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INTRODUCTION

THE Indians treated in the present volume are representatives of three linguistic stocks — the Luiseños and the Cahuilla of southern California, the Mono of the east-central part of that state as far south as Owens lake, and the Paviotso who live in scattered groups in Nevada and California, especially about Pyramid and Walker lakes in the former state, all belonging to the Shoshonean family, while the Diegueños of extreme southern California are Yuman, and the Washo at the elbow of the California-Nevada boundary form a distinct linguistic family known as Washoan, although some students prefer to class them as part of the far-flung Hokan family. In addition to the Luiseño-Cahuilla division, which includes also the Juaneños and the Cupeño, the Southern California Shoshoneans comprise the Serranos and the Gabrielinos; but all these groups were so nearly alike in culture and in physical features that to treat them individually would result in little more than repetition.

Living for the greater part in vast region that may be characterized as semi-arid, one would suppose that, like Indians of similar environment elsewhere, they would have acquired at least the rudiments of agriculture. On the contrary, they seem to have been contented to gain livelihood by the least possible exertion, taking whatever none too prodigal Nature had to offer in the way of the smaller mammals, together with reptiles, insects, larvæ, and the seeds and fruits of desert or mountain growths, while the more northerly of the tribes, living in region of extensive lakes, gathered fish and waterfowl in quantities as an important part of their food supply, as did the Southern California Shoshoneans and the Diegueños whose territory reached to the coast. All in all, the culture of these groups, and especially of the Mono-Paviotso, or Plateau Shoshoneans, was as little developed as that of any tribes within the limits of the United States, if not in North America. In one respect, however, they manifested esthetic taste and ability to marked degree, for the basketry of some of their women gave and still gives expression to high artistic sense. While earthenware was also manufactured to some extent, it was in no way comparable with that of the Pueblos of New Mexico and Arizona. All the groups were inclined to be peaceable, largely because they had little to tempt the avarice of other Indians, and the only pretense at hostility exhibited

among themselves was the result of petty bickerings which rarely resulted fatally.

The Diegueños were among those gathered into missions by the Spanish friars of the seventeenth century; indeed the first mission established in California, that of San Diego, founded by Fray Junípero Serra in 1769, was for the purpose of christianizing the Diegueños, who took their name from this mission seat. The Luiseños, Gabrielinos, and Juaneños in similar manner were named respectively from missions San Luis Rey, San Gabriel, and San Juan Capistrano, whose neophytes met practically the same fate as those of the mission establishments northward as far as San Francisco bay.

So extensive is the area occupied by the native inhabitants considered in this volume, and so scattered are they, that the material has required much longer time in the gathering than was found to be necessary in the case of some of the more populous tribes with highly developed culture involving an elaborate ceremonial system. In all this work, as during many years, I have been fortunate in having the continued and valued collaboration of Mr. W.E. Myers.

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