

many antagonistic in their natures. If their contact has created violent ebullitions, it is no more surprising than are those occurring in the crucible, and instead of wondering at the seething which accompanied the process, a pleasant surprise at the advances made in so few years, is a more just and natural feeling.

Through untold centuries the site of what is now San Francisco, remained, doubtless, with scarce a change, save the slow growth of the shrubs and dwarf oaks which maintained severe contest with the dry earth and strong winds, vegetated and decayed; the drifting sand, and the slight incidents and vicissitudes which marked the dream-life of the few savage tribes that have left no trace except the decomposed shells and other matter forming their rancheria relicts. The barren sand hills, the rippling waters of the Bay, the stunted shrubs, the flowers giving an early answer to the winter rains—these were the history of the spot until men foreign to the soil, but imbued with a sublime faith, left home and civilized society and plunged into its desert of cold winds, desolate sand, and savage men, to teach civilization to barbarism and preach salvation to the heathen.

Then followed the details of missionary life, self-denial, industry, toil, the policy of the statesman, the fortitude of the Christian, the courage of the soldier. Gradually the wild man's confidence was won, his listless nature partially aroused, through his appetites, his life of laziness and hunger changed to some degree of industry and comfort. He was taught to supply food by tilling the soil, and his dim ideas of God were used as avenues to reach his soul with some conception of moral and religious accountability. All these poor heathen with their teachers, have passed away, leaving scarce a trace of their history. But who shall say that in the great hereafter the records of what the Franciscan Missionaries and their wild Indian pupils did and tried to do, may not shame the grander results of our more modern missionary and political achievements.

Three score years and ten—man's allotted age—thus passed away, a few acres of soil being cultivated; a few Indians through hope of food more than from any religious bias or conception of what the gospel meant, demanded and promised, being added to the missionary fold; a few soldiers stationed at the Presidio; a few ships at intervals visiting the harbor for water, hides and tallow; and few advances in civilization other than those indicated. For, however admirably calculated the system of Catholic Missions may be for drawing into their fold the Indian, teaching him a few of the common arts of life, and to incorporate upon his heathenistic traditions of the Great Spirit some of the forms of Catholic worship, it has seldom or never progressed beyond these partial results, either from inadequacy in the system itself, or, what is more likely, owing to the principles of the materials upon which it labored—the apathetic, intractable, unprogressive Indian nature. And little better adapted to aid in human progress, than the Indian's, was the nature of a large portion of the Mexican population, which first took possession of California, and which at the time of its acquisition by the Americans, was the ruling class. They are generally as far reduced in character from their ancestors whether Moorish or Castilian, as they are in point of time, or as the adobe haciendas and Missions, are inferior to the palaces of Grenada or Madrid. Beyond a certain point their power of civilization, progress and industry seems incapable of advancing, and that point was reached soon after the Missions were established, and enough Indians "lassooed" to supply the priests and