

CHAPTER IV.

PHYSICAL APPEARANCE.

Physical Appearance of the Natives—Their Stature, Strength, Weight, Complexion—Their Teeth, Hair, Dress, Ornaments—Abbé Domenech's Book—Fish-eating Indians not weak in the Legs—Bathing common; Skill of the Ahts in Diving—Vapour-Bath unknown—Water colder than in England—Traces of old Spanish Settlement—Painting Faces—Custom of Moulding the Head—Appearance of the Natives in Infancy and Youth—Rapid Decay of Manly Strength—The Faces of the Ahts expressive of Settled Character.

*. . . And yet more pleased have, from your lips,
Gathered this fair report of them who dwell
In that retirement.*—WORDSWORTH.

THE next part of my subject, which I hope will not be uninteresting to the reader, is the physical appearance and characteristics of these people. As their only article of dress is a blanket, and I was constantly among them, I can speak with some confidence as to their physique. The external features of all the natives along this coast are much alike, but one acquainted with them can generally distinguish the tribes to which individuals belong. I have noticed that the slaves have a meaner appearance than the free men, and that those few small tribes who dwell inland