

nies; they may have prevented them from painting their skin, from making incisions on their chins, noses and cheeks; they may have destroyed among the great mass of the people superstitious ideas, mysteriously transmitted from father to son in certain families; but it has been easier for them to proscribe customs and efface remembrances, than to substitute new ideas in the place of the old ones.

The Indian of the Mission is secure of subsistence; and being released from continual struggles against hostile powers, from conflicts with the elements and man, he leads a more monotonous life, less active, and less fitted to inspire energy of mind, than the habits of the wild or independent Indian. He possesses that mildness of character which belongs to the love of repose; not that which arises from sensibility and the emotions of the soul. The sphere of his ideas is not enlarged, where, having no intercourse with the whites, he remains a stranger to those objects with which European civilization has enriched the New World. All his actions seem prompted by the wants of the moment. Taciturn, serious, and absorbed in himself, he assumes a sedate and mysterious air. When a person has resided but a short time in the Missions, and is but little familiarized with the aspect of the natives, he is led to mistake their indolence, and the torpid state of their faculties, for the expression of melancholy, and a meditative turn of mind.

I have dwelt on these features of the Indian character, and on the different modifications which that character exhibits under the government of the missionaries, with the view of rendering more intelligible the observations which form the subject of the present chapter. I shall begin by the nation of the Chaymas, of whom more than fifteen thousand inhabit the Missions above noticed. The Chayma nation, which Father Francisco of Pampeluna* began to reduce to subjection in the middle of the seventeenth century, has the Cumanagotos on the west, the Guaraunos on the east, and the Caribbees on the south. Their territory occupies a space along the elevated mountains of the Cocollar and the Guacharo, the banks of the Guarapiche, of

* The name of this monk, celebrated for his intrepidity, is still revered in the province. He sowed the first seeds of civilization among these mountains. He had long been captain of a ship; and before he became a monk, was known by the name of Tiburtio Redin.