

## EARLY MEXICAN AND CALIFORNIAN RELATIONS WITH JAPAN.

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Pleasant with antique memories as are the Missions of California, their history is actually wonderfully modern. Father Junipero Serra and Don Portola are eighteenth century figures, whose careers cover Napoleon's boyhood. The story of San Francisco and the Golden Gate, even if carried back to Spanish days, is not an old one; and its later growth and importance begin in the same hundred years as its first discovery. And yet the coast itself is full of Elizabethan story, from Cape Mendocino southward. Nothing seems more accidental than the late finding of this noblest of harbors. Some of the ports across the ocean with whose names we are not familiar today, are even younger than San Francisco.

There is a flavor of the new and accidental in the story of Yokohama, now a city of nearly half a million. Within the memory of man it was a mere fishing hamlet, "across the bay"—as the name actually signifies—from the considerable town of Kanagawa. After the treaty ports were opened fifty odd years ago, Kanagawa proved a dangerous spot for a foreign settlement because it lay on the high road between the eastern and western capitals, and the warlike retinues of the nobles were accustomed to pass through it. Several assassinations unfortunately took place, and foreign merchants of their own accord preferred to avoid the settlement and move elsewhere.

Hongkong is another very new place. I have known men who were in charge of the operations when this barren isle at the mouth of the Canton River was converted into a modern city, free from the international complications that were always arising in the crowded city of Canton. All three of these world ports are strangely new, if we consider the history that clusters around them. To understand Yokohama we must know about the founding of Tokyo and the astonishing record of its bureaucratic centralization, which unified Japan. Tokyo or Yedo is but a few decades younger than Manila.

Much of the early voyaging on this side of the Pacific was carried on with a mistaken idea of the size and nature of the great ocean. As soon as Luzon became a Spanish possession, and the

arrival of the yearly galleon was looked for in New and Old Spain, largely because of the valuable spices that it brought from the Far East, the Spanish king and his advisers grew concerned over the safety of the vessel and its escort. Philip was afraid of French and English buccaneers, who would cross from Newfoundland by the supposed Straits of Anian, and swoop down on the galleon from the north. He imagined that their course would lie along the coasts of Japan and China, and conceived the possibility of conquering that littoral. This was one of the recommendations he made to the authorities at Manila in the early days;—"That China be immediately occupied by Spain, to circumvent the French and English buccaneers."

It was not until 1584, five years after the redoubtable Drake had captured a galleon, laden with Oriental goods, off the coast of Costa Rica that the northern route was discovered which takes advantage of the Japanese *Kurosiwo*, or "black stream." Francisco de Gali came home by this route, taking 204 days to reach Mexico by way of Cape Mendocino; and henceforth it became the regular trade route. The first vessels to return to this coast from the conquered Philippines came by the Ladrões, and sighted land at Santa Catalina off the southern coast of California.

Thereafter all kind of adventures and complications became possible and likely to these old-time vessels sailing northeast from Luzon by way of the Black Stream; and a notable occurrence took place in the year 1596, which left stinging memories behind it, in Japan, in Luzon and also in old Spain. The yearly galleon from Manila had met with foul weather on its way east, and came to anchor off the coast of Tosa in the island of Shikoku. The captain was invited to make use of the neighboring port of Urado, but the pilot who guided him in took care to strand the vessel on a sand-bank. The "San Felipe" was thus at the mercy of the Japanese, who with the connivance of the Daimyo, Chosokabe by name, made short work of looting it. No wonder the Spanish crew lost their temper, and protested vehemently, threatening a terrible vengeance from their great king at the Escorial. These threats and war talk had a great deal to do with the later isolation of Japan.

The captain of the wrecked vessel, Landecho, made representations to the Japanese government through intermediaries, and hoped to obtain some redress; but these men helped him but little, and avarice prevailed. The ruler of Japan at the time was the great Hideyoshi, a soldier of fortune who had climbed up to the highest rung of the state ladder, and acted as if there was no emperor over him. The Taiko, as he was called, sustained the extraordinary claim made by the Tosa baron that all stranded vessels and wrecks

became the property of the Japanese authorities. The cargo of the "San Felipe" had been estimated at a million and a half crowns when it left Manila, and perhaps half a million had been jettisoned. Possibly it was worth at least six hundred thousand crowns to the Japanese as it lay stranded at Urado, the modern Kochi.

Leaving his subordinates to struggle as best they could for the rescue of the plundered cargo, Landecho went up to the capital, Miaco (Kyoto), by way of Osaka, accompanied by the Franciscan fathers who had sailed with him. In this great commercial emporium, which remains to-day the center of Japanese trade and shipping, they found a Franciscan mission established. Three years before, the governor of the Philippines had sent an embassy to Hideyoshi, with handsome gifts. Accompanying it were several Franciscan fathers, who had been allowed to remain in the country while negotiations were pending, provided they did not attempt to proselytize. There was another reason why they could not well engage in any religious propagandism; by special stipulation the Japanese field was left to the Jesuit fathers who had been first on the field. The Pope Gregory XIII had in 1585 forbidden, under pain of excommunication, the intrusion of any other religious order into Japan.

Notwithstanding these obligations, the eager fathers used a house, which they had been allowed to build, for proselytizing, attached a chapel to it, and opened the place with as much religious pomp and circumstance as if they had been in Seville. They also proceeded to build a convent at Osaka, which they called Bethlehem, and preached openly in public "with an astonishing confidence." By their officiousness they gained the thorough ill-will of the Jesuits, and came in for rebuffs from the authorities, who had made special concessions to the men already in the field. The excuse on which the Franciscans fell back, that they were attached to a special embassy and were Spaniards first and *religieux* after, was very slim, and at the same time equivocal and dangerous. Although Portugal and Spain at this time owned allegiance to the same king, the old dislike and jealousy remained as bitter as ever, and the Jesuit missions, with the Governors of Goa and Macao behind them, had no use for Manila and the Franciscans. By the concordat of 1580, the Japanese field belonged to Portugal, and this intrusion from the Philippines was of the nature of poaching.

Dependent as they were for interpreting on men already attached to their jealous rivals, the Spanish visitors were really at the mercy of unscrupulous hangers-on at the Japanese court. And then, to culminate their misfortunes, the pilot of the "San Felipe" lost his head, and began to threaten the Tosa baron and his advisers. Pro-

ducing a map of the world, he showed the vast possessions of the Spanish king, and dwelt on the uselessness of opposing his policy or displeasing him. When asked how the king had come into possession of such huge dominions, he replied that the king's policy was to send *religieux* ahead, who converted a portion of the people; and that thus the way was prepared for the arrival of his forces, who found no difficulty, by combining with the native Christians, in securing the whole territory.

All this was carefully reported to Hideyoshi, and plunged him in a spasm of rage unusual even for him. Sometimes that imperious spirit feigned wrath to intimidate his enemies, but on this occasion there was no make-believe. The double-dealing of the Franciscans, whom he had allowed to remain in the country under certain conditions, was quite well known to him, even although he had for the time ignored it. But now his anger broke forth. "And so," he exclaimed, "I have been harboring traitors, who by the admission of their own nationals make religion a cloak for conquest." With the all-powerful Taiko in such a mood, there was little hope that Landecho would recover his stolen goods. Most of the crew and passengers of the "San Felipe" were sent back to Manila, but one Franciscan father remained behind, to suffer martyrdom at Nagasaki along with twenty-five others.

When the unfortunates returned with their story to Manila, the blame was all put on the Jesuits, who were accused, in a pamphlet scattered throughout the Spanish-speaking world, of using their whole influence to aid Portuguese commerce in Chinese-Japanese waters. With this end in view, it was said, they did not stop at calumny. Believing that their own missions depended for continuance and success wholly on Portuguese commerce, the Jesuits accused the Franciscans and Spaniards of political intrigue in order to bring about their ruin.

Father Organtino, who more than any other man had carried out the work begun by St. Francis Xavier in 1540, used his best endeavors to free his converts and brethren from the odium that attached to the newcomers. His friend, the Governor of Lower Kyoto, had an interview with Hideyoshi, and pleaded their cause. "Don't you know," said the great man, "that Mexico and the Philippines have been subjugated by those very men who landed in Tosa? These *religieux* will be followed by armaments which will assail these realms in open war. The Portuguese have obeyed my edict, published ten years ago; why do these new men appear, daring to preach what I forbid and to sap and subvert the Empire of Japan?" Governor Ishida was able to placate him in respect to the Fathers of the (Jesuit) Company, and came away with an assurance that Father Organtino might remain tranquil and easy in mind.

The account of the whole affair that was sent by way of New Spain the following year is interesting. Dr. Antonio de Morga is the writer, and it is an official document, prepared for dispatch by the annual galleon, and dated June 30, 1597. It goes on to say that the "San Felipe" sailed in July, 1596, and was lost in the port of Urado. Taikosama, the "Emperor" of the country, took all the treasure, which he coveted, and which was worth a million and a half crowns. Six barefoot friars of the order of St. Francis had been crucified at Nagasaki, along with eighteen native Christians, and had met death with great fervor; and many marvels and miracles had since been wrought by their bones. A marginal note is found here; somewhat characteristic of the pious Philip: "Let everything about the miracles be collected and a summary thereof be made in the most authentic manner."

So much for the Manila galleon that never reached Acapulco, and whose cargo, instead of furnishing goods for a three weeks' market in the Mexican port, was rifled by Japanese wreckers. Fifteen years elapse before we read of any movement on this side to establish relations with the island empire. I now come to a name familiar to all who are interested in the discovery of California; that of Sebastian Vizcaino. This man began life as a humble trader in the year 1593, and in the following year secured a permit from the Viceroy of New Spain to engage in pearl fishery in the Gulf of California. The new regime that began with the accession of Philip's successor in 1598, showed more activity in affairs Transatlantic, and Vizcaino was commissioned to sail as Captain-general on a northern voyage of discovery, the second of its kind. Leaving Acapulco in May, 1602, he landed in San Diego, went on to Point Pinos, and called the station Monterey in honor of the Viceroy who had dispatched him. He remarked the excellent straight pines and oaks on the hills there, and thought that they would make serviceable timber for the Philippine galleon. From Monterey he proceeded up the coast as far as Cape Blanco.

His interest in Asiatic commerce was to bear fruit nine years later. The government of New Spain had \$20,000 ducats set apart for the fitting up of Monterey as a station; but Vizcaino was anxious to find a port further west and closer to the Philippines, which would have made Monterey useless. He himself was a man of too slight social standing to be entrusted with ambassador's privileges; but he still remained the moving spirit in the famous expedition that was soon to sail. The embassy is known as Sotomayor's, and it actually left Acapulco in the beginning of April, 1611. But thereby hangs a tale.

The yearly galleon from Manila that sailed in the summer of 1609 carried with it the acting-viceroy of the Philippines, Don Rodrigo

Vivero y Velasco. There were three vessels in all, the flagship "San Francisco" and her two consorts, the "San Antonio" and "Santa Anna." Storms overtook the trio, and the "Santa Anna" was wrecked on the Bungo coast in the island of Kyushu. Not hopelessly, however, for next year they were able to float her. The crew found their way to Nagasaki; and met there a fellow-countryman, Sotelo, who was to become prominent later in international relations. The "San Antonio" successfully weathered the storm and held on its way, but the "San Francisco" in rounding Cape Nojima, S. E. of Yedo (Toyko), was driven ashore at Otaki about 40 miles from the capital, and lost thirty of her crew. She was a ship of a thousand tons. The remaining three hundred on board were treated hospitably, and the Prince of Satsuma, who happened to be in Yedo at the time, paid Don Rodrigo a friendly visit. The great Shogun Iyeyasu was then in retirement at Shidzuoka several days west of the capital, but his son Hidetada, second of the Tokugawa dynasty, received the Spaniards kindly, and sent them on to his father.

At this time that sagacious ruler was anxious to develop Japanese shipping and mining, and was deeply interested in the arrival of the Dons. They made three requests of a general nature. The first was the protection of Christian priests in the discharge of their religious duties; the second was the ratification of the standing alliance between the "Emperor" of Japan—as they termed the Shogun—and the King of Spain; and the last was the expulsion of the hated Hollanders, rebels to their royal master. The first two requests were granted, but a curt refusal greeted the last. On his part Iyeyasu spoke for the loan of thirty miners from New Spain, where the gold and silver processes were regarded as superior. To this Don Rodrigo replied that the request might be granted on the footing that half the products of the mines should go to the miners, and the other half be shared between the "Emperor" and his master, the King of Spain. He added that his sovereign might wish to have factors or commissioners in Japan, to look after Spanish interests; and these officials would bring with them priests of the different orders who would celebrate the offices of religion in public and have public churches.

Iyeyasu seemed favorably disposed to all but the dictation regarding the Hollanders, to which he showed marked dislike. In the employ of the Shogunate at this time was a sagacious Englishman, Will Adams, whose grave at Yokosuka, not far from Uraga is often visited by his countrymen and others, as I have done. On all points except religion the Spaniards found him a fair-spoken and friendly acquaintance. It was in a ship built at Uraga under Will Adams' directions, and manned by a Japanese crew, that the

stranded Spaniards returned to New Spain. They christened it the "San Bienventura," and it sailed on August 1, 1610, arriving at Matanchel (Mendocino) in California in less than ninety days. When the crew and passengers reached their destination, a magnificent reception awaited them. The city of Mexico wore a gala dress on the occasion.

And now this brings us back to Vizcaino and his Transpacific plans. With shipbuilding facilities promised at Uruga and other suitable places in Japan, why not go further west than Monterey? And so the twenty thousand ducats appropriation was applied to the fitting up of an embassy to Japan, entrusted to Don Sotomayor. A vessel, the "San Francisco," was provided, manned by a suitable crew and furnished with two pieces of artillery. It carried a cargo for sale in Japan; which was to call forth a protest from Luzon that he had broken faith by engaging in direct trade with the Japanese and encouraging them to build ships for the Pacific trade.

In the summer of 1611 Sotomayor and Vizcaino sighted the shores of Japan, and lost no time, after landing, in making their way to Yedo. The haughty Spaniard was imprudent enough to march to the palace with much military display. The standard of Castille floated proudly before his armed escort, and the bandsmen awoke the echoes with their trumpets; all which was displeasing to the jealously sensitive Japanese government. His excellency presented many rich gifts, and announced that he had a cargo of cloth for sale. The presents were accepted, and he was sent on to the ex-Shogun at Shidzuoka; with the warning, however, that there was to be no armed escort. In the private interview which he had with the great Iyeyasu, in retirement, yet still powerful, Sotomayor made four demands; he asked for free permission for his countrymen to construct vessels of every kind in Japan; permission to survey the coasts of the empire; the expulsion of the Hollanders; and liberty of sale for Spanish merchandise. Along with the latter should go freedom from search. We hear no more of the fourth demand, and the third was, of course, peremptorily refused. After some hesitation, the second request was granted. The Shogun took Will Adams into his confidence, who told him that in Europe such a demand would be regarded as an unfriendly act, and be rejected; but in this case, he thought, it might be allowed.

And so Vizcaino was able to make his much desired survey. It caused such an outcry that his name became indelibly associated with the embassy, and he is actually called the ambassador in the History of Charlevoix. Associated with him was the very active priest named Sotelo, who had been wrecked on the coast of Hizen some seven years before. He was allowed to settle in Saga, the

castle town of Nabeshima. When Don Rodrigo Vivero was consulting with the Yedo authorities, it was Sotelo who acted as interpreter, and helped to draft the treaty of 1610. The two made a careful survey of Central and Western Japan, completed in 1613. When Vizcaino left for home he was told that he might encourage traders to cross the Pacific; but no priests! The "San Francisco" finally got back to Mexico in January, 1614.

It might have been preceded by a vessel built under Sotelo's supervision. This indomitable spirit had been pressing upon the Shogun Hidetada the advisability of getting into direct relations with the King of Spain, and regarded himself as intrusted with a diplomatic mission to Philip III. For this end he had caused a vessel to be built at Yedo, and it actually started on its way, with a Japanese crew. Misfortunes soon overtook it, however, for it was wrecked in the bay of Yedo near Uraga, and Sotelo was brought back to the capital and imprisoned. At one time it seemed as if his life was surely forfeit, but he succeeded in securing the good services of the great lord of Sendai, the one-eyed Date Masamune, and was not only released but promoted to higher and wider activities than ever before. The story of Father Sotelo's brilliant appearances at the courts of New and Old Spain is one of the most romantic on record.

This move on the part of New Spain to establish direct relations between Acapulco and Japan was not looked upon with favor by the government at Manila, which desired to make that port the emporium for the China and Japan trade. It regarded the position of the Spaniards there as insecure, with but seven hundred soldiers in the presidio, and a hundred or two more at Ternate and Tidore, Portuguese-Spanish possessions. Near by was "a China incredibly populous and a strong and valiant Japan," to quote from a Governor's letter of the time. Both countries were interested in Mexico, China because it gave her supplies of silver for barter, and Japan because she wished to learn better methods of silver-refining.

It was in this year 1612 that proposals were actually made to change the Manila trade route from New Spain to the Cape of Good Hope. Since 1580 the two crowns of Portugal and Spain had been united and Portuguese ports were open to Spanish vessels. In a letter dated April 12, 1612, from Manila, Montesclaros offered four objections to the change. These were; the need of expensive convoys because of Dutch hostility; the continued unfriendliness of the Portuguese, at whose midway stations they should have to call; the comparative safety of the Pacific; the possibility of losing the Chinese trade by Malacca's taking the place of Manila, as

Chinese vessels might hug the Siamese coast and prefer to land their cargoes on the Malacca peninsula rather than Luzon. Montescaros recommended as preferable an improvement in the Pacific route, by making use of the isthmus of Panama. Vessels from Spain might sail on to Portobello, follow the Chagres River up to Cruces, and then transport their goods the remaining twenty miles to Panama by land. It was thence but a short sea voyage to Acapulco, the regular sailing station for the Philippine galleon.

The China trade was not considered very valuable. The silk that came to Manila and was forwarded to old Spain was regarded as inferior stuff, with no wearing quality; and it was proposed to start sericulture in Mexico. To the Mexican mines came Chinese mercury for refining, but the product was impure and full of lead. At this time the Dutch East India Company was beginning to be a power in the East; and in a few years it became the dominant commercial factor in the whole Orient. Manila sank in importance and never recovered its lead.

1. Since writing the above, I find that Mrs. Zella Nuttall has gone over much of the ground that I have covered in this paper. In Vol. IV, No. 1, of *American Archaeology and Ethnology*, University of California Publications, appears her "The Earliest Historical Relations Between Mexico and Japan," Berkeley, The University Press, 1908. The writer evidently had no adequate grasp of Japanese history or political terms, and the paper suffers throughout from annoying blunders; e. g., p. 3, "Taikun Hideyoshi" (Taiko), "Sekigakara (Sekigahara); p. 21 and foll; "Masumane" (Masamune), the mighty Lord of the Province of Oxo (Oshu), p. 8, "the Port of Uraga, the most important and flourishing port of Japan"—which it never was; p. 12, "Kino-San" (Kuno-San); p. 44, "Dashima (Deshima), etc., etc. Iyeyasu is always referred to as "emperor" although he was only retired Shogun.

But the English history in her pages is no better; e. g., p. 6, "But fifteen years had elapsed (in 1602) since Francis Drake had lain in wait at Cape St. Lucas for the galleon expected from the Philippines, and after robbing it of its treasures, abandoned its crew on the arid shores of the Peninsula of California." Cavendish is meant, who captured the "Santa Anna," Nov. 4, 1587, and left the passengers and crew at the harbor of Aguada Segura, where there was plenty of water and game, having set fire to the hulk. The crew, however, were able to put out the fire and to navigate the disabled vessel across the strait to the mainland. Again at p. 7;—"These (letters from the Japanese colony in Manila) and some gifts were intrusted (by Governor Vivero) to William Adams, who was likewise placed in command of the next Spanish

vessel which was sent to Japan." Now Will Adams was never in Manila, although he visited the Loo-Choo islands and Siam, and was twice in Cochin China.

Was Vizcaino of gentle birth, and of high enough grade in 1611 to be sent in charge of the embassy to Japan? Mr. Richman does not seem to have seen Mrs. Nuttall's pamphlet, and makes no use of her results. He refers to Vizcaino as a "humble trader" in 1593, and in a note (22) to his "California Under Spain and Mexico," cites the Viceroy Monterey, who in a letter dated August, 1595, refers to Vizcaino as too "obscure" to be intrusted with certain responsibilities. And yet (note 34) his words *seem* to imply that Vizcaino was in charge. "On April 7, 1611, Viceroy Velasco informed the King that according to royal order, Sebastian Vizcaino had set out on an embassy to Japan." Charlevoix in his history as quoted by Murdoch, calls him contemptuously "Skipper Vizcaino." Of course Vizcaino was the moving spirit; but he was not of ambassadorial grade. Using the best Japanese sources, Murdoch and Yamagata name Sotomayor as ambassador. (Vid. page 480 of their history, *footnote*.) Mrs. Nuttall declares that he was of gentle birth, p. 11: "Mexican historians have differed as to the name of the ambassador appointed, but an original document preserved in the archives of the Indies proves, beyond a doubt, that it was General Sebastian Vizcaino, who in this document is twice mentioned as being a son of the viceroy." I fear there is some blunder here.

Mrs. Nuttall has evidently not seen Meriwether's "Life of Date Masamune," in Vol. XXI, of the Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan. Sotelo ended his romantic career at the stake, being burned alive at Omura (not "Bomura," Nuttall, p. 44) in Shimabara, where so many Christians were put to death. He had given no little trouble to the Manila authorities. King Philip refused to confirm his appointment as Bishop of Eastern Japan. He opened a Seminary for Japanese in Manila and one day calmly took possession of a house, placed a bill upon it, and said mass. The Philippine authorities were unfriendly to his efforts to develop relations with the Japanese. "It is rash," wrote Fernando de Los Rios Coronel, procurator-general of the Philippines, "to encourage the Japanese to establish relations with New Spain, thus teaching a barbarous nation how to navigate." (Blair and Robertson, History of the Philippines, Vol. XXXII.)

It is interesting to read Fray Diego Aduarte's uncomplimentary account of Will Adams in his "History of the Dominican Province of the Holy Rosary," translated by Blair & Robertson, Vol. XXXII, p. 32: "A certain English heretic named Guillermo Adam, who

knew the Japanese language and how to please the emperor by giving him an account of European affairs, vomited forth the hate which he felt against our holy faith whenever he had opportunity. He told him that the plans of the king our Lord is to send religious first, in order to make the way plain for soldiers, citing for example Nueva España and the Philippines, although, in point of fact, neither there nor here did religious precede, but invaders who intended to conquer the country." Almost the very words of pilot de Landa of the wrecked "San Felipe," himself a Spaniard!

2. *Governors of the Philippines.* Rodrigo de Vivero, a native of Laredo, became page to the Queen of Spain. He served as an official in Mexico and was appointed Governor *ad interim*, July 7, 1607. Arrived at Manila June 15, 1608, and served as Governor till Easter, 1608. He was succeeded by Don Juan de Silva, a native of Trujillo, and knight of the order of Santiago. Arriving at Manila in April, 1609, he served as Governor till his death in April 19, 1616.

3. The sequel of all these efforts to establish commercial relations between Japan and New Spain is dramatically told in Richard Cocks's Diary, Dec. 6, 1615 (quoted by Murdoch & Yamagata, p. 603): "Also you may understand how a ship arrived at Kwanto (i. e. Uraga) in Japan this year, which came out of New Spain and brought good quantity of broadcloth, kerseys, perpetuanos, and raz of Milan, which they offer at a low rate; but I think it is the last that ever will be brought from thence, for it is said the Spaniards made proclamation with eight drums at Acapulco and other parts that, upon pain of death, there should never any more Japanese come nor trade into New Spain, and both they and all other strangers of what nation soever should forthwith avoid out of all parts of New Spain. But in requital hereof the Emperor of Japan hath made proclamation, on pain of death, that never hereafter any Japanese shall trade or go into New Spain, and commanded the friars or padres which came in this ship should avoid out of his dominions; for the truth is, he is no friend neither to Spaniards nor Portuguese." (I have modernized the spelling.)

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