEEN THIRTY-FOUR NINETEENTH AVENUE

1926

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OF SAN FRANCISCO

WHO, AMID HIS MULTIFARIOUS BUSINESS INTERESTS,
IS NEVER-FAILING IN HIS INTEREST IN THE
ROMANTIC HISTORY OF CALIFORNIA

ISTORICHESKOYE OBOZRENIA
OBRAZOVANIA
ROSSIISKO-AMERIKANSKOI KOMP
I DEISTVIEIA DO NASTOIASCHEGO VREMENIA
SOSTAVIL P. TIKHMENEV
CHAST II
SANKTPETERBURG
V TYPOGRAPHII EDUARDA VEIMARA
1863

HISTORICAL REVIEW
OF THE ORGANIZATION OF THE
RUSSIAN AMERICAN COMPANY
AND ITS TRANSACTIONS UP TO
THE PRESENT TIME
COMPILED BY P. TIKHMENEV
PART II
SAINT PETERSBURG
PRINTED BY EDWARD WEIMAR
1863

TITLE-PAGE OF THE RUSSIAN BOOK FROM WHICH
REZANOV'S REPORT OF HIS VOYAGE TO NUEVA
CALIFORNIA WAS TRANSLATED, TOGETHER WITH
A TRANSLATION THEREOF, INFRA, INTO ENGLISH

THE PRINTER'S FOREWORD

HOW THIS VOLUME came to be printed may be possibly of some interest to the reader. The story of the Russian colony in Nueva California is of absorbing interest, and of much historical value. This Press had revised the English translation of Langsdorff's Voyages and Travels for printing, and it was necessary to consult Rezanov's report, which led quickly to the decision that the report should be printed first. Langsdorff was Rezanov's personal physician on the voyage to Nueva California; but he deserted his chief at Sitka – and his chief needed his services. Had Rezanov been taken care of, the land that gave the Doña Concepción birth would soon have had the Russian double-headed eagle at the top of the hasta bandera in the Presidio de San Francisco. Rezanov's personal account is the best introduction to the history of the Russ in Nueva California. It is now presented typographically in English, for the first time, as, to use Rezanov's own words, "a report of the first step of a Russian on the soil of Nueva California." It was dated at Sitka (New Archangel), June 17, 1806 (o. s.).

The translation of the Rezanov report, by Ivan Petrov, in the Academy of Pacific Coast History at Berkeley, is defective. Doña Concepción Argüello, Rezanov says, always referred to California jokingly; thus, as “a beautiful country, a warm climate, an abundance of grain and cattle, – and nothing else.” (See page 36, post.) Petrov’s interpretation is, that “she would always deprecate it: ‘a good soil, a warm climate, plenty of grain and cattle and nothing else!’”

The paragraph on pages 63–64, post, beginning with the asterism, indicating a short ellipsis, is not in the Petrov translation. He dismisses it in these words: “The remainder of page 275 and page 276 contain speculations as to the future of the Siberian trade and a proposition, on the part of Resanoff, to return home by the way of Vera Cruz and visit the eastern coast of Mexico and the United States.–I. P., Translator.” Had the paragraph printed post been translated, no doubt could possibly have arisen in the minds of historians as to the intention of Count Rezanov to wed the beautiful Concepción.

Further explanations are not deemed necessary. The work is issued as being able to speak for itself.

T H E C O N T E N T S

THE PRINTER'S FOREWORD . . . PAGE ix

THE VOYAGE—IN THREE DIVISIONS

THE FIRST DIVISION

FROM SITKA TO THE PUERTO DE SAN FRANCISCO . . . PAGE 3

THE SECOND DIVISION

AT THE PUERTO DE SAN FRANCISCO 9

THE THIRD DIVISION

FROM THE PUERTO DE SAN FRANCISCO TO SITKA . 65

THE NOTES

COUNT NIKOLAI PETROVICH REZANOV 81
RUSSIAN AMBASSADOR AND PLENIPOTENTIARY

MARÍA DE LA CONCEPCIÓN MARCELA ARGÜELLO . . 89
LA FAVORITA DE LA NUEVA CALIFORNIA

EL PRESIDIO DE SAN FRANCISCO 101
THE BIRTHPLACE OF THE DOÑA CONCEPCIÓN ARGÜELLO

THE ILLUSTRATIONS

COUNT NIKOLAI PETROVICH REZANOV . . *Frontispiece*

¶ Reproduced in mezzotint from plate in Tikhmenev's Historical Review.

PRESIDIO DE SAN FRANCISCO – 1806 12

¶ This view is by an unknown artist. As shown in the plate in this book, it is etched on copper, on a reduced scale, from the original copperplate in the original German edition of Langsdorff's *Bemerkungen auf einer Reise um die Welt* (Frankfurt am Main, 1812). The view was not included in the illustrations in the English translation of Langsdorff (*Voyages and Travels*, London, 1814), and is now reproduced for the first time. It is the first view of any part of San Francisco.

RUSSIAN AMERICAN COMPANY'S FORT AT SITKA . 72

¶ The original drawing of this view was by Georg H. von Langsdorff, the personal physician of the Count Rezanov. The plate otherwise has the same history as that of the Presidio de San Francisco in 1806, *supra*.

PRESIDIO DE SAN FRANCISCO – 1816 84

¶ This is the first (and only) view of the Presidio de San Francisco showing the Presidio square entirely inclosed by buildings, although without walls. The original drawing was by Louis Choris, the artist of the first Kotzebue voyage (sometimes called the Romanzov expedition), in 1815–18, which was in the Puerto de San Francisco in October, 1816, in the *Rurik*. Choris's view was redrawn on stone, and the lithograph appears in his *Voyage pittoresque* (Paris, 1822). The lines of the lithograph are weak, but an enlargement aided in adding strength. There is much history written in this picture.

PRESIDIO HARBOR, SAN FRANCISCO – 1826 . . . 96

¶ The original drawing of this plate was by Captain William Smyth, of the British royal navy. The captain was an admiralty mate on the *Blossom*, under Captain Frederick W. Beechey, when that vessel anchored in the harbor of San Francisco on the 7th of November, 1826, ten years and one month after the arrival of Kotzebue in 1816. This plate is a copper-etched reproduction of the crayon lithograph in Forbes's *California*. The ruined Presidio is seen at the left. The caballero points his finger toward the Punta del Cantil Blanco, the first Punta de San José (the present Fort Point), on which stood Fuerte de San Joaquín, and between which and the projecting point at the left is the Pozo de los Marineros (anchorage). Opposite the high punta is the Punta del Diablo. The narrow strait is the Golden Gate (*La Bocana de la Ensenada de los Farallones*). The vessel, in all probability, is the *Blossom*.

THE VOYAGE - IN THREE DIVISIONS

THE FIRST DIVISION
FROM SITKA TO THE PUERTO DE SAN FRANCISCO

THE SECOND DIVISION
AT THE PUERTO DE SAN FRANCISCO

THE THIRD DIVISION
FROM THE PUERTO DE SAN FRANCISCO TO SITKA

1 REZ. VOY.

THE FIRST DIVISION SITKA TO PUERTO DE SAN FRANCISCO

CALAMITOUS situation of the Russian American possessions in Alaska – Privations and starvation – Purchase from the Americans of the ship Juno and her cargo – Bare subsistence on the meager supply of provisions on board – Resolve of Rezanov to save the Russian American possessions or perish – Voyage to Nueva California determined upon – Leave Sitka on the Juno – Scurvy-stricken crew – Former intention to explore the Columbia River – Its mouth sighted – Contrary winds drive ship south – Return on following day – Carried farther north by strong current – Gray's Harbor – North shore resembles mouth of Columbia – Doctor Langsdorff enters harbor in bidarka – Country seemed to be inhabited – Another attempt to enter Columbia – Anchor under difficulties – Rescued from critical situation – Sickness of crew compels departure for south – Favorable wind – Arrival at entrance to Puerto de San Francisco on night of March 27, 1806 – Anchor outside on account of dense fog, and wait till morning.

THE FIRST DIVISION SITKA TO PUERTO DE SAN FRANCISCO

GRACIOUS SIRE, COUNT NIKOLAI PETROVICH.

MY RECENT REPORTS to your excellency, as well as those to his majesty the emperor and the general administration of the Russian American Company, must have sufficiently apprised you of the extremely calamitous situation of the Russian American possessions which was found upon my arrival there; the privations, the starvation, during the entire winter, the men barely subsisting on the scant provisions purchased with the ship Juno; the disastrous condition of the country, brought about by sickness; my determination – the circumstances compelling the action – to undertake the voyage to Nueva California, resolving to save our American possessions or perish in the attempt.

By the aid of a kind Providence, all difficulties having been surmounted, it is now a pleasure to render to your excellency a report of the first step of a Russian on the soil of Nueva California.

Leaving Sitka on February 25, 1806 [o. s.], on the ship Juno, purchased by me from the Bostonians,

6 THE REZANOV VOYAGE

the crew, disabled by scurvy, soon began to fag, and hardly half were fit for duty. We were brought to the brink of despair by these vexatious and wretched conditions, and were thereby forced to relax.

Even under favorable conditions it had been my intention to explore the Columbia River, but as in my last report to the general administration I have fully gone into this matter, I need now but merely refer you thereto. We sighted the mouth of the river on March 14th, but were forced by contrary winds to stand off. Keeping for some time on a southerly course, we returned on the following day and expected to enter its mouth, but observations taken showed a different latitude, and it was seen that a strong current had carried us sixty miles to the north, and that we were off Gray's Harbor, the northern shore of which very much resembles the mouth of the Columbia. A land-breeze permitted us to lie at anchor, and we sent off a bidarka with Doctor Langsdorff, and the harbor was entered. The lead showed a depth of water at the bar, at the flood, of from four to five fathoms, and, according to Langsdorff, it is not nearly as unapproachable as

it has been described by others; but perhaps since their time the bar was lowered by the current. The doctor saw much smoke at the head of the harbor, and he inferred therefrom that the country must be inhabited. The anchorage is very good and well sheltered from the winds, while the bottom is sandy. I repeat here to your excellency merely the words of the doctor, but I myself saw a sandy rolling shore, partially wooded. At night we left the coast, having taken advantage of a favorable wind, and finally a contrary and sharp gale kept us out at sea.

The number of our sick increased daily, and one died. Beginning with myself, the scurvy spared nobody, not even the officers. We again made an attempt to find and enter the Columbia, as the only harbor on this side of Nueva California, in order to recuperate, and we neared it on the 20th of March and anchored. We intended to enter on the next day, but a rushing current and high breakers made this impossible.

The Indians lighted fires on the hills, indicating a desire, on their part, that we should enter, but it was evident that the strong winds prevented them

from correctly directing us into port. At length we proceeded to seek a shelter, ourselves, and entered amid such whirlpools that it was only after much difficulty that we at last anchored in four fathoms of water.

Here the remarkable seamanship of Lieutenant Khostov was forced upon my attention, and I must do him the justice to state that it was only by his resoluteness that we were saved, and rescued from a critical situation, where we were surrounded by ledges of rock.

The sickness of the men demanded that we take advantage of the first fresh north wind. We thanked God that the change of the moon had brought us a continuing and favorable wind, and with pallid, deathlike faces we at last reached the entrance to the Puerto de San Francisco on the night of the 24th [27th] of March, 1806 [o. s.], but on account of a dense fog we anchored outside and waited till morning.

THE SECOND DIVISION AT THE PUERTO DE SAN FRANCISCO

ENTER the Puerto de San Francisco – Challenged – Surrender of ship demanded – Politic explanations – Don Luis Antonio Argüello, comandante temporal of Presidio – Invitation to dinner – Padre José Antonio Uría – Overwhelmed by cordial reception – Tactfulness of Don Luis – Where were the Nadeschda and the Neva? – Further politic explanations – Misión San Francisco de Asís – Misionero padres in favor of trade – Boston vessels spread reports of Russian distress in north – Rezanov's generosity and display of wealth – Abundance at Nueva California and its climate invite crew to desert – The hospitable Argüellos – The beautiful Doña Concepción – Past sufferings delightfully requited – Arrival of Don José Joaquín Arrillaga, gobernador of Nueva California – He is saluted by two forts – Artillery increased since Vancouver's visit in 1792 – Questions of etiquette – Padre Pedro De la Cueva – Rezanov's reception by the gobernador at Presidio – Don José Darío Argüello, comandante of the Presidio de San Francisco – Don José De la Guerra y Noriega, comandante of the Presidio de Monterey – Both come from Monterey – Gobernador grants a business interview – Rezanov's plea for commercial intercourse – Disclaimer of Russia's desire to colonize in Spanish territory – Wealth in north sufficient – Object of visit to procure breadstuffs and agree upon trade preliminaries – Gobernador defers decision – Rezanov's private source of information – Gobernador fearful of compromising himself – Possible breach of concord between their governments – Rezanov's speedy departure requested – He protests – Asks permission to purchase breadstuffs while nothing prevents – Also to permit barter for goods on ship – Arguments used to accomplish his purpose – No grain delivered – Incidents rendering his position critical – Decides to become serious with the beautiful Concha Argüello – Her disposition and character – Her merry description of Nueva California – The proposal and acceptance – Her parents shocked – Perplexity of the misioneros

10 THE REZANOV VOYAGE

– Her brave front overcomes all opposition – Final decision left to throne of Rome – The betrothal – What it brought about – The Russian now master – Hispaniolized, in estimation of Spaniards – Grain now delivered and merchandise disposed of – Ambitious plans of Rezanov – His regrets for Russia's lost opportunities to occupy the whole coast – Spanish court's fear of Russia – Trade neglected by Spaniards in past – Chinese goods reach California via Mexico – Manila a free port – Enormous profits – Spaniards open ports on Eastern coast of America to United States – Plans to further trade between Nueva California and Russia – Spanish king's expenditures for maintenance of garrisons and warships – Funds for the padres with which to erect churches – Smuggling by vessels from the United States – Leave desperate ruffians and women – “Disturb our peace and corrupt our morals” – Attempt to remain permanently – The Bostonian Captain O'Cain and his doings – Successful plan of the gobernador to drive off intruders – Vessels and officers trading or smuggling on coast – News from Europe – Napoleonic wars – System of official communication between Europe, Mexico, and Nueva California – Precautions in case vessel carrying dispatches is taken by enemy – Letters and documents in duplicate or triplicate – Rezanov outlines manner in which his romance originated – Sets out his plans for serving his country and furthering its interests in America in case of its completion – Could not be done by any one else – He sacrifices himself for the good of others.

THE SECOND DIVISION AT THE PUERTO DE SAN FRANCISCO

EMBRACING at once the opportunity offered by a favoring wind and tide to enter the puerto on the following morning [March 28, 1806, o. s.; April 8, 1806, n. s.], and the suspicious nature of the Spanish government being known to me, I thought it best to go straight through the gate and by the fort, in view of our desperate situation. I deemed it useless to send in and ask for permission to enter, since, in the event of refusal, we should necessarily perish at sea, and decided that two or three cannonballs would make less difference to us than refusal.

With all sails full, we ran for the puerto. As we neared the fort a great commotion was observed among the soldiers, and when abreast of it one of them asked, through a speaking-trumpet, "What ship is that?" "Russian," we replied. They shouted to us several times to anchor, but we merely replied, "Si, señor; si, señor," and simulated an active effort to comply with their demand, but in the mean time we had passed the fort and were running up the puerto, and at a cannon-shot's distance complied.

12 THE REZANOV VOYAGE

Some twenty horsemen, among whom were the comandante and one misionero, soon after this, demanded the surrender of the ship, but we were not alarmed, as their cavalry was within range of our grape-shot. I dispatched Lieutenant Davidov to inform them that I was the Russian officer of whose coming I hoped they had been notified by their government; that I should have proceeded to Monterey had not my ship been damaged by storms, which compelled me to seek shelter in the first port; that I should leave as soon as the repairs were made.

The answer brought back was, that orders had already been received from the Spanish sovereign to render us all necessary assistance, and that the comandante invited me to dine with him at the Presidio, at the same time assuring me that all my requests should be promptly attended to. Inspired by gratitude, I thereupon went ashore, and was met by Don Luis Antonio Argüello, a son of the comandante, temporarily in command during the absence of his father. We were proffered saddle-horses, but as the Presidio is not more than a verst



ORIGINAL DRAWING BY AN UNIDENTIFIED ARTIST, and ENGRAVED BY CLOVIS
EL PRESIDIO DE SAN FRANCISCO, NUEVA CALIFORNIA - 1806
PUBLISHED BY T. C. RUSSELL AND SONS, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

(=.66 m.) from the shore, we went on foot, with the comandante and the Misionero Padre José Antonio Uría.

The cordial reception by the hospitable family of the comandante overwhelmed us. An invitation to dinner followed. We remained until evening, and then returned to the ship.

Don Luis informed me with marked courtesy and tactfulness that he must send a courier to the gobernador at Monterey, the capital, to advise him of my arrival, and that he therefore found himself compelled to ask where our ships, the Nadeschda and the Neva, were, of which they had previously been notified.

I replied that I had ordered them back to Russia; that I had been intrusted by the emperor with the command over all his American territories, and had visited them during the past year, having wintered at Norfolk Sound; that I had finally decided to visit the gobernador of Nueva California to confer with him, as the chief of a neighboring territory, as to our mutual interests.

Be pleased, gracious sire, not to consider that it

2 REZ. VOY.

was from empty pride, but merely to impress the Spaniards with the importance of our possessions in the north and to further our interests with them, that I thus proclaimed myself comandante. The welfare, the interests, of our country required it. In any case, even here I transgressed but very little, as I really have the chief command, and that by our emperor's order, and also by the power of attorney given me by the [Russian American Company's] shareholders. I made no improper use of these, but, on the contrary, sacrificed myself every hour for the benefit of those whom I represented.

By the courier sent by Don Luis Argüello to the gobernador I also sent a letter, in which I thanked him for his gracious manifestations of hospitality, and informed him that as soon as the vessel was repaired I should leave for Monterey.

On the following day the misionero padres of the Misión San Francisco de Asís extended to us an invitation to dinner. This Misión is about an hour's ride from the Presidio, and with my officers I went there, in compliance with the invitation. In our conversation with the misioneros there, we touched

upon the subject of trade, and it was very perceptible to us that they were strongly inclined thereto.

Later, in a more fitting connection, I shall have the honor of setting out for the consideration of your excellency the condition of all the misiones and presidios, the trade, surplus, and requirements of this territory; but now, gracious sire, be kind enough to permit me to invite your attention to what are perhaps but trifling matters, that I may show you how, imperceptibly to those of whom I shall speak, I accomplished my purpose, despite the desperate straits we were then in, and also the means I employed.

Upon our return from the Misión, not only as a vehicle for the reciprocation of the dinners given by the comandante and the misioneros, but also in order to hide from the Spaniards our distress and needfulness, of which the Boston vessels had told them to our disadvantage, I distributed fitting and valuable presents, thus displaying every evidence of wealth and demonstrating our generosity. My efforts were crowned with success. There was not one, either male or female, who did not receive

something especially desired, and the hearts of the people were won for us by the general satisfaction following. Not only this, but their reports of the generosity of the Russians allured the padres from distant misiones, while those near by voluntarily offered to supply us with a cargo of breadstuffs.

Perceiving the possibility of obtaining a cargo of breadstuffs at this puerto in a short time, I decided to go overland to Monterey, and sent by courier a letter to the gobernador, stating that as the repairs to my ship would perhaps detain me a considerable time at San Francisco, I would respectfully ask him to permit me to visit him. His reply was framed in the most courteous terms. He would not permit me to go to so much trouble; he would undertake the journey, himself, the following day; and stated that he had sent orders that I should be assisted in everything. At the same time, he sent me, through the comandante temporal, official congratulations on my arrival.

Thereupon I recognized the suspicious nature of the Spanish government, which at every point prevents foreign visitors from gaining a knowledge

of the interior of the country, and from observing the weakness of their military defenses.

In the mean time the excellent climate of Nueva California, the abundance of breadstuffs there, the comparison of the resources of the country with our destitution, were hourly subjects of conversation among the members of our crew. We noticed their inclination and desire to remain here permanently, and thereupon we took the necessary precautions against their desertion.

The third day after we arrived, three Bostonians and a Prussian, who, when we purchased the *Juno*, entered the company's service as sailors, expressed to me their desire to stay. I told them that I would consult the comandante, but he, when conferred with, refused to consent, whereupon I ordered their removal to a barren island, where they were held until the day of our departure.

In the mean time we placed pickets on shore and established rounds, and a mounted patrol was given us by the Spaniards, but, in spite of every precaution, two of our most esteemed men, Mikhailo Kalianin and Peter Polkanov, seized the opportunity to escape

when at the creek washing their clothes, vanishing without a trace.

Subsequently I obtained the word of honor of the Spanish authorities that the deserters, if found, would be deported to Russia by way of Vera Cruz; but I ask your excellency that they be punished and returned to America to remain forever. Without severe punishment as an example, it will be hard to control the others.

While awaiting the arrival of the gobernador we made visits daily to the residence of the hospitable Argüellos, and soon became on intimate terms with them. Loveliest of the lovely sisters of Don Luis, the comandante temporal, the Doña Concepción is the universally recognized beauty of Nueva California, and your excellency will concur with me when I say that our past sufferings were thus delightfully requited, for our time was passed very joyously.

Pardon me, gracious sire, that in such a serious report I mingle something of the romantic – but perhaps I must be very sincere.

Meanwhile the favorable reports concerning us, which were continuously reaching Monterey, had

disposed in my favor the gobernador himself, who, to our good fortune, had been a particular friend of this house from his youth.

At last, on the 7th of April, 1806, Don José Joaquín Arrillaga, gobernador of Nueva California, arrived. He was saluted from the fort with nine guns, and another battery, behind our ship, which was not visible on account of a point, opened a fire with the same number.

No matter how weak the Spaniards are, yet since the visit of Vancouver in 1792 they have increased their artillery. We later secretly inspected the second battery above mentioned, and found five brass guns of twelve pounds' caliber. They say they have seven guns at the fort, but whether there are more or less is unknown to me, as I was never there, and I did not allow others to go, in order to disarm suspicion.

Upon the arrival of the gobernador I at once sent an officer to congratulate him. Graciously replying, he informed me that he had a painful foot and was tired from his journey, but hoped to see me soon. And really the venerable don, whose hair was white, was actually entirely fagged out from the journey

on horseback, as there is no other mode of traveling overland in California.

The following day I expected a visit either from the gobernador himself, or at least a message by one of his officers. I noticed a great commotion among the soldiers at the Presidio, but it was nearly noon when two misioneros came to the ship to advise me that Don José Darío Argüello, the comandante of the Presidio de San Francisco, who had arrived with the gobernador, invited me to dinner. With thanks for the compliment, I answered the misioneros that the proprieties demanded that I should go to him and thank him for the daily favors accorded to me by his family, but that as at present the gobernador, with whom I was in official communication, was at his house, I begged him to pardon me for my delay in the discharge of my duties to him. One of the misioneros, Padre Pedro De la Cueva, with whom we became intimately acquainted, said to me, "You have not understood me correctly. The gobernador also sends you an invitation. All are at the Presidio, dressed in full uniform, to receive you fittingly." I intimated to the padre that a military officer might

have been sent, but the jovial padre answered, "Are the holy padres not as worthy of respect as officers? We live in America, and I'll wager we know nothing but sincerity."

Perhaps, thought I, they count this formality as already complied with by sending the comandante temporal several days ago, and in order that I should not prejudice our business interests I decided to go. Saddle-horses had been provided, and we left for the Presidio.

While riding I fell behind with Fray Pedro, and I asked him if permission had been granted to sell us breadstuffs. He replied, "I must answer you in confidence. Previous to his leaving Monterey the gobernador received information from Mexico to the effect that if we are not now at war with you we soon shall be."

"What a blunder!" said I, laughingly. "Would I have come here at such a time?"

"That is what we said," he replied.

From this it seemed as if the fear was all on their side, and that they suspected our coming was with sinister intentions, supposing, perhaps, that the two

22 THE REZANOV VOYAGE

ships which they expected – the Nadeschda and the Neva – would arrive soon.

Meanwhile I sent a note to the ship, pretending that I had forgotten my handkerchief, with orders that none of the men should be allowed on shore, and then calmly pursued my way.

When entering the Presidio, the officers met us at the gate, and the picket saluted. The gobernador, in full uniform, came to meet us in the patio. When crossing the plaza I noticed the pleasant, smiling faces of the beautiful Spanish señoritas, and at once my suspicions vanished, as, if there had been any ground for suspicions, the señoritas would without doubt have been secluded.

After paying my compliments to the gobernador and thanking Comandante Argüello for the kind and gracious hospitality of his family, I candidly informed them that it was in their names that I had been invited there by the misionero padres, and although I was not aware of the status of the holy padres and had not given the matter my serious consideration, yet I had made all conventionalities subordinate to my desire to secure the benefits that

had attracted me to Nueva California, and that I had longed very impatiently for the opportunity to become acquainted with its supreme authorities.

The gobernador spoke French quite well. He was confused when I had spoken, and apologized for the precipitancy of the misioneros.

“It is true,” he said, “that I meant to have the honor of inviting you, but I could not venture to do so without first notifying you of my arrival, and although everything in California is subject to my commands, yet my right foot” (on which he could hardly step) “refuses obedience, and in this state of affairs the misioneros, knowing your kindliness, undertook the duty, and thus misinterpreted my instructions.”

“That being the case,” said I, “I am under more obligations to the misioneros, since they hastened our meeting.”

The unreserved manner of the gobernador, the mutual exchange of compliments at the table, and my intimacy with the members of the Argüello family, combined, very soon created in us a sincere mutual regard.

Don José De la Guerra, the comandante of the Presidio de Monterey, an artillery officer, and a few cadets, received me with gracious politeness, and thenceforward we were on intimate terms with the principal officers and officials of Nueva California.

Requesting a business interview, the gobernador complied, and made an appointment for meeting me on the following day, but, upon my persuasion, he met me that same evening.

"You must not be at all alarmed," said I, "at my impatience. I hope you have already gathered from my letter how valuable time is to me."

When I had disclosed myself personally to him, I proceeded to tell him that my presence in Nueva California had for its primary object the welfare of the American possessions of both Russia and Spain, and, entering at once into the matter, I impressed upon his mind the wants of Nueva California, as well as those of the Russian colonies, which could be supplied by mutual commercial intercourse; that only in that way could lasting bonds of comity be established between the courts of both countries; that the American colonies of both would flourish,

and that our coasts would form a tie between us, which would always be equally protected by both powers, and that nobody would dare to settle in the unoccupied territory between us.

I further explained to him that the possessions of his Catholic majesty in the New World were of such vast extent that it was impossible to protect them, and that, on account of their weak means of defense, they would sooner or later fall a victim to the rapacity and aggressiveness of others, and that perhaps the war in Europe was now saving them. As to the suspicions long entertained by the court of Spain that the Russians wanted to colonize in Spanish territories, I could assure him that even if California were gratuitously given to us, it would, on account of the expense of keeping it, never bring us such advantages as we could expect would accrue from mutual commercial intercourse.

“Dismiss from your mind this erroneous idea,” I told him. “In their furs alone, the possessions of our monarch in the north have an inexhaustible source of wealth. The growing demand for these furs, as an article of use as well as of luxury, among

3 REZ.VOY.

the northern peoples enhances their value every year, and forbids all thoughts of quitting a country that enriches us, and of such vastness that for ages to come its supplies cannot be exhausted. Therefore the situation of Russia, as well as its interests, must convince you that the southern parts of America are not necessary to us. Even were it otherwise, you must acknowledge that so strong a power would not need to disguise its intentions, and you could never prevent it from carrying them out. I frankly tell you we need breadstuffs. These we can procure at Canton, but Nueva California being nearer to us, and having a surplus that it cannot sell, I came here to negotiate with you with a view to purchase, as the supreme authority in Nueva California. Assuredly we can agree upon the preliminary conditions, and send them to our respective courts for examination and approval. That is the true motive of my voyage, and I respectfully ask you to decide speedily in the matter, so that I shall not lose valuable time."

I perceived that the gobernador listened to me with much pleasure, and he said, "We have already learned of the confidence reposed in you by your

emperor, and the full powers conferred upon you with regard to America, and are acquainted with your instructions in regard to commercial affairs. Therefore I am exceedingly pleased to know you personally; but my position is altogether different from yours, and for many reasons I cannot give you an answer decisively and at once. In the mean time permit me to ask you if it is long since you have had letters from Europe."

"Ten months," I answered him. Though it was a fabrication, yet, fortunately, since my arrival, with the aid of the misioneros I had happily succeeded in perfecting my knowledge of late political news.

"Do you know," he asked, "that you are at war with Prussia?"

"Perhaps," I replied, "on account of the purchase of Pomerania."

"But the latest news that I have received from Europe – five and a half months old – shows that Russia's relations with France are not amicable, nor are they amicable with other powers allied to the latter."

"That may also be so," said I; "but the threats of

European cabinets must not always be taken at their face value. You will acknowledge that you and I are at present in such an out-of-the-way corner of the world that we may hear of a war when peace has perhaps already been declared."

"True," said he; "but you take this too calmly."

"Men like us," said I, "who are inured to all kinds of dangers, must not take much notice of rumors."

I reverted to the previous subject, and he asked me to give him until the next day to consider, and at the same time told me very politely that, though there were no doubts as to my character, formality demanded that I should send him the documents conferring upon me plenipotentiary powers, so that he could properly make his report to the viceroy.

"With pleasure," I said; "and then we shall talk seriously together to-morrow morning."

Thanks to my close intimacy with the house of Argüello, I was told, the next day, word for word, all that had been said there after I left. My frank declaration had met the assent of the gobernador. He acknowledged the merits of my conclusions as to the wants of Nueva California, and consulted

with the misioneros, who were all on my side. He divulged to them the unfriendly attitude shown by our European cabinets, and admitted that he wished nothing better than to get rid speedily, in some way, of such visitors as we, on whose account he might compromise himself in the eyes of their suspicious government, whether we were received kindly or unkindly. However, they had spent the evening in committing my arguments to paper.

I met the gobernador according to appointment, and was courteously received. I addressed him at once on my subject, and handed him the registers of various powers, which I possessed in duplicate, saying that the Spanish register had been given over by me to the ships returning to Russia, as I did not at that time expect to visit Nueva California. He made merely a copy of the register of the French court and a copy of my credentials from the Russian American Company, and returned everything.

“Your talk last night interested me greatly,” said he. “I acknowledge that I wish you success with all my heart, but I cannot conceal the fact that I hourly expect a report of a total breach of concord between

our governments. I do not know how to meet and consider your project, and I must tell you frankly that it would be very agreeable to me if you would hasten your departure in a friendly manner before the arrival of the courier expected by me."

"I am astonished at your haste," said I. "You have received instructions as to how I should be received, but even if you should receive other instructions, it seems to me that, coming here as I did, with the most friendly intentions, the law of nations would allow you the means of parting with me in a like friendly way. Only appoint a time within which I must leave."

"Oh, of that you can be assured."

"Then let us put aside," said I, "this disagreeable concept while as yet there is nothing to prevent us from occupying ourselves with what concerns the interests of both powers."

"You wish to purchase at this puerto a cargo of breadstuffs. But tell me why you want such a large quantity, since you do not need so much to provision your ship for your return voyage."

"I will at once explain to you my reasons. First,

my ship is in need of repairs, and hence the ballast must be discharged, and it is desirable that, in place thereof, breadstuffs shall be loaded. Second, I want to purchase the breadstuffs in order to learn, upon their distribution in the possessions of Russia in America and in Kamchatka, if the purchase price would be suitable, and to determine the needs of each place, and in the general plan the total quantity required, as we now know in detail what Nueva California can supply, and the amount. At the same time you yourself admit that a cargo of five thousand pouds (= 200 tons) is no great object in trade."

"I acknowledge that," he said; "but I hear that you have brought goods."

"None at all," I replied. "The ship's commissary has a small quantity, which I permitted him to take on board, and I do not deny that this was done for the purpose of barter, if you will permit this."

"All I can do for you," said the gobernador, "is to allow you to pay for the breadstuffs in piastres, but with regard to trade in general, you will pardon me if I tell you that I cannot consent to that, on account of strict orders from the government. With regard

to the purchase of breadstuffs, the granting to you of permission to do so is very difficult. I must ask you to state your requirements in writing, without mentioning other matters, and I also respectfully ask you to state briefly the particulars of your travels from Saint Petersburg.”

“I am very sorry,” said I, “that you cannot grant my last request. The goods, the inhabitants tell me, are very much needed by them, and it is my wish that my commissary can sell them, as in that case we should gain more room in the ship for breadstuffs. But it makes no difference to me whether I pay the purchase price of the grain to the misioneros or to my commissary. I am only sorry that on my first visit the wants of the population cannot be satisfied, it being so easy for you to consent thereto, and thus give general satisfaction. The misioneros will supply the grain, the piastres will be paid to them by me, a receipt being taken therefor, which you will send to the viceroy. As to how the holy padres use the money, that is a matter that does not, it appears to me, concern either of us.”

“No, no,” said he; “that is equivalent to trading.

After living sixty years without reproach, I cannot take that upon my conscience."

"But," said I, "it is not love of gain, but merely a desire to benefit your countrymen, that would urge you to infringe slightly on the regulations. Here you are in a better position to see the needs of the country than the people in Madrid, and really I see no crime in it, especially," said I, with a smile, "when the holy padres will bend the knee in prayers for you."

"Oh, I see very clearly that the holy padres have already bent the knee for you," smilingly remarked the gobernador; "but, jokes apart," he continued, "you cannot imagine how strictly the regulations prohibiting all trading are enforced here. I will give you an instance. Some five years ago a Boston vessel wintered here. Running in debt to us, and having no ready cash, I accepted in payment some goods we needed. But first I had reported to the viceroy, who replied that for that time the transaction would be permitted, but that in future such trading would not be, as it would give foreign vessels a pretext for visits to our ports."

“To convince you,” said I, “that I am desireless of being the cause of any trouble to you, I will not pursue this discussion further, but will merely ask you to give me ground to hope that I shall get the necessary quantity of grain.”

“You shall have it,” said he.

“And in order to lose no time, I will order that the ship be disarmed.”

“With God’s help,” answered the gobernador.

Thereupon, in his presence, I sent orders to that effect to the ship. Congratulating myself on having made a beginning, I left to time the carrying out of my experiment in trading, certain of its successful termination.

On the following day I presented the gobernador with the written statement requested by him, but some five days passed without a single grain being delivered. Meanwhile rumors of the war between Russia and France had day by day grown so that they were taken to be true, and a frigate, on a cruise from San Blas, was expected. I also heard that a part of the Monterey garrison had been transferred to the Misión Santa Clara de Asís, a day’s march from

this puerto. The inclination of our men to prove treasonable and to leave us, and the actual desertion of two men at that time, rendered our position still more critical. But the respect always manifested by the Spaniards showed no signs of diminishing. I had a dragoon at all times as a guard of honor; the Spanish pickets always saluted; the gobernador met and took leave of me graciously every day; and the general courtesy everywhere manifested disarmed me of all suspicion.

From day to day, though in a way imperceptible to the gobernador, the graciousness of the house of Argüello towards me inspired in him a feeling of increasing confidence in me, and he apologized for not yet having visited me on my ship.

"Let us," said I, "set aside all useless formality of etiquette. I know the ways of your government, and I am sure that if you had followed the impulses of your heart you would have visited me long ago, but, anyway, I am with you every day."

"We have become accustomed to your presence," said the gobernador, "and I assure you that the good family of my friend Argüello appreciate the pleasure

of seeing you in their house just as highly as they are grateful to you for the manifestations of your benevolence.”

Here I must lay open to your excellency some purely personal affairs. Seeing that our situation was not getting better, expecting every day that some serious unpleasantness would arise, and having but little confidence in my own men, I decided that I should assume a serious bearing where I had before been but formally polite and gracious.

Associating daily with and paying my addresses to the beautiful Spanish señorita, I could not fail to perceive her active, venturesome disposition and character, her unlimited and overweening desire for rank and honors, which, with her age of fifteen years, made her, alone among her family, dissatisfied with the land of her birth. She always referred to it jokingly; thus, as “a beautiful country, a warm climate, an abundance of grain and cattle, – and nothing else.”

I described Russia to her as a colder country, but still abounding in everything, and she was willing to live there, and at length I imperceptibly created

in her an impatient desire to hear something more explicit from me, and when I proffered my hand, she accepted.

My proposal was a shock to her parents, whose religious upbringing was fanatical. The difference in religion, besides the prospective separation from their daughter, was, in contemplation, a dreadful blow to them.

They sought the counsel of the misioneros, who did not know what to do. The parents forced their daughter to church and had her confessed. They urged her to refuse me, but her brave front finally quieted them all. The holy padres decided to leave the final decision to the throne of Rome.

Not being able to bring about the marriage, I had a written conditional agreement made, and forced a betrothal. Consent was given on condition that the agreement be kept secret pending the decision of the pope. Thereafter my deportment in the house of Comandante Argüello was that of a near relative, and I managed this puerto of his Catholic majesty as my interests called for. The gobernador was now very much perplexed, and perceived that he had

4 REZ VOY.

made a mistake when he assured me of the high esteem with which I was regarded by the family of the comandante, as he now found himself to be in fact my guest.

A rare friendship, of thirty years' standing, existed between the gobernador and the comandante. The latter was consulted in everything. Every official document received by Gobernador Arrillaga passed through the hands of Comandante Argüello, and consequently through mine. The gobernador was soon won over, and he placed a like confidence in me, and at length they did not keep the slightest secret from me.

I conversed better in Spanish every hour, and was in Comandante Argüello's house from morning till evening, and when his subordinate officers saw that I had almost become Hispaniolized, each vied with the other to be the first to apprise me of any new occurrence, so that now information of the possible arrival of any courier was not dreaded.

Meanwhile I wondered why the misioneros did not deliver the grain, and so I managed to have the gobernador perceive my dissatisfaction. He told me

frankly that the holy padres expected a courier, and that they thought that thereupon they could obtain the ship's cargo for nothing; hence the delay. I told him just as frankly that he personally was the cause of the delay. "Do you not still keep the Monterey garrison at Misión Santa Clara?" I assured him that as soon as he should order the garrison to return to Monterey, all rumors would at once cease.

The gobernador was surprised to learn that even his secret orders were known to me, and, turning it off as a joke, sent orders at once for the troops to return, while the misiones were again advised that those of them that desired to supply grain should deliver it, as otherwise he would be obliged to take different measures.

At the same time he ordered, upon my request, a detail of inválidos from the pueblo, where, with the assistance of Concepción's brother, the grain was ready for the first shipment. As soon as the first shipment was on the way, the misiones began to send in such quantities that I was driven to request them to stop hauling, as, on account of the ballast, the ordnance, and the cargo of goods, the ship could

not take on more than four thousand five hundred pouds (poud = 40 pounds). With the grain I received four hundred and seventy pouds of tallow and butter, and one hundred pouds of salt and other things.

Our account was computed in piastres, but the prices, as fixed in California by the government, were known to me, and on that basis my purchase was made without any mistake. I shall speak of the prices in the proper place, but I was very anxious to make an experiment in trading, and I urged the gobernador in every way to this end, promising him the good-will of my emperor.

The venerable don hesitated a long time in this connection, and on one day went so far as to ask me to tell him candidly how he could comply with my wish and at the same time be free from suspicion.

"Very easily," said I. "Let the misioneros and the other inhabitants present a petition to you, of which you will advise me; then send some of your officers to examine the quality of the goods and ascertain the prices. The latter I shall make as favorable as possible, in the interests of the inhabitants, if you will give orders that the original Mexican invoices

for such goods shall be shown me. Thereupon I will transfer the piastres to my commissary, from whom you will receive the goods and apportion them as required by the people.”

This plan was carried out to the letter. The goods were inspected and accepted, and the transfer was made. My name did not appear in the transaction, except where I signed the general invoice of goods purchased, certifying that such goods belonged to the commissary, Panaev, and that, for the purpose of supplying the wants of the inhabitants of Nueva California and to favor the Spanish government, I had permitted such sale, and had deposited in the office of the puerto a declaration to that effect.

This, gracious sire, is our first experiment in trade in Nueva California, which, at a low estimate, may amount to a million rubles yearly. In the future the needs of our American possessions will be supplied; Kamchatka and Okhotsk, with grain and other provisions; the Yakuts will not be obliged to carry grain long distances; the government expenses for army and navy supplies will be diminished; the price of bread in Irkutsk will be much lower when

a considerable portion of grain, formerly shipped to the distant provinces, can be kept at home for local consumption; the custom-houses will bring new revenue to the crown; the industries of interior Russia will receive a new impulse when the number of factories will have to be increased on account of the California trade alone, and in the mean time ways will be found for trade with India by way of Siberia; and your excellency may believe that with a good and well-considered beginning all this will be brought about in a short time.

I have already, in my last reports to the general administration, written sufficiently concerning the means of expanding the trade here to dimensions worthy of a great empire. I shall only briefly refer to them here, and declare my sincere belief that it is too soon for us, or, rather, unprofitable, to send ships back to Russia by way of Canton. Above all other matters, I considered the strengthening of New Archangel, the sending of ships from there to Canton, and then back to Siberia and America, as thus they could make quicker, safer, and more profitable voyages.

No ships with goods should be sent here [New Archangel] from Saint Petersburg, unless they are to remain here. Then both America and its fleet will be strengthened. Siberia will be awakened by this trade, and when it is impossible for Russia to dispose of all its goods, time will show us the proper moment to attempt world trade; otherwise I must acknowledge it would be only factitious glitter and little profit.

Pardon me, gracious sire, for having once more deviated from my course, but I am constrained to give your excellency a true conception of the trade possible with California, and therefore I shall begin by explaining the measures, weights, and coins of California, and then proceed.

But, apart from all jokes, gracious sire, if you can obtain permission to trade with Nueva California, the company could, from the profits accruing, erect granaries, and, after encouraging the savages in the proposed southern colonies, it would not be long before their increased population would make it necessary to use our own system of agriculture and

cattle-raising, and with our trade with Canton fully organized, we could settle Chinese laborers there.

Your excellency perhaps may laugh at my far-reaching plans, but I am certain that they will prove exceedingly profitable ventures, and if we had men and means, even without any great sacrifice on the part of the treasury, all this country could be made a corporeal part of the Russian empire; and when you consider the conditions and investigate their interrelations, you will concur in my opinion that our trade would make notable and even gigantic strides. All great plans appear visionary on paper, but, viewed and considered comprehensively, their execution compels admiration. Not through petty enterprise, but by great undertakings, have mighty commercial bodies achieved rank and power.

If the Russian government had thought earlier of this part of the world, and estimated adequately its potentialities, and if it had pursued continuously the far-reaching plans of Peter the Great, who, with insignificant resources, dispatched the expedition commanded by Bering, it is safe to say that Nueva California would never have been Spanish territory,

the Spaniards having only turned their attention to it since 1760, and it was only by the zeal and energy of the Franciscan misioneros that this incomparable territory was permanently incorporated into their kingdom. Even now there still is left an unoccupied intervening territory fully as rich, and if we allow it to slip through our fingers, what will succeeding generations say? I, at least, shall not be arraigned before them in judgment.

We must presume that the Spaniards, fanatical though they are, will proceed farther, and though I endeavored to divert suspicion, yet their officials are not likely to credit my amicable arguments.

As decidedly as I am convinced of the success of this proposed undertaking, just as positive am I that if its merits are not recognized and embraced in the time of Alexander I, we never need expect to reap the potential benefits, missed by not being seized in time. Then it will be evident to the world that the Russians, recognized for initiative, and possessed of a faculty for surmounting obstacles, – national traits, – must have submitted to circumstances and sunk into inactivity, with souls dead to everything

meritorious and of moment. In a word, we should be compared to a worn flint, from which wearied hands struggle to secure a spark, which, if secured, is impotent, – a flint whose original potent fire was not utilized.

Por Dios, gracious sire, consider with a spirit of patriotism the natural resources of this territory, which promises and offers such vast advantageous commercial opportunities to our country, of which your excellency is the only intermediary before the imperial throne, and present to the emperor my plans, the accomplishment of which will make his memory immortal.

Queen Elizabeth of England it was that founded the greatness of her country, and in reverence is her name still held by English subjects. But a name of greater exaltation than Elizabeth's would be that of our emperor if under his happy reign Russians will shake off the yoke of foreign nations and reap an abundant harvest from great undertakings.

I fully set out, in my last reports to the Russian American Company, that my efforts would justify my former proposals, to which we were led for a

long time by natural conditions, and my voyage to California appears to me only to justify them, but you may believe me, your excellency, when I say that there is nothing chimerical in any of my plans regarding other places.

The gobernador of Nueva California, as I have already had the honor to explain to your excellency, having unexpectedly become my sincere friend, hid nothing from me, as he was aware that I could learn everything through Comandante Argüello. He frankly admitted to me that the Spanish court feared Russia above all the other powers; that the Shelikhov settlements gave them reason to expect further enterprises, but the past twenty years had fully quieted their apprehensions.

“I beg of you,” said I to the gobernador, “to lay aside forever any suspicions entertained by your court, and disclose to them our discussion in this regard.”

“You need not ask me,” said he. “It is my own pleasure to advise the viceroy of your friendly and sincere assurance, which will greatly aid us in the arrangement of closer trade relations. Command

me for the welfare of the people committed to our care, and you shall see what hearty service I shall render.”

In fact, every day brought new proofs of esteem and friendship. Everything was at my command. The garrison was increasingly diligent in hastening the delivery of the grain, and the people supplied us with water. In short, every one strove to emulate the others in pleasing us; and as I found no more difficulties to overcome, I had nothing to do but give the necessary orders. Despite the many rumors of war, I planned festivities, and gave dinners to the Spaniards, and in this pleasant manner entertained all who remained at the Presidio after the details of men had been made for my service.

The gobernador, proving his sincerity, danced with us, notwithstanding his weak legs. Gunpowder was not spared, either aboard the ship or at the fort; the tuneful guitars of the Spaniards accompanied the vocalizations of the Russians; and, with all our needs, I believe that the Californians will long call to remembrance the visit of the generous Russians, and I must acknowledge to your excellency that we

spared nothing that could heighten respect for the Russian empire in this part of the world.

I talked quite frequently with the gobernador as to trading, and said that I marveled that Nueva California should lack so many things that were so easily obtainable. "It appears to me," said I, "that, were trade encouraged a little, all your wants could be provided for."

"Do not wonder," said he. "Trade has entirely been neglected with us, but now the government is beginning to open its eyes in this matter, although its view is still obstructed as by a fog. The differences of the various parties at court, as well as their private interests, cannot be brought into accord with public interests. It is true that trade has been protected to a great degree. The class of people engaged therein is now so much respected that the king, in spite of the restrictions of the nobility, has conferred upon many of that class the title of *marqués*, something that has never before been done in Spain.

"The Caracas company was almost on the point of failure and dissolution, but, three years ago, it was revived in an unprecedented manner. The

5 *Rez. Voy.*

directorate of the company is now at Madrid, and it has suddenly acquired fifteen million piastres. The king himself is interested to the number of six thousand shares, or a million and a half piastres. He has given the vessels of the company the right to carry the royal flag, and to recruit men and officers from the royal navy. The company carries on trade with the East and West Indies, but poor California is forgotten.

“It grieves me to tell you, but it is actually true, that our government is too slow, and therefore has no accurate conception of anything, nor has it any desire to acquire any. When the company proposed to assist in establishing trade, some private persons, who had from ancient times been sending a galeón occasionally from Manila to Acapulco, protested against it as an infringement on their rights, and at once demanded that the king prohibit the company from touching at any port on the western shores of America. These Manilans carry Chinese goods on their galeones, a portion of which goods reaches us, but only through the hands of the Mexicans, who, by two corvetas which are annually cruising along

our coast from San Blas, send us goods at excessive prices, and we have to pay the piastres in advance, in order to obtain, the following year, the necessities of life.”

Once the conversation turned upon the Philippine Islands, and I asked him what nations they carried on trade with, and if it was true that the Manilans paid two or three per cent for the carriage of their piastres to Europe.

“Manila,” he answered, “is a free port with us. As far as money is concerned, it may be that it was so formerly, and still is, that the greed of the English, as well as that of other nations, trading in India has resulted in an increased rate in the interest of the Manilans, but I do know for certain, from one of our San Blas officers, that the English paid them not less than twenty-five per cent, and you may believe that even that makes them rich, when they make over two hundred per cent on the goods bought at Canton, Bengal, and other places, with the money of other people. But just at present I believe that the Bostonians will profit by the interruption of their friendly relations with us, since upon the declaration

of war with England they at once renewed their former proposals to trade with our possessions in America. Our government refused this, but when the United States minister left Madrid in displeasure our court, in this critical situation, was forced to send a satisfactory answer after him, by which four ports on the Eastern coast were opened to them, namely, Buenos Ayres, Vera Cruz, Caracas, and Cartagena; and having New Orleans [i.e., Louisiana territory] ceded to them by France, and on account of the proximity of Pensacola to New Mexico, they have gained such a foothold in trade that even Santa Fé is beginning to use their goods. As I have personally witnessed in our waters the enterprise of the citizens of this republic, I am not surprised at their success. Recognizing the profits to be derived from trading, they flourish in the pursuit of trade; and who does not, at present, except ourselves? We pay with our purses for our negligence. While the whole world is pursuing the prey, we are satisfied by amusing ourselves with dried fish.

“I frankly tell you,” continued the gobernador, “that it is only necessary for your emperor to insist

strongly, and the demand will be complied with in a short time, but, otherwise, the slowness of our government would only create in you a feeling of disgust. The Bostonians may serve as an example. For a long time, and without results, they begged, but determined demands overcame the resistance of the selfsame ministers who, a few years before, would not and did not consent. They had decided that it would be extremely useful, and that it would insure the safe shipment of piastres from America to Europe, in time of war, by trading with a neutral power."

"I assure you," said I, "that if only my emperor take an interest in my project, I shall consider it as already carried out, but it is necessary that you, on your part, shall make strong representations to your viceroy."

"Certainly," answered he. "I will tell you my plan. Three misiones have already sent me their petitions, and upon my return to Monterey petitions will be received from others. All these I shall send to the viceroy in the original, with my remarks, explaining all the advantages which you have so clearly stated.

To these I shall make additional requests, for such other essentials as will satisfy my heartfelt desire to provide for the welfare of the territories to which I have devoted my life. I also ask you to second my letter to the viceroy by one written by yourself."

"With pleasure," I replied, and on the following day I handed my letter to him. During all this time I endeavored in every way, with the assistance of the misioneros and their friends, to rouse to greater enthusiasm the venerable gobernador, in order to induce him to embody in his report the strongest arguments. Every day the conversation was turned upon the same subject.

"I am very thankful for your arrival," he once told me, "as it provided the means of renewing my frequent representations in regard to the absolute necessity for foreign trade, which, on account of the remoteness of this territory, were never considered. It often incensed me when friends informed me of the more than unfavorable answers of the ministers. 'This California is a cursed land, that causes nothing but trouble and expense!' As if I were responsible for its unprofitable and expensive institutions."

"Tell me," I asked, "the sum expended yearly."

"Not less than half a million piastres."

"And its revenue?"

"Not a real."

"But you spoke to me some time ago of a tithe of a tenth part on grain."

"That is collected from the inválidos only. Even that is reserved for the use of the misiones, in case of a failure of the crops, and therefore guards are maintained in their granaries. In a word, the king is constrained to pay the expenses of garrisons and warships, and also to provide funds for the padres with which to erect and beautify their churches, since his sole object is the propagation of the true faith and further the happiness and prosperity of the people. Thus, as the true defender of the faith, he sacrifices his all to religion."

On hearing such a panegyric I almost burst with laughter. "This is very praiseworthy, and soul-saving too," I said, assuming a very pious demeanor; "but, unfortunately, the existence of glaring immorality proves that some of the peoples do not recognize the goal of the true way to salvation, and, being on

the wrong path, prefer pleasures that are temporal to those that are eternal. From such vile elements your most enticing and persuasive expressions of desire to benefit them, and the most fervent prayers of your padres, are powerless either to protect your religion or yourselves.”

“You are right,” said he. “I have asked repeatedly that our military force be increased, but when our apprehensions in regard to your proximity in the north were quieted, my petitions only resulted in vain promises. At present, however, the audacity of the Bostonians has alarmed us, but the ministers have promised to dispatch a frigate this year to watch the vessels from the American states, which engage in smuggling along our shores and carry on a secret trade continually. But that is nothing. Sometimes they leave with us ten or fifteen desperate ruffians, who, since our garrisons are so small, disturb our peace and corrupt our morals. They bring women with them too, and, besides their audacity, attempt to remain here permanently.”

“Some time ago I spoke of the Bostonian Captain O’Cain,” the gobernador said to me once. “He came

to us in 1803, from Unalaska, with forty islanders. They hunted seals in their bidarkas all winter, and whither they went when they left we do not know. You will oblige me very much by explaining this affair, which, perhaps, I may have to report to the viceroy."

Here I must inform your excellency as to this matter. Captain O'Cain came in a ship of the same name to Kadiak. He made a contract with Baranhov, whereby he was to receive forty bidarkas, in which he was to hunt seals. The returns were to be divided equally at an island newly discovered by him. He promised, in case he should land at any place where provisions could be obtained, that his clerk should purchase them for the Russian American Company, he himself not to derive any profit therefrom. On receiving the bidarkas and the men, O'Cain landed the latter in Nueva California. Whether he deceived Baranhov, or whether the latter was to profit by the deception of O'Cain, I must leave to your excellency to decide, adding only that at that time they were dying of starvation, and that several barrels of flour which O'Cain had brought with him had been the

means of saving their lives. A similar contract was to be entered into this year with Wolfe, to which I did not dare to agree, however, and having bought his vessel, I did the same thing without any protests, and in large quantities. I gave the following version of this affair to the Spaniards.

“I am very glad,” said I, “that you reminded me of this proceeding. These Bostonians do more harm to us than they do to you. They land people here, while they steal from us. Besides carrying on trade in our waters, this scoundrel of whom you speak, having captured a party of our Americans who had gone to a distant hunting-ground, stole some forty Kadiaks and their families. In the following year, Captain Barber, a man of the same stamp, brought to us, at Kadiak, twenty-six of these stolen people, saying that he had ransomed them from captivity on Queen Charlotte Islands and would only give them up upon the payment of ten thousand rubles, which sum humanity compelled us to pay him; but whither O’Cain took the others is to us unknown. Those who were brought back said they had been at various places and also on different ships, but the

names of the ships and of the places where they had been landed we could not ascertain, on account of their ignorance. I assure you that these and similar tricks of theirs have taught us to be more cautious, and that we should take steps to drive off intruders of that character; but the innumerable sounds and passages in our waters make such driving off very difficult."

"But," said he, "I can tell you that I have given such orders that they will perhaps soon be driven off. A mounted guard is stationed on shore, who, when a ship is sighted on the horizon, is to report her to the nearest presidio. In the mean time he is to watch her, and, upon her reaching the shore, she is to be taken in charge."

And, true to his plan, in about five days a report from San Diego was shown me by the gobernador, that the Anglo-American brigantine Peacock, of 108 tons, with six cannon and four falconets, under Captain Oliver Kimball, had approached the shore and sent off a boat with four men, who were taken, but the vessel escaped. Those taken were the pilot, a Bostonian, Thomas Kilvain, second contra maestre

[boatswain], John Pierre, from Bordeaux, and two sailors. They said they had left Boston in September, 1805, and arrived at the Sandwich Islands on the 12th of February; that of the vessel's crew only fourteen men remained; that the cargo consisted of arms and goods of various kinds, which they were going to trade for goods in the Russian American territories; that they had landed only to get fresh provisions.

On the following day a letter for the pilot was sent ashore, in which the captain told him that the vessel would remain a few days near the coast, and that he should attempt to escape. But by that time the men were already in irons and on their way to San Blas. I congratulated the gobernador on the success of his order, which pleased him very much.

At length, dispatches were received from Mexico, but, whether threatening or otherwise, they were no longer dreaded by me. Some newspapers came with these dispatches, from which we learned that Napoleon had decisively beaten the Germans, and that our armies were retreating homeward.

A very unpleasant piece of news was dated from Hamburg, October 4, 1805, saying that a revolution

had broken out at Saint Petersburg, but that they did not dare to say more until confirmation of the news. I was almost prostrated by this report, and though I tried to hide my grief, yet it was perceived. The Spaniards, one and all, said that never should they have expected such a thing would happen to the emperor, who was so much beloved, not only by his own nation, but by all other nations, since all the newspapers eulogized him for his goodness of heart, which caused every one to envy his subjects. Such deserved praise, though very often heard from foreigners, was always especially pleasing to me, but at this time my heart was rent only the more because of it.

“My God!” said I to myself, “what has happened to my fatherland?” I could not remain quiet, and as the gobernador did not show me the viceroy’s letter, I thought that he was withholding the last number of the newspaper from me. However, as nothing remained hidden from me long, the letter from the viceroy was soon in my hands. Therein he described in detail a desperate battle between the allied fleet and the English. Four numbers of the

6 Rez. Voy.

newspaper had come, besides extracts from a letter from France, which said that Napoleon had taken Vienna and compelled the emperor of the Romans to retire to Moravia. The viceroy's letter closed with a bitter joke reflecting on the allies. I found nothing else of importance in the letter, and the newspaper reports included nothing compelling secrecy.

I asked the gobernador how often he received intelligence from Europe. He replied, "We receive official messages once a month by a paquebote that runs from Cádiz especially for this purpose, but by trading-vessels we receive news much more often. From Mexico, besides the regular monthly courier, special messengers are sent upon the arrival of any important news."

I admired this system, and thought of our poor possessions, for it seemed as if they were not in the new world, but in the realms of the dead. With the extension of our commerce we may receive news twice a year.

"Should the paquebote be taken by the enemy," said I, "then your dispatches would also be taken?"

"Never," said he. "The trunks with the papers

are always strapped, and have leaden weights too, and in case of attack are thrown into the sea, and duplicates are sent by the next ship, since in time of war not only documents, but letters also, are sent in duplicate, or even in triplicate. If you desire to write to Europe," added he, "you may rest assured that your letters will go direct to their destination."

Accepting his offer, I sent a report to his imperial majesty, of which, and of my letter to the viceroy, I have the honor of sending a copy to your excellency.

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These, gracious sire, are all the observations that my six weeks' sojourn in Nueva California allowed me to make in that country. You will pardon me if I have at times expressed my own personal feelings, and ascribe such expressions to a weakness common to mankind.

* * * Should fate decree the completion of my romance, – not begun in hot passion, which is not becoming at my age, but arising under the pressure of conditions, – remoteness, duties, responsibilities, – perhaps also under the influence of remnants of feelings that in the past were a source of happiness

in my life, – then, and in such case, I shall be in a position to serve my country once again, as by a personal examination of the harbor of Vera Cruz, Mexico, and by a trip through the interior parts of America. This could not be accomplished by, nor would permission be granted to, any one else, the suspicious Spanish temperament forbidding such investigations. I should also be able to inform you fully, gracious sire, as to their trade, their surplus, and their needs. Upon becoming acquainted with the viceroy of Nueva España, I could be of benefit to my countrymen in making an attempt to secure an entrance for Russian vessels to the eastern ports, as I hope that during the reign of such a gracious emperor the Russians will inaugurate trade from Saint Petersburg in natural and industrial products. At the same time I can investigate the prospects of trading with the United States, upon visiting that country, and seek to establish business connections with our company.

Here, gracious sire, you will see that I sacrifice myself for the good of others, and only hope that my strength shall equal my intentions.

THE THIRD DIVISION

PUERTO DE SAN FRANCISCO TO SITKA

DEPARTURE from Puerto de San Francisco – Gobernador and friends go to Fuerte de San Joaquín to take leave of the Russians on the Juno – Russians salute with seven shots, and Spaniards with nine – Island of Kaigan – Becalmed – Heavy gale – Arrival at Norfolk Sound – Salute fort – No reply – Prepare for hostilities – Reassured on arrival of bidarkas – Anchor in harbor of New Archangel – Fever and an eruption broke out on voyage – All recover – Occurrences in Russian American possessions during absence – Scurvy at New Archangel and Kadiak – Many deaths – Herring appear, and relieve situation – Armed Kolosh come to fish – Precautionary measures doubled – Arrival of ship O’Cain – Captain Winship refuses to trade with Kolosh upon seeing critical situation – They leave all the sooner – Their fear of Baranhov – Rezanov regrets that Baranhov will leave country – Kolosh watch fort closely – Rumors of attempt to capture port – Defenses sufficient – All men armed while at work – Yakutat captured by savages – Fort fired and people killed – Perpetrators bribed by Akoi Kolosh – Advices from other places of threats to exterminate Russians – Hardships suffered in transporting furs and provisions at Kadiak – Many drowned – Territory requires seaworthy boats instead of bidarkas – Captain Winship reports coming of Americans to settle on the Columbia River – Easier for Russians to settle there – Claims of the United States to this shore challenged – Prediction that they will discontinue making settlements there – Excluded from western coasts by commercial agreement – Names of Boston vessels cruising and trading in the sounds and on coast – Their intrusion resented – Not necessary to enter into negotiations concerning coast with United States – Bostonians will quit if country strengthened – Kamehameha, king of Sandwich Islands – His enterprise – Desires to enter into trade relations – Yermak and Rotislav, ships built by Baranhov – Much success in horticulture – Rezanov’s plea in closing his report.

THE THIRD DIVISION PUERTO DE SAN FRANCISCO TO SITKA

I MUST ALSO REPORT to your excellency our return voyage from California, and the circumstances connected therewith.

We left the Puerto de San Francisco on the 10th of May, 1806 [o. s.], at six o'clock in the afternoon. The gobernador and all our friends went to the fort to take leave of us. We saluted with seven shots, and they answered with nine. After leaving, we gained only in longitude at first, and after running over ten degrees in that direction, we found a favorable wind, which carried us to the island of Kaigan. Here we were becalmed ten days. At this time many of our shrouds gave way, and we had hardly succeeded in mending them with yarn made from cable and rope ends, when a very heavy gale arose, in which all our masts would have snapped off had not our repairs been made.

We arrived off Norfolk Sound on the 8th of June, and saluted the fort by firing. As they did not reply, and as we neither met bidarkas nor saw any human beings anywhere, we became doubtful, especially as

it was still fresh in our memories that we had left them on the verge of the grave. As we had ten good guns, we began to prepare for hostilities, when, at nightfall, some bidarkas arrived, and we became assured that those we had left at New Archangel still existed in safety. In the night we entered the harbor, and in the morning anchored.

Our return voyage was favorable, except for some sickness. Fever and an eruption (*sarampión*) broke out. The latter attacked me also, but, thank God, all recovered, and we arrived here safely.

Thus far I have had the honor to report to your excellency all the circumstances, as they appeared to me, attending our voyage before my arrival here. Now I will add something as to occurrences at this place. At the time of my departure [February 25, 1806], scurvy raged both here and at Kadiak, and seventeen Russians died of it. At New Archangel sixty men were incapacitated. Our Americans were also attacked, and many died. Fortunately, herring appeared on the 22d of March. The men then had fresh food, and began to recover. Now there are only six men still in danger, and five walking with

the aid of crutches. These we are trying to restore to health by bread and vegetables. At the time the herring began to run, over one thousand Kolosh came to fish. Several had guns, and precautionary measures against them were doubled. They stayed until about the 1st of April, when the Bostonian three-masted ship O'Cain arrived, under Captain Winship, an old friend of Baranov. Upon seeing the critical situation, he refused to trade with the Kolosh, and notified them of the friendly relations existing between him and the Russian governor. This constrained them to leave all the sooner for the various sounds. Thank God, they did not attack when the garrison was so much reduced. They fear Baranov very much, and it is true that the mere mention of his name holds the whole country in fear. But I must inform your excellency that he will not, under any conditions, remain here any longer than May of next year, and he has implored me to notify the general administration of that fact. I am sorry, very sorry, to lose this excellent man. Upon his departure the best men will leave. The Kolosh, after their last visit, had from ten to fifteen of their

men continually going and coming, watching the fort most of the time.

Meantime, rumors are current that the Chilkat and Khutznov Kolosh will unite with the Sitkas to capture the port. Baranov has surrounded his hill with a stockade, with embrasures for the cannon. Not a sound passes unchallenged. True, our fort is like an island, but against the Kolosh this measure of defense is sufficient, as even the boldest would not dare to attack the hill. Our men do not go to the shipyard, nor to the forest to cut timber or burn charcoal, without loaded guns. At all other kinds of labor similar precautions are taken. The Kolosh now appear more friendly and walk about freely, but such scoundrels as they are cannot be trusted nor believed. No more treacherous people exist.

The ship Alexander arrived here from Kadiak on the 26th of April, and brought much bad news. Yakutat was captured by the savages in October, the fort destroyed by fire, the people all killed but eight men, two women, and three boys, who were not at the fort, but in a hayfield, and thus escaped. They were subsequently captured, however, and

are now held by the Ougalikhmuts, who demand a ransom, which will be sent from Kadiak. The crime was perpetrated by their own Kaiurs, but these had evidently been bribed by the Akoi Kolosh.

From Kenai Bay and Chugach Bay, and also from Nuchek, we have received advices that the Chugach and Mednovtze are threatening to exterminate the Russians. The Kenaitze begin to show indifference, and complain that they do not get enough tobacco. Malakhov and Repin, who are in charge of these forts, ask for assistance. Only ten men were sent to them from Kadiak, as no more could be spared, but, anyway, what is that? Only a few more victims!

At Kadiak the people suffered great hardship in transporting provisions and furs, and many were drowned during a storm. It is necessary that boats seaworthy in character be built everywhere in our territories. They will cost more than bidarkas, but where human lives are concerned this proposition should be considered seriously.

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 Captain Winship told Baranov that, last autumn, sixty men had left the United States overland to settle

on the Columbia River. A settlement there would have been easier for us than for any other people. The United States claim the right to this shore, as the headwaters of the Columbia River are in their territory, but, upon the same principle, they could extend their possessions to all the country wherein there are no European settlements. But they will, I think, discontinue making settlements there, for the Spaniards have opened to them four ports on the Eastern coast of America, and they are excluded from touching the western coasts of America by a commercial agreement. This was done subsequent to Winship's departure from Boston, and as yet is not known to the American vessels here.

Four Boston ships are now cruising and trading in the sounds; namely, Captain Gill, on the brig Leda; Captain Porter (brother of the one killed), on the ship Hamilton; Captain Brown, on the ship Vancouver; and Captain Gebitz, on the ship Pearl.

We know that many ships will come to trade at Kaigan; namely, the Model, Hazard, Peacock, and others. When shall we compel these unwelcome intruders to cease coming, and in what manner, if



ORIGINAL DRAWING BY J. H. VAN LANSBROEK, AND ENGRAVED BY J. COOPER. PRINTED BY T. C. KENNEDY, 265 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK.

THE RUSSIAN-AMERICAN COMPANY'S FORT ASTORIA

we intend to establish a permanent fleet? I have mentioned this matter in my reports to the general administration, and I refer your excellency to such reports. There you will learn the reasons why I do not find it necessary to enter into any negotiations concerning this coast with the government of the United States. Will you strengthen this territory? I shall be sorry if the ministry will not look into it, for if we strengthen our positions the Bostonians will leave the country of their own volition.

The Peacock, of which I have already written, was dispatched by O'Cain with goods for Baranov, with the final object of selling the vessel, and then the whole crew will enter the company's service. Mr. Swift also asked him to say that he had delayed sending the promised cargo, having been informed that the Neva and Nadeschda had supplied us, but in the mean time the Hazard had been dispatched by him, which rounded the Horn in company with the Peacock, when they parted.

Baranov has been invited by Swift and others of his friends at Boston, and he asks for permission to depart on one of the American ships next year,

7 REZ. VOY.

and to proceed from there to Saint Petersburg. I expect the Peacock, and hope to buy her.

Though I have tried to condense this letter as much as possible, yet it appears to me that it would be wrong to withhold any information from your excellency that could possibly be of interest to you.

The king of the Sandwich Islands, Kamehameha, proffered his friendship to Baranov. This possibly may appear strange to your excellency, but I must first tell you that he is a sovereign over savages only, and then inform you how it happened.

Captain Winship says that Kamehameha treats all Europeans with the greatest consideration, and that they are beginning to settle all over his islands. They engage in agriculture and in cattle-breeding with great success, and are at liberty to depart from the country whenever they please. He allows his subjects to serve on foreign vessels without pay, so long as they return as skilled sailors. He has bought fifteen one-masted vessels, ordered a ship-builder from Boston, established a shipyard, and, besides all this, has recently purchased a three-masted vessel from the Americans.

Mate Clark, who was on Winship's vessel, has been two years in the Sandwich Islands, and has a wife and two children there, and various interests. He had been several times in this country, and was received very hospitably by Alexander Andreivich. Knowing the wants of this country, he told the king so much that he was sent to negotiate a commercial treaty. If we should be allowed to accept this, the petty king, Kamehameha, desires to make a personal visit to New Archangel, notwithstanding the great distance, and lay the foundation for intercourse of a commercial nature. He promises to send us taro, breadfruit, cocoanuts, breadstuffs, hogs, and rope, when there is a surplus, receiving from us calico, cloth, linen, and iron and timber for ship-building. He purposes beginning this unusual intercourse next year. But it is a pity we cannot keep Baranov at this place.

The vessel Yermak, which was built by Baranov himself, and was included in the trade for the Juno, arrived at the Sandwich Islands in forty-two days, in spite of the lateness of the season. Supercargo Moorfield writes to his partner Wolfe that he knew

very few small vessels that were her equal, and that he intends to go to Canton with her, and from there to Boston, around the Cape of Good Hope. Proving a success, the builder is proud of her. The Rotislav, the other vessel built by Baranov, is now on her way to Okhotsk. Though Mr. Wolfe and his mate, Mr. Podgash, praise the vessel very much, I do not dare to trust all my dispatches to her. Mr. Moorfield writes that seven Bostonians, members of his crew, have become citizens of the Sandwich Islands.

With all the unpleasant news that awaited me here, my heart was somewhat gladdened when I found that my counsel to the people to assume a domestic life had been adopted and had borne some fruit. Despite their feebleness and disease, I found here twice as many gardens planted with potatoes and other vegetables, which had been received from the Bostonians by Alexander Andreivich, and which were growing luxuriantly. This is sufficient proof that we may provide against future requirements even through our own resources.

Pardon me, gracious sire, that, having no time to write to the members of the general administration

individually at this time, I must respectfully ask you to read this letter to the committee and give them a copy thereof, from which they can obtain all the information necessary. It may also be helpful as a continuation of my reports. Since they are confided with government secrets, you may assuredly confide to them the letters of a private individual.

I expect nothing from the honorable members but the assurance that the manner in which I have sacrificed myself will not be misunderstood, nor my confidence violated.

However, if I have not by my labors merited their confidence, I leave it to their consciences, feeling sure that in all things I have always kept in mind the welfare of my country, and that in no case have I prejudiced my honor, nor was I guilty of any act unworthy of my countrymen.

The inclosed short report to his imperial majesty I ask you most humbly to submit. Its contents you will find in the copy, under the letter "B."

With entire respect and obedience, I have the honor always to be your excellency and gracious sire's humble servant,

NIKOLAI REZANOV.

T H E N O T E S

COUNT NIKOLAI PETROVICH REZANOV
RUSSIAN AMBASSADOR & PLENIPOTENTIARY

MARÍA DE LA CONCEPCIÓN MARCELA ARGÜELLO
LA FAVORITA DE LA NUEVA CALIFORNIA

EL PRESIDIO DE SAN FRANCISCO
BIRTHPLACE OF DOÑA CONCEPCIÓN ARGÜELLO

COUNT NIKOLAI PETROVICH REZANOV
RUSSIAN AMBASSADOR & PLENIPOTENTIARY

THE DISCOVERY by the Russians of the Aleutian Islands and the northwest coast of America was followed by many voyages thither by Russian merchants to procure the different kinds of furs, but chiefly sealskins, which those territories offered in abundance. These were sold to great advantage on the Russo-Chinese frontier. Overland commerce continued, although the Chinese ports were closed. Notwithstanding the difficulties, the number of ships engaged in the fur trade increased from year to year, having continued without interruption since 1745. Infinitely greater success might have attended had the trade received aid from the imperial government, for better ships might have been built, with more able commanders and fewer losses. The bulk of the trade was in the hands of the Russians, but soon the English, Americans, and even the Spanish, began to share in the lucrative commerce. Many evil consequences attended the extraordinary Russian increase, as each vessel belonged to a separate owner. The natives were invariably ill-treated; the fur-bearing animals were slaughtered without any thought of the future.

Grigor Ivanovich Shelikov, who was really the founder of the Russian colonies, endeavored, at first in vain, to form a company that should put a stop to the reckless slaughter of the animals. At length he succeeded in joining company with Ivan Larinovich Golikov, and fitted out ships. These were commanded in person by Shelikov. The company was under the protection of Catherine II, and was endowed with important privileges; but the irregular manner in which its business was conducted, and the cruelties towards the natives, drew upon it great and powerful enemies.

The Emperor Paul I, who succeeded the great Catherine, his mother, upon her death in 1796, determined to destroy the power of the company and crush the trade at the same time. Upon this the Count Nikolai Petrovich Rezanov intervened in the interest of the company. He had been a protégé of the great Catherine,

and, possessing the versatility of an accomplished courtier, had, naturally, a powerful influence at court. A nobleman of parts and ambition, but scant patrimony, he was impressed by the business capacity of Shelikov and became interested in his plans. Marrying the daughter of Shelikov, he acquired with her much wealth. On the death of Shelikov in July, 1795, Rezanov became the chief adviser of Madam Shelikov. The plans of her late husband now paled into insignificance beside those of her son-in-law. After much intrigue, Catherine was on the point of granting a charter to Rezanov and his aristocratic associates, when, on November 17, 1796, she died.

Rezanov, the accomplished courtier, quickly adapted himself to the changed conditions. A faithful servant to the voluptuous Catherine, he now became the companion of the feeble-minded Paul, who at length, on August 11, 1799, confirmed by imperial ukase the act of consolidation of the United American Company under the title of the Russian American Company, which, later, operating under imperial protection, and numbering among its shareholders the imperial family, by its settlement and operations in Nueva California made the Spanish court tremble.

Paul I was assassinated in March, 1801, and was succeeded by his son, Alexander I; but during the reign of the former, Adam Johann Krusenstern, an officer in the Russian navy, had sailed on board an English merchant vessel to study the navigation of the dangerous China Sea. During his stay at Canton he noticed the arrival of an English ship which had been fitted out at Macao. She had returned, after a speedy trip, from the American coast with a cargo of furs, which was disposed of for a large amount of money. Perceiving the disadvantages under which the Russians were laboring in sending their furs to Okhotsk, he memorialized the Russian minister of marine, proposing the dispatch of ships from Kronstadt to Russian America, with men and material for the construction and equipment of vessels, so that a commerce might be established in the North Pacific which would place the

Russian American Company beyond foreign competition. It was not until July, 1802, that Krusenstern received a favorable answer. Two vessels were thereupon purchased in London and renamed "Nadeschda" (the Hope) and "Neva."

Much credit is due to Rezanov for the successful outcome of the Krusenstern memorial. He still possessed great influence at court. His wife, with whom he was deeply in love, was now dead, and her dowry was invested in the stock of the Russian American Company. He was broken-hearted. His health was poor. Under the strain, adventure appealed to him. In the Krusenstern voyage it had presented itself. Patriotism, his own interests, and those of his company, seconded the appeal.

Closer connection with the Eastern nations was desirable, in view of the proposed extension of Russian commerce. Rezanov was appointed ambassador to Japan, and he carried an autograph letter from the czar to the mikado, together with costly presents. He also carried a commission as royal inspector of the American northwestern establishments, and plenipotentiary of the Russian American Company.

Captain Lieutenant Krusenstern commanded the Nadeschda, a ship of 450 tons. Rezanov was aboard, and had with him a few young gentlemen of rank, as attached to the embassy. There was also a body of officers and men distinguished in various branches of science, among whom was G. H. von Langsdorff, a physician and naturalist, who wrote an account of his observations; and it is worthy of note that one of the cadets was Otto von Kotzebue, who later commanded two expeditions in the Pacific (1815-18, 1823-26), both visiting California. The Neva, a ship of 370 tons, was commanded by Captain Lieutenant Urey Lisiansky.

On August 7, 1803, the two vessels sailed from Kronstadt - to carry the double-headed Russian eagle for the first time around the world. Calling at Copenhagen, Falmouth, and Teneriffe, Santa Catharina, in Brazil, was reached on December 20th. Here it was found necessary to repair and refit the vessels, and here also arose

a question as to the right to command, precedence being claimed by Rezanov. The expedition sailed on the 4th of February, 1804, and, after rounding Cape Horn, touched the Marquesas and the Hawaiian Islands, arriving at the latter on June 7th.

Here the plans of the voyage were changed, Lisiansky in the *Neva* going to Kadiak, Sitka, and other Russian establishments, assisting at Sitka in the subjugation of the natives in an uprising. On the 1st of September, 1805, he sailed from Sitka for Canton with a cargo of furs valued at about a half-million rubles. On the 3th of December he reached Macao. Here much difficulty was experienced in the landing of a part of the cargo for sale and in the purchase of Chinese goods with the proceeds, the Chinese being as equally determined as the Japanese to allow no trade by sea with the Russians.

The *Nadeschda*, leaving the Hawaiian Islands on the 10th of June, 1804, proceeded to Petropavlovsk, in Kamchatka, arriving on the 14th of July. Rezanov now assumed complete control, and the ship, repaired, well equipped and provisioned, sailed on the 6th of September for Nagasaki, arriving on the 8th of October. Here Rezanov was detained several months, being subjected to insulting, debasing, and revolting ceremonials meanwhile. The letter and the presents from the Russian emperor were rejected, and Rezanov was distinctly informed that in future no Russian vessels would be permitted to enter a Japanese port.

On the morning of April 17, 1805, the *Nadeschda* weighed anchor, and early the next morning sailed from Nagasaki Bay. Several months were passed in examining the coasts of Tartary and the islands between that country and Japan, and on the 5th of June the *Nadeschda* was again in the harbor of Petropavlovsk. Here Rezanov and his suite left the ship, and on the morning of the 5th of July Krusenstern sailed to make further explorations. On August 30th the ship anchored again off Petropavlovsk, and word was received that "the *Neva* had had a bloody action with the natives of Sitka." Resuming the voyage, a fruitless search was



REMARKS ON CLAYTON'S LITHOGRAPH OF THE MOUNTAINS OF CALIFORNIA
ETCHED BY CUTLER - PRIVATE PRESS OF T. C. KERRILL AND FRANCISCO
EL PASO DE LOS ANGELES - 1816

made for land seen by the Spaniards in 1634, and, presuming the Neva was already at Macao, Krusenstern, to his regret later, gave up the search, and on November 20th anchor was cast in Macao roadstead. The Neva, as already stated, arrived on December 3d.

On the 19th of February, 1806, the Nadeschda and the Neva sailed from Whampoa. Going around the Cape of Good Hope, the Neva, disobeying an order to stop at Saint Helena, arrived at Kronstadt on August 4, 1806, and on the 19th of the same month the Nadeschda arrived, having carried the Russian eagle for the first time across the equator and around the world.

At Petropavlovsk on June 5, 1805, when the Nadeschda cast anchor, the Russian American Company's brig Maria was ready to sail for Kadiak. Count Rezanov, smarting under the arrogance of the Japanese, and the humiliations undergone at their hands, and "breathing out threatenings and slaughter" against them in retaliation, purposed going overland immediately to report to his royal master the czar of all the Russias; but, according to Doctor Langsdorff, he received letters on his arrival, and these impelled him to abandon his resolve, in order to visit the Aleutian Islands and the territory on the northwest coast, under his commission as royal inspector of the American northwestern establishments and plenipotentiary of the Russian American Company. On the brig Maria, therefore, Rezanov, with his valet and Doctor Langsdorff as his personal physician, found accommodations. In his physical condition, he did not deem it wise to travel through a rugged and inhospitable territory without a physician. Coming from Saint Petersburg, and going to Kadiak for the second time, two young Russian naval officers also went with Rezanov. Both were now in the service of the Russian American Company, and, later, both accompanied Rezanov to Nueva California, — Nikolai Alexander Khvostov and Gavril Ivanovich Davidov.

The Maria sailed from Petropavlovsk on June 24, 1805, and, after visiting on the way the establishments on the islands, was at

8 Rez. Voy.

Sitka, or New Archangel, August 6th (o.s.?). Governor Baranov was embarrassed not a little by the arrival of such company, and the situation was aggravated by the arrival of hunters to take up winter quarters. The stock of provisions was low, and starvation was a probability. The American ship *Juno*, Captain J. Wolfe, of Bristol, Rhode Island, was lying in the harbor. She had provisions in abundance, a cargo of otter-skins, with a large store of goods for trading, – firearms, cloths, hardware, etc. The *Juno*, with all her supplies, was purchased by Rezanov, and the large supply of excellent provisions removed temporarily the menace of famine. The merchandise was later traded off in Nueva California. The *Juno* was sent to Kadiak and returned with coarser provisions, and, under orders, a number of women. The winter of 1805–06 was passed in great discomfort. Snow and rain storms prevailed, the settlement was again on the verge of starvation, and Rezanov ordered that the *Juno* be got ready for his long talked of voyage to Nueva California, intending to enter the Columbia River on the way, to which he intended to remove the settlement at Sitka.

Rezanov, having sailed from the Puerto de San Francisco on May 21, 1806, arrived at New Archangel on June 19th. Here he dispatched the report of his voyage to the minister of commerce at Saint Petersburg. Leaving Sitka on the *Juno*, he crossed over to Kamchatka and started from Okhotsk on September 24th on his overland trip to Saint Petersburg to report to the emperor and to get the imperial approval of his intention to wed the Señorita Concepción Argüello. Weakened by hardships and troubles, he was seized with a violent fever. Langsdorff having deserted him at Sitka, and without medical advice, he rashly resumed his way and fell from his horse in the wild wintry Eastern Siberian wastes. He died at Krasnoyarsk on March 1, 1807. Langsdorff visited his tomb in the same year, – a large stone, in the fashion of an altar, without an inscription. Sir George Simpson, in 1842, visited the tomb “erected in 1831 by the Russian American Company.”

Baptismal Record

MARÍA DE LA CONCEPCIÓN MARCELA ARGÜELLO

LIBRO DE BAUTISMOS OF THE MISIÓN DE
NUESTRO SERÁFICO PADRE SAN FRANCISCO

931. Dia 26. x feb^o x el año 1791. en la Ysla xera M^{ra} x
Marcela N. S. P. S^{ra} ⁶⁵ bautizó solemnem^{te} a una niña nacida el día 19^o
Conce^{on} Marcela. xda me^a hija legítima x D^o José Argüello Teni^o x Cap^o y Coman^{te}
la Argüello D^o José P^o inmediato natural x la Ciudad x Querétaro en la
Pau^a Nueva Esp^a. y x D^a María Ignacia Moraga natural x el R^o Presidio
Española x el Altar en la Sonora, puebla de la n^{ra} Señal x la Conce^{on} Marcela.
fue su Padrino D^o José x Zúñiga Teni^o x Cap^o y Coman^{te} x
el R^o P^o x D^o Diego P^o poder authen^{te} p^o el Cabal, Coman^{te}
Ins^{pe} y D^o xera D^o José D^o Pedro Fages con a^uda x dos
testigos, que lo fueron el S^o Manuel x Vargas Sarg^o x la comp^a de
Monterey y Juan x Dios Ballesteros cabo xda, otorgado en
debida forma a Manuel Boronda, cabo xda comp^a xera R^o P^o.
x el S. P. S^{ra} ⁶⁵, quien lo admitió, y tubo en brazos a
dicha niña al tiempo x bautizarse x de x adverso, que no contax.
ha parent^o su lar oblig^{on} x padrino, y q^{ue} solo a^uda a su poderdante,
p^o q^{ue} xve xduerado x parent^o xpiritual, y como oblig^{on} con de-
hidas, rep^o x las empliqué, y p^o que conise lo p^{ri}mo en dho día
m^o, y año, ut supra.

Fr. Pedro Ben^o Cambón

TRANSLATION

931. ON THE twenty-sixth day of February of the year 1791, in the church
of this Misión de Nuestro Seráfico Padre San Francisco, I solemnly
baptized a female child born on the nineteenth day of the said month,
legitimate daughter of Don José Argüello, teniente de capitán y comandante
of the contiguous royal presidio, a native of the city of Querétaro, in Nueva
España, and of Doña María Ignacia Moraga, a native of the Real Presidio del
Altar, in Sonora. I gave her the names of María de la Concepción Marcela.
Her godfather was Don José de Zúñiga, teniente de capitán y comandante
del Real Presidio de San Diego, by power of attorney authenticated by the
comandante, inspector y gobernador of this provincia, the Señor Don Pedro
Fages, with the assistance of two witnesses, who were the Señor Manuel de
Vargas, sargento of the Compañía de Monterey, and Juan de Dios Ballesteros,
cabo of the said compañía, authorized in due form to Manuel Boronda, cabo
of the compañía of this Real Presidio de Nuestro Seráfico Padre San Francisco,
who accepted it, and held the said female child in his arms at the time of her
baptism. I notified him that he was neither contracting relationship nor the
obligations of a godfather, and that he should advise his constituent to this
effect, so that he might be informed of the spiritual relationship and of the
other obligations contracted, as previously explained; and in witness whereof
I sign it on the day, month, and year ut supra. FR. PEDRO BEN^o CAMBÓN.

[RUBRIC]

931= General
baptismal number
(white & Indian)
65= Spanish
(rubric) parentage

MARÍA DE LA CONCEPCIÓN MARCELA
ARGÜELLO
LA FAVORITA DE LA NUEVA CALIFORNIA

DOÑA CONCEPCIÓN WAS DISTINGUISHED FOR HER VIVACITY
AND CHEERFULNESS, HER LOVE-INSPIRING AND BRILLIANT
EYES, EXCEEDINGLY BEAUTIFUL TEETH, EXPRESSIVE AND
PLEASING FEATURES, SHAPELINESS OF FIGURE, AND FOR A
THOUSAND OTHER CHARMS, BESIDES AN ARTLESS NATURAL
DEMEANOR — BEAUTIES OF HER KIND ONE MAY FIND,
THOUGH SELDOM, ONLY IN ITALY, PORTUGAL, AND SPAIN

LANGSDORFF: VOYAGES AND TRAVELS

CONCEPCION DE ARGUELLO
(PRESIDIO DE SAN FRANCISCO, 1806)

BRET HARTE

I

LOOKING seaward, o'er the sandhills stands the fortress, old and
quaint,
By the San Francisco friars lifted to their patron saint,—

Sponsor to that wondrous city, now apostate to the creed,
On whose youthful walls the Padre saw the angel's golden reed;

All its trophies long since scattered, all its blazon brushed away;
And the flag that flies above it but a triumph of to-day.

Never scar of siege or battle challenges the wandering eye,—
Never breach of warlike onset holds the curious passer-by;

Only one sweet human fancy interweaves its threads of gold
With the plain and homespun present, and a love that ne'er grows
old:

90 THE REZANOV VOYAGE

Only one thing holds its crumbling walls above the meaner dust,—
Listen to the simple story of a woman's love and trust.

II

Count von Resanoff, the Russian, envoy of the mighty Czar,
Stood beside the deep embrasures where the brazen cannon are;

He with grave provincial magnates long had held serene debate
On the Treaty of Alliance and the high affairs of state;

He from grave provincial magnates oft had turned to talk apart
With the Comandante's daughter on the questions of the heart,

Until points of gravest import yielded slowly one by one,
And by Love was consummated what Diplomacy begun;

Till beside the deep embrasures, where the brazen cannon are,
He received the twofold contract for approval of the Czar;

Till beside the brazen cannon the betrothed bade adieu,
And, from sallyport and gateway, north the Russian eagles flew.

III

Long beside the deep embrasures, where the brazen cannon are,
Did they wait the promised bridegroom and the answer of the Czar;

Day by day on wall and bastion beat the hollow, empty breeze,—
Day by day the sunlight glittered on the vacant, smiling seas;

Week by week the near hills whitened in their dusty leather cloaks,—
Week by week the far hills darkened from the fringing plain of oaks;

Till the rains came, and far-breaking, on the fierce southwestertost,
Dashed the whole long coast with color, and then vanished and
were lost.

TO NUEVA CALIFORNIA 91

So each year the seasons shifted, – wet and warm and drear and dry;
Half a year of clouds and flowers, – half a year of dust and sky.

Still it brought no ship nor message, – brought no tidings, ill or meet,
For the statesman like Commander, for the daughter fair and sweet.

Yet she heard the varying message, voiceless to all ears beside:
“He will come,” the flowers whispered; “Come no more,” the dry
hills sighed.

Still she found him with the waters lifted by the morning breeze, –
Still she lost him with the folding of the great white-tented seas;

Until hollows chased the dimples from her cheeks of olive brown,
And at times a swift, shy moisture dragged the long sweet lashes
down;

Or the small mouth curved and quivered as for some denied caress,
And the fair young brow was knitted in an infantine distress.

Then the grim Commander, pacing where the brazen cannon are,
Comforted the maid with proverbs, – wisdom gathered from afar;

Bits of ancient observation by his fathers garnered, each
As a pebble worn and polished in the current of his speech:

“Those who wait the coming rider travel twice as far as he’;
‘Tired wench and coming butter never did in time agree’;

“He that getteth himself honey, though a clown, he shall have flies’;
‘In the end God grinds the miller’; ‘In the dark the mole has eyes’;

“He whose father is Alcalde of his trial hath no fear,’ –
And be sure the Count has reasons that will make his conduct clear.”

92 THE REZANOV VOYAGE

Then the voices sententious faltered, and the wisdom it would teach
Lost itself in fondest trifles of his soft Castilian speech;

And on "Concha," "Conchitita," and "Conchita" he would dwell
With the fond reiteration which the Spaniard knows so well.

So with proverbs and caresses, half in faith and half in doubt,
Every day some hope was kindled, flickered, faded, and went out.

IV

Yearly, down the hillside sweeping, came the stately cavalcade,
Bringing revel to vaquero, joy and comfort to each maid;

Bringing days of formal visit, social feast and rustic sport;
Of bull-baiting on the plaza, of love-making in the court.

Vainly then at Concha's lattice, vainly as the idle wind,
Rose the thin high Spanish tenor that bespoke the youth too kind;

Vainly, leaning from their saddles, caballeros, bold and fleet,
Plucked for her the buried chicken from beneath their mustang's
feet;

So in vain the barren hillsides with their gay serapes blazed,
Blazed and vanished in the dust-cloud that their flying hoofs had
raised.

Then the drum called from the rampart, and once more, with
patient mien,
The Commander and his daughter each took up the dull routine,—

Each took up the petty duties of a life apart and lone,
Till the slow years wrought a music in its dreary monotone.

v

Forty years on wall and bastion swept the hollow idle breeze,
Since the Russian eagle fluttered from the California seas;

Forty years on wall and bastion wrought its slow but sure decay,
And St. George's cross was lifted in the port of Monterey;

And the citadel was lighted, and the hall was gayly drest,
All to honor Sir George Simpson, famous traveler and guest.

Far and near the people gathered to the costly banquet set,
And exchanged congratulations with the English baronet;

Till, the formal speeches ended, and amidst the laugh and wine,
Some one spoke of Concha's lover,—heedless of the warning sign.

Quickly then cried Sir George Simpson, "Speak no ill of him, I
pray,—
He is dead. He died, poor fellow, forty years ago this day.

"Died while speeding home to Russia, falling from a fractious horse.
Left a sweetheart, too, they tell me. Married, I suppose, of course!

"Lives she yet?" A deathlike silence fell on banquet, guests, and hall,
And a trembling figure rising fixed the awestruck gaze of all.

Two black eyes in darkened orbits gleamed beneath the nun's
white hood;
Black serge hid the wasted figure, bowed and stricken where it
stood.

"Lives she yet?" Sir George repeated. All were hushed as Concha
drew
Closer yet her nun's attire. "Señor, pardon, she died too!"

MARÍA DE LA CONCEPCIÓN MARCELA ARGÜELLO was born at the Real Presidio de Nuestro Seráfico Padre San Francisco on February 19, 1791. Her father was Don José Darío Argüello, the founder of the Californian family of that name. Her mother was Doña María Ignacia Moraga de Argüello, a niece of Don José Joaquín Moraga, who came to the Puerto de San Francisco in 1776 and was in command at the founding of the Presidio and the Misión. He was comandante of the Presidio from its founding in 1776 until his death in 1785. He was buried in the church of the Misión.

Don José Darío Argüello was born about 1753, in the city of Querétaro. He was for about six years a private in a regiment of Mexican dragoons; a sargento in the presidio compañía at Altar, Sonora, for two years and a half; promoted in 1781 alférez of the compañía organized by Don Fernando Xavier Rivera y Moncada for the proposed Presidio de Santa Bárbara; reached San Gabriel July 14, 1781, and remained there until the founding of Presidio de Santa Bárbara on April 21, 1782; appointed comisionado, in 1786, by Gobernador Pedro Fages to distribute to settlers lands in the Pueblo de los Ángeles; in February, 1787, was promoted teniente of the Compañía de San Francisco, being comandante of the Presidio until March, 1791, and again from April, 1796, until July, 1806, the latter year being memorable as that in which Rezanov came to Nueva California. Argüello, in October, 1797, was promoted brevet capitán, the commission being received in February, 1798. From 1791 to 1796 he had been comandante of the Presidio de Monterey, and upon the death of Comandante Hermenegildo Sal at that Presidio in 1800 he desired a transfer to Monterey, which was refused, but in 1803 was recommended for promotion. On March 22, 1807, he was promoted capitán of the Compañía de Santa Bárbara. His commission was received late in 1808, but he had been at Santa Bárbara since the autumn of 1806. On the death of Gobernador José Joaquín Arrillaga on July 24, 1814, Argüello, the ranking officer in Nueva California,

became acting gobernador without appointment, but he did not cease to be comandante at Santa Bárbara, nor did he move his residence even temporarily to the capital at Monterey. He was commissioned gobernador propietario of Antigua California on December 31, 1814, but he held the command in chief until the arrival, on August 30, 1815, of Don Pablo Vicente de Solá, who had been commissioned by Don Félix María Calleja, viceroy of Nueva España, as gobernador propietario, or comandante general y jefe político, of Nueva California. The two commissions bore the same date.

Don José left Santa Bárbara in October, 1815, and proceeded to Loreto. Here nothing was to his liking. He did not receive his pay, and age and ill-health were added to the miseries of poverty. In February, 1822, the crew of a vessel belonging to the fleet of Admiral Thomas Cochrane raided Loreto, and carried off from Gobernador Argüello's home everything of value, including his set of silver plate – probably that which excited the admiration of Doctor Langsdorff when Rezanov and he first visited the happy family at the Presidio de San Francisco on the memorable eighth day of April, 1806. Don José, his formal resignation having been accepted, sailed from Loreto on October 27, 1822, to join his son Gervasio at Guadalajara, his physical condition such that it was doubtful if he could reach his destination alive. His latter years were full of trouble, some perhaps imaginary, and he died in the winter of 1827–28.

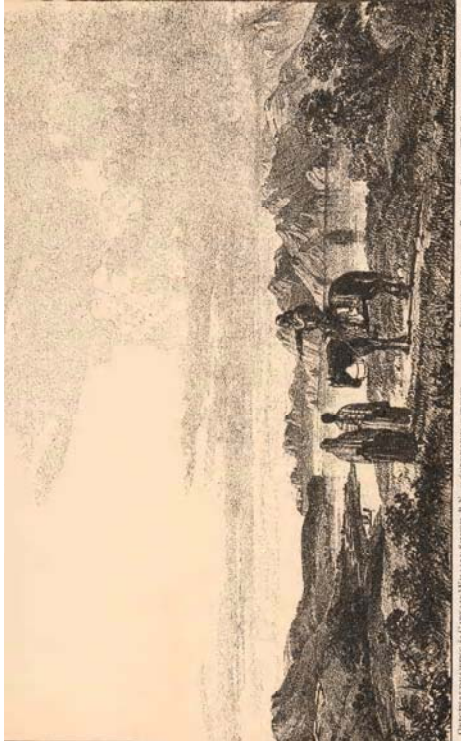
The Doña María Ignacia, upon the death of Don José, was anxious to return to California, and sought to go with Don José Antonio De la Guerra, upon his return after an absence of two years as diputado to Mexico. Robinson, in the fifth chapter of his *Life in California*, mentions the arrival of De la Guerra. But the doña was deemed unable to undertake the journey, and she died on April 12, 1829.

Bancroft says of Don José Darío Argüello, that he was the best known and most influential man in Nueva California, where he

had served faithfully thirty-four years. His record was a perfectly clear one, and in ability and fidelity bore a marked resemblance to his friend Gobernador Arrillaga. He was a good officer, a strict disciplinarian, an excellent accountant, and withal a very popular man. Arrillaga used to refer to him familiarly as El Santo, and the padres regretted the departure of a man who seemed like one of themselves. Old residents remember him as a tall stout man, of a very dark complexion. Some of his descendants show the true Spanish type of face.

It must be presumed, in the absence of anything to the contrary, that the fortunes of the Doña Concepción followed those of her parents until the spring of 1829, when her mother died. In a letter dated January 30, 1829, she alludes to some reports in California derogatory to her father's good name, and asks Don José De la Guerra to contradict them. Before this, in a letter dated Loreto, April 20, 1818, to her brother, she tells of being troubled by the ardor with which a Don Santiago (James Wilcox Smith) presses his suit for her hand, and by reports current on the subject among her friends in California. She denies having given Don Santiago any encouragement that she would marry him, though she admits that it had once occurred to her that, as he had promised to change his religion, by consenting she might save his soul; but she had reflected that if his conversion was sincere he had no need of her. Whatever interest she had manifested in him had been inspired by gratitude for favors extended to her family. She is anxious that the matter be explained to Don José De la Guerra and Don Pablo de Solá, the gobernador.

Bancroft, giving the names of old and prominent Californians, says that – after her return to Santa Bárbara – they all speak of the Doña Concepción in terms of the highest respect, dwelling on her many acts of charity and religion, her ministrations to the sick, her teaching of children (both Indian and Spanish), her habit of carrying always a bottle of holy water, her visits to the different misiones and presidios, and her persistent rejection in the early



ORIGINAL DRAWING BY CAPTAIN WILLIAM BRYCE, R.N., OF FARRAN'S POINT. FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY T. C. BIRCHALL, SAN FRANCISCO.
THE PRESIDIO HARBOR, SAN FRANCISCO.
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA LIBRARY
1826

days of all offers of marriage. Gobernador Alvarado believed that by a mysterious warning she saved his life at Santa Bárbara in 1838. It does not appear that at this time she lacked funds. Her name is found among a list of creditors in 1840 of the tottering Misión San Buenaventura. One thousand dollars was due her.

Sir George Simpson, governor-in-chief of the Hudson's Bay Company, visited Nueva California in 1841-42. His *Narrative of a Journey Round the World* contains much valuable information concerning the California of that period. The work was issued in two volumes in London in 1847, and in one volume, in the same year, in Philadelphia. Sir George, in the *Cowlitz*, anchored in the cove of Yerba Buena on December 30, 1841. In the evening of the 14th of January, 1842, the *Cowlitz* anchored abreast of the castillo at Monterey, and on the 24th Sir George was landed at Santa Bárbara. Here he presented his letters of introduction, and started at once to pay his respects to the principal inhabitants. Mrs. Ramona Wilson, a sister-in-law of General Vallejo, and wife of Captain John Wilson, made famous by Dana as captain of the *Ayacucho*, entertained Sir George and his party at dinner. Here it is deemed better to give Sir George's own account of the Doña Concepción Argüello at Santa Bárbara, as he is quite frequently misquoted and misinterpreted, like many another writer.

"After dinner we were joined by the remainder of our party, the *Cowlitz* having by this time come to anchor, and we again sallied forth to see a few more of the lions. Among the persons whom we met this afternoon was a lady of some historical celebrity. Rezanov, having failed, as elsewhere stated, in his attempt to enter the Columbia River in 1806, continued his voyage as far as San Francisco, where, besides purchasing immediate supplies for Sitka, he endeavored, in negotiation with the comandante of the district and the governor of the province, to lay the foundation of a regular trade between Russian America and the Californian settlements. In order to cement the national union, he proposed uniting himself with the Doña Concepción Argüello, one of the daughters of the

9 REZ. VOY.

comandante, his patriotism clearly being its own reward, if half of Langsdorff's description was correct.

"Rezanov, who was himself of the Greek church, regarded the difference of religion with the eyes of a lover and a politician, but as his imperial master might take a less liberal view of the matter, he posted away to Saint Petersburg with the intention, if he should there be successful, of subsequently visiting Madrid for the requisite authority to carry his schemes into full effect; but the Fates, with a voice more powerful than that of emperors and kings, forbade the banns, and Rezanov died, on his way to Europe, at Krasnoyarsk, in Siberia, of a fall from his horse.

"Thus at once bereaved of her lover, and disappointed in her hope of becoming a pledge of friendship between Russia and Spain, Doña Concepción assumed the habit, but not, I believe, the formal vows, of a nun, dedicating her life to the instruction of the young and the consolation of the sick. This little romance could not fail to interest us; and, notwithstanding the ungracefulness of her conventual costume, and the ravages of an interval of time which had tripled her years, we could still discover in her face and figure, in her manners and conversation, the remains of those charms which had won for the youthful beauty Rezanov's enthusiastic love and Langsdorff's equally enthusiastic admiration.

"Though Doña Concepción apparently loved to dwell on the story of her blighted affections, yet, strange to say, she knew not, till we mentioned it to her, the immediate cause of the chancellor's sudden death. This circumstance might, in some measure, be explained by the fact that Langsdorff's work was not published before 1814; but even then, in any other country than California, a lady who was still young would surely have seen a book which, besides detailing the grand incident of her life, presented at the same time so gratifying a portrait of her charms."

The first bishop of California – Fr. Francisco García Diego – had arrived at Santa Bárbara on the 11th of January, and Simpson and his party, on the 25th, were taken to the Misión, where the

Reverendo Obispo de las Californias resided. "Even in this his day of small things the bishop received us with much pomp and ceremony, attended by two monks, three or four graduates, and a train of servants. . . . While we were engaged in an agreeable and amusing conversation, some of the attendants brought in a table, placing on it, among other refreshments, a pile of cakes, the work of Doña Concepción. The wine was the produce of the vineyard of the Misión, rather sweetish, but of excellent quality; the brandy, also home-made, was superior to the wine, being flavored with fruit into a perfectly colorless cordial."

The Doña Concepción had returned to Nueva California soon after her mother's death in 1829, now to remain permanently. The heart of the family was always in Nueva California, whether a provincia of Nueva España or a territorio of Mexico, and it is known that Concepción had previously returned on at least one visit. Her home was now with "the first family of California," that of Don José Antonio De la Guerra y Noriega, and it is more than probable that it was here that Sir George Simpson first met her, when he and his party "again sallied forth to see a few more of the lions." At this time she was a member of the Third Order Secular of Saint Francis, the members of which were not under the obligations of a vow, and whose habit was gray.

When the first convent and seminary for females in California was founded at Monterey in 1851 by the Dominican Sisters, the Doña Concepción, though sixty years of age, was the first novice to enter. On April 11, 1851, she received the white habit of Saint Dominic at the hands of Bishop José Sadoc Alemany, and with it the name of María Dominga. This convent, opened under the protection of Saint Catherine of Siena, was in 1854 moved to Benicia, and there Sor María Dominga lived until her death on December 23, 1857. Two days later the body was laid to rest in the convent cemetery. In 1897, the body, with the others in this cemetery, was reinterred in the private cemetery of the Order of Saint Dominic. The grave is marked by a white marble slab.

Doctor Langsdorff, who accompanied Rezanov on his voyage to Nueva California, states in his *Voyages and Travels* that the Señora María Ignacia Argüello, the mother of Doña Concepción, at the time of his visit had had fifteen children, thirteen of whom were then living. Record is now found of nine of these; i.e., José Ignacio Máximo, Luis Antonio, Santiago, Gervasio, María de la Concepción Marcela, Francisco Rafael, Toribio de Jesús, Ana Paula, Gertrudis Rudesinda. All were born in Nueva California. Luis Antonio, Santiago, Gervasio, were prominent in the history of California. The latter two will not be considered further here.

Don Luis Antonio was born at the Presidio de San Francisco on June 21, 1784; entered the military service as a cadet in the *Compañía de San Francisco* in 1799; *teniente* and *comandante* in 1806. He was famous as an explorer. Don Luis was elected *gobernador* of Nueva California on November 10, 1822, under the regency of Iturbide in Mexico; after April 2, 1823, he held the office under Iturbide as Agustín I; after November 17th he held under the *Congreso Constituyente*. He resigned in November, 1825. His first wife was Rafaela Sal, daughter of Hermenegildo Sal, *comandante* at the Presidio de San Francisco at the time of Vancouver's visit in 1792; his second wife was Soledad Ortega, granddaughter of José Francisco Ortega, the first white man to see the narrow strait called the Golden Gate, and the daughter of José María Ortega, the grantee of the historic Rancho de Nuestra Señora del Refugio. Don Luis died in San Francisco on March 27, 1830, and was interred in the cemetery of the *Misión de San Francisco*. To his widow, the Doña Soledad, he left the famous Rancho de las Pulgas. His monument is inscribed, —

AGUÍ YACEN LOS RESTOS DEL
CAPITÁN DON LUIS ARGÜELLO
PRIMER GOBERNADOR DEL ALTA CALIFORNIA BAJO EL
GOBIERNO MEJICANO
NACIÓ EN SAN FRANCISCO EL 21 DE JUNIO, 1784
Y MURIÓ EN EL MISMO EL 27 DE MARZO, 1830

EL PRESIDIO DE SAN FRANCISCO THE BIRTHPLACE OF CONCEPCIÓN ARGÜELLO

EL PRESIDIO DE NUESTRO SERÁFICO PADRE SAN FRANCISCO DE Asfs was founded on September 17, 1776. Teniente José Joaquín Moraga, an uncle of Concepción Argüello, commanded on the occasion, assisted by five Franciscan frailes. As a pueblo was founded concurrently, this was really the beginning of San Francisco. Moraga and the pobladores had arrived at the site on July 26th and erected brushwood huts. On August 18th the San Carlos arrived, and her crew assisted in erecting “permanent” buildings, which work was completed in September.

Captain George Vancouver, in the British warship *Discovery*, anchored off the Presidio on November 14, 1792. His description of the Presidio is the first one written. The comandante’s house as described by him had probably undergone little change since the birth of Doña Concepción on January 19, 1791. It is worthy of note here that Comandante Argüello was in command at the Presidio de Monterey from March, 1791, until April, 1796. Don Hermenegildo Sal, whose hospitality was unbounded, was serving as comandante in 1792. Vancouver’s account, in part, follows.

We soon arrived at the Presidio, which was not more than a mile from our landing-place. The only object of human interest that presented itself was a square area, whose sides were about two hundred yards in length, inclosed by a mud wall, and resembling a pound for cattle. Above this wall the thatched roofs of their low small houses just made their appearance. On entering the Presidio we found one of its sides still uninclosed by the wall, and very indifferently fenced in by a few bushes here and there, fastened to stakes in the ground. The unfinished state of this part afforded us an opportunity of seeing the strength of the wall and the manner in which it was constructed. It is about fourteen feet high and five feet in breadth, and was first formed by uprights and horizontal rafters of large timber, between which dried sods and moistened earth were pressed as close and as hard as possible, after which the whole was cased with the earth made into a sort of mud plaster, which gave it the appearance of durability, and of being sufficiently strong to protect them. . . .

Their houses were along the wall, within the square, and their fronts uniformly extended the same distance into the area, which is a clear open space, without buildings or other interruptions. The only entrance into it is by a large gateway, facing which, against the center of the opposite wall or side, is the church, which, though small, was neat in comparison to the rest of the buildings. This church projects farther into the square than the houses, and is distinguishable from the other edifices by being whitewashed with lime made from sea-shells, limestone or calcareous earth not yet having been discovered in the neighborhood. On the left of the church is the comandante's house, consisting, I believe, of two rooms and a closet only, which are divided by massy walls similar to those inclosing the square, and communicating with each other by very small doors. Between these apartments and the outward wall was an excellent poultry-house and yard, which seemed pretty well stocked. Between the roof and ceilings of the rooms was a kind of lumber-garret. These were all the conveniences the habitation seemed calculated to afford. The rest of the houses, though smaller, were fashioned exactly after the same manner, and in the winter, or the rainy season, must, at the best, be very uncomfortable dwellings; for though the walls are a sufficient security against the inclemency of the weather, yet the windows, which are cut in the front wall, and look into the square, have no glass, or any other defense that does not at the same time exclude the light.

The apartment in the comandante's house into which we were ushered was about thirty feet long, fourteen feet broad, and twelve feet high, and the other room, or chamber, I judged to be of the same dimensions, excepting in its length, which appeared to be somewhat less. The floor was of the native soil, raised about three feet from the original level, without being boarded, paved, or even reduced to an even surface; the roof was covered in with flags and rushes; the walls on the inside had once been whitewashed; the furniture was a very sparing assortment of the most indispensable articles, of the rudest fashion and of the meanest kind.

Langsdorff, in describing his first visit to the Argüello family with Rezanov, says that the whole establishment at San Francisco had the appearance of a German farmstead, with low one-story houses inclosing a somewhat long quadrangular yard. The house of the comandante was small and mean. A whitewashed room,

scantly furnished with but little furniture, and that poor, had half its floor-space covered with straw matting, this half serving for reception purposes. Langsdorff notes the surprise of the Russians when a rich service of silver was used at the dinner-table.

In the Transactions of the Geographical Society of the Pacific (vol. 4, ser. 2, 1907), George Davidson tells the Presidio's size as given by Fr. Francisco Palou, — a square of ninety-two varas each side; about two hundred and fifty-two feet, or smaller than the estimate of Vancouver (about two hundred yards). He supposes the square was enlarged between 1776 and 1792. A plan of the Presidio as it stood in 1820 is described by Davidson, "made," he says, "to show the effects of the great earthquake of 1812."

The plan is a rectangle, in the proportion of eleven north and south and ten east and west; the whole arrangement is built to face north; the chapel at the south or higher end of the parade-ground, extending into the square and beyond the wall; east of the chapel, the quarters of the comandante, and on the west those of the officers; the cuartel, near the northeast entrance, the calabozo at the east side of the entrance, the guardhouse on the west side. All the buildings were about ten feet from the inner sides of the walls, and were twenty-five feet deep. Around the whole parade-ground was a line of trees, with the flagpole near the center. The plan also indicates the Pozo de los Marineros, or anchorage; the "ojo de agua," or El Polín, and the houses of Marcos Briones y Miramontes, beyond the southeast angle.

Otto von Kotzebue, on his first voyage, visited the Presidio on October 4, 1816, and was received at the gate by the comandante, Don Luis Argüello. He says he found it as Vancouver described it. This is not satisfying, but Adelbert von Chamisso, the naturalist of the expedition, does better. He says the Presidio is new-built with stone and covered with tiles, but the building of the chapel had not yet been begun. Tiled roofs were probably in evidence, but Chamisso must have been mistaken as to "stone buildings."

Kotzebue, on his second voyage, arrived at San Francisco on

September 27, 1824. The Mexican colors were now waving over Fuerte de San Joaquín; California, no longer a provincia of Nueva España, was now a territorio of the republic of Mexico; a soldier was sent from the castillo to beg from Kotzebue enough powder to answer his salute. Don Ignacio Martínez was now comandante at the Presidio, but was absent; Don Luis Antonio Argüello was now gobernador, and resided at Monterey. Kotzebue visited the Presidio, and says that it was in the same state as on his first visit.

Captain Frederick W. Beechey visited California in 1826, in the Blossom. His description of California occupies two chapters of the second volume of his Narrative (London, 1831). Visiting the Presidio in November, he was well received and entertained by Don Ignacio Martínez, the comandante, whose abode, he says, was in one corner, forming one end of a row, the other end being occupied by a chapel. The opposite side was broken down, and little better than a heap of rubbish and bones, on which jackals (coyotes), dogs, and vultures were constantly preying. Storehouses, artificers' shops, and the jail, composed the other two sides of the quadrangle. All were built in the humblest style with badly burnt bricks, and roofed with tiles. The chapel and the comandante's house were distinguished by being whitewashed. A near view or one from a distance, intimates Beechey, impresses a spectator with any other sentiment than that of its being a place of authority.

The history of the Presidio de San Francisco has never been written. As constructed in 1776-77, neither the walls nor the buildings remained intact after the second winter. By the time Vancouver arrived, probably nothing remained of the original construction. The remarks of foreign visitors chronicle changing conditions, the work of earthquakes, of wind and rain storms. No attempts to repair or reconstruct resulted in anything permanent. The little that does remain bears the unmistakable marks of the destroying angel, the irrepressible and inextinguishable vandal, the destroyer at once of art and of the art preservative of arts. May the Indian's "good father at Washington" come to the rescue.

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