

ART OF THE  
OLD WORLD IN NEW SPAIN  
AND THE MISSION DAYS OF  
ALTA CALIFORNIA

MARY GORDON HOLWAY, P. I.

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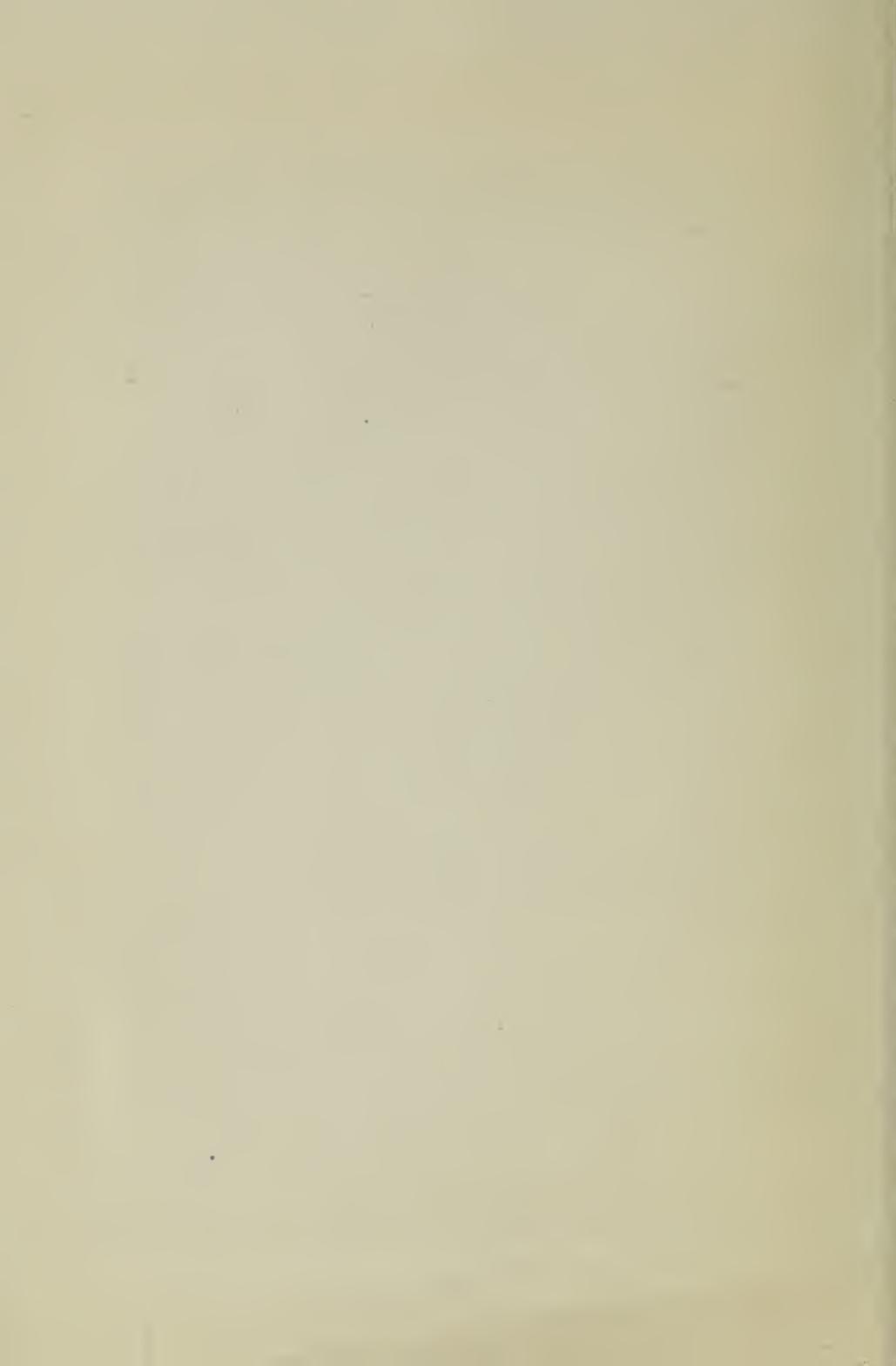


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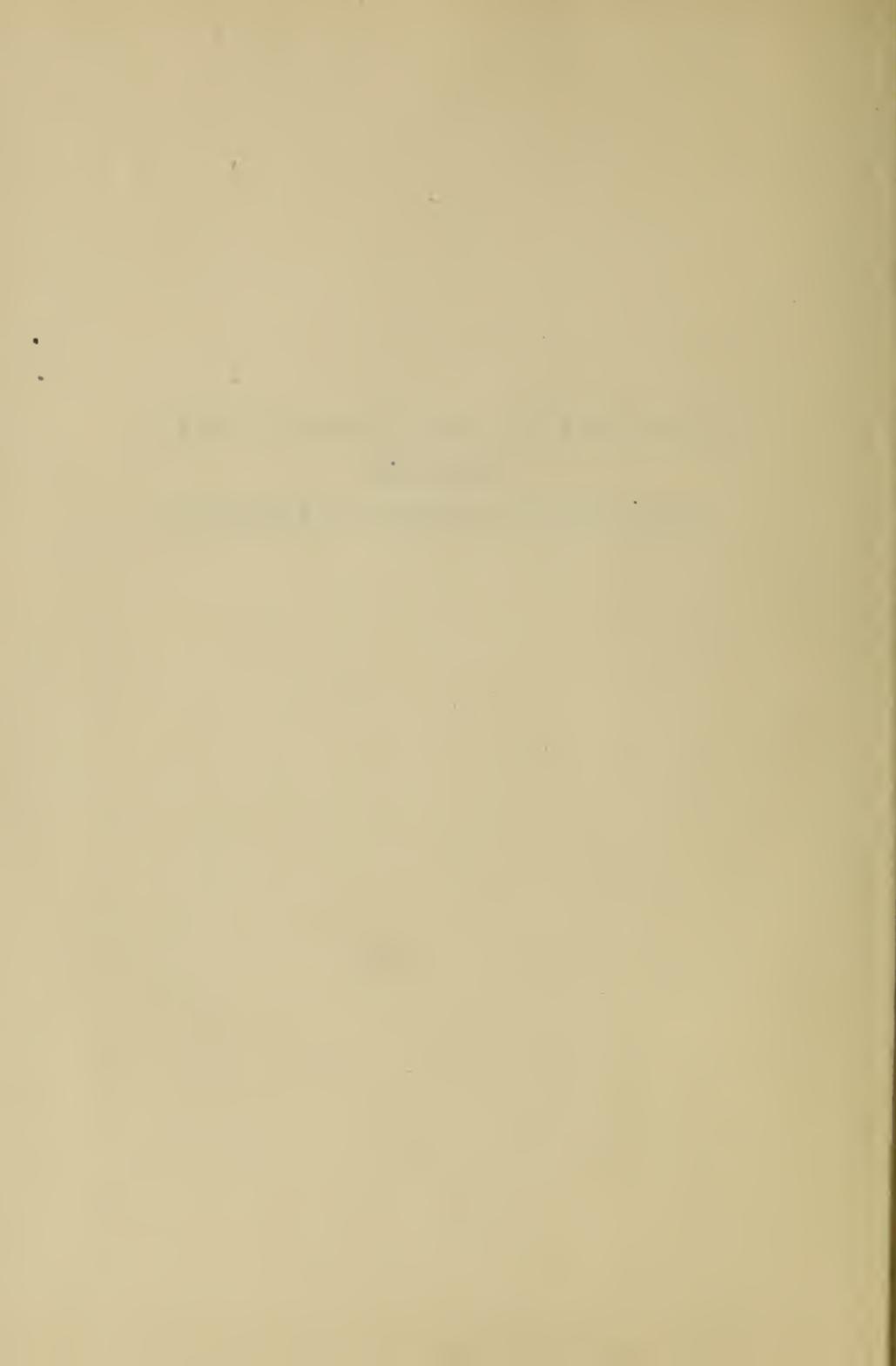
THIS VOLUME  
ON WHICH THE EYES OF MRS. HOLWAY  
NEVER RESTED WAS THE LAST LINK THAT HELD  
HER TO EARTH. AS THE FINAL LOOSE LEAVES  
OF PROOF FELL FROM HER FINGERS  
HER SPIRIT PASSED.  
LOVINGLY  
SHE LEFT HER GIFT  
TO THE YOUTH OF THE UNIVERSITY  
AND TO THE WOMEN OF CALIFORNIA WITH  
WHOM SHE WROUGHT THAT THE  
LOVE OF BEAUTY MIGHT  
FIND AN IMMORTAL  
PLACE IN THE  
WEST  
C. M.







ART OF THE OLD WORLD IN NEW SPAIN  
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MISSION DAYS OF ALTA CALIFORNIA







**PALACE OF CORTES IN CUERNAVACA**

Built by Cortés in 1521. One of the oldest and most famous buildings in Mexico. Under the government of Morelos occupied as Capital of State. Beautiful old arcades remain in their original state. Photograph from Baxter's Spanish-Colonial Architecture in Mexico.

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ART OF  
THE OLD WORLD IN  
NEW SPAIN

AND THE

MISSION DAYS OF  
ALTA CALIFORNIA

*By*

MARY GORDON HOLWAY, B. L.



SAN FRANCISCO:  
A. M. ROBERTSON

1922

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## DEDICATION

TO THE  
SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF CALIFORNIA,  
PARTICULARLY TO THOSE OF THE SECOND AND THE  
THIRD GENERATIONS, THIS VOLUME IS DEDICATED  
IN THE ONE-HUNDRED AND FIFTY-THIRD YEAR  
OF THE FOUNDING OF THE FIRST  
MISSION IN CALIFORNIA  
WITH THE  
SINCERE WISH THAT THE PERUSAL OF ITS  
PAGES MAY BRING NEW LIGHT ON ONE PHASE  
OF DEVELOPMENT IN THE FORMATIVE  
PERIOD OF OUR STATE'S  
HISTORY AND AN  
APPRECIATION OF THE BACKGROUND  
CONTRIBUTED BY BOTH NEW  
SPAIN AND HER MOTHER  
COUNTRY ACROSS  
THE SEAS



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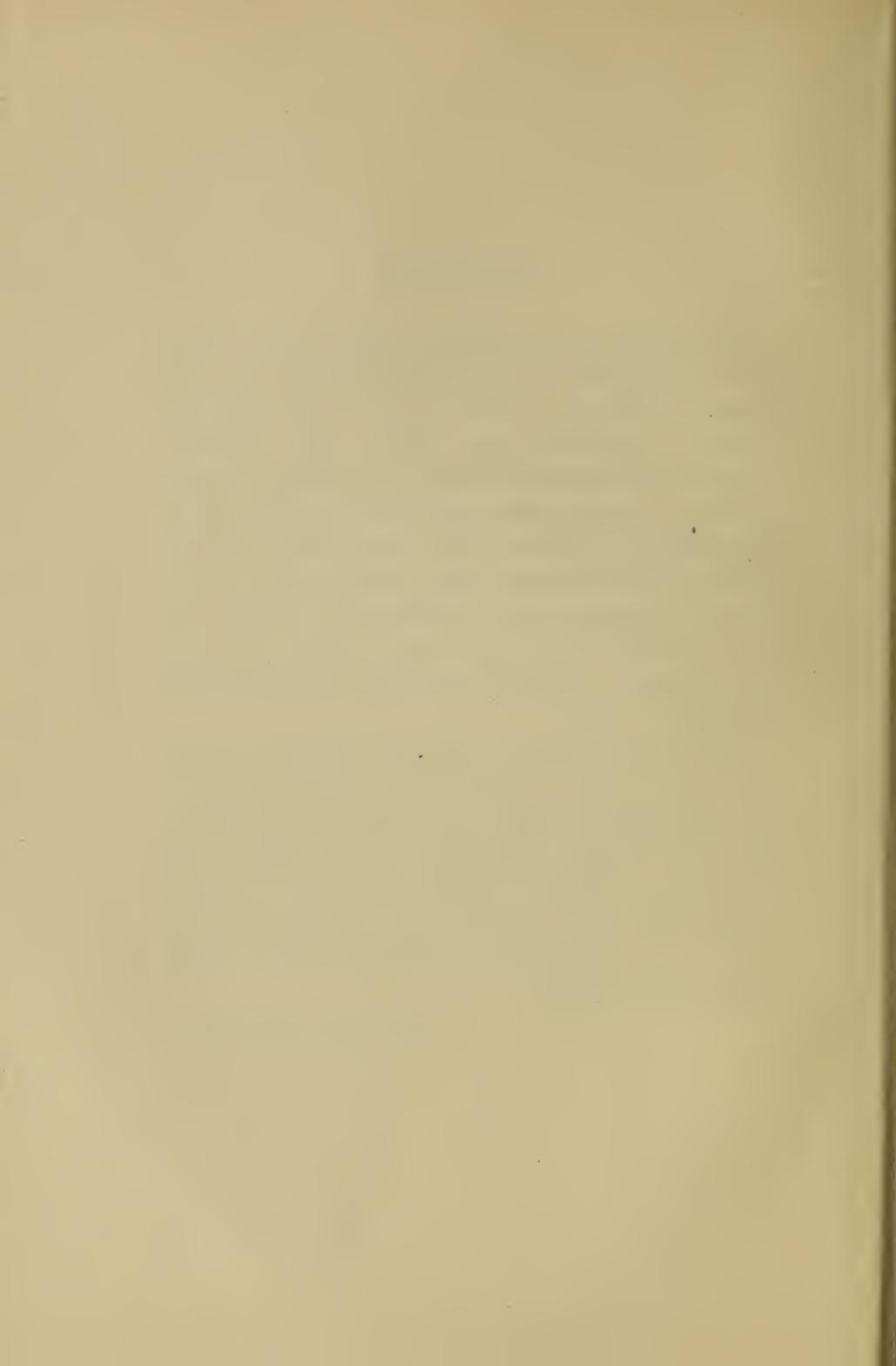


## FOREWORD

*The reader of this delightful book by Mary Gordon Holway will have an intriguing glimpse into those little known influences that were at work during the early period of California and Mexico. Mrs. Holway's study has gleaned much from the fragmentary remains of the art creations that enriched the missions at the height of their influence. At this moment there are many articles of art that were taken from the old missions and from Spanish homes which have found their way into auction rooms or junk shops. I have seen priceless treasures of Spanish colonial art that have been bought for a song.*

*It is my belief that this book will furnish an incentive to its readers to watch for every opportunity to get control of those things that will help in the restoration of the history of California and of Mexico; and eventually I hope they will be turned over to our California Museums, and thus make even more clear the picture so charmingly presented here of this obscure link in our history.*

BERNARD MAYBECK.



## PREFACE

**I**N THE building of a great city the contribution of the artist, either painter or sculptor, although not so obviously needed at the outset as the work of the mason or engineer, is nevertheless one of the vital constructive forces, since it is an influence ministering to an inherent human need, a desire for something more than protection or shelter, the craving for that which stimulates and satisfies the love of beauty in a visible form.

*A silent and enduring witness of this need from the dawn of time is found in the steady progression of the use of color on the walls of the prehistoric cave dweller. Archæologists tell us that these prehistoric drawings in outline were inspired by necessity of a means of communication between neighboring tribes, yet the introduction of color and its subsequent elaboration, though slow, reveals in addition an instinct transmitted from primitive man to succeeding generations; and thus through the chain of countless ages the crude statement of a simple fact recorded with the sweep of a single line, perhaps, on the walls of a prehistoric cave, centuries after has developed into a message of*

*beauty and inspiration as it speaks from the canvas of a modern master. Thus follows the indisputable fact that the progress of a nation may be read in the progress of its art and though seemingly but a by-product of its period, it is yet a true index of the condition of the people, since each resulting phase of art is the reflex of the forces contributing to their development, both temporal and spiritual.*

*In writing therefore the story of the art of Old Mexico and California, so full of romance and artistic interest that the area seems like an enchanted country, one can scarcely forbear to intrude upon the province of the historian. It is with deep gratitude the writer acknowledges the debt to Professor Herbert E. Bolton, Professor of American History and Director of the Bancroft Library at the University of California, and to Professor Herbert I. Priestley, also of the Bancroft Library.*

*Acknowledgments are also due Father Zephyrin Englehardt, author of *Missions and Missionaries of California*, the late Mr. F. S. Daggett, Curator of the Exposition Building, Los Angeles, and Miss Helen B. Wood of the same institution; Father Chanal of the University of Santa Clara; Father Dorca of the Plaza Church, Los Angeles; Father Eugene Sugranes, formerly of San Gabriel Mission; Mr. Bernard*

*Maybeck for his invaluable artistic suggestion and criticism, and the many friends who contributed from their store of personal recollection information of much value. While the writer does not claim that the material is wholly new, the major part has been obtained through study and research at the Bancroft and other libraries, museums and private collections. The description of the pictures and statuary remaining at the California Missions today is the result of personal visits to these missions by the author in May 1918, July and August, 1919, and July and August, 1920. For the six illustrations of Art in Mexico the author is indebted to the J. B. Millet Publishing Company for their permission to reproduce photographs in Sylvester Baxter's Spanish-Colonial Architecture in Mexico.*

MARY GORDON HOLWAY.

*Berkeley, California  
May, 1922*



## PREVIOUS TO THE CONQUEST

LONG before Junípero Serra began his march of spiritual conquest across the western wilderness, Spain was sending works of art to adorn the churches of her subjects in New Spain; early in the period when Cortés was contesting for dominion, gifts from the reigning house reached Mexico, followed by importations of still greater value during the succeeding century. Keeping pace with the activity of the padres in their work of civilization among the Indians, these importations furnished a contributing though silent factor in the formative influence exerted by Old Mexico upon the character of the Indian; an influence which became more direct through the training by Spanish art teachers in her own native schools, not only upon the Indians in Old Mexico, but later upon the Indians of the peninsula and ultimately upon those of Alta California itself. It is therefore fitting that the story of early art on the Pacific Coast should include a brief reference to the art of Old Mexico, especially that of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Whether Spain was interested for self-glory and conquest, or for the laudable desire of spreading the doctrines of Christ in a new land, is immaterial in this discussion. The fact remains that notwithstanding all the cruelty involved and the destruction made of historical material during the extension of Spanish dominion in New Spain, the mothercountry did a herculean task in rescuing the land from the hands of idolaters; in this work her patronage of native art played a very vital part.

Very little is known of the art of Mexico previous to the conquest, since, with the advent of the Spaniard, the greater part of the pictorial art of that period disappeared, destroyed in the effort to satisfy his religious fervor. Like many primitive peoples, the early Mexicans painted on dressed skins with crude pigments, but, their civilization being far in advance of that of other North American tribes, these pictographs or "codices" as they are known, proved of great historical value. In this form of art, the Mexicans conveyed not only their idea of religious belief, but also their idea of life with its various activities and interests. Some of the representations were intended for portraits of their gods, others of their kings, and still others of their heroes; some explained the

mysteries of their religion—many referred to astronomy and even forecasted weather conditions; historical events were recorded in this manner. Codes interpreting their laws, customs, methods of administering taxes and levying of tributes were all in pictorial form. One pictograph was named the “Book of Tributes” and one the “Zapotec Codex.” To the followers of Cortés this form of art was incomprehensible and it is not strange therefore that in their zeal to destroy the idols of the savages, the Spaniards failed to discriminate between religious and other forms of picture writing. “To the great grief of the Indians and the utmost regret of the curious among the Spaniards” vast numbers of these ancient paintings, together with many valuable documents and manuscripts, were collected and burned in the market-place at Tezcuco where the principal school of painting was located.

After the Spaniards realized the great historical loss, attempts were made to get information directly from the living Indians, but distrust of the invader and the desire to preserve what was left of the pictographs and manuscripts defeated efforts in that direction. Certain of the ecclesiastics and Spanish officials, however, were able to

make a few collections of the historical paintings that escaped destruction. The first Bishop of Mexico collected sixty-three specimens, thirteen being valuable historical records. One collection presented to Pope Clement VII by Emanuel, King of Portugal, is at the Vatican. Some of the paintings were deposited in museums and private libraries. The Mexican Government confiscated in the beginning private collections, but permitted historians to consult them. Of these a few are at Vienna and a few also at the Louvre in Paris. Humboldt purchased several when the treasures of León y Gama were sold and sent them to Berlin; Cortés sent a great number to Spain as "curiosities of New World art." A volume of rare Mexican paintings (probably from among those sent by the Conqueror) made on a thick skin and profusely illustrated is preserved in the library of Bologna. The last Mexican king bequeathed to his descendants what remained in the royal collection after the burning of Tezcuco; some of these are at the National Museum in the City of Mexico, among them an historical painting which competent critics consider of rare value. This painting was at first supposed to refer to some event in biblical history and attempts were made to connect the

earliest history of Mexico with the same period expressed in the painting. According to later authorities, however, it represents the "wanderings of the Mexicans in the valley itself from 1325 back to 882, A.D., which is the earliest chronological sign in the painting.<sup>1</sup>

Paintings also served the Mexicans as maps and charts. When Cortés was seeking information in regard to safe harbors in the Gulf of Mexico, Montezuma sent him a painting of the entire coast from where the city of Vera Cruz stands to the river Coatzacoalco.<sup>2</sup> Bernal Díaz in his history of the Conquest is authority for the statement that Cortés in a long arduous sea trip to Honduras used a chart given by the officials of Coatzacoalco picturing all the places and rivers between the points of departure and his destination.<sup>3</sup>

From the vast numbers of paintings that filled the temples and the royal palaces of the City of Mexico and of Tezcuco we know there must have been a great number of artists, and they must have worked with surprising rapidity. This is not strange

<sup>1</sup>MacNutt, *Letters of Cortés*, Vol. I, p. 338.

<sup>2</sup>Première lettre—Correspondence Cortés avec Charles-Quint.

<sup>3</sup>At the Exposition Building, Los Angeles, California, there is an original pictograph, a beautiful book cover made of stag skin, a brilliant white surface, and probably describing the rain.

since they painted in outline as the primitive Egyptians worked, and like the latter lacked knowledge of perspective and proportion. Besides other skins, they used parchment made from deer-skin, and painted also on fine cloth, and on paper made from the agave leaves, palm leaves and sometimes from cotton. Singularly enough they painted no nudes of either sex.

Colors were obtained from the roots and leaves of flowers and from plants; the smoke or soot of the *ocotl*, a certain kind of pine, furnished black; the indigo plant, blue, and purple was made from cochineal, an insect;<sup>1</sup> another red from boiling vegetable seeds in water, yellow from ochre; nitre converted yellow into orange. Occasionally artists used pulverized earths, mixing different kinds to produce desired color; plant products, especially roots and stems and pulverized minerals, are still used by the older Pacific Coast Indians today for the same purpose. For binding the colors *chian* oil or sometimes the heavy juice of certain plants sufficed.

Aztec sculpture, which was far superior to Aztec painting, like the latter, had many characteristics of the Egyptian, especially in its monumental size,

<sup>1</sup>Historia de la Pintura en Mexico.

its composition and deep, cavernous shadows. An excavation made at Monte Alban near Oaxaca shows an instance of these resemblances in the four rude sculptures over life-size, seated in a row, strongly resembling Egyptian temple figures. Remnants of broken sculpture strewn over large areas indicate the immense number of statues made by this interesting people; a number so great it is said the invaders laid the foundation of the first church built in Mexico of crushed idols.<sup>1</sup> In the surface-soil around the pyramids at Teotihuacan, and in the sepulchral urns throughout the valley, thousands of miniature terra-cotta heads were found, remarkable for their excellence.

The Mexicans were also skilful in gold and silver work, using sometimes an alloy of copper and tin. "They made perfect images of natural bodies. A fish with alternating scales of silver and gold; a parrot with movable head, tongue and wings, and an ape with movable head and feet, with a spindle in his hand in the attitude of spinning."

The gifts sent by Cortés to Charles V in July, 1519, included many beautiful pieces of workmanship so rare and so exquisitely wrought they astonished the goldsmiths of Seville. Gómara in

<sup>1</sup>History of Mexico, Clavigero, book vii, p. 413.

his *Life of Cortés* mentions in the list "four tridents adorned with feathers of various colors with pearl points tied with gold threads; a headpiece of wood covered with gold and adorned with gems from which hung twenty-five little bells of gold; instead of a plume it had a green bird with eyes, beak and feet of gold."

But the art par excellence of this ancient people was the feather mosaic work in which the feathers were so finely matched that the Spaniards often "mistook it for a painting." This mosaic work was wrought from the plumage of tiny birds which the Spaniards called *picaflores*, raised in the palaces and private houses for the purpose of supplying the colors which art could not imitate. Sometimes the plumage of parrots and other tropical birds as combined with the *picaflores* making a feather fabric which furnished the brilliant winter raiment of the wealthier class and for the priests; it was also extensively used in the gorgeous hangings of their palaces and churches. The Indians not only made original conventional designs in feather work but after the Conquest copied Spanish paintings. One of the finest, a Girolamo with a crucifix, is mentioned by d'Anagnia, an Italian of the sixteenth century, as being much more vivid in color-

ing than any of the modern masterpieces. In making this mosaic work a number of artists worked on different sections of the same design, using pincers to take hold of the fine feathers and pasting them on a background of fine cotton cloth. When all the parts were completed, they were united on a plate of copper and flattened until the surface was as smooth as a pencil drawing. In delicacy of handling, the native artists in their feather work approached the fineness of the Japanese. No wonder, the Indians valued these mosaics more highly than the gold work. At the time Clavigero wrote (1780) there was but one living artist skilled in feather mosaic<sup>1</sup> and at the present time there is nothing of the art to be found preceding the sixteenth century. The modern feather work of Mexico is but a feeble imitation of the feather mosaic of the earlier centuries.

Lamborn tells the legend of the feather work; how, long ago, in their pilgrimage south from the "mysterious seven caverns" the parent tribe found thousands of humming birds with the most gorgeous scintillating colors. These the wise men of the tribe alleged were spirits of their guardian gods

<sup>1</sup>This artist lived perhaps at Patzcuaro near "the home of the humming birds;" the last artist in feather work died there in 1819.

commanding the natives to found a great city there, which they did, naming it Michiocan (the Tarascan Capital of the Attica of Ancient Mexico) and familiarly called by the natives "the home of the humming birds." The Spaniards coming long afterward found native artists using the plumage of these birds to make pictures and thus originated the far-famed Mexican mosaic work. The next step of the artist in mosaic work was to copy in oils the paintings of the foreigners.

Many specimens preserved in the room allotted to Mexican antiquities at the Louvre and also those in other museums both in the old world and in the new show the Aztecs were skilled in the making of pottery. On the Pacific Coast in the Hearst Collection at the University of California, Berkeley, a series of interesting spindle whorls and a number of ancient painted and lacquered gourds, bowls, and other decorated receptacles, all from the Valley of Mexico, and the collection at the Golden Gate Park Museum furnish good illustrations of the sincerity with which these ancient people worked. After the Conquest, of a necessity, the art became entirely European.



Ironwork of balconies and choir screens, Santa Clara, Mexico.



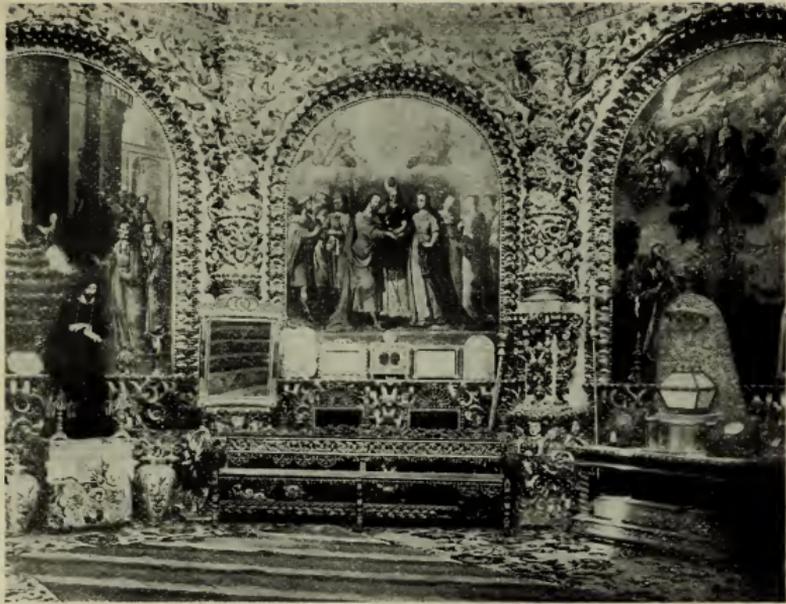
## AFTER THE CONQUEST

FOR fully a century after the Conquest, the art of Mexico was concerned solely with the religious development of the natives. Even in Old Spain, whence came the teachers, many of the works of art destined for purposes of decoration as well as for working models in the schools, were intended first of all to teach the lessons of the church. The teacher of the great Velázquez had declared, "The chief end of art is to persuade men to piety and to incline them to God." It followed naturally that the Mexican painter of the latter part of the century as well as the artist in the beginning should select the same theme.

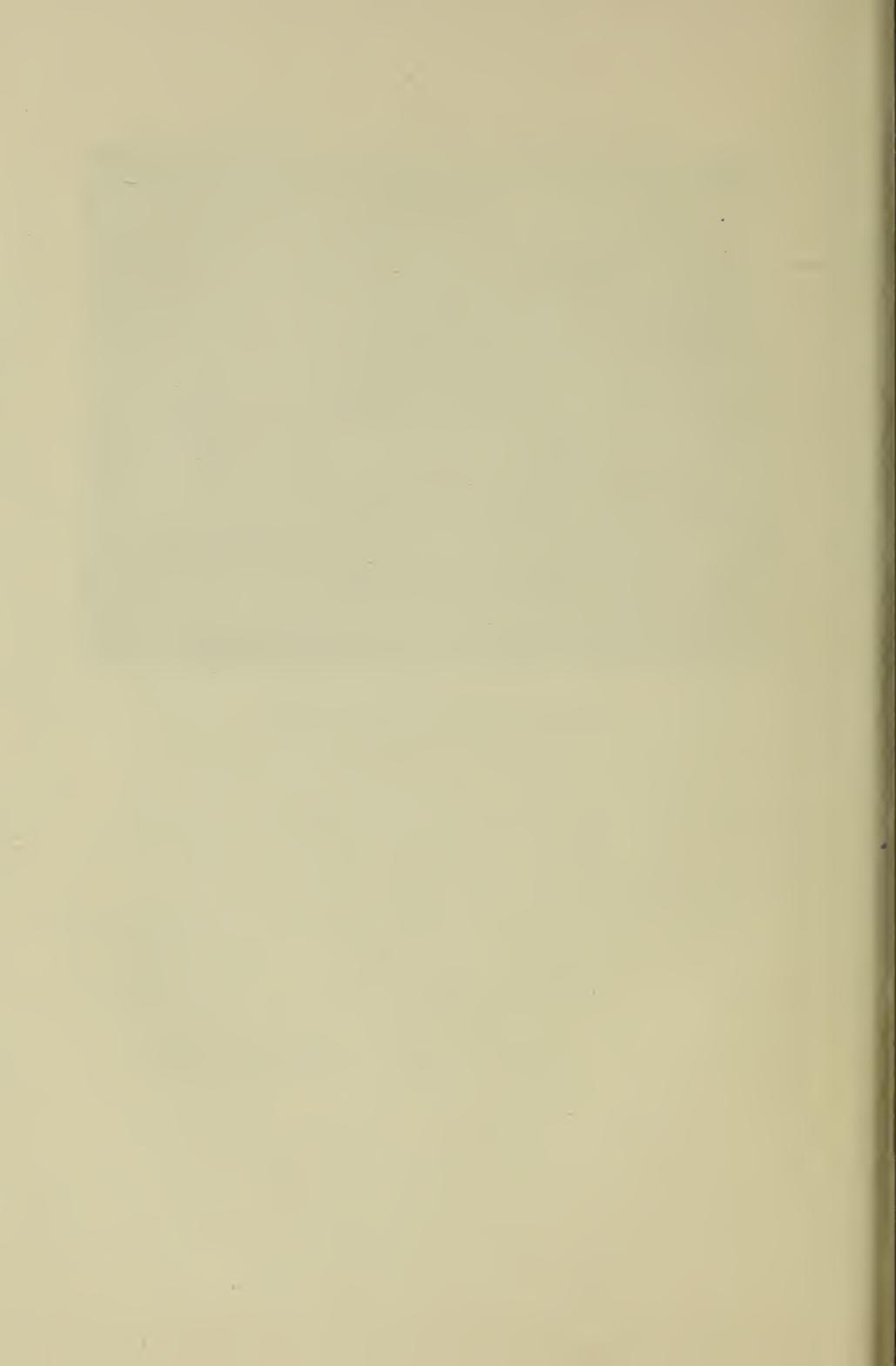
The missionaries discovered very early in their efforts to Christianize the Indians the necessity of having some tangible means of approach to the savage mind in order to arouse the religious appeal which was offered by their own destroyed gods and idols. Cortés recognized this necessity when he placed "images of Notre Dame and other saints in place of the idols," after he destroyed the

temples<sup>1</sup> on his march to the Mexican capital. The transition, however, from pagan gods sculptured in stone to representations of saints carved in wood, or painted on canvas, which the foreigners enshrined in new temples, resulted in much confusion to the neophytes, since they failed to catch the significance of the substitution. Attempts were made to overcome this difficulty in a measure by combining Pagan and Christian symbols, in a manner somewhat similar to that employed by the early Christians in Rome! The Venus and Adonis myth for instance, was used as a symbol of Christ's love, and other Pagan myths represented various religious truths. The Roman Christians painting Christian images and symbols on the unpolished surfaces of obsidian mirrors used in worship of the sun placed the mirrors on their own altars. This was but one of many devices used to obtain freedom from pagan interference in the observance of Christian religious ceremonies. Although the motive of the Spanish padre was in direct opposition to that of the missionary in Rome, yet the results were identical in permitting spread of Christian propaganda among a pagan people, and articles

<sup>1</sup>La Première lettre, p. 91. Correspondence de Fernand Cortés avec L'Empereur Charles-Quint.



BAROQUE  
Convent of Santa Rosa de Viterbo, Mexico.



used by the Aztecs in worship of their gods were often found converted to religious use by the Christians. A holy water font in the National Museum was originally a stone god in the form of "a coiled feathered serpent" which inverted and hollowed out served another religious purpose; later black virgins appeared in evidence of the attempt of the padres to win confidence in "immigrating saints." A good example of this is found in the black Virgin and Child in the Pennsylvania Museum at Philadelphia; another at the Mission Inn at Riverside, California, a wooden statue of the Virgin with hair and feet crudely suggested.

Cortés was deeply interested in the religious work of the padres; in his letters to Charles V he urged that monarch to send "missionaries who are able to build and decorate in a fine manner the churches and chapels."<sup>1</sup> As the work of the padres progressed it was paralleled by the elaborate decoration of many of the oldest convents, churches and other religious buildings;<sup>2</sup> the interior walls were

<sup>1</sup>La troisième lettre, p. 643. Correspondence de Fernand Cortés, etc.

<sup>2</sup>"The church of San Cristóbal de Hualahuises is richly adorned with stations."—Complete works of Gonzalez, Vol. II.

Among the items in the expense account of the convent of Santa Clara College, Santa Clara, California, there is one of forty-four pesos paid in March 1583 for decorating the church. Another of June 8, of eight pesos for the same purpose and in 1584, forty pesos to the Spanish Basque painter Acumaia for a picture ordered by the abbess. M. G. H.

often covered with wonderful carvings and "churrigueresque" work of gold plate—fine iron-grill work in the screens added to its artistic grace and finish. In the cathedral of Puebla the choir stalls are elaborately carved with insets of ivory. At Querétaro, in the Cathedral of Guadalupe, the church and convent of Santa Rosa and the church of El Carmen, and other buildings begun in the latter half of the sixteenth and early seventeenth century when the Renaissance was dominating Spain, exquisite decoration had been carried to its highest point. The walls of the interior of the main chapel of Santa Clara were covered from floor to ceiling with the curious carved churrigueresque work mentioned above. The church of San Francisco, built in the earliest colonial period (sixteenth century) near Cholula has most marvelously carved ceilings of a complicated design with gilded and foliated reliefs—hosts of angels and cherubs peer through the openings upon the worshippers below. This church has also a magnificent old screen of gilded wood. In the Querétaro church of the same name built in 1851, there is an altar of silver with a solid gold figure in the shrine.

One of the best examples of the ornate churrigueresque work is the ceiling over the organ-loft

of the church of Santo Domino where hundreds of beautifully painted figures are set between the carved panels dividing the decorated spaces; even the under parts of the notched arches are wonderfully decorated.

Bernal Díaz, the Jesuit Padre Toribio Benevente or as he was named by the Indians, "Motlinia," "the poor and miserable," and the Franciscan Juan de Torquemada (historian of the Inquisition), all authorities on the history of the period of the Conquistadores, record the bringing of many religious paintings and statues from Europe by the first missionaries<sup>1</sup> to beautify houses of worship in the new country; it was at this time when the Netherlands were under Spanish dominion, that Mexican monks brought many old Flemish paintings and tapestries, found in the various convents and churches.

One of the earliest importations, the statue of Notre Dame placed by Cortés among old Nahuatl gods in the ruined pagan temple at Cholula, is said to have been brought from the Mother Country by Villafuerte, a soldier in the conquering army. From the pagan temple the statue was removed to the Christian Church upon the same

<sup>1</sup>Historia de la Pintura en Mexico, note 19.

site and in 1594 transferred to the Franciscan church of San Gabriel (completed in 1604 at Cholula where it still remains). This statue, now known as the Virgen de los Remedios, the Gachupina,<sup>1</sup> is a crude "wooden doll," about a foot high, holding the Infant Jesus in its arms; both figures have evidently been carved with a very rude instrument.

Of more than usual interest in this connection, because perhaps of the tradition attached to its origin and the time of its production is the ancient painting of Our Lady of Guadalupe dating back to 1531. The picture enshrined in a tabernacle in a silver and gold frame and covered with plate glass, is on the high altar of the Cathedral of Guadalupe in Mexico City.<sup>2</sup> It is an interesting fact that the temple of Tonatzin, the Aztec mother of the gods, stood on the same site of this church. The picture is painted on a coarse cloth of silk fibre and considering the time that is said to have elapsed since the painting was first discovered the coloring and the halo are wonderfully preserved.

<sup>1</sup>Cachupin (literally, "he who wears spurs") probably Gachupin (feminine form, Gachupina) means the Spaniard who emigrated to North America and established himself there" (From the dictionary of the Spanish Academy, Madrid, 1869. George Butler Griffin, Historical Society of Southern California, 1888-89, p. 49).

<sup>2</sup>Missions and Missionaries of California, Fr. Englehardt, vol. I, p. 610.

The Virgin is represented in an embroidered robe of crimson and gold; a blue mantle covered with stars is draped over her head, partially covering it, and falling from beneath is a crown with ten golden rays. She stands with her right foot on a crescent held by a cherub; her hands are clasped, and an aureole surrounds the entire figure. The picture or "the Apparition," as it is sometimes called, is believed by devout Mexicans to have been painted by supernatural means, the question giving rise to much discussion by historians and other writers. Skeptical Mexicans, however, declare the work exceedingly crude and deny the general belief in regard to it while they admit its remarkable color. Father Englehardt upholds the divine origin of the painting in the following explanation: "On three successive occasions a lady of surpassing sweetness and exquisite voice appeared to Juan Diego, a Christian Indian, while on his way to Mass, twice on December 9, 1531, and once on December 12 of the same year. In each of the visions, speaking in the Aztec tongue, the Virgin urged upon him that he visit the Bishop's palace and give the message she sent, viz.: that she desired a temple built to her honor to be erected on the spot on which they stood, promising pro-

tection and consolation for all that called upon her in their distress. Juan was successful in gaining the Governor's attention after the third appearance of the Virgin. When he unfolded his tunic in the presence of the official, the miraculous image of the Virgin was displayed as if it were painted upon the cloth. The likeness was removed and placed in the priest's oratory. Afterward the genuineness of the existing painting was proven in 1853, when, as it was being removed from the old altar for repairs, attention was called to its extraordinary weight, and the picture found to be identical with the one on Juan's mantle. The painting had been stretched on four heavy boards held together by the three nails used by the Indians of that period; on the canvas was an inscription certifying that this was the original and true picture." Hittell disputes the story, saying the credulous Spanish adopted the tale of a soldier who asserted (after setting up an image he had brought from Spain and changing the foreign features to Aztec) that the "Mother of God had made a miraculous appearance in the likeness of an Aztec Virgin." (Probably a confusion with the original of the *Virgen de los Remedios*.)

The Virgin was named *Nuestra Señora de Gua-*

dalupe, and declared to be the patroness of Mexico and its provinces. A church was built on the spot where the apparition appeared and the picture placed in a shrine.

Miguel Sánchez, one of the prominent painters of the Mexican school of the period, wrote the first history of the picture in 1648. Copies were sent out after that date and the study of Our Lady of Guadalupe occupied the attention of painters for the rest of the century. The "official examination" however did not take place until 1666, when an examining group was appointed consisting of college graduates, a lawyer, a clergyman, a man of letters and others whose ability was approved "through their works." A commission of seven artists in 1751 under Cabrera vouched for its authenticity from the artists' point of view.

The Spaniards declared that with the miraculous appearance to the Indian Juan Diego, all idolatry in Mexico came to an end. From that time (1531) the veneration of the picture began, and on December 12 of each year, a celebration was held in honor of Our Lady of Guadalupe. The custom was begun in 1824 when the Republic was estab-

<sup>1</sup>In the revolt of Mexico, the banner of Guadalupe was carried by the Mexicans and that of the Virgen de los Remedios by the Spaniards.

lished and continued by the Californians<sup>1</sup>; and we read that by order of Governor Figueroa, in 1833, the streets and houses at Monterey were decorated in the daytime and illuminated at night; in 1839 the city of Los Angeles gave an appropriation of gunpowder for salutes during the religious ceremonies.<sup>1</sup>

The zeal of the padres was rewarded by a multitude of converts, sometimes thousands in a day; and the erection of churches and chapels followed in quick succession. The decorative supply soon became exhausted, European importations proving too limited for the demand; hence the need for art production in the new country itself and the consequent rise of native artists and native schools. In response to the request of Cortés for missionary teachers, Charles V sent in 1523 three men of exceptional ability, one of whom, Pedro de Gante (Peter of Ghent), destined to become the pioneer of education on the western continent, was said to be a cousin of the reigning monarch. Gifted with a pleasing personality combined with rare skill as a teacher, this Flemish Franciscan monk won the confidence and affection of the Indians and for fifty years worked among them devoting the period entirely to the founding of schools for

<sup>1</sup>History of California, Hittell, vol. II.

their advancement. For this purpose he received immense land grants and large sums of money.

Under the patronage of Viceroy Mendoza, and with the assistance of two padre teachers arriving with him, Fray Juan de Tecta, guardian of the Monastery of Ghent, and the Flemish Fray Juan de Aora, de Gante founded the school at Santiago, Tlaltelolco (in connection with the Franciscan convent), in the Indian quarter of the City of Mexico, for the children of the Aztec nobility; an institution so successful that the daily attendance numbered one thousand. Here the neophytes were taught to sing in choirs, to paint and to carve altar screens, choir stalls and other accessories for church use, using insets of ivory and shell in the carving as well as in the older paintings. They made also, for church decoration, fine embroidery into which they introduced the brilliant native feather work. In painting they had for models masterpieces from Spain and Flanders, many of which were those brought evidently by the Spanish missionaries.<sup>1</sup> Thus instruction in music, painting and wood-carving began simultaneously with the

<sup>1</sup>A portion of a very old painting (artist unknown) representing the school of Padre de Gante, is at the Mission Inn at Riverside, California. The canvas, however, is so worn that, with the exception of de Gante, the figures of the three padres are scarcely discernible.

study of Latin, Theology, and other branches in not only the first school in Mexico but also the first school in America.

After the Conquest, however, the history of art in Mexico begins with a definite report in a letter sent by Fray Julián Garcés, first bishop of Tlaxcala, to Pope Paul III in 1537, sixteen years after the entry of Cortés into the city. In this letter Fray Garcés refers to the progress made by Pedro de Gante and the other missionaries in teaching the Indian to sculpture and to paint in this school.

While the works of art imported from the old world gave the essential dramatic touch in teaching the Christian mysteries and in various events connected with the new religion, the art training by the missionaries was of still more value in this respect. This was true even from the beginning when there could be no personal expression in the work, since it consisted of mere copying from inferior models, and became more evident later in the attempts of the natives to express their knowledge of a religious subject in the work of their own hands. Mr. Baxter reminds us that the earliest colonial art, though based on the prevailing art of the mother country, was carried on by natives, not savages, but by a race which had

already advanced in civilization and whose achievements in art before the Spanish influence were not to be despised. Therefore Mexican colonial art had a distinct flavor of its own. An evidence of this fact may be seen in the depth of the shadows inherited from the Aztec period, showing the native tendency in the later art which influenced Spain itself.<sup>1</sup> Moreover the wisdom of the padres in permitting the natives a free hand is shown in the expression of native feeling which often pervaded their work. A notable instance of this native feeling is seen in the introduction of figures of monkeys and other tropical animals, and the famous Mexican bird, the guajamaya, into the wood-carved designs of the beautiful choir stalls of San Agustín Church. Although these stalls were not made until probably the end of the seventeenth century this characteristic individuality persists throughout the work. It appears also in the Aztec figures on each side of the beautiful iron grill work of the entrance to the Calle de Infantes in Puebla; furthermore there is no trace of Spanish influence in the carving of the dogs held by chains in the hands of these same figures. The Virgin is often

<sup>1</sup>Notice the correspondence of cavernous shadows in the ornaments in the picture of iron grill work at Santa Clara, and the Egyptian.

represented with ear-rings and necklace in accordance with the feeling of each artist to follow his national type in portraying the Madonna.

With the importation of finer models the native workers became skilled copyists. Torquemada and Motolinia both declare that there had been no picture or statue brought from Spain that the Christian Indians could not reproduce before the end of the sixteenth century. The presence of Spanish artists early in 1600 (although there is little authoritative in regard to them or their work) aided, no doubt, the efforts of the padres in stimulating the native artists to think for themselves and by the end of the sixteenth century copying had entirely disappeared and the Indians were doing creative work. Among the latter, Bernal Díaz mentions the names of Andrés de Aquino, Juan de la Cruz and the Crespello as being the first three Mexican-Indians to become prominent in creative work. Bernal Díaz speaks also of the exaggerated estimates given to their work by the critics.<sup>1</sup>

Unfortunately the padre painters did not understand the mixing of pigments to resist the chemical action upon color at the elevation of the Mexican

<sup>1</sup>*Historia de la Pintura en Mexico*, p. 23.



Tapestries in the Chapter Room of Cathedral at Puebla, Mexico. Gift of Emperor Charles V.



plateau; and their work, besides growing ashy with the passing of years eventually became valueless for either artistic or historical purposes; the humidity of the walls also had a deleterious effect upon mural decorations. This partly accounts for the absence of frescoes in the churches, a want supplied by paintings in frames fitted in spaces for decoration. Between the period of the Indian artists and that of the Spanish and Mexican schools two collections of portraits of the Viceroyes are the only works existing. Both collections are in the City of Mexico, one in the National Museum, and the other in the Casa Consistorial.

In the collection of Miss N. A. Hendee of Los Angeles there are beautiful paintings on wood of five archangels from an original series of six. These are known as the Yucatan panels, probably brought from the Cathedral at Merida, Yucatan, which at one time was full of relics that have long disappeared.<sup>1</sup> The artist is unknown but from the technique and the medium used they are no doubt excellent examples of the later mission art. On each panel outlined or etched against a background of soft buff color and seemingly floating in an ethereal atmosphere is a figure of a female saint:

<sup>1</sup>Clavigero, book VII.

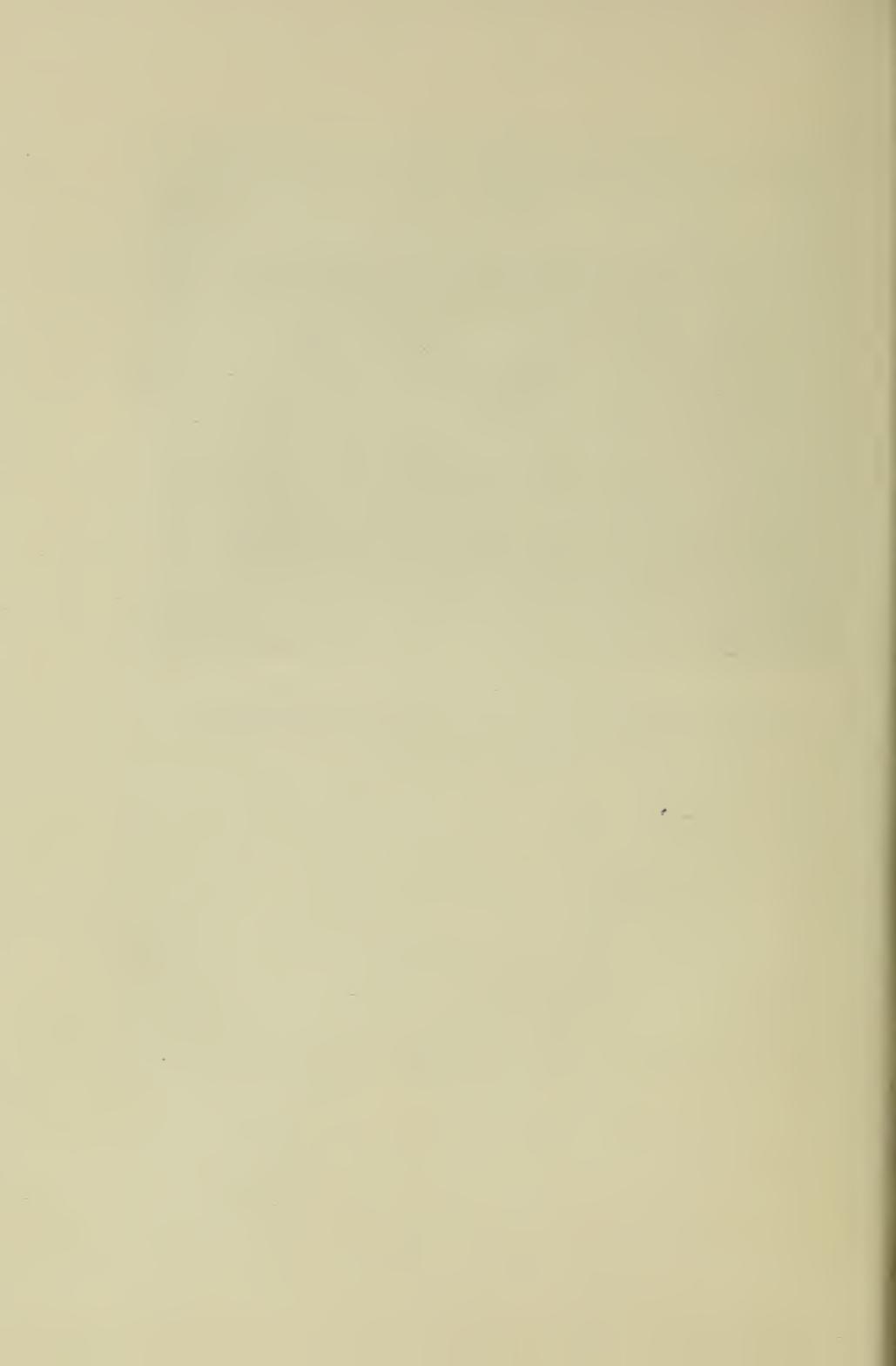
beneath two appears an ornamental legend, one "S. Seult" and the other "S. Vriel." The flesh tones in brown are very fine, the delicacy of repeated brown and yellow tones relieved from monotony by touches of red and gilt in the graceful folds of drapery and by the insets of pearly shell in drapery and wings. The drawing and spirit of the work suggest Botticelli or Fra Angelico influence and the lack of both modeling and vividness of color preclude all idea of the old Mexican School.

A further suggestion of the earlier period is found in the frames of dark brown wood, two of which are ornamented in inlaid pearly shell in conventionalized flower forms; others with birds and flowers, also in shell inlay, and flowers painted in pale yellow and reds. These ancient frames have also an inner and an outer simple conventional design in gilt. The use of gilt tracery in frame and picture would indicate a later period than that denoted by shell inlay but both the shell and ivory insets were occasionally used for decorative purposes as early as the seventeenth century. At the Glenwood Mission Inn, Riverside, California, there are three rare old frames of this description dating from about 1750. It is known that Cortés sponsored artists from Spain other than the padre



#### THE ENTOMBMENT

By Titian in Church at village of Tzintzuntzan near Pátzcuaro in the center of Mexico—ascribed by some to Echave and by others to Ibarra. Discovered by Frederic E. Church in 1884.



painters and teachers and that the former were sent South and East from the City of Mexico into what is now Central America, decorating chapels and convents and other religious houses as they journeyed. In the Fifth Letter to Charles V, Cortés described his religious activity throughout his journey through Yucatan, but since the Cathedral at Mérida was not completed until fifty years after his death, the paintings can scarcely be ascribed to a Spanish emigrant painter of the period of Cortés. Moreover the countenances are so unmistakably of colonial rather than continental type it makes the importation from any of the West Indian Islands extremely doubtful. The work may well be the product of the Mission schools in the latter part of the sixteenth or the beginning of the seventeenth century; the legends may be accounted for by their being added much later than when the original paintings were made. The first building erected in Yucatan after the arrival of the Spaniards was the home built in 1541 for Montejo, first governor of the province. This edifice known as the "house of Montejo" has a most unusual entrance; a carving over the portal of two armed knights trampling underfoot two Indians is representative of the spirit of the Spanish Con-

quistadores in overcoming rebellion in that province.

During the earliest period of the Conquest Charles V, reigning monarch in Spain, sent many valuable gifts to the colonial churches in the new world. The Cathedral at Cuernavaca, erected in 1529, still possesses a wonderful clock presented to Cortés for that purpose; the Cathedrals at Mexico and at Puebla were especially favored. As the number of convents, chapels, and chapter houses increased, this custom inaugurated by their sovereign was followed by members of the royal house and by other Spanish nobles; later the sending of these "votive offerings" became a religious obligation. The Palace of Sant Elmo at Seville was assigned to the receiving of gifts of pictures, statuary, tapestries, and all forms of art intended for the decoration of the mission churches, chapels, and convents in New Spain. Many of the paintings had the sign  cut into the backs of the frames, showing they came from Seville. There was also in front of the palace a heroic figure of the Virgin in a boat; in the receptacle which she held were placed the taxes and tributes imposed by the government for the support of the churches overseas.

With the increasing wealth of the church the gifts included originals and fine copies of the lead-

ing masters in Spain and Italy, especially during the seventeenth century when wealth and taste were factors in the selection, and the rivalry of successive reigns of viceroys influenced and encouraged the best importations. Zamacona, a Mexican statesman, is authority for the statement that as late as 1890 works by Velázquez still hung on the walls of a secularized Puebla refectory, then used as a shelter for a riding school.

At the time that Cortés was conquering in Mexico, Renaissance art was just being introduced into Spain by a number of artists who had gone to study in Italy, after this fewer Flemish paintings found their way to the new colony. The effect of foreign training was a complete revolution in the idea of ecclesiastical art—a revolution peculiar to Spain alone, the relatively flat decorative element in sculpture was replaced by sculptured figures with great multiplicity of detail — the direct outcome of the native Mexican in the Mexican art which influenced Spanish taste, now ready after the Moslem occupation of Spain. As a consequence stone and marble were set aside for wood as a cheaper and more readily worked medium. This fact accounts for the numberless statues of wood that filled the mission churches.

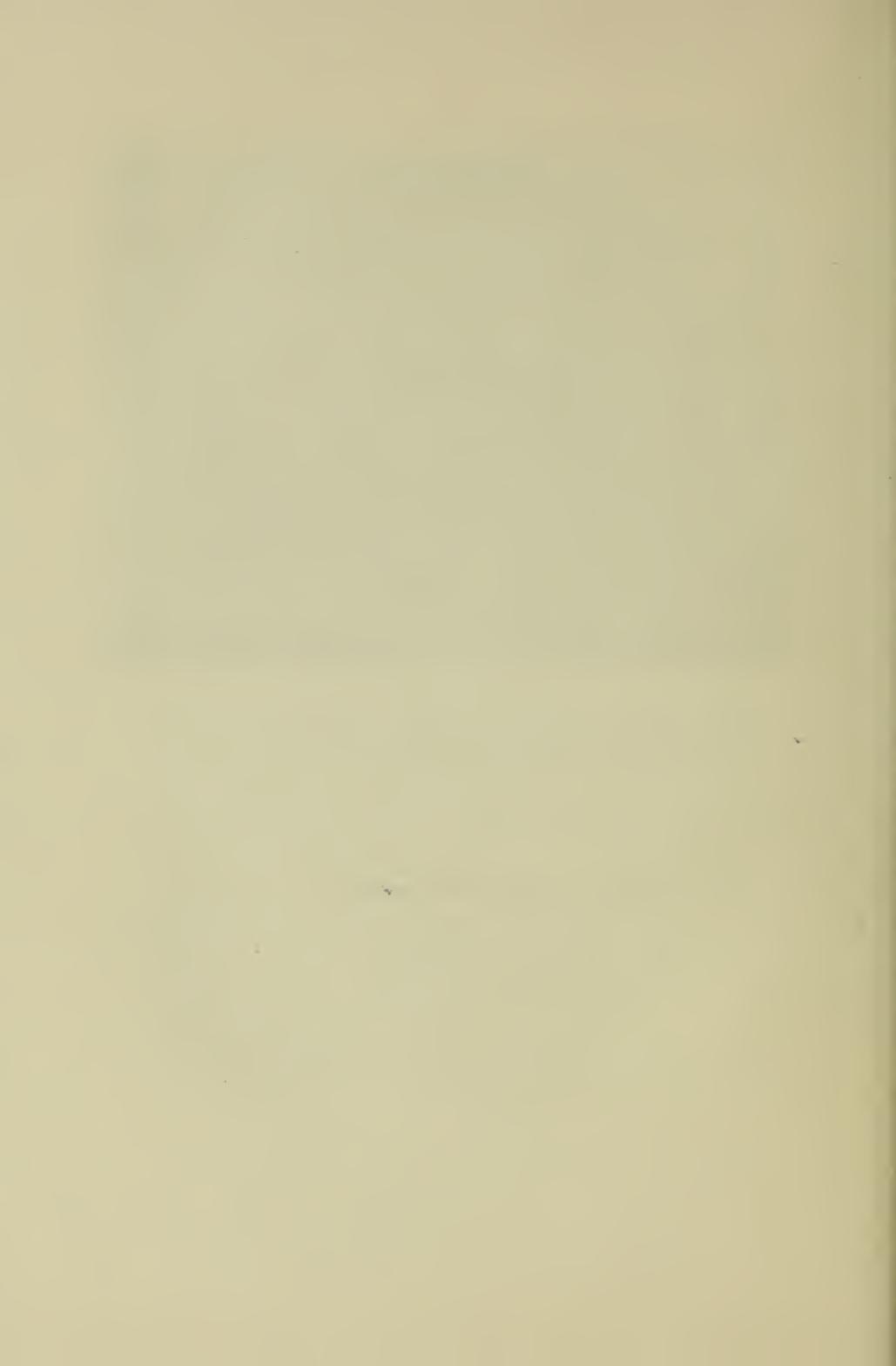
Among the painters of the latter part of the century, Ribera (Il Spagnoletto) the "Spaniard in Italy" (1585-1609), who, notwithstanding his short period, was one of the leading art influences, introducing the Italian manner of thought in the realistic treatment of subject as well as the Italian idea of technique. Following the artistic precedent of the period, Ribera's favorite religious motifs included martyrdoms and crucifixions. At the old church in Toluca there are several copies of Ribera, whether painted by artists of the old Mexican School or European, is uncertain. The Mission of San Carlos at Monterey, California, possesses a painting attributed to this artist; the head of the bleeding Christ is typical of Ribera's choice of subject; the heavy shadows, the use of color, and the drawing are characteristic of his St. Jeromes and other religious work. While it no doubt is inferior to the best of Ribera's earlier works, it is one of such merit as to suggest that the canvas may have been painted by one of his pupils or by an artist of the Old Mexican School. It is evidently far superior to anything within the capacity of the Mission Indians of California.

In 1550, Titian and other famous artists were painting in the court of Charles V at Madrid; a



### HORTUS CONCLUSAS

Mural painting in sacristy of Santa Rosa at Querétaro—artist Eduardo Tresquerras—Interior Churrigueresque tending to Baroque. Exterior Spanish Renaissance and Baroque—Paintings in Church by Cabrera.



little later Murillo at Seville was the idol of the art center of the world. Undoubtedly canvasses of both masters were included among the gifts of not only Charles V but of Philip II, patron of foreign masters and himself both painter and sculptor, and equally munificent as the former monarch towards the churches of New Spain. A beautiful painting of Our Lady, the gift of Philip, hung in the first church that the Jesuits built in 1557 in the city of Guanajato. This picture was afterwards removed to the church of San Juan de Dios in San Francisco. Charles V sent an Assumption by Murillo to the chapter house of Guadalajara as a token of gratitude for money contributed by Mexican monks to help resist the invasion of Mexico by Napoleon III. It is a canvas resembling a remarkable way the famous Assumption in the Louvre. When Maximilian was in power (1864), there was an unsuccessful attempt to remove it to France and hang it beside the Conception in the Louvre. Later the church authorities refused an offer of \$75,000 for it. Fr. Chanal of the University of Santa Clara reports seeing this painting at Guadalajara in 1914. Among other gifts of Charles V, was an altar-piece of a marble Christ sculptured in high relief in the church of San Francisco in

Mexico City;<sup>1</sup> or the beautiful Flemish tapestries on the walls of the Cathedral sacristy in Puebla were sent by the same monarch,<sup>2</sup> himself a native of Flanders. The subjects of the tapestries designed by Rubens are characters taken from classic mythology and seem at variance with the sacred character of their surroundings.

The church of El Carmen founded at Querétaro in 1614 and at present considered the most "fashionable and aristocratic church in the city" possessed in early colonial times three or four Murillos painted on linen, which were valued by the authorities at "many thousands of pesos." These pictures were guarded closely by the superiors of the community to prevent unscrupulous villagers from stealing them; so highly were they valued that the officials at one time called upon the military to protect them from theft.<sup>3</sup> In the convent (which is now entirely gone), there was a fine Ascension as well as a Circumcision both by Murillo. Mme. Calderón de la Barca, wife of an official in Mexico (1838-1841), in her published letters writes of the ill care of these paintings espe-

<sup>1</sup>Historia de la Pintura en Mexico, note 120.

<sup>2</sup>Spanish Colonial Architecture in Mexico, p. 152.

<sup>3</sup>La Cruz, vol. 15, pp. 26-27.

cially of the Circumcision where the figure of the Jewish priest (whom the vandals insisted was the Devil) is badly mutilated. This author mentions also two other canvasses of merit, a Descent from the Cross in the same church, and, in the Convent of the Profesa, a Guido Reni representing Christ bound to a pillar and scourged, the expression of the beautiful tender face contrasted strongly with the "savage cruelty in the countenances of his executioners."<sup>1</sup> Mme. Calderón herself owned an Annunciation by Bayeu, the Valencian, a canvas which she claimed was brought from Spain by one of the early missionaries. In the chapter room of the Mexican Cathedral, there is a Virgin by Murillo and one of the same subject by Pietro de Cortona.

Perhaps one of the finest of the "votive offerings" ever sent out of Spain is an Entombment ascribed to Titian at the Church of San Francisco in the village of Tzintzuntzan near Pátzcuaro in the center of Mexico. Due to the remoteness of the village, it remained undisturbed in the search for masterpieces during the period when Mexico was stripped of much of its artistic wealth for export. This picture, discovered by Mr. Frederick E.

<sup>1</sup>Mme. Calderón de la Barca, *Life in Mexico*, vol. II, p. 9.

Church in 1884, is (if not destroyed by the revolutionary soldiers since 1915) in its original condition, due no doubt to the favorable climate, since the clear dry air circulates through the open window of the room in which it is hung. Charles Dudley Warner, writing in 1887, in his *Mexican Notes*, gives a vivid description of the painting. "In the sacristy adjoining the ancient monastery is the treasure of Mexico. The picture in a splendid old carved frame is hung over the vestment chest. In the upper left hand corner is a bit of very Titianesque landscape. On a hill are three crosses in relief against an orange sky. In the lower left hand corner is Mary Magdalen seated on the ground, contemplating the nails and crown of thorns. The figure of Christ supported on a sheet is being carried to the tomb—a dark cavern in the rear. Aiding also in the tender office is a woman, her head bowed over the dead Christ. Behind are St. John, Mary the Virgin, Mary whom Christ loved, and St. Joseph. As you study the picture you have no doubt that it is an original, not a copy; . . . it is in a perfect state of preservation."

F. Hopkinson Smith writes more fully: "The picture is an Entombment sixteen feet long by

seven feet high. Surrounding the dead Christ wrapped in a winding sheet, one end of which is held by a disciple, stand the Virgin, Magdalen, Saint John and nine other figures, all life-size. In the upper left hand corner is a bit of blue sky against which is relieved an Italian villa—the painter's own, a caprice of Titian's often seen in his later works.

“The high lights fall upon the arm of the Savior drooping from the hammock-shaped sheet in which he is carried, and upon the head covering of the Virgin bending over him. A secondary light is found in the patch of blue sky. To the right and behind the group of disciples the shadows are intensely dark, relieving the rich tones of the browns and blues in the draperies, and the flesh tones for which the artist is famous. To the right is a figure supposed to be that of the donor, Philip II.”

Soon after its discovery it was removed from the sacristy to the main church and hung in a much less favorable light. The old carved frame was replaced by a glaring modern frame of white and gold.

The Entombment is accredited by some critics to Echave, the Spanish emigrant painter of Mexico who was a skilful imitator of Titian's style; others

attribute it to Ibarra, but one of the most convincing arguments that it was painted by the great master is found in a study of the Titianesque quality of glowing transparency which distinguishes that master's painting of human flesh. This "golden mellow tone" was produced without the use of strong contrasting tones of color, but by its division into many small but "significant shades" the artist obtained the life-like quality that is almost startling. The nude body of Christ in the Entombment at Tzintzuntzan has this quality to a marvelous degree.

In contradiction of this "proof" some critics maintain that the painting is lacking in the passion characteristic of figures in other Entombments painted by the master. Mr. Baxter contrasts the "chastened prayerful sorrow" of the St. John in the Tzintzuntzan canvas with "the frenzied grief" of the same figure in the Louvre Entombment. In the former painting two figures to the right are supposed to be two portraits representing the king and Titian himself — the likeness of the latter is unmistakably the very young Titian and might account for the lack of passion found in his work of a more able period. The resemblance to Philip II is not strong enough for evidence and the likeness

of the younger Titian would place the date in the period of Charles V. Philip II had a deep interest in the welfare of the churches in New Spain, particularly in that at Tzintzuntzan, through his regard for Bishop Quiroga who was stationed there (1538) a few years after his consecration. Charles V also had the same affection for Quiroga; these facts make the time of presentation and the name of the donor doubtful.

Many attempts to purchase the painting have been made. It is reported the Archbishop of Mexico once offered \$50,000 for it but the Indians of this little squalid village stubbornly refuse to part with it. They worship it, steadfastly refusing permission to copy or to photograph it.

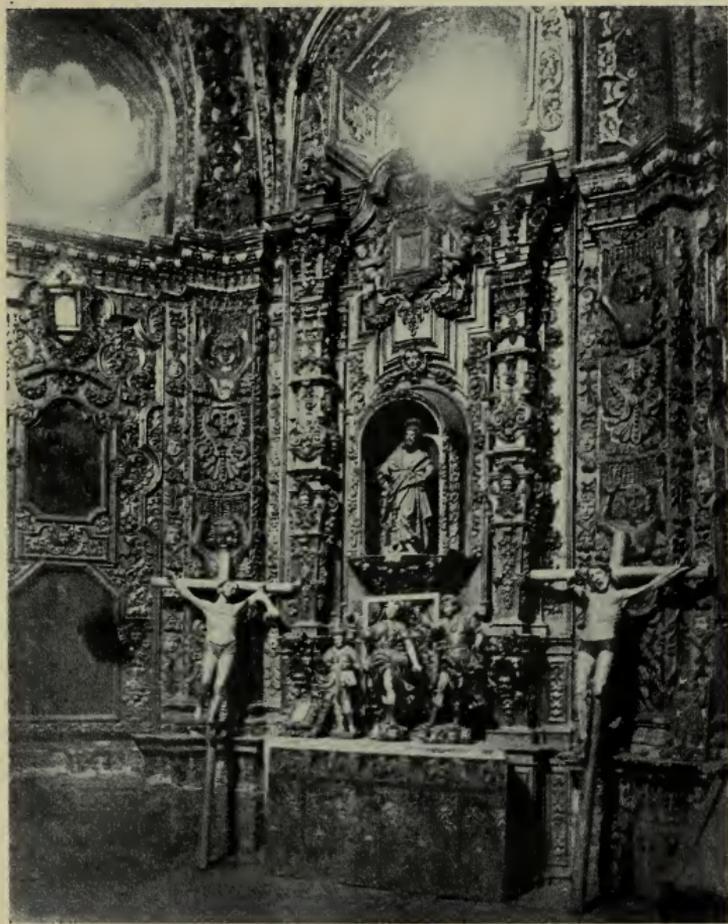
Although importations of European works of art had virtually ceased by the end of the seventeenth century the interest of the Spanish monarchs in the decoration of the colonial churches still remained; as late as 1774 Charles III commanded Vallejo, a prominent artist of the Mexican School, to paint a picture of the Virgin for the College of Ildefonso.

Probably one of the last masterpieces to reach Mexico from Spain as a votive offering is the "Madonna of the Ring," painted by Antonio Palo-

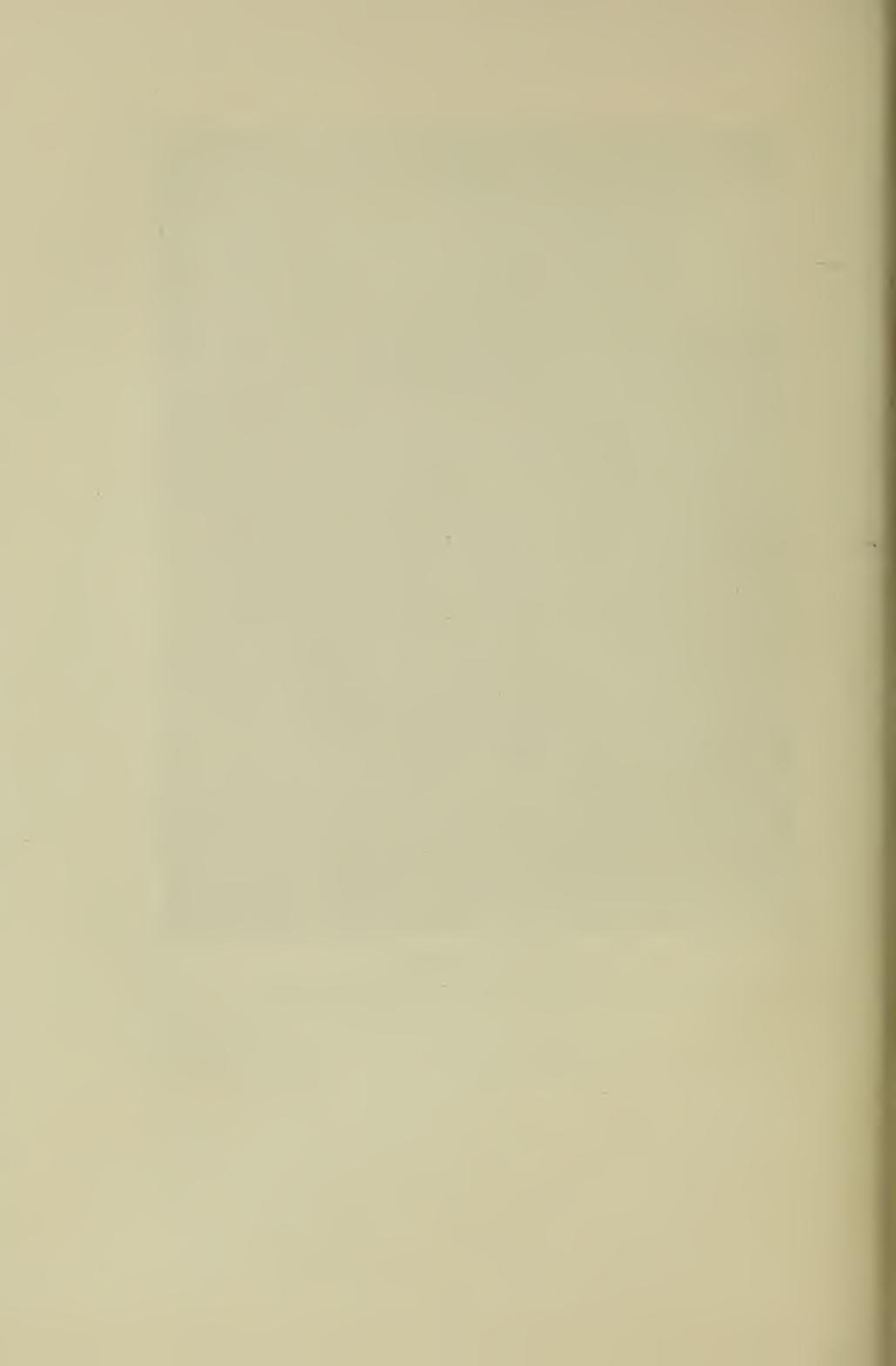
mino (1653-1726) in the latter part of the seventeenth century. This canvas, one of the many taken away from Mexico, now hangs in the Southwest Museum at Los Angeles. The composition is unusual since only the head and one shoulder of both the Madonna and the Infant appear in the painting. Both faces are of Spanish type and the technique Spanish, but a wreath of flowers surrounding the composition suggests Flemish influence. The garland, however, may have been added to the original work sometime later.

During the latter part of the seventeenth century many valuable silver mines were discovered, and the bonanza kings, fabulously rich, erected churches near their mines as votive offerings for their good fortune, but by that time New Spain was filling the need for decoration, not only for religious houses, but for the palaces and other buildings, through her own masters and the work of her native schools.

It is a sad commentary upon the political condition of Mexico at the time that so little is left to tell the story of artistic interest during the colonial period. Taking advantage of the poverty and the general unrest of the Mexicans during successive revolutions, speculators bought from their owners,



THE CAMARIN  
Seminary of San Martin, Mexico—Polychrome Statuary.



often for trifling sums, priceless treasures of Mexico. In 1860, an expert critic, in an examination of over two thousand paintings, discovered but a few of European origin, yet the colonial period, under the patronage of the Viceroy, was rich in its native art. Not only the finest of the canvasses imported from Spain, but much of the best of the native Mexican art was bought and sent to Europe to be disposed of in foreign markets. After the secularization of monasteries and convents in Mexico in 1856 much of what remained from the spoil of the foreigner was left to decay through the ill care afforded to some of the crumbling buildings. The monastery of LaCruz, one of the largest of the conventual buildings, filled with paintings and other works of art, has for some time been in ruins. Defacement and destruction of much that was beautiful is due to the ruthlessness of the revolutionary soldiers lodged in the cloisters and other places sacred to the Mexicans.

With the conversion of the religious buildings to municipal use, the gold plating of high altars and of statues, together with all of the exquisite and costly decorations of the interior walls, disappeared, confiscated by the revolutionists. Among these "converted" buildings is the ancient church of San

José, built according to the story of the conquistadores, on the site of an old palace of Montezuma. It was in this church the missionaries gave the Indians their first artistic training; today it is used as the public headquarters of the City of Mexico, the main chapel, in which Padre de Gante four centuries ago established the first art school, serving as a public library.

In the city of Guanajuato, there is still standing, however, untouched by the hand of the despoiler or invader, the beautiful church of San Cayetano, built by Antonio Obregón to commemorate the discovery of the Valencia mines. This church, begun in 1765 but not completed until twenty years later, is an interesting example of the lavishness of the wealthy Mexican bonanza kings of that period in their votive offerings to the church. "The high altar is heavy with silver; piers, arches and roofs are elaborately carved and show the individuality of the artisans and the inlaid pulpit is one of the finest in Mexico;"<sup>1</sup> time has but mellowed its coloring, and has taken nothing from the graceful outlines of its walls. Mr. Baxter states that at one time after the War of Reform it was proposed to scrape all the heavy ornamentation from the walls of

<sup>1</sup>Historia de la Pintura.

the chapel of the Virgin of the Rosary at Oaxaca in order to obtain the gold from the heavy gilding; fortunately this vandalism was not carried very far before it was stopped by the authorities and the walls remain as a witness of the magnificent interior decoration, of the religious buildings of early Conquest days.

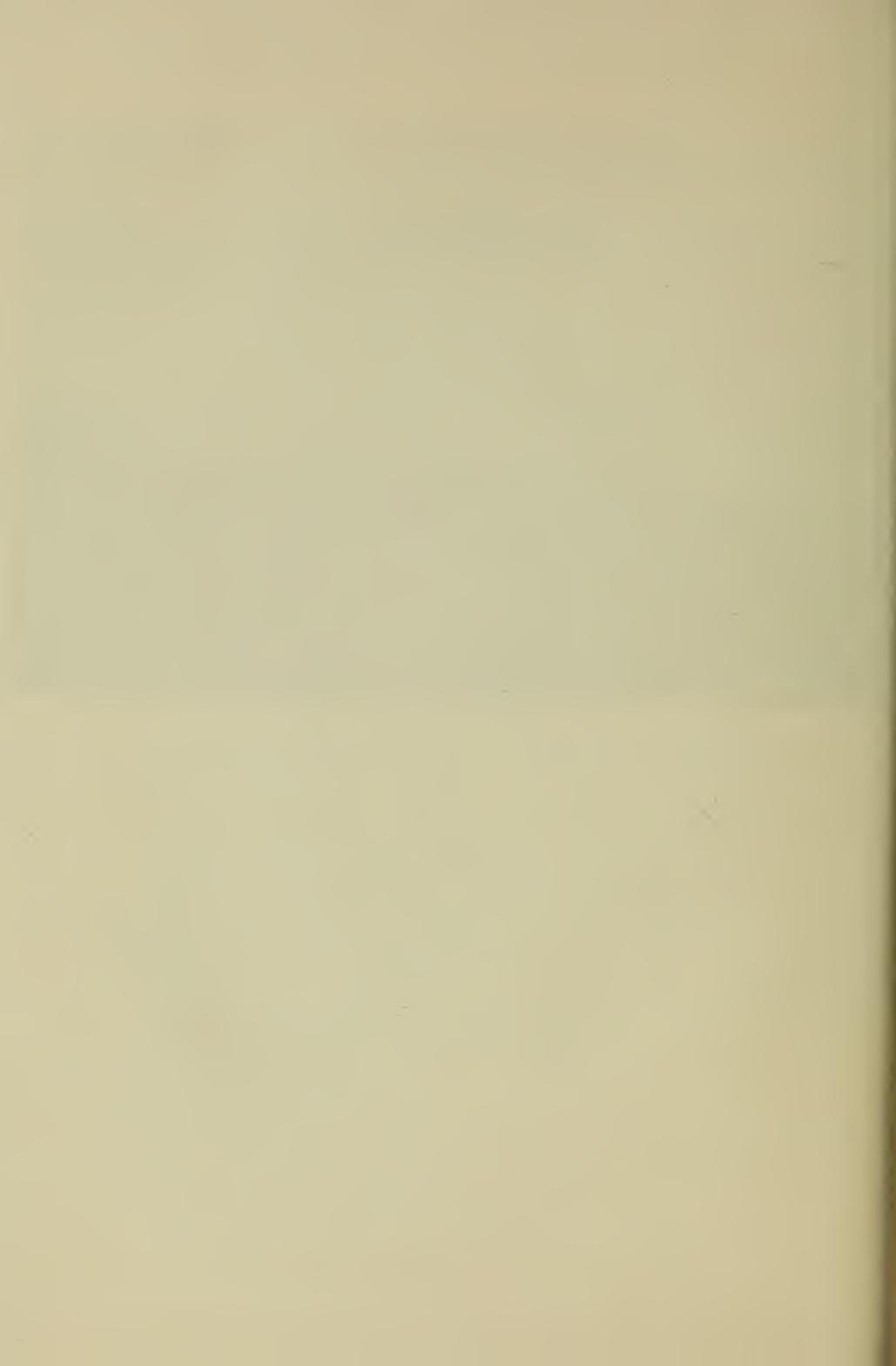
## OLD MEXICAN SCHOOL

THE identity of the first Spanish painter and the date of his arrival in Mexico are shrouded in mystery. Cortina is responsible for the story that Rodrigo de Cifuentes, born in Córdoba in 1493, came to Vera Cruz in 1532 and worked under the auspices of Cortés; afterward he taught the natives to paint in the first school established in 1523 by Pedro de Gante, and later Cortés sent him to Honduras where he decorated many churches and chapels. De Cifuentes evidently painted on his journey to Honduras on his return; since Cortina credits him with the decoration of the Franciscan church at Tehuantepec as well as of other religious buildings. He also is said to have decorated the house of Cortés. Besides his fame as a mural painter De Cifuentes had a reputation as a portrait painter and in 1538 was doing his best work — The Baptism of Magiscatzin (probably an Indian chief) and the portrait of Doña Marina, the Indian woman who interpreted for Cortés, both painted during that year, were said to be in the convent of Tlaxcala as late as 1860.<sup>1</sup> The portrait of Cortés

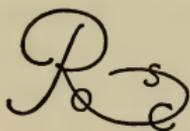
<sup>1</sup>Historia de la Pintura.



“The Presidio of Monterey, California.”



painted about the same time as that of Marina has disappeared. Some of the finest portraits are among those of the early viceroys in the Palacio Municipal in the City of Mexico; at the San Carlos Academy there is also an interesting painting of Cortés on his knees returning thanks for the conquest of new territory. According to Terry, the Baptism of Magiscatzin was still in the old church of San Francisco, Tlaxcala, in 1909. Cortina's story of the date of the arrival of Cifuentos is disputed by Fray Valdés, who could find no record of De Cifuentos' name in the list of those who accompanied Cortés, although many less famous than he are mentioned, but Fray Valdés would give credence to the report since Cortina was "a man of honor." In his signature De Cifuentos made use of his initials, thus



Count Beltrami, the art critic, believes Sebastián Arteaga came first and after him Cristóval de Villapando. As sufficient proof of the statement in regard to Arteaga, Beltrami cites the "superb work" of the latter in the old Santa Teresa convent and in the chapels of San Francisco and San Agus-

tín. Arteaga, an officer of the Inquisition, always used the signature "Notario del Santo Officio." His official duties left scant time for his art; so although he was painting as late as 1643 very little of his work or that of any of his followers remains. The Christ of St. Thomas and the Los Deposorios de la Virgen, both at the San Carlos Academy, show his vigor of drawing. There is also a St. Thomas at the National Museum. It is not known whether Arteaga was of Spanish or Mexican origin.

Villapando, supposed to have been born in 1649, died in 1714. Other critics place Andrés de Concha immediately after Rodrigo de Cifuentes. The temporary building erected in 1599 in which the memorial services for Philip II were held was ornamented by de Concha. Some of his best paintings are on the high altar of the church of Santo Domingo, Yauhuítlan, Oaxaca. Another of the very early painters, but later than those mentioned, is the Flemish Simon Pereyns, born in Antwerp; a Virgin and a Child at San Carlos Academy bearing decided Flemish characteristics is attributed to him. This is supposed to be the painting he was sentenced to make after his trial for heresy. Contemporary with Villapando, Juan Correa did notable work; they painted together the six large works in sac-

risty of the Cathedral at Mexico and they also decorated the Chapel of the Kings at Puebla Cathedral.

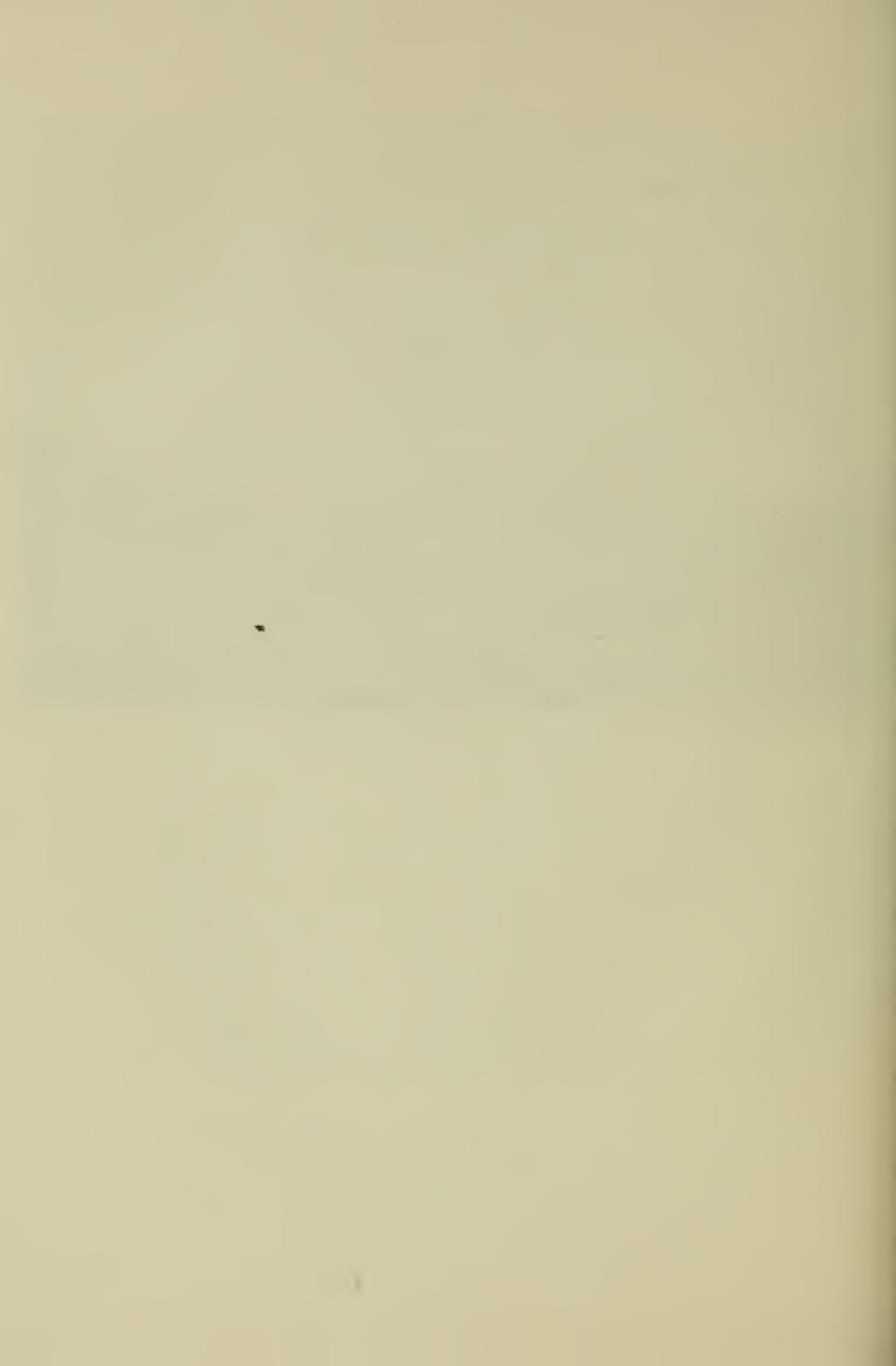
The first reliable information of a Spanish painter working in Mexico is in the letter from José de Ibarra in the early part of the eighteenth century to a fellow artist, Cabrera. Ibarra states that Reino Alonso Vásquez, a native of Seville, brought fine technique from Spain, long before any of the other seventeenth century painters were at work, and fixes an approximate date by stating that the last work of Vásquez was a "votive offering" of a series of pictures presented to the Chapel of St. Catherine by a Viceroy who governed between 1603 and 1607. These paintings Ibarra reports were at one time on the high altar of the chapel at the University but nothing remains of them. There are two large paintings, an Assumption and a Resurrection attributed to Vásquez.

Between 1600 and 1700, especially during the first half of the century, there were a number of artists of great merit, emigrated from Spain, who undoubtedly had been trained under European masters of the period, from the resemblance of their work to that of these masters, and the difficulty which followed in distinguishing the old world from the new world work.

A new era in Mexican art, however, begins with the painting of Baltasar Echave, called *El Viejo* the elder, to distinguish him from his son, a young contemporary of Vásquez and a close student and follower of Titian, and now recognized as founder of the Old Mexican School. Echave emigrated from Zumaya, in the province of Guipúzcoa in Spain early in 1600, since there is record of a treatise on the ancient language in Cantabria published by him in 1607. He painted a *San Cristóbal* in 1601 as signed, and at the National Museum an interesting old altar-piece signed in 1609, originally in Tlatelolco, was brought to the museum in the year that Echave painted it. The description on the altar-piece "*La Visitation*" according to the critics is considered one of his two best works, for its vigor of drawing; the figure of Elizabeth is not that of an old woman but still does not seem inferior in interest to that of the Virgin; the grace and delicacy of head and hands show influence of Murillo; the flare of the Virgin's sleeve and the modeling of the drapery, though somewhat stiff, are also after Murillo; the coloring is distinctly Titian. Instead of on canvas the picture is painted on cedar, as many of the paintings of that period were, because of the supposition that cedar would be more



"The Mission of San Carlos near Monterrey."



enduring in the humid climate. Another notable work, also signed by Echave, was on the same altar at Tlatelolco — a Virgin in the Rafaellesque manner. This painting, however, was not brought to the Museum until after the *La Visitación* was taken there.

Echave was a prolific painter, his period covering nearly forty years (1600-1640). Like that of all great masters his work varied in successive periods, according to the emphasis placed on composition, color, drawing or other characteristic phases of technique of his painting. Many of the churches until recently had much of his work. In the National Museum besides the two paintings mentioned, there are also a Holy Family, an Adoration of the Magi, a Martyrdom of St. Ponciano, a Christ on the Mount of Olives, and a St. Cecilia brought from the church of San Agustín, City of Mexico, and considered as fine as old world work. Contrary to the usual custom of the early Mexicans, Echave signed many of his canvasses, but the Holy Family and the St. Cecilia, originally in the *Profesa* before being taken to the Museum, are unsigned. Although they are among the best of his earliest work in point of originality and composition, the *Triumph of Mary*, *Faith De-*

stroying Idolatry, and several allegorical pictures are at Puebla. Modern critics agree, however, his best remaining work is his *Oración del Huerto* at the San Carlos Academy.

Baltazar Echave el Mozo (the younger) failed to achieve the success of his father; he inherited neither the imagination nor the ability of the latter. The *Triumph of the Church* and the *Triumph of Religion in the Sacristy of the Puebla Cathedral* and the canvas of the *Resurrection* signed in 1669, now at the San Carlos Academy, are probably his best works.

Following the period of Echave, Pedro García Ferrer, a noted painter and architect, arrived from Spain in 1640 to decorate the Cathedral at Puebla. He remained but a short time, however, and the only record of his work is the six paintings over the *Altar of the Kings* — No doubt the archaic characteristics of these paintings influenced greatly the work of the native artists in that city.

In the history of the Old Mexican School the names of but two women artists are recorded—*La Zumaya* (probably named for her native town), wife of Echave the elder, and *Juana Inez de la Cruz*, Carmelite nun and a poetess, artist and writer of great merit.

The story of La Zumaya reads like a romance as told by Cayetano Cabrera in his *Escudo de Armas de México*. She is supposed to have lived in the early part of 1600 since she was painting at the same time as her husband. She was not only an excellent copyist but did creative work as well and painted as he did in both the Dutch and Italian manner. One of her best pictures, a St. Sebastián showing the influence of the Valencian School, and much admired by artists of her period, is hung on the Altar of Pardon in the Cathedral of Mexico; unfortunately like many of the other old paintings it is hung very high and covered with glass which prevents critical study of the canvas. Over another altar in the same Cathedral there is a series of her paintings illustrating events in the life of the Virgin. Cabrera also declares that this artist "was not only mistress of painting but vouches for the old tradition in Mexico that she taught her husband to paint."

The existence of La Zumaya however is not credited by Mr. Baxter, who quotes the scholar M. de Agueda as showing there never was a La Zumaya as the records prove that Echave was married twice but neither wife bore that name. The San Sebastián on the Altar of Pardon is at-

tributed by Mr. Baxter, to Echave himself. The confusion between the name of the birthplace of Echave and of his artist friend Francisco Zumaya may account for the story.

Juana de la Cruz, better known as a writer of exquisite verse than as a painter, although equally gifted in both arts, came a little later than the period of Echave. She was born in 1651 at Ne-pantla, a small town near the City of Mexico, and died there in 1697. Her work as a painter is not well known, since so little of it remains. In Memorial Hall, Philadelphia, there is however a copy of her portrait painted by herself with an inscription beneath the picture showing the estimation of her contemporaries. The translation reads "The Reverend Mother Juana de la Cruz, Phoenix of America, glorious perfection of her sex, honor of the nation of the new world, and subject of the admiration and praises of the old." Besides this portrait the only other example of her work is in the church of San Francisco de Asís, a fine Aparición de Cristo y la Virgen. A lifelike painting of Juana by Cabrera hangs in the National Museum of Mexico.

The art of New Spain at this period though far inferior to that of Europe and having many characteristics of the old world work (especially of the

schools of Seville and Madrid), yet had distinctive characteristics of its own. Many of the painters were trained under and copied the technique of the masters of those schools. The coloring was particularly vivid and perhaps of indifferent merit yet the work was a great advance over the art taught by their predecessors in the mission schools. There were no facilities for technique, but few models, and the painters naturally must have worked in a restricted way—yet the results show genius and strength, even if the taste of the epoch was confined to impressions of what the artists had seen in Spain.

Professor K. L. Deisler of New York some years ago brought from old Mexico a most unusual painting of a Winged Madonna<sup>1</sup> which is also evidently a product of this period of Mexican art. The picture is a fine example of the Murillo School supposedly by the master or one of his pupils. It measures 16½ by 12½ inches, done on copper as were some of the old Spanish paintings of the period, and is in a remarkable state of preservation. The figure of the Madonna winged and crowned with stars is represented poised on the body of a serpent. The theme is taken from the Apocalypse,

<sup>1</sup>International Studio. November, 1913.

Chapter XII. Verse 1 refers to a "crown of twelve stars": in the painting however one of the stars is missing, either concealed by the body of the Child or as has been suggested, "purposely omitted because Judas turned traitor." The explanation of the appearance of the Child is found in Verse 5. "And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with an iron rod." Verse 14 is authority for the wings: "And there to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle that she might fly into the desert unto her place where she is nourished for a time and times and half-a-time from the face of a serpent." St. John, a very small figure compared with the figure of the Madonna, is represented in the picture upper right hand corner, a pen held in his hand and an eagle is perched by his side, emphasizing the identity of the saints. Glowing sunset in the background makes a fine setting for the rich coloring of the picture.

The head of the Virgin is certainly after the Murillo type; the hands are characterized by the long index fingers as in the canvas of the Immaculate Conception, which the Winged Madonna resembles strongly in treatment of drapery and of pose. The drawing of the hands and the placing of God the Father above the head of the Virgin

make this Madonna very similar to that of the Murillo at the Hermitage, but the shortened figure and exposed feet mark a lack of the dignity which characterized Murillo's masterpieces. Then the fact that the St. John and God the Father as well as the Infant are so greatly out of proportion to the heroic size of the Madonna, all point, perhaps to imitation of an earlier Italian master.

It is claimed there is no example of the Winged Madonna to be found in any of the European galleries, but in the National Museum, City of Mexico, there is a beautiful Virgin of the Apocalypse by Cabrera and there is also a mural of the same subject in the Franciscan Cathedral at Guernavaca founded in 1529. At the Mission Inn there are three canvasses, painted about 1700, of the same subject namely the Woman of the Apocalypse (18½ and 15), the Woman of the Book of Revelation (13 x 9) and Woman of the Apocalypse (63 x 39); all are crowned with stars and exactly fit the text in the twelfth chapter of the Apocalypse. These paintings were brought from Mexico.

The Exposition Museum at Los Angeles has also recently acquired a very beautiful Virgin of the Apocalypse which is reported to have been brought from Spain to the Capuchin Convent

of Querétaro by the first missionary padres. It is circular in form, painted on beaten copper and in technique corresponds with the painting mentioned above. The figure and the pose of the Virgin are the same in both works, but a larger grouping of saints is in the latter. The drawing of the hands and feet is exquisite, the flesh tones are exceedingly well done, and the brilliancy of coloring of robes, golden stars and the halos of the Virgin and Child remarkable, but the figure of the Virgin is much foreshortened and the wings extremely large in proportion. A round brass frame, beautifully carved, is in itself an evidence of the work of some master.

Among other masterpieces at the Exposition Museum, Los Angeles, there are two large canvases (artists unknown), the Magdalen in the Cave and Santa Restituta, both excellent examples of the early Mexican School. From the drawing and composition they belong to the early seventeenth century but under the influence of another master than Murillo. The Magdalen is represented in a cave where she retired, according to the tradition, after the resurrection and ascension of Christ. While the coloring in this work is subdued for that period of vivid brush, the artist must have understood the chiaroscuro of Corregio as is suggested in the han-



### SANTA CRUZ MISSION, CALIFORNIA

After the earthquake of 1840, showing the figure of the Virgin on the altar, the pulpit and sanctuary rails. Pen sketch by Miss Howard, from a painting belonging to Mrs. Cornelia Kirby Brown of Berkeley, California.



dling of the cherubs in the dim light of the cave.

The second painting represents the Apparition of the Angel Gabriel to Santa Restituta (Saint Restored) in the dungeon. Santa Restituta (a Christian maiden and daughter of a Roman patrician of the third century) because of her faith was confined in a dungeon, loaded with chains and compelled to remain without food or drink for seven days. A celestial light which fills the prison cell heralds the coming of the Archangel who breaks her chains and gives her food and light and liberty. The attire of a Roman Virgin fixes the date as the third century. The two figures completely dominate the canvas, that of a soldier on the right of the maiden, being subordinate to them. The drawing, especially of the archangel, is exceedingly spirited, the brilliancy of the halo about the head of the maiden, the golden tracery and figures and vividness of coloring in the robes of the two Saints being exceedingly decorative. Both paintings were brought by the original owner Don Antonio Coronel of Los Angeles from the Capilla Real or Iglesia de los Naturales (Church of the Natives) at Cholula in 1895,<sup>1</sup> an overflow for the Franciscan Church

<sup>1</sup>The pictures at the present time belong to the collection of Mr. S. C. Evans of Riverside, California, by whom they are loaned to the Museum.

built in 1524 by order of Cortés for the Indians. The paintings are of corresponding size and shape and may have been placed on the stairway or corridor of the same building previous to their being brought to the Capilla Real.

One of the most brilliant painters of this time was a follower of the Dutch School, Juan de Herrera, called Juan the Divine, as Luis Morales was named in Spain in the preceding century. In breadth of technique and brilliancy of coloring Juan followed in artistic feeling the example of his probable Spanish relative the bizarre Francisco Herrera (1576-1656), considered by some Spanish critics as the founder of the Spanish National type. Twelve small paintings of martyrs at the Cathedral in the City of Mexico, dated 1698, are all that is left of his work. At the convent of Puebla there were large pictures of the subjects treating of the Franciscan order, and in other convents a great deal of this mural work.

The great number of paintings that decorated the stairways and cloisters of religious buildings, especially in the convent of Puebla, Santa Rosa, and others at Querétaro, and at Cholula showed the religious fervor and zeal of the painters who founded the Old Mexican School. Count Beltrami

mentions the Jesuit Father Manuel painting dextrously with both hands, as ranking very high and gives a Holy Family (formerly on the stairway of the College at San Gregorio but now at the School of Medicine) which he considers very beautiful as an example of his work.

Nicolás Becerra, who came from Spain in the latter part of the seventeenth century, was one of the painters remarkable in this period since he anticipated in his technique the later school of the eighteenth century. Dissolute in his youth, he became in his later life a Franciscan friar and afterward devoted his talent exclusively to the needs of the church. His only paintings in existence are two from the series representing events in the life of St. Francis painted for the Convent of San Francisco. These are now in a private collection. But the most able man of this group was Juan Rodríguez Juárez, the "Appelles of Mexico," one of a family of painters that included his brother Nicolás Juárez, portrait painter of merit, and Luis Juárez his cousin who belonged to the school of Echave. All three are represented at the National Museum. Rodríguez, born in 1676, lived but fifty-two years and still there are two distinct epochs in his work with seemingly a century between

them. From the beginning he had used the best of all schools, following the Caracci or the Eclectic School, but in the latter part of his life, his color became more intensive, like that of the schools of Seville and Madrid. He was the first painter to show the influence of Murillo. On the altar of the kings in the Cathedral of San Carlos there is an Epiphany in which Rodríguez has painted a portrait of himself as Botticelli did over half a century before in his Birth of Christ. In this picture the artist represents himself in armor with a blue sash draped from his shoulders over his back somewhat after the Botticelli style. There is also in the Academy a half length portrait of Rodríguez in a blue coat which critics say has a striking resemblance to the Epiphany figure. The Cathedral also possesses a Santa Teresa and a St. Joseph but they are hung very high and it is impossible to study them critically. The work at the National Museum because of its indifferent merit does not represent him carefully. By some critics, his masterpiece is considered to be the beautiful Adoration of the Kings on the high altar of the chapel of Los Reyes in the Cathedral at Mexico, but two of his best works are the two large pictures in the Church of St. Augustine at Querétaro, a colossal



MISSION SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO, CALIFORNIA  
Founded 1776. Note carving over the lintel of the old  
doorway. Aztec influence.



St. Christopher and the Vision of St. Gertrude Contemplating St. Augustine in Heaven. These pictures were hung in the doorway of St. Augustine (founded in 1731),<sup>1</sup> which was appropriated by the government long ago for municipal use.

Like his brother Nicholas the priest, Juárez painted many portraits of distinction. Among them are two hung in the Convent of Carmen, both notable for their truthful delineation, a full length canvas of the Viceroy Duke of Linares and one of Marquis de Altamira.

The remarkable change from the relative soberness of the seventeenth century coloring to the intensive brilliancy introduced by Juárez is accounted for in various ways. Some critics claim it was the result of direct inspiration through the canvasses of Murillo sent to the Indies and which afterward reached Mexico. Others claim it was due to still another source. At this time there was a D. Gabriel Murillo, reputed to be the eldest son of the Master Bartolomé Murillo, painting in the West Indies. There is a conjecture that his work after reaching Mexico became confused with that of Murillo himself and alone was responsible for

<sup>1</sup>During the Díaz administration a federal telegraph office was installed; at the same time the front was remodeled.

the entire change of manner which took place later. However this is an unsupported theory since there is no definite knowledge that the Murillo of the West Indies was in any way connected with the artist in Spain. From whatever source Juárez derived his knowledge of technique, his new ideas attracted many followers. Living through the whole transition period, he revolutionized the technique of his predecessors and became the founder of the new Mexican School of the eighteenth century.

Many of the new school exceeded Juárez in brilliancy of color, especially José Ibarra, the Murillo of Mexico, whose extensive use of vivid reds and blues was an exaggeration of the prevailing style, due to the direct influence of the master, whom Ibarra is said to have resembled personally. Two large canvasses painted in 1740 covered the front of the large hall in the College of San Ildefonso.

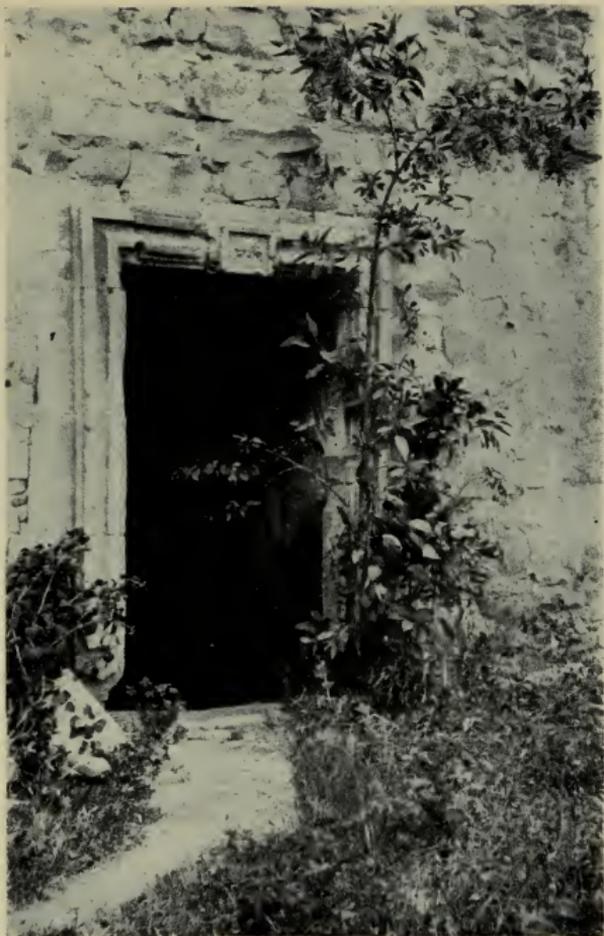
The Glenwood Mission Inn at Riverside, California, has at present two brilliant paintings (63 x 77), "Repose in Egypt" and "Adoration of the Magi," attributed to Nicholas Rodríguez Juárez (1680-1740). The first is a singularly strange treatment of the theme; the Virgin is represented holding an ordinary cooking utensil over a fire which

is being replenished by winged angels; an Infant of decidedly Byzantine type is held in the arms of St. Joseph standing near. In the Adoration of the Magi, the interest of the picture is increased by two figures of exceedingly dark countenances; one figure in robes holds a shell, probably an anachronism connected with the introduction into the composition of St. James the Greater. In this canvas both drawing and composition are treated more vigorously than in the "Repose."

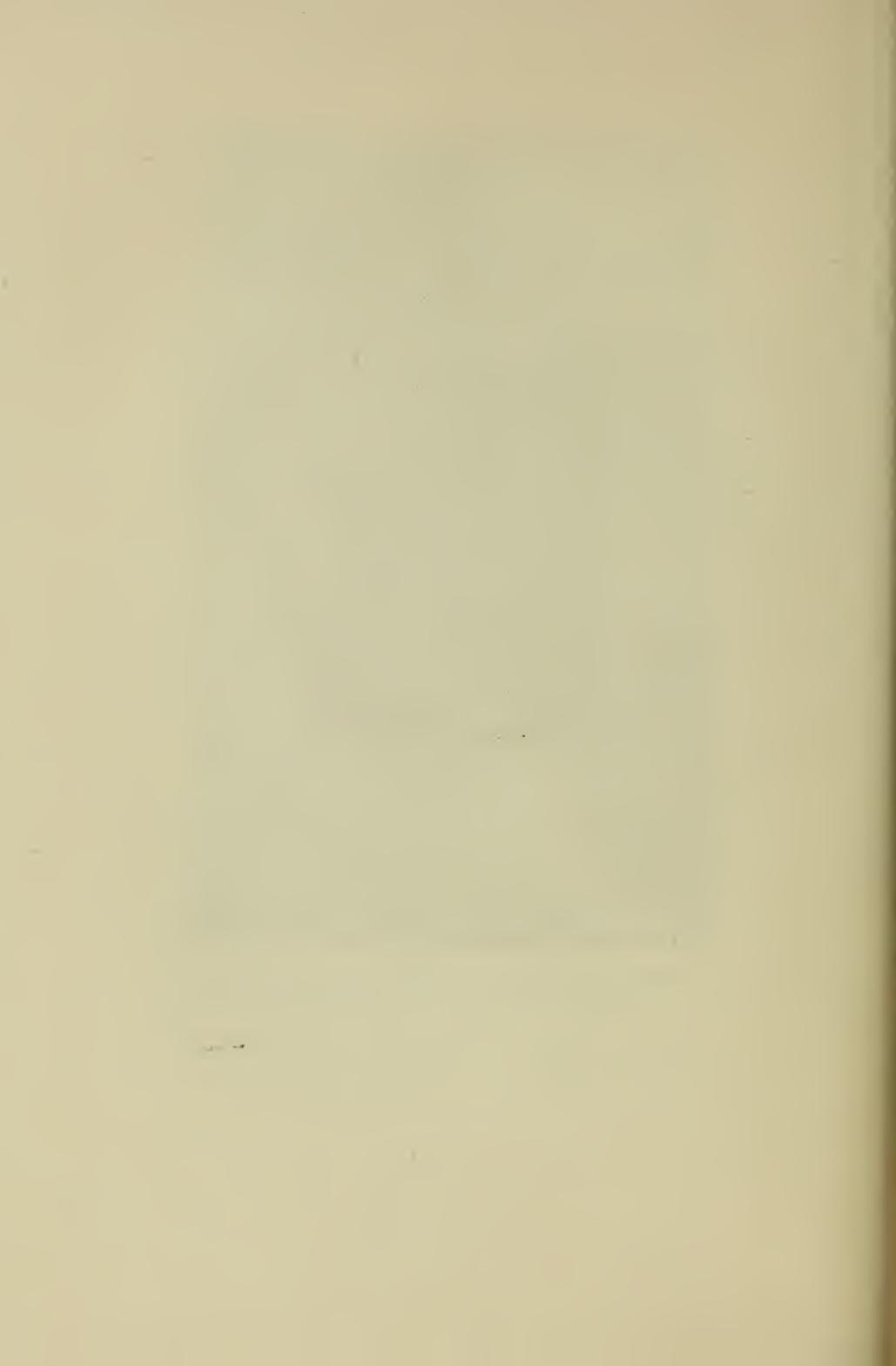
## SCHOOL OF IBARRA

AFTER Cabrera, Ibarra was without doubt the greatest Mexican painter. Count Beltrami speaks of the exquisite delicacy and beauty of the female figures in Ibarra's work at the Cathedral, and the churches at Puebla. In 1825 the same critic refers to a very fine St. Inez in the Church of the Bethlemites (now converted into a public library). His last great work was the Calvary dated 1756, the year of his death. This picture may have been destroyed, as in 1860, the owner though poor, refused to sell it to museum or gallery thus leaving it unprotected from the fury of the revolutionists.

Ibarra, born in 1688, painted prolifically and like Juárez painted in two centuries. In the National Academy are two of his greatest works, the Woman of Samaria, and the Woman Taken in Adultery, besides an excellent portrait. There are also eleven canvasses considered very fine at the Cathedral in Puebla, but his best work is probably the series portraying events in the life of St. Joseph, his patron saint, painted for the church of Santa Inez in Mexico. In the Bethrothal of St.



MISSION SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO, CALIFORNIA  
Founded 1776. Note carving over lintel showing Aztec influence.



Joseph, now owned by the Reverend Don Antonio Plancarde, Ibarra painted a portrait figure of himself among the spectators.

Ibarra was the friend and colleague of the distinguished native Mexican painter and engraver, Miguel Cabrera, appointed life president of the Academy of Painting when it was established in 1735. Cabrera had a marvellous imagination and painted with so much feeling that his fame was as great in the century after his death as it was when he lived. There is a tradition that he was a Zapotec Indian, but the legends in his paintings show that he was from Oaxaca in the Department of Guanajuato in Mexico, where he was born in 1695. The date of his last painting is 1764, four years before his death. While he lacked the vigor of Arteaga and the good taste of Echave his composition was excellent and his work especially in the beauty of the female heads and faces, appealing; his coloring was remarkable for its freshness and softness like that of Juan Rodríguez Juárez but without the latter's exaggeration; his drawing, similar to that of Correggio, while not always correct was superior to that of other Mexican painters of his time. A very beautiful *Nuestra Señora del Refugio* signed by Cabrera hangs in the South-

west Museum at Los Angeles. In this painting the drawing of both heads is unmistakably after Correggio. An exceedingly brilliant and decorative effect is given by the golden insignia I. H. S. closely repeated over the surface of the Virgin's robe. Cabrera copied from the old masters, but very rarely. He had a large studio with many assistants who no doubt painted portions at least of the canvasses attributed to him in many of the convents and churches. This fact may account for the completion in fourteen months of thirty-four large paintings representing events in the lives of two Saints, San Ignacio and San Domingo.

A number of canvasses painted for the University of Mexico are hanging in the San Carlos Academy, but his best works, which unfortunately suffer from restoration, are the Stations of the Cross at the Cathedral of Puebla. Cabrera also did the fine mural painting in the church of San Sebastián built by the mining magnate José de la Borda at Tasco, in the mountains of Guerrero, a magnificent building rising against the bleak hillside.

The rank of Cabrera among contemporary painters was very high and his opinion in matters of art was sought by the civil and religious authorities

of his day. When a commission of seven prominent artists was appointed by the abbot in 1751 to make a critical study of the painting "Our Lady of Guadalupe" and determine by actual technical rules whether it was a miraculous production or the work of human hands, Cabrera was chosen leader of the group. There had been an "official examination" by laymen in 1666, but nothing had been written or determined as to its authenticity from the standpoint of the artist at this time. Cabrera and his colleagues declared the picture to be a supernatural work and their opinion was embodied in a treatise on the subject of thirty pages written by Cabrera which was published at San Idelfonso in 1756. He asserted the picture "was not painted in water colors, nor in oil, nor in any manner, artificial or human." The treatise was dedicated to his protector Fray Salinas.

At this same meeting of artists, Cabrera was selected to paint a copy of Our Lady of Guadalupe for presentation to Pope Benedict XIV. Nearly every church in Mexico possessed a copy of this work.

Another native Mexican, Miguel Zendejas, like Cabrera, was equally well known for his use of light and shade but surpassed all others of his

period in his wonderful mastery of drapery. His chiaroscuro resembled the work of Correggio; while his delicate color was similar to the school of Seville.

Like the rest of the school, "independent," he ignored the five prescribed technical rules observed by older painters, never using crayon in outlining, but like the French Delacroix, painted with first "intention." He lacked in perspective and refused absolutely to paint the nude whether from a religious delicacy or the futuristic feeling of today will never be known. He was born in 1724 at the Puebla de Los Angeles and during his long life of ninety-two years painted constantly; much of his work was at the monasteries and convents of Puebla. One of his first pictures, Christ Praying in the Garden, is at Puebla.

Fray Miguel de Herrera, a very fine artist but of the old school, also lived to a great age, painting far into the eighteenth century. He was famous for a number of small canvasses illustrating the life of Alexander. Unfortunately these paintings were placed in a private gallery where they were not available for art students. Another painter of merit following the older school, Cristóval Villapando, mentioned previously, although his work varied in

quality, ranked high for his master imagination in picturing the Passion; but it is also unfortunate in this instance that his only work left at the College of San Francisco has been retouched.

Among those who were appointed with Cabrera to judge as to the divine origin of the painting of the Lady of Guadalupe besides Luis and Rodríguez Juárez, were Juan Ruíz, Manuel Osonio, Ventura Arneas, Antonio Vallejo and José Alcibar, the last painter of the new school. The work of Alcibar was in striking contrast to that of his immediate predecessors and contemporaries. Instead of following the school of Seville, he showed an originality in his fidelity to nature and instead of the smoothness of Vallejo and Cabrera he substituted a vigor unknown before among the artists of that period. Even in his old age Alcibar's work retained these characteristics. In 1799, nearly fifty years after he served with Cabrera on the commission to examine the paintings of Guadalupe he painted one of his fine canvasses, the San Luis Gonzaga, now at the San Carlos Academy—his Last Supper is at the Cathedral and the Patronage of St. Joseph at La Profesa. A signed canvas "St. Ann and the Blessed Virgin" now hangs in the Museum at Glenwood Mission Inn. The vigor of the artist's

drawing is clearly shown in the figures of both Mary and St. Ann. A dove hovers over the figure of the former who stands on a table and is supported by St. Ann.

Next to Cabrera, Vallejo ranked in power with the religious and civil authorities. Perhaps one reason for this was the close resemblance of his work to that of Murillo. In 1774 when Pope Clement XIV inserted the "Mater Immaculata" in the Catholic Litany, Charles III commanded Vallejo to paint the Virgin and Saints as a "votive offering" for the University. In this large picture, there are faithful portraits of the donor Pope Clement XIV, the archbishop, the king, and the viceroy. Besides these figures there are numerous students, St. John and St. Luis Gonzaga, representing the patron saints of learning and four other saints. The representation of the Virgin is remarkably beautiful. This picture, mentioned earlier as one of the latest "votive offerings" was painted at the College of San Idelfonso, but was afterward removed to the University, a building now occupied by the National Conservatory of Music. In 1860 the painting was reported much disfigured through lack of protection from sun and rain before its removal to the Conservatory. Vallejo was a pro-

lific painter, his best work being done between 1767 and 1768, most of which was done for San Ildefonso and the University. There is a large number of his paintings in the Church of San Diego and in the National Preparatory School are two very fine monumental canvases, the Holy Family and the Pentecost.

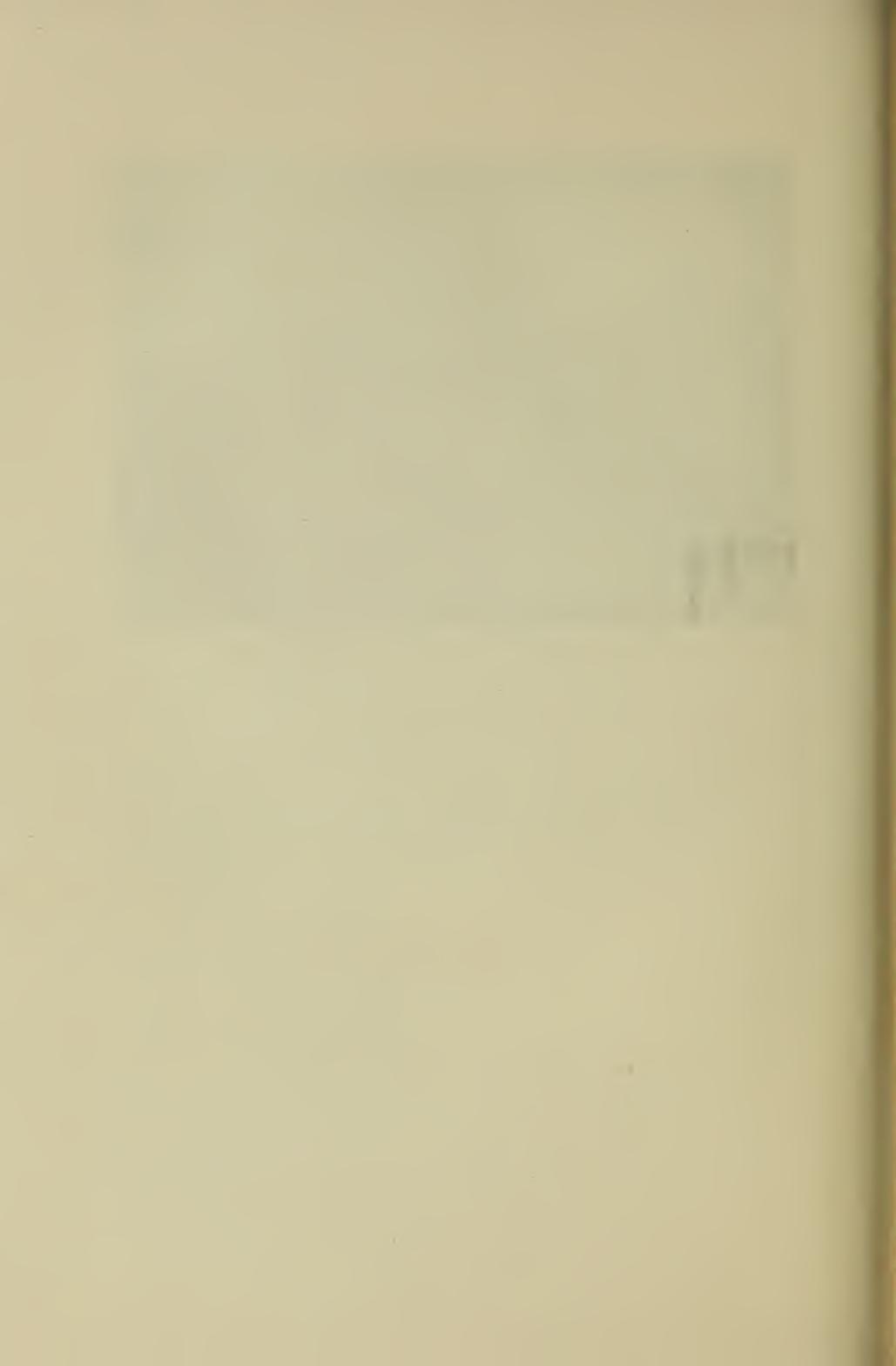
Probably one of the most celebrated mural paintings of the eighteenth century and certainly the ranking one at that period on the western continent is the *Hortus Conclusas* or Closed Garden (allegorical picture representing the nuns and pupils at work in the Garden) which fills the entire wall in the sacristy of the Church of Santa Rosa at Querétaro. It was painted by a native Mexican born in 1765 of Spanish parents, Francisco Eduardo Tresguerras, the "Michael Angelo of Mexico," so-called because he was equally famed as architect, painter, sculptor, engraver, etcher, musician and poet. His work as a painter and sculptor supplemented his work as an architect as evidenced in his church of Santa Rosa where the smallest detail of wood-carving, the delicate wrought-iron of the grill work of the choir-screens, the brilliant emerald lines that frame the paintings of the altar are but a part of the unity of

the scheme that includes the famous mural of the Garden. Tresguerras studied under Cabrera at the Academy of Painting; he was a follower of Murillo and consequently a brilliant colorist—the decorative scheme on the walls of his churches is eloquent testimony to that fact.

The Persian dome of the church *Nuestra Señora del Carmen*, built in his native city of Celaya, is considered one of his masterpieces, the gleam of the yellow and green glazed the decoration, giving the effect of luminous gold. As in the church of *Santa Rosa*, Tresguerras painted at *Carmen* wonderful frescos, but while it was the works of his youth at *Santa Rosa*, *Carmen* contains the works of his later life. Among those the Entombment of Tobias and the Resurrection of Lazarus are considered two of his most wonderful canvasses. He lived for seventy-eight years and unlike his predecessors, preserved the excellence of his work until his death.



All-Seeing Eye over Statue of St. Michael—Mission San Miguel.



## THE ACADEMY OF FINE ARTS

By the close of the seventeenth century Spain had virtually replaced the simpler style of the former Renaissance by the more complex baroque inherited from Italy. This style, becoming more and more involved in masses of detail, finally reached an extreme later in the ornate churrigueresque, in which beautifully carved wood was covered over with heavy leaf of gold plate and spaces filled in with small medallions cut from old paintings sacrificed to furnish this material. The churrigueresque in turn fell into disfavor with the reaction in favor of the Greco-Roman forms.

When brought into New Spain, the churrigueresque, through its freedom of artistic expression, seemed especially adapted to colonial needs, but later because of its excessively multiplied detail finally reached a decadence which rivaled the decline in the old world. Although the Academy of Fine Arts had been established in 1753, almost contemporaneously with the Imperial Academy of Russia, the originality of the painters in the Old Mexican School had disappeared. The Academy

recognized the work of Mexican painters however, conferring the title of Académico de Mérito upon José Alconedo the last of the old Puebla artists, who was exiled to Spain for political activity in the insurrection in 1808.

In an endeavor to stimulate art interest, the San Carlos Academy was founded as a school of engraving in 1778 and later, in the year 1781, it was enlarged to include instruction in painting, sculpture and architecture. From its founding, the king gave the Academy strong support in sending the best teachers from Spain as well as the finest models and other necessary equipment; one of his gifts was a valuable collection of casts from the antique, sent over in 1791.

With the exception of a few who had gone to the old world for instruction, the Mexican painters knew nothing of the art of Greece or Rome, their knowledge of subject and technique being confined to the Spanish and Italian schools which they had copied and upon which the style of the Old Mexican school had been based. Among the teachers that came at this time (1793) was Don Manuel Tolsa, one of the most eminent Spanish architects of his day, and a celebrated sculptor both in wood and stone. Tolsa immediately began removing all

evidences of churrigueresque art in the old churches in Mexico—an unwise movement at that time, since although the enthusiasm for the churrigueresque had waned on both continents, the prevailing Greco-Roman spirit of the old world had as yet awakened no response in the new. The cold classic forms failed to express the mysticism inherent in the Mexican mind, and the substitution of the severe Greco-Roman style of decoration for the beautiful altars and rich decoration of the Cathedral proved an innovation too swift and too thorough for the devout Mexican mind. Humboldt describes the democracy of the school in giving free instruction to hundreds of students, Indians and whites, the sons of rich and poor working side by side, sketching from the same plaster casts or from life. Still New Spain, resenting the intrusion of foreign methods, steadily refused to accept academic instruction; painting especially was at a low ebb, and the Academy failed to flourish.

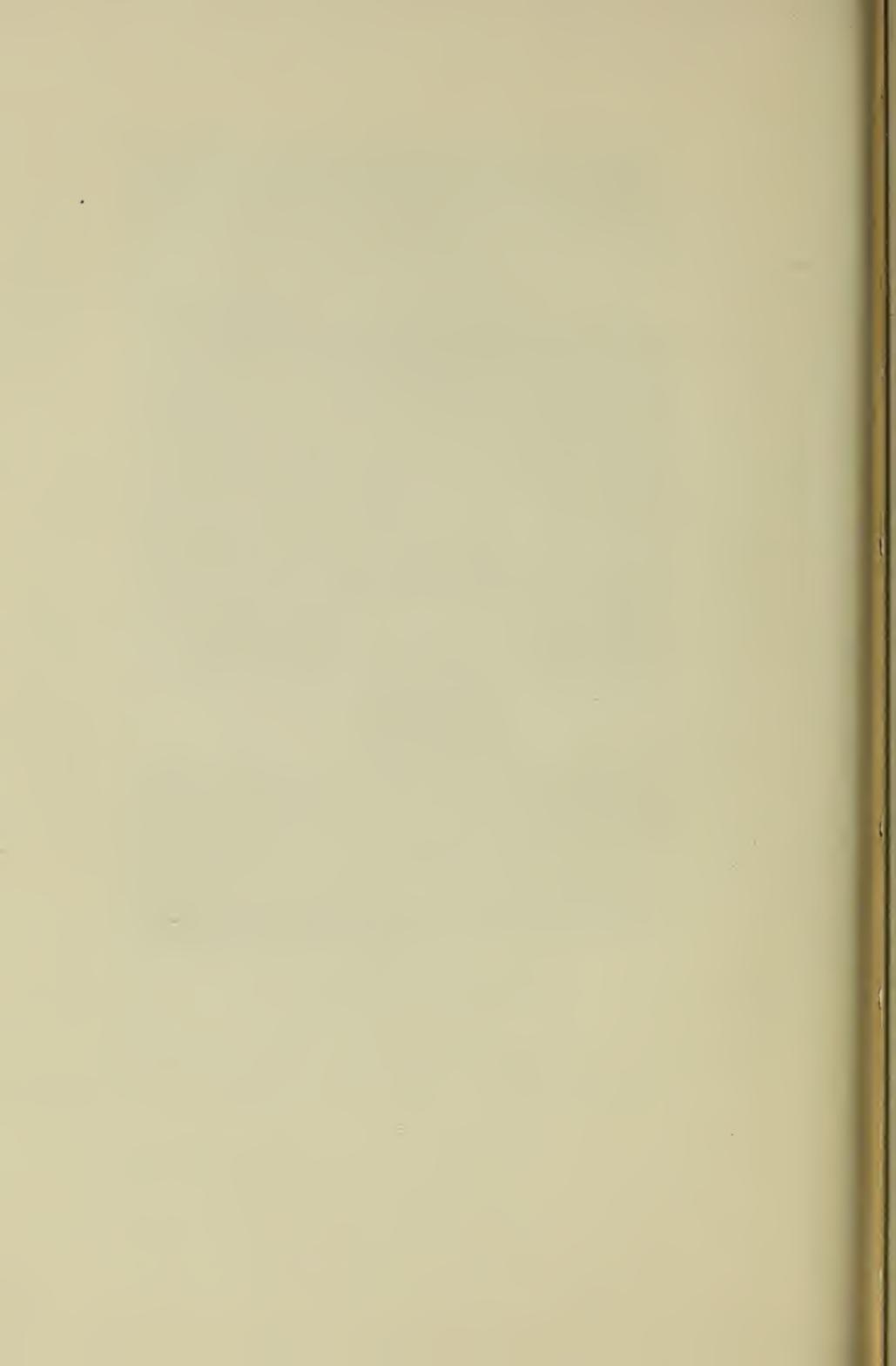
Rafael Ximeno, who accompanied Tolsa from Spain and succeeded him as head of the Academy, proved no greater success than his predecessors in reconciling warring factions. He was a fine mural painter, using broad brush strokes, but his color was exaggerated and his drawing poor. Ximeno

however may have been in advance of his period, as these characteristics are to be found in some of the modern work accepted today. His murals were far superior to his oils.

In the early part of 1800, the greater number of models and casts had been so mutilated and disfigured, owing to the civil war, that they were of very little service. An effort had been made in 1794 by the Viceroy, Marqu's de Branciforte, to revive the languishing condition of the Academy and to beautify the City of Mexico. Under his patronage Tolsa began in 1795 the statue of Carlos IV, his masterpiece, but such was the lack of artistic interest that seven years elapsed before it was set up in the plaza. In 1822 it was enclosed in a huge wooden globe because of the feeling against Spain, and afterward taken to the University; in 1852 it was removed to the head of the Paseo de la Reforma bearing on its pedestal the legend *Conservado como Obra del Arte* "Preserved as a Work of Art." This statue cast in one piece is the first important piece of bronze ever cast in the western world, the only other bronze statue was the Concepción in Puebla. Before 1843 the Academy building was abandoned as a school, but the beauty of the engraving that escaped des-



SANCTUARY AT SANTA YNES  
July, 1920. Photo by R. S. Holway.



truction proves its beneficial influence on national taste.

From the time of their importation as stated, masterpieces from the old world and originals of New Spain also, were hung out of reach on the high walls of old churches and religious houses, inaccessible alike to sightseer and student and consequently difficult to locate or study. Still the earnest student of the art of the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in Mexico, denied access to the National Museum and other repositories of art in Mexico itself, in these days of interrupted relationship between us and our sister republic may find a fair field in the collection at the Greenwood Mission Inn, Riverside, California and at the Memorial Museum in Philadelphia. In this latter eighty canvasses of the wonderful Lamborn collection are to be found, including signed paintings by Miguel de Herrera, Joseph de Ibarra, Berra, Vallejo, López, Enríquez, Juan Rodríguez, Juárez Cabrera, and other painters, besides one canvass that is ascribed to Echave. These canvasses, with the occasional Mexican masterpiece unfortunately but too rarely found hidden away and forgotten in some private museum or library on this western coast, are sufficient evidence of

the efforts of Mexican masters of those days to cultivate the genius and improve the native taste of their people.



SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO

Portals of the original church destroyed by the earthquake in 1812. Note carving—paneled doors. Photographed by R. S. Holway, May, 1918.







THE MISSION DAYS OF  
ALTA CALIFORNIA



CALIFORNIA'S  
INDEBTEDNESS TO THE MISSIONS  
FROM THE STANDPOINT  
OF ART

**M**EASURED in terms of the histories of older countries, life on the Pacific coast may be written in a few chapters of brief chronology. New Spain was but the product of a new civilization imposed upon a nation already populous and cultured, but the path of the padres as they marched northward and westward over two centuries later may be traced through a land whose geography was as vague at the time as the character of its inhabitants was unknown. For this reason in the history of California one of the most essential and at the same time perhaps the most fascinating chapter, because of its very elusiveness, is the story of the Missions.

As early as 1522, almost a hundred years before the founding of the first English colony in America, Spain was being made familiar with the people of Mexico through the description of their appearance, habits and customs in the letters of Cortés

to his monarch, Charles V.<sup>1</sup> The Conqueror had built at this time a dockyard at Zacatula north of Acapulco and had four ships in the dock ready for exploration, yet for two centuries after, the world knew nothing of the population of California, or as it was then called the "Upper Coasts of the South Sea," nor of the natives some miles inland, except scanty information given by a few explorers.

The earliest mention of the Californians to which we can give credence is made by Cabrillo, the Portuguese navigator who arrived in San Diego Bay in 1542. He writes of the mud huts and brush shelters, the clothing of skins, of their canoes and how "an Indian Queen and many of her people came to dance with the Spanish sailors."

An old chronicler of the voyage of Sir Francis Drake along the coast of California gives a vague account of the natives as they appeared in 1579. He tells of the painted faces, the nude bodies and the girdles of bulrushes worn about the waist by the women. He describes the singing and dancing accompanying their religious ceremonies; also a kind of scepter decorated with chains of bones and crowns of network curiously wrought with feathers of many colors.

<sup>1</sup>MacNutt's Translation of Letters of Cortez, pp. 162-166.

The next reference to them is made after an interval of one hundred and fifty years in a description by another Englishman, Captain Woodes Rogers, who describes the primitive attire of the savages as he saw them while he was coasting along the Pacific shore in 1709. He writes that the males were nude but the women wore short shirts of silk grass or pelican or deer-skin. For ornaments they used shell, pearls, and red berries. At this time California was popularly supposed to be an island; even as late as 1713 it is drawn as such on Guerdeville's map of the world made for the French Academy of Sciences. More than three-quarters of a century had elapsed since the account of Captain Rogers before the first definite knowledge of the inhabitants and life on the Pacific Coast was given to other parts of the world through a description of neophyte life in the Missions by Count de Lapérouse, a French navigator. Sent out by Louis XVI to explore the unknown regions of the world in the early part of 1800, von Langsdorff, who accompanied Reznof in command of the Russian expedition sent for the same purpose, gives a definite picture of life as he saw it on the coast at various points in 1806. This information was supplemented by the illustrated account of

Louis Choris in his work entitled, "Voyage pittoresque autour du monde, avec des portraits des sauvages d'Amerique, d'Asie, d'Afrique et des isles du grand ocean," etc. Choris was attached to the staff of the Romanoff Expedition under Kotzebue (a Russian scientific expedition also to explore the remote countries of the world), visiting San Francisco in 1816. Although the voyage was begun in 1815 and several countries were visited before California, the account begins with the story of the latter, the author naively stating in the introduction that from the first his idea was to "present to the public" entirely new or very interesting material and for that reason the beginning of the book is concerned with California, "pays encore peu connu" (a country as yet very little known). The description of other countries well described by geographers or known through their commerce with the old world is placed later as being of less interest. Chamiso, the artist of the expedition, in a series of plates, pictures the inhabitants of the Presidio at play, at work, their attire, their manner of dressing hair, their utensils, weapons of defense, etc. A view of the Presidio shows the stockade in the middle of the foreground. The center of interest is, however, two horses instinctively waiting with

their heads flung upward, vibrant in their stationary pose, evidently surprised at the approach of a horseman riding rapidly toward them with leveled spear. To the left another rider, spear elevated, rides behind two Indians guarding a white man, possibly a deserter, between them. Nearer the foreground is a fire about which are gathered a number of persons, one of the standing figures holding a papoose in her arms. In the immediate foreground another mounted Spaniard drives a group of Indians with packs, seemingly fagots, strapped across their backs, evidently the method of transportation of that period. A few horses gamboling to the right complete the life element in the illustration. The equipment of the horse and rider is in the Spanish style; the whole picture is vibrant with the spirit of the times.

A more crowded plate and of much less interest from an artistic standpoint illustrates a dance of the natives before a mission building, according to Bancroft the old Mission Dolores.<sup>1</sup> This may well be, since the building was begun in 1782 and was still standing in 1885. In the picture there is only a section of the Mission building shown with a very shallow foreground. Still another plate

<sup>1</sup>History of California, Bancroft, Vol. II, p. 378.

portrays human heads from different tribes and incidentally interesting types of hairdressing. The illustrations, instinct with the alertness of the figures, are remarkably clever.

It is these accounts, meager though they are, that mark the dividing line between legend and fact and are the beginning of that fascinating thread of human interest that culminates later in the story of argonaut and pioneer, following the discovery of the first piece of gold in the tail race of Sutter's Mill.

There is a vast contrast between the gorgeous settings of early ecclesiastical structures in Mexico, numbering thousands, created and maintained by donations of fabulous wealth from the faithful and the primitive, meager product of the California padre with untrained savage assistants. Lack of revenue and of appropriate building material, combined with poverty of imagination, could result only in the crude and ephemeral, yet historically California owes a twofold debt to her Missions; not only because the first reliable information regarding its early inhabitants came through the description of neophyte life, but also because of the fact that the first art impulse on the coast was given by the Missions which furnished subjects for

illustration in books of discovery and travel long before the landscape of the coast was even thought of as an artistic theme. In the second volume of Captain George Vancouver's *Voyage of Discovery to the North Pacific Ocean* (1700-1795), there are two finely engraved plates, "The Mission of St. Carlos near Monterrey" and "The Presidio of Monterrey." The plates measure about  $6\frac{1}{4}$  by 9 inches and were made from sketches "taken on the spot by J. Sykes," artist of the expedition. Although not published until 1798 in London, these sketches have the distinction of being the first art production in California of which there is any record. Vancouver first visited the Presidio at Monterey and the Mission at Carmel Valley in 1792. In November, 1793 he made another visit to these places, the plates being the results of the three visits.

In 1828, thirty years after the publication of the first drawings made in California, there appeared the initial painting of the series of missions that afterward became one of the most favorite of California themes. This earliest painting of a Mission building, the San Gabriel, was made by a Mexican artist,<sup>1</sup> probably one of the soldiers stationed at

<sup>1</sup>News Notes of California Libraries, Vol. V, No. 3 (July, 1910), p. 44.

that post. The picture, measuring 15 11-16 by 29 13-16 inches, is exceedingly crude, both in design and technique. It is unfortunately lost, but a copy of it painted about 1880 by Henry Chapman Ford, is now in the Ford collection owned by Mrs. F. H. Sloan (formerly Mrs. Ford) of Los Angeles. Robinson's engraving of the same Mission was made in 1900.

In 1853 the Mission buildings at Santa Cruz were painted by a French artist, Le Tousset or Toussaint who was visiting there at the time. This canvas, now at the rectory of the church, is the only picture showing the buildings in their original style and has furnished the model for the outlines of the different illustrations and paintings of the ancient building.

Of the twenty-one missions that measured the progress of the padres along the King's Highway, many have long since disappeared and those that remain are merely a memory in their original state to the older generation.



Hand riveted Candlestick from Mission San Francisco Solano at Sonoma,  
California.



## NATIVE ART PRODUCTION

THE PATIENT PADRE AND  
THE ARTLESS INDIAN

ALTHOUGH so little is known of the habits and customs of the natives in the period preceding the missions, modern research proves the existence in prehistoric times of a well-established pictorial art among the tribes along the coast and in the southwest—an art approaching in quality the prehistoric murals recently discovered in the caves of Altamira in northern Spain and of Fort Gaume in southern France.

In the latter part of August, 1914, an expedition from the School of American Archaeology discovered one hundred and six most remarkable drawings on the walls of the prehistoric caves of the Rito de los Frijoles, thirty miles west of Santa Fé, New Mexico. These drawings included not only designs of fishes, birds, and other animals, but conventional and geometrical forms as well. No doubt this cultural quality extended to the Indians of this coast, although there are few evidences of it remaining at the present time. There

are none north and but few south of Monterey, California. In the mountains of Santa Barbara there are a number of rock paintings in caves; on Painted Rock in Santa Ynés mountains thirteen miles west of the city of Santa Barbara may be found representations in color of the sun, of men, and of animals; also in a cave in a boulder twenty feet high at San Marco Pass, there are a number of "rock pictures." About five miles above San Antonio Mission in the hills bordering the San Antonio River, there are a number of wall paintings in a sandstone rock cave. Many of them are merely outlines in red ochre or paint; still others are "entirely filled in with color; some made of lines or dots." Imperfections in the wall surface as a scaling or depression of the right form is utilized by outlining it as a head of a human or other figure, the feet, arms and the body being added. Some fine murals are to be found in a cave on Santa Catalina Island, although none of them is so brilliant as the prehistoric murals of France and Spain. In the latter cases the drawings were in deep caves remote from the action of the elements, much better protected than the work of the Indian on the Pacific Coast. The fact that the California Indian possessed but a very rudimentary know-



Large Museum Hall—San Gabriel Mission.



ledge of pigments which would readily fade or be entirely obliterated by rain and sun may account largely for lack of specimens in this country. The difference in the quality of the painting of the Arizona and New Mexico Indians and that of the Coast tribes may be in a measure due to the remoteness of the latter from the ancient civilization of Mexico. In a collection brought from the Santa Barbara Islands by Dr. Hector Alliot of the Archaeological Institute of America were a number of pipes and whistles presumably used in the ceremonial rites of the natives. Each instrument had been treated with a coating of asphaltum in which fragments of abalone shell had been inlaid in fantastic design, direct evidence of "artistic temperament" in the tribe.

A latent talent among the West Coast Indians was still further developed in basket weaving which seems to be the only art in which they really excelled. Choris speaks of their proficiency in this respect in his *Voyage pittoresque du monde*, as they appeared in 1816; "The Indians at the Missions to the south of San Francisco, particularly that of Santa Barbara, make charming vessels and vase-shaped baskets, capable of holding water, from withes of various running plants. They know

how to give them graceful forms and also how to introduce pleasing designs into the fabric. They ornament them with bits of shell and with feathers.”

The natives of the greater part of the coast country also carved in wood, but the product was exceedingly rude in design and very limited in quantity. Utensils of various kinds, articles of personal use and various objects ornamented with dolphins, flying fishes and other animal forms, taken from the excavations of Indian mounds along the coast, prove they had also a rude conception of sculptural forms.

In their work among the natives of California the padres found the same problem that perplexed the missionaries at the time the Conquistadores were invading Mexico: viz., the overcoming of the difficulty experienced by the neophytes in making the transition from the worship of visible stone gods and idols to the comprehension of an unknown religion filled with abstract truths. Father Junípero Serra, after returning from San Diego, found the cross erected at Monterey surrounded with feathers, arrows, meat and fish brought by Indians endeavoring to do homage to their new God; and Soulé in his *Annals of San Francisco* comments: “In 1775 when Father Garcés

was travelling on a crusading or proselyting expedition from Sonora to California, he carried with him a painted banner, on one side of which was represented the Blessed Virgin Mary, and on the other the devil in the flames of hell. On arriving at an Indian settlement the missionary took his first step of conversion. Just as the travelling mountebank blows his horn and flutters his flag on approaching a village of likely gulls, so did our good Father hoist his standard and cry aloud; when as he naively observes, the fascinated Indians, on seeing the Virgin, usually exclaimed 'good!' but when they observed the devil, they as often said 'bad!' Probably this was faith enough to entitle them to immediate baptism, absolution and salvation. Food, lodging, raiment and freedom from the cares of the family and the future naturally followed." Langsdorff tells of wonders in this regard wrought by the figure of the Virgin represented as springing from leaves of the great American aloe instead of the ordinary stem,<sup>1</sup> and we read that at some missions it was customary to paint the hands and faces of the saints dark in an effort to reach the untutored Indian mind. In contrast to this another method was employed

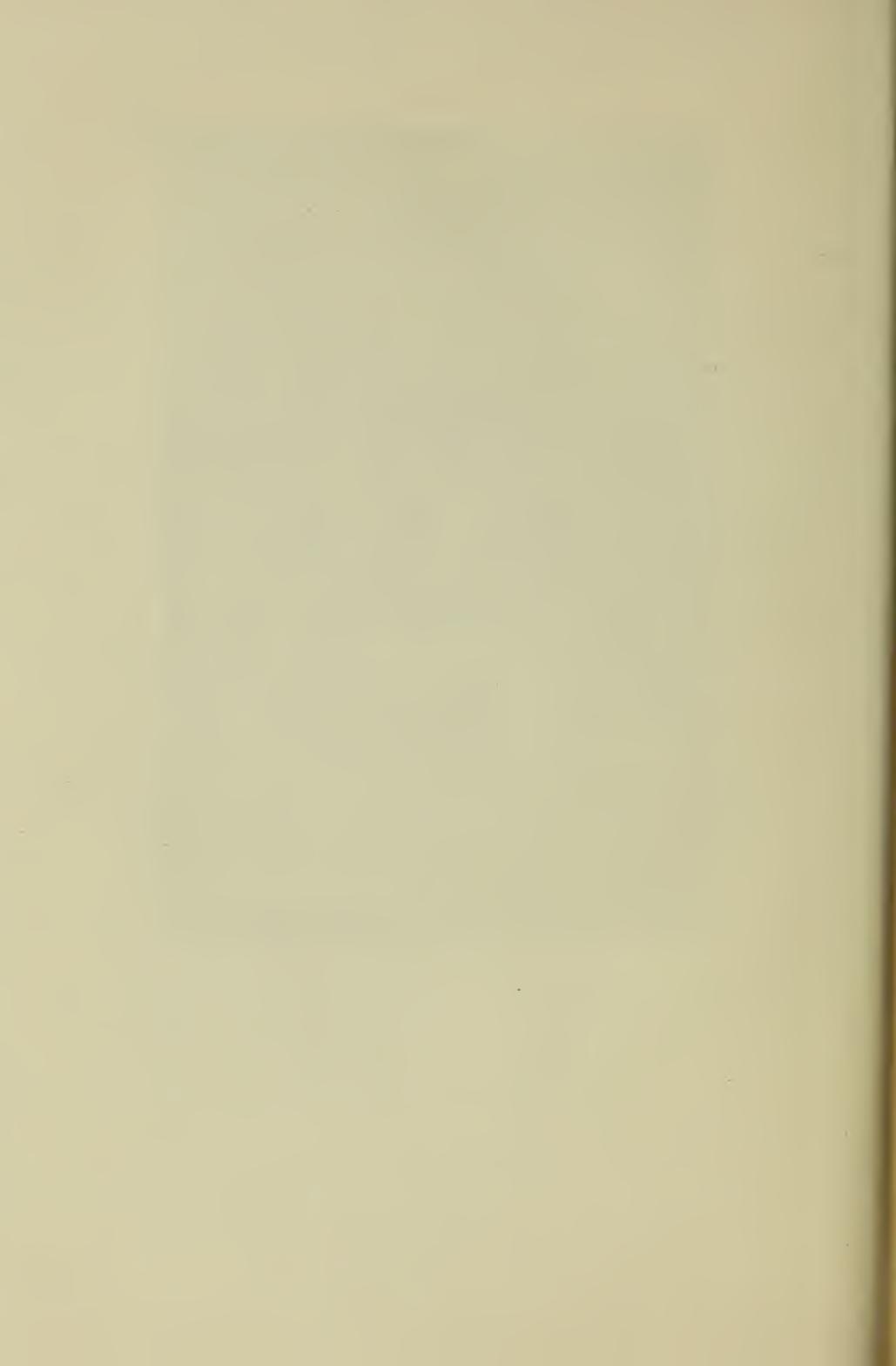
<sup>1</sup>California: A History of Upper and Lower California, Alexander Forbes.

when the element of fear was introduced, for example: at one time the facade of Santa Clara Mission was covered with vivid representations of the punishments and the joys of the after life, an idea carried out to some extent in decoration at other missions. Lapérouse in his *Voyage Round the World* writes of a painting of Hell which he saw at Carmel Mission in 1786. The picture depicted, the author says, scenes vivid enough to leave an impression of terror in the minds of the savages, and he doubted if the picture of Paradise opposite produced such a good effect upon them, because of the serenity it represented about the throne of the Supreme Being, an idea too sublime for savages to comprehend. He contends it was absolutely necessary to create a vivid imagination in the mind of the "newly-converted," adding that this must seem impossible to the Protestant cult who prescribed images and ceremonies of the Catholic Church.<sup>1</sup> The efforts of the padres in their early work was furthered by allowing the neophytes to use their own crude musical instruments, as may be seen by the two preserved at San Juan Capistrano. On one a most hideous noise is created, by jerking back and forth iron handles attached to

<sup>1</sup>Voyage of Discovery, La Perouse, Vol. I, p. 264.



San Gabriel Mission Church—Main Altar—San Gabriel Mission.



it. On the other a stone is rattled in a similar manner on a triangular shaped box.

But it was not through wonder and fear alone the work was approached. As one writer expresses it, "The vividness of color of the frescoes, the pictures, the statues, the robes, the incense smoke, the silver sheen of altar furniture, and the throbbing of the violins in the choir loft, all contributed to the impressions the padres wanted to make."

Missionaries in New Spain soon realized the necessity of substituting pictures and statues of the Christian saints to create some emotional appeal in the savage mind and to replace the idols destroyed in the efforts of the Christians to remove all traces of heathen worship. Cortés placed "images of Notre Dame and other Saints in place of the idols"<sup>1</sup> that were thrown down from the temples and broken on his march to the Mexican capital in 1521. In order to reach the grasp of the primitive mind the padres in California as well as those in Mexico found the effort of the aboriginal artist to give his own conception of the mysteries of the new religion a great aid, crude as the expression might be. In this respect the padres of the Con-

<sup>1</sup>Correspondence de Fernand Cortes avec l'Empereur Charles Quint, le première lettre, p. 91.

queror's period had a great advantage over the faithful workers to the north. When Cortés arrived in Mexico he found an ancient civilization of high order, the gold and silver work often rivaling that of the goldsmiths in Spain. Early in this period at his urgent request the mother country began sending to the new colony missionary architects and artists<sup>1</sup> of ability, and her interest in this respect was unflinching until native art production was firmly established in New Spain.

Although not arriving until two and a half centuries later than their predecessors to the south, the missionary padres found the California Indians had advanced but little beyond their prehistoric ancestors in point of art production. The neophyte had a primitive knowledge of color using only red, yellow, black, white and green obtained from pulverized earths, the red from ochres, and black from hydrous oxide of manganese and applied in their primary form since nothing was known of a "binding-substance." In this matter the Mexicans were far ahead; they knew *chian* oil and often used some of the heavier juices of plants, which permitted mixing of colors thus giving variety of color scheme. The Coast Indian had a limited

<sup>1</sup>*Ibid.*, la troisième lettre, p. 643.

knowledge of drawing and like the Mexican, lacked in perspective; some authorities contend that this, in the case of Mexico, points to an Egyptian influence inherited by the natives of Peru and introduced later into Mexico through a Peruvian art. Situated as they were, so far from harassing nations, both poverty of ideas and poverty of expression may amply account for the crudity of the work along the northern coast. The scarcity of material, even the wood used for carving, was also an obstacle in the way of development.

Owing to these limitations and also to the lack of training on the part of the few missionaries who were sent primarily to convert and to instruct them in "useful arts," but little progress was made in an artistic direction for a long period and in the beginning it was only through the generosity of Mexico and the mother country in supplying decorative material that the padres were enabled to carry on their religious work among the Indians in Alta California.

Strange as it may seem the neophytes painted for religious purposes alone; there was no ornamentation of their own huts in mural work, but with the erection of the adobe or wooden chapels and churches which succeeded the primitive *enramada*

woven of boughs, an opportunity was given to develop originality, however displeasing the results. A glance at the relics preserved in the southern museums and churches will convince the observer of the superiority of the southern Indians in originating forms; in this respect they ranked far beyond the Indians of the northern and the central portions of the state.

The neophyte artist is often accused of showing more knowledge of form and color in his basketry decoration than in his mural work under the instruction of foreign teachers. Perhaps this may be accounted for by the fact that basketry decoration was with him an ancient art; each pattern, skillfully worked out, handed down through the generations, had its special meaning. To beautify the dwelling place of a new Deity as requested by a foreign race of another type of religious thought called for an exercise of the creative faculty un- employed before. Here the wisdom of the padre instructor is apparent in permitting the neophyte artist in his religious decoration to use motifs already known to him. From the introduction of Indian symbols, running parallel lines resembling serpents, the lightning flash, attempts to picture the sun, the River of Life and other symbolical

characters, it is evident that some part at least of the decoration was left to the individual taste of the native artist. Perhaps patterns that seem to the later observer but a crude imitation of marble may have been intended to represent sky and cloud effects.

Then again the treatment of splints and reeds in producing color for basketry decoration was an essentially different process from that of getting from mineral earths the color in mural decoration on crudely plastered walls. The art of color in the former is probably as ancient as the form of the decorative pattern, itself. The delicate coloring required in representing figures of saints in the mysteries of the Christian religion was prohibitive since, as stated before, primary colors alone were available and the knowledge of mixing color could not be imparted to the savages in a short period of time. Perhaps with the tendency of artists in the present era to return to the primitive in form and "divided color," the criticism may not be so apt in regard to aboriginal work.

Even while working under instruction from the padres, the Indian, like his neophyte brother of New Spain, still retained something distinctive in his work, a flavor apart from its crudity, making

it easily distinguishable from all other untrained effort. For many years one of the prominent families in the San Fernando Valley possessed a crucifix, the figure being of Indian type with crown of thorns and Indian tuft of feathers. It was made by the neophyte who painted the Stations of the Cross for that church. At Mission Santa Ynés there is a good example of this individuality, a San Rafael (painted by an Indian of the same name) with a typical Indian face and head. Teófilo, the neophyte painter of Capistrano, absolutely refused to submit to conventional interpretation of the padres in his work. Carvings over door lintels in buildings of this first mission built of stone carry Aztec characteristics. A Madonna now at the Southern Museum, taken from the church of Our Lady of the Angels over a hundred years ago, shows strongly the native tendency in this respect. In the relic room of this same church may be seen fourteen stations of the Cross, painted on a cloth background covered with thick white paint; the colors are the rudimentary blue, red, green, white and black with no mixer; pink is used for flesh tones. The drawing is exceedingly crude but the heads of the figures startlingly Egyptian in appearance. None but a primitive could have produced a

result so distinctly foreign in feeling to the efforts of the padres or other Spanish instructors; moreover there were no models to follow at the time this work was done. All of these native products are interesting as showing the manner of the primitive mind in conveying its own impression relative to a belief so foreign to its own mode of thought. The primitive results of the neophyte's work are now almost obliterated and notwithstanding the fact that the starting point of the real history of California begins with the building of the first Mission in 1769, all that remains in a material way to tell the story of the Spanish padre's zeal in California is the classic charm inherited from tiled roof, columned cloister, bell-tower and arcade, the occasional picture and "tattered tapestries that came from Spain."

## THE REMAINING MISSION MURALS

WITHIN the period that elapsed between the founding of the first mission and the release of the completed chain from the guardianship of the padres, church and chapel interiors had passed through successive stages of decoration. Crudity of ornamental form and color in both interior and exterior work may be accounted for in part by the absence of local wealth to urge erection of magnificent buildings as had been done in the rich mining districts of Mexico, and the lack of any revenues to maintain those which were established in the Mexican Missions. Yet, even had building material been available, the most potent reason still remains, as stated before, in the utter incapacity of the California neophyte to appreciate any artistic effect except as expressed in crude form and vivid unrelated color. Native effort under the direction of the padre artist, on wooden joist and plastered wall, was followed by the more elaborate and pretentious work on canvassed arch and ceiling by itinerant foreign artists of later times and later still the modern painter proved his desire to pre-



OUR LADY OF SORROWS  
Mission Dolores. Founded 1776.



serve the original work, in semblance at least, from entire obliteration through fire, earthquake and other disaster. Some of the mural work is of such decidedly Moorish and Byzantine character and yet so crude, it has been suggested that the work was done by padre artists lacking in talent and endeavoring to reproduce from memory the decoration of their churches in Old Spain. Moorish and Byzantine characteristics are found also in some pulpits, carved confessionals, missal stands, wall brackets and other woodwork but the artist was far more successful in ornamental carving than the former in his less skilful use of color.

Except in few instances the decoration of the main space of the building was confined to a running border above a flat dado on the walls, a running vine or other pattern outlining window-space, door, and niches containing the statues, which were usually of wood. Elaborate decoration was reserved for the chancel space and often the sacristy walls were more extensively beautified comparatively than those of the church itself. Frequently the former offered a better opportunity to study native work than any other part of the building interior. The church ceilings, especially those of wood, were either ornamented directly or covered by a decorated canvas.

Earthquake and lack of protection from fire are not alone responsible for the disappearance of the original decoration of the mission walls. Unfortunately much that was interesting from an historical, as well as from an artistic point of view has been lost, covered by the whitewash coat placed under the direction of well-meaning but unsympathetic successors in the footsteps of the Spanish padres. From the standpoint of the modern thinker however uninterested in either the history or the aboriginal art of California, this opinion may well be reversed. Two factors at least may have been involved in the entire obliteration of primitive work from church and chapel interiors: first, the laudable desire of the instructor with the passage of time to further the advance in religious education of his neophyte charges by removing evidences of primitive attempts to teach facts concerned with the new mode of worship; second, during the period of Spanish occupation and even still later when the missions became parish churches, it may have been thought wise to remove neophyte decoration in accordance with the altered character of the congregations.

Of the mission wall paintings untouched by a despoiling hand, decorated by neophyte or wan-

dering artist, all that remain are those at San Miguel and Santa Ynés; with the exception of the front of the altar, the former stands today as left by the original artist. The dado is the work of the Indians; the remaining decoration was done by a Spanish decorator named Murras in 1820 or 1821.<sup>1</sup> The patterns are large and are said to have been taken from books of design. On the wall behind the altar there are three large panels separated by pillars mottled to resemble marble, each panel outlined by a conventional decoration of vivid red flowers and green foliage, and forming a background<sup>2</sup> for the wooden figure standing before it. Over the statue of St. Michael in the middle panel a large painting of the Moorish All-Seeing Eye, which appears frequently in Mission decoration, forms a center of a huge representation of wooden rays alternating in white and gold. A chalice above each side panel and a corresponding one above the All-Seeing Eye are joined by a garland formed of clusters of grapes with leaves. The dado below the panels had the mottled effect associated with the idea of neophyte work.

<sup>1</sup>This information was given the writer by Father Zephyrin Engelhardt, to whom it was told by Mrs. McKee, a daughter of the artist.

<sup>2</sup>This "glory" frequently forms a background for representations of the "Sacred Heart" and other paintings as well as for statuary in many of the ancient Mexican churches.

Above the statue of St. Joseph standing on a bracket to the left of the altar in an oval panel is a realistic painting of the wounded hands of Christ, crossed and showing the piercing made by the nails which held them to the cross. A corresponding panel filled with conventional pattern on the right is of little artistic interest.

On the side walls of the sanctuary the decoration is still more elaborate. A deep frieze of three parallel rows of small squares outlined in black, each filled with the same conventional design, has both above and below a fringe of blue color looped with tassels of blue, brown, and green. Separating this from the decoration of the main body of the wall, perpendicular bands alternating in conventional designs of dark brown and green, are set off for the altar on each wall. Over the altar, the ceiling is decorated in rose with a design in blue; the rafters are also of rose.

The most interesting part of the San Miguel decoration is on the north wall directly back of the pulpit and on the wall opposite. In a panel between fluted columns a huge fan-like painting springing in alternating bands of green and pink from a green base a short distance from the floor extends far beyond the pulpit on both sides. In the remaining



TABERNACLE DOOR  
Mission Dolores about 1776.



wall space to the choir loft at regular intervals are the same fluted blue mottled columns. The Greek key pattern, used occasionally in sculpturing in stone for exterior decoration, was rarely introduced in interior decoration in combination with other painted forms; at San Miguel, however, it runs at the top and at the bottom of the frieze panel above and of the panel below the choir rail. At the intersecting corners of the Greek pattern and in the panels of the choir appears a conventionalized rose.

Everywhere the coloring is still vivid; this is particularly true of the deep blue, the rich green, red and yellow of the altar-rail spindles and those of the choir, the pulpit stairway, the panels of the pulpit and the red scalloped ornamentation at the bottom of the canopy crown. The coloring of the latter itself is gorgeous in gold and silver, black and green; at its top stands a bell, above which is a cross.

The choir, sanctuary, and sacristy at Santa Inés still retain untouched much of the earliest mural work. The painting directly back of the altar is a series of columns and panels in mottled green, a crude imitation of marble; a dado of wider panels in the same imitation carries a border of irregular diamond-shaped pattern. On the side wall the

effect is still more decorative; here the panels, also simulating marble, form a background for oil paintings which are supported on elaborately ornamented brackets; a conventional pattern in black and green outlines the windows. Below the panels runs a border in a pattern of red, yellow and green, broken at intervals by conventional vases joined by short garlands of thick leaves. The beam decoration is unique; in the same colors as above, arcs are described on the sides, the points of intersection set off by an elongated figure; running tendrils of a vine form the decoration on the inner side. Green tones prevail in the chancel space throughout, even extending to the fluted interior of the shell above the head and shoulders of the figure of St. Agnes above the altar. The whole niche corresponds in coloring to the crude green marbled panels below.

For some time the original altar of stone was set aside, replaced by the more garish modern substitute, until, through the effort of Father Alexander Buckley, the latter was displaced by one before which the neophytes were accustomed to worship. Over this ancient work is a wooden protection the front of which carries an elaborate decoration of alternating blue and white stripes,

an inch and a half broad, symbolizing the River of Life. A diamond shaped pattern containing alternating baskets of roses and fruit was evidently painted over the stripes with leaves and flowers intermingled. This is no doubt the work of some Spanish or Mexican artist; neither the pattern nor coloring, however, suggest the work of Murras at San Miguel. Corresponding to the general scheme of ornamentation, panels of green and white form the decoration of the arches below the choir loft.

In originality of design and also in execution, the decoration of the sacristy walls surpasses that of the sanctuary, and like the rosetted and pierced sides of the confessionals is Moorish in design. The running Greek key between two parallel borders in patterns of conventionalized red roses and leaves, both borders differing in motif, produces a most unusual decorative effect. The fact that the Greek key was but rarely used in mission murals and that it is associated with the rose-colored conventionalized flower both in Santa Inés and in San Miguel murals (although without the leaves in the latter case) would suggest work by the same artist; or at least indicate that the motifs were from the same book from which Murras selected the San Miguel patterns. About the niches

outside the chancel in the main church an alien coat conceals the original decoration. This the devoted priest in charge (July, 1920), Father Butler, with painstaking care is endeavoring to uncover (using the pointed blade of a pen-knife to remove the offending wash), that the decoration may be seen in its entirety.

At Santa Inés, there are many wooden candlesticks and wall brackets, all of which are painted in the brilliant coloring, red, blue and green, found in the spindles of the altar rail and pulpit stairs at San Miguel. The decorations of the ornamental rosettes on the altar piece are also in these vivid colors separated by gilt lines. On the tabernacle door is a beautifully painted Good Shepherd; the rafters are ornamented on the under side in running tendril pattern; on the front and back are festoons on a white ground in brown and red patterns.

Santa Clara was elaborately decorated and the present restoration gives an excellent idea of the brilliancy of coloring of the original work. The canvas on the ceiling was taken from the old church before the first fire and afterward placed in its present position on the ceiling of the new church. It is uncertain whether it was painted by one of



Statue of San Juan at San Juan Bautista. August 1, 1920.



the padres or by a Mexican artist; it may be possible that Murras painted a part of the ceiling although the design has none of the characteristics of the other murals attributed to him. The wainscot line set off in broad curves simulating the body of a serpent was intended, James says, to remind the neophytes of the old serpent in the Garden of Eden. A more poetic conception is given however—the River of Life.

On the walls of the ruined nave of the ancient San Juan Capistrano stone church and among the little plant leaves peeping out between the bricks in the empty niches before which the great altar stood, there are still vestiges of brilliant frescoing in Byzantine patterns of red, blue, pale green and gray. Directly under the arches of the sanctuary beautiful decorations in simple designs still retain their coloring of green and gold and although the whole surface has been exposed to the action of the elements since 1812, when an earthquake converted the building into a ruin, much of the color, though dim, remains wonderfully beautiful.

On the ceiling of Father Serra's old chapel at this mission are numerous rosetted figures in good coloring and traces of a pleasing decoration on the south wall. A conventional diamond shaped pat-

tern designed in red, yellow, brown, and black also remains in the niche which holds the figure of San Juan over a door in the corridor.

The brilliantly colored rosetted figures cut from cedar on the ceiling at Santa Barbara are a restoration of the original designs by the Indians representing the Winged Lightning. Within the chancel of the restored decoration, also elaborate and vivid, appears the favorite All-Seeing Eye radiating beams of light; the frescoes of fruit and flowers on the walls were all painted by the Indians under direction of the padres.

Among the relics at this mission is the crown-piece of the tabernacle belonging to the ancient altar; this interesting relic has for decoration a design combining the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Mary with the cross, the crown of thorns and other insignia referring to the torture of Christ; set into the wood but most effective and original are the insets of iridescent abalone shell fragments, a decoration more attractive than the marble effect on the columns and side arches at the entrance, all that is left of the primitive murals. The use of the abalone inset may have been a survival of the aboriginal form used by the Indians at Catalina and the Santa Barbara Islands or it may have been

an inheritance from Mexico where the shell was extensively used at one period; a few frames with shell insets were brought to some of the southern missions and the idea may have been adopted by the Indian artist in this instance.

At San Luis Rey traces remain of the original mural work crudely simulating black marble instead of the usual dull red, blue or green; the decoration on the large arch spanning the interior is in the dark marble veined in light blue and red. Above each window is a star-shaped figure with conventional trailing pattern extending across the top; below, a rude conventional pattern outlines the positions occupied by the missing holy water fonts. Within the sanctuary the decoration was of much higher order; in a paneled arch over the side altar two winged angels are pictured in space holding a golden crown between them and in another panel over the entrance to the altar are represented the stigmata of St. Francis.

Connected with the main church at San Luis Rey was the beautiful little octagonal shaped chapel used for the services of the dead. The approach was at the right through a doorway afterward built up. This chapel was remarkable, not only for the unusual decoration of the chancel wall

immediately behind the altar, but also for its rounded brick columns set into the wall at the angle marking the regular divisions of wall space.

In an oval panel over the arch which spanned the entrance to the chancel is a painting of the cross and the five wounds of the Savior, and the stigmata of St. Francis.

Until about fifteen years ago, the little Pala chapel, a dependency of San Luis Rey and situated about twenty miles from that mission, retained its original decoration by the Indians. Above a primitive dado, columns spanned by broad arches were painted in dull reds on the whitewashed walls; afterward they were obliterated by a new coat of whitewash to the great grief of the Indians. It is hoped the original frescoes may yet be "restored" by the removal of the offending coat, as is being attempted at Santa Inés.

The decoration at San Gabriel, mainly confined to the retable back of the main altar, is of an entirely different character from the fresco ornamentation of the other mission churches, the dark frame with its niches for the six wooden statues being elaborately ornamented in the churrigueresque style of the early Mexican mission chapels and churches. This fact suggests that the

retable itself may have been an importation either from Spain or Mexico with the statues and pictures and other equipment brought north by the padres, or later still. The original pulpit has four panels in the main body each having a white star in the center; a cone-shaped support at the bottom of the pulpit is ornamented with inlaid strips.

At Our Lady of the Angels in Los Angeles (sometimes known as the Plaza Church) the original murals behind the altar, brown panels outlined with pin lines against a white background, offer strange contrast to the French decoration by Penelon, the French artist, who did much toward the restoration of that church. Two yellow oval panels outlined in brown make a dull setting for wooden figures holding flambeaux; in the baptismal room the decoration, also conventional (except the Baptism by Penelon), is of higher order.

Notwithstanding the decay at St. Francis de Asísí, Mission Dolores, the main and side altars of the ancient building remain in comparatively fair condition. Behind the main altar stands the large reredo, with its elaborate rococo decoration of niches, and numerous panels outlined in gilt frame ornamented with gilt scrolls, garlands and other conventional designs carved in wood. In the chur-

riquerresque patterns of the Mexican mission structures, similar panels contained beautiful medallions in oil painted for the purpose. When these were not available, rare old paintings were often sacrificed to furnish the vignettes necessary to fill the spaces; in the California missions poverty of like decorative material was often met by using these simple carvings, an endeavor to offset the lack of variety of color by the richness and brilliancy of the gilt ornamentation.

On the cornice of the side altars a decoration in tones of lavender, and in the panels on the lower part of the outer columns of the same altars, graceful vases filled with roses, form a decoration Italian rather than Spanish in feeling; and although far removed from neophyte work are still of an early period.

The original ceiling decoration remains. The space between the rafters is filled with rhomboid figures each divided into two triangular parts alternating red and white or pale gray; the rafters and corbels are done in alternating, regularly bent, bands of red, yellow, gray, and white. Over the arch fronting the altar space a more elaborate design was painted on an ancient canvas now rapidly disintegrating, tattered and hanging in shreds.

Touches of mural decoration by the neophytes may be seen in the faded red leaves behind the altar and occasionally on the walls at San Juan Bautista. That the decoration of the whole church was not altogether by the converts is shown by the several triangular wooden panels upon which the All-Seeing Eye is represented. These were thrown down with various other figures during the earthquake of 1800; they are now in the relic room, crude but still superior to any Indian work.

From the mass of ruins at San Fernando, not a trace of ornamental work remains except the faint mottling on two columns and cornices near the altar. The decoration evidently followed the usual pattern of simulated marble.

At Carmel in the old chapel where Father Serra celebrated mass before the large building was completed, a fragment on the south wall, sufficiently large to show the character of the original decoration still may be seen. Above a dado of triangular shaped figures alternating in pale yellow and green, a very distinctive pattern, there is an almost indiscernible border in brown and red. Directly over this dado the prayer

*O Corazón de Jesús  
Siempre ardes y resplandeces*

*Enciende el ——— mio e ilumina.*

*Angeles y Santos*

*Alabemos al Corazón de Jesús.*

Translated it reads:

*O Heart of Jesus*

*Always burning and shining*

*Kindle and illumine mine with Thy divine love.*

*Angels and Saints*

*Let us praise the Heart of Jesus.*

An old Moorish arch separates the chapel from the adjoining church.

In the conflagration of March 19th of the present year (1920) at San Luis Obispo Mission, fire and steam have been effectual agents in exposing not only interesting mural work on the sacristy walls but also a most exquisite decoration on the two wooden lintels over the entrances to the altar space of the church beyond. This work (stencil-ing?), in alternate pairs of double scrolls in delicate blue and rose colors between parallel borders, is almost obliterated from the right lintel by smoke, but the left carries the definite pattern easily traced. The marks of the heavy blunt axe or other instrument remaining on the hand-hewn timber seem at variance with the delicacy of its ornamentation.



SAN JUAN BAUTISTA

Door with "River of Life" carved decoration. Cat hole in corner.  
August, 1920.



On the same wall which divides the altar-space from the sanctuary, on the inner side, are two rows of festoons in rose with a conventional figure joining the halves of each; other rows of festoons may have been painted above, but are not visible. Stars and rosetted figures are placed irregularly throughout the decoration; patches of flat dado in rose color, native work, appear where the smoke-grimed alien coat has flaked off during the intense heat.

The boards (which are of uniform width) composing the ceilings of church and sacristy escaped the effect of fire and smoke and will be placed as they were in their original positions during the restoration which is now being done (July, 1920). Both ceilings carry exceedingly crude decoration. The irregular shaped stars and other figures in black are painted over a coarse white wash; there is no doubt whatever of the native work. Being placed so high, however, the appearance of the decoration was deceptive and the work impossible to study. In the church the rose colored dado and decorated border of the neophytes were concealed under the modern coats of white and blue washes.

Opening from the sacristy, an old adobe building still retains its original ceiling of tule or bam-

boo covered with dried grasses. Remnants of rose colored decorations in star form still remain on its south wall.

San Luis Obispo is fortunate in being able to have saved from destruction its wonderful old vestments, two of which in framed cases are of a more ancient pattern than those of the present time. One gorgeous covered chasuble with still untarnished silver flowers has a deep fringe of red, yellow, and blue, exceedingly brilliant and as fresh appearing as when it first left the Spanish loom.

Although it is almost a century since the last of the missions was founded, the adobe church and buildings of San Francisco Solano (1824) still stand in a fair state of preservation (September 3, 1920). No trace of mural or other decorative work can be found either under the flaking whitewash or on the heavy plaster coat beneath it on the walls of the church, granary or adjoining rooms opening from the corridor. It does not follow however that the artistic sense was wanting among the neophytes and padres at Sonoma since some of the most beautiful as well as useful iron work was produced at this mission. The hand-riveted dragon-shaped candlestick is unusually ornate and shows evidence of the neophyte's use of foreign models.

The heavy beams, hand-hewed, which support the wooden ceilings of the padres' quarters, the corridor with its willow-brush roof tied with thongs of raw-hide to the rafters and the bell opposite the church entrance are all reminiscent of the atmosphere of neophyte days.

DECORATIVE  
ECCLESIASTICAL EQUIPMENT FROM  
SPAIN AND MEXICO

PAINTINGS

FOR THE equipment of the missions, gifts were received from churches and colleges of both Old and New Spain. The Mexican College of San Fernando and the congregations of Seville and of other European cities furnished a large part which was increased by "votive offerings" of private individuals in both countries. Lapérouse speaks of the great number of fine pictures, copies of Italian paintings, which he saw at Carmel Mission when he visited it in September 1786. Both Spanish royalty and Mexican viceroy gave official recognition and encouragement to the custom of giving to the mission. An instance of this interest may be found in a letter of instructions dated December 25, 1776, from Bucarely, viceroy of New Spain, to Governor Neve of California in which the latter is advised that "an image of St. Francis is being sent for use in the chapel of the



Old wooden figures that originally ornamented the posts opposite Entrance of Mission San Antonio. The wooden ox-cart is also a relic of early days.  
In collection of Mr. Dutton at Jolon, California, reported  
by Mr. Dutton of Jolon.



fort of San Francisco,"<sup>1</sup> and in a letter to Father Palou, biographer of Father Serra, Gálvez, visitor-general of New Spain under Charles III, writes of selecting and packing with his own hands sacred ornaments, vestments and silver vessels for the celebration of the mass, which were taken north by the expedition accompanying Father Serra when he set out to found the missions in California. Before starting on his journey Serra went to Santa Ana to consult with Gálvez and both decided at that interview that church furniture, ornaments and vestments should be supplied by the missions to the south. Father Palou made a list of all items brought at the time.<sup>2</sup> Later the older California missions contributed to the equipment of the younger; at Santa Inés there is a silver incense cup, a gift from La Purísima and also an incense burner from San Miguel. Monterey still has a beautiful asperger, sent in the early days from Carmel;<sup>3</sup> also a silver processional and altar candlesticks of beautiful design from the same place.

Paintings and statuary and other objects of art, venerated by padre and neophyte alike, remained at the various missions to which they were sent,

<sup>1</sup>Chapman, *Founding of Spanish California*, p. 384, note 9.

<sup>2</sup>*History of California*, Bancroft, Vol. I, p. 119, note 9.

<sup>3</sup>*Old Missions and Mission Indians*, G. Wharton James.

until the period of "secularization" when the missions were taken over by the civil authorities (1833-1848). In the looting which followed, much of the gold and silver altar equipment disappeared, but owing to the fact that a number of the missions became parish churches, the padres were enabled to secure from various sources and to preserve many of the looted pictures, statues and richly decorated vestments. San Gabriel, San Juan Capistrano, Santa Clara (until the unfortunate conflagration of 1909) and a few other mission churches are still veritable storehouses of these treasures. Much of the gorgeous display of banners, paintings, tapestries, massive crucifixes and candlesticks of gold and silver which Alfred Robinson says in his "Life in California" he saw at Santa Barbara in 1846 is still there. The museums at Exposition Park in Los Angeles, at Golden Gate Park in San Francisco and the Mission Inn at Riverside, all possess priceless treasures from an historical point of view in the heirlooms donated or purchased from descendants of the old Spanish families, gifts from the missionaries in return for courtesies and favors shown them. Perhaps one of the finest of these paintings hangs in the Exposition Museum, an exquisite Santa Rosa de Lima, at-



Native carving originally nailed on wall of church at Carmel.



tributed to Murillo. It was brought to Mexico from Spain, to a church in Guadalajara where it remained until about a hundred years ago when it was given to the grandmother of the present donor<sup>1</sup> by the Franciscan padres to whom she had shown great kindness.

In the relic room adjoining the church of Our Lady of the Angels at Los Angeles, built in 1784, the oldest Spanish church on the Pacific Coast, there is a most interesting old tablet 34 by 47 inches in size painted on lambskin, with the music and words of the hymn sung by the choir at the celebration of the mass on Good Friday. Around the margin of the tablet are beautifully illuminated panels containing scenes of the Passion and other subjects. Among others at the bottom is a representation of the Tower of Gold at Seville, Spain, which was built early in 1220 by the Moors and partly destroyed by an earthquake in the seventeenth century, the main portion remaining intact. Later in the century, the smaller towers which surmounted the main structure were restored. The illuminated panel shows the tower completed, but another panel shows the coat of arms of Bishop Cervantes, the ecclesiastic pre-

<sup>1</sup>Mrs. Martinez of Los Angeles.

siding in Seville previous to the disaster. This fact may place the date of the painting early in the seventeenth century, but since it is not known whether the tower is represented before the earthquake or after restoration there is no decisive proof as to the exact time. The technique places it far beyond any Mexican work of the period and the local Spanish subjects would also seem to indicate Old World work. Square golden notes on the red lines of the music add to the brilliant effect of the illustrations. The medium is tempera probably mixed with honey.

In the same room is also a very large painting of the Immaculate Conception attributed to Roelas, a fellow student of Murillo and master of Zurbarab. Roelas painted in Spain in the latter part of the 16th and early part of the 17th centuries and was commissioned by wealthy religious orders to decorate their monasteries and churches. This painting is most beautiful in drawing and color; the background has been retouched but the figure of the Virgin and the faces of the cherubs are original work; the head of the Virgin shows undoubtedly the influence of the Murillo school. A great deal of golden decoration on the drapery of the Virgin and across the blue robe closely repeated, the em-

blem of the Jesuits, JHS, in letters of gold, make a most brilliant effect, the colors of the painting seemingly as vivid as when they were first mixed on the artist's palette. Roelas' works are rare and highly prized. There is a number of good Italian copies hanging among other pictures in the museum. Cut into the frame of a beautiful Italian Madonna may be found the index,  indicating that the picture was the property of the diocese of Seville.<sup>1</sup> The same characters were found on the frame of a St. Francis and of a St. John of Prado. A painting of St. Bernard and of St. Raymond and many others all on copper are of such good technique that they suggest Spanish origin.

In the old church there is a series of four very old paintings, Italian in feeling and evidently brought from Spain but hung so high, as is the custom in the churches of Mexico, that it is impossible to study them carefully although the coloring is still vivid and of excellent taste. In one canvas the Birth of Christ, the rigid figure of the Infant, and other crude resemblances to work of Giotto are apparent.

The largest collection of paintings once the

<sup>1</sup>The writer discovered the symbol in May, 1918, which was "translated" by Father Dorca, a young artist priest who had recently arrived from Seville and was stationed at Our Lady of the Angels at the time.

property of the missions is at the present time at San Gabriel. Many of these were brought from Spain but unfortunately those in the main church have been "restored" and the brilliancy of original coloring lost. Lining the walls are representations of the twelve apostles and several other saints; an unusual canvas of the Holy Trinity signed by Lucas Mena hangs in the main building; on the sanctuary walls are a beautiful Blessed Virgin and a St. Gabriel, both of exquisite coloring.

The greater number of paintings however is in the museum, at one time the old monastery of the mission. Some of these are on canvas; others on copper and still others on wood. An interesting "Story of the Apparition" of the latter class has four separate oval paintings in oil joined by cross-pieces at the back; in each oval is represented an incident of the story. The picture, said to be four hundred years old, is evidently a product of Mexico; the wood is in a fair state of preservation, the colors brilliant and pleasing. There is also a fair copy of Cimabue's Madonna, by a Mexican artist.

Many old paintings of the early period of Spanish art are still in their mutilated Spanish frames. A St. Joseph with the Sleeping Child, the Dream of St. Joseph, a Byzantine Madonna, a St. Peter

and a St. Paul are of this early time. There are several of a later period, three attributed to Murillo, the Virgin, a St. Francis and a beautiful Immaculate Conception, the latter in the size of the canvas at Seville. A Salome Carrying the Head of John the Baptist is poorly drawn but shows the Murillo coloring. A large canvas, Massacre of the Innocents, and a Queen Esther are good representatives of the Murillo school. Many of the inferior canvasses in this collection bearing the Murillo signature may have been the work of his oldest son, Dante Gabriel Murillo, when the latter was painting in the West Indies; the paintings were brought afterward to Mexico; or they may have been the master's own early efforts or even the work of students working under his direction, a custom not unusual at the time.

Italian masters are also represented in the charming Mary Magdalene attributed to Coreggio and copies on copper of Raphael's Madonna Granduca and Andrea del Sarto's Madonna and the Child.

At Santa Barbara the paintings of undoubted Spanish origin are full of unusual interest; two lunettes in oil, Our Lady of the Scapular and the Last Judgment (a copy of the canvas at the Es-

curial in Spain), are within the chancel. In the half-light of the altar-space both composition and coloring are indistinct, preventing an accurate description of the paintings. This applies also to the Descent from the Cross on the right wall near the altar and to the large painting of the Savior on the left. The curved shape of the lunettes would indicate that originally they were intended for placement directly over doors or windows or within an arch space. Their present position on flat walls as well as their technique is clear evidence of a foreign gift. High on the right wall over the arch spanning the recess containing the altar of the Mater Dolorosa is a very large oblong painting of Hell and above the arch directly opposite over the altar of St. Francis is a canvas of the same shape and size picturing Purgatory. The former is reminiscent of the theme as portrayed at Carmel (mentioned in another connection) and described by Lapérouse as he saw it there in 1776. In the scattering of the secularization period may not the canvas have found its way with the Purgatory to Santa Barbara or may it not have been a gift from the generous Carmelo to one of the poorer mission chapels (San Miguel?) which now possesses a work of the same motif? The canvas has disap-

peared from Carmel. Lapérouse mentions also a companion picture representing Heaven but it would seem a stretch of the imagination in connecting the Purgatory even if dim, with that work, though it is unlikely that a Purgatory representing one of the states of existence after death would accompany the former two. However both the Santa Barbara paintings may have been direct gifts from Spain through Mexico. In Palou's list of church equipment brought north with the expedition to found California Missions, mention is made of "eleven pictures of the Virgin" but of no other paintings. Consequently many pictures and statues were gifts sent afterward from Mexico or Spain. Possibly Cabrera's Virgin of Guadalupe, of which there were numerous copies in Mexico, was among them because of the generous supply of that particular subject.

Two other large paintings of the same oblong shape and very dim are equally as interesting as those mentioned. Hung much lower than the Purgatory and beyond on the same wall is a very ancient painting of three male figures which entirely fill the canvas, without background or detail to form an atmosphere. On the right wall corresponding to this is a representation of three female

saints, the center figure holding a vessel resembling a monstrance<sup>1</sup>; the one on the left the Child in her arms, the Virgin Mother, and the one on the right with her foot on a skull holding a crucifix, evidently the penitent Magdalen. The paintings are of very poor color lacking brilliancy; this fact and the crude composition places them in an early period of Spanish art. A beautiful copy of the Virgin of Guadalupe from Mexico, over a side altar, a fine Assumption after Murillo in the drawing of the Virgin and cherubs, and a Crucifixion are close to the chancel rails. The latter two with the Stations of the Cross were brought from Spain in 1793.

On the left wall of the chancel at San Miguel there is a rare Good Shepherd, dim in coloring and painted in pigments; the quality of the medium used is more apparent in the drapery and in the crudely drawn red sheep. The drawing of the head of the Shepherd and of the two cherubs holding the golden crown above it is far superior to the rest and seems to be painted in a different medium. The canvas is either Mexican or possibly a very early Spanish retouched by a neophyte or a padre artist. On the walls of the main church are large paintings in brilliant coloring of St. Augustine,

<sup>1</sup>Perhaps a vase.

St. Dominic, St. Bonaventure, St. Anthony and St. Michael in Glory; in the latter the canvas is crowded with figures below the form of the ascending saint. The drawing of St. Gabriel represented in ethereal space is excellent; that of St. Dominic however is relatively poor; a string of beads held in his hands significant of the fact that he originated the idea of the rosary, and a dog standing near holding a blazing torch in his mouth add to the interest of the picture. In the St. Bonaventure the vivid scarlet decoration attracts attention to the center of a canvas crowded with detail. Another canvas of the early Spanish school picturing Hell with an almost obliterated Satan in the high center is interesting because of technique and theme. The narrow frames on all of the paintings, except those of the twelve modern stations of the Cross, are very old, as confirmed by the decorative inner lines in yellow and red pigment.

At San Juan Bautista there are also many paintings, some of much merit. In one, a beautiful but unusual Trinity of such uneven technique it seems the work of two artists, the drawing of the dove and the head of Joseph and perhaps the head of the Infant by the same painter, being superior to

that of the lower part of the painting; the hands of the Child especially are evidently the work of an inferior artist. An unframed head of a figure showing printed pages held in the hands of St. John is most exquisite, the drawing and coloring of the flesh tints being especially fine!<sup>1</sup> Among other paintings there is a beautiful Baptism of Christ, the tenderness of the face unusually well done; this as well as the Virgin of Guadalupe are very large canvasses. Like many other representations of Our Lady of Guadalupe, incidents connected with the story are pictured in the margin; in this case there are but four, one in each corner. In one of these there appears a Juan Diego of decidedly brown complexion contrasting strongly with the two white padres to whom he shows the image on the napkin. In a native-made frame, probably three feet square, a painting of St. Michael is one of the finest in the collection; its brilliancy of coloring would be disclosed were the accumulated dust and grime removed.

At Santa Clara there are several canvasses preserved from the conflagration of 1909, one of them a fine copy of Cabrera's Virgin of Guada-

<sup>1</sup>In August, 1920 the writer discovered the loss of both these paintings; stolen from San Juan Mission.

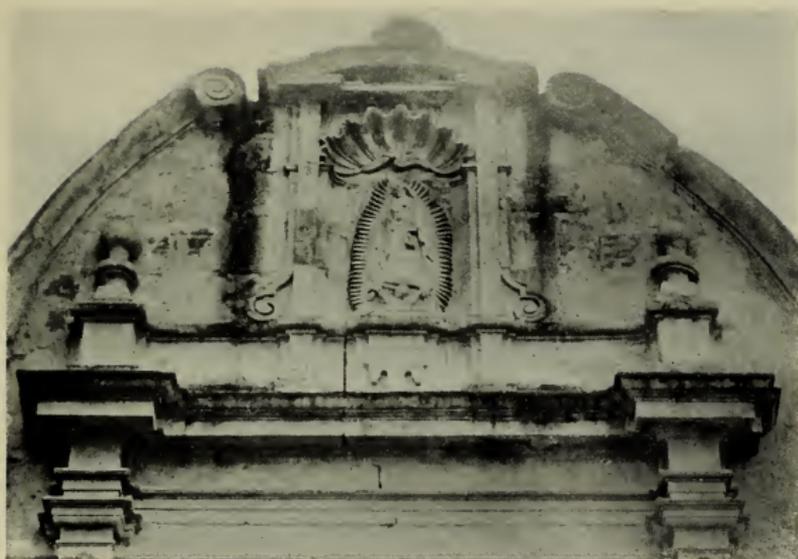
lupe, with the technique of the best of the Old Mexican school. In the sacristry two paintings, a Virgin and a Christ, are in as vivid color as when they were painted. A painting of the Loaves and Fishes is equally vivid; the face of the Christ is remarkably well drawn, also the figure of the kneeling child. The canvas is set in an elaborate frame of unusual form, each of the straight sides broken by a broad arc, the whole surrounded by a narrow Florentine decoration. There is also a Mater Dolorosa which from subject, technique and lack of brilliancy corresponds to the Ribera type, evidently by an artist painting before Echave. There are but few others remaining, a St. Hyacinth, a St. Benedict and a St. Francis, all of inferior artistic merit.

Of the ancient mission structure at Santa Cruz there remains only the east foundation wall of stone, almost concealed in the overgrowth of shrubbery which covers it. In 1840 (January 16) an earthquake and tidal wave occurred. During that time the church tower was overthrown, statues were thrown from their niches and ornaments damaged or destroyed. From the wreckage a number of paintings of inferior value, representing saints, are preserved in the rectory adjoining the

church, but whether the paintings were among those borrowed with other church necessities at the founding of the mission in 1790 or were a part of the supply furnished by Mexico later is not known. They are of little artistic value or interest. A picture of the town painted by an Indian is also preserved here and is the only evidence of neophyte work remaining at the Mission. The drawing is unusually well done for the time; the coloring in low key but clear, suggests instruction from an artist teacher.

Very few canvasses brought to the northern missions are comparable in quality with the magnificent large Ascension on the stairway of the same rectory. Although not brought from Mexico until the late twenties, it was probably painted long before, the brilliant coloring showing the influence of Titian on the Mexican artist. The canvas is no doubt one of Mexico's masterpieces of its period.

An Assumption of the Mexican school at San Luis Obispo is painted in pigments, the colors without depth. The face and hands are well drawn but the feet are poorly done; the same is true of the angular drapery over the bent right knee; the drawing of serpent and moon are archaic. In con-



Stone carving of the Virgin of Guadalupe over door at Presidio Church,  
Monterey, California.



trast to this canvas, there is a Madonna and Child of excellent color suggesting Murillo but Raphael-esque in composition. In a Crucifixion with the Magdalen, while the drawing and coloring of the flesh tints of the Christ are unusually fine, the female figure is stiff and uninteresting; another painting of the Magdalen in the Cave is equally poor in technique and color. Of a later period is a saint ascending in glory crowned with flower chaplet, lilies in hand and vivid yellow robe with tunic of red. The coloring is good but not of the same brilliancy and depth as that of the Madonna canvas. A good copy of Cabrera's Lady of Guadalupe hangs within the chancel. All of these canvasses are of the Mexican school, but the twelve very old stations of the cross may be of either Spanish or Mexican origin.

On the left side of the chancel space at Santa Inés there is a very interesting old painting of St. John, showing Italian influence in the landscape background. The figure is much better drawn than that of the crude lamb, stiff and awkward. On the same wall an old picture of St. Francis with skull and pen scarcely discernible has a similar background; from its composition, drawing and technique, it suggests the period of Ribera, the "Span-

iard in Italy." It is doubtful whether these paintings are by Mexican artists working from models, or by early Spanish artists of the old world. This church, like many of the others, possesses a fine copy of Cabrera's Our Lady of Guadalupe, but the most interesting representation of the Madonna hangs on the left wall just beyond the rail separating the space beneath the choir loft from that of the main church. The Virgin is pictured with a pleasing youthful countenance and instead of the usual gilt crown or halo, wears a wreath of intermingled lilies and brilliant poppies. A modern note is added by the finger ring, earrings, golden necklace and locket. At frequent intervals on the surface of the blue cloak covering a vivid red robe appear the characters JHS in brilliant gold, designating the emblem of the Jesuits. This golden decoration is found frequently on the paintings of the Virgin by the Spanish Roelas who was commissioned to decorate many of the Spanish churches in his time. It is also a favorite decoration in Mexican paintings of the Virgin. This canvas is not of sufficient merit to be attributed to that artist; the work is uneven, the limbs of the child being much more poorly drawn than the figure of the Virgin.

More interesting still from the historical standpoint is the painting of San Rafael mentioned in the preceding pages. The neophyte artist has drawn a typical Indian face; in the right hand is held a fish, a staff in the left; the figure standing in the water of the brook is furnished with a large pair of exceedingly crude but gauzy wings. The painting in its ancient frame is a revelation of the personality of the aboriginal artist.

Over the stations of the cross (painted in 1642) are the wooden crosses made by the Indians; the stations are in dark green frames of primitive pattern.

With the generosity of Carmel toward the other younger missions and the looting following the secularization, there are very few old paintings and statues remaining. Within the sanctuary is a very old unframed painting of Santa Rosa<sup>1</sup> of Lima, with chaplet of roses; a palm is held in her right hand; from the left is suspended an anchor sustaining a church resting in its flukes. The figure of the saint is represented in a white robe with a long string of beads worn about the throat instead of from the side as the rosary is usually pictured.

On the opposite wall to the left of the altar is a

<sup>1</sup>This may be, however, a representation of Saint Agnes.

painting of the Savior holding an open book. This canvas is inferior in coloring and technique to the Santa Rosa. Another ancient painting in the sacristy is the St. Peter represented with the keys in his right hand and a miniature church in his left. The drapery is very crudely done, but the face is well painted in comparison.

On the tabernacle door at Mission Dolores is a beautiful old painting of the Italian school, representing the Savior blessing the bread which He holds in His hands; on the table immediately before Him, stands the tall silver chalice containing the wine.

Two other small paintings in oval frames are placed on brackets on corresponding sides of the large figure of St. Michael above the Crucifixion over the tabernacle. The one on the right, labeled "Coat of Arms" portrays the bare arm and clenched hand of a soldier protecting or supporting the cross which forms the background of the picture. The painting on the left is a faded representation of a Spanish cross.

At Mission San José there are six large canvasses of special merit and strangely enough of almost uniform size. An equestrian figure of St. George is well drawn but the horse is much out of proportion;

a Magdalen in the Cave of excellent drawing and coloring; a St. Francis receiving the stigmata; but perhaps the finest canvas is the one representing Innocent III before his elevation to the papacy. There is also a Holy Family and a Virgin and Child. The latter canvas representing the Virgin in a brilliant blue robe, decorated profusely with the golden emblem of the Jesuits, is of the Mexican school.

The original copper baptismal font is still in use in the modern church. Festoons of gold and rose color and the gold green and red decoration of both font and pedestal still retain their original brilliancy.

On the walls of the Southwest Museum in Los Angeles are many paintings that were once the property of various California missions. Among them is Our Lady of the Seven Sorrows which although not possessing any inherent value in itself has an interesting historical association with California. As stated previously, when Fr. Junípero Serra started on his overland journey from Mexico to establish the missions, he took with him chalices, crucifixes, candlesticks and various gold and silver vessels which might be easily carried to be used in the celebration of the Mass. The paintings, statu-

ary, processional crosses and heavier material were sent by the water expedition on the pilot boat *San José* which set out at the same time.

The painting of Our Lady of the Seven Sorrows, Fr. Palou (biographer of Fr. Serra) says in the *Noticias* (p. 47) was brought on that ship,<sup>1</sup> but its preceding history is unknown; however, from the texture of the canvas and the technique it is undoubtedly a Spanish painting of the seventeenth century. This is the picture which Fr. Palou says in his *Life of Serra* (p. 130) was held up before the band of Indians August 1774, when they attempted to prevent the padre from establishing the Mission San Gabriel, a few miles south of the present site. When they beheld the picture the Indians, throwing down their bows and arrows, flung themselves on the earth in adoration before it. The painting is supposed to have been one of the gifts sent to Mexico from Spain and afterward sent north on the *San José* at the time of the Serra expedition. It was placed in the San Gabriel Mission but was lost in the pillaging after the secularization in 1834, recovered later by the pastor and afterward fell into the possession of the person from whom it was purchased for the Museum.

<sup>1</sup>*Out West*, September, 1904, Charles Lummis.

A St. Anthony brought from San Juan Capistrano, much more valuable intrinsically than the Lady of Sorrows, was probably painted in the period when "burgomasters and princes had their pictures painted in the resemblance of a holy man" since it is evidently the portrait of a very young missionary. It is said to have been done by a Spanish artist.

Another St. Anthony, from San Miguel, is a beautiful sketch painted in the early seventeenth century. A large canvas of Mary Magdalen renouncing the world (probably by some Spanish artist late in the seventeenth century) was brought from San Antonio de Padua. There is also a very fine St. Cecilia; the technique is of the same century but unfortunately executed in such poor medium that the flaking of the colors prevents critical study.

The fact that the European masters left their canvasses unsigned and that this custom was followed by Mexican artists with the exception of Echave and a few others, made it exceedingly difficult to distinguish the painting of a master from that of an exceptionally brilliant pupil, leading as well to confusion of Old and New World work; but in the case of the exquisite canvas the Ma-

donna of the Ring, in this collection the genuineness of the canvas is attested by the signature of the artist Palomino (1653-1726) which would place the date probably in the seventeenth century. The composition is unusual, since the head and one shoulder only of both the Virgin and the Infant are shown in the picture. The Virgin and Child are both of the Spanish type; the technique suggests the Murillo school although a garland of flowers surrounding the composition points to a Flemish influence. The garland, however, may have been added later.

Spanish artists working in Mexico and artists of the old Mexican school are represented in the collection also. The large canvas, *Martyrdom of St. John of Nepomuk* (1675), is a classic, showing unmistakably the influence of Murillo. How it came to California is unknown but it is said that at one time it hung in the private chapel of a famous southern California family not far from the city of Los Angeles.

Many of the paintings in this collection as well as those at San Gabriel show influence of French, German or Italian schools.

SCULPTURES

In several of the mission churches relics of the old wooden statuary are still preserved. Much of it, products of the early period of ecclesiastical wood-carving in Spain and Mexico, is realistic in the extreme, the medieval touch being more strongly emphasized perhaps because of the nature of the medium and the difficulty of the sculptor to render in wood the delicacy and grace imparted by marble. Nevertheless many of the figures, though lacking in pleasing qualities, still have a charm and dignity of their own.

Among the ruins of Serra's chapel (1776) at San Juan Capistrano, a fragment of an interesting old figure probably thrown down in the earthquake (1812) which destroyed the building, reveals the method employed by the ancient figure carver in wood. The original work evidently consisted of sections held together by wooden pegs, the whole covered with a cotton fabric, afterward an exterior coat of stucco or plaster was applied and finally the completed figure was colored by the artist.

Picked up from amidst the dust of the broken sculpture at the same place an exquisite head and a hand give evidence of the beauty of some of these wooden statues at this mission, but perhaps the

most distinctive feature of the statuary at San Juan Capistrano is the delicate rendering of drapery. The robe of the San Juan figure itself is beautifully cut; the ornamented outer garment drawn in a flare from the extended right arm, held close to the body in graceful folds against the book which is carried in the left hand, in comparison with other work is classic in treatment. This figure is on one of the side altars.

Another figure of San Juan with sword and bearing a banner is not so well executed. St. Dominic with rosary in his hand is excellent in color; but the most beautiful of the statuary is a little Madonna and Child on the right wall of the sanctuary. The Virgin and St. Mary Magdelene holding the nails of the Cross are both medieval in conception but well carved.

At the monastery of San Juan Bautista is the beautiful St. John life-size (which stood originally above the altar) perfectly preserved with the exception of a missing finger. The carving of the teeth, of the veins and muscles of neck, arms, hands, and feet is marvelous;<sup>1</sup> the coloring also is exquisite. The figure is accompanied by the figure

<sup>1</sup>Probably either by the artist himself or a student of the school of the Mexican Zacarias Cora, famed for his knowledge of anatomy and for his delineation of muscles and veins.

of a saint also life-size, but not so well developed. A brilliant green and gilt robe and tunic of red on one of the unidentified figures are as vivid perhaps as when the work was first completed. A St. Paschal in Franciscan garb is wonderfully modeled, the flesh tints of hands and face unusually fine. St. Francis of Asís in brown robe and girdle, the edges of the robe outlined in gilt embroidery; a white-robed figure of St. John with wooden staff and open book, the edge of the black tunic also relieved by ornamental gilt tracery; a St. Isadore of Portugal with the sheaf of wheat in his hand; a beautiful, tender St. Anthony holding an exquisitely modeled Infant and a number of figures of saints seemingly in civilian attire are all undoubtedly of Spanish origin. One of the masterpieces of wood-carving is an artistic figure of the Christ just as it was removed from the Cross, lacking the unpleasant medieval touch usually depicted at that period in the Christ countenance. A Madonna with tall silver crown, purple drapery edged with gold, and a blue gown, is gorgeous in color but inferior in carving, as is also that of the clothed Infant in her arms. Another interesting relic at this mission is the large mass-book of gilded wood carved from a single block; this, with the various

missal-stands, processional crosses, wooden canelabra chairs and old carved cases decorated in color are sincere examples at least of the mission-period craftsman's skill. One of the remnants of the generosity of either New or Old Spain is the large lantern that held the light in front of the altar in the old church. It is a rare instance of beautiful *repoussé* work.

The early carved wooden figure as found in the California missions corresponded to the primitive type of Byzantine art in having only head and hands sculptured, the unfinished body and feet being concealed in drapery of cloth, silk, or sometimes stiffened leather. An advance in later work was marked by the absence of all textiles when the robes and figure were entirely carved in wood. For obvious reasons in their sculptures and paintings the realistic quality would predominate in the crude work of the neophytes. James suggests the draped statues were probably made by the Indians under the direction of the padres and the imported work was carved throughout ready for placing in position. A combination of the two types is to be found in the St. Anthony and Infant at San Luis Obispo; in this case the larger figure, wholly carved, the brown robe covered with gilt leaves, carries a

sheaf of artificial lilies, while the Infant is clothed in a white cotton dress with elaborate Mexican needle work.

In the same church a youthful figure fully carved of St. Luis the Bishop with mitre and robed in ecclesiastical garments stands on a pedestal over the main altar; on one side of the altar is a Virgin, and on the other a St. Joseph and Infant, also carved throughout, but of mediocre quality; an exceedingly realistic crucifix, the corpus bathed in streams of blood, is hung to the left of the altar.

A still more unpleasing example of the same subject forms the main centerpiece affixed to the wall over the left altar at San Buenaventura, the head crowned with thorns, the attenuated arm muscles and the wounded knees literally covered with congealed blood. Another draped figure at the same church is a tall Mater Dolorosa with a brilliant halo and a long lace drapery stretched across her extended arms (an anachronism, since the cloth is supposed to be the linen wrapping for the body after its descent from the cross). A large male figure also draped balances that of the Virgin on the left; in each case only heads and hands are carved. An old figure of St. Bonaventure with crown of red and gold and carved throughout

stands on the main altar and on the right altar a most militant and unusual male (St. Michael?) with spear and glory affixed to back of head by brass spikes; black boots with red tops add to the military note. This statue is flanked on each side by figures of saints, one in brown and one in white robe. On the opposite altar, the same balanced effect is given by two figures correspondingly robed and placed.

One of the best examples of this primitive type is the draped statue of the Mater Dolorosa preserved behind glass in the sanctuary of the Presidio church at Monterey. The figure, four feet high, is clothed in dark brown robe entirely covering the feet and outstretched hands. A gilded halo seems at variance with the modern robing of the figure, but the rude if rather expressionless face suggests native work.

A strange contrast to the usual conventional draped statue of the mission period is the large figure of the Ecce Homo, for some time housed in the Orphanage at Mission San José, but at present in the monastery of the old mission at the same place. This figure has both hands and feet carved and also portions of the feet visible beneath the tattered red robe which conceals the unsculptured body. Across the back, a purple silk drapery ex-

tends from the shoulders to the hem of the cashmere garment replacing the original silken robe. The knotted white silken cord, the girdle of St. Francis, holds the robe close to the figure and, simulating the bonds of Christ, binds the hands crossed in front. These hands are remarkable for the fact, that, although sculptured short and broad as though accustomed to manual labor, instead of the slender tapering fingers usually ascribed to the Savior, they are exceedingly well formed and possess a pathetic quality not expressed in other representations. Parted lips disclose teeth so life-like in appearance that the observer might readily give credence to the story of their human origin. The suggestion of the *Ecce Homo* is carried out by the realistic crown of thorns upon the head. Notwithstanding the fact that the flesh tints are but crude pigments laid on in rough strokes over the wood and the carving lacks the delicacy which characterizes the smoother technique of mission sculpture of less merit, the sculptor has caught the Christ portrait and put into the round the pity and tenderness as well as the agony that other artists have expressed on canvas. It is the most exquisite in feeling of the existing mission sculptures, except perhaps the St. John of San Juan Bautista.

At Mission San José there is also a St. Bonaventure in wood, with carved robe, but having a cape of deer hide stiffened in the required shape. The smooth flesh tints are put on in form of a wash, but the face is of the conventional type expressed in the *Ecce Homo*.

The massive St. Michael over the main altar at San Miguel is one of the most interesting of the fully carved statues. The figure six feet high stands on a crudely made bracket of native work, the Scales of Justice held in the right hand and a sword with Latin inscription "Quis ut Deus" (Who-as-God) on the blade in the left; the work is rendered more impressive by a large painting of the All-Seeing Eye set in the center of a fan-like representation of the rays of the sun, on the wall above the head. Two other fully carved figures, a St. Francis and a St. Anthony, both in brown robes with gilt oak leaves, are of indifferent merit. The Infant held by St. Anthony is of the Byzantine type, as is also the high-crowned statue of the Madonna at Santa Barbara. In both instances the Child is out of proportion and resembles a little old man.

In the relic room at Santa Barbara both figures of a St. Anthony and Child are unusually well carved, especially that of the saint, in which the

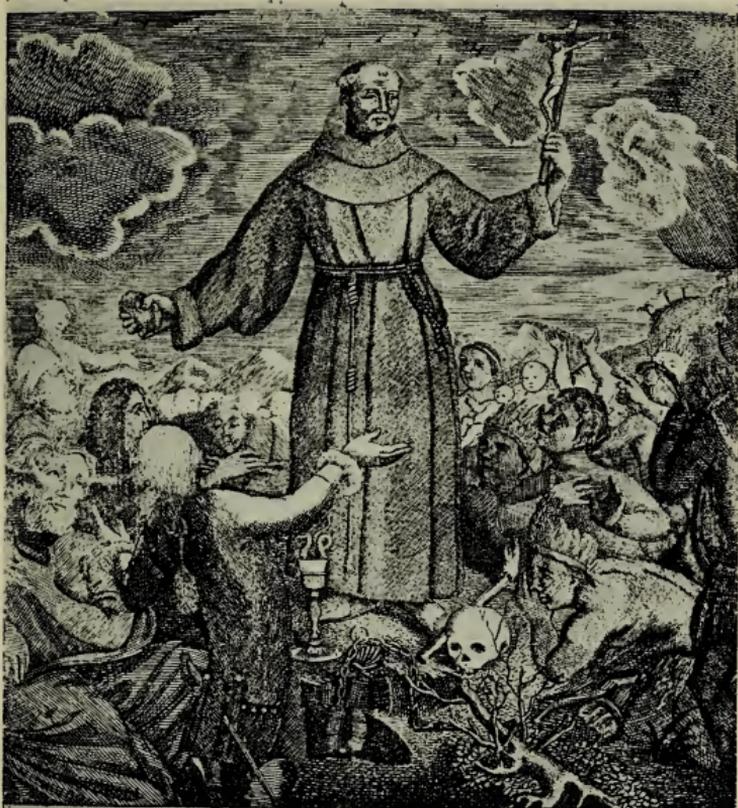
spiritual and tender qualities of the face are charmingly represented. Here are also the three archangels: St. Raphael, the cross on his breast, the fish under his foot, symbol of the guardianship of Tobias; St. Michael with breastplate but without the sword, a militant though younger and much smaller figure than that at San Miguel; San Gabriel with eyes uplifted, his robe decorated with stars and moon significant of his message of the Incarnation to the Virgin; buskins and decorated raiment of the three figures are of the same general style, and, in contrast to the impression given by the ordinary wooden statuary, the posture of the body and the gesture by both hands uplifted give to each figure an expression of animation and force.

Over the altar at Santa Clara there is a large St. Michael fully carved but not so impressive as the San Miguel figure. In the relic room are an elder St. John, with open book, and a figure supposed to be St. Stephen with the martyr's palm in his outstretched hand. The garments of the statue appear more suited to a courtier than to a martyred saint; indeed the figure might readily be mistaken for one of the Mexican viceroys if the identity were not suggested by the martyr's symbol.

Within the sacristy, directly over the altar on an

elaborately decorated bracket at Santa Inés Mission is a statue four feet high of the saint herself, holding a lamb in the left hand and the martyr's palm in the right. The figure is carved throughout; on the head a small crown or halo, the body clothed in a simple girlish robe confined at the waist by a belt or cord. The simplicity of attire is not to be attributed to the youthfulness of the subject, however, since the countenance, pleasing as it is, belongs to a mature woman rather than to a maiden just entering her teens when her martyrdom occurred.

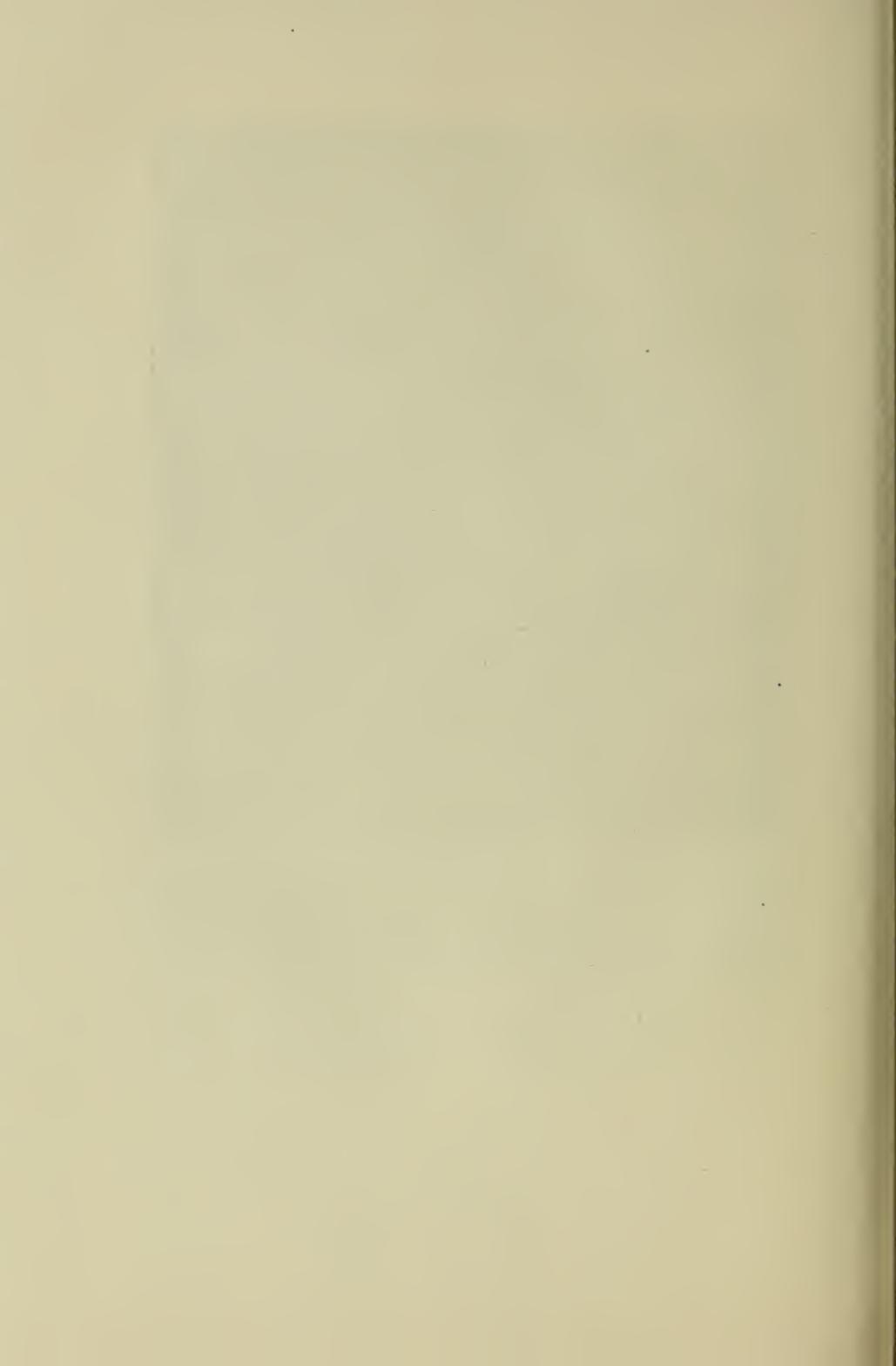
This mission also possesses a St. Anthony and Child unique in that the face of the saint is much darker than the saints are usually represented. This was no doubt an effort to reach the untutored savage mind, a means employed in the earliest mission period. The Child, an exquisite figure, is of more recent date, as may be judged from the technique and by the crude fastening by a nail to the side; the space between the body of the saint and the curved fingers of the extended hand was evidently occupied by a larger figure of the Child as the present fails to fill it. Another indication of the difference in periods of sculpture is seen in the ancient time-worn exposed surface of broken parts



**V. R. DEL V. P. F. JUNIPERO SERRA**

*hijo de la S.<sup>a</sup> Prov. de N. P. de Fran.<sup>a</sup> de la Isla de Mallorca. D. y Exc.<sup>o</sup> de Theol.<sup>a</sup> Comis.<sup>o</sup> del S.<sup>o</sup> Ofi.<sup>o</sup> Abis.<sup>o</sup>  
 del Ap.<sup>o</sup> Col.<sup>o</sup> de S.<sup>a</sup> Fern.<sup>o</sup> de los Re.<sup>o</sup>s. Fund.<sup>o</sup> y Presid.<sup>o</sup> de las Misi.<sup>o</sup> de la Calif.<sup>a</sup> Septentr.<sup>o</sup> — Mu.<sup>o</sup>rio  
 con gr.<sup>o</sup> fama de sant.<sup>o</sup> en la Misi.<sup>o</sup> de S. Carlos del P.<sup>o</sup> del N.<sup>o</sup> Monte-Rey a 2 S. de Ag.<sup>o</sup> de 1782.  
 de edad de 70. a. D. M. A. di. habi.<sup>o</sup> gastado la mi.<sup>o</sup> de su vida en el exerc.<sup>o</sup> de Mision.<sup>o</sup> Apost.<sup>o</sup>*

Frontispiece of the *Vida y Apostólicas Tareas del Venerable Padre Fray Junipero Serra*.



of the larger figure and the obviously fresher surface exposed in the broken foot of the Child. The statue is fully carved throughout. A large golden halo extends about the Infant's face, instead of in the usual fashion back or around the head. The flesh coloring of the Child is exquisite.

Another statue, the Madonna and Child, modeled after the Murillo Conception (the figure of the Virgin standing within the curve of the crescent moon), is too delicately carved for neophyte work.

Santa Inés is also fortunate in having the original tabernacle made by the neophytes still in use and placed as it was in the early mission period. It is in shell form and harmonizes in coloring with the greens and blues of the original altar and chancel decoration. Beautifully carved heads of cherubs ornamented pedestals placed on each side of the altar. A Christ Child and a fully carved St. Joseph are the only figures that remain.

Occasionally the Child is sculptured alone, as in the statuettes in the relic room of Our Lady of the Angels, Los Angeles, at Carmel, at Santa Clara, and at Santa Barbara. The figures are of the same type, large head and an unproportioned body clothed in cotton or lace dress; the Child, owing to the influence of the Byzantine characteristics, ap-

parently much older than the artist intended to portray. It may possibly have been an endeavor in some cases to represent Jesus as He appeared before the Doctors in the Temple.

At San Gabriel the most impressive of the five statues in the gilded niches above the main altar is the figure with outstretched wings of the archangel from whom the mission takes its name. Below in the place of honor amidst the lilies of the altar, stands a draped figure of the Virgin holding in her right hand a sheaf of lilies, typifying the Immaculate Conception. The face and head of each of these two figures are much better carved than those of the other saints. In the museum are two small silver statues of the seventeenth century period and an Immaculate Conception in solid ivory, indisputable remnants of the generosity of either Old or New Spain.

San Diego being an entire ruin there is nothing to be found there of decorative material except two ancient wooden statuettes of the Christ which are at present at the school near the mission site and which originally may have been part of the mission equipment. The figures are one and a half feet high; one fully carved Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane is a kneeling figure with clasped

hands and fervent gaze turned heavenward; the other represents Him immediately after the scourging by the soldiers, a braided crown of thorns carved around the pathetic head. The cloak which the jeering soldiers placed over his shoulders is made of a coarse fabric painted red, but, in this instance, the use of the drapery is not a device to cover uncarved portions of the form; the wounded limbs are represented unclad beyond the knees exposing the cruel stripes of the lash. The whole figure expresses intense suffering and dejection.

Four draped statues originally at San Antonio, a Saint Raymond probably the least interesting; the Virgin, the hands missing, a halo of golden stars behind the head extending to the shoulders; a St. Francis with the double cord and showing the stigmata on his uplifted hand, and a St. Anthony—are of varying artistic value. The latter, a cherished possession of two still faithful members of the older congregation, is carried by them to the mission church at the annual celebration of the mass.

Two quaint old heads with Moslem turbans carved in weather-beaten oak and preserved in a private collection at Jolon are said to have been set on posts at the entrance to San Antonio. They were

probably figureheads of foreign vessels utilized for decoration.

At Mission Dolores, the original statues, thirteen in number, fully carved in wood, still stand in their respective niches of the reredos and side altars. In each instance the pedestal is of unusual size and more elaborately decorated than in many of the old mission churches. The principal figure over the main altar is a large St. Michael, staff in left hand and uplifted sword in the right. A green tunic elaborately decorated in gilt flowers, a red drapery over the shoulders, and gilded boots complete the brilliant costume of the soldier of the cross. On the right of this figure stands a St. John also brilliantly costumed, and a smaller unnamed statue; on the left a St. Clare in brown robe, holding a rosary, and beyond, a small but well carved St. Francis showing the stigmata. Below to the right of the tabernacle is a crowned figure, of mediocre quality, of the Virgin; on the left stands a beautifully carved Mater Dolorosa. More interesting still is the central figure over one of the side altars, St. Anthony, a sheaf of lilies in the right hand, the left supporting an open volume upon which rests the figure of the kneeling Child, not the Infant usually portrayed with this saint, but an older Child, modeled

after the Byzantine type and sometimes sculptured alone. A kneeling San Juan Capistrano and a St. Joseph fill the side niches. On the opposite altar, San Luis Rey with cross and uplifted sword and St. Bonaventure with open book are on the right and left respectively of the central figure of St. Joseph. In the right hand of the latter is borne a sheaf of lilies and in the left an Infant unproportioned to the size of the larger figure. In all except the Mater Dolorosa, the St. Clare and the San Luis Rey a brilliant note is added by the vivid coloring of the robes; in the San Luis Rey the dark armor is indifferently rendered in the carved wood. In every figure the carving and coloring of the hands far surpass that of the heads and faces.

In one of the isolated buildings near the church at Santa Cruz are several old statues and remnants, from the original mission. A fully carved St. Michael and an unusual figure of the Virgin intended for changeable vestments are still in a good state of preservation. The latter is really a large doll approaching life-size, with movable joints permitting the figure to be placed in various attitudes. Although received at the same time as the other statuary, it is evidently of a later period. A fine figure of St. Anthony with head missing and a St.

Michael still remain. While a number of pictures, statues, and other altar decorations were borrowed from other missions in the beginning, a supply was promised by the Viceroy and, without doubt, those remaining are from the number sent.

The story of the padres' effort to impress the Indian with the fear of punishment after death is shown by an old weather-beaten carving which has been recently restored to the Carmel Mission.<sup>1</sup> The crude carving, originally nailed to the door of the church, is made from a piece of California oak five inches thick and about three and a half feet long. It represents a female figure in Purgatory posed in the midst of flaming tongues of fire. It is evidently native work.

In the sanctuary at Carmel there is also an ancient wooden statue of the Virgin probably of the same period of the above carving. This figure, lacking in color as though exposed to the elements for a long time, was placed probably in the vacant niche on the outside south wall. The carving is exceedingly crude, the arms being merely suggested and hands and toes the only parts carved. A glory envelops the entire upper portion of the figure.

At Carmel, of the many beautiful statues brought

<sup>1</sup>The carving was restored to Carmel by Mr. J. K. Oliver who obtained it from an Indian. The latter regarded it as his mascot.



Portrait taken from a painting made over a year after his death.  
Fanciful portrait of Father Serra; until recently  
supposed to be genuine.



from Spain, one of the finest (brought in 1770) is of the Virgin, possibly, from the winged heads of cherubs at her feet, representing the Assumption. The figure is fully carved; bracelets ornament the wrists, but the halo or crown is missing. The exquisiteness of the figure and delicacy of carving shown in the cherub heads are evidence of Spanish origin. The St. Joseph (formerly holding the Infant), the San Carlos and the Virgin, were all brought from Spain in 1770 and originally formed the group back of the altar.

The instruction of the padres and the readiness of the California Indian to respond to artistic training is evidenced in the construction of fountains at Santa Barbara, at San Fernando, and at San Juan Capistrano; the decorated pottery vases still in use in the gardens of the latter; in the carved doorways with nail heads covered by diamond-shaped inlays; ornamented keystone niches or shrines over the doorways; in the artistic treatment of old vestment cases, altar rails and choir lofts; in the working in brass, iron, leather, etc. For obvious reasons this phase of neophyte culture could not be included in the present chapter, which has confined itself to dealing with paintings and sculpture of the mission period.

PORTRAITS,  
FALSE AND TRUE, OF FATHER  
JUNIPERO SERRA

PERHAPS no other name associated with the early history of the western coast is better known or more revered than that of Father Junípero Serra and yet until recently the people of California as well as others labored under a misconception regarding the authentic portrait of the celebrated Franciscan.

To readers of California history and literature, the small volume entitled "Relación de la Vida y Apostólicas Tareas del Venerable Padre Fray Junipero Serra" (The Life and Apostolic Labors of Father Junipero Serra) is of especial interest, since it is considered authoritative in all matters of California history previous to that date, and is probably the first book written<sup>1</sup> in the state. The manuscript was prepared by Father Francisco Palou, friend of Father Serra, in 1785 "among the heathen surroundings of the Port of San Francisco,

<sup>1</sup>The first book printed in California, "California As It Is and As It May Be," was issued in 1849. Mr. Geo. Cole suggests from the date that the *Relacion* is the first *written* production.

in that new mission, the most northerly of New California, where I had no access to books or the society of learned men whom I might have consulted," the author naively asserts in his prologue. The same year Father Palou took the manuscript to the City of Mexico, where it was published in 1787.

It is not the literary nor the historical interest, however, but the frontispiece of the book which attracts the attention of the student of the history of art on the Pacific Coast, since this plate was supposed for many years to be the first portrait published of Father Serra.<sup>1</sup> This illustration is a singular combination of the realistic and the mystical;<sup>2</sup> it portrays him standing on a low mound preaching to a congregation kneeling at his feet; on one side is the civilized portion of his flock, courtiers, soldiers, women and children; on the other side, the savage, braves and squaws with their papooses; all the attendants are gazing upward into the wrapt face of the inspired preacher. In his left hand he holds an uplifted crucifix and

<sup>1</sup>This topic was first discussed by Mr. George Cole in a paper on "California Missions and Mission Pictures," published in *News Notes of California Libraries*, July, 1910.

<sup>2</sup>Description from the plate at the Bancroft Library, University of California.

in his right, the large stone with which he mercilessly pounded his breast immediately after he had delivered his sermon. At his feet lies the chain with which he scourged himself in imitation of San Francisco Solano, Apostle of Peru;<sup>1</sup> other symbolic designs are pictured scattered on the mound.

Previous to 1860 there was no portrait of Serra known to the general public until the appearance of the woodcut in Hutchings' *California Magazine* in May of that year. This portrait, even at the present time popularly supposed to be authentic, proved to be a copy of the head and bust of Serra from an idealized painting which hung for many years in the San Carlos Academy in the City of Mexico. Unfortunately the painting disappeared about ten years ago and all efforts to trace it are so far unavailing. The canvas was painted by a Mexican artist some time after Father Serra's death and no doubt at the suggestion of Father Palou in a letter dated September 6, 1784, to Guardian Juan Sancho of the College of San Fernando describing the last hours of Serra. Palou desires to commemorate the receiving of the Sacrament by Serra the day previous to his death and asks that the latter be represented "on his

<sup>1</sup>*Franciscans in California*, Father Zephyrin Engelhardt.

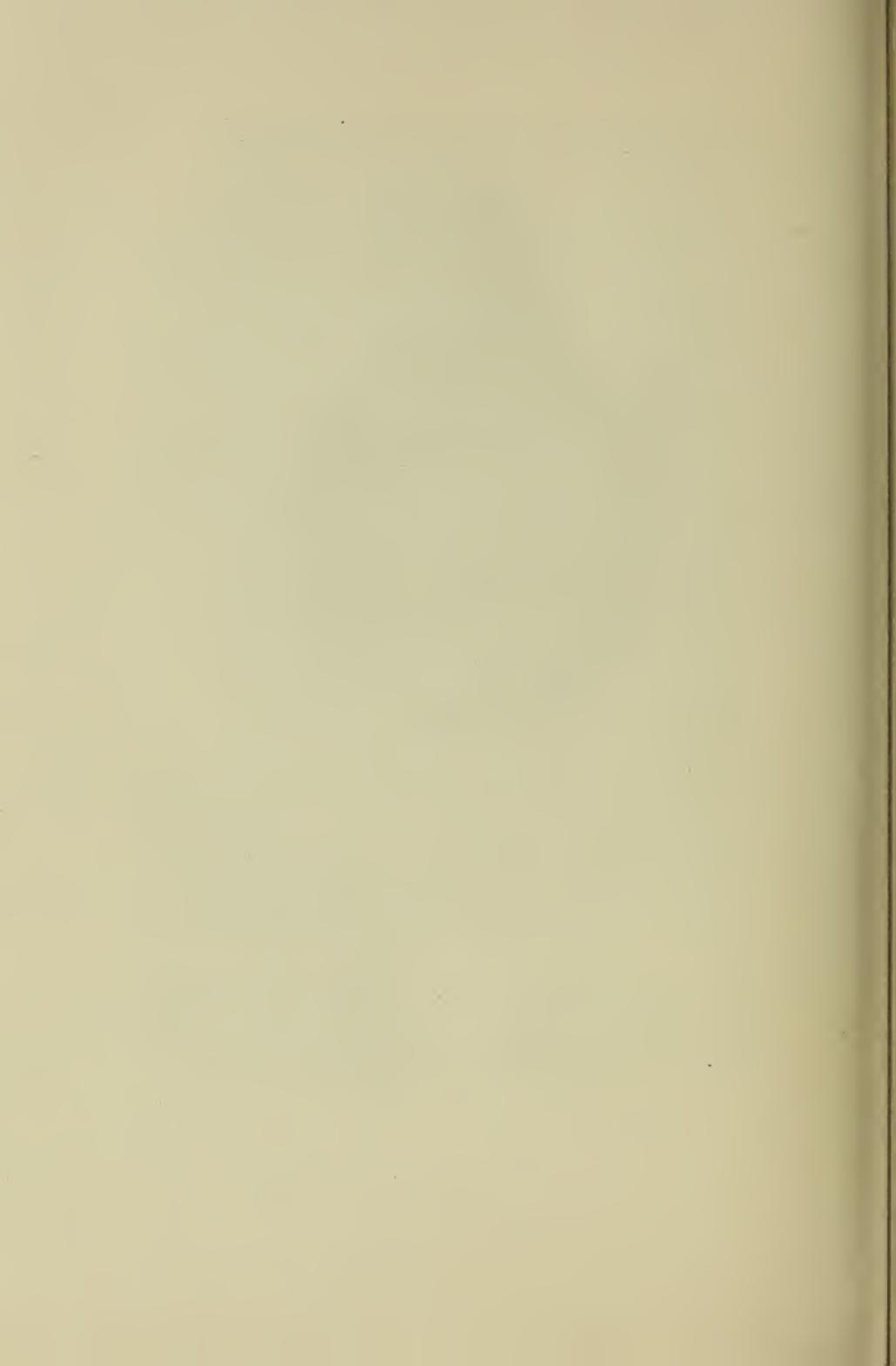


*Fr. Junipero Serra*

*From the real portrait of Serra*

**FR. JUNIPERO SERRA**

Founder of the California Missions, was born at Petra on Island of Mallorca, off the coast of Spain on November 24, 1713, came to California in 1769. Died at Mission San Carlos Borromeo (Carmel) on August 28, 1784. Aged 70 years, 9 months, 21 days. He is buried on the right of the altar of the Mission Church at Carmel. From the real portrait of Serra.



knees before the altar surrounded by Indians and by cuirassed soldiers, all bearing candles.”<sup>1</sup> In his letter of February 6, of the next year, Sancho informed Father Palou that the portrait was being painted at Bishop Verger’s expense.<sup>2</sup>

The painting, seven by nine feet, pictures the moment when Father Palou, on the steps of the altar in the church of San Calos, Carmel, with the holy wafer held reverently before him, is advancing to administer the Sacrament to Father Serra kneeling at the altar. Thus the lifted head and wrapt expression may be accounted for in the reproduction of the idealized portraits of Serra which have appeared from time to time. Painted from life, the representation of Father Palou in this canvas is consequently an exact portrait. The figure of Serra is clothed in Franciscan robe, the stole and the napkin in his uplifted hands both showing plainly the oak-leaf pattern of the fabric; the stole and cape worn by Father Palou are of the same fabric; the oak-leaf pattern is repeated even in the body of the rug which covers the altar steps. Proceeding upward from the lips of Serra in the direction of the Host, printed in

<sup>1</sup>*California Under Spain and Mexico*, Irving B. Richman.

<sup>2</sup>Verger was originally Guardian of San Fernando; later, Bishop of Linares.

reversed capitals, is the Latin verse, "Tantum ergo Sacramentum" being chanted by the choir at that moment.

Above the altar on a pedestal stands a figure of the Virgin and Child but in the indistinctness of the photograph from which this description is taken nothing is visible of the altar furnishings except the six large lighted candles and candlesticks and the silken square covering the chalice decorated with a cross. Although the standing figure of the administering priest, Father Palou, apparently occupies the center of artistic interest, nevertheless the artist has centered the interest of the observer on the kneeling figure of Father Serra by placing immediately behind him but two figures, an acolyte with an uplifted bell proclaiming the solemn moment and a tonsured priest in Franciscan garments. On the opposite side in contrast, the group of six Indians kneeling, crowded together, and two officials standing immediately behind give the idea of mass, offering no prominence to any single individual. Each figure except Serra, the acolyte, and Palou bears a lighted candle, carrying out the request in the letter to Juan Sancho. Even in the indistinctness of the shadow, reverence and adoration are discernible

in the faces of the Spanish worshippers, an expression wholly absent from the countenances of the Indians. Below the painting is a legend of nine lines in Spanish relating to the work and death of Serra.<sup>1</sup>

The only authentic portrait of Father Serra was painted probably in Mexico during his visit there in 1773, and belonged to the College of San Fernando where it remained until transferred to the National Museum; after hanging in that building for some time, it, too, like the canvas mentioned above, unfortunately disappeared. In the first volume of *Missions and Missionaries of California* there is a fine reproduction from a photograph of the original painting which Dr. Nicolas Leon, formerly of the National Museum, assured Father Englehardt was a genuine portrait of Father Serra. Facing an article on his work, *La Ilustración*, a

<sup>1</sup>At the Exposition Building, Los Angeles, the writer saw (May, 1918) a photograph of the original in this canvas. On the back of the photograph there is a tracing in ink over the pencilled words "H. H. to A. F. Coronel, May 13, 1882. Junipero Serra." Between the date and Serra's name the sentence apparently by the same writer "Do not sell this;" which request although adhered to may not have prohibited the photograph's being loaned for reproduction. The words "Junipero Serra" also in pencil are written below the picture. The cabinet corresponds exactly with the head of Serra as shown in a photograph, an enlargement (by Mr. Frank Miller of the Mission Inn, Riverside) from a small photograph of the original painting a short time before it disappeared from the Museum. The description of the painting as given above is from the enlargement in the author's possession.

Mexican magazine, published in 1855 an excellent print of the seated half-length figure, the head an exact reproduction from the same source as the head in Father Palou's book—evidently the original at the Museum.

There are several points of resemblance in the portrait of the *Relación Historica* and in the one now recognized as the genuine portrait. The upper parts of the robes are identical, the contours of head and face are similar and the thick lock of hair directly over the forehead is the same in each, unlike other portraits of missionary fathers.

Father Palou was Guardian of the church of San Fernando before his visit to the northern mission of St. Francis and it is probable that the portrait in the *Relación* may have been copied from the original painting since at that time the portrait was at the College of San Fernando and accessible to any artist who might be commissioned to copy it.



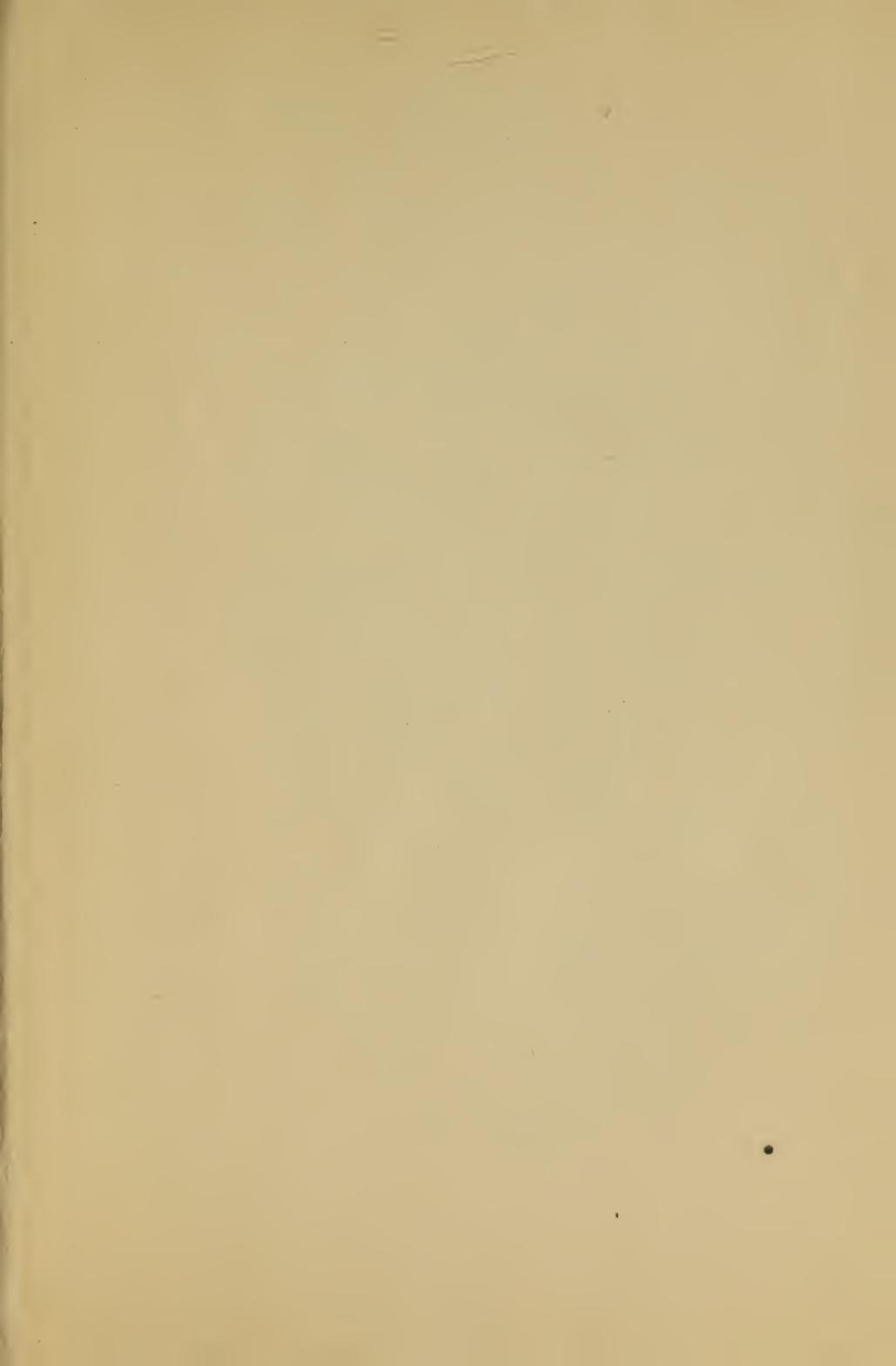
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