

RICHARD HENRY DANA, JR.
1835-36

By the 1820s, aggressive fur hunting had nearly exterminated the sea otters and seals once plentiful along the California coast. Foreign interest then turned to the region's 400,000 head of cattle—between 1822 and 1848, California exported more than a million hides and 7,000 pounds of tallow (rendered from cow carcasses). Most of this trade was conducted by New England merchants who sold the hides to Bostonian tanneries and leather-goods factories and the tallow to South American candle and soap factories. The Yankee ships returned from New England filled with manufactured goods to sell in California, turning into “floating department stores” hawking everything from shoes, furniture, liquor, and jewelry to fireworks, pianos, and fine silk handkerchiefs. Mexican officials, whose main source of revenue came from fat tariffs, encouraged the trade. In 1822 Bostonian William A. Gale set up shop in Monterey and spread the word that his firm, Bryant and Sturgis, was willing to pay two dollars a hide. By outbidding all British and Russian competitors, Bryant and Sturgis enjoyed a near-monopoly on the California hide-and-tallow trade for the next twenty years.

Possessing forced labor and abundant land, California's twenty-one missions dominated the production of hides and tallow

through 1834. On August 9 of that year, governor José Figueroa, of partial Indian descent himself, issued a proclamation that began the secularization of the missions and turned half of all mission property over to the neophytes. The Franciscans had feared this day ever since Mexico had won its independence in 1821 and adopted a constitution based on republican ideals. There was widespread resentment among *gente de razón* toward the missions for their wealth and mistreatment of the Indians, a resentment laced with a healthy dose of self-interest, to be sure.

The disassembling of the mission system opened the door for approximately 700 private land grants, most for about 15,000 acres but some exceeding 200,000. This led to the rise of California's next dominant institution—the family *rancho*. Located along the coast (along with a few in the Central Valley), the *ranchos* mainly raised cattle for the booming hide-and-tallow trade but also grazed sheep and horses and cultivated grain and wine grapes. Any Californian could petition the governor for a land grant by submitting a hand-drawn *diseño* roughly outlining the dimensions of the desired land. Well-connected families (such as the Vallejos, Alvarados, and Peraltas in the north and the Carillos, de la Guerras, and Picos in the south) could secure grants for each family member, creating an elite class of *rancheros* who controlled hundreds of thousands of prime acreage. Surprisingly, about sixty grants went to women.

Secularization proved to be a mixed blessing for the 18,000 Indians still in the missions. They were freed from the institution that had virtually enslaved them for sixty years, but resuming their old way of life was unthinkable given all the changes wrought by diseases and subjugation. Furthermore, much of their former land was by now inhabited by *rancheros* and their huge cattle herds. Many Indians were never informed that they legally owned mission property, and those who tried to work their land were forcibly bought out by rapacious *gente de razón*. Strangers in their own homeland, most Indians abandoned the missions and found work as *vaqueros* and servants in nearby *ranchos* and towns. A few disappeared into

California's interior, reappearing from time to time to lead raids on *rancho* herds. The mission buildings themselves, looted by Indian and Californio alike, fell into disrepair.

The first Anglo-American residents of California came as traders in the 1820s and settled there permanently, often marrying into local Californio families. The Californians welcomed foreigners into their midst, granting them citizenship and land, provided they naturalized and adopted Catholicism. In return, most Americans derided Californio culture as lazy, wasteful, and immoral. This stemmed from what historian Leonard Pitt has described as “a deep-seated clash of values between the Anglo-American and the Latin-American culture,” involving such elements as “the Protestant's condescension toward Catholicism; the Puritan's dedication to work, now familiarly known as the ‘Protestant Ethic’; the republican's loathing of aristocracy; the Yankee's belief in Manifest Destiny; and the Anglo-Saxon's generalized fear of racial mixture.” Racist scorn of Californio culture trickled back to the East Coast, reinforcing the notion that bountiful California was languishing under Mexican control.

The most widely read description of California was Richard Henry Dana, Jr.'s *Two Years Before the Mast*, a riveting account of the author's experiences onboard a Bryant and Sturgis hide-and-tallow brig in 1835 and 1836. Born in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in 1815, Dana was a sensitive, melancholy child whose mother died when he was seven years old. He enrolled in Harvard at age sixteen but had to withdraw during his junior year when measles left him with raw nerves and weakened eyesight. Instead of embarking on a tour of Europe to regain his health, as was customary for many affluent young men, Dana elected to enlist as a sailor onboard the California-bound *Pilgrim*.

He sailed from Boston in August 1834, rounded Cape Horn, and spent about sixteen months collecting hides up and down the California coast. It was exhausting work—because California had so few harbors, the heavy hides (which would spoil if wet) often had to be loaded by hand into small boats and ferried two or three miles out

to the *Pilgrim*. In contrast to sea captains like Vancouver and Beechey, Dana's concerns were those of the common sailor—namely, seeing the country, avoiding work, and meeting women.

Dana, like most American visitors, disparaged Californios as “an idle, thriftless people” while simultaneously praising the exceptional California landscape, climate, and soil. In a typical passage, he wrote, “Such are the people who inhabit a country embracing four or five hundred miles of sea-coast, with several good harbors; with fine forests to the north; the waters filled with fish, and the plains covered with thousands of herds of cattle; blessed with a climate, that which there can be no better in the world; free from all manner of diseases, whether epidemic or endemic, and with a soil in which corn yields from seventy to eighty fold. In the hands of an enterprising people, what a country this might be!” More than any other work, *Two Years Before the Mast* shaped American attitudes toward distant California.

Dana returned to Boston in September 1836. Now healthy and tanned, he spent the next three years rewriting his sailor's journal at night while attending law school during the day. *Two Years Before the Mast* was published in 1840 and proved to be an immediate and enduring bestseller. Dana's years in California turned out to be the best ones of his life. He married and opened a law office in Boston but continued to wear his hair long and frequent sailors' saloons and brothels, obsessed with memories of freedom and camaraderie onboard the *Pilgrim*. He wrote only one more book, *To Cuba and Back*, his account of an 1859 round-the-world trip. It featured a stop in California where he nostalgically wrote that he was “made for the sea” and that “life on shore is a mistake.” In an 1873 letter to his son, he conceded, “My life has been a failure compared to what I might and ought to have done. My great success—my book—was a boy's work, done before I came to the bar.” In his final years he moved with his wife to Europe and struggled in vain to finish a third book on international law. He died in Rome in 1882. More than a hundred years later, his “boy's work” continues to be hailed as California's first literary classic. This excerpt from Dana's narrative begins

December 4, 1835. Also included is his description of a wedding and *fandango* he attended in Santa Barbara a few weeks later, one of the liveliest—and most positive—portrayals of Californio culture penned by an American during this period.



Richard Henry Dana, Jr. (1815–1882). Courtesy of The Bancroft Library.

RICHARD HENRY DANA, JR.

from *Two Years Before the Mast*

December 4, 1835. Our place of destination had been Monterey, but as we were to the northward of it when the wind hauled ahead, we made a fair wind for San Francisco. This large bay, which lies in latitude $37^{\circ}58'$, was discovered by Sir Francis Drake,¹ and by him represented to be (as indeed it is) a magnificent bay, containing several good harbors, great depth of water, and surrounded by a fertile and finely-wooded country. About thirty miles from the mouth of the bay, and on the southeast side, is a high point upon which the *presidio* is built. Behind this point is the little harbor, or bight, called Yerba Buena, in which trading vessels anchor, and, near it, the Mission of Dolores. There was no other habitation on this side of the bay except a shanty of rough boards put up by a man named Richardson,² who was doing a little trading between the vessels and the Indians. Here, at anchor, and the only vessel, was a brig under Russian colors from Sitka, in Russian America, which had come down to winter and to take in a supply of tallow and grain, great quantities of which latter article are raised in the missions at the head of the bay. The second day after our arrival, we went on board the brig, it being Sunday, as a

¹San Francisco Bay was almost certainly “discovered” not by Drake but by Portolá and his men in 1769; historians continue to debate where Drake actually landed in 1579.

²William A. Richardson (1795–1858), born in England, came to California in 1822 onboard a whaling ship. He stayed on, adopted Catholicism, and married the daughter of Ignacio Martínez, *comandante* of San Francisco *presidio*. In 1835 Richardson founded the town of Yerba Buena at the site of present-day San Francisco’s Grant Avenue between Clay and Washington streets.

matter of curiosity; and there was enough there to gratify it. Though no larger than the *Pilgrim*, she had five or six officers and a crew of between twenty and thirty; and such a stupid and greasy-looking set, I never saw before. Although it was quite comfortable weather, and we had nothing on but straw hats, shirts, and duck trousers and were barefooted, they had, every man of them, doubled-soled boots (coming up to the knees and well-greased), thick woollen trousers, frocks, waistcoats, pea-jackets, woollen caps, and everything in true Novaya Zembla rig; and in the warmest days they made no change. The clothing of one of these men would weigh nearly as much as that of half our crew. They had brutish faces, looked like the antipodes of sailors, and apparently dealt in nothing but grease. They lived upon grease, ate it, drank it, slept in the midst of it, and their clothes were covered with it. To a Russian, grease is the greatest luxury. They looked with greedy eyes upon the tallow-bags as they were taken into the vessel, and, no doubt, would have eaten one up whole, had not the officer kept watch over it. The grease appeared to fill their pores and to come out in their hair and on their faces. It seems as if it were this saturation which makes them stand cold and rain so well. If they were to go into a warm climate, they would melt and die of the scurvy.

The vessel was no better than the crew. Everything was in the oldest and most inconvenient fashion possible: running trusses and lifts on the yards, and large hawser cables, coiled all over the decks, and served and parceled in all directions. The topmasts, top-gallant-masts, and studding-sail booms were nearly black for want of scraping, and the decks would have turned the stomach of a man-of-war's-man. The galley was down in the forecastle; and there the crew lived, in the midst of the steam and grease of the cooking, in a place as hot as an oven, and apparently never cleaned out. Five minutes in the forecastle was enough for us, and we were glad to get into the open air. We made some trade with them, buying Indian

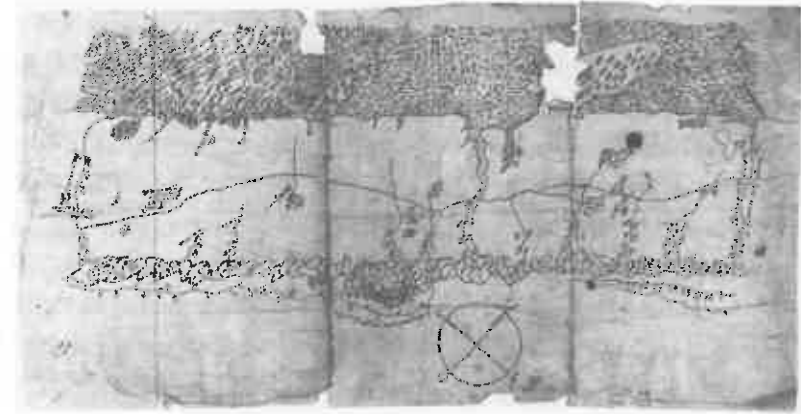
curiosities, of which they had a great number, such as beadwork, feathers of birds, fur moccasins, etc. I purchased a large robe, made of the skins of some animal, dried and sewed nicely together, and covered all over on the outside with thick downy feathers, taken from the breasts of various birds, and arranged with their different colors so as to make a brilliant show.

A few days after our arrival the rainy season set in, and for three weeks, it rained almost every hour without cessation. This was bad for our trade, for the collecting of hides is managed differently in this port from what it is in any other on the coast. The Mission of Dolores, near the anchorage, has no trade at all; but those of San José, Santa Clara, and others situated on the large creeks or rivers that run into the bay, and distant between fifteen and forty miles from the anchorage, do a greater business in hides than any in California. Large boats, or launches, manned by Indians and capable of carrying from five to six hundred hides apiece, are attached to the missions and sent down to the vessels with hides to bring away goods in return. Some of the crews of the vessels are obliged to go and come in the boats to look out for the hides and goods. These are favorite expeditions with the sailors in fine weather; but now, to be gone three or four days—in open boats, in constant rain, without any shelter, and with cold food—was hard service. Two of our men went up to Santa Clara in one of these boats and were gone three days, during all which time they had a constant rain and did not sleep a wink, but passed three long nights walking fore and aft the boat in the open air. When they got on board they were completely exhausted and took a watch below of twelve hours. All the hides, too, that came down in the boats were soaked with water and unfit to put below, so that we were obliged to trice them up to dry, in the intervals of sunshine or wind, upon all parts of the vessel. We got up tricing-lines from the jibboom end to each arm of the foreyard, and thence to the main and cross-jack yard arms. Between the

tops, too, and the mastheads, from the fore to the main swifters, and thence to the mizzen rigging, and in all directions athwartships, tricing-lines were run and strung with hides. The head stays and guys and the spritsail yard were lined, and, having still more, we got out the swinging-booms and strung them and the forward and after guys with hides. The rail, fore and aft, the windlass, capstan, the sides of the ship, and every vacant place on deck were covered with wet hides on the least sign of an interval for drying. Our ship was nothing but a mass of hides, from the cat-harpins to the water's edge, and from the jibboom end to the taffrail.

One cold, rainy evening, about eight o'clock, I received orders to get ready to start for San José at four the next morning, in one of these Indian boats, with four days' provisions. I got my oil-cloth clothes, southwester, and thick boots ready, and turned into my hammock early, determined to get some sleep in advance, as the boat was to be alongside before daybreak. I slept on 'til all hands were called in the morning; for, fortunately for me, the Indians, intentionally or from mistaking their orders, had gone off alone in the night and were far out of sight. Thus I escaped three or four days of very uncomfortable service.

Four of our men, a few days afterwards, went up in one of the quarter-boats to Santa Clara, to carry the agent, and remained out all night in a drenching rain in the small boat, in which there was not room for them to turn 'round; the agent having gone up to the mission and left the men to their fate, making no provision for their accommodation and not even sending them anything to eat. After this they had to pull thirty miles, and when they got on board, were so stiff that they could not come up the gangway ladder. This filled up the measure of the agent's unpopularity, and never after this could he get anything done for him by the crew; and many a delay and vexation, and many a good ducking in the surf, did he get to pay up old scores or "square the yards with the bloody quill-driver."



To request a land grant from the Spanish government, a Californio submitted a *diseño* roughly defining the boundaries of the proposed *rancho*. This *diseño* for Rancho San Antonio in the East Bay was submitted in 1820 by Luís María Peralta (1759-1851). His 46,800 acres of land (more than seventy square miles) extended from San Leandro Creek in the south to El Cerrito Creek in the north. *Courtesy of The Bancroft Library.*

Having collected nearly all the hides that were to be procured, we began our preparations for taking in a supply of wood and water, for both of which San Francisco is the best place on the coast. A small island [Angel Island], about two leagues from the anchorage, called by us "Wood Island," and by the Mexicans "Isla de los Angeles," was covered with trees to the water's edge; and to this two of our crew, who were Kennebec [Maine] men and could handle an axe like a plaything, were sent every morning to cut wood, with two boys to pile it up for them. In about a week they had cut enough to last us a year, and the third mate, with myself and three others, were sent over in a large, schooner-rigged, open launch, which we had hired of the mission, to take in the wood and bring it to the ship....

The next morning a water party was ordered off with all the casks. From this we escaped, having had a pretty good siege with the wooding. The water party was gone three days, during which time they narrowly escaped being carried out to sea and passed one

day on an island, where one of them shot a deer, great numbers of which overrun the islands and hills of San Francisco Bay.

While not off on these wood and water parties or up the rivers to the missions, we had easy times on board the ship. We were moored, stem and stern, within a cable's length of the shore, safe from southeasters, and with little boating to do; and, as it rained nearly all the time, awnings were put over the hatchways and all hands sent down between decks, where we were at work, day after day, picking oakum, until we got enough to calk the ship all over and to last the whole voyage. Then we made a whole suit of gaskets for the voyage home, a pair of wheel-ropes from strips of green hide, great quantities of spun-yarn, and everything else that could be made between decks. It being now midwinter and in high latitude, the nights were very long, so that we were not turned-to until seven in the morning and were obliged to knock off at five in the evening, when we got supper, which gave us nearly three hours before eight bells, at which time the watch was set.

As we had now been about a year on the coast, it was time to think of the voyage home; and, knowing that the last two or three months of our stay would be very busy ones, and that we should never have so good an opportunity to work for ourselves as the present, we all employed our evenings in making clothes for the passage home, and more especially for Cape Horn. As soon as supper was over, the kids cleared away, and each man had taken his smoke, we seated ourselves on our chests 'round the lamp, which swung from a beam, and went to work each in his own way—some making hats, others trousers, others jackets, etc.—and no one was idle. The boys who could not sew well enough to make their own clothes laid up grass into sinnet for the men, who sewed for them in return. Several of us clubbed together and bought a large piece of twilled cotton, which we made into trousers and jackets, and, giving them several coats of linseed oil, laid them by for Cape Horn.

I also sewed and covered a tarpaulin hat, thick and strong enough to sit upon, and made myself a complete suit of flannel underclothing for bad weather. Those who had no southwester caps made them, and several of the crew got up for themselves tarpaulin jackets and trousers, lined on the inside with flannel. Industry was the order of the day, and everyone did something for himself; for we knew that as the season advanced and we went further south, we should have no evenings to work in.

Friday, December 25th. This day was Christmas, and, as it rained all day long, and there were no hides to take in, and nothing special to do, the captain gave us a holiday (the first we had had, except Sundays, since leaving Boston) and plum-duff for dinner. The Russian brig, following the Old Style, had celebrated their Christmas eleven days before, when they had a grand blowout and (as our men said) drank, in the forecabin, a barrel of gin, ate up a bag of tallow, and made a soup of the skin.

Sunday, December 27th. We had now finished all our business at this port, and, it being Sunday, we unmoored ship and got under way, firing a salute to the Russian brig and another to the *presidio*, which were both answered. The *commandante* of the *presidio*, Don Guadalupe Vallejo,³ a young man, and the most popular among the Americans and English of any man in California, was on board when we got under way. He spoke English very well and was suspected of being favorably inclined to foreigners.

³ Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo (1808-1890), one of the most important figures in Mexican California, was age twenty-seven at the time of Dana's visit. A lifelong soldier, in the early 1830s Vallejo was put in command of California's northern frontier by Gobernador José Figueroa. To forestall possible Russian encroachment, in 1835 Vallejo founded the town of Sonoma (near Mission San Francisco Solano), where he built a huge mansion called Casa Grande.

We sailed down this magnificent bay with a light wind—the tide, which was running out, carrying us at the rate of four or five knots. It was a fine day; the first of entire sunshine we had had for more than a month. We passed directly under the high cliff on which the *presidio* is built and stood into the middle of the bay, from whence we could see small bays making up into the interior, large and beautifully wooded islands, and the mouths of several small rivers. If California ever becomes a prosperous country, this bay will be the center of its prosperity. The abundance of wood and water; the extreme fertility of its shores; the excellence of its climate, which is as near to being perfect as any in the world; and its facilities for navigation, affording the best anchoring-grounds in the whole western coast of America—all fit it for a place of great importance.

The tide leaving us, we came to anchor near the mouth of the bay, under a high and beautifully sloping hill, upon which herds of hundreds and hundreds of red deer, and the stag, with his high branching antlers, were bounding about, looking at us for a moment, and then starting off, affrighted at the noises that we made for the purpose of seeing the variety of their beautiful attitudes and motions.

Sunday, January 10th. Arrived at Santa Barbara.... Great preparations were making on shore for the marriage of our agent, who was to marry Doña Anita de le Guerra de Noriega y Corillo, youngest daughter of Don Antonio Noriega, the grandee of the place, and the head of the first family in California. Our steward was ashore three days, making pastry and cake, and some of the best of our stores were sent off with him. On the day appointed for the wedding, we took the captain ashore in the gig, and had orders to come for him at night, with leave to go up to the house and see the *fandango*. Returning on board, we found preparations making for a salute. Our guns were loaded and run out, men appointed to each, cartridges served out, matches lighted, and all the flags ready to be



“Trying Out Tallow, Monterey,” 1847, by William Rich Hutton. To produce tallow, Indian laborers boiled fat from cattle carcasses in enormous iron pots. After it cooled, they poured the liquid into fifty-pound hide bags called *botas* for transport to the market. *Courtesy of The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.*

run up. I took my place at the starboard after-gun, and we all waited for the signal from on shore. At ten o'clock the bride went up with her sister to the confessional, dressed in deep black. Nearly an hour intervened, when the great doors of the mission church opened, the bells rang out a loud discordant peal, the private signal for us was run up by the captain ashore, the bride, dressed in complete white, came out of the church with the bridegroom, followed by a long procession. Just as she stepped from the church door, a small white cloud issued from the bows of our ship, which was full in sight, the loud report echoed among the surrounding hills and over the bay, and instantly the ship was dressed in flags and pennants from stem to stern. Twenty-three guns followed in regular succession, with an interval of fifteen seconds between each, when the cloud blew off, and our ship lay dressed in her colors all day. At sundown another

salute of the same number of guns was fired, and all the flags run down. This we thought was pretty well—a gun every fifteen seconds—for a merchantman with only four guns and a dozen or twenty men.

After supper the gig's crew were called, and we rowed ashore, dressed in our uniform, beached the boat, and went up to the *fandango*. The bride's father's house was the principal one in the place, with a large court in front, upon which a tent was built, capable of containing several hundred people. As we drew near, we heard the accustomed sound of violins and guitars, and saw a great motion of the people within. Going in, we found nearly all the people of the town—men, women, and children—collected and crowded together, leaving barely room for the dancers; for on these occasions no invitations are given, but everyone is expected to come, though there is always a private entertainment within the house for particular friends. The old women sat down in rows, clapping their hands to the music and applauding the young ones.

The music was lively, and among the tunes we recognized several of our popular airs, which we, without doubt, have taken from the Spanish. In the dancing I was much disappointed. The women stood upright with their hands down by their sides, their eyes fixed upon the ground before them, and slid about without any perceptible means of motion; for their feet were invisible, the hem of their dresses circle about them, reaching to the ground. They looked as grave as though they were going through some religious ceremony, their faces as little excited as their limbs; and on the whole, instead of the spirited, fascinating Spanish dances which I had expected, I found the Californian *fandango*, on the part of the women at least, a lifeless affair. The men did better. They danced with grace and spirit, moving in circles 'round their nearly stationary partners and showing their figures to advantage.

A great deal was said about our friend Don Juan Bandini,⁴ and when he did appear, which was towards the close of the evening, he certainly gave us the most graceful dancing that I had ever seen. He was dressed in white pantaloons, neatly made, a short jacket of dark silk, gaily-figured, white stockings, and thin Morocco slippers upon his very small feet. His slight and graceful figure was well adapted to dancing, and he moved about with the grace and daintiness of a young fawn. An occasional touch of the toe to the ground seemed all that was necessary to give him a long interval of motion in the air. At the same time he was not fantastic or flourishing, but appeared to be rather repressing a strong tendency to motion. He was loudly applauded and danced frequently towards the close of the evening. After the supper the waltzing began, which was confined to a very few of the *gente de razón*, and was considered a high accomplishment and a mark of aristocracy. Here, too, Don Juan figured greatly, waltzing with the sister of the bride (Doña Angustia, a handsome woman and a general favorite) in a variety of beautiful figures, which lasted as much as half an hour, no one else taking the floor. They were repeatedly and loudly applauded, the old men and women jumping out of their seats in admiration, and the young people waving their hats and handkerchiefs.

The great amusement of the evening—owing to its being the Carnival—was the breaking of eggs, filled with cologne or other essences, upon the heads of the company. The women bring a great number of these secretly about them, and the amusement is to break one upon the head of a gentleman when his back is turned. He is bound in gallantry to find out the lady and return the compliment,

⁴Born in Peru, Juan Bandini (1800-1859) emigrated to southern California in the early 1820s and became a prominent *ranchero* and politician. "He had a slight and elegant figure, moved gracefully, danced and waltzed beautifully, spoke good Castilian...and had, throughout, the bearing of a man of birth and figure," wrote Dana. However, Bandini's fortunes turned downward after the U.S. conquest of California, when he was stripped of all his properties despite having three American sons-in-law.

though it must not be done if the person sees you. A tall, stately *don*, with immense gray whiskers and a look of great importance, was standing before me, when I felt a light hand on my shoulder, and, turning round, saw Doña Angustia (whom we all knew, as she had been up to Monterey, and down again, in the *Alert*), with her finger upon her lip motioning me gently aside. I stepped back a little, when she went up behind the *don* and with one hand knocked off his huge *sombrero*, and at the same instant, with the other, broke the egg upon his head, and, springing behind me, was out of sight in a moment. The *don* turned slowly round, the cologne running down his face and over his clothes, and a loud laugh breaking out from every quarter. He looked round in vain for some time, until the direction of so many laughing eyes showed him the fair offender. She was his niece and a great favorite with him, so old Don Domingo had to join in the laugh. A great many such tricks were played, and many a war of sharp maneuvering was carried on between couples of the younger people, and at every successful exploit a general laugh was raised.

Another of their games I was for some time at a loss about. A pretty young girl was dancing, named—after what would appear to us an almost sacrilegious custom of the country—*Espiritu Santo*, when a young man went behind her and placed his hat directly upon her head, letting it fall down over her eyes, and sprang back among the crowd. She danced for some time with the hat on; when she threw it off, which called forth a general shout, the young man was obliged to go out upon the floor and pick it up. Some of the ladies, upon whose heads hats had been placed, threw them off at once, and a few kept them on throughout the dance, and took them off at the end, and held them out in their hands, when the owner stepped out, bowed, and took it from them. I soon began to suspect the meaning of the thing, and was afterwards told that it was a compliment, and an offer to become a lady's gallant for the rest of the

evening and to wait upon her home. If the hat was thrown off the offer was refused, and the gentleman was obliged to pick up his hat amid a general laugh. Much amusement was caused sometimes by gentlemen putting hats on the ladies' heads without permitting them to see whom it was done by. This obliged them to throw them off or keep them on at a venture, and when they came to discover the owner the laugh was turned upon one or the other.

The captain sent for us about ten o'clock, and we went aboard in high spirits, having enjoyed the new scene much, and were of great importance among the crew, from having so much to tell, and from the prospect of going every night until it was over—for these *fandangos* generally last three days. The next day two of us were sent up to the town and took care to come back by way of Señor Noriega's and take a look into the booth. The musicians were again there, upon their platform, scraping and twanging away, and a few people, apparently of the lower classes, were dancing. The dancing is kept up at intervals throughout the day, but the crowd, the spirit, and the elite come in at night. The next night, which was the last, we went ashore in the same manner, until we got almost tired of the monotonous twang of the instruments, the drawling sounds which the women kept up, as an accompaniment, and the slapping of the hands in time with the music, in place of castanets. We found ourselves as great objects of attention as any persons or anything at the place. Our sailor dresses—and we took great pains to have them neat and ship-shape—were much admired, and we were invited, from every quarter, to give them an American dance; but after the ridiculous figure some of our countrymen cut in dancing after the Mexicans, we thought it best to leave it to their imaginations. Our agent, with a tight, black swallow-tailed coat just imported from Boston, a high stiff cravat, looking as if he had been pinned and skewered, with only his feet and hands left free, took the floor just after Bandini, and we thought they had had enough of Yankee grace.