

SAN GABRIEL ARCHANGEL.

Some of the ruins of the Californian missions are very extensive, those of San Luis Rey particularly so. These have recently been restored with care, and a movement is on foot to preserve others. The movement includes nearly every thinking man in the southern countries, for, if he is not inspired by a love of archaeology, he, at least, appreciates the fact that the missions attract a large number of tourists. A few of the missions have been able to weather the storms of time, and, though they have seen three flags over them, remain steadfast in their seat as the Vicar of Bray. One may still hear through the tranquil air, the clear summons of their bells and sit in worship or respectful attention on the rude benches where generations have found solace.

And what epicures these mission founders were! Drop yourself down anywhere in Southern California, and if there is a dainty stream, a fertile valley, a charming scene, you may ask the first man you meet to show you the mission. Be sure it is not far off. If you see a cottage in that neighborhood where the roses clamber highest and bloom most thickly, where the garden, shaded with tall palms, is one snow-bank of calla lilies, or shaggy as a terrier with chrysanthemums, go right in and ask for the padre. The wise ones no longer plant their churches on a rock, for they remember the parable of the sower. It is pathetic to visit the ruins of some extensive mission, perhaps now choked with prickly cactus or overgrown with wild sunflowers, and to think what ecclesiastical hopes fell there. But one can visit here and there a mission still virile, though, no doubt, but the shadow of its ancient glory. One of these missions, in some respects the most remarkable of all the survivors, is that of San Gabriel Archangel, which nestles in the valley below our Californian home of last winter, and to which one afternoon we paid a visit.