

P R E F A C E.

of this peninsula, as the Spaniards have hitherto reduced. He gives us an account of the gulf, its coasts, and islands. He enlarges upon the soil and climate, the natural history, the pearl fishery, and the manna of this country, which is a new discovery. Then follows a very distinct and curious detail of the nations and languages, the tempers and manners of the Californians, with their policy in peace and war, and lastly, he treats of their religion; in respect to which he observes, that those who resided on the continent, were, when the Spaniards found them, entirely free from any idolatrous notions, had few or no ceremonies, and yet had some very singular speculative opinions, but that it was otherwise in the islands, where, through the arts and frauds of a particular race of men, the people were grievously enthralled in superstitious slavery.

The second part contains the history of California, from the time of its first discovery, to the sending thither the jesuits. This discovery was made by order of the famous Hernan Cortes, who went thither in person in 1536, and landing in the gulf,