

Saint Junípero Serra

Servant of Christ the King

A. H. Fitch



Stabat Mater Press

This edition of *Junipero Serra – the Man and his Work* by A. H. Fitch has been annotated and re-published Stabat Mater Press.

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Preface

The best and most interesting method of obtaining historical information is the biographical. This is equally true whether the reader is studying a particular period relating to his own country or is taking a broad survey of universal history. Biography, especially when supplemented by extracts from original sources, leaves upon the mind a more definite impression than any other form of historical writing, with the one great exception of autobiography, of which unfortunately there is too little.

When, therefore, I desired certain information relating to the central and dominant figure in California during the early period of Spanish occupation, I turned to Francisco Palou's biography of Fray Junipero Serra. This work, together with his *Noticias de la Nueva California*, is today the standard history of Spanish California, and constitutes the source from which every historian of that state draws his facts for the years 1769 to 1785.

While Palou's account of his friend's life and labors on the Pacific coast is of great interest to the student of California history, it is perhaps not too much to say that his book makes but dry reading for the average person. There can be little doubt that the admiration and love Palou entertained for Junipero induced him to chronicle his life with the sole view of procuring for him recognition in the church as one of her saints; hence the prominence accorded the religious aspect

of Junipero's life, the detailed narration of miraculous happenings in his career, etc., which detract for the general reader from the historical interest of the book.

Although every work on California since Palou's days necessarily contains references to Fray Junipero Serra, no other biography of him has been written. It was to supply this lack, and also because Palou's biography has to my knowledge never been translated [Since this was written, a translation of Palou's *Vida* has been published], that I undertook to write the present work, not, however, without many misgivings as to my ability to do justice to the subject. The national, and not merely local, interest of Junipero, as the preserver of Spain (and thereby indirectly to the United States) of the Pacific coast, from San Francisco to San Diego, becomes evident to all who read the history of California.

Just in so far as our importance as a nation is affected by our coast line, does the nation owe a debt to Junipero Serra. Even Mr. Hubert Bancroft, who in his invaluable *History of California* but faintly disguises his dislike of the friar, says: "It did not require Palou's eulogistic pen to prove him a great and remarkable man."

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Youth and Early Manhood

There still clings to the name of California a pleasant halo of romance, although the mystery which some two hundred odd years ago lent a subtle charm to that name has long since departed, together with those dauntless Spanish spirits who sailed the seas, to plant the emblem of the church and Spain on Californian soil.

The names of Cortes, of Cabrillo, and Vizcaino, those intrepid discoverers and explorers of the Pacific by the coast of California, are familiar to all. But how many of us, beyond the boundaries of that western state, have heard the name of Fray Junipero Serra? And yet, had it not been for this Franciscan friar, the history of these United States of ours might have been strangely altered. The Russians—the ever-present bugbear of Spain and her American colonies in the Eighteenth century—might finally have swooped down from the far North and raised the standard of the Czar in Alta California. Or England, incited thereto by reports from her many sailor adventurers, might have sent forth to that land of sunshine and flowers the nucleus of a thriving English colony.

In their isolated state, it is doubtful if the people of such a colony would have dreamed of claiming independent sovereignty. The surrounding country was filled with savages, while on beyond stretched eastward for thousands of miles a continent unknown, unexplored, and full of fearful mystery. By sea, too, the Californian colonies were

not much nearer the Atlantic coast, for the voyage around the Horn, which in our time can be made in sixty days, could not then be made under one hundred and fifty or two hundred days. It is safe to say that England would have been sure of her Californian possessions and so would have retained, perhaps permanently, her foothold in these states.

But a brown-frocked friar from the terraced island of Majorca has made of such possibilities idle, fruitless conjectures. It was because of his daring determination and intrepid spirit that California was not abandoned by the Spaniards. And it was owing to his ceaseless toil that later the long chain of missions was laid which carried civilization from the wilds of San Diego to the oft fog-enshrouded sand dunes of San Francisco harbor. Spain took possession of California, but it was Fray Junipero Serra who retained it for her, and the history of California offers us no more interesting picture than that of this Franciscan friar.¹

Francisco Palou, the faithful friend, pupil, and biographer of Fray Junipero, tells us quaintly that this "indefatigable servant in the vineyard of our Saviour began his laborious life the twenty-fourth day of November in the year 1713, at one o'clock in the morning, in the town of Petra in the Island of Majorca."

1. Where soldiers planted flags, they often departed; where friars built chapels, roots took hold. The missions baptized the land into Christendom. Fray Junipero did not serve the Spanish crown by sword, but by sacraments. His presence meant California was not left to wander in heathen disorder or foreign schemes, but was drawn into the visible order of the Church.

There are probably no more beautiful islands in the world than the Balearic Islands. The ancients gave to them the name of Aphrodisiades, or Islands of Love. Majorca is the largest and loveliest of them all. It was counted at one time the great market of Europe. In the eighteenth century, as far as commercial importance was concerned, the islands could be numbered among the "forgotten isles." In this fair land of the orange and the ruby muscatel, the inhabitants were industrious, extremely hospitable, and of an orthodoxy that even the rationalizing spirit of eighteenth-century Europe could not disturb.

Such was the birthplace of Fray Junipero Serra. His parents were Antonio Serra and Margarita Ferrer, pious, honest peasants of exemplary habits. They named their infant son Miguel Joseph. He was baptized the day of his birth. The child was early instructed in the Catholic faith, as soon as he began to walk his parents taking him regularly to the church and convent of San Bernadino in Petra. He gained the affections of the good fathers in the convent, who taught the boy to sing, and he served as chorister and acolyte in the parish church, to the great delight of his parents. He was small in stature and not so robust as little peasant boys are generally conceived to be; but if he was constitutionally frail, he was also constitutionally intrepid. He had an ardent temperament and possessed a strength of will and intellect which would have made him an important factor in any walk of life he might have chosen.

His purpose to become a Franciscan was formed in early childhood, just as later his purpose to become a missionary was formed in early manhood. There were, therefore, in Junipero's life no wasted years in which the mind struggled blindly in a career not suited to it till it finally threw off its yoke and found its proper sphere. In another respect he was also peculiarly noteworthy. His life can be searched in vain for a single record of sin, or frivolity, or dreary waste places. He was not

converted after years spent in dissipation. His soul from childhood to the hour of his death remained ever exquisitely clean and fresh.

While yet a boy, his parents, observing his extraordinary abilities, took him to Palma to pursue his studies. He became in a short time conspicuous among his fellow students for his proficiency in learning. In the evenings when other youths were dreamily tinkling their guitars in dim flower-scented patios, or gayly roaming Palma's narrow streets to serenade dark-eyed maidens with some Majorcan lyric of love, the young peasant from Petra was absorbed in his books.

His intellectual attainments made him the pride and delight of his teachers. Yet in the midst of the distraction of studies his mind harked back continually to his longing to become a monk. One day he asked the consent of the Provincial to enter the Franciscan order. His small stature, his delicate appearance caused the church dignitary to pronounce him too young to take monastic vows. As a matter of fact he was in his seventeenth year, and the Provincial, being informed of this, withdrew his objection. Young Serra took his first vows September 14, 1730. In this year of his novitiate the principal convent in Palma gave a signal proof of the high appreciation accorded him by electing him professor of philosophy, a position in which he appears to have distinguished himself markedly.

At his ordination he took the name of Junipero. The first Junipero was one of the disciples of St. Francis, who besides being distinguished for his humility was the jolliest of the "joyous penitents." His pious capers smack of a lively sense of humor. On one occasion, when forbidden to give away his cloak, (for by so doing he would have left himself naked) he said to the next beggar, "If you tear it off my back I will not resist you," and afterward cheerfully explained to St. Francis that "a worthy person took it from me and went away with it." All are familiar with the story of how he avoided a triumphant

entry into Rome, prepared for him by an enthusiastic crowd, by the simple expedient of making a fool of himself on a seesaw, until, deeply offended, his admirers turned away and left him to enter the city alone. That the serious young Majorcan professor chose to call himself after this merry Franciscan throws an interesting sidelight on his character.

While still a young man, Fray Junipero, as we must now call him, obtained a degree of S.T.D. from the famous Lullian University, with an appointment to the John Scotus chair of Philosophy. He held the appointment with distinguished success until he left Spain. His doctrinal learning brought him fame, but it was his eloquence as a preacher which dominated the people, who flocked in large crowds to hear his sermons. He had a sonorous voice and a fervent delivery. A man at once so learned, so eloquent, and so possessed of the faith of a child, could not fail to stir his listeners in every fiber of their being.

He was selected by the university to deliver the panegyric on the occasion of a festival in honor of their patron and compatriot, the eminent Dr. Raymond Lully. This famous mystic and theologian had led a wild life in his youth. It is said that he once scandalized the people by entering the church on horseback to see a lady of whom he was enamored. Years afterward he was stoned to death by Mussulmans in Africa, where he had gone to obtain converts to Christianity through his peculiar system of logic.

Fray Junipero's address on the life of this acute theologian and prolific writer was so scholarly that the learned men of Palma and the university were equally amazed and delighted, and an eminent critic pronounced the discourse "worthy of being printed in letters of gold." It was at this time, when Junipero had obtained his highest renown, that he determined to devote the remainder of his life to his fellowmen in the wilderness.

Long before the Reformation, the activity of the Catholic church in every country save Spain had almost entirely ceased. Popes and princes were more absorbed in temporal affairs than in spiritual conquests. But in the Spanish peninsula missionary ardor had never abated. Spain's proximity to the Moslems, her prolonged and constant struggle with the infidels, kept the missionary spirit alive in the hearts of her people. The great maritime discoveries of the fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries added fuel to their ardor. To traverse dangerous seas, to penetrate unknown lands for the purpose of carrying Christianity to the heathen was to Spanish cavalier, and Spanish priest, one of the leading motives of their exploring expeditions.

Down to the latter end of the eighteenth century, the love of proselytizing may be said to have been one of the prominent characteristics of the Spaniard. The Franciscans were the first religious order to send missionaries to Mexico. Twelve Franciscan friars undertook the perilous task of introducing Christianity to the natives of the conquered country. In fact, from the time of the second voyage of Columbus, which several Franciscans accompanied, members of the order shared in every expedition to New Spain and established their missions. So powerful an organization did they become in Mexico, that in the eighteenth century their convents were to be found in every pueblo of importance in the country. In consequence, their influence was vast; frequently the king himself would request them to support the administration of his viceroy. By royal command the authorities in New Spain were not permitted in any way to interfere with the internal government of their order. The missionaries were wretchedly paid. The stipend allowed by the crown for carrying Christianity into remote wildernesses, for braving dangers, enduring untold hardships, was three hundred *pesos* (about \$150) a year to each missionary. This

pittance was often grudgingly paid and sometimes not at all, according to the state of the royal exchequer.

But to poverty Junipero was as indifferent as he was resolutely blind to the allurements of ambition, fame, and power. When he determined to employ his marked abilities, his vigorous mind, to the conversion of the heathen, to give up his splendid career in Majorca for this purpose, he told no one of his resolve for he feared his plans would be frustrated. Notwithstanding that he guarded his secret jealously, a certain professor in the convent, Fray Rafael Verger, heard it rumored that one of the brotherhood was about to embark for the New World as a missionary. He repeated the rumor to his friend, Francisco Palou, and confessed that he was sorely prompted to turn missionary himself, but that the duties of his professorship made such a step impracticable. The two friends made many efforts to discover the identity of the unknown friar. Their inquiries were futile, nor were they even successful in learning whether the vague rumors which had reached them contained an element of truth. Palou's mind dwelt incessantly on the subject; it held a fascination for him. He wished to consecrate his years to missionary labor. He determined to ask counsel of Fray Junipero, his professor, whom he greatly esteemed and loved. One day when the two were alone together Palou told him his secret aspirations. As Junipero listened, his eyes overflowed with tears. They were tears of intense relief and joy. It appears that, though his own resolve had never wavered, he had not been without a great dread of future loneliness, of separation from the companions of his young manhood. He had passed long hours in prayer. He had completed two novenas to the Virgin and San Francisco Solano, in which he implored them to inspire in the heart of a friend the same ardor which burned within his own. He now felt that his prayers had been answered. He in turn unburdened himself to Palou. Before teacher

and pupil separated, their plans had taken definite shape. Junipero enjoined upon the younger man the strictest secrecy. It was necessary for the friars to obtain the consent of the *comisario general* of foreign missions. Junipero accordingly wrote to this functionary. In his reply the *comisario* gave him small encouragement. It was difficult, he said, to arrange the matter; the two applicants were not on the mainland, moreover the complete quota of friars for the missions had already been chosen from Andalusia and would soon embark for the New World.

Though bitterly disappointed, Junipero did not lose courage. He wrote again, asking permission to join a college on the mainland, in order to remove one of the objections mentioned by the *comisario*. While affairs were at this juncture, the Lenten season of 1749 was approaching, and Fray Junipero was sent to preach in the parish church of his native town, Petra. Before leaving Palma, he again cautioned Palou to guard well their secret.

Now it happened that among the friars who had volunteered and had been selected by the *comisario* to go to America, were five who had never seen a larger expanse of water than the rivers flowing past their inland homes. When they gazed for the first time upon the great, turbulent ocean and heard the roar of the raging surf, they were terror stricken. Their fear overcame their zeal. They repented of their offer to Christianize benighted heathen and returned hurriedly to the safety of their homes. The *comisario general* knew where he could supply the places of at least two of these timid ones, and he dispatched immediately the necessary licenses to Fray Junipero and Palou. What happened to these licenses or *patentes* as they were called, is not known, but Palou intimated that they arrived safely at the monastery, then were strangely lost between the entrance door of that establishment and his cell. Whether or not the convent authorities

deliberately confiscated the letters, is not known, but it is certain that they were strongly averse to losing so brilliant a member of their faculty as Fray Junipero Serra. His reputation as an acute theologian, distinguished scholar, and eloquent preacher had added in no small degree to the renown of their convent, both at home and abroad. To lose so valuable a servant in the great mission fields of the American wilderness was not to be tolerated without a struggle. It was doubtless this opposition that Junipero anticipated when he impressed upon Palou the necessity of secrecy.

Once in receipt of his *patente* he well knew that his departure could not be hindered, but until then he would not be free to follow his pious inclinations if these took him from Majorca. The *comisario*, hearing nothing further from either Fray Junipero or Palou, and perhaps suspecting the cause, again dispatched two *patentes*. On this occasion he took the precaution of sending the papers by a special courier. They did not miscarry a second time, and Palou received them as he was entering the refectory. It was the last day of March. Palou lost no time. With the precious *patentes* tucked carefully inside his frock, he took the road to Petra. He arrived that night. Seeking Junipero, he delivered the letter and license. His happiness, said Palou artlessly, could not have been greater had he received a mitre and been promoted to the dignity of a bishop.

It was near the end of Lent. Junipero decided to wait until after Easter before leaving Majorca. Possibly the knowledge that it was the last festival he would ever celebrate with his old parents had something to do with this decision. Palou returned to Palma to arrange for their embarkation. He seems to have had difficulty in finding a ship, but finally engaged their passage on an English packet boat soon to sail for Malaga.

Fray Junipero in the meantime preached his last sermon in the little town where he was born. He bade his friends farewell. He asked and received the blessing of his old father and mother. He did not tell them his destination. The third day after Easter he set out for Palma. When he arrived at the convent, seductive overtures were made to him by his superiors, to induce him to abandon his plans. They would make him guardian, they said, although he was young for that honor, and they would cause the appointment to be ratified at the next meeting of the prelates, which was close at hand. But neither this flattering offer nor others equally or more tempting were sufficient to induce him to give up his missionary project.

Junipero finally left the city with Palou and boarded the English packet boat, which was to carry them to Malaga. Before a fair wind the little sailing craft flew swiftly out to sea. From its deck the two friars gazed upon Majorca's lovely vine-terraced shores, which one of them at least was destined never to see again. The voyage lasted fifteen days. It proved unexpectedly exciting, though far from agreeable. Palou's account of this voyage is graphic, interesting and naive:

In these controversies Junipero had the advantage of a temper perfectly controlled, and of an extraordinary memory. With imperturbable calm he could quote text after text from the Scriptures, while the irascible English "heretic" was rummaging in his Bible for a verse he couldn't find. That the friar had some twinges regarding his share in these fiery encounters is probable, for after the captain's last fit of anger, and when he had shut himself in his cabin for a cooling lapse of hours, Junipero said to Palou,

There were no further controversies; the captain's wrath abated, and a few days later they reached Malaga in safety. After a short stay in the convent of San Francisco the friars went to Cadiz. Here the *comisario* received them with great friendliness. He expressed regret that there were not more applicants to replace the five friars whose fear of the great, unknown ocean had so over-powered their missionary zeal as to cause them to withdraw at the last moment. Fray Junipero whereupon told him he was confident that among the brotherhood in Majorca were several who would gladly join the expedition. At the request of the *comisario* he wrote to his friends, Fray Rafael Verger, Fray Guillermo Vicens, and Fray Juan Crespi, the last a school-friend of Palou's. The names of two of these friars figure prominently in the annals of New Spain. Crespi became the well known keeper of diaries of early Alta California days as Palou was her first historian, while Verger became the "Father Guardian" of San Fernando College in Mexico, a position which Palou, later, also occupied. Junipero therefore sailed for the New World accompanied by three friends whose sympathy, confidence, and hearty co-operation probably helped to make his Californian career so singularly successful. The expedition left in two detachments. The first carried among twenty other priests, Junipero, and Francisca Palou.

Their voyage to Vera Cruz lasted ninety-nine days. Before they made their first port, which was Porto Rico, they had to endure much suffering because of the scarcity of food and water. For two weeks, a scant supply of water was doled out once in twenty-four hours to every man on board. There was a great deal of murmuring, both among

the priests and the laymen. Fray Junipero alone was never heard to complain. His companions inquired one day whether he, too, did not suffer from thirst. "My thirst causes me no trouble," he replied serenely.

When pressed for an explanation he said, "I have found a remedy for this thirst, it is to eat very little and to talk less—it does not waste the saliva."

We can imagine a sly twinkle in his kindly eye, as he gave this reply. The ship left Porto Rico on the second of November and a month later sighted Vera Cruz, but a furious norther came up and drove it towards Campeche.

The tempest lasted two days. On the night of the second day, the fourth of December, the friars gave themselves up for lost, and waited the end. Their situation was indeed perilous. The crew had mutinied; the ship was leaking; the pumps were inadequate; the winds and the waves thundered ceaselessly around and above them.

The tempest was at its height when the morning of the third day broke. It was a saint's day, "the martyred Santa Barbara." The little band of missionaries, Dominicans and Franciscans, gathered in the cabin. They were to cast their votes and determine which saint they should appeal to in this hour of peril. They were not long in deciding. With one accord they shouted, "Viva Santa Barbara!" It is recorded by Palou that simultaneously with the shout, the storm abated, the wind became gentle and benign and blew the ship without further mishap into the harbor of Vera Cruz, where they arrived on the sixth of December.

Mexico City and Sierra Gorda

The port of Vera Cruz was the key to New Spain. It was guarded by the fortress island, San Juan de Ulua, one mile distant from the mainland. San Juan was at this period of history the strongest fort in the New World. It had become so through dire necessity. Little more than half a century had elapsed since the famous attack on Vera Cruz by eight hundred buccaneers, led by the handsome, fair-haired devil, Lorencillo. His name was still remembered with terror in the town. Strangers were told the tale of his landing at dead of night and driving from their homes six thousand panic-stricken inhabitants, imprisoning them for three days in the churches, where the least of their sufferings was being deprived of food, water, and sufficient air, while the pirates plundered the city.

With a record like this to Lorencillo's credit, it is interesting to read the eulogy left him by one of his admiring fraternity: "his only fault was his impatience and a habit of swearing a little too frequently!"

Since the sacking of the city, San Juan de Ulua protected itself more formidably with one hundred twenty mounted guns and three mortars. Vera Cruz itself was also strongly fortified. Its walls were built of hewn stone and were six feet high, surmounted by strong double stockades. Thus safe-guarded Vera Cruz continued to thrive, though it was the most unhealthful city in New Spain. Water was scant and poor in quality. The practice of burying the dead in church vaults caused

a periodical pestilence to ravage the city, while the exhalations from stagnant swamps in the neighborhood produced a malaria called by the inhabitants *vomito*. In the winter it was visited by a violent north-west wind, which, though it often blew the sand in such clouds as to render breathing difficult, was yet of immense sanitary benefit to the city. When the ship that carried our voyagers lowered her sails under the shadow of the great stone walls of the island fort, and was securely fastened by cable ropes attached to bolts and rings in the masonry, the passengers were transferred in small boats to the mainland.

The missionaries were hospitably received in the convents of their respective orders. Their first act on arriving was to hold a solemn *fiesta* in honor of Santa Barbara, after which they sought the seclusion of the convents for a few days of much needed rest.

But not Junipero. He preached the sermon at the *fiesta*—amazing everyone, Palou declared, by his eloquence—and then prepared to push on to the City of Mexico without delay.

It was customary to send missionaries forward to their various destinations in some kind of vehicle or on horseback, and with the necessary commodities for the journey. Of this custom Junipero chose not to avail himself. He begged permission to travel on foot and to start immediately. He was quite able, he said, to walk the hundred leagues which lay between Vera Cruz and the capital of New Spain. There was small chance that such a request would meet with a refusal; to grant it was to save money furnished from the King's exchequer and money from that source was by no means easy to procure. Moreover the years of 1749-50 had not been prosperous ones to the inhabitants of New Spain. Unusually heavy frosts had destroyed the crops, resulting in a famine which spread throughout the country. In some of the provinces the famine had been followed by an epidemic. Nor was this all. There had been earthquakes, destructive ones, and many

lives had been lost and entire towns destroyed. The religious orders in New Spain must have felt severely the effects of these calamities in the depleted state of their treasuries. When therefore Junipero expressed not only a willingness, but a desire, to travel as did St. Francis of old, without carriage, horse, or provisions, his convent in Vera Cruz made no attempt to dissuade him. He was accompanied by a friar from the province of Andalusia. Palou did not go with his friend. He was probably already feeling that insurmountable lassitude which later developed into the malignant fever of the country, and brought him close to death's door.

The two friars started forth on their journey, their sole provisions their breviary and an unlimited faith in Divine Providence. Could St. Francis himself have done better than this? In the populous European countries it required small courage for a traveling friar to depend for his sustenance on the *mensa domini*, or table of the Lord, as St. Francis loved to call the bread of charity. But in this New World it was an entirely different affair. The country was sparsely settled, the pueblos were long distances apart and chance travelers few. But these difficulties were as nothing to Fray Junipero's vehement will and courage. He went on his way joyfully. The roads were rough, the weather at times bitterly cold or intensely hot. Without proper preparations to meet these climatic variations, without sufficient food, and quite as often without water to quench their thirst, the friars plodded doggedly on.

They endured great fatigue and suffered many hardships. Junipero's confidence and courage sustained the drooping spirits of his companion. All through his career this is a phase of Junipero's character which stands out most prominently. Modest in his scholarly attainments, humble almost to excess in his estimate of his character, he yet possessed in an extraordinary degree a confidence, nay, an iron belief, in his ability to accomplish successfully whatever task he un-

dertook. Without this belief, no man, it matters not what his inborn capacities or opportunities, will attain success; while with this belief, even though he be but indifferently gifted by nature, he will rarely fail in accomplishing what he has set out to do. In Junipero this confidence took the form most natural to a man of his character, training, and fanatical religious convictions. He believed in the special intercession of Divine Providence in his behalf.

On his journey to the City of Mexico he was three times in imminent danger of perishing from excessive fatigue, starvation, and the inclemency of the weather, and was three times relieved by the charitable acts of a stranger whom he unhesitatingly believed to be St. Joseph descended from heaven to succor him and his companion. Some years later St. Joseph returned with all the members of the Holy Family, for the express purpose of procuring the weary friar a good night's lodging!

Before he reached the City of Mexico Junipero's strength failed him completely. His legs became swollen from fatigue and sore from innumerable mosquito bites. It was with the utmost difficulty that he continued his wearisome limping over rough roads, under the blazing sun of low lying valleys, in the chill of steep and sometimes perilous heights. One morning after a heavy, unrefreshing sleep, he awakened to find he could not continue his journey. His foot and ankle had become grievously inflamed and ulcerated. He chafed under the enforced delay when almost in sight of his destination, but gave himself one day of rest, then set out again upon his road. During the remainder of his life Junipero was never free from wounds on his foot and leg brought on by the hardships of this journey.

It was New Year's morning, 1750, when he limped wearily into the City of Mexico, just eight months and a half from the day he left Majorca.

The capital of New Spain was at this time the largest and finest city on the American continent. It was encircled by a navigable canal which answered the twofold purpose of a drain and a military defense. The buildings were handsome, the architecture peculiarly refined. A certain kind of porphyry was employed in the structure which imparted an air of solidity and splendor to the city. The palace of the viceroy approached in size the royal edifices in Madrid, while within the palace, more often than not, prevailed a magnificence that would not have discredited a European monarch. Attached to the palace gardens was a botanical garden famous for the variety and rarity of its plants.

The residence of the archbishop was a stately pile of which an old chronicler said, "It expressed the Luster and the Quality of him that inhabits the same." The *paseos*, or public promenades, were the pride and delight of the people. In no part of Spain could their equal in beauty be found. Among the most famous was the *paseo* of Atzacapatzaleo.

It stretched along the banks of the canal, the high road for the fruit, flower, and vegetable venders of the city. Little canoes filled with brilliant colored flowers, with luscious fruits embedded in bowers of green leaves and blossoms, floated daily down the canal and gave the scene the effect of a perpetual water carnival. In the afternoon, when the capital awoke from its siesta and went abroad the *paseos* were at their brightest. A carnival of gaiety reigned. Hundreds of coaches, springless, but richly decorated, drawn by two or four horses and attended by servants in gorgeous livery, passed one another in stately procession. Here all the fashion and beauty could be seen. Dark-eyed senoras and señoritas, clad in evening gowns glittering with jewels, leaned in graceful indolence against the cushioned seats of their coaches, or sat erect, vivacious, ever ready to be amused, to gossip, to laugh at everything,

at nothing, to coquette. Magnificently attired cavaliers on prancing steeds, their "saddles embossed in massive gold or silver and fringed with dangling pieces of precious metal, which jingle at every step," threw bold, admiring glances into the passing coaches, or with silver spur and dainty inlaid whip, made opportunity to display their fine horsemanship. It was the joy of a fete, a fete recurring daily, always the same, yet never palling on those limpid-eyed, luxurious women, with slender hands and little feet, and on those gaily enamored cavaliers.

Even in the preceding century the capital of New Spain was known in Europe for its habits of gaiety and luxury. The accounts of its wealth and extravagance were scarcely exaggerated and applied with equal truth to the days when Fray Junipero came to Mexico.

The capital presented the two extremes of society somewhat markedly, in fact, it bristled with sharp contrasts. There were lazy, improvident natives who, when not begging or lounging around shops, where pulque was sold, were lying in the pleasant warmth of the sun, their only garment a square blanket scarcely sufficient to cover their nakedness. There were also the indigent sick, lured often from long distances to the capital, in quest of aid from the many hospitals, which the liberality of the rich supported. And there were the half-naked hucksters swarming around wretched booths of cane and rushes, shouting out their wares or exchanging jocose greetings with one another. All these served as a striking contrast to the luxurious display of the upper classes.

We do not know what effect the splendor of this New World capital had on Fray Junipero, but it seems improbable that he was not

impressed with the number and grandeur of the churches in the city. The great cathedral occupying the same site where some two hundred fifty odd years before stood the sinister temple of the Aztec war god, was then, as now, the most magnificent structure in Mexico. Here was placed the wonderful image of "Our Lady of the Assumption," wrought of gold and supported by four golden angels, and the image of "Our Lady of Conception," made of pure silver which had been presented to the cathedral by the rich silversmiths of Mexico. Junipero had at an early hour that morning said his prayers in the church of Our Lady of Guadalupe. He may have lingered afterwards to gaze about in the vaulted twilight of the interior; for this was the church the haughty viceroy Montanez, had been so zealous to complete that he had, himself, solicited alms in the streets of the capital—a spectacle rendered particularly edifying from his lordship's regal habit of driving in a carriage drawn by six magnificent horses. Had it been the hour of mass, Fray Junipero might have seen well-fed, or over-fed women leisurely sipping chocolate, for even in church they would not abstain from indulging themselves in their favorite beverage. A certain bold bishop in Chiapas, it is said, attempted to stop this singular custom. He was poisoned for his pains. This is the origin of the saying, "Beware of Chiapas chocolate."

When Junipero reached the college of San Fernando, all the friars were at prayers in the church. He appears to have been struck with the fervor of their devotions, for he afterward exclaimed to his companion, the monk from Andalusia, "To become a member of such a pious community is alone worth all the pain and fatigue I have suffered."

The guardian of the college received Fray Junipero with marked distinction. The monks were eager to show their regard for one whose reputation for piety, scholarship, and eloquence had already preceded

his arrival in their midst. One of the older monks exclaimed as he embraced him, "Oh, for a forest of Juniperos!"

"Not of my kind, reverend brother," returned Junipero; "rather beg for a forest of a very different variety."

This humility was not a cloak to cover deep seated pride, for neither guile nor hypocrisy lodged under Fray Junipero's cowl. The mental attitude of those who have penetrated farthest into the kingdom of knowledge is invariably one of deep humility at the littleness of their advance into the vast realm lying unexplored before them, and the moral attitude of those whose ideals are the noblest, whose spiritual aims are the highest, is one of profound humility of heart that they are so far from attaining the gospel perfection for which they strive.

Fray Junipero was at this time about thirty-seven years old. In stature he was of medium height; his features were small and delicate; his figure slender; it did not suggest great muscular strength, nor that extraordinary power of endurance which distinguished him in his missionary career. He was very diffident when in the company of strangers. His manners were simple and uniformly kind, his bearing humble; yet there was an air of resolution about him which inspired confidence. He was always serious, so much so, that he appeared stern, even gloomy. But when he spoke his expression became gentle, sweet, and so attractive that all hearts warmed towards him. Such a character was calculated to gain the trust and devotion of his brethren in the distant missions where he later labored.

Junipero spent five months in the college of San Fernando. They were quiet, restful months, occupied with the performance of his religious duties. Yet he was not altogether happy. He had taken the long journey to Mexico to labor among the Indians, not to remain in safe tranquility in the luxurious capital of New Spain. One holiday evening when the friars were strolling in the pleasant paths of the

monastery orchard, accompanied by the Father Guardian, the latter let it be known that he was seeking missionaries for the remote and craggy regions of the Sierra Gordas. Instantly Junipero turned to him.

Ecce ego, mitte me, he exclaimed with ardor.

Inspired by his enthusiasm, many others offered their services. It was soon apparent that the Sierra Gorda missions would no longer lack for ministers, as had hitherto been the case. The law did not require a friar to serve as missionary against his will, and the Sierra Gordas had never been a favorite mission field. The Pames Indians in this mountainous region had been difficult to conquer. They were a bold, belligerent people, long a terror to the colonists in that part of the country. They made marauding raids into the very streets of the Spanish settlements; they burnt the churches and destroyed the missions. The long-continued efforts of the militia to subdue these savages were only in part successful. Finally Jose de Escandon, an officer in the Queretaro militia, was commissioned with the difficult task of pacification. A man of great nobility and integrity of character, Escandon was also a man of wealth and maintained his troops at his own expense. He was a strict disciplinarian and never permitted excesses. He appears to have accomplished the subjugation of the Sierra Gorda Indians successfully and in so humane a spirit that the vanquished savages gave him their confidence and friendship. After this wild region was brought, at last, under Spanish control, one would naturally suppose that missionary labors would make favorable progress. But this was far from true. The climate of the Sierra Gorda was humid and unhealthful. Devices to preserve health were unknown or not practicable. After short services the missionaries sickened and were obliged to retire to the hospital of their college in Queretaro. It became customary later to recall the missionaries every six months and send others in their places.

This method was not successful, for the friars, because of their short stay among the Indians, had no time to learn the native language, which was a great hindrance to spiritual conquest. In temporal matters they were equally unsuccessful. The missions, far from being self-supporting were unable to furnish maintenance sufficient even for the missionaries. It was necessary to forward provision regularly to keep the neophytes from deserting. This was particularly true of the missions Santiago de Xalpan, Purisima Concepcion, and two or three others.

Such was the condition of affairs there when Junipero offered his services. Palou had arrived in the capital, recuperated from the fever that had so nearly cost him his life. He volunteered with his friend to labor among the Pames Indians. Accordingly, the two set out one morning in early June from San Fernando College for the mission of Santiago de Xalpan, situated in a remote spot among the crags of the Sierra Gordas. They made the journey on foot, although Junipero was suffering from the condition of his foot and ankle, and although saddle mules had been provided for them. The rule prohibiting riding had long been obsolete in the order, while even in the early days of the Friars Minor, the brethren were permitted to ride on occasions of manifest necessity or under stress of infirmity. But Junipero outdid the "penitents" themselves who gathered around St. Francis at Portiuncola, in the severity of his deprivations. He had a fanatical contempt for his body, which was more than medieval, and which later in his career had, we suspect, something to do with the antagonism he encountered among the military officials in California.

On the 16th of June the friars arrived at Santiago 'de Xalpan, and were received, said Palou, with gratifying rejoicings by the neophytes. Junipero promptly set to work to learn the language of the Pames Indians. Having accomplished this, he translated into Pames

the prayers and doctrines of the Catholic church. He acquired the Indian tongue only after great perseverance and hard work. He did not possess the faculty of learning easily strange languages. In later years his linguistic troubles increased, and he spent many hours in the effort to overcome them.

He was indefatigable in temporal affairs as in spiritual matters; he appears to have managed the former so well that, under his administration, the mission became not only self-supporting but extremely prosperous. He possessed an executive ability of high order, was full of resource, of prudence, of acumen. The value of his services were soon recognized, and the Guardian of San Fernando offered him the presidency of the Sierra Gorda missions. Junipero, who all during his long life remained perfectly indifferent to worldly honors, declined the appointment. A year and a half later, the Guardian again sent him a *Patente de las Misiones* and on this occasion insisted so strongly upon an acceptance that Junipero could not refuse. He retained the position, however, for three years only, then resigned.

"If this office is an honor," he said, "then let the others share in the honor also—likewise if it is a burden," he added with that touch of dry humor which he occasionally displayed.

His life in the Sierra Gordas covered a period of nine arduous years of unremitting labor. His abilities finally caused him to be recalled by the Guardian of San Fernando College, to Mexico, in order to take charge of some missions of the Rio Saba in Texas, among the warlike Apache nation. He obeyed with alacrity, although knowing the fate which had overtaken the last president of the missions. The acceptance of a charge of this nature remained always voluntary even after the appointment was made by the Guardian. But Fray Junipero was not the man to shrink from such a trust. He hastened to Mexico to receive his instructions. Before he arrived however, the Government

had decided to send out a punitive expedition, and instead of going to Texas, Junipero was retained in the college. He remained there seven years, preaching in the capital, holding missions in the surrounding bishoprics, and performing the duties of his office of *comisario* of the Inquisition, to which he was appointed in 1752. Of his connection with the Inquisition little is known besides the bare fact itself. It is probable that his duties of *comisario* were not of great importance. The privileges of the Inquisition had been so curtailed by the reigning monarch, Carlos III, that it not only was no longer the dreaded power of former days, but, like a mortally wounded giant, was gasping for life.

It was during this period that we first hear of Fray Junipero as a sensational preacher. His sermons were now fervent exhortations to repentance. He scourged himself in the pulpit on his bared shoulders with an iron chain. He besought his auditors to examine into their own consciences and repent their sins. Every cut of the chain on his quivering flesh was a cry to repent. The emotional power of the masses is always great. Junipero's auditors were thrilled to the depths of their hearts; they sobbed and cried aloud. One day a man among them, unable longer to endure the sight of the cruel whipping Fray Junipero was giving himself, rushed to the pulpit, seized the chain from the friar's hand, and taking his stand in the chancel, stripped himself to the waist and, while unmercifully applying the chain to his own shoulders, exclaimed, "I am the ungrateful sinner, who should do penance for my many sins, and not the padre who is a saint."

So great was the force of the blows he dealt himself that he fell exhausted. He lived only long enough to receive the sacrament, and then expired. Among other methods of self-chastisement that Junipero employed was beating his bared breast with a stone, while holding aloft in his left hand a crucifix. This was called "the act of contrition." The

severity of the blows he dealt himself caused many to fear he would fall dead in the pulpit. Often when he spoke of purgatory and the pains of hell, he would light a large taper having four wicks and place the burning wax next to his skin, holding it there until the smell of the scorched flesh reached his terror stricken audience.

It was not only in public that Junipero chastised himself. In the still hours of night, he often slipped from his cell and sought a remote corner in the choir gallery where he scourged himself with his chain. Sometimes the sound of the blows penetrated to the cells of the slumbering monks and awakened them. The most curious of their number then would creep to the gallery to discover the penitent, and, recognizing Junipero, would steal softly back again, filled with wonder. Not satisfied with these self-inflicted chastisements, Junipero habitually wore under his friar's frock a rough haircloth tunic, upon which were fastened small pieces of copper.

This scourging, chain-lashing, and self-torturing to which he resorted, partly to impress his hearers, partly to crush what he calls the "beast" in his own frail body, is repulsive to contemplate, and seems to smack more of the thirteenth century than the eighteenth.

It is a relief to turn from these harsh pictures to the charming one Palou gives us of the vigils Junipero kept, even in his sleep.

His intercourse with the outside world was strictly confined to his duties as priest and missionary. During his long residence in the capital, he, ' was never known to make a social visit. This was not because worldly life was irksome to him, for he was totally unfamiliar with it, but because he moved and dwelt on a different plane

from most men. His religion was alive, a glowing spark burning in the depths of his soul; it was his one great passion in life. A certain sweetness in his character, combined with his integrity, secured him the staunch friendship of many men. But women never saw the warmer, more gracious side of his character. In his intercourse with them he remained habitually unsmiling, even stern, restricting his conversation to recounting edifying incidents in the lives of saints, which were intended to inculcate lessons of sobriety, a trait the worthy friar seems to have considered absent from the average feminine bosom.

His habits were well known in the capital. When those who sought him failed to find him behind the monastery walls, they knew without making inquiry that he had left the city to preach in the bishoprics.

His journeys were not always easy or devoid of an element of danger, as when, on his way to Oaxaca, he and his companions traveled eight days in a canoe on the River Miges. They dared not venture on shore to stretch their cramped limbs or to escape the terrible heat of the sun in the shade of dense and perfumed forests, because of the "lions and tigers," (probably the puma and jaguar) which could be seen lurking near the banks. These trials were accentuated by the bites of venomous insects to which they were exposed. When they reached the first inhabited portion of that wild region, they were in a state bordering on complete exhaustion.

Many stories are told of Junipero in the various provinces where he held his missions. These stories are interesting in so far as they serve to throw additional light on the character of a man destined to occupy the most prominent place in California history.

On one occasion he had a narrow escape from death while in church. The communion wine had in some inexplicable manner been poisoned and Junipero became violently ill. He was carried to the sacristy, placed on a couch, and his vestments hurriedly removed. All

who saw him believed he would die. When his condition became known, a certain *caballero* of the parish hastily brought an antidote. Junipero, turning his head aside, resolutely refused to swallow the antidote. Later, when' he recovered, he explained apologetically to the well-intentioned *caballero* the reason of his refusal:

While these missions were in progress there occurred one of those events which mark a strange epoch in the history of the Roman Catholic church, namely, the total temporary extinction of the most powerful, most influential of its organizations. As this extraordinary event had a direct bearing on Fray Junipero's future career, it will not be out of place to devote a little attention to it.

The Expulsion of the Jesuits

I n the middle of the eighteenth century the famous Society of Jesus comprised about twenty thousand members. They could be found in all parts of the world. There was not a country, no matter how remote, or difficult of access, where the silent-footed Jesuit was not busily at work. The society possessed immense wealth; it controlled to a large extent the education of youths in many countries; among its members were the confessors of kings and princes; it exerted a powerful political influence in the civil administration of Catholic countries. The Jesuits were, in fact, at the height of their power and their fame when their downfall was decreed. The causes that brought this about were many and varied, but among them may be mentioned the accusation that the Jesuits converted their missionary stations into commercial centers and conducted bold speculations, more lucrative to their order than to their country. They were also accused of avoiding the payment of tithes by false representations of the conditions of their missions—a fact which the Franciscan friars first brought to the attention of Spanish royalty. The storm was long in brewing.

In France Madame de Pompadour assisted materially to expedite their downfall. She was their bitter enemy, a fact which, it has been observed, was perhaps more creditable to them than otherwise. Her hatred of them was no doubt due to the firmness with which the Jesuit confessor of Louis XV. refused the king absolution unless the Pom-

padour were dismissed from court. Nor did the society find so staunch an ally in Marie Therese as it might well have expected, for she had been educated by Jesuits and was one of their ardent admirers. Yet we find the Austrian empress writing to the youthful Marie Antoinette, her daughter, this cautious advice:

As a matter of fact, the sagacity of the queen could not but recognize the menace to the states in the Jesuits' thirst for power, and in the manifold strifes and disturbances of which they were the cause.

But strangely enough, it was in the Spanish Peninsula, where their dominion seemed too firmly established ever to be uprooted, that the most powerful blow was dealt the order. Carlos III. of Spain issued a mandate for the expulsion from his dominions in Europe, Asia, and America, of all the members of the Society of Jesus. It was further decreed that any Jesuit who should, without the king's express leave, return to Spanish dominions under any pretext whatever, even that of having resigned from the society and being absolved from the vows, would be treated as a proscrip, incurring, if a layman, the penalty of death, and, if a priest, that of confinement at the option of the ordinaries.

It was in the summer of 1767 that the Jesuits in New Spain learned of the calamity that had overtaken their order. They numbered in the provinces 678 members, of whom over half were natives of America, who had never been beyond the confines of their country. To be suddenly driven into exile, and without adequate means of support, to be deserted in this extremity by the Pope himself, who, fearing the

burden of maintaining so many poverty stricken priests, forbade them to seek shelter in his dominions, was, indeed, a bitter hardship.

The carrying out of the king's mandate in the provinces of New Spain fell to the lot of the Marquis de Croix, who had been appointed viceroy the previous year. He was reputed an upright, able man, with a pronounced liking for the delicacies of the table and good wine, of which latter there was a remarkably fine supply in the viceregal cellar. That he was bold and swift of resource in emergencies, the following anecdote related of him, while he was still in Spain, will show. He had incurred the disapproval of the Inquisition and was summoned suddenly to appear before that dreaded tribunal. He obeyed the summons, but, as he was holding command at the time, he took the precaution of bringing with him a squad of soldiers and fourteen cannon. He stationed his men around the inquisitorial building, and gave orders that if more than fifteen minutes elapsed from the time he entered the building until he reappeared again, they were to fire upon and demolish the entire structure. The Inquisitors evidently deemed it prudent not to detain the doughty soldier. He was dismissed "*con muchas zalemas y carabanas.*"

It may be that he was not averse to complying to the letter with his royal master's commands in regard to the expulsion of the Jesuits from New Spain, for he appears to have done so in a most thorough manner. He invited the *audencia* to come to the palace for the purpose of conferring on confidential state matters of importance. It was an evening late in June when the meeting took place. The scene was not without a touch of the dramatic. Facing the *audencia*, De Croix produced a sealed package. He opened it; within was a second package, also sealed. Upon this was written, "Under penalty of death you will not open this despatch till the 24th of June at nightfall." Within the package was the royal order for the expulsion of the Jesuits from the

provinces, together with minute instructions concerning the methods to be employed in their arrest, even naming the men to whom this task should be given. A third envelope contained the following:

If the viceroy required an incentive to do his work thoroughly, he undoubtedly received it in the last clause of this royal mandate. De Croix decided to act at daybreak the following morning. Rumors of what was to occur reached the populace. Great indignation was everywhere expressed. The masses were disposed actively to assist the padres in fighting arrest. Whatever may have been the reputation of the Jesuits in Europe, or the dislike and distrust entertained for them there, in New Spain they appeared to have possessed the sympathy of the people. But the viceroy was prepared to meet any outbreak on the part of the populace. He stationed soldiers at street corners where the arrests had been made. The Jesuits were kept imprisoned in their houses until preparations were completed for their deportation. The people were told to disperse quietly and "that they were born to obey and hold their peace," a piece of information that had the effect of exasperating them to the extent of secretly planning a revolt against Spain, but its premature disclosure caused the revolt to be crushed before it was fully ripe.

June 28, the Jesuits were placed in coaches and with a strong guard to accompany them sent to Vera Cruz. The people flocked, weeping, around their carriages to say farewell. In some of the towns through which they passed their entry resembled a triumphant procession. The crowds that gathered to do them honor were so dense that the soldiers were frequently obliged to use the butt end of their muskets to force an