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TRAVELS IN BOLIVIA;

WITH A

TOUR ACROSS THE PAMPAS

TO

BUENOS AYRES, &c.

BY

L. HUGH DE BONELLI,

OF HER BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S LEGATION.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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115
116
117

TRAVELS IN BOLIVIA.

CHAPTER I.

Departure from Southampton—Arrival at Jamaica—
Scene at the Theatre—An Execution—Slaves—St.
Thomas—The Continent of South America first
appears in sight—Santa Marta—Cartagena—Chagres.

ON a bright morning in the beautiful month of May, when the soft and genial atmosphere has served to banish from our minds the severities of a past winter, and its long train of consequences, and we become young again, and sanguine in the anticipation of warmer days and brighter skies, I packed up bag and baggage to undertake, as a voluntary exile, for the space of three or more years, a voyage to the shores of the distant Pacific. I was

urged to the determination by a very great desire of acquiring a knowledge of the countries in the New World, which had been wholly withheld, or but partially afforded, by antecedent travellers. To obtain this end, I gladly secured the opportunity of personal observation, by accepting the office of Secretary to H. B. M. *Chargé d'Affaires*, at the head-quarters of the Bolivian Republic; and under such flattering auspices, I anticipated every facility towards the attainment of the object I had in view. After undergoing the painful ordeal of parting from friends and relatives, and bidding adieu, perhaps for ever, to long-remembered faces, I set sail from Southampton.

After a prosperous voyage from England, we drew near the beautiful island of Jamaica; crags, hills, mountains, and vales followed each other in quick succession, as the panorama passed rapidly before us. Every now and then a sudden ray of light would illuminate plantations of well cultivated cane, when the extensive works and comfortable habitations adjoining appeared in bold relief against the cocoa forest in the background; whilst snugly anchored in some

safe creek might be seen a West Indiaman laden with her luscious cargo, and ready to depart on her homeward voyage. All at once our steam is stopped, a boat approaches with a black pilot on board. Again we start amidst the shoals. Port Royal is close at hand, with her sweeping batteries frowning from the water's edge.

As we coast along within a stone's throw of the shore, we pass the line of battle or guard ship, commanded by the Commodore of the station, and near to which are anchored two steam vessels of war. A salute is fired as a high government officer is signalled. Our course is now shaped within the piles, and as we sweep round the bay or spacious harbour, we disturb from his repose many a ponderous pelican, who flaps his huge wings and takes to flight, then skims the water's brink, and darts upon its prey. Another battery is passed, after which a forest of masts appears, and close at hand is seen the picturesque city of Kingston; at the back, suburban houses, cottages, and gardens happily blend together in the pleasing picture; whilst large tracts of cultivated lands, amongst which beautiful villas are occa-

sionally interspersed, extend to the very base of the first range of hills, receiving the invigorating sea-breeze, which renders the air of this locality so particularly salubrious. The small town and barrack of Newcastle are here situated, the winter quarters of European troops, who remove from their high position in the summer time to an encampment in the plains beneath.

From this range of hills tower the mountains which give such a grandeur to the scene, adding, by the purple richness of their tints, the charms of colour to the many other beauties of this delightful country. Some of our passengers had now reached their destination;—I, together with many others, paid but a temporary visit to the Island, before proceeding on our way to Chagres. We were soon escorted to the Hotel of Madame Feron, where I was fortunate enough to obtain a sleeping room facing the north; a luxury which is fully appreciated in these southern climes. I was waited upon by a fat elderly *garçon*, who seemed to be butler, *majordomo*, and everything else—a gentleman of colour, as he called himself, and as black as a coal. He had lived, as

he told me, some time in England under the *cognomen* of Mr. Sambo Smut Miller, and seemed very anxious to do for me all the honours of "de big house," of which, he informed me he understood "ticlar well de sarvice." After indulging in a bath, and partaking of the luxuries of a West Indian breakfast, followed by a mild Havannah in a rocking-chair, the bill of fare of an American theatre was placed in my hands, which determined me as to the character of my evening's amusement.

In company with two or three *compagnons de voyage*, I first of all sallied forth to see the Lions of the place, and procure certain necessaries for our transit across the Isthmus. The streets and lanes of the city are, with scarcely any exception, as bad as they can possibly be, notwithstanding their all being built at right angles, and of a very convenient breadth. Good houses are occasionally to be met with in Hanover Street, and the neighbourhood about it. In the High Street may be found large stores, outfitters, clock-makers, with a very average run of business, together with the Commercial Hotel, which is now under the superintendence of a French-

man who was formerly cook on board one of the steamers. This house is conducted according to the American style. Everything is there enormously dear, with a great absence of real comfort. It is the great *rendezvous* of the captains of the Merchant Marine. In addition to the dismal appearance of the shops and houses, which seem to have seen better days, and are now fast falling into decay and ruin, the town possesses a great disadvantage in its pavements of white sand, into which the pedestrian, much to his annoyance, is continually sinking. The glare, too, from these pavements, during the oppressive heat of a noonday sun, is so painful to the eyes, that my rambles about the place were anything but agreeable. We bought a box of excellent cigars, at the rate of 12 dollars the thousand, and then hastened home to prepare for dinner, and our evening's amusement.

We enjoyed our repast amazingly; the wines, which did our host great credit, being delightfully iced, and very refreshing. We were kept the whole time in a perfect roar of laughter, from the facetious jokes, and amusing style of narration, of the aforesaid

gentleman, who after taking the best part of three bottles of wine, and three or four glasses of French brandy, was in the highest state of spirits imaginable, which soon began to develop themselves in songs, hornpipes, and reels, much to our diversion. We persuaded our recruit to accompany us to our box at the theatre; but before leaving the house we completely metamorphosed him by dressing him up in some of our own clothes, so that he was at length turned out a regular beau.

The theatre was densely crowded; and nothing but black heads and white teeth were to be seen in every corner of the house, except in the boxes, which were well filled with elegant ladies, officers in uniform, and civilians. We were late in our arrival, and only just in time to witness the scene of Virginius raving before Appius Claudius, after having stabbed his child. The audience were very much affected, and tears were flowing copiously from many an eye. Miller had placed himself in the front of the box, and was beginning to participate in the general emotion, when all at once he was recognised by the negroes in the pit and

gallery. They immediately open their eyes and mouths in astonishment, and cry out at the top of their voices, "Ho! who dat? Massa Miller?" After this there is a general roar of applause—shout after shout continues for some time, with cries of "Bravo! bravo!—Hurrah! hurrah!—Miller for ebber!" The worthy who had attracted all this attention most graciously acknowledges the compliment by several profound bows, and displays, with much apparent ostentation, a conspicuous gold ring, which we had placed upon his hand, over a white kid glove. This elicits still greater applause. At length, when silence is restored, after all are pretty well hoarse with shouting, some one in the pit begins to whistle vociferously. This sets Miller in a tremendous passion, who calls out to the offending gentleman, "Who dat insult a gemman who trabble him all ober de world." This little bit of by-play was even too much for the gravity of the actors. Virginius rolled backwards and forwards, ready to split his sides with convulsive laughter; Virginia, though she had been first killed in due form, according to the sad *dénouement* of the painful tragedy, showed

evident signs of participation in the general mirth, and actors and audience joined in one united burst of merriment. This state of confusion, in which hisses, hootings, and whistling mixed themselves with the uproarious applause, seemed likely to last for some time; and, anticipating a more serious disturbance if we remained longer, partly by persuasion and partly by force, we managed to get our man away from the position where his presence had so completely broken in upon the order of the evening's proceedings, and hurried him home, where we left him, safe and sound at last in the bosom of his family.

After the adventure of the evening, we were discussing its strange features over a glass of iced *sangaree* and a cigar, when we learnt that three black fellows were to be hanged early the next morning for murder, committed on the road to Spanish Town upon the person of a carpenter, who had received a large sum of money, and was carrying it home. The culprits were condemned on circumstantial evidence alone, though the proofs of their guilt were very satisfactory. This opportunity of witnessing an execution caused our party to determine to be present upon

the occasion. After a good night's repose—thanks to the mosquito curtains, which effectually kept our tiny tormentors at bay—we were awoke early by the continued bustle of passers-by, hastening to the great square which was to be the scene of the awful event of the day. Calling up my companions, we were soon in motion, and joining the throng of persons in the street, made the best of our way to the great *rendezvous*. In the centre of the spacious square, around which were congregated the principal buildings of the place—such as the church, theatre, market-place, and barracks for the West India black regiments,—we came in full view of the preparations for the sad event which was so soon to be transacted. A stage and scaffolding had been erected, and four regiments were drawn up in the square, whose glittering and conspicuous accoutrements were well contrasted with the black crowd of men, women, and children, who had assembled in every part of the square whence a view of the execution could be procured. Many of the women sobbed aloud, and much sympathy was manifested for the unfortunate criminals.

As the time approached for carrying the

sentence into effect, a general buzz ran through the crowd, and presently all eyes were turned in a particular direction. In a cart, seated on their coffins, appeared the condemned criminals, dressed in white; their downcast countenances and their nervous deportment plainly showing the painful feelings which were struggling within them. Near them were seated the hangman and his deputy, together with a small escort of soldiers. When the cart had arrived at the place where the gallows had been erected, the two functionaries immediately sprang upon the platform, and placed a coffin under each drop. The poor men, who were about to suffer death, were so overwhelmed with terror at seeing the preparations which were being made, that it was found necessary to assist them in ascending the steps. They were then placed upon their coffins, and the ropes adjusted; when at a given signal, the coffins were thrust from under them, and the two bodies, after a few convulsive movements, hung motionless from the beam, showing that the spark of life had fled.

The immense concourse of spectators were

deeply interested in this melancholy scene, during the whole of which a profound silence prevailed. Just after the fatal termination of the day's proceedings, some ill-disposed person in the crowd made a sudden rush, exclaiming at the same time—"Here they come." This had the effect of creating a regular panic; and a general scream, which followed, only served to increase the confusion. I found myself carried off my legs by the force of the mob, imagining that some mad bull had broken loose, so great was the terror and alarm depicted on every countenance. On every hand I beheld women and children thrown down, and trodden under foot, without a chance of their being rescued; and before it was possible to assure the people that they were foolishly yielding to a false alarm, many had been seriously injured, if not killed, in the awful state of pressure to which they had been subjected. My friends and myself being separated in the confusion of the moment, we arrived at our hotel singly, glad to find ourselves and each other not much the worse for the part we had been reluctantly compelled to take in the scene from which we had but just escaped.

Whilst we were taking our breakfast, poor Miller made his appearance, with a chop-fallen countenance, and a wet cloth bandaged round his head, complaining of a racking headache. He began to upbraid us with our conduct in making him drunk, and bringing upon him all the subsequent sufferings he had undergone. We all expressed our sorrow at the sad result, which we had never contemplated, and sincerely condoled with him on the misfortunes we had been partly the means of occasioning. As I had been commissioned to deliver a small parcel at a house a few miles distant, I proposed to the poor invalid that he should serve me as a guide, hoping that the exercise and the fresh air might remove the unpleasant effects of the previous evening. We accordingly started, and whilst on the way, Miller, making use of some excuse, prevailed on me to stop at a house in the outskirts of the city, which I soon discovered to be his own.

I found it exceedingly clean and comfortable, and was introduced to Mrs. Miller, who, with her little black progeny, came forward to pay their respects to me. This good lady told me how her husband, when he

got among gentlemen, and began to talk about England, invariably carried matters too far, by a too free indulgence in the spirituous drinks with which they treated him. Miller, whose countenance too well betokened his late potations, here drew a deep sigh, and said nothing. He was particularly relieved when I proposed to cut short the visit, which I did after presenting each of the young ones with a dollar a-piece, making them exhibit their beautiful white teeth to great advantage. I was particularly struck with the ridiculous resemblance between father and children; the latter presenting an exact counterpart, in miniature, of their parent's physiognomy.

Having taken leave of the family, I proceeded, in company with my *cicerone*, to execute the errand which had brought me so early from home. Our road lay through a large collection of clean cottages, to which small gardens were attached, in which everything was laid out with the strictest regard to regularity and neatness. We passed also several farms situated in smiling meadows and pasture land, where many herds of cattle and flocks of thriving sheep were indus-

triously grazing; the owners, with their happy faces, as they stood at their homestead doors saluting the passer-by, or offering him a hearty welcome into their comfortable homes. I noticed several females, whilst pursuing their avocations, to be showily dressed, and decorated with large gold earrings, and other ornaments, thus bespeaking a happy ease in circumstances. And these people, who now seemed surrounded with every comfort, and whose mode of life promised every enjoyment they could desire—these people were the once wretched, mangled, and ill-treated African negroes, torn from their native land, and every tie of affection, to become the base slaves of their fellow-man. But the glorious act of emancipation has set them free. The spirit of the Gospel has at last been acted upon, and now they breathe a new existence. The influence of education, honourable industry, and the possession of wealth, has made them what they are—I assert, without fear of contradiction—as virtuous and loyal a class of persons as any to be found within the dominions of the British crown.

The profits of the planters who formerly

drew their princely fortunes out of the sweat and toil of their miserable slaves, to dissipate them in vice and luxury in far distant lands, have now fallen to the usual average of commercial gain. These have learnt, in their turn, to know the value of that labour which they exacted from their fellow-men, persecuted and goaded to their tasks contrary to every divine law and maxim of sound morality; and now they find themselves under the necessity of paying for it as equitable a sum as they would for any other commodity, and of thus realizing only sufficient profit to satisfy the desires of reasonable men,—not the avaricious cravings of the rapacious votaries of princely magnificence. These West Indian nabobs have now ceased to be; but, phoenix-like, from their ashes has arisen a new generation of human beings, and he that was once the poor, pitied, and degraded African slave, is now the free, intelligent, and industrious British subject, true to his God and his country, and to those blessed laws and institutions that have made him free.

These reflections were suggested in the course of our drive by the remarks elicited

during a conversation with my trusty guide, and fully corroborated by my own personal observation. After having performed the object of our journey, we returned safe to the hotel, my companion being glad to find that the influence of the country air had wholly cured him of his headache, and myself well pleased to have gained much useful information, and to have satisfied my eyes with the blessed fruits of negro emancipation. I was soon informed by my friends of the arrival of the steamer, and the necessity of our immediate embarkation, as she would leave the island when the mails had been taken on board. After satisfying all demands we parted with much regret from our friend, poor Miller, who blubbered like a child at the thought of our leaving him.

When we found ourselves safe on board, we looked about us, and began to discover many new faces amongst our fellow-passengers. Amongst them were a beautiful Spanish *senorita*, accompanied by her mother and servant; a French fencing master and his son, a charming little boy; and two Germans, one of whom, the instant he saw me, rushed into my arms, to my great asto-

nishment, calling me the *sehr gut* English gentleman who had relieved him, and given him all sorts of good things, in the great Canādo, on the road to Mexico. The circumstance was as follows:—

One evening, being in company with two military friends, with whom I was travelling to the capital of Montezuma (for, gentle reader, I was not, at this time, quite a novice in the art of travelling, but had already explored many interesting portions of the New World), we made a halt for the night, after a fatiguing hot ride through the intricacies of this mountain-pass, at a small Indian village within its precincts. Having lighted our fire, and proceeded to select our evening's meal from a variety of game, the produce of our morning's sport, consisting of parrots, squirrels, and *carpinteros*, a very beautiful kind of woodpecker, we were deeply occupied in the process of cleaning, plucking, and trussing, for the evening's bivouac. Whilst all this was going on, one of our scouts informed us that a poor, beggarly wanderer, to all appearance a European, was passing close at hand. I immediately started up, and following the directions of

my servant, soon overtook him. Light hair and white skin, though much sunburnt and freckled, proclaimed his European birth, his outward man exhibiting the clearest indications of the most squalid misery and abject want. Not answering in English, French, Italian, or Spanish, I found it was necessary, in order to make him understand, to have recourse to some other language. Mustering, therefore, for the occasion, my little stock of German, I drew forth from him a long rambling story, the greater part of which I was unable to comprehend. However, imagining from his appearance that food and shelter was what he most needed, I conducted him back to my companions, who took compassion on his apparent misery, loaded him with an abundance of good things, and subscribed a dollar a-piece for the alleviation of his present wants. The wayfarer then departed, well stocked with provisions, and full of gratitude for our timely kindness and consideration.

He now appeared before me under different auspices. The wretched mendicant of the Mexican Canādo was now metamorphosed into a cabin-passenger, and a

gentleman of distinction. He was very profuse in his expressions of gratitude for the services I had formerly rendered him, and I found him an excellent companion, and jovial in the extreme. He now explained to me the cause of his altered appearance since the time we had last met. It appeared that his avocation had made it necessary for him to visit yearly the capital of Mexico, with some hundreds of horses from the States of Columbia and North America. On one occasion he had been waylaid by the robbers who infest the territories of that Republic, and left for dead, after being stripped and wounded; whilst one of his companions, a countryman of his, had been killed. Having suffered many injuries, and a great loss of doubloons in this adventure, he resolved, ever afterwards, to adopt a plan which should ensure his being unmolested. As his presence in the capital, where he effected rapid sales, and realized large sums of money, was a signal for these desperadoes to look out for his departure, he had many times eluded their vigilance by leaving Mexico in the disguise of a beggar, having secreted on his person several hundred ounces of gold.

So completely had his artifice succeeded, that on more than one occasion he had received from these robbers a *madio* in the way of charity. It was whilst thus wandering about in his disguise that I had met him; and in the course of the recital of the causes which had led to it, I was much diverted to find I had been so effectually duped, in common with others.

After we had been a short time at sea, the weather became excessively cold and unpleasant. We had a succession of slight gales, which made the vessel pitch and roll, much to our discomfort, and a continuance of rain which rendered the atmosphere hazy, and hindered our prospect. As these subsided, the island of St. Thomas began to show itself, with its numerous bays and outlets, once the retreat of hordes of pirates who infested these seas, to the terror of every one who came within their reach. After passing the small straits, under the guns of a Danish brig-of-war, we entered the spacious harbour, in front of which, situated amongst the hills, is the neat and cleanly town of Port Franco, the capital of the island. The steamer drew up alongside of the Company's coal *depôt*,

at some distance from the town; when, in company with a friend, I jumped ashore, to proceed on an exploring expedition amongst the rocks, in search of lobsters. As we ascended upon the heights, through a maze of aloes and cactus, deep beneath us was seen the charming little bay, like an inland lake, surrounded by an amphitheatre of rocks, rising one above another, and covered with pretty dwarf trees, aromatic shrubs, and beautiful flowers; and at the base of all this was a soft carpet of glittering sand, where lay scattered a multitude of variegated shells, bathed by the white foam of the retiring tide.

Here and there the blue waters reflected in their crystal clearness many a grotto of rocks that stood above their surface, whose beautifully modelled forms were studded by myriads of shell-fish, which clung in fantastic shapes to their projecting points, whilst in the deep channels which the waves had traced, the fish which had lately sported and revelled in their native element, were now snared and caught, and remained high and dry in the spots where the retiring waves had left them. Considering that the place seemed

to promise us every success, we endeavoured to secure some of these denizens of the deep; but, being unprovided with the proper means for taking them, we found ourselves obliged to return to the ship completely bespattered with mud and dirt, having made only one capture—that of a lobster of eight pounds weight. We had no sooner made our report to those on board than a party was formed for the purpose of indulging in the sport, the result of which was the capture of five-and-twenty or more fish of various kinds in a very short time. Our stay at this island being limited to merely sufficient time for procuring an extra supply of coals, and for taking in the mails, I determined to avail myself of the short period allowed me for paying it a visit.

The first object which presented itself to me on landing was a ruinous fort or citadel, bearing the marks of age on its weather-beaten walls, with its solitary sentry pacing to and fro at the drawbridge. Advancing into the town, I found it clean and well-built, with one principal street facing the sea, running from one extremity of the place to the other, and undulating with the

hilly nature of the ground. In this street a few very good houses, with stores and a spacious hotel, formed the most conspicuous features. The other buildings consisted of several unattractive churches and a number of wooden shops, in which were sold all varieties of every necessary article. The smaller streets branching from the main one were chiefly occupied by slaves.

At the time I visited it, the city was densely filled with emigrants from Martinique and Guadaloupe, in consequence of an outbreak amongst the black population in those islands. It was quite heartrending to behold large families thus forced to leave their comfortable homes and plantations, with scarcely time to save their lives, or procure a single shilling for their future wants, and reduced to every misery and deprivation in a foreign land. The Danes, greatly to their honour, notwithstanding their own scanty means, did all in their power to alleviate the distress of these persons, thus driven from necessity to seek their hospitality and an asylum from the evils to which they had been exposed in their own country.

I dined at the hotel, and had the pleasure

of receiving as my guest, through the instrumentality of a Danish officer, one of those fine old specimens of the ancient *noblesse Française*, the staunch adherents of the unfortunate Louis the Sixteenth. Though overwhelmed in his old age with the terrible calamities which had befallen his country, I found his society very entertaining. He enlivened his discourse according to the true French fashion with many an anecdote and *jeu d'esprit*, and, the time of my visit to the island having at length expired, I parted from him with much reluctance, and withdrew on board the steamer.

Early the next morning we bade adieu to the little Danish colony, and made rapid progress for the Spanish Main. As I approached the land, where the daring spirit of a Cortes, Pizarro, or Almegro found a vent for the rapacious cruelty of the age in which they lived, in the oppression of the feeble and defenceless race of the Incas, a slight feeling of regret came over me at the thought of leaving the vessel in which I had steered so happy a course, and which seemed to me a tie of affection, binding me to that land, whence I had started, and which had

been so long endeared to me by every principle of love and gratitude. I was now about to tread these foreign and unknown shores, perchance in sickness and in sorrow, without even a sympathetic tear to moisten the stranger's grave. A passing sigh escaped me whilst thus bringing before my mind the probable events of my future life, and rendering a tribute of affection to the many kind friends I had left behind me. But my reverie was of short continuance; and, as I looked landward, where the low line of coast was clearly discernible, my hopes became again buoyant at the anticipation of many pleasing adventures in the countries to which I was proceeding.

As we approached the entrance of the harbour of Santa Marta, which is well backed by several high hills and rocks opening into the bay, the ruined battery that once commanded the harbour was plainly visible, though now remaining merely as a vestige of the Spanish rule in bygone days. The view from this point of the fair and interesting land of Columbia—the land where was kindled the first flame of South American liberty—the land of the great Simon Bolivar, and the

theatre of most of his far-famed exploits—is worthy of notice. Ten minutes' walk from the pebbly beach stands the small town of Santa Marta, of Spanish origin, and which, being laid out according to a geometrical plan, presents, when seen at a distance, a very agreeable uniformity; but on being entered is, without exception, as dirty and miserable a hole as can well be imagined. Not very far off is the river Magdalena, which is navigable for many miles into the interior of the country, and is the means of conveying goods in small craft as far as the capital, Bogota. As the eye wanders over the adjacent territories, stretched on either side are seen a succession of plains, beautiful and verdant, and as smooth as a bowling-green, watered by numerous streamlets, and in some parts gracefully clothed with cover and young wood. In the background appears, veiled in deep tints of ultra-marine, a thickly-wooded Alpine range of hills, towering above which, into the very skies, the giant Cordilleras half conceal their frowning heads, save when a ray of silver light pierces the gloom, and distinctly brings to view their snow-clad summits.

A short visit on shore having completed all arrangements, another bevy of passengers was introduced on board our vessel. Amongst these were the American *Chargé d’Affaires*, his wife, four daughters, a son, and a female servant; an American commodore, a regular Sam Slick in his way, and one of the real go-a-head, calculating, and guessing sort—though a most amusing and jolly companion, who had no objection to join in the laugh against himself and his own jokes; and a couple of *padres* about to join their order at Panama. At this new shipment of American beauty, the young gentlemen of our party began to buck up, and tried to outvie each other in doing the amiable. Pleasant little parties were formed, and, weather permitting, quadrilles were set on foot, together with various other amusements, in order to make the time pass agreeably.

The moon had now gained her full, and throughout the night shed her brilliant light upon the rippling waves, as she fast rolled her course through many a fleecy and fantastic cloud. O’er the waters where her dazzling orb lay mirrored, soft and gentle zephyrs occasionally swept, and the quiet of the scene

was disturbed only by the dashing of the waves against our noble ship, as she majestically pursued her course along the placid surface of the deep. Everything on board partook of the calm stillness that reigned around. Many leant over the vessel's side in deep meditation, as they listlessly watched her track on the ruffled waves, or stood in groups, and followed with anxious gaze the pale moon's course, whilst they mused together on the tranquil scene. Could we have read each other's inmost thoughts at that moment, what a volume would have been unfolded of painful or pleasurable feelings, of self-congratulations or regrets at the memory of the past, and of hopes or fears at the anticipation of the future!

Possibly the death-like silence which prevailed, served only to renew the bitter pangs which life's bustle and excitement had long since banished from the mind. Each was intent upon the subject of his thoughts, as they fast flowed under the soothing influence of the pensive hour, when, all at once, several soft and well blended voices struck upon the ear. The spell was broken. Faces that but just before expressed the deep reverie into

which the mind was cast, were now mantled with a smile, as all chimed in with heartfelt emotion in singing the lively chorus. We had now a musical treat for the rest of the evening. A succession of delightful pieces chosen from the best English and Italian masters, were ably executed, and gave us all great satisfaction; and with light hearts we at length retired to rest, to enjoy refreshing repose, and to lose ourselves in the strange scenes and delights which Dreamland affords.

The next morning, the city of Cartagena—once a strong-hold of the Spaniards, came to view, with its sea-girt fastnesses, fortified walls and bastions, now greatly neglected, and falling into ruin and decay, as is the case with all the great defences formerly built by the Spaniards. Steering along by the out-works of the city, we entered an inlet in the main land, leading to a spacious land-locked bay, the mouth of which is defended by two batteries or little isolated forts, beautifully constructed of stone, having large guns in pigeon-holes, which are pierced from the water's edge to the batteries above, and command every position. A landing and

commodious harbour skirt the city, which is alike secure from the danger of a foe, and the fury of the elements ; the country all around being one continued forest. The *provedor* was about to leave the ship in his boat, in order to take in certain necessaries, when I took passage with him to reconnoitre the town, which, from its antiquated buildings, narrow streets, and fortress-looking character, bears the impress of a very ancient date. I visited several large stores, filled with all sorts of commodities ; and thence I went to the market-place—a large building—or more properly a shed, constructed of poles and bamboos, and thatched with plaintain leaves.

Here I found congregated hundreds of persons in the act of buying or selling. The latter, who were chiefly Negroes, for the most part decorated with gold ear-rings and other ornaments, sat squatted upon the ground. Amongst them was a fair sprinkling of Indians and Mulattoes. Piled up in their front were the several commodities in which they dealt. Little mountains of water-melons, pumpkins, plantains, pines, bananas, mangoes, oranges, potatoes, and flowers, were

ranged in close conjunction ; whilst turkeys, fowls, ducks, every kind of fowl and game, fish of all varieties, and turtles, together with an abundance of eggs, furnished their different supplies. I was particularly attracted by some exquisitely worked Indian straw mats, hammocks, fans, and baskets, and made purchase of several specimens. Having concluded my bargains, and seen everything in the place that was worthy of note, I got into the boat to return to the vessel, which we had no sooner reached than preparations were made for our departure, and Cartagena was speedily lost to sight.

For the last few days during which we were approaching the Spanish Main, heavy fogs, squalls, and torrents of rain came on at intervals, and were followed by occasional gleams of sunshine, showing the commencement of the rainy season. Being now near my *pied à terre*, the captain of the steamer, with his accustomed kindness, gave orders that a hamper of necessaries should be got ready against my disembarkation. This liberal supply was intended to assist me in crossing the Isthmus, and consisted of a couple of roast fowls, a tongue, cheese, and

biscuits, together with two bottles of porter, one of sherry, one of champagne, and one of brandy. The last night which I spent on board the vessel was the occasion of much mirth and jollification, the pleasure of which the thought of our separation on the morrow tended greatly to damp. It is strange how attached persons become to each other in the course of a short sea voyage. The stiffness and formality of ordinary society become gradually relaxed, and an easy and polite familiarity takes their place, uniting together people of every grade and character on terms of the most intimate intercourse. It is when the time of parting arrives that we begin to value the acquaintances we have made—now, perhaps, lost to us for ever. We passed the evening in the interchange of every kind wish and sentiment. Early next morning, under a lowering sky, Chagres was reached.

CHAPTER II.

Landing at Chagres—Passage up the river—Gorgonda—Cruces—Crossing the Isthmus—Adventures in the forest—View of the Pacific Ocean—Panama—The Scotch Watchmaker's story of the Pirate's Isle—Steaming for Callao—Passengers on board—River of Guayaquil and town.

It was in the month of July, 1848, that I at last set foot on the American continent, at Chagres. It was early in the morning, the day threatened rain, and was most unusually foggy. At the extremity of a bay, formed by the rocks which run inland, stands the town, if a collection of huts, hovels, and mud-houses deserves that appellation. It possesses a harbour, on one side of which are the ruins

of a large fort commanding the entrance, and on the other, the *embouchure* of the river Chagres, which here joins a low and swampy coast, after having pursued its course imbedded in wood and jungle. After landing on the quay, our luggage was thrown ashore without a shed or shelter of any kind being provided to protect it. I collected everything belonging to myself together into one heap, the natives being so independent they will render you no assistance for love or money, and in a very short time the rain came down in right good earnest, and I was completely drenched to the skin. It was no time to be idle; and as for remaining in the place, that was out of the question, amongst a population of blacks, Indians, and half-bred Choloos, who are brutal and uncivil in the extreme; and for the accommodation even of a hen-roost, are satisfied with nothing less than gold. By the side of the landing, I found a large assortment of canoes of different sizes, protected by a small thatched house over each. In one of these, like a toad in a hole, you take up your quarters for the river navigation, which is an undertaking of rather an arduous character, the

stream running with prodigious force, and opposing your progress every inch of the way. Having despatched the Custom-house officers, who were vexatiously turning over and examining my effects, in spite of the inclemency of the weather, I struck my bargain with some of the boatmen, and finally embarked on my course up the river.

A little fleet of canoes soon after joined me, whose company afforded me much amusement, and served to make me forget all the *desagrémens* of my first landing. The river, as I proceeded, presented a noble breadth, and was fringed on either side by a continuation of impenetrable forests and jungle, a large portion of which was actually growing out of its bed. It was surprising to me how the black sailors managed to combat against the impetuous stream, sometimes guiding their little bark into a dense thicket formed of branches of trees, at first sight appearing to defy our entrance, and then issuing on the other side into the open and unencumbered river. At other times the violence of the current was such that the boat was whirled into the middle of the stream, and for a time entirely at its mercy,

so that in the course of a few minutes we found that we had retrograded the distance through which we advanced in the course of the previous hour. After one of these mishaps I discovered myself to be alongside of the boat which contained the American Consul and his family. As the ladies of the United States are particularly sensitive in regard to any breach of the laws of decency and decorum, I was surprised to find the boat manned by a set of sturdy blacks, who had divested themselves of every article of clothing, and were boldly conducting their lovely charge with no lack of good humour, wholly regardless of the blushes they elicited. Night setting in, we were obliged to pull up at a clear space in the river, their being great danger in advancing after it is dark, on account of the way being continually impeded by the trees and large branches, which line the banks.

On landing we found ourselves in the midst of cultivated ground, whereon stood several *ronchoes* and cottages inhabited by negroes and Indians, in front of which a large concourse of these black families was assembled, and enjoying the delights of dancing to the sound

of the *chum chum*, and the noisy chorus of the merry spectators. We were all much diverted by the grotesque movements of these people, the scene being rendered highly picturesque by the flickering glare of a multitude of fire torches distributed in every direction. After partaking of sundry refreshments, which I had brought with me from the steamer, we contrived to while away a few hours very agreeably, and then returned to our canoe to sleep away the drowsy hours of the night as well as circumstances would allow.

Early next morning we made another start, and soon found that the river became bound within narrower limits. The extensive virgin forests which had hitherto marked our course gradually diminished, and bare rocks and high embankments supplied their place. We stopped at a cottage, and were fortunate enough to procure a good supply of eggs, which, together with a little tea from our canteen, furnished us with an excellent breakfast. Towards the latter end of the day we arrived at the village of Gorgonda, containing a number of

decent houses, and a *posada*, or inn. Scrambling up the banks, where, on account of the late heavy rains, we had difficulty in extricating our legs from the thick mud, oftentimes losing a shoe or a boot in the course of our struggles, we soon found ourselves in the inn, and ensconced in tolerable quarters, since, in addition to everything we could reasonably require in the way of meat and drink, we were offered the luxury of a bed—one which in this part of the world is not to be disdained, however exorbitant might be the charge. Feeling inclined for a bath, I ventured as far as the river alone, hoping to enjoy the cool and refreshing water in the bright rays of the moon, which had just then arisen in all her nightly splendour. I had divested myself of my clothes, and was about to plunge into the stream from one of the boats, when I perceived two or three black objects at some distance, which at first I took for logs of wood floating down the river. Regarding them, however, more intently, they seemed to advance and then disappear, upon which I hallooed to a boatman in care of one of the boats, who was lying down and smoking; and right glad I was

that I did so, for he informed me that what I had been looking at were nothing more nor less than alligators, who would speedily have made me disappear, had I been so imprudent as to place myself within their reach. Thanking my lucky stars for my escape from the danger which had threatened me, I scampered back again to my bed, with the full determination never again to run the risk of forming an evening meal for these voracious creatures.

The next morning we embarked for the town of Cruces; and after a very pleasant cruise, the river winding throughout the course, and forming various small bays surrounded with wood and pasture scenery, it appeared in sight; being a long, straggling, and uncomfortable looking place, little better than an Indian village. At the upper end of it was the house of the *Governador*, to whom I had a letter of recommendation. On being introduced to him, I found myself in the presence of a little old man, who was evidently the innkeeper of the place, for he was surrounded by a host of persons who were paying their bills for the accommodation they had received, which proved not

very considerable, when I learnt six or seven persons had been billeted in the same room. Owing to the great demand for mules, we were obliged to remain here all night, and as there was a large assemblage of travellers, I took care to keep a sharp look out upon my luggage, which was to last me during a sojourn of three years in this country.*

Several of my friends having procured horses, we were determined to push on at once for Panama, and there await the arrival of their goods and chattels. To this course I particularly objected in my own case, and therefore I made up my mind to pass the night in the place, and follow on with my baggage on the morrow. Having taken up my position in a small barn or out-house on the premises, I was left unmolested, and after having partaken of a welcome meal of eggs and grilled meat, I left the house and began to look about me. The first object

* Let me here caution travellers on leaving their canoes, never to lose sight of their luggage till they have seen the whole of it safely deposited under cover. If they use not this precaution, they might find themselves *minus* some portion of their cargo when far from the place, without the slightest chance of redress.

which struck my attention was an old church, by the side of which was a primitive belfry, consisting of three poles tied together in the form of a gallows, with three bells suspended from them. I entered this rustic building, the interior of which, like many others which I subsequently saw in South America, was as grotesque and barbarous as the bigoted curate whom I met there was rude and unlettered. Saints of every kind were painted, or to speak more properly, daubed about in all directions, resembling rather clowns and mountebanks than the sacred personages they professed to depict. There were religious subjects of every description as well as allegorical pictures, in which the most unchristianlike forms were introduced, mixed with animals of the most chimerical and disgusting character. In the stillness of this sanctuary, I observed several persons who seemed wrapt in fervent prayer, ignorantly regarding the objects before them with a superstitious awe and reverence. On leaving the edifice, I strolled through the town, the inhabitants of which were for the most part at their doors, and enjoying the afternoon's amusement. This consisted of certain feats of horseman-

ship performed by men and women, who rode their animals with wonderful adroitness, sometimes lifting each other completely out of the saddle whilst galloping at full tilt, then stopping short and chasing each other in all directions, even following them into the houses, amidst shouts of laughter from the lookers on. Others amused themselves and others by picking up rings, handkerchiefs, and other articles, whilst riding their horses at the full extent of their speed. After witnessing these exploits till I was completely tired, I returned to my shed, where I passed a good night, notwithstanding the miserable accommodation the place afforded. After breakfast on the following morning, the Governor sent for me to inform me that he had been able to procure me baggage mules, and a horse for my especial use, together with the attendance of two *mozos* or servants. As there was no alternative, I had to wait hour after hour for their arrival, which did not take place till the afternoon.

Thus furnished, I prepared to set out. The traffic at this time across the Isthmus was so great that the supply of mules and horses for

the transit was greatly deficient, and I had reason to think myself fortunate in not being detained longer than was the case. Before leaving the place, however, I was enabled to render essential service to the American *Chargé d'Affaires*, when all his family, servants, and a large pile of trunks and boxes made their appearance just previous to my departure. None of the party could speak or understand a word of Spanish, and found themselves from this cause in a very sad dilemma; and I transacted for them all their business as well as I could, saw them make a fair start, and on the arrival of my goods and cattle was soon in stirrup and in the act of commencing my overland journey. On entering the large forest which covers this portion of the Isthmus, the effect of the rainy season was everywhere apparent. Large *pantanos* or pools of water had been formed, and the mud in some places had accumulated so much that the roads were hardly passable. The horses and mules were every moment stumbling into holes, and as they lay on the ground floundering under their loads, they experienced the greatest difficulty in regaining their footing. The

day, which was bright at intervals, often became all of a sudden dark and obscure. Then, almost as quick as thought, down would come a sheet of water, almost enough to wash a person out of his saddle, the animals all the while turning their backs to the squalls, and defying every means used to induce them to proceed. Leaving my servants and their charge to get on as best they could, I broke into one of the numberless tracks with which the Isthmus is covered, preferring to ride amongst the green wood, and so avoid the deep and miry quagmires to be found upon the highroad. After following the track for some time, I found that I had lost my way amidst the intricacies of the forest, and I wasted many hours in crossing and recrossing various streamlets and gullets in the hope of being able to recover the right road. I was determined, however, to push on, and hallooed every now and then, in order to attract the attention of passers-by, or to gain information from the natives in case I happened to be in the vicinity of any village. I found myself at last responded to by female voices, and hastening to the spot from whence the sounds proceeded, I soon gained the

road, where I beheld the whole party of American ladies together with their servants in a sad plight. Drenched with water and splashed up to their very eyes, they looked more like a set of negroes than fair descendants of the Anglo-Saxon race. Some had fallen off their horses, who were tramping about upon the morass, and dismay and bewilderment seemed to have taken possession of the whole party. On seeing me, there was a general exclamation of delight.

They told me that they had lost their way in endeavouring to discover a better route amongst the trees, and that after wandering about for a length of time in search of the old track, they had at last despatched the Consul himself, hoping that he might fall in with the provision mule which had been left behind, as, after all their annoyances and fatigues, they were quite famished with hunger. They had now waited a considerable time without having seen or heard anything of him, and as the sun was getting very low in the heavens, they had begun quite to despair, when they fortunately heard my cry. After sympathizing with them on the disasters which had befallen them, I gave

them everything I had, which was a small box of dried preserves, a treat which was duly appreciated, and for which they were very warm in their expressions of gratitude. I now joined their party, having lost sight of my own luggage, and not knowing in what direction it might be, glad under any circumstances to be of service to the poor benighted and bewildered ladies. We therefore proceeded together in the hopes of meeting with some casual travellers who might give us information as to where the right track lay. The road, as we advanced, became very narrow, and divided in the centre by an enormous landslip, occasioned, no doubt, by the late heavy rains. There was a passage on each side walled by projecting rocks, very much sunken, and so confined that there was scarcely room for a loaded mule to pass.

Just as we were on the point of entering this defile, the tramp of mules and voices was heard, and presently appeared the advanced guard of persons travelling in charge of treasure forwarded across the Isthmus for the return steamer to Europe. Mule after mule then came in sight, laden

with its precious cargo, each one seeming to follow the bent of his inclination, and straggling about pretty much as he chose. One had lain down under some trees, exhausted with the weight he bore, and was not able to rise again from the ground, till the rear guard came up and rendered his assistance. It is strange with what little caution large sums of money are conveyed through so apparently dangerous a locality. I noticed that the guards, so far from having their muskets ready for use on any sudden emergency, carried them carefully wrapt up in green baize strongly corded to protect them from the rust. However, I was informed that only two attempts at robbery had been made on the convoy in the course of several years, which naturally abated my astonishment at the seemingly ineffectual measures taken for their protection. From the officer in command I received the intelligence that the road in advance of us was in a very bad condition, and it was evident, as the sun was fast setting, that we should be in total darkness in a very short time. He advised, as the distance to Panama was very considerable, that the best course for us to adopt was to

remain for the night at two *Ranchos*, a short way off, having no doubt that our companions and luggage mules had taken the other road. We resolved to act upon this advice, the plan proposed appearing to us so feasible, and made off as fast as we could to the place indicated.

On our arrival at the *Ranchos*, we found them occupied by two young gentlemen; one an officer in the Bolivian service, and the other an architect in the employ of the same Government. They politely gave up to the ladies the use of the large room of which they had taken possession. The only thing to be procured in this miserable abode was a small supply of *Bananas*. There was not even water, and we had to go and fetch it for ourselves from a neighbouring stream. The night was passed as well as circumstances would permit, and early on the following day the two Bolivians started. I remained behind with my fair companions, but found that they were determined not to proceed till they had received a change of raiment. They urged me, therefore, to press forward to Panama and send them succour; which I consented to do, and immediately set

out on my travels. The road lay on a gradual ascent, and I found myself by degrees emerging from the forest, the clearage becoming everywhere more conspicuous, as large rents of earth with variegated *strata* occasionally met the eye. I turned upon my saddle to take a view of this little barrier between the two oceans, and look over a broad expanse of wood, undulating with the retiring valleys or rising in majesty over the brow of some lofty hill. Fresh foliage flourished everywhere, and many a lovely flower was seen loading with its rich perfume the balmy breeze.

Advancing on my route, I gained a prominence whence I witnessed one of those manifest panoramas which charm the senses and fill the mind with delight and astonishment. It was on this very spot that, centuries before, after days of toil and disappointed hopes, Pizarro saw for the first time the vast expanse of the beauteous Pacific. Low down beneath me, like a fairy isle reposing on the waters, on whose blue and glassy surface it stood out, reflected in all its loveliness, lay the graceful little peninsula on which stands the town of Panama. Cultivated lands on

both sides of the way, which marked my progress as I descended from the heights, proclaimed my near approach to the abode of man. Groups of cottages, with pretty little gardens attached, soon came into view. Then I encountered gangs of prisoners under the custody of their guards, busily employed in repairing the highroad; and soon after a sort of *boulevards* through which I passed announced my entrance into the city of Panama. The streets, as I passed along, appeared to be composed of houses of a very antiquated construction; in many instances shattered and displaced by the numerous earthquakes that visit the locality. The shops displayed every possible variety of French goods, and trades of all denominations seemed in a thriving condition; the bustle and business-like appearance of the town being much increased by droves of heavily-laden mules continually passing up and down the streets. After a while I reached an hotel, kept by a German, a lame man, and where everything is conducted after the American fashion.

I obtained a commodious sleeping apartment, taking my meals at the general *table*

d'hôte, the breakfast, as usual, being laid at a certain hour in the morning, and remaining till mid-day, for the benefit of the inmates, who dropped in as inclination or convenience suggested. The display of fish and shell-fish was prodigious, but particularly the latter; every variety of it which I ever saw in my life was, I believe, here congregated, including some extraordinary rock oysters, of a green colour, and reckoned very delicious. I made a frugal breakfast, and was not tempted to indulge much in these luxuries; which I found afterwards was greatly to my advantage, for most of the new arrivals, having partaken of them to a very great extent, found themselves half poisoned, and were for some time exceedingly ill. I fell in here with a friend in the American Commodore, who kindly favoured me with much of his company, and no end of long yarns. We sallied forth together in order to have a look at the town. The grand Plaza is surrounded by many large buildings, amongst which, from its size and importance, the cathedral takes the lead; all, however, being in a sad state of dilapidation, having large rents in every direction, from

the incessant shocks of earthquakes to which the place is subject. The cathedral, which is externally a noble and imposing pile, has been from this cause greatly dismembered and deprived of many of its ornaments and decorations. As I ascended to the entrance by a flight of broken steps, a picturesque group of friars in close conversation gave great character to its monastic porch. The interior of the building is as much disfigured as the outside, but enough remains of its former magnificence to testify to its rich and splendid effect in its palmy days.

On the opposite side of the Plaza, a row of large and conspicuous houses occupied the ground, whose balconies of carved wood and painted green, after the Peruvian fashion, afford an opportunity for the scrutinizing gaze of some dark-eyed senorita or many a lounging gallant, as he idly puffs his aromatic cigar. All at once we noticed the painted sign of a Scotch watchmaker; and recollecting our old friend, Sam Slick, we made bold to enter, and introduced ourselves to Mr. M'Pherson, a gentleman who gave sufficient indications of the country of his birth in as fine a North

British brogue as ever I heard. In the course of conversation he detailed to us an anecdote which showed him, for once in his life, to have been deficient of that caution which is so characteristic of his race. The biter had been bitten, as the following story will prove:—

An old Scotch carpenter who resided at Panama, and occasionally did work for the said Mr. M'Pherson, took him into his confidence, and told him how that twenty years before, he had belonged to a pirate vessel, which was at that time a terror on the high seas. After a successful cruise and a capture of several richly-laden Spanish vessels which they pillaged after they had destroyed the crews, they made for one of the remote islands of the Archipelago, where they hastily deposited their ill-gotten treasure in a cavern, piling up stones to conceal the entrance. Just as they were engaged in this operation, a British frigate appeared in sight and bore down upon them. They slipped their cable and made off, when a chase commenced, and in a very short time it was evident that the British ship was gaining on the pirate. Every exertion was made to improve her

sailing qualities, and a host of articles which could be spared were thrown overboard in order to lighten her. Notwithstanding all this, her pursuer made considerable advances upon her, and soon began to open a running fire. The captain of the pirates finding that escape was hopeless, determined to resort to stratagem to attain his object. He accordingly sent a boat's crew, amongst whom was the carpenter, to board the man-of-war, and to inform her sailors that their own vessel was a privateer, sailing under the Buenos Ayres flag, and now in the act of cruising after a rich Brazilian. The carpenter was no sooner on board than he stated the plain facts of the case, telling them that they were, indeed, pirates who infested the seas, to murder the ships' crews and plunder their vessels; but that he himself was amongst them very much against his will, having been taken from on board a vessel which had fallen into the hands of his present comrades, who only spared his life on condition that he should render them his services in the way of his handicraft. The information thus clandestinely conveyed, was immediately acted upon. A signal was made for

the pirates' vessel to surrender, but instead of complying, she filled every stitch of canvas, and her guns having been thrown overboard, she was fast making away, when a broadside from the frigate turned her completely over on her beam-ends. She very soon righted; but in a very short space of time foundered, before assistance could reach her. The boat's crew were taken by their captors to Jamaica; there tried, condemned, and hanged, the carpenter alone being acquitted, on the plea of his having been forced to join them to save his life. This man, owing to adverse circumstances, was prevented for a space of twenty years from visiting again the shores of the Pacific.

At length, the wished-for opportunity arrived; he worked his passage out to the New World with the secret of vast treasure being concealed there within his breast, and anxious to avail himself of the knowledge which he knew was possessed by no one but himself. At Panama he commenced an intimacy with M'Pherson, to whom, as a countryman, he divulged his secret. His too credulous friend, lured with the hope of gain, greedily swallowed the bait, and

eagerly offered to devote his hard-earned savings in America towards the purchase of a schooner. The sum of 2,000 dollars which he had at command, not appearing adequate for the purpose, it was agreed to take a third party in the affair; and one of the leading and most affluent merchants in the city having been appealed to, he acquiesced in the proposal with the greatest delight. Preliminaries being now settled, a schooner was purchased, and soon furnished with every requisite. The parties were so sanguine as regards the promised treasure, which the plausible description of the carpenter had pictured forth in such vivid terms, that they began to fancy it already within their reach, and actually formed plans for disposing of it to the best advantage; so sure were they of success, and jealous lest any one else should participate in their good fortune, that they refused to admit into the benefits of their scheme many monied persons who were desirous of joining them. Having, therefore, manned their schooner with a small crew, they took their places on board and set sail, whilst a vast concourse of anxious spectators looked on with envy and wonder. After a

tedious voyage of three weeks, this hopeful batch of adventurers at last reached a desolate and dismal-looking island amongst the Archipelago of the Southern Ocean. Entering a small bay, they were told by the carpenter that they had arrived at the goal of all their hopes and wishes, and in a very short time he would point out to them the spot where lay buried the prize of which they were in search. Eager to get on shore, the whole party simultaneously left the ship, the anchor having been carelessly dropped without sounding, or any of the usual and necessary precautions. Then, under the conduct of their leader they followed on in right good earnest, mounting and descending steep precipices, crossing deep chasms, and overcoming every difficulty of the way; carried on, as they were, by the excitement and the hope of gain.

They had scarcely recovered from the fatigues of their long march, and were yet puffing for want of breath, when they commenced their work upon the soil—digging, hammering, and removing large stones, till they were quite overcome by the heat and exhaustion. But still they slaved on, taking little notice of a terrific storm which had

been gathering for some time, and now burst with fury over their heads. Seeking a temporary shelter, they awaited with impatience the time when they might again be able to resume their labours. When the weather permitted, they set to work afresh, and after many hours' incessant toil, with no seeming reward for their arduous efforts, their tired frames began to yield to the long-continued call upon their energies, and nature began to assert her need of rest and nourishment.

Then for the first time they thought about their little vessel they had left behind them in the bay, a prey to the fury of the wind and the waves. One of their party was immediately despatched to procure the necessaries of life; and after some time returned, panting and out of breath, with the alarming intelligence that the schooner was nowhere to be seen, having probably dragged her anchor, and drifted out to sea. At this announcement, a general rush was made for the shore. Every promontory and rise were gained, whence there might be a possibility of getting a glimpse of the missing bark. But a general haziness, which darkened the atmosphere, considerably curtailed the range

of vision, and not a speck in the wide ocean seemed to pronounce encouragement to the intent and anxious gaze of these forlorn adventurers.

They now began to be awake to the perils of their situation, and with eyes and hands upraised to heaven in utter despair, they felt themselves abandoned on an island of rocks, partly covered with guano, where their only supply of water was that which fell from the heavens, and reposed in the holes and cavities of the ground, and a few sickly plants and a little stunted brushwood and stumps afforded their only chance of fuel. After many upbraidings, reproaches, and disputes, they found they were compelled mutually to assist each other in concerting measures to alleviate their present necessities. A large cavern was converted into a temporary domicile, and a good supply of shell-fish having been brought together, a fire was kindled; and the little party having made a hearty meal, and enjoyed some sound repose, on the following day felt in better spirits; and though surrounded by every discomfort and privation, yet clung with that tenacity which the lust of avarice so usually

produces—to the hope of speedy riches which originally buoyed them up. With death staring them in the face, they renewed their exertions in every direction, in the prospect of alighting upon the anticipated treasure, but as unsuccessfully as before. Instead of exercising their faculties to devise some mode of extricating themselves from the present difficulties, and using all their energies for the attainment of that one object, these misguided men went on exhausting their strength in the fruitless search after that which, if found, would be of less value to them than a crust of bread under the circumstances in which they found themselves placed.

Day after day thus passed away, their strength and courage failing, the hope of success even beginning at last to relax its hold upon their minds, and most of the party suffering severely from indisposition, owing to the nature of the food they had been necessitated to take. Various plans and stratagems were set on foot for the purpose of entrapping the birds which occasionally flew about over the island. At first these succeeded [partially, but after a time

the birds became so estranged that they would not suffer themselves to be caught, and shell-fish became again the only resource of the poor unhappy treasure-seekers. A succession of hot days had so far evaporated the moisture around, that none of the natural reservoirs contained the supply of water they originally afforded. Hunger and thirst began to tell upon the famished and worn-out frames of these once hardy seamen; suffering and despair were written upon every countenance. The daily watcher, posted upon some bleak peak, with open mouth and far-stretched vision, gazed in sorrowful silence on the distant waves, and looked in vain for the slightest indication of some passing whaler. Ever and anon, he returned to his comrades to repeat once more his sad, sad tale. The little group, once so joyous and full of life, were now struck dumb with terror and amazement. The carpenter, the leader of the band, with cadaverous look,—at one time pensive and wrapt in thought,—at another, wild and distracted, sat apart, a melancholy picture—his hands upon his brow, and his head downcast in moody silence. Perched on a little rock

above, might be seen his friend, the wily Scot, gnawing with impatience his finger-nails, now sweeping with his keen gaze the broad expanse of the horizon, then regarding his mates with inquiring looks, as he chewed with rage the last remnant of his tobacco, which had been made for some time past to serve his wants. There lay the opulent merchant, writhing on the sand in the agony of pain, without even one friendly hand to supply his wants or assuage the fever that was fast consuming him—a helpless beggar, without even a drop of water to relieve his thirst, whilst all the while his richly-stored Argosies ploughed the seas, and the fame of his wealth had spread to every land. Desirous of dabbling in every enterprise to add still more to his accumulated gains, he had now fairly overreached himself; and though possessed of every good, would willingly have exchanged his lot with the meanest of his servants. The black cook, with bleached cheek and bleared eyes, was kindling a fire, stopping every now and then to wipe away the scalding tear that furrowed his cheek.

A fresh supply of fish had just been brought him by the boy who was lazily

looking on, whilst preparations were being made for the frugal meal, when all of a sudden a scream was heard, and the Scotchman was seen laughing loud like a maniac, and, pointing to the horizon, he fell like a dead man on the ground. All started with dismay, even the sick opened their sunken eyes to learn the cause of all the commotion. The answer was, that poor M'Pherson had breathed his last, and the scene resumed its wonted aspect.

Now Scotchy, in his fall, had rolled with the head and face into the midst of the cold and slimy fishes, which had the effect of bringing him at once to his senses. Jumping on his feet, he asked what was the matter, rubbing his eyes and appearing to have just awaked from a dream; then, looking with all eagerness in the direction of the sea, he cried, with a great deal of fervour and gesticulation, "Yes!—no!" and, after a slight pause, "Yes! hurrah, hurrah, boys, we are saved; a sail, a sail!" This little word, like an electric shock, seemed to run through every vein. The feeble, melancholy, and the wild, all started up at once, and gazing with outstretched necks, shouted out

together, "A sail! a sail!" then sank into each others' embrace and wept like children. The whole party then fell upon their knees, and poured out their hearts in gratitude to Him who had thus responded to their repeated cries to Him for deliverance. All was life and bustle in a moment. The sick and the prostrate were now cheered by the prospect of speedy succour, and the more able-bodied were dancing about with joy, as that little speck on the horizon, where all their hopes were centred, grew plainer and plainer to the sight. A signal was hoisted, and, after some anxious delay, was seen from the vessel in the bay. They fired a gun of recognition, and great was the delight to the spectators on shore to watch the gradual approach of the welcome ship which was to bear them from the Pirate's Isle.

Thus ended this unsuccessful enterprise. What became of the enthusiastic author of it I was not able to learn, nor whether the rich merchant was still plodding on in the pursuit of gain, and still ready to embark in any adventure which seemed to promise a sudden increase to the wealth he had already amassed. As regards the third party in the

trio—the once sanguine Scotchman, now wise by experience ; there he was to tell the tale, the interest of which was much heightened by his detailed and happy mode of telling it.

My old friend the Commodore, who heard the story, added, in his strange way, “ Well, I guess you had tarnation fare of it ; almost as bad as when I lost myself in the back states, and had to live on alligator soup for a month.”

This was rather too much for our gravity ; we all laughed outright, the Commodore himself chiming in most heartily. We then took leave of Mr. M‘Pherson, thanking him for the entertainment he had afforded us, and with many congratulations on his happy escape from the dangers he had met with on the Pirate’s Isle.

We now visited the landing-place, which is open to the sea, and under cover, affording good accommodation for a market which is held there, where meat, fish, vegetables, and fruits are displayed in great abundance. The population of Panama consists of whites, blacks, mulattoes, Choloos, and Indians. The showy ear-rings, crosses, trinkets of gold, and other ornaments worn here, even by the common people, bespeak a certain

degree of affluence and comfort. During my stay here I witnessed a tornado—one of those extraordinary phenomena of nature which comes on and passes away with a suddenness truly surprising. The water was perfectly smooth, and it appeared that scarcely a breath of air was stirring. At a short distance from the land a number of sailing boats were moored, in which the sailors were either fast asleep, or lazily exerting themselves in some trivial employment. All at once the utmost activity began to prevail amongst them. I watched them slipping their cables, as if desirous of getting away from shore as fast as possible. In another instant a terrific whirlwind came on with the most fearful violence, shivering to pieces two or three small boats, which were untenanted, and not loose from their moorings. The sea rose to a great height, foaming with tremendous fury, whilst on shore clouds of dust were thrown into the air and whirled about in gigantic columns of fifty or a hundred feet high. Presently everything as quickly subsided to its wonted quiet, and the bay presented the same scene as usual. The fortifications, which I afterwards visited,

from their great extent and the solidity of their construction, show what importance was attached by the Spaniards to the city of Panama,—the key, as it were, to their vast possessions in this part of the world. There are still remaining between twenty and thirty of those beautiful brass guns, exquisitely decorated with every species of elaborate ornament, and for which the Spaniards formerly were so justly famed. Since their expulsion from these territories, the fort has been entirely neglected, and many parts of it have now fallen into the sea, and disappeared altogether. The coast on both sides of the little tongue of land on which the town is situated, takes the form of two semicircular bays, which are beautifully wooded. Large quantities of gold, it is stated, have been found there, at the mouths of several rivers that empty themselves into the Pacific. The district of Panama is celebrated for its pearls, which are found there in great abundance; and the town itself has acquired a deserved renown for a manufacture of very fine gold chains, of most exquisite workmanship.

Being desirous of leaving by the Pacific

Mail Steamer for Callao, on the following morning, I returned early to my hotel, and made every necessary arrangement; and on the following day I embarked in a canoe, which contained just room enough for myself and boatman. I am indebted to him for having narrowly escaped being maimed for life. I was sitting carelessly in the canoe, letting my hand float upon the water as it glided along, when he warned me to withdraw it, telling me that a sailor, only a few days before, had had his hand bitten off by a shark. Since then I have been assured that this, as well as many other parts of the Pacific Ocean, completely swarm with these rapacious creatures, and that many persons become incautiously the victims of their voracity. The numerous islands of every size, with which the water is dotted, produced, as I sailed along, a most enchanting picture; many were in clusters of twos and threes, others standing apart, but all covered with brushwood, cultivated ground, and luxuriant vegetation. A single dwelling upon some of them bespoke the solitary residence of some family in the enjoyment of the delights of so romantic a seclusion. Whilst

regarding with attention and interest this agreeable scene, and letting my eye wander over the broad expanse of the blue Pacific, I found I had gained the steamer, around which was assembled a flotilla of boats, the air resounding with a hundred voices. Trunks, boxes, and packages were in process of being passed along the deck, and here and there stood in piles, obstructing free ingress and egress. The officers of the ship were engaged in escorting ladies and families to the saloon. The stewards were running about in all directions, and in the endeavour to do all for which their services were put in requisition, failed to give satisfaction to anybody. Deck passengers and negro servants, both male and female, fill every corner. The steam is up. Presently the order for all strangers to leave the ship is given, and the crowd which was before almost impassable, gradually diminishes. The little fleet of boats fall off in the rear. Shouts and loud adieus rend the air, amidst the waving of hats and handkerchiefs. As our speed increases, each individual of the living mass on board these little boats is lost to view, and discernible only by the occa-

sional waving of a handkerchief by some fair hand. When finally out of sight, the arrangements on board our steamer began to assume some form, and everything fell into its usual current.

Our *belle assemblée* consisted of rather a heterogeneous company of persons, whom the dinner-hour brought into close contact, and laid the foundation of many an agreeable acquaintance. A very good-looking and interesting woman, surrounded by a brood of little ones, just like herself in miniature, graced a portion of the table, with two servants in attendance. This lady, I was informed, was the wife of a noted cock-fighter and better at Lima, who had accumulated immense wealth from a course of continual success in such pursuits. A gentleman who sat near me, an excellent linguist, and possessed of extraordinary conversational powers, had been the partner of a well-known and talented man, the editor of one of the leading papers, who had been waylaid and shot dead in the open day by some one who had felt offended at his strictures. Another gentleman, a fine old military man in half uniform, with a venerable grey head and wrinkled

brow, was one of the veterans who had fought with General Saint Martin, and disputed every inch of his native soil till he had completely driven away the fierce invaders. Then there was a French priest, a man of high preferment and finished education, on his return from Rome to Valparaiso, where he was chief of a Roman Catholic College, and much esteemed. This person was a great scrutinizer of persons and things, and often made me his confidant and the depository of his caustic remarks.

Several ladies, who were going to visit their friends at Lima, were now, for the first time in their lives, aboard a steamer, the innocence of whose remarks, and continual run of questions, was truly amusing. Some young gentlemen, who seemed determined on frolic and mischief, had observed a friend of theirs retire to his cabin, near the grand saloon. Imagining him to be suffering from sea-sickness, they disguised themselves in large cloaks, with which they quite covered their heads, and placing themselves at the door of the cabin, they commenced reciting the service for the dead, with the appropriate responses; and then concluded by singing a

requiem—all which was regarded with the utmost horror by the legitimate divines who happened to be on board.

I once more met my old friend the American Consul, with his wife and daughters, and laughed heartily over the recollection of our past misfortunes in crossing the Isthmus. There were also an Italian captain, a Genoese, on his way to Lima, to interest his numerous and wealthy countrymen in that city upon the regeneration of Italy; a young cashier belonging to a great firm in the same place, who gave himself as many airs as if he had been the first banker in Europe; and a doctor, who, if he bled as many patients as he did bottles of wine during the course of our voyage, must have had no cause to complain of his practice. In one corner sat an elderly gentleman and maiden lady, brother and sister, surrounded by parrots, a monkey, two cats, and three ugly little dogs, all of whom they alternately kissed and hugged. Two young cadets of sixteen, in uniform, who, without a figure of speech, may be said to have smoked themselves away—for they were scarcely perceptible behind the volumes of smoke they emitted,—got into disgrace

with these worthy people. One of these young sparks threw down, on the sly, a lighted cigar upon the monkey, who had been watching him. The animal seized it, and put the lighted end of it into his mouth; then screamed, chattered, and cried—jumped upon the head of the old lady, who was so frightened that she fainted away; then upon that of the old man, from which he fell to the ground with the old gentleman's wig firmly held between his jaws. Besides these, there was a party of fashionably-dressed men, who made it a practice, I understood, to go and return by this boat, forming a bank, and introducing a variety of games, such as Monte, Pharo, &c., in the course of which large heaps of doubloons were soon transferred to their own coffers.

It is astonishing how infatuated the South Americans are on the subject of gaming, in any shape. It should be evident to them that persons such as these, who live—and live sumptuously—on the proceeds of their play, without any other ostensible means of livelihood, must be nothing else than a set of sharpers; and yet, because they are gentlemanly robbers, they are not only tolerated,

but they succeed in inducing many to embark in their speculations. A man was pointed out to me, who came on board with 120 ounces, all of which he lost, besides his watch and chain; and he had at last to borrow an ounce to enable him to leave the ship. This system of gambling on board passenger vessels should be strictly prohibited. Wherever this is not the case, it is a disgrace to any nation that sanctions or tolerates it.

As the evening drew on, the breeze freshened, and the motion of the ship became more sensibly felt. Those who had braved it hitherto now began to feel rather queer, and found some excuse for retiring to rest. A few hardy veterans, whose constitution nothing could shake, assembled around a table, to smoke or sip their grog, till all was dark. These I soon left to their enjoyment, till one after another fell from his perch, intoxicated, or fast asleep.

Early next morning, whilst still in bed, I felt that the steam had been turned off, and heard various voices from boats. This assured me of our arrival at Buenaventura; but on looking through my glass, and finding, from the haziness of the morning, that no-

thing was to be seen, I turned in again to my couch and went to sleep. When at last I got up, I hastened on deck. The sun was shining with all the splendour of a Southern hemisphere. The shore was plainly visible, with the silver sand spread like the surface of a mirror, except where hundreds of sand-hills, formed into rows, had all the appearance of an encampment.* Sometimes a valley or tract of rich land was seen, watered by some friendly stream; and flowers, fruits, and vegetation flourished with abundant fertility; whilst high in the heavens, though indistinctly marked, and broken by many a cloud, might be traced the line of the Cordilleran Range.

Taking my walk along the decks, I was noticing the numerous deck passengers, each of whom had made his bed in some convenient spot, snug and comfortable, over the gratings, when I was saluted by two young

* These plains of sand, in the deserts of the South, are continually changing their forms. On some days, the sand is piled up into huge mountains; at other times it resembles a series of hillocks; then it presents the appearance of a sea of waves, or a broad extended plain, as smooth as glass.

Spaniards from the mother country, with all the gravity peculiar to that nation. I found them to be men of intelligence and gentlemanly address, though deck passengers, and meanly attired. I had the opportunity of procuring for them many favours on board, for which they expressed their gratitude. They told me that they were going to Guayaquil to purchase a quantity of the straw hats for which that place is famous, to dispose of at Lima, Bolivia, Chili, and Buenos Ayres, at an enormous price, some of these hats fetching so much as six ounces or doubloons a-piece. They said that they would be proud if I would allow them to execute any commands from me, in making any purchase of cigars, hats, or a beautiful sort of straw hammock worked by the Indians, and peculiar to the country; all which, they told me, they could procure for me at a cheaper rate than I myself could as a stranger. I thanked them for their kind offer, and gave them some few commissions.

The pilot on board the vessel was a fine-looking South American, and spoke with ease the English language. He interested me very much with an account of a famous and

daring enterprise in which he had been engaged under Earl Dundonald, then Lord Cochrane, under whose flag he had served in the cutting-out of the Spanish frigate *Esmeralda*, from under the round batteries of Callao. The enthusiasm with which he told the story, and the freshness with which each event in his recollection seemed to be clothed, made it all appear as of recent date, instead of, as was the case, a matter of long-past history.

We were now fast approaching the land, as our course lay towards the entrance of the great river of Guayaquil. Avoiding the sandbanks and shallows of the bar, we enter the mouth of the river, on which large pieces of timber are to be seen stranded, whilst others are floating on the waters, making their way to the sea. The enormous breadth of the river becomes gradually less, and soon nothing is to be seen from the water's edge to the farthest limit to which the eye could reach, but one great mass of dense wood. Numerous birds, disturbed from their solitudes, scream and dart by us as we slowly proceed against the stream; and shoals of fish, frightened by the noise of the

vessel, plunge and disappear beneath the hurrying tide. The current becomes stronger as we advance, and the steamer is obliged to seek the shelter of the nearest shore. Large trees bathed by the waters spread their ponderous branches in all directions ; and where the mud banks are laid bare by the receding tide, the alligator, stretched asleep upon the shore, lies basking in the sun's scorching heat, nor quits his slimy bed till disturbed by the rifle's sharp report, he retires wounded from the scene, and is soon lost in the depths beneath. The giant oak here rears his stately head ; and the cedar, mahogany, and banyan—the latter a forest of woody bowers in itself, vie with each other in all their majesty of luxuriant growth. As we advance, several tributary streams, overshadowed by festoons of foliage, open a long vista along the surface of their placid waters ; and occasionally where there was a slight clearage, fields of waving maize or cane caught the sight, together with a few huts, where the sunburnt children of the soil enjoyed their pastime in the cooling breeze. Occasionally in some creek sturdy Indians might be seen, after the labour of the day, selecting from the

fruits of their toil, which they had just landed from the watery flood. Large tracts of cultivated land and good houses became visible ; and passing boats, schooners, and canoes, announced our proximity to the city of Guayaquil.

This port belonging to the Republic of Ecuador, of which Quito is the capital, presents from the river a pleasing and tropical appearance. Behind a quay or esplanade, where trees and seats afford shelter and repose, stands the town, with its large galleried houses and variegated awnings to protect the inhabitants from the excessive heat of the mid-day sun. Shops, *cafés*, and stores, form the basement, which is thronged with visitors, who come to while away a vacant hour, or deal in the various kinds of merchandise there displayed. At a short distance from the shore a fleet of schooners is anchored, and coasters and rafts line the roads, whilst a number of small boats and canoes stud the beach in all directions. This being the destination of the American Consul and his family, on their way to Quito, myself and a few friends escorted them on shore. As they objected to go to the common *posada*, the only accom-

modation I was able to procure for them was a badly-furnished apartment, where, however, by the kindness of the Captain of our steamer, the *Nueva Granada*, they were supplied with a good stock of provisions, as the eatables were cooked on board, and sent to them. I now left these unfortunate people, who had begun to find the inconvenience of being in a foreign country without being able to speak a word of the language, and started on an exploring expedition by myself. I was soon accosted by two well-dressed gentlemen, who saluted me in the most respectful manner. I was quite at a loss to know who my friends were, when they recalled to my recollection some little favour I had conferred on them on board the ship. I regarded them with astonishment when I recognised my Spanish acquaintances, now completely metamorphosed, and dressed in the very height of fashion. These grateful fellows could not thank me sufficiently for what I had done. They made the best return they could in assisting me in various purchases I was making, and procured for me many articles at a much cheaper rate and

of a better description than I could possibly have procured myself. The evening being advanced, and feeling rather tired, I entered one of the best *cafés* to seek some refreshment. The waiter was at my elbow almost before I had time to call him, and placed down before me an ice, some chocolate, sweet cakes, and preserves. I looked at him with surprise. He bowed and withdrew. Imagining this to be the custom of the country, I took no further notice, but helped myself freely to that which pleased my fancy. After remaining some time, I called the waiter, and demanded of him how much I had to pay. He informed me that all I had taken was already paid for, as well as anything else I might choose to order. I regarded the fellow with astonishment, thinking he must have been mad. Still wishing to settle my bill, with my purse in hand, I made another attempt to ascertain the amount of it. To all my inquiries he was now mute, and taking the things away, he bowed and retired.

On my way to the beach I turned over this affair again in my mind, and the only solution of it which I could give was, that my Spanish

friends had seen me enter the *café*, and in this delicate manner had manifested their gratitude.

As I approached the water's edge, in order to procure a boat to take me on board, I found the place crowded by a perfect galaxy of all the beauty of the town, together with a host of black female servants, all busily enjoying the delights of sea bathing. At first I thought of delaying my departure a little till they had finished their pastime; but, as I found that the nymphs took little or no notice of me, I put a bold face on it, hired a boat, and made a sally into the midst of them. I soon gained the vessel, and passed the night on board. It was intolerably hot, and the number of musquitoes and other tormentors made the place a regular *Inferno*. Soon after daybreak the steam was up, and we were ploughing our way through the waters of Guayaquil. I forgot to mention that the pine apples there are without exception the finest I ever beheld, many of them weighing five or six pounds each, and they are as abundant as they are remarkable. Rafts came alongside containing pyramids of them, and they were sold at about the rate of one *Madio*,

(or 3d. of English money,) each. Every person on board was quickly supplied with a large stock. The sailors and cabin servant, (although the practice was strongly prohibited,) filled up every hole and corner where they could conveniently store them away; and in a very few days run of the steamer there was a ready sale for them at the rate of two dollars each at Valparaiso and Chili. Our boat-swain, a very intelligent and active seaman, had like the rest, completely filled his berth when off his watch, and afterwards went to sleep, during which he was stung by some insect, and in a very few minutes the poor fellow was like a mad person and dancing about with pain. His mates, to relieve him, applied every remedy they could think of, but to no avail. His arm became swollen from one end to the other, and was in the highest state of inflammation. The pain was so acute that the poor man cried like a child, and his sufferings were so truly heartrending, that it was determined to leave him at the next port, where he would be put under the care of experienced persons, and derive the benefit of the very best medical advice. The next day being the anniversary of the foundation of the

Chilian Republic, the Purser, who was a son of that nation, did all the honours, and treated the whole table to champagne. Various patriotic toasts were given and ably responded to, and after some good songs, the party broke up on the very best terms of friendship. The evening of the day being fine, and a couple of guitars having been procured, some of the dancers of the country, known by the name of *Baylarcetos*, were introduced.

These dances are particularly graceful, and are managed something after this manner. The two guitarists place themselves in a conspicuous position, surrounded by the spectators of the amusement, a vacancy in the centre being left free for the dancers. A lady and gentleman are selected, who stand opposite to each other, both holding a white handkerchief in the right hand. Verses are then sung by the party, and generally of their own composition, relative to the dancers or the company present. The dancers advance towards each other and then retire, waving their handkerchiefs gracefully in the air; this is often repeated, all joining in chorus, and adding the clapping of hands to the beat of the music. The dancers become ex-

cited and throw themselves into extravagant attitudes; and when one set is fatigued, they are succeeded by others, and so on during the whole course of the night. In this way the hours were agreeably beguiled, and entertainment was found for those who had nothing else to amuse them. My old friend the American Commodore, since he had lost the society of the Consul, and particularly of his pretty and agreeable daughters, appeared like a fish out of water. Not being able to speak Spanish, he used to say that he considered himself very unlucky in not being able to talk to the "girls," and therefore was obliged to be content with ogling them. As a resource under the circumstances he courted my society; and in the course of our conversation together, which turned upon many subjects, the discipline of the navy was at last started, and proved a very fruitful topic. He gave me chapter and verse to prove the superiority of his own over all others. A Captain was walking the deck of his vessel, when, observing a man skulking aloft, he hallooed to him, "What the devil are you after, sir? Come down." The man in his hurry and fright, slipped, and came right down upon

the deck the shortest way, severely knocking the Captain about the head and shoulders in his fall, without hurting himself in the least. For this he was arrested and brought to a trial, charged with striking a superior officer. The prisoner pleaded in extenuation, that he did but obey orders. The Captain, who had now recovered, smiled at his adroit defence, and confessed that he had ordered him down. Upon this the man was honorably acquitted, and moreover, received the compliments of the court for prompt execution of orders. I could not help laughing, and remarked to my friend that to visit accidents with the outward form and solemnities of a trial, seemed to my way of thinking very unsatisfactory. His opinion was that no disobeyal of order, even by accident, could be tolerated under any circumstances whatever, and this was a knock-down argument. After this I thought that the Commodore had mixed his grog rather too strong, and so, wishing him a good night, I retired to rest.

CHAPTER III.

Callao—San Lorenzo—City of the Kings—Its principal features—Bull fight—Account of a dangerous encounter with robbers in Mexico, several years before—Festival of Santa Rosa, at Lima—Chorillas—Shooting on the mountains—Dizzy elevation—Ruins of the Incas—Monasteries—Pisco.

AFTER the events detailed in the last chapter, nothing of any importance occurred till we came within sight of the Peruvian coast. Off Payta, a large sailing boat was seen making towards us with crowded sail, having on board various packages and several new passengers. The port itself appeared at too great a distance for anything to be discernible but a few houses. Late in the evening many other ports were passed, but nothing was seen of them. At last, a forest of masts,

backed by the island of San Lorenzo, marked the port of Callao. This port, from its admirable situation and vast capabilities, shows the great penetration of its founder, the conqueror Pizarro, who made it to be the maritime key to his great city, *de los Reyes*, (Lima, city of the kings.) There is a tradition that the island of San Lorenzo originally joined the main-land, forming a peninsula, on which stood the ancient town of Callao, or San Lorenzo (I forget which), with its numerous churches, fortifications, and houses, together with an extensive harbour for shipping. During a tremendous earthquake, the greater part of this peninsula was engulfed beneath the sea, leaving where once stood a fair city with its busy inhabitants, nothing to mark the spot in the vast expanse of waters which covered it. Separated from its mother earth, the lovely isle of San Lorenzo stands now at a distance of between two and three miles from the main-land, and is not inhabited—or if so, merely at stated seasons of the year, by a few fishermen who build there temporary huts for the pursuit of their avocation. It is stated that the island seaward is infested by hundreds of

sea-horses of an enormous size. This I can quite believe, having seen several of them at a small watering-place, some twenty miles farther along the coast. Parties of gentlemen, chiefly officers belonging to the British fleet engaged on the station in the Pacific, hunt these animals, whose tusks are of great value and form an important article of commerce. Several boats are manned, the sportsmen being armed with rifles and boarding-pikes, and the parties start in pursuit of these animals, which are seen basking in hundreds on the sand or swimming around the shore. No sooner are a few shots fired than they plunge into the water and attack the boats, in many cases placing their paws upon them and endeavouring to seize upon the inmates, until repulsed by the boarding-hooks and pikes. The slaughter of some of them on these occasions is very great, though the sport is not unattended with danger. By reason of its seaward position, the island forms an excellent harbour for Callao. It affords a safe shelter from the winds, and a breakwater to the ocean, and within its precincts a large amount of shipping rides in safety. Two large round batteries command

the port, where are mounted some of those beautiful brass guns peculiar to the Spaniards. There are several landings, one being especially devoted to the boats belonging to vessels of war. The good people of Callao are full of strange stories as regards their being able to see on clear days beneath the waters the ruins of the city which so tragically disappeared.

The present town chiefly faces the sea, and much resembles in appearance a seafaring town in England. There are slop shops in every variety, ship-chandler's stores, and a very great sprinkling of taverns and dancing places for the sailors. As for the ladies, they walk about bedecked with every species of jewellery and finery; and so anxious are they to make all the display they can, that they even carry two or three watches at a time. The dissipation which goes on at this place at night is, I am told, perfectly alarming. I was very much amused by the conduct of sailors from the various ships of war on leave of absence, the instant they got on shore. They were for the most part French or English, and a pretty figure they cut on the horses which they hired, clinging

to them in a very grotesque manner, and howling just as if they were on board a ship. The road from Callao to Lima is about three miles, and perfectly flat. An omnibus runs between the two places several times a-day.

At the period of my being in the country, the commercial world was much engrossed by the subject of a projected railway to unite the towns. Since my visit I understand that so desirable a result has been achieved. The little tract of land between the port and the capital has been the scene of some of the most daring robberies and murders upon record. The ruins of some houses, and a number of dilapidated walls were about midway between the two spots, and here the brigands cautiously awaited the approach of travellers, and either shot at them from behind their ambush, or pounced upon them suddenly and despatched them with their knives. If not killed at once, these unfortunate travellers were invariably severely wounded, and were generally tied hand and foot by these butchers, and left for dead in the road. These deeds were usually perpetrated by men on horseback, who, upon the least alarm, immediately dispersed themselves in all directions, and

baffled all pursuit. Since, however, the establishment of the omnibuses, the road has been so much frequented by travellers—so many at a time, and so well armed, that to a certain extent these acts of violence have been put a stop to. After passing a thickly wooded portion of the journey, the road becomes extremely beautiful, trees planted at equal distances and interspersed with elegant seats, forming a magnificent avenue. On each side are delightful gardens, filled with fruits and flowers, inviting the passer-by to rest awhile, and partake of one of the cool and refreshing beverages with which the country abounds.

Lima, the city of the kings, is surrounded by strong walls, having four principal gates, and numerous towers or bastions, with flanking batteries which command the various approaches. Like many other works constructed by the conquerors of the country, at enormous labour and expense, this massive erection has been allowed to tumble into decay for want of the necessary repairs. The moat or ditch in some places has been filled up by the crumbling wall; and in other parts, where once was heard the cry of war, and

where the dreadful instruments of destruction roared, smiling gardens and peaceful little summer-houses now attract the eye. The streets which form the suburbs of this far-famed city, present no remarkable features. The external appearance of the houses exhibits a plain white façade, with a large massive wooden gateway, and through two or three windows on the ground-floor, strongly barricaded with long perpendicular iron bars, might be seen a suite of rooms elegantly furnished. On passing through the entrance, a large court-yard is entered, around which is found a large assortment of flowers in pots tastefully arranged. The apartments which open upon this *patio*, are generally composed of the principal drawing and ante-rooms, which, seen from the street through the open gateway at night with their brilliantly-lighted chandeliers, produced a most admirable effect. This description will serve for most of the houses in Lima; only the larger houses have a story above, and the external windows are decorated with large carved balconies, almost in every instance painted green. The corners of the streets are chiefly occupied as wine shops, where commodities in chandlery of all

descriptions are sold. I observed that the front rooms of many respectable houses were converted into shops.

The appearance of the grand Plaza is anything but commanding. The Palace of the President, where Pizarro was assassinated by the followers of his companion in arms, the great Almegro, has little to boast of as regards its external aspect. A large gateway which is generally crowded by officers and soldiers, lounging about in all directions, is with the exception of a dirty flag that waves above, the only indication that this is the seat of government. The building presents to the beholder nothing but a long white-washed wall, in which a few windows, high from the ground, look out upon a crazy balcony. On one side, several stalls and mean-looking shops disfigure this edifice, which occupies the greater part of one angle of the square. The opposite angle is occupied by the cathedral, a large building of stone with a tower and belfry, which are upon the whole grand and imposing, though bearing evident marks of the continual earthquakes which frequent the city. The remainder of the square is composed of houses, under

which is a colonnade of shops, on the outside of which the several wares are fantastically arranged. Between the arches of the colonnade stalls may be seen, at which gold embroidery and epaulette makers are hard at work at their trade. Here are also flower-venders, and small *cafés*, tastefully arranged with flower-pots and seats, so as to form little bowers, where may be enjoyed in all their perfection, ices, chocolate, and sweetmeats. In one corner of the square is a large boarding-house upon the American principle, the charge being three dollars a-day, including everything. Here are congregated commercial club-houses and billiard-rooms belonging to the English merchants, as well as the Policia, and other public buildings.

In the centre of the Plaza is a very old and dilapidated fountain, which is generally surrounded by beggars and deformed persons soliciting charity. The principal street leading from this locality is called Calle del Comercio. It is like a little Paris in miniature, from the number of elegantly decorated shops and large *cafés* with which it abounds. There the French milliner is busily employed, surrounded by Parisian fashions. There the

European bootmaker, hatter, or saddler, vie with each other in a rich assortment of their respective goods. The splendour and magnificence of the jeweller, the taste of the confectioner, and the grace of the hairdresser, are conspicuous on every hand. There is the bazaar to tempt the curious, and the profusion of the Italian warehouse to satisfy every want.* The *café* of the Balla d'Oro is regarded as one of the very best, every accommodation being procurable at a very reasonable charge. This establishment is generally crowded, particularly at night, when the numerous billiard tables with which the rooms are furnished often exhibit very showy play. Near to this street resides a Yankee, who is a livery-stableman, and a very obliging fellow, and lets out horses at the rate of a dollar a day.

The street of *Plateros* (silversmiths) is filled with persons entirely engaged in that handicraft. A tolerable display is made by the large fashionable silver spurs, weighing

* The business of the latter, together with that of the grog shop, is always conducted in Lima by Italians, who are chiefly Genoese, and considered a very wealthy class.

several pounds, together with silver ornaments for horses, church chalices and utensils of various kinds, which are exposed in the windows.

I took up my quarters at decidedly the best hotel in the city—one kept by a Monsieur A. Calle de los Bourgadones. The house is conducted in the genuine French style, and the difficulty of getting apartments is so great that persons have sometimes to wait weeks before they can be accommodated. When I was at last fortunate enough to secure an entrance, I found myself in the society of merchants, officers of the navy, Italian opera singers, clerks, and artists. The table which is kept there is most excellent, and the general affability which French manners engender, soon made us all feel at home.

Amongst the inmates were a number of persons who appeared to live at the house all the year round. They were a set of young men of the most fashionable exterior, who indulged in all the follies and extravagancies of the day, having at their command magnificent horses, beautiful *chères amies*, and everything they could possibly want.

These young men, I was informed, lived entirely by gambling, and in the course of a short season of between two and three months at Chorillas—a small watering place a few miles from Lima—gained sufficient to supply their needs during the whole of the year. This place, which is much resorted to by the *élite* of Lima, is very notorious for these sets of sharpers, who carry gaming to an alarming extent, and aggrandize themselves by the ruin of many respectable families. It was during my residence at this hotel, that I saw for the first time Colonel Visendon, the unfortunate fellow who was afterwards shot in Bolivia, and to whom I shall have to allude in a subsequent part of this work. Besides this person, I made the acquaintance of a little, fat, talkative Englishman, who kept a sort of superior wine store, much frequented by the merchants, captains, and English in general. A fine painting of some railway, which proved a great source of attraction, served as a sign to this concern. This man, who had been in the country for thirty years or more, and had been twice married there, possessed a great stock of local knowledge. I called

upon him several times, and derived from him much sound and useful information.

The ladies of Lima wear an extraordinary costume, called a *Tapada*, which attracted my particular attention. With some the material is black satin, but light brown and various other tints are constantly to be seen. The skirt, which is exceedingly full, is beautifully stretched down at certain distances below the hip, and then allowed to fall gracefully. From the waist upwards it has the appearance of a sack, forming a sort of hood, which is held in such a position that only one eye is seen; the wearer being thus disguised to such a degree that it is almost impossible to recognise her. Mistakes from this cause are continually taking place. Husbands have been known to follow their own wives for the purposes of intrigue. Brothers have failed to discover their own sisters, or lovers their sweethearts, when dressed out in one of these disguises. Married ladies generally possess one, which they put on unknown to their husbands, and then slip out of doors—for what purposes I must leave the dark beauties of Lima to answer for themselves.

The Italian Opera House is much frequented, and the company pretty tolerable. A performance takes place once a week. On other nights, a Spanish tragedy or comedy is enacted, or a little posturing is got up for the amusement of the people of Lima, who are much addicted to this species of entertainment. An Italian adventurer opened a large room, and gave a series of dissolving views, with accompanying music, realizing by his speculation, in a very short time, a very considerable fortune. Two or three American artists, practising the daguerrotype process, were as successful in their line.

During my sojourn in this city, the announcement of an intended bull-fight, to take place at the Teatro de los Toros, on the outskirts of the city, induced me to make an effort to witness this strange exhibition. Carriages of all kinds, from the most superannuated to those but newly built, were put in requisition; and cavalcades of horsemen, together with a vast concourse of pedestrians, habited in their holiday attire, flocked early to the exciting scene. The Theatre of Bull-fights contains a spacious arena, which is enclosed by a strong barrier five feet high,

around which a clear passage is formed, away from the spectators. Around the circle the seats are then ranged, one above another; and at one part, opposite the entrance, an elegant box is fitted up with flags, garlands, and drapery, together with gaudy cloths of velvet and gold, for the reception of the President and staff. Tier after tier soon becomes densely filled with eager spectators, the lower ones being reserved for the more *élite* of the population of Lima, comprising many a beautiful woman, attended by her favorite cavalier. A division of infantry, headed by their band, march into the arena, and after they have paraded about some time to the cheering sounds of some lively music, the President and his staff appear in their box, and are complimented by the usual honours, and the applause of the multitude. The band then retire to a place allotted to them, the soldiers march within the barriers, and, after a flourish of trumpets, six beautifully-dressed young men, each with a small red flag in his hand, rush into the middle of the arena, and bow to the President. After this, six *cavaliers piqueurs* follow, on richly caparisoned horses, and do the same. The

whole of them then disperse and retire, the horsemen taking up their places, with the six men on foot in advance of them.

There is a second flourish of trumpets ; the gates in front of the presidential box are thrown open, and the roar of an infuriated bull echoes along the theatre. The most intense enthusiasm prevails everywhere, and the whole company are on the very tip-toe of expectation. A small, black bull, with short horns, and short, curly hair, rushes headlong into the arena, with his tail erect, and foaming at the nostrils, and makes a stand in centre of the flagmen. These then wave their banners, and do all in their power to enrage him. The infuriated beast looks first at one, then at another, stamps violently upon the ground, and then roars with terrific vehemence ; after which, as quick as thought, he rushes at two of the footmen, who have only time to clear the barriers ere the horns of the bull come into contact with their garments. He now makes for one of the horsemen, and in an instant shivers his lance to pieces ; then gores the horse under the ribs, who, falling right over on his rider, nearly crushes the unfortunate *piqueur* under

him. In order now to divert the attention of the bull from their helpless comrade, the flagmen and horsemen exhibit a great deal of prowess and daring, and the intrepidity they manifested in their several efforts was beyond all description. The bull, worried by one and the other, followed them for a little space of time, and during this short interval, the fallen man was rescued, and carried away in a most deplorable state. The poor horse, in the agony of his sufferings, endeavoured to rise upon his feet, when the mad bull, catching another sight of him, made several desperate rushes at the dying creature, and having strewed the arena with his entrails, finally tramped upon his victim with rage. The flagmen now advance towards the bull, armed with flags provided with darts at their ends, to which are attached fireworks. When they arrive near him, they turn suddenly off, planting, at the same moment, a dart in his buttocks. This is no sooner done than another, and another, and another flagman goes through the same manœuvre, till the angry beast is literally covered with flags. The fireworks then ignite, covering him with a shower of sparks.

Every now and then an explosion takes place, and the skin appears torn away from the flesh, with the red gore trickling down. Mad with pain, fright, and rage, the infuriated animal now frisks about in all directions, and at last, gasping for breath, comes to a regular stand. Once more the trumpets flourish; the stately *matador* enters in the graceful costume of an Andalusian bull-fighter. He raises his little black bonnet, and bows to the President. His esquire then advances, and offers him the hilts of two Toledan swords, crossed. One is selected, and this handsome Spaniard (for he was a famous bull-fighter from Cadiz) walks up towards his ferocious enemy. All the other flagmen and horsemen retire, and form a group in a distant part of the arena, to watch the encounter.

The bull seems by instinct to know that his end is approaching, and to recognise his destroyer. He keeps his gaze fixed upon him, as he steadily advances, quite on the alert, as he comes up to him, to start away on the instant. They are face to face intently regarding each other, when all at once the animal roars furiously, stamps impatiently on the earth, butts at the air, and scatters about

his gory foam. Then he starts up with the rapidity of lightning, tosses high in the air the red cloth held out by his wily antagonist and tramples it under foot. He then turns and renews his attacks; the adroit and agile bull-fighter stepping aside each time to avoid his sudden rush. All this time the appearance and shouts of the people rend the air, and the uproar of the excited spectators, who are worked up to the greatest pitch of enthusiasm and delight, mingles with the loud bellowing of the fierce beast, who occasionally makes false starts, which are well watched and parried by his active adversary. At last, fearing, as it were, to lose a chance, he rushes on his foe, when his head is immediately enveloped in the red mantle, and the king of the *Matadores*, jumping aside, with uplifted hand plunges his well-tempered steel up to the very hilt in a vulnerable part of the bull's body, a little above the shoulder. The animal now rushes forward, frantic with pain, and giving one long last gasp, falls dead upon the arena.

The whole assembly then rises. The waving of hats and handkerchiefs is universal, and the applause quite overwhelming and

deafening. Wreaths of laurel are thrown to the conqueror, who stands upon his fallen victim and bows to the admiring crowd. Then there is another flourish of trumpets, the military bands strike up in the general tumult, the large gates are thrown open, and four beautiful steeds covered with rich cloths of gold and plumes of waving feathers on their heads, harnessed abreast, and led by their respective grooms, prance gracefully round the circle, after which the dead bull is attached to the harness, and after making the round of the arena, is conveyed away amidst general acclamations. Seven other bulls now entered and went through the like phases of this extraordinary exhibition, after which the enraptured audience withdrew, well satiated with the sight of blood, and the slaughter of unoffending dumb animals. The continual repetition of such a sight was to me painful in the extreme; and I returned to my hotel in disgust at what I had witnessed, and content to have satisfied my curiosity for once and for ever on the matter of bull fights.

Early one morning I determined to visit the market-place, which I found to be in a square connected with the principal Plaza by

a street which joins one of its corners. In this square is situated an old church or monastery, and a number of wooden stalls and sale tenements, with which it is covered, bespeak the manner of its appropriation. Very early in the morning the scene is one of great bustle, lines of butcher's stalls meet the eye, poultry in all its varieties is piled in heaps, and the passer-by is regaled with a sight of fruits, and vegetables, and flowers of every tint and odour in all their beauty and freshness. The general buzz of voices which greets the ear adds life and animation to the busy scene. Many a fashionable interloper, who has come there merely for amusement, looks on with envious eye at some industrious housewife cheerfully performing the duties of her station. There some fat *padre* solicits the donations of every stall, to line his already well-stored scrip, and gives in return his hearty benediction. The display of fish, formed into little heaps upon the ground, exhibits to the stranger such an assortment as he seldom meets with. The mendicants, who assail the visitor upon every hand, are beyond calculation. I was particularly struck by the deformities to which most of them are

subject. There were lepers, palsied persons, and those afflicted with every species of malady, and all these subsisting (and that in a very comfortable manner) entirely upon charity. As I was wandering about in this place, I met with my old friend, a German doctor, with whom I had an adventure many years before in Mexico. We dined together and recapitulated our exploits. The following is the circumstance to which I allude.

Early one morning the diligence from the city of Mexico to the port of Vera Cruz entered the pleasant city of Piroli, passing to its destination along the narrow streets, and attracting the attention of the idlers who were gathered in groups at the doors of their dwellings. The heavy vehicle rolled into the great square where stood the noble cathedral, and passing by the fountain and arcades, which adorned the place, arrived in the vicinity of the Grand Hotel Nacional, and ultimately creaked into the extensive court-yard of that establishment. The passengers alighted, comprising two English gentlemen, officers in present commission—a German doctor with his wife and two little girls, a German and Mexican gentleman

and myself. A Yankee coachman had conducted our little party thus far safe on our journey. In the centre of the court-yard was a jet of water, and round about coaches and carts were standing, and bales were strewn. On some mats littered with provender two troops of horses and mules were making their meal, and seated near at hand, drovers and coachmen were intently discussing their savoury dish—a mess of meat and pumpkins made perfectly red with red peppers. Near the scene two or three brigand-looking fellows stood, carelessly looking on, but keen observers of all that passed, though appearing to be occupied merely in the quiet enjoyment of their cigars. Two flights of stairs on each side of the court-yard led to a wooden gallery which surrounded it. After partaking of an excellent French dinner in the *Salle à manger*, which was entered from this gallery, I retired to my dormitory, which was situated upon the same floor, and soon fell asleep, but was not suffered long to enjoy my repose, for I was soon summoned to appear before the *alcalde*; and with as much haste as I could I accordingly paid a visit to that important

functionary. I found that I was not the only one whose slumbers had been broken in upon for a similar purpose. The *alcalde* graciously informed me that he was anxious to have a personal interview with me, in conjunction with my fellow-travellers, as he never suffered any one to depart from the city without his especial permission. This was a precaution he always observed, in consequence of the numerous robberies which took place upon the road; and he was always desirous of giving travellers the opportunity of furnishing themselves with an escort as the only remedy. He said that if we paid him, he would make the necessary arrangements, and that we should find an escort waiting for us on the outside of the town. We all of us agreed to this stipulation, and, having thanked the *alcalde*, withdrew to our quarters.

At break of day the coach was loaded; we took our seats as before, and were again *en route*. Now, the evening before, I had had a little friendly conversation with our Yankee coachman over a glass of grog and a cigar, when that worthy individual informed me to my comfort of the certainty of our

being waylaid by robbers on the following day. This being the case, I had requested as a favour to be allowed to take my seat with him on the box, as all my friends having determined on a stout resistance in case of attack, I should the better be enabled to give them the alarm when the time should arrive. To this proposal of mine he objected, on the ground that, but a short time previously, the coachman and a gentleman who was seated by his side had received a volley at the same instant, and had been both shot dead. He told me that the moment that the robbers ordered him to pull up his horses he must immediately comply or meet with a certain death, giving me to understand that his part must be strictly neuter, even if murder should be committed. Many of these desperadoes, he informed me, he knew by sight, some of them as well dressed gentlemen as any in the capital. They never molested him, and he, on his side, dared not to take any notice of them. Some few of them, with whom he came into constant contact, occasionally nodded to him, but, for his part, he thought it best to steer clear of their acquaintance, and for his own personal

safety, on no account to appear to thwart them in their evil designs. However, he said that the instant he saw any of them, he would lash his whip against the side of the coach, and thus give us warning of their approach. As we entered the coach the dawn was breaking, and a slight fog prevented us from seeing distinctly the forms of objects as we passed along. The heavy and ponderous gate of the city slammed behind us, and once in the open country we rattled fast along the road. A sound night's rest, the good fare which "mine host" had provided for our hasty meal, and the comforts of our toilet ere we started, mantled our brows with the smile of content. We jogged along in the very best of spirits; many a joke passed round, and we all recounted our little adventures in the course of our rambles about the town we were now leaving.

In the midst of all our merriment the coach suddenly stops, and a number of horsemen are to be seen galloping about in all directions. Two make a stand at the leaders, two at the wheelers, two present themselves at the door, prudently keeping themselves rather in the background for

fear of accident, and two are posted behind them to come to their succour if wanted. All this time several of the gang, who are on foot, creep out from the adjoining hedges, ready upon any emergency, to make themselves generally useful (I must here remark that this minute description of their proceedings was afterwards given me by the coachman, who quietly witnessed all their manœuvres). All these were well armed, and wore black masks over their faces. One of them, who appeared to be their commander, ordered us immediately to dismount from the vehicle, somewhat in these terms, "Get down, or by St. —— I'll shoot every one of you." At this peremptory summons we looked at one another, each by a sudden impulse grasping his pistol. Having thus made due preparations, my friend the German doctor, addressing the speaker, said that he had no doubt that he and his party were the escort which the Alcalde had promised to send with us, and that they had made a mistake in treating us in the way they had done.

This jocular mode of dealing with the question was quite unavailing; several round oaths were ejaculated by our relentless

aggressors, and a general stir amongst them began to take place. We plainly saw that no time was to be lost, and, therefore, without more ado, we discharged a couple of pistols out of the window, and as we found to our great relief, with considerable effect. Two of the brigands were severely wounded, and were dragged by their companions through a hedge of prickly pears, and there left to recover or die. In fact, the whole party, with the exception of these, made a precipitate retreat; for when we threw open the doors of the carriage and jumped out, sword, blunderbuss, or pistol in hand, to fight like Britons, we found the coast perfectly clear. Our valour found no field for its exercise, and we contented ourselves with greeting our runaway antagonists with a parting shot, as they scampered away out of our sight. Instead of the exciting scene which threatened us with so much danger but a few moments before, everything around us was as quiet as ever, and we found ourselves in full possession of the field. My Yankee friend advised us immediately to reload all our fire-arms, to leave the wounded men to their fate, and to push on as fast as

possible, for fear of another attack. This was no sooner said than done, and away we started, fully prepared for another encounter. The ladies of the party scarcely recovered from the terrible fright into which the menacing posture of our assailants had thrown them. This adventure, too, had been a painful trial for the poor children. During our parley with the robbers, the German lady, who sat at my back, with her two little girls, had had the presence of mind to make them lie down in the bottom of the carriage for fear of random shots; and whilst the events above detailed were going on, they clung to me from terror with such tenacity, that the agitation of their minds had a powerful influence upon myself, tending much to unnerve me in the trying position in which I was placed. However, now that the danger was passed, we determined to make the best of our way forward, not much relishing the idea of a repetition of the scene; and as we advanced, we found abundant cause for the alarm, for the course of our journey led us through several narrow and difficult passes, where two or three resolute robbers might have destroyed the whole of our party with-

out sharing any risk in return. We pursued our way, however, unmolested, and finally arrived at a post-house where relays were kept, and found there stationed an officer and a company of men. They congratulated us upon our escape, telling us for our consolation, that the very band who had stopped us were in league with a certain captain of brigands, who could, on any emergency, muster together several hundreds of his followers, by whom even small divisions of troops had been sometimes roughly handled. Under these circumstances, we considered ourselves doubly fortunate, in having so completely turned the tables on our murderous assailants.

But to return from this digression. The day following that on which I again fell in with my old friend, the German doctor, one of the heroes, I may say, of the above tale, was the anniversary of the Patroness Saint of the city of Lima. From the break of day everybody seemed to be in motion. Flags and rich tapestries were hung from the windows and balconies, and lined the various streets. Bands of music, military bands, and detachments of soldiers, were passing continually to and fro. Ladies elegantly dressed,

followed by negro servants, bearing little carpets and numerous *tapadas*, were seen hurrying to the cathedral, to hear the Mass of Grace performed by the Bishop, in presence of the President, general officers, law doctors, and other functionaries of state.

The interior of this superb edifice is richly decorated, the several altars being covered with gold, silver, and precious stones, of the most rare and costly description, lent to the Church for this grand occasion by all the wealthy inhabitants of the city. The whole of the internal walls and columns are adorned with crimson velvet drapery, fringed with gold, and spangled with the same material. Myriads of wax tapers suspended in chandeliers, or crowded upon the altars, cast their brilliant glare around. The nave is richly carpeted; and on a slight elevation is placed the President's chair, facing which and at the sides are places set apart for the general officers, *aide-de-camps*, judges, law officers, ministers, heads of the various colleges, deputies of the chambers, and other important functionaries.

At the altar, which is entirely of silver, and decorated in the most costly manner,

stand the officiating priests in the grandest ceremonial attire; and close at hand, on a magnificent pedestal, richly gilt, and hung with festoons of roses which glitter in the light of a pyramid of wax-tapers, is the beautiful figure of the Lady Patroness, Santa Rosa, adorned with a diadem of brilliants and a robe of satin, embroidered with pearls and precious stones, and holding in her hands the symbolical rose, composed entirely of brilliants. The church is crowded with devout worshippers, including members of the chief families in the city. The President and his accompanying office-bearers take their places, when twenty young novices immediately advance, and present to each of these high functionaries a wax taper. Then the deep sonorous notes of the noble organ peal through the building, blending its tones with a loud chorus of voices, or accompanying the sweet cadences of some solo performer. The solemnities of the mass are gone through and the benediction given, when the order of procession is formed amidst the thunder of petards, the explosion and hissings of numberless rockets, squibs, and other fireworks; the dinning sound of vari-

ous bells, and the continual murmur of loud chantings and prayers. On the Plaza in front of the cathedral, several battalions are drawn up, headed by their officers, to receive the advancing procession with a salute, and then fall into their respective positions. The following was the order observed upon the occasion:—First came three companies of infantry, bareheaded; then two singing-boys in white surplices, carrying silver incense-burners in their hands; a noviciate, bearing a silver cross; the heads of colleges, followed by the several members, robed in crimson dresses and badges; the deputies, two-and-two; the law doctors, magistrates, and other officers of state; the President-General's *aide-de-camps*, staff, and household; three priests, the middle one holding the banner of the Cross; twenty-four singing-boys; three banners, that of Santa Rosa in the centre; fifty choristers and musicians; three priests, attired in sumptuous vestments; twenty young girls, dressed in white, scattering flowers; the image of the Saint, carried by twenty of the most important personages of the city, and surrounded by a number of priests, habited in surplices, and a body-

guard of soldiers, bareheaded ; twenty friars ; two incense boys ; priest, with banner of the Church ; grand canopy of embroidered silk, held over the head of the Bishop by six priests, each carrying a silver rod in his hand ; three banners ; a number of priests ; three companies of soldiers ; the various professions, represented by individuals, walking two and two, and carrying lighted tapers. Regiments of soldiers, each with its military band performing airs, brought up the rear. As the procession passes along, the spectators fall upon their knees and cross themselves. It makes the round of the Plaza, moving along through some of the principal streets of the city, and returning in like manner, through a perfect mass of living beings ; windows, balconies, house-tops, and every available position being filled with their eager occupants, regarding with the greatest possible interest the varied procession, as it slowly wended its way along the prescribed route.

It was astonishing to me, that, amidst so much bustle and crowding, no serious accident occurred. There was not, so far as I heard, any breach of public morals, particularly as

ill-disposed persons had so many opportunities of exercising their vocation without any, or, at all events, with but a slight chance of detection. In countries where the Roman Catholic religion is prevalent, this is very remarkable; and whatever may be its faults, it certainly does exert such an influence over the minds of the most hardened and depraved, that they are, by force of habit, enabled for a time, and under certain circumstances, to put a check to their propensities, and to conduct themselves, for a period at least, with order and decorum.

During my stay at Lima, I received an invitation from an English friend of mine to pay him a visit for a week or two, at the delightful watering place of Chorillas, a few leagues distant. Having despatched my luggage a day beforehand, I hired a horse and set out upon my trip. Having passed through the small streets just within the walls, where misery, destitution, and debauchery, seemed to revel, I found when once through the gates of the town, orchards, beautiful gardens, and plantations, beginning to attract my view, and increasing on every hand as I proceeded. The road was excellent, but not so secure

but that every advancing horseman met his fellow with distrust, taking care to exhibit his pistols in a conspicuous manner, as he rode rapidly along. The route, which followed the course of the sea shore, though at some considerable distance, was soon rendered more lonely by the appearance every now and then of the ruins of large buildings with numerous dilapidated walls. Occasionally large plantations of green cane came in sight, and numerous bands of slaves might be seen busily employed upon them. Whilst progressing leisurely through this country, I came up with eight or ten fishermen on their return to Chorillas, who claimed my protection, as they informed me they had in the course of the previous week been stopped on the road and robbed of their little earnings. They told me that, independent of the regular highwaymen that infest this locality, the bands of slaves who are at work in the cane plantations, often quit their occupation to sally forth and rob and murder travellers, after which, leaving them on the road, they beat a hasty retreat to the fields. This state of things was suffered to go on without any attempt at a check on the part of the Govern-

ment, until a General Officer was robbed and illtreated on his way to visit the President, who was at that time staying at Chorillas. This made it necessary to take measures to prevent a recurrence of such a disaster ; and from that time escorts have been provided for all persons of distinction travelling by this route. Robbers in this part of the world are characterized by a degree of audacity which is almost incredible. In the city of Lima itself, acts of plunder have been perpetrated in open day, with the most perfect impunity, although, of course, the hazard has been proportionably great. A number of these bold thieves have been known to enter a house at mid-day, and having closed the entrance, and gagged, tied, and handcuffed the poor unfortunate inmates, to ransack it of every article of any value ; and then descend to the streets filled with passengers, and walk away as if nothing had happened. The system of police in these parts must be deficient in that great *desideratum* of effecting its object by the influence of intimidation, where such things as these are even possible, not to say, of very general occurrence.

After deviating from the highroad for a

short distance, in order to visit a number of *Quintas* or summer villas, beautifully situated with a view of the sea in front, and surrounded by luxuriant gardens and fine trees, the delightful bay soon came in sight. On an opposite range of cliffs, the pleasant watering place of Chorillas, whose numerous villas line the coast, presents to the traveller a most agreeable *coup d'œil*. Unlike most small towns in these parts, this place possesses very comfortable houses, a first-rate hotel, *cafés*, and billiard rooms. In the fashionable season, I am told that house-rent is excessively dear. It is in fact a little Brighton, and the resort of many families of distinction during a few months in the year. After passing an agreeable evening with my friend, I made arrangements with him to go over the cliffs on the morrow, and have a little shooting. The morning turned out very clear and propitious, and in company with my friend and a couple of English dogs I made a start. Passing over the cliff, along which lay the first part of our journey, we had the calm waters of the bay spread out beneath us; whilst watching from the dizzy heights its mirrored surface, my attention was directed to some strange

animal, which I discovered to be one of those enormous sea-horses, to which I have already alluded, in speaking of the Island of San Lorenzo.

Its appearance, from the great elevation at which I beheld it, was extremely singular. Its body seemed to be of a prodigious length, and covered with a short, glossy coat. With the exception of two great white tusks, projecting from the mouth on either side, the form of its head resembled that of a seal. This monster swam about with great rapidity, at times showing the greater portion of his body above the water, and at other times disappearing from view altogether. On striking upwards from the path by which we had so far travelled, we ascended a succession of cliffs, each higher than the other, sometimes being obliged to crawl on all-fours, where the nature of the path would not allow of our walking erect. After turning a sharp corner, we at last reached the shelf of a projecting cliff, having an Indian track along its very verge, of scarcely a foot in width, and immediately over a deep and fathomless abyss. My friend, accustomed to the dangerous height, passed unconcernedly

along, with his eyes fixed upon the scene before him. I, on the other hand, had too much to do in giving due attention to the occasional change of posture that was necessary, and therefore could take no notice of anything but the next step in advance. All at once I raised my eyes, and beheld myself on the brink of the precipice. The giant rocks formed range upon range, and were here and there hollowed out into deep caverns, whilst their rugged peaks, bleached by their continual war with the elements, stood out in their naked sublimity, and frowned upon the foaming waters beneath. Around their pinnacles hovered, high in the air, hundreds of pelicans, and every species of marine bird, mingling with the roar of the tide and the wind's dismal moan, the unearthly discord of their screaming cry. The terrors of this scene, so sudden and so stupendous, were quite overwhelming, and made me completely stand aghast. This exciting moment made the big drops stand upon my brow, and chase each other in quick succession on my pallid features. Each limb refused to perform its office. The brain was beginning to participate in the

general feeling, and my powers of thought and reasoning were fast ebbing away, when the firm grasp of my friend's extended hand recalled me to my senses. I now turned my eyes from the fearful abyss, where, in another moment, I might have been dashed to atoms, had not my companion warned me to fix my attention alone upon the path I was treading. I did so, and regained my confidence; nor did I venture to lift my eyes again from the ground till, having arrived at a pinnacle resembling a small martello tower, I came to a stand, to look around in comparative security. Perched like an eagle in his nest, I could regard the blue heavens above me with composure, whilst shadow after shadow, as from a passing cloud, occasionally obscured its brightness. I looked up, and saw to my astonishment, soaring on his outstretched pinions, and sweeping in proud majesty along his boundless domain, the mighty condor, in his aerial flight. A number of these extraordinary birds, measuring from twelve to fourteen feet from wing to wing, were hovering about, and floating in the air just above my head, startled, no doubt, by the unusual circum-

stance of finding human beings invading their haunts, and occasionally making a descent, and sweeping by with such rapidity that the current of air they set in motion was distinctly felt.

At length, not much relishing their familiar proximity, I fired a couple of barrels, one loaded with shot, and another with ball, at an enormous specimen immediately over my head. The only apparent effect which this produced was to startle a shower of feathers, which came down floating about in the air, and falling on the ground in all directions, the frightened bird soaring away out of my reach, but not so precipitately as might have been expected. My friend, an old explorer of these wilds, told me that he would give me a treat, and bade me watch his descent from the high position on which we were standing. Leaving me, he urged his way to an opening in the cliff, where the projecting points of some rugged rocks furnished him with the means of passing down a descent too horrible to look upon; and yet, with his gun slung across his shoulder, he set about his hazardous task, and springing from crag to crag, accomplished it with ease.

I watched his pigmy form, till at last he came to a standstill upon a shelf of rock, as hundreds of birds, disturbed from their impregnable fastnesses, rose in the air and fluttered about, rending the air with their screams, as if determined to dispute the advance of an intruder into their exclusive territory. All at once a couple of shots were fired, when the number of these birds increased to thousands, flock after flock breaking forth from every hidden cavern or pinnacle of rock along the coast, mingling in their flight, and joining in one chorus of wild and discordant screams.

I remained for some time, secure in my eyrie, regarding with wonder the several fragments of reddish rock which stood out in the sea, resembling in their fantastic shapes fortresses, bastions, towers, counter-scarps, all surrounded by channels, and detached from the main land by the action of the water.*

* On another occasion, having descended to the beach by another route, I had an opportunity of inspecting more closely these curious *phenomena* of nature; and as the tide retired and laid bare more of these singular rocks, I discovered channels leading from them and

On some sands close by I descried two pelicans that I had shot; and an Indian, who asked me for permission to secure them, effected great marvels in attaining his object. After being joined by my venturesome companion, I was conducted home by a route more agreeable to my nerves, although we had to experience much discomfort, and endure a great deal of additional fatigue in passing along several deep ravines and watercourses. When once at home, I had much pleasure in talking over, with my friend, the adventures of the day; and, now that all danger was over, I joined readily with him in a hearty laugh against myself,

communicating with the main land, of more than a mile in length, and as beautifully executed as if wrought by the mason's chisel. I descended into one of these subterranean passages in pursuit of crabs, which, together with a variety of shell-fish, are found here in great numbers at low water. During my ramble, a squall no doubt had formed, and I was greatly alarmed by several reports like the firing of great guns, and then a fearful rush of waters. I had barely time to climb up the side of the rock, when they swept along with overwhelming rapidity, carrying everything before them. I was now glad to seek the outlet, and find myself beyond the reach of danger.

at the pitiable figure I had cut in crossing the mountain paths.

On the following morning, I took a stroll along the beach, and was much amused at witnessing the singular mode adopted by the ladies for the enjoyment of a water excursion. The bathing-men are Indians, very stout and robust, who being divested of every species of covering, except a pair of drawers, take to the water, each carrying a lady upon his shoulders. The men strike out to swim, and do so without inconveniencing the ladies, who float horizontally on the surface of the water. In this way they are carried for a mile or more, and appear to enjoy this novel mode of locomotion extremely.

After this, I joined, as previously arranged, my friend and two ladies, in order to visit on horseback, some extraordinary ruins of a temple, or palace of the Incas, near Chorillas, and which is in a remarkably fine state of preservation. Taking the inland road, we passed many flourishing plantations of cane, maize, and barley, and afterwards entered a small village, where numbers of Indians, dressed out in their holiday attire, and bedecked with a profusion of ornaments, were

celebrating a rustic *fête* in the Plaza, in front of the church. At length, after advancing some considerable distance further, we arrived near an orchard, near to which were the ruins of which we were in search. Near it was an Indian cottage of a superior order, at which the toll of a *madio* per head, gave each person of the party the privilege of eating as much fruit as he pleased, and of taking away a small quantity with him. This orchard, or garden, covered a space of ten or a dozen acres of land, and was laid out regularly in groves. The trees, which were of a splendid growth, were covered with fruit, in some cases to such an extent as to weigh down the branches; and beneath their ample shade, various parties of ladies and gentlemen were reposing and enjoying the delicious fruits they had gathered. In some parts the song or soft tones of the Spanish guitar were heard, to whose dulcet sounds the light step of the graceful dancers beat time on the green sward. After an agreeable ramble amongst the trees, during which we availed ourselves of the privileges we had secured to our heart's content, we again mounted our horses, and advanced towards the ruins.

These consist of walls and foundations of some stupendous building, which by some is supposed to have been a palace of the Incas, by others a temple of the sun, whilst others regard them as a part of the remains of the great fortress of the empire. However this be, the building or buildings of which but fragments of ruins now remain, must have been on a colossal scale, covering as they do many acres of land. The distance between some of the walls, shows that some of the rooms must have been large and spacious, but for the most part they are small, having many passages and communications between them. The back of the edifice seems to have opened into enclosed grounds of some considerable extent. This leads to the conclusion that here were the gardens attached to the nunneries of those ancient times. The Incas often had their palaces adjoining the temple of the sun, near which was the convent of the officiating virgins, and attached to this was generally a delightful park or garden, well wooded with groves of the most choice and luxuriant trees. Sometimes contiguous to these buildings were the public granaries, and in other cases a fort or citadel. The

number of vases, utensils of earthenware, and trinkets of gold and silver found here is prodigious, as well as mummies found generally in a sitting posture, though in a perfect state of preservation, attributable, no doubt, to the effect of the dry sandy soil, which has the property of extracting the moisture from animal matter without suffering it to lose its outward form. The whole of these ruins are constructed of *adobe* (mud), with the exception of several very large stones, which have been used in laying the foundation.

Delighted with my excursion, I returned to Chorillas, and soon after, having bid adieu to my kind friends in that agreeable retreat, I prepared again to visit the capital. My stay here was now very short, as the period for the steamer's departure had nearly arrived. However, I made the best use of my time in partaking of every species of enjoyment which the place afforded. On two evenings in the week, the military bands played for a short time at the back of the palace of the President, which drew together a large concourse of fashionable people belonging to the city. Operas, polkas, quadrilles, waltzes, and *baylarcitos* (little dances

peculiar to the country), followed each other in quick succession, to the great delight of many a group of lovely *senoritas*, accompanied by their *duennas*. I found in general amongst the middling class of society, a lax etiquette to be very prevalent. It was easy enough to get into conversation with young ladies, even when escorted by their mothers, *duennas*, or brothers, during the course of the serenade, but that, however, ceased with the music. The place at which this promenade takes place is opposite a church which encloses the city gates, where there is a communication not unlike the Bridge of Sighs, at Venice.

This locality, during the time of the Inquisition, was the theatre of many horrors. Here was celebrated the *auto da fè* of the new world. In the interior I was informed that many dismal dungeons and instruments of torture may yet be seen. During my stay at Lima, I made a point of visiting some of the old monasteries belonging to the Jesuits. These buildings are little towns in themselves, a regular complication of cells, courts, passages, chapels, refectories, and gardens; and here multitudes of monks once passed their time in study, or in the observance of the

stated hours of religious worship. Now, however, their numbers have dwindled away considerably. A few friars and their attendant lay brothers are all that remain of the thriving communities who once swarmed in these spacious establishments. Now silence and desolation reign everywhere, and scarce a footfall is heard, where sounds of life and industry once echoed along the walls. As regards the government of the country, that of General Castillan has few redeeming points, but that which is most advantageous to the people at large is the continual state of peace which he has hitherto maintained through his policy. His repeated attempts to levy fresh contributions, and introduce new taxes, have given great dissatisfaction; not less, however, than his dislike to foreigners, whom he endeavoured to discountenance in every possible way. This has brought forth a protest on the part of the English Minister, who has succeeded in getting many stringent regulations relaxed on behalf of his nation. The natural character of the man is proud and ambitious, cunning, with a dash of bravery, but at the same time a consummate hypocrite. I

observed him smile in derision when showing to some friends the candle he had held on the occasion of the fête of Santa Rosa, in which he had taken part with all the solemnity of a bigot, practising before the multitude all the *ad captandum* airs of an adroit dissembler.

I had now completed all my arrangements for leaving Lima, and having embarked on board the steamer, found myself the next day at Pisco, a small port of a very wild and extraordinary appearance. An accumulation of large detached rocks meets the eye in all directions. Against these the raging waves dash themselves and sprinkle their white foam, and numerous seals are seen scrambling about over their rough points, or basking in security in their deep hollows. The coast is everywhere dark and uninviting, and a fragile, ill-constructed landing, splashed by every wave, offers its slippery footing to the anxious traveller. On the cliff, two superior houses, surrounded by enclosures of wooden railings, mark the residences of the British and American consuls. Having passed these, we entered the town, which presents nothing remarkable to the tourist, consisting as usual of one broad street, with its stores and shops,

and a Plaza with its accompanying church. Pisco is famed throughout the whole of this part of South America for a kind of spirit of the same name, which is distilled in large quantities, and imported to all parts of the country. The consumption of this liquor is enormous, and a degree of bustle, owing to the continual passing to and fro of mules laden with jars of it, gives to the town rather a lively appearance. After making the purchase of a few cigars, I hastened on board the steamer, and bade adieu to Pisco. On the next day before sunset, we were again drawing near to land, the coast being rocky and rugged, and swarming with pelicans, which in flights of six or seven at a time were continually passing the vessel, and affording excellent practice to many a young aspiring sportsman. A sort of bay was entered, the high cliffs gradually forming into a deep recess, behind which, I was informed, was the port of Isly. The appearance of several droves of heavily-laden mules seemed to confirm the statement. An American whaler was riding at anchor some distance off. We did not approach very near to the port, but cruising about in the neighbourhood without

coming to anchor, we received some passengers from one of those large rafts so much in use along this coast. After rather a rough night, and more tossing about than was agreeable, we arrived at last at Arica. I now bade adieu, for many a day, to the blue Pacific, to tread the soil of the Incas, so beautifully delineated by Chateaubriand in his magnificent poetical effusions. A large tract of interesting country lay before me, and I was now about, perhaps, to follow in the footsteps of that handful of bold and turbulent spirits, who having first alighted on these shores from the Old World, in their fanatical zeal, first conquered and then destroyed one of the most innocent of paternal systems of government, and planted in the hearts of their descendants the seeds of dissatisfaction, avarice, cruelty, and rapine, leaving them deficient in those settled principles of action which alone can make a great people.

CHAPTER IV.

Description of the Coast of Peru—Arica—Tacna—Ventellia—Palea—Tacorian range—Rio Mauri, frontier of Bolivia—Bridge of Nasacara—First View of La Paz.

THE coast of Peru may be said to consist of a line of sandy desert, five hundred leagues in length, the breadth varying from seven to fifty miles, as the several branches of the Andes approach or recede from the shores of the Pacific Ocean. It presents great inequalities of surface, and has the appearance of having once formed a part of the bed of the adjoining ocean; and were it not for the stupendous background to the scene, by means of which all other objects are reduced to a comparatively diminutive outline, the sand hills nearer the shore might

be called mountains. This long line of desert is intersected by rivers and streams, which are seldom less than twenty or more than eighty or ninety miles apart, and narrow strips on both banks of every stream are peopled in proportion to the supply of water. During the rainy season in the interior, or when the snow on the Andes begins to melt, the great rivers on the coast swell prodigiously, and are crossed only by means of *bolsas*, which are rafts fastened on four bulls' hides sewed up to render them watertight, and filled with air. On account of the tremendous surf, *bolsas* of a different construction are used on this coast. The largest kind is formed of several trunks of trees lashed together, upon these are arranged three or four cross-pieces, and then another flooring of the same number of logs as the bottom tier. These rafts are run aground, and the surf, in moderate weather, does not break over the upper tier so as to injure goods or wet passengers. A pole is stuck in the middle, to which a sail is rigged. The rudder is a plank run into the water between the logs, rather abaft the centre.

In this way merchant vessels are com-

monly unloaded in many places; on some parts of the coast a long bundle of rushes, tapering at each extremity, is used, particularly by fishermen, who seat themselves astride and paddle through the swell.

A few of the large rivers reach the sea, but most of those of the second order are consumed in irrigating the cultivated patches, or are absorbed by the desert through which they pass, for in this inhospitable region it never rains. Here is to be seen neither bird, beast, nor reptile, nor even a blade of vegetation. Sometimes a rill of water bubbles up, but it is lost again within the space of a hundred yards. Very often the banks of rivers are too steep and rugged to admit the water being applied to the purposes of irrigation, consequently the surrounding country cannot be cultivated. No stranger can travel from valley to valley, as the inhabited strips are inappropriately called, without a guide; for the only indication that the desert has been trodden before is an occasional cluster of bones, the remains of beasts of burden that have perished. The sand is frequently raised into immense clouds by the wind, to the great annoyance of the traveller, who

generally rides with his face muffled up. The obstacles to moving, in a country like this, a body of troops from one point to another, can only be appreciated by military men, who have had to contend against them. But descriptions unaccompanied by a statement of facts, will fall short of conveying even a faint idea of the horrors of the desert.

It is by no means a rare occurrence for the most experienced guides to lose their way in these trackless deserts. In that case, terror instantly reduces them to a state bordering on insanity; and, unless they soon recover the path by chance, or are fortunate enough to see indications of other travellers looming above the horizon, they inevitably perish, and, like a foundering ship on the broad ocean, leave nothing behind them to mark their fate. In these extensive deserts, the merest puff of wind will obliterate the footsteps of a column of soldiers, so that not the slightest trace of them remains behind. The guides are, nevertheless, very expert, and regulate their course by circumstances, unobservable by the casual traveller.

When Colonel Miller galloped across the

Desert of Sigüas, ten leagues in breadth, he expressed some doubt to his guides as to whether they were following the right direction. They informed him that, so long as a bright star, which they pointed out to him, remained in sight, there was no danger of their losing the way; remarking, at the same time, that, as the wind always blew from the same quarter, they had only to keep the breeze blowing towards the left eye in order to ensure their making progress towards the valley of Vitor. Detachments of troops, however, and even entire corps, have often been known to lose themselves for a considerable time.

When the remains of General Alvarado's army were on their passage by sea from the Puertos Intermedios to Lima, in 1823, a transport, conveying above three hundred cavalry, got on shore and went to pieces twelve leagues south of Pisco, and fourteen leagues west of Ica. All hands escaped to shore; but, in attempting to find their way to Pisco, they lost themselves for thirty-six hours, until they became at length utterly bewildered, and gave themselves up to despair. On the tidings of the wreck reaching

Pisco, a regiment of cavalry was ordered out with a supply of water, to pick up the unfortunate sufferers. Amongst the survivors of the catastrophe was Colonel Lavelle, the commanding officer of the shipwrecked soldiers, who thus recounted the circumstances attendant on the direful calamity. He stated that amongst the number of those who reached the shore was an orderly who had fought by his side at various battles, and who had, on one occasion, been instrumental in saving his life, at the risk of his own. This man, strange to relate, was now as insensible to the distresses of his master as to those of his comrades, and was driven to desperation by the prospect of a continuance of the sufferings to which he was exposed. Overcome by fatigue, he would at times drop upon the surface of the burning soil and tear up the sand in search of water, in a paroxysm of agony and impatience. After the party had proceeded for some leagues, in the distance were descried a few date trees, near the roots of which water is always to be found. A feeble cry of joy burst from the parched tongues of the foremost, not so much to encourage those in the rear as to

express the hopes which animated themselves, as they caught sight of the trees towering in the distance. Weak as they were, they immediately quickened their pace, although, before they reached the desired spot, numbers of them fell lifeless to the ground from sheer exhaustion. A few, who had strength enough left, at last gained the place, when, throwing themselves on the ground at the feet of these lofty beacons, they scratched the earth with their hands with untiring vigour, till a moisture came oozing forth from the roots, and this the poor sufferers sucked with avidity, and with a relish which, perhaps, they had never before experienced. The slight relief which this gave them for a time cooled the parched lip and moistened the dry throat; but it did not satisfy. Soon the burning fever returned with redoubled force, and the excruciating agonies of despair shook every frame. Then, with a last effort, many, with an accession of energy as death stared them in the face, started up, and jumping on the earth, scratched with all their might, with a demoniac laugh and eyeballs stretched out to their farthest extent, till the delirious raving having expended its fury, left its

victim a black and shrunken corpse upon the sand.

At length the wished-for succour came; squadron after squadron arrived upon the spot, and as they passed with horror the discoloured and distorted bodies of former comrades, they failed to recognise them as they lay rotting on the burning sand. One third only of the three hundred men who escaped the wreck, survived the dreadful ordeal through which they subsequently had to pass. Unable to raise themselves from the ground, they could but look up in the faces of their deliverers and smile their debt of gratitude. Inarticulate sounds only could escape them as they made an effort to express in words the thankfulness they felt for their timely rescue. Every remedy that suggested itself was tried for the purpose of restoring the famished frames of these exhausted sufferers; and each trooper at last left the spot, carrying with him one of these unhappy men with all the tenderness of a mother for her offspring. On their arrival at Pisco, the kind people of that place were unremitting in their attentions, and seemed glad to have the opportunity of providing

for the necessities of those poor soldiers, who had so valiantly risked their lives in the cause of the independence and regeneration of South America.

In such a dreary tract of country as I have been describing, is situated the seaport of Arica, through which quantities of European merchandise are transferred to the interior of Bolivia. It contains about eight hundred inhabitants. The view seaward, and the barren plains and sand hills, present the usual characteristics of this line of coast. By a ponderous and gloomy-looking rock which shelters the harbour, the shipping within is rendered tolerably secure from wind and weather. The sandy plain on which the town is situated extends to the valley of Tacna, and is continued thence to the foot of the majestic range of the Cordilleras, whose snow-capped summits glitter in the sunbeams, and stand out in distinct outline on the azure firmament of these favoured climes. A kind of raised terrace has been formed on the beach, containing a row of good substantial warehouses and private dwellings, which for the most part belonged to an Englishman—the late Mr. John Murphy. Conti-

guous to these is the residence of the Government, Custom House, &c.; and at a short distance, in the same row of buildings, is the British Consulate. On the rocky side runs out a mole or landing, rudely constructed of wood and stone, and situated behind it is the greater part of the town, consisting of streets intersecting each other at right angles, and a spacious Plaza, or square.

The traveller, on disembarking at this miserable locality, will be forcibly impressed with the prospect of the many hardships he is likely to undergo in the course of his journey to the interior. The monotony, however, of a sojourn at this place is often broken by the sight of numerous droves of heavily-laden mules, who are on their way to Tacna, and other distant towns. One of the evenings which I spent here was agreeably beguiled in witnessing a religious demonstration in favour of some pet saint. It consisted of a procession which moved slowly on to the tune of some drawling chant, and in which a profusion of tallow candles figured most prominently. The Plaza was very tastefully decorated with festoons of flowers, here and there interspersed with

lamps, branches, and leaves. In the centre arose a temple made entirely of fireworks, which, when the beauties of the structure had been sufficiently admired, were set on fire, and to the delight of the spectators at this maritime site, the whole was changed at once to the representation of a ship in full sail.

For those who have any sporting propensities, some very excellent pigeon shooting may be found in a valley between two and three leagues from the town. I saw a whole mule-load, which was the product of two guns, after but a single day's sport. Being desirous of pushing on into the interior, I procured horses and mules for myself and baggage, and made a start.

At a distance of about fourteen leagues from Arica stands Tacna, a place of some importance, and containing 17,000 inhabitants. It is here that most of the large wholesale foreign houses are located. On leaving Arica the road skirts the sea shore for some distance, and then gradually turns more inland. The reflection from the sands in these regions, when the sun is high in the heavens, produces a very painful sensation in the eyes, and inflammation invariably su-

pervenies, unless they are protected by a gauze veil, or coloured glasses. The unusual dryness of the atmosphere is evidenced by the great number of bleached skeletons of mules, without a particle of animal matter remaining upon them, which continually greet the traveller. As he advances, the arid plains become more undulating; they then assume the form of a succession of ridges, until at length they unite in the distance, and form the mighty Cordilleras, whose summits tower high above the clouds.

On approaching the bed of a river of some magnitude, bordered by high embankments, a few shrubs relieve the unvarying sameness of the sandy desert. Near to this spot are several hovels, which form a kind of post or resting place, used by the merchants for their relays. From an elevation, within two leagues of Tacna, is seen the town imbedded in a valley, which is most abundant in verdure, and which stretches to the very foot of the grand mountain barrier; thus producing a delightful contrast to the everlasting sand hills and levels which characterize the coast. Drovers of llamas, loaded with copper, and various exports and imports, cross

each other upon the road, whilst they are cheered by the rustic notes of their Indian guides, as they toil along to their various destinations. The approaches to the town present numerous neat *quintas*, with their well cultivated gardens and orchards, in which are found many of the varieties of fruit and flowers which so commonly luxuriate in a tropical clime. After crossing a small bridge, which spans a paved canal, running through the centre of the Alameda, or public promenade, the town is entered. It covers a considerable space; and from its proximity to the coast, commands the greater part of the internal European commerce of Bolivia. Its construction is irregular, and the general plan adopted by the founders of cities in the New World seems not here to have been observed. Unfortunately, it is subject to frequent earthquakes. When they assume an horizontal action, which is generally the case, the damage is confined merely to the cracking of walls, displacing of roofs, or injury to buildings which are out of the perpendicular. But occasionally the action is

perpendicular, and then the effect is most disastrous.

An instance of this kind occurred a few years since, when the principal church was reduced to a heap of ruins. On the same foundation an elegant modern edifice has been raised, which, judging by the large and continuous rents which disfigure its *façade*, seems doomed to the same fate. A great inconvenience which is experienced in this place is its want of water. It is sold at a high price, and but scantily supplied only two days in the week. If this drawback could be remedied, this town would greatly increase in importance. The Alameda presents all the appearance of a Continental *boulevard*, the walk being provided with seats, and flanked on both sides by small shops.

The merchants and heads of commercial branch-houses have formed here a petty aristocracy, and assume all the airs and pretensions of that class.

On leaving Tacna for an inland journey, the first requisite was to furnish myself with a good saddle *mulo de passo*, for on so uneven

and wayward a tract, any ordinary beast will almost jolt a person to death. This is easily accomplished. The next thing is to make an arrangement with some well-known *herrero*, or blacksmith, at a stipulated price per head for each animal, for the conveyance of your goods and baggage, by no means forgetting the necessity of an extra hand. This point must be particularly attended to; for, otherwise, in spite of the fatigues of the journey, you will be oftentimes compelled to assist in the arrangement of your packages, which are continually being displaced on the road, as it is impossible for one person to do it without further help.

When you have made these arrangements, it will then be necessary to provide yourself with tea, sugar, chocolate, rice, pepper, salt, and pickles; meat, *charcas*, *cholones*, and a fresh sheep, together with a few tins of preserved meat; the road all along to the city of La Paz being unprovided with posts, and therefore affording, except in one or two exceptional cases, neither food nor accommodation.

My *herrero* had such continual calls upon his attention, in making the necessary provision for my journey, that I did not get

fairly under weigh till late in the day. However, this was of little consequence, as I had determined to pass the night at Ventellia, which is but a few leagues distant, on the outskirts of the valley. The scenery, as you advance, consists of fine pasture land on both sides, with well-cultivated fields and trees; and the landscape is occasionally enlivened by multitudes of mules and llamas, who were on this occasion, as they passed and re-passed, serenaded by the musical pipes of their Indian drovers.

These adventures, together with the occasional salutation of some solitary traveller whom you meet upon the road, or the joyous laugh of some merry homeward-bound party, sufficiently amuse the senses, and make the tedious leagues easily accomplished.

We at last arrived at our destination. The post of Ventellia consists of a red building, which contains one large room, out-houses, or *corrales* for animals, and other conveniences. In the corners of this room are square earthen mounds, where travellers arrange their beds and make themselves as comfortable as circumstances will permit. Having alighted at this place, I encountered the

hostess—a dapper little woman with two pretty roguish-looking daughters, who seemed perfectly willing to offer me a hearty welcome. My mules unladen, and baggage housed, the *herrero*, assisted by the aforesaid damsels, soon set to work in good earnest to select from my provisions the necessaries I required. They soon concocted for me an excellent *chupe*, together with some good tea; and after finding myself greatly refreshed by participating in such acceptable fare, and indulging in the luxury of a mild Havannah, I prepared to retire to rest for the night. Gentle reader, you may judge of my surprise at beholding these two vestals and their mother strike their canvass and jump into bed not further off than five or six paces from my crib! This circumstance seemed not to have the least effect upon my neighbours, who, no doubt, reposed in the confidence of perfect security, without probably wasting even a thought upon me. For my part, so unaccountable a breach of propriety drove away every wink of sleep from my eyelids, and left me to indulge in a long waking reverie; until, at length, the streaks of morning light penetrating the windows

and doorway, I gladly hailed the coming day. It was not long before the *herrero* was at my bed-side, urging upon me the importance of making an early start, as the moon was at her full; thereby affording us an excellent opportunity of getting over some leagues in the comparatively cool and refreshing air of the early twilight. I readily consented, and a very short time sufficed to put everything in order for my departure. After satisfying the demands of my hostess, and receiving a blushing farewell from my dark beauties, I reluctantly withdrew.

It is not easy to account for that prepossessing influence which inclines us to take a fancy to certain persons at first sight. In strange and distant lands, however, this is particularly the case, where the heart, in its isolation, catches at the least mark of attention and kindness. To illustrate this peculiar sympathy, I will here narrate an instance which occurred to me in the year 1846, when, on my third visit to the Mexican capital, in company with two young noblemen, officers in the Guards, I was proceeding by diligence towards the capital of Montegurra. We were halting about mid-day at a

hosteria, where a *table d'hôte* was provided, kept by a comely and superior sort of hostess. Our party had no sooner made its appearance than this lady evinced the greatest solicitude for our comfort, overwhelming us with every kind of civility and attention. She hardly left us for a moment, to the entire neglect of the other travellers who were sojourning in the house. To have seen her occasionally embracing us and shedding tears, it must have appeared rather the meeting of a mother and her long absent sons, than that of mere visitors who expected nothing more than the usual welcome at a road-side inn. The whole circumstance appeared to me so strange that I respectfully ventured to inquire of her the meaning of this strange sympathy. She then gave me the following explanation:—

A short time previously the diligence had been stopped by a band of well-mounted robbers, who severely wounded, robbed, and maltreated the travellers. Amongst these were a couple of young English gentlemen, who very likely offered some resistance, as they were afterwards found left for dead in the road, nearly stript and covered with many severe cuts in different parts of their bodies.

This kind and feeling woman, having witnessed the occurrence, hastened to their assistance, as soon as the robbers had decamped with their booty, caused them to be conveyed to her house, and was unceasing in her attentions and alleviations of their sufferings. She informed me that immediately on our entrance she recognised in us the features of our countrymen, that this circumstance recalled to her mind those dreadful moments, and that she was now overcome with fears for our future safety. She said that she could not tell why, but that she loved our people from the very first time she beheld them.

On equipping myself for the road, I sallied forth and only perceived streaks of light in a particular part of the horizon, as yet too faint to dispel the general gloom. My *herrero*, armed with a lantern, was busily employed in collecting and arranging his mules. On perceiving me, he gave me the following wholesome advice,—“Sir, it is advisable that we should take advantage of the coolness of the night, as our mid-day travelling will be intolerably hot, (this observation was too soon to be verified;) in the space of twenty minutes or half an hour the moon will rise, and

it will then be almost as light as day." This advice was no sooner given than acted upon. The ordering of our march was a matter soon accomplished, and away we started. Journeying by midnight in such a country as this, has a peculiar effect on the imagination. The deathlike stillness of all around suggests every imaginary fear, and the eye wanders over lakes, or pictures forth some direful precipice or chasm which has no existence, but in the mind of the traveller. On directing the eyes upward, everything is characteristic of the skies in the southern hemisphere. The canopy of the heavens sparkling with innumerable stars, which stand out in gem-like splendour on the dark arch of the firmament. The grandeur and majesty of such a scene cannot be surpassed, and calls forth every sentiment of awe and admiration. The change from night to morning is very sudden. The sun is no sooner seen than he is above the horizon. Whilst, perhaps, wandering in thought amidst those distant worlds above his head, the traveller all at once catches bright gleams of light darting along the horizon, and tinging the surrounding clouds with many a silvery hue. On a sudden, a globe

as it were of fire appears, and of truly colossal dimensions. The god of day commences his career in the heavens, the general gloom is everywhere dispersed, and soon the most indistinct object is lighted up and stands out in bold relief on the azure sky.

On witnessing such a scene, I found that the cool breeze of night had not yet given place to the scorching heat of the coming day; and I found that I was compelled to draw my *poncho* tighter round the body, and advance apace. Arriving at a small *cabrada*, or mountain pass, in which was situated an Indian house, I determined to make a halt, as I expected to be overtaken by a fellow-traveller. I therefore sent my baggage on before me, intending to overtake it at my leisure; and, as the sun began to gain force, and everything indicated a melting hot day, I prepared to unload my breakfast, and arrange my solitary pic-nic. This consisted of a cold fowl, ham, pickles, and a bottle of stout; and, fortified by a sharp appetite, I was about to make a vigorous attack, when, lo and behold! two gentlemen from La Paz turned the corner of the cliff, and, with a very good grace, introduced themselves to me

en voyageurs. I invited them to share my repast, and they did ample justice to the meal, to the great chagrin of the poor cottage Indians, who, watching every mouthful with dismay, must have feared that not even the very bones would be left to their share. In return for my hospitality, these gentlemen brought out from their private store some tea and sugar, mixed with *pisco*, as a sort of *bonne bouche*, after which, with many protestations of friendship, they took their leave, and left me to myself.

The heat being too great to allow of my resuming my journey, I determined to let some few hours slip, particularly as my resting-place for the night was within a few leagues,—the government building in the town of Palca. I amused myself by wandering into an orchard on the opposite side of the road, which was well shaded by fig-trees, and other kinds of trees, beneath whose branches flowers of different sorts spread themselves in graceful profusion, whilst a delightful spring of running water continually flowed from the adjacent rocks. After tarrying here till the heat of the sun had in a measure subsided, I again set forward,

traversing the *cabrada*, the next level of which reached the hills which form the base of the chain of the Andes, and increasing in altitude, rise, to all appearance, to the very heavens. Deep in this gorge roars a stream, as it battles its way to the plains below; and on the slopes of the hills, near small patches of cultivated land, appears the rude hut of the poor Indian. In more distant spots, selected for grazing, are to be seen numerous flocks, which are carefully tended and watched by many a youthful shepherd or shepherdess. Thus, as I was musing amidst a succession of beautiful mountain scenery, and slowly ascending a zigzag path, overshadowed by a projecting rock, I was startled from my reverie by a loud peal of laughter, the joyous notes of which, as they echoed from cliff to cliff, formed a pleasing accompaniment to the scene. On looking up, I saw far above me a group of the fair daughters of the land, looking like some choicest wood-nymphs disturbed in their rustic amusements by the profane approach of a satyr.

It appears that my presence had aroused their fears; for whilst gazing with rapturous delight on these dark-eyed beauties of this

sunny clime, they, startled like its native fawns, had soon taken refuge in flight.

After I had gained the elevation, I saw before me, like the nest of some solitary bird in a desert region, the post and hamlet of Palca. This government building consists of a large house, containing one capacious room for the accommodation of travellers, tolerably clean and comfortable, together with outhouses, *corrales*, &c. In this establishment eggs and many other delicacies are found, the comforts of which I was not slow to appreciate. Early next morning, before break of day, I was aroused by my *herrero*. Tempted by the refreshing breeze, he was anxious to proceed, as he well knew the arduous undertaking we had before us in the ascent of one of the great mountain passes of this lofty range. Having partaken of a hasty cup of chocolate, and assured myself of the proper adjustment of our baggage by the dim light of our lantern—since the least slip or derangement of his load might startle the poor beast, and hurl him, cargo and all, down some steep precipice, into the fathomless abyss below—we again set forward.

The road lay along a mountain gorge, where

numerous springs nourished a healthy and vigorous vegetation, forming a powerful contrast with the brown, stunted herbage that clothed the mountains around. The first beams of morning brought with them those chilling breezes that make the traveller disposed to hug his cloak, in the hope of additional warmth.

As the light increased, we found that we were about to leave behind us all the facilities of a somewhat level road, and nothing was seen in front but mountain piled on mountain to the very heavens. Advancing upwards, we at last caught sight of the glorious sun, shedding his bright rays on the mountain sides, and tinging their tops with purple gold. But we were doomed for some time to envy the genial warmth we saw above us, as the deep shadows in which we were enveloped poured their cold and benumbing influence on the scene immediately around us. As we slowly progressed, height after height was gained, until the great mountain which forms the block of the range, soaring high above us, seemed to stop all further advance. But these desolate regions were not unknown to the foot of man; and

often was my attention attracted by some Indian trail, sometimes but a few inches in width, which skimmed the mountain's brow, till lost in intricacies and precipices, apparently inaccessible to man or beast.

Having arrived at a slight level, a halt was made, in order to tighten the girths of the animals and safely secure the luggage—the least negligence on this score being the forerunner of certain destruction. All proving satisfactory, the ascent was commenced by a path which takes a zigzag course up an almost perpendicular mountain. The distress of the poor beasts of burden soon became very apparent. Every moment they were obliged to stop for breath, the great altitude we had attained rendering this more than ever necessary. When disposed to take a little temporary repose, no power on earth could have made them stir, till they had in some degree recruited their strength. Even I myself occasionally lingered behind, in spite of a remonstrance from my guide ; and, when I could just see the whole caravan in its aerial pilgrimage above me, I slowly followed. When I had gained the ascent, I beheld with some uneasiness the consequence

of one false step, which must have inevitably swept the whole party to the gloomy depths below. At length the wished-for summit was gained, and here I witnessed a scene which for sublimity cannot be equalled, and surpasses all my powers of description.

On the top of one of the highest ranges in the world, arose certain mountain peaks, soaring high above the rest, the very summits of the inferior range appearing to form their base. There they stood out, as they towered to the very skies, radiant with silvery whiteness, and reflecting many a bright tinge of light from the ethereal atmosphere to which they aspired in proud pre-eminence. From this lofty pile of mountains, the eye wanders over various slopes and windings into the fathomless abyss beneath. A different distances are seen craters or dry lakes, but so inconceivably small, that they are soon lost again in the extensive variety of objects which crowd upon the attention. Then, by minute observation, the eye can discern herds of llamas with their droves reposing on some table-land or slowly winding their way along the steep slopes of some adjoining mountain. It is only when the

difficulties of the descent are partially overcome that the opposite range is seen to advantage. Then it stands out in all its grandeur, and calls forth many an expression of awe and wonder at the stupendous character of this astonishing chain of mountain scenery.

Having thus far escaped any ill effects from the rarity of the atmosphere at these tremendous altitudes, I began to congratulate myself on being made of "sterner stuff" than would be subject to those laws to which ordinary mortals are fain to submit. But my *herrero*, who seemed to have a presentiment of the result, in telling me that the mountain in advance was the last barrier to the noble pass of Tacora, gently hinted that, although I had hitherto braved every danger, I was not to make myself too sure of having overcome all mishaps. The caution he gave me was shown to be not without reason, for on gaining the summit I immediately became sensible of a very heavy oppression on the respiratory organs, and I experienced such a racking head-ache, that I speedily lost all consciousness.

It must have been under the influence of

these disagreeable sensations that I either dismounted or fell from my saddle in a state of stupor; for, when I had a little recovered, I found myself on the ground, abandoned by my very mule; and there I lay, without a soul near me, overwhelmed by lassitude and anxiety, the sun's path in the heavens alone making me sensible of the fleeting hours that had passed. At length, to my great joy, one of our men, leading the truant animal, made his appearance; and shaking off the lethargy to which I had fallen a victim, and arming myself with as much determination as I could muster, I mounted and rode off. In making the descent along the mountain slopes, the way was everywhere characterized by rocky stumps, covered with moss of an extraordinary growth, which formed what resembled large velvet cushions, of every possible shape. After a long and tedious ride, rendered doubly so to me, who had scarcely recovered from the effects of *soroche*, to which I had so recently been compelled to succumb, I at last joined my travelling camp and cargoes, and soon afterwards alighted at the three miserable huts which formed the post of Tacora, where our small party was again re-united. I now,

however, found, to my inexpressible dismay, that the *herrero* and his *mozo*, together with a travelling companion, were all completely prostrated by the illness to which I myself had been exposed; and, weak as I was, I was obliged to act the part of cook, doctor, and general *factotum* to the whole community. But circumstances gave me the necessary energy, and I soon found myself able to make all the sleeping arrangements, cook victuals, and administer medicine and other necessaries to my poor disabled companions.

After passing a most uncomfortable night, which turned out most bitterly cold, and finding ourselves half buried in snow, which had found its way through the thatch of our fragile and ill-constructed cabin, we were soon *en route* again in the morning. We discovered ourselves to be in rather a dilapidated condition, as regarded our strength and animal spirits, after the misadventures of the previous day; but, aided by a good bowl of tea, we had courage to make a fair start, and the morning air sufficiently invigorated us to make us forget all our past grievances.

The road, which was still on the descent,

presented plain after plain, intersected by mountain ranges, some being slightly clad in snow; but even this feature of the scene was gradually on the decline. At length we reached the Rio Mauri, which forms the boundary between Peru and Bolivia. The banks of this river are high. It is many hundred feet in breadth, and in the rainy season must be wholly impassable, when swollen by the numerous cataracts and water-courses from the surrounding country, which are its tributaries.

The *herrero* having sent out scouts to find a suitable fording, they soon discovered the object of their search, and, having taken up their position in the water, ourselves and baggage mules waded our course in perfect safety between them to the opposite bank.

This elevation gained, the country on the other side presented to our view a flat surface, with occasional ridges of hills, or down, traversing the path. Now and then we could discern a *cabrada*, or ravine, formed by the impetuous streams which flow down from the mountains, though at that time exhibiting nothing but a dry watercourse. The ride this day seemed more long and tedious than

ever, as village after village was seen straggling on the brow of some distant hill.

Anxious to gain our resting place for the night, I inquired for the ardently wished-for Uchusuma, and at length it presented itself in the form of several Indian houses of a superior quality. They were built of stone and mud, well thatched, without windows, but with doors, though of such a description that the entry must be made on all fours, dog fashion. The lady of the house, an old shrivelled hag, with a *mamita* friend, and surrounded by a host of naked starving children, received us on our entrance. None of them ever seemed in the course of their lives to have indulged in the luxury of a wash, as, to all appearance, they carried about on their persons the accumulated deposits of years. Having rolled back some large stones, which barricaded one of the outhouses, we managed to make up some quarters for the night. At a distance of twenty or thirty yards, a beautiful crystal stream afforded us, at all events, a necessary supply of water, and by the aid of our travelling stock, and the addition of a few potatoes, we contrived to make a tolerable meal. Hunger and fatigue had given us

an appetite, and although we ate our humble fare under by no means the most favourable circumstances, we felt that we required no other sauce. The poor wretches who lived in this miserable hovel were doubtless contented, and therefore why should not we be so? Their desires keep pace with their wants, and they are few enough. Even money is often valued amongst them as something to be hoarded up as a treasure, and it is known that many of the Indians save every piece of silver they may gain in their lives only to bury it in the earth, where it is frequently for ever lost, through the sudden death of the parties.

All arrangements being completed in the morning, we again set off. Our way led across the plain to some rocky ground, which formed the entrance to a small *cabrada*, whose sides were washed by some mountain streams, which rushed and foamed at the impeding rocks which hindered their progress. At a certain point in our passage we came all at once upon a precipitous descent, and at this spot one of the grandest panoramas that ever mortal eye beheld burst upon our view. Here the whole party came to a

standstill, rivetted to the spot by the astounding scene before us. It was as if the whole of the beauties of Switzerland, with all its Alpine grandeur, had been now spread out before us, but augmented into those mighty proportions which characterize the landscape in this new world of the South. The clouds seemed to be drawn from their ethereal abode, and were descending in every fantastic shape, and blending in every shade of light with the numerous mountain tops that formed their base. These, clad in eternal snow, had assumed a silvery whiteness which it was painful to behold, and this vast expanse of glare was occasionally relieved by shadows of blue and yellow of varying depth, together with its warmer or cooler tints of grey, as it reflected more or less of the colour of the earth or sky. At the base of this sublime range a giant forest raised its sombre hue, and lower down might be traced the less stern pencillings of the warmer and luxuriant valleys of a tropical clime, engendering within their bosoms all that could charm the sense and captivate the eye. Mass after mass of beautiful forest verdure clothed the distance, which assumed

every variety of aspect, as numerous fleeting clouds shaded or disclosed the bright luminary, whose magic beams touched up for a moment with life and beauty every feature of the scene. Here and there were to be seen rivers in their meandering course, and stealing gently over the lovely sward, then rolling with impetuous wrath through rocky beds to the entrance of some dismal ravine, where their dark progress is lost to sight till again they are seen rushing down in some mighty fall, again perhaps to separate into numerous cascades, whose glassy surface reflects the bright colours of the rainbow. As the eye wanders nearer, range after range of mountain scenery, clad in bright green or the more sombre hue of mineral wealth, break a long level, where many a small lake presents its smooth surface, and on whose bosom the gaudy flamingo, duck, goose, teal, and snipe, with others of the feathered tribe, disport themselves with all the consciousness of happy existence. Nearer still, the traveller can descry where the high and rugged hills present a range of dark and sterile masses, rich with silver ore, the mines of Chulluncayani. At a *finca* close adjoining an English-

man resides, who has formed a company for working these mines. The house appeared outwardly comfortable, having been no doubt altered and remodelled after the European fashion. I did not make a halt here, but some months after, on my making the acquaintance of the proprietor, he expressed much regret at my not having paid him a visit on this occasion.

After casting many a lingering look on the gorgeous scene we were now about to quit, we descended by a mountain track, and in a short time found ourselves following a level road, which was well watered by numerous springs, forming various canals, that bubbled and sparkled in the mid-day sun. We occasionally came across some giant rock that seemed to withstand our progress, and represented in its colossal proportions to our wonder or amusement, some strange device of ruin, bird, or animal. At last we entered a small *cabrada* formed by sloping downs, where we found an agreeable road that widened as we advanced, and furnished at its side an occasional pile of stones to announce to the weary traveller that another league was passed. After continuing

along this line for some time, the town of Santiago appeared in sight, and right glad we were to hail so welcome an appearance.

Ill-constructed walls and houses half-finished or deserted mark the approach to the Plaza or grand square, where all the drunkards and idlers of the town might be seen loitering about the wine shops, with which the place is well supplied.

The building most deserving of attention, as indeed it is in all these towns, is the church, with its adjoining residence for the parish priest. These, in fact, bear no proportion to the other edifices, which are for the most part as wretched-looking habitations as can well be imagined. The church lords it with princely sway, and in many cases is the sole depository of all rule, temporal as well as spiritual. But it is generally the case that these localities boast of a governor,—who is some ignorant tool of the government, a post-master, and a *juz* or judge, the latter sometimes with hardly sufficient education to know how to write.

○ On my arrival here I sent for the governor, in order that he might provide me the necessary accommodation. He billeted me, much

to my disgust, in a dirty mud-house, which, however, I contrived to get cleaned; made enormous charges for all that I required, but greatly to my peace of mind, gave me as little of his company as I could well desire. My appetite had been too well sharpened by my mountain excursions not to find the roughest fare acceptable, and when at last I sought repose in my humble bed, fatigue made the night pass quickly away.

The first gleam of morning was the signal for departure. Our route this day was very uninteresting, and we toiled our weary way over barren tracts, with beds of saltpetre glittering in the sunbeams, threatening our eyes with *ophthalmia*, and breathing many of "the ills to which flesh is heir." The change of temperature at this lower level by no means suited my constitution, and scarcely recovered as I was from the effects of my late illness, I was more than ever desirous of pushing on to the next resting place. Under these circumstances I was more inattentive to the beauties of the road than I should otherwise have been; for the noble works of nature which prove so interesting and instructive to a contemplative mind, entirely lose their

charm, when anxiety or fatigue oppress the traveller; and it is curious, that the very fact which deprives a long journey of its character to please, only spins it out the more, and extends to a seemingly interminable length, a distance which would be passed over with alacrity and delight under more favorable conditions. At length the town of San Andres appeared in sight, and revived at the prospect of a close to our journey for the day, we quickened our pace, and soon found ourselves arrived at the church, a large and conspicuous building, whose dome, as seen in the distance, had formed the cheering landmark to guide our steps. Close to this spot rose an edifice of considerable dimensions, embracing three sides of a square. It presented externally an agreeable aspect, as the fresh coat of whitewash which had recently been bestowed upon it shone brightly in the sun's rays. An archway led to the *patio* or court-yard. We were here accosted by the master, who was also governor of the town, and whose urbanity and politeness made us soon feel ourselves quite at home, and disposed thoroughly to enjoy the comfortable quarters in which we had at last alighted. He showed us some ex-

cellent rooms, and the accommodation for man and beast seemed so superior to what we had of late been accustomed, that I determined to strike my tent here for a day or two. I opened my medicine chest and recruited my shattered nerves, which had yielded to the fatigue and mishaps I had so recently encountered. Our host, who combined in himself all the dignities of the place, such as governor, *alcalde* or magistrate, postmaster, *maitre de hotel*, and forage vender, exerted himself with all becoming hospitality in providing us with dinner, and various luxuries which were as necessary as they were palatable. Having done full justice to his bill of fare, I prepared for a ramble over the town, or, as we should in England more properly term it, hamlet, though it aspires to the more distinguished cognomen of a *pueblo*. I soon procured a large supply of oranges, notwithstanding their being then out of season, and greatly relished so great a dainty. After passing a couple of days in this inviting locality, I found my energies returning; and well stocked with a fresh supply of health and vigour, I started for the puente de Nasacara.

There was a great sameness in the route for a considerable distance, as in nearing the horizon, which continually bounded the prospect, the unvarying, interminable plains of the South seemed still spread out before us. Ever and anon, our attention was called to herd after herd of llamas, as the pipe of the Indian drover occasionally struck upon the ear. On reaching a slight elevation, the circuitous course of a great river was plainly discernible; and the heather, where partridges, disturbed at our approach, had hitherto remained concealed, appeared all at once to teem with life. The air at intervals was darkened by clouds of wild-fowl performing their evolutions, and accompanying their gyrations by their discordant screech, as they were by turns disturbed from their hiding-places in the creeks and gullies, or the bosom of the flowing waters. Gradually the road approached the river we had previously seen; and ere we arrived at its banks, we found ourselves in the town of Nasacara, consisting of a number of houses, among which are some very respectable edifices, in comparison with those in the generality of towns of this description. This

exception is accounted for by the fact, that Nasacara is the point at which takes place the transit of merchandise from Europe to Bolivia, there being here the great toll or ferry over the river. As we approached its margin, I was struck with the remarkable appearance of activity and bustle which characterized the scene. A large concourse of Indians—men, women, and children—were here assembled, and the river was literally covered with *bolsas*. This mystery was soon unravelled. The heavy rains, that had prevailed for some time in the mountain districts, had deluged the plains beneath, and so swollen the river, that it had broken its bounds, swept away the bridge, and for a time interrupted all commerce. The Governor, a colonel in the army of the Republic, who was also lessee of the toll,* had summoned to his presence under this emergency the *caciques* of the district, to consider what means should be adopted to remedy this untoward occurrence. The latter, who entered

* The bridge of Nasacara, like many others, is let out at a fixed rent, on condition of its being kept in thorough repair. Large fortunes are often realized by persons in speculations of this kind.

cordially into his plans for preventing, as much as possible, the certain check to commerce that seemed likely to arise from the catastrophe, called together their respective bands of Indians, and ordered them to set to work and provide reeds and other necessaries for the construction of *bolsas*. These were soon got ready on a great lake in the interior; and when the whole number was completed, they were brought to the site of the demolished bridge; and there launched upon the water. The day of my arrival was that on which all these great preparations were finally concluded.

It was regarded as a *fête* of an unusual kind, and the occasion called forth great excitement and general rejoicing. On sending a servant across the river to the Governor, I was immediately provided with *bolsas* for myself and party, and we were soon afterwards conducted to a very comfortable house, where we found every accommodation we could desire. The Governor, a gentleman in the prime of life, who combined in himself the several characteristics of the farmer and the soldier, received me with the greatest courtesy, and did all in his power to make

me feel welcome. After partaking of an excellent dinner, and discussing some bottles of wine which I had produced from my stock, we at length parted on the very best of terms.

Early next morning I was aroused by my host to breakfast, and to witness the construction of the new bridge. On looking on the river, its banks presented the appearance of an immense encampment. Thousands of Indians, men, women, and children, were scattered in groups for a considerable distance, and the whole scene was enlivened by the bright sunshine of a tropical morning. The river itself was no less teeming with life, for hundreds of *bolsas* covering its surface were crowded with a living freight awaiting with anxious ardour the important ceremony of the coming day. These *bolsas*, not unlike the small galleys of the ancients, or the gondolas of the modern Venetians, were gaily decorated with garlands of flowers and green boughs, which, together with the gaudy trappings of the Indians, gave the whole affair a very festive character. After the Governor and myself, with a few of the principal persons of the place, had made our

appearance, the signal was given for commencing operations. On either side of the river large buttresses were made, which were connected by two large hide cables of prodigious strength attached to gigantic stones in the centre of each buttress, over which large stones were then piled to a great height. These preparations were completed with great ceremony and amidst general shoutings from the assembled multitudes. The fleet of *bolsas* then moved gracefully along the water, until every boat had taken up its station and was securely attached to the cables above, thus forming the basement of the bridge. Over this were placed logs of wood, which were firmly tied to the ropes, and boughs of dry wood and brushwood being placed over them and covered with earth, a tolerably solid road was formed, naturally subject to a certain vibration on its being passed over. Everything being concluded, the festivities of the day commenced. These were liberally kept up by the proprietor of the toll, whose bounty on these occasions in the supply of food and drink outsteps all bounds, so that the day's proceedings generally end in a grand debauch.

I was informed that the singing, dancing, and games of this rude people ere they finally dispersed and returned again to their mountain homes, sometimes lasted so long as several days.

After being an eye-witness of this singular spectacle I returned home with my host and his staff, and, having partaken of an early dinner, bade farewell to all friends at the bridge of Nasacara. The road this day combined the same features of country as we had already passed. Ridge after ridge of hills, *cabrada*, valley and glen, rivers and tributary streams, all perceptibly inclining to a lower level of plains beneath, by turns diversified the landscape; whilst stretched far in advance, the snowy *cordon* of the Andes, rising in terrific grandeur along two-thirds of the horizon, formed the sublimest background to the scene that imagination can possibly conceive. The approach to a great city was soon plainly indicated by the numerous herds of laden llamas which we met on the way, and the various parties of Indians with their *mamitas*, each of whom carried a chubby child suspended gracefully across the back, driving their donkeys loaded

with vegetables, fruits, or wares, to the market of La Paz.

The ride appeared to us particularly long and tedious, from the fact of our continually finding ourselves further from our journey's end than we imagined. A knot of trees near some large rock, or a bright embankment in the distance, deceived us into the expectation that we were nearing some dwelling, and possibly the wished-for post-house, where we anticipated some rest; but we were doomed to continual disappointment. At length, on winding round the brow of a hill, the Port of Bentella came suddenly into view. This is the first port out of La Paz, and consists of several mud thatched buildings of one room each, situated on a square *patio* or yard. I sent for the master of the post, and making a selection of the best apartment, I had my goods and chattels safely stowed away therein, and took care that the animals should be well provided with fodder, to fortify them for a respectable entry into La Paz on the following day.

Whilst thus engaged, the trampling of horses' feet was heard, and immediately two gentlemen, well mounted, both horse and

rider being decked out in the fanciful costume of the country, made their appearance. With an assumption of importance and the *sans façon* of Bolivians in general, they dismounted and gave their orders in a peremptory tone. They had taken possession of my room, and were proceeding to have their luggage conveyed there, when I arrived upon the scene to stop all further interference with my arrangements. My outward man must have struck terror to these grandees, for I found that my accoutrements were such as to command respect.

Judge, gentle reader, how they could resist a slouched hat and tassels, with loose handkerchief around the neck, *à la brigand*, a red sash tied round the waist, *polinas*, pistols, knife, with a double-barrelled gun in hand. Emboldened by the impression I seemed to have made, I accosted them thus: "Gentlemen, you doubtless know the rule of the road, first come first served; you will have the kindness, therefore, to shift your quarters and leave me in possession of mine." The tone in which this was spoken, and some previous information which they appeared to have gleaned, set them on their

best manners. They not only acquiesced in all that I required, but endeavoured to make themselves exceedingly agreeable, and having in a very short space of time concocted some tea—mixed *aquardiente*, a beverage much used on the road, we sat down to the repast, and I soon gained the information, that I was expected at La Paz, and that apartments were in readiness for me in the house of a well-known gentleman of the town. A long conversation upon the general news of the day, particularly the late revolution at La Paz, after having despatched a good meal, and partaken of sundry bottles of excellent sherry, to which were added brandy punch and cigars, put me in a very good humour, and thoroughly disposed me for a sound night's rest. On rising next morning I found that my friends of the previous night had taken their departure. I therefore leisurely set out for the city of La Paz.

The hilly country gradually subsided into something more of the character of a prairie, and afterwards we entered upon the *pampas*, stretching far and wide to the very foot of the mighty range that bounded the horizon. The bright sun, as it marked its upward

course in the heavens, shed a warm and congenial glow upon the scene. The sparkling dew glistened on the gemmed surface of the fresh earth, and the partridge, disturbed by the foot of man, fluttered from its hiding place to find its heathered shelter close at hand. Nature was indeed most beautiful, and seen to every possible advantage on the opening of such a day as this.

After advancing for some time through a succession of the most interesting scenery, and at length descending a range of hills, we arrived at the Punas, 12,000 or 13,000 feet above the level of the sea. As we approached Vicachia, which is situate about nine leagues from La Paz, I was witness of that curious optical phenomenon termed the *mirage*. It was about eleven o'clock in the morning, and a great mist overspread the lake. The eye, wandering from object to object as they appeared indistinctly through the haze, seemed to detect lakes of prodigious size, which lost themselves in the heavens above, and there, suspended as it were in mid-air, but inverted, might plainly have been seen houses, trees, mules with their drivers, in fact, a perfect reflection of the landscape

beneath. So extraordinary was the sight—and the fact of all the objects being upside down, which should at once have suggested that it was all the effect of some optical illusion, made it the more strange to my astonished senses—that I could hardly persuade myself that I was awake, and not indulging in the visions of some Arabian tale. Gradually the reality declared itself, and we found that what we had been gazing at with wonder was the exact transcript of an Indian village, surrounded with well-cultivated fields of waving maize, which now came forth full into view. I stopped my horse to admire the extensive landscape and watch the industrious operations of the swarthy denizens of a southern clime. Men, women, and children were busily occupied in the exercise of their daily labour, which they prosecuted without interruption, even under the scorching influence of a tropical sun.

At this moment my *herrero* rode up to me, accompanied by a comely Indian girl, who, through my interpreter, conveyed to me the request to partake of some *chichia*, as an offering for an abundant harvest, at the

same time wishing me a prosperous and happy journey. So unexpected an act of generosity and kindness on the part of these aborigines struck me very forcibly, and I was about to open my purse-strings to acknowledge the favour, when my amiable *Indiana* abruptly withdrew, assuring me that what she had given she gave freely from the heart, and without any idea of remuneration.

As we advanced along the plain, numerous droves of llamas, mules, and asses bearing different kinds of wares and merchandise, proclaimed our approach to the busy haunts of men. All of a sudden I found myself on the edge of a precipice, and, looking down from the eminence on which I stood, I saw before me, spread out as on a panorama, and imbedded in one of the loveliest valleys I ever beheld, the beautiful city of La Paz. Viewed from this elevation, the plan of the city, laid out after the fashion of Spanish towns, is distinctly seen. The arrangement of the streets, intersecting each other at right angles, is plainly recognised, and the whole appeared to the eye like a miniature model, or like Gulliver's city of

Lilliput with its pigmy inhabitants. The undulatory nature of the site has bestowed its character on the various streets, which rise and fall with the form of the ground on which they are built.

The general effect of the whole city laid beneath me as seen from this spot was most extraordinary. There was bustle and activity, but the distance had reduced the several actors in the scene to the dimensions of mere dots, and I seemed to be looking on a coloured map rather than the actual appearance of the reality itself. The *sierras* on either side heightened the charm of the representation, coloured as they were with the various tints of the rainbow, owing to the great quantity of metal imbedded in their bosom assuming in turns every shade of crimson, yellow, blue, brown, neutral tint, and black. Wherever slopes are met with, cultivation may be found, as the Indians appear to delight in selecting such inaccessible spots as would not entice a stranger.

In the vicinity of the city are several small holes composed of a species of earth called *greda*, or, as we should perhaps call it, fuller's-earth. During the wet season, which

commences in November and ends in April, these heaps of marl, owing to the heavy rains which then prevail, assume every variety of shape, and convey, as it were, a representation of men, animals, obelisks, and gothic structures, so well delineated that it is at times difficult to imagine them any other than real works of art. The background to this grand and imposing picture is formed by the gigantic range of the Cordilleras as they appear in their bright garb of perennial snow, amongst which the towering Illemani, rising 24,000 feet above the level of the sea, lifts its lofty peak, and reflects the effulgence of the sun-lit heavens on its diadem of virgin white.

CHAPTER V.

Descent to La Paz—Arrival in the city—Its Plaza and adjacent streets—Market-place, Museum, and Courts of Law — Theatre — River—Alameda — Climate— Churches—Festival of Nuestra Senora de la Paz—del Rosario—Public entry of General Belza—Carnival— Festival de la Cruz—Revolution at La Paz.

ON leaving the spot where I had the first view of La Paz, described in the last chapter, everything soon began to betoken the suburban approach. The Gareta—a barrier, or look-out house for passports, was soon reached. Then shops, stores, and buildings of various kinds, marked the vicinity of a large city; and soon afterwards we found ourselves on a slight elevation, in a kind of square, one side of which was formed by an ancient church, one of the primitive struc-

tures of the Jesuits. From this point we obtained a delightful view of this favoured city, which possesses all the advantages of the tropics, together with the freshness and salubrious air of a colder clime. Its proximity to the mountainous region of perpetual snow doubtless contributes to its refreshing coolness, as compared with many other places situated beneath a tropical sun; and the clouds which gather around the summits of this lofty range, as they discharge their deluge of waters over the devoted city, serve both to purify the atmosphere and fertilize the land. It was at such a moment that I approached it. Indications of a coming storm were everywhere abundant, and that unnatural stillness, in which Time appears to have outrun his glass—when “coming events cast their shadows before,”—prepared us for what was so certainly to follow.

Soon bursting their celestial barriers, heaven's high artillery rolled on in awful grandeur. The spirit of the tempest, with flaming sword, dashes to earth, as the whirlwinds in mighty columns of dust sweep along, from subterranean caverns, the trembling plains beneath. Then all is as sud-

denly hushed. This fierce warring of the elements has passed away as a dream, and nothing is to be now seen but the ethereal vault of heaven, where the noble condor, with outstretched pinion, soars in silent majesty in the broad expanse.

After witnessing so magnificent a scene, we pursued our course till we arrived at a convent, which stretches along one side of the way, and through whose numerous windows might be seen occasionally the heads of some of its unfortunate inmates, peering out, as it were, upon a world lost to them for ever. Passing on from thence, I soon arrived at the beautiful mansion of Senor Villareal, to whose kind offices and hospitality I am indebted for many an agreeable day spent in the city of La Paz. I was now domiciled in my resting-place, and had ample opportunity of reconnoitring the various points of attraction which the neighbourhood offered. As, altogether, I passed a space of two years in this city, I shall be able to give the reader a tolerable idea of it, and of the impressions produced by my sojourn there, without my narrative appearing in the form of a journal.

In the principal Plaza, or square, which is

composed wholly of granite, a very superb cathedral is now in process of erection. It is remarkable for its elegance and simplicity of style, and promises to be one of the most graceful, as well as most substantial edifices of the New World. Unless the work be prosecuted with greater spirit than has hitherto been evinced, generations to come will fail in seeing its completion; but it is to be hoped that the pride of possessing so splendid a work of art will stimulate to greater exertions in future.

Adjoining the cathedral is the Prefectura, or *Hôtel de Ville*, a building in the Swiss style of architecture. It is coloured yellow, but is by no means a disagreeable object. At the opposite angle of the Plaza are a number of arcades. It is here that the English apothecary, Mr. Marchant, resides. He is a man of the profoundest erudition, besides being an excellent linguist, but is at the same time somewhat celebrated for his strange eccentricities. The other inhabitants of this quarter are chiefly notaries, writers, and such like.

At the termination of the arcades there is what is denominated the *Capella*, or chapel,

which on some occasions is used for the purposes of religious worship, but is at the same time devoted to many other objects. State prisoners are here confined, as well as malefactors, previous to their execution. It is also used as a Chamber of Deputies during the Congress; likewise as a school, and the place where examinations are held for the distribution of degrees and diplomas. The remainder of the Plaza presents nothing remarkable, (unless we except a tolerable house, which once served as a residence for a former president,) it being chiefly occupied by shops and a number of very inferior stores.

The general characteristics of the place are heavy carved balconies, painted green after the Limanian fashion. In the centre of the quadrangle is an elegant stone fountain, exhibiting workmanship of a very high order, in the style of the French school of sculptural design. The architect of this work, and the designer of most of the modern public buildings of the Republic, is a Senor Nuncy, a gentleman of decided talent, who was sent by the late president, at the expense of the Government, to Italy, France, and England, for the purposes of study, and

who availed himself so well of these advantages that the fruits of his genius will bear a favourable comparison with the best works of the artists of these several countries.

Leading into the grand Plaza is the Calle de Comercio, which forms the end of a long series of streets from the heights to the city, and which constitute the principal entrance into it from that quarter. The shops which it contains are of a very ordinary character, both as respects outward appearance and internal convenience; but nevertheless they often contain valuable stock to a very large amount, consisting mostly of English and French goods. There are several commercial houses here engaged in a large way of business. The principal are those carried on by Senors Zabala, Grenier, Masoer, Sainza, Aramago, Loruco y Hermanos, Portales, and Stokes.

Of private mansions, there are several which merit notice. Those of Senors Villamil, Bollivian, Santa Cruz, Medina, and Grenier, are among the best. The marketplace, during the former part of the day, presents a very lively scene. Hundreds of Indian women and children are to be seen

squatted on the ground and selling their provisions, consisting of various wares, mining implements, fruits, flowers, and vegetables; and in the sombre attire of their habitual mourning, (said to be for their departed Incas,) forming a marked contrast with the gay and pretty Creole women who come to make their purchases, dressed out in their gaudy petticoats of various hues. By the way, those who are admirers of dark eyes must be on their guard against the seductive influence of these attractions on the part of the latter.

Then the attention is diverted to the water-carriers, both male and female, passing to and from the fountain, and bending under the weight of their huge *contaros*. Occasionally the scene is varied by a number of fat *padres*, accompanied by little boys, chanting as they march in procession in honour of some great image of a saint, which is decked out with all the finery they can heap upon it. The tinkling of a bell warns the stranger quietly to withdraw from a too near approach to the important ceremonial, or otherwise he will find that he must submit, in common with others, to the usual reverence which is

exacted, according to the peculiarities of the country.

The museum, library, and courts of civil law, are contained in one large building. In the former are to be found several extraordinary and antiquated specimens of the human form. They consist of mummies which have been dug out of the ruins of the cities of the Incas, and are in a remarkable state of preservation. There is also an extremely rare collection of Indian vases and earthen utensils, as well as some unique specimens of arms, and various ornaments of singular make. The room in which these are preserved is hung round with a numerous collection of portraits, representing certain Spanish grandees who were in command of La Paz—such as Oruro, Cochabamba, Potosi, Sucre,—no doubt of great interest to the historians and biographers of the country, though anything but pleasing to the eye of a connoisseur in works of art. The collection of minerals is very valuable, but, for want of labels, the public are debarred from the instruction and interest they would otherwise afford. The same remark applies to that part of the building which is devoted to

natural history. There are here preserved various specimens of animals and birds of an extremely rare character, but the advantages of their being assembled together are quite neutralized, owing to the entire absence of all arrangement and classification.

The law officers, judges, counsellors, and attorneys or notaries, in this part of the world, are, without doubt, a most favoured race, since before they undertake any of their duties, all payments accruing to them must be paid in advance. The spirit of litigation and chicanery in this law-beridden country, seems to have reached the acme of absurdity. There is scarcely a family or even an individual in respectable society, who is not involved, more or less, in some one or more lawsuits. The great power which the tribunals exert, is maintained chiefly by the extreme intricacy of their interpretations. Bribes are certainly resorted to, till the least wealthy of the parties is forced to submit simply from the want of means. An extraordinary case came under my knowledge, which I consider worthy of insertion here.

A gentleman belonging to one of the first

families in the Republic purchased a large and valuable estate, estimated at from 70,000 to 80,000 dollars. He undertook to hand over this sum of money in certain stipulated payments to various parties to whom the estate had been bequeathed by the deceased proprietor. In consideration of his high repute and general character for probity, he obtained possession by fixing a day for the first instalment. This point gained, he clandestinely presents 100 dollars to some individual to start a claim to the property. This has the desired effect; lawsuit after lawsuit follows. Months and almost years roll away before justice is done to the rightful owners. They at length, at a great pecuniary sacrifice, obtain a judgment in their favour; when, lo and behold! another claimant appears. The former judgment is reversed. The time, anxiety, and expense by which it was carried on are found to have been entirely thrown away, and a like process must again be instituted.

By following up this system the fortunate possessor had enjoyed the proceeds of the estate for at least seven years, and quite unmolested in his nefarious robbery; for, by

the use of a powerful interest, he had obtained from the courts the appointment to an office by which he became the deposit or trust-holder of all properties and rents. This hopeless cause so reduced the circumstances of the rightful—though, by a legal quibble, not the *lawful*—owners of the estate, that they were unable, at length, to furnish the necessary funds for the furtherance of their claims; and, after seven⁺ years of fruitless litigation, the present occupant was left in undisputed possession of a property, thus fraudulently acquired, worth at the present date at least 100,000 dollars.

The theatre is a respectable and commodious building, possessing four tiers of boxes, which, as far as can be discerned by the feeble aid of mere tallow candles, appear to be very decently decorated. On one of my visits to this place of amusement it was crowded by a large proportion of the *élite* of the city. The house presented a perfect galaxy of beauty, as the lovely *senoritas*, arrayed in all the charms that nature or art could give, successively caught the eye, and a great profusion of gold lace which glittered on the persons of many a military

caballero added brilliancy to the scene. The piece selected for the occasion was from the English *repertoire*. It consisted of the play of Catherine Howard, in eight acts, admirably translated into the magnificent Castilian dialect, and tolerably well sustained.

I began to imagine, when the play was half over, and my interest was really aroused, that it was the custom in these parts to take a siesta between the acts, for the candles went completely out; and when, at the command of the manager, the chandelier had been lowered, and a new light had been thrown upon the subject, it was discovered that a shower of grease had taken place on the poor unfortunates who had taken their position in the pit of the theatre. They were well bespattered, much to their annoyance, although they had previously been too much carried away by the interest of the representation to notice the gradual droppings from the guttering candles to which they had hitherto been exposed. Of course the necessity for replenishing them gave rise to a painful delay, and when light and order were again restored, we found that the unexpected interlude, of which we had all, more or less,

been unwilling spectators, had not left us in a suitable mood for properly enjoying the remainder of a dismal tragedy.

The city of La Paz is watered by the river Chillapampa, which, after passing by Poto-polo, is divided into two branches, one of which winds a circuitous course through the valley of La Paz, presenting rare and romantic beauties, whilst the other, under the designation of the *Rio Della Caxa Del Agua*, passes through a third of the city, and forms a most picturesque feature in the landscape. Large masses of granite, which in the course of many ages have detached themselves from the surrounding hills, now partially block up the bed of the river, and give rise to a number of cascades, where the impetuous and foaming waters give life and animation to this charming country. During several days in the week hundreds of washer-women are to be seen following their avocation in this romantic spot, and drying the sundry articles of dress on which they have been exercising their customary labours, in the cool and refreshing breezes which are to be found in this neighbourhood.

Near the river is the Prado or Alameda,

a delightful walk and place of recreation, for which the inhabitants of La Paz are indebted to the interest and exertions of General José Bolliuvian. This calm and quiet retreat consists of a level garden, agreeably situated, intersected by a variety of pleasant walks, and furnished in all directions with stone benches for the accommodation of visitors. The lovely rose-plant here attains the height of twelve or fourteen feet, yielding flowers during two-thirds of the year, and impregnating the air with the fragrance of their delicious odour. Nothing can be more delightful than a stroll in this delightful locality, where art and nature vie with each other to embellish the enchanting scene.

After passing through the Alameda, you arrive at a bridge which crosses a small stream running into the river. Well-cultivated fields are seen on both sides of the road, but more especially on that on which the river is situate, and which gradually slopes towards the centre of the beautiful valley, in whose bosom a luxurious vegetation, and every species of tropical fruit and flower reminds the traveller of the favoured land on which he is treading. On the other

side, where the ground is more elevated, the husbandman finds that he is amply repaid for the little labour he bestows upon the soil; and the fields, well stocked with produce, show that he is not backward to take advantage of the many facilities for culture which it offers. It is on this elevated site that the parochial church of San Pedro stands, as well as the Indian village surrounding it, called San Francisco, and which gave birth to the adjoining city of La Paz.

One might naturally imagine, from the geographical bearings of this country, that excessive heat would prevail in many parts of it; but this is not the case. The land is so raised above the level of the sea,—in many instances so much as 11,000, 12,000, or even 13,000 feet,—that the air is exceedingly rarified, and the disease called the *soroche*, which consists in a difficulty of respiration when undertaking the least exertion, is extremely common, and much experienced by strangers, when exposed to the fatigue of ascending or descending the hilly streets of the capital. The mornings and evenings are extremely cold and bracing, especially during the winter months. Ice is generally found in the streets

in the morning, but soon disappears as the sun rises in the heavens.

On account of the great elevation of the land, and the rarefaction of its atmosphere, no noxious or troublesome insects exist in the city. It seems to have had the advantage of a second St. Patrick to destroy all its vermin; and, on retiring to rest, there are no fearful forebodings of a nightly attack from those tiny invaders of our repose, which in many countries detract so much from our peace and happiness. Here a bed is indeed a bed of roses, and a luxury we are never sure of meeting with elsewhere. When indulging in so indispensable a contribution to my undisturbed repose as an untenanted bed, where "free from the torments of a back-biting world," I could repose in security, I have learnt duly to appreciate so desirable an exemption from those nightly discomforts, to which other and more civilized countries are, for the most part, unfortunately doomed.

La Paz contains several churches, which are generally unfinished. In fact, few churches or public buildings are ever completed, the towers of the churches, particularly, presenting a very ruinous appearance,

when perhaps the remainder of the structure is brought to a tolerable state of perfection. The old cathedral of San Domingo is no exception to this rule, and even in that part of it which is now finished, can lay little claim to anything like architectural beauty, built, as it is, in a kind of bastard order, a mixture of Italian and Moresque. The doorways and the *façade* generally are of this latter order, whilst the tower or belfry partakes more of a Roman character.

The interior consists of a nave and two aisles, the grand altar being placed immediately under the dome, whilst chapels lead out from the aisles on either side. On high days and holidays, a most impressive effect can be produced by a gorgeous display of rich plate; and, on these occasions, the church ornaments and decorations are seen to great advantage, as they glitter in the brilliant light of an endless profusion of wax tapers. Behind the high altar is situate the organ, which is usually accompanied by an orchestra, in which wind-instruments painfully predominate, everything being blown out of tune by their exclusive and domineering sounds.

In the choir are some very fine voices, although the boys are so strenuous in the exercise of their duties, and scream to such a pitch, that one quite trembles lest they should do themselves some bodily injury in their exertions to do themselves and their music justice. There is a great number of cabinet paintings in this church, one of which particularly attracted my attention, as being a *fac simile* of one of Rubens' pictures in the National Gallery in London. Most of them are evidently bad copies from the old masters; but, doubtless, answer every purpose of decorating the building, and stimulating the devotion of those who resort thither with the object of worship. The friars of the Dominican Order are generally very portly-looking gentlemen, elegantly dressed in the finest black, carrying large hats upon their heads, and exhibiting on their persons gold buckles and ruffles of lace. In appearance they are scrupulously neat, and are to be met with in the best society, being generally persons of the very first education.

The best church in La Paz is possessed by the monks of the Franciscan Order. It is built of stone, and more substantially than is

generally the case in these countries. The bell-tower, as usual, is not completed. As regards the internal arrangements of the edifice, it differs very little from the cathedral. The Church of the Recoletas is more remarkable for its neatness and cleanliness, than for any pretence at splendour or showy decoration. The religious order to which it belongs is composed of Spanish or Italian monks, or such as have resided at Rome for many years. They subsist principally by charity, and are the most industrious, devoted, and exemplary of their class. In my account of the revolution at La Paz, I shall more fully touch upon the merits of these good men, whose simple faith and manners form a pleasing picture in the annals of monastic life. In the churches of La Merced, San Pedro, Santo Agostino, and the several communities attached to them, there is little worthy of remark.

Besides monasteries, there are also here several nunneries. Of course the latter are kept more secluded, and protected from the profane gaze of the curious stranger. Yet, through a double grating, the first of wicker-work, the second of a more substantial cha-

racter, which divided the church of the nunnery of Las Concebidas, I contrived to be a witness of some of their religious services. In a chapel of their own, divided into two stories, appeared the nuns, facing the grand altar. The younger portion of them, or the novices, were stationed on the upper platform, and were occupied in singing and chaunting to the accompaniment of an old harpsichord, to which was added a number of little drums of the size of a cocoa-nut, producing the most ludicrous effect imaginable. On great occasions the church is literally crowded with plate and ornaments, and report says that the sisters are immensely rich, being proprietors of numberless large farms. I can easily credit this, if one may judge of their opulence, as we do of that of the world in general, by the table they keep; for, having occasion to pass daily by a side-door belonging to the establishment, I was forcibly reminded of Landseer's admirable picture of the Abbey Porch in the olden time, as I witnessed the heavily-laden mules stored with a plentiful supply of provisions of every kind for the fortunate inmates.

The convent of Santa Tereza contains a

very strict order of Carmelites, who are so entirely secluded from the world as not even to be visible during divine service. The church and nunnery attached to it occupy a complete square. Though these sisters have so entirely bade adieu to the world as to have renounced all society but that of their fellow nuns, in order, according to their mistaken ideas, the better to devote themselves to the service of God; they nevertheless at times leave the sacred precincts of their asylum, but then they are always securely shrouded from the vulgar gaze of the world without. They are transported to various parts of the city in a sedan chair, which is decked out with white—fit emblem of virgin purity,—and ornamented with flowers and all the jewels and other ornaments which they possess. On entering the convent they are not expected to come empty handed. For three consecutive days they have to pay the dowry of 2,000 dollars, which secures to them this retreat for life.

I saw several lovely and blooming creatures initiated into the mysteries of this sisterhood, and taking upon themselves the vows by which they voluntarily surrendered

their liberty, and immured themselves for life in a living grave. It was a painful thing to witness, and extracted from me a sigh, as I lost sight of them for ever. There are churches with hospitals attached to them, which are very clean and comfortable, and afford the best medical attendance to be found in a new state. That of San Juan de Dios is for the reception of male, and that of La Capella de San Rafael for the reception of female patients. The Recogidas is a convent of a religious order, into which foundlings are taken and educated. It is a most excellent institution, and founded on the true spirit of charity.

The outward observances of the Roman Catholic Church are here mixed up with many barbarous customs and relics of paganism; so much so, that her religious ceremonies lose much of their impressiveness and solemnity. I can quite imagine that, immediately after the conquest of this country, it was considered a wise policy on the part of the church, to allow a certain licence to the untutored aborigines, that by degrees, and imperceptibly, they might become subject to her laws and edicts. But after so many

centuries, during which her rule has been recognised, when her doctrines are so well understood, and the principles of Christianity are duly appreciated, I am at a loss to conceive the propriety of retaining such an evident infusion of barbarous rites into her religious ceremonies as are occasionally witnessed. All important processions, fêtes, and other like observances, are accompanied by large parties of Indians, who are dressed up in the most fantastic and grotesque manner; taking part in some grave ceremonies, with their bodies painted, and their faces masked, and mounted on wooden horses, bulls, dragons, and altogether presenting as ludicrous an effect as it is possible to conceive. On what principle the reverend fathers of the church tolerate such absurd puerilities, I cannot imagine.

It is evident that the spread of education and sound doctrine is wholly incompatible with the practice, at least, of any church that sanctions such degrading superstitions, and it is a proof that little has been seriously done to enlighten the minds of these savage tribes, and to imbue them with just ideas of our more refined religion, when we see them

thus taking delight in these ridiculous exhibitions.

During my stay at La Paz, I had many opportunities of witnessing these displays of religious zeal. One of the most important is that which takes place on the festival of *La Senora de la Paz*; and I will now endeavour to give the reader an idea of the singular manner in which it is celebrated. The morning of Wednesday, the 24th of January, 1849, it being the day which is peculiarly dedicated to the lady patroness of the city, was ushered in by the sound of Indian pipe and drum proceeding from every quarter, and awakening the slumbering inhabitants to the consciousness that the *Caciques* were collecting their several bands.

During many days previous great exertions had been made in the erection of scaffoldings in front of the old cathedral. These were from thirty to forty feet high, and covered with crimson cloth, and were abundantly decorated with pictures of saints, framed in silver, forks, spoons, dishes, jugs, and all sorts of domestic utensils, of the same precious metal; images, garlands, drapery, together with fruits of every variety, from

the water-melon to the fragrant pine-apple; flowers of every description, and of every hue; vegetables of all sorts and sizes, from the formidable pumpkin to the unassuming radish, all tastefully arranged around silver, plaster, and wooden images of saints and angels, which cut rather a ludicrous figure as they peered forth from amidst such a profusion of dainty fare. Within the building, the various altars were adorned in like manner with everything calculated to add to the gaiety of the scene.

The neighbourhood was filled with roving parties of Indians, attired in the peculiar costume of their several tribes; some of them, both men and women, following the fashion of the Peruvians, carried crowns of variegated feathers on their heads, leopard skins thrown over their shoulders, and their bodies decked with kirtles of feathers. With bows and arrows in their hands, and dancing unwearyedly to the rude sounds of their native music, these unpolished sons of nature were to be met with in all parts of the city for hours, and failed not to excite attention in their efforts to celebrate the day. Some parties appeared in long robes of white, neatly

plaited round the body, with their faces blackened, and wearing broad belts of variegated feathers of exquisite workmanship—others with lappels or wings of the same material—the head-dress being a sort of diadem, with one feather at the back. Each person carried a Pandean pipe, which in some cases was of large, in others of small dimensions—but the combined effect of them, though the intonations were in rather a melancholy strain, was anything but disagreeable or inharmonious.

Some of the most eccentric performers on this occasion wore large cocked-hats, several yards in extent, made of paper, and trimmed with variegated feathers, the aforesaid plume in the centre of colossal dimensions, forming a conspicuous feature; their faces wearing masks, representing the heads of wolves, bears, or monkeys. Others appeared habited in old court suits, or faded regimentals, with *epaulettes* of feathers, and mounted on imitation buffaloes, leopards, and dragons, having their legs hidden by a kind of petticoat. In their hands they carried small looking-glasses, in which they continually affected to admire themselves, and they pro-

duced much merriment by their antics and gambols, occasionally rushing at the people with their horns—then formally and with much ceremony joining the musicians and dancers.

At night large bonfires illuminate the neighbourhood, and a general fire of squibs and crackers takes place, until the actors in this strange scene, overcome with drink, reel, quarrel, fight, and tumble home. The general effect at night is much heightened by the numerous lamps and lanterns with which the several altars of the church are decorated. The amusements peculiar to this festival generally last between two and three days, when, to those who love quiet and decorum, it is agreeable to find that order is again restored.

Similar scenes to that above described take place on the day set apart in honour of the patron saint of the Indians—La Senora del Rosario. This day, throughout the whole of the Bolivian and Peruvian Republics, is observed with great pomp, and, as usual, with a vast amount of feasting and drunkenness. The grand muster on the occasion, and the religious ceremonies connected with it, take

place at one of the primitive churches of the city, called Chillapampa. From this point the procession starts, after being marshalled in due order; the streets along which it passes being tastefully decorated with garlands of flowers, which hang in festoons across. At certain intervals altars are erected; and the great mass of draperies, which are suspended from the numerous balconies which line the streets, produce a very striking effect. For the most part, the costume of the Indians, together with the music and other accompaniments, resembles what has already been described. There were, however, so many remarkable additions, when I was fortunate enough to be a spectator of these important solemnities, that I will attempt to describe them.

The attire for the head which was worn by the first party, was of a most remarkable character. The usual head-dress of feathers was fixed on a kind of wicker frame-work, and the union of a number of these formed a square of many yards in extent, producing, as the wearers of them moved backwards or forwards, according to the dance, the appearance of a house or town being carried

aloft on their heads. The second party advanced two and two, and were dressed in red, blue, and yellow frocks, trimmed with fur or feathers. On their heads they wore curious little caps of the same materials, from underneath which appeared masks of cats, monkeys, negroes, which, by their grotesqueness and singularity, occasioned much diversion to the bystanders. Some of them carried in their hands enormous postilion's whips, whilst others were to be seen in kid gloves, bearing before them accordions, from which, as the procession advanced, they from time to time struck appropriate chords. These last, as I afterwards learnt, were young gentlemen of the town, who took a delight in contributing to the gaiety of the scene by taking a part as actors in it.

In the midst of all these buffooneries was the appearance of an angel, which soon turned out to be of real flesh and blood. It was admirably represented by an Indian child, who was covered with jewels, and adorned with wings and feathers, according to the recognised description of this species of gentry. Next came, but at a respectable distance, well suited to her dignity and

importance, the ponderous image of the lady-saint, borne aloft by a crowd of Indian devotees. She was literally studded with pearls and jewels, and the bier which supported her appeared covered with roses and candles, adding materially to the brilliancy of the scene. As she slowly advanced along, everything was well contrived to do her honour, and from the hands of dolls and angels, by means of hidden strings, little baskets of rose-leaves were emptied on her precious head. Of course, when the ceremony was over, the festivities of the day were far from concluded; and in all parts of the town large parties of Indians might be seen till a very late hour, dancing, fighting, and reeling, under the influence of the too free potations in honour of their patron saint.

As in other places under the sway of the Roman Catholic Church, the carnival is here also an occasion of great hilarity and mirth. In this year, however, the week during which it was held was of more than ordinary importance, for on the Saturday preceding its commencement, the public entry of General Isidore Belza into the city gave rise to the usual demonstrations of rejoicing, in

honour of his successful triumphs. It was on the occasion of his return from dispersing his enemies, and consolidating his position as President of the Republic, that he was now about to enter the city as a conqueror; and the excitement which prevailed was intense. The morning proved unusually propitious, and the streets exhibited a very gay appearance, as the worthy citizens, eager to evince their respect for the hero of the day, thronged every part.

The houses, over each of which waved the Bolivian banner, were gaily decorated with rich draperies; and the various balconies and windows were crowded with elegantly dressed ladies, gentlemen, and children; all exhibiting the greatest interest to witness the animated scene. Large parties of Indians dressed after the extraordinary fashion of their country, and headed by their *Caciques*, holding in their hands staves, headed with silver suns, danced, capered, and caracoled to the accompaniment of their strange music, as the advancing battalions told of the near approach of the mighty conqueror. The streets were crowded with the most motley group ever beheld; including

Spaniards, Bolivians, Argentines, foreigners of all sorts—Choloos and Indians, as well as mulattoes and blacks of every cast and hue, which compose the Republic.

Here, as in most cases on the advance of an army in time of peace, came large parties of females and servants, accompanied by masses of multifarious luggage. The women, hardy amazons of their sex, appeared riding their beasts astride, without showing any qualms of delicacy; children, in some cases, being attached to their backs. Of the *mozos*, or servants, some were mounted, but the major part of them travelled on foot, in company with jaded animals of every description, from the warlike charger to the patient ass, all bending under the heavy load of every variety of precious cargo—consisting of trunks, bedding, wines, guns, swords, cocked hats, pots, pans, parrots, and pet dogs; in fact, everything connected with the pride and circumstance of glorious war.

After this motley group had wended its way through the crowd, the distant sounds of martial music bespoke the near approach of the great object of that day's attraction. This signal of the hero's advance was hailed

by all with the greatest enthusiasm, but more particularly by scores of dirty little boys, who had been informed that some thousands of dollars were to be thrown to the crowd. The chaos of sounds at this moment was deafening, as the entire populace manifested their delight by a succession of loud and prolonged shouts. The native Indians were not backward on the occasion, but redoubled their exertions in the dance, or more vigorously made use of their drums and pipes to herald the event, to which all eyes were now directed.

As the military bands advanced, windows and balconies became agitated with their living masses; hats and handkerchiefs waved in the air, and the lovely hand of many a beautiful *senorita* held aloft roses or choice flowers, ready to be scattered on the victor's head as he passed along. At length, some distance in advance of his staff, mounted on a superb black charger, magnificently caparisoned, appeared the General, a fine-looking man of swarthy complexion, well attired in a Field-Marshal's uniform; and, with hat in hand, bowing gracefully to the fair ladies, in acknowledgment of the fragrant *bouquets*

they were showering upon him. Next came the remainder of the brilliant *cortège*, including the General's staff, and a cavalcade of the most opulent personages of the city, who had gone out to meet him. These were followed by his body-guard of cuirassiers, lancers, two military bands, regiments of the line, and cavalry.

The General, having taken possession of a mansion prepared for him in the Calle de Comercio, the proceedings of this day's pageant were terminated in the evening by many dinners and balls, which took place to commemorate the event. The next day being Sunday, there was a grand religious thanksgiving at the cathedral, which was attended by all the officers and functionaries, together with the military corps and bands, with great parade.

As the carnival this year fell on a Sunday, that day was merely distinguished from ordinary Sundays by the religious solemnities, just alluded to, in honour of the President of the Republic. The various amusements connected with this season were, therefore, postponed till the next day, when, from the earliest dawn, pleasure-seekers of all sorts

were to be seen in every part of the city, intent upon the celebration of the carnival, with its due observances. The Indians, as before, were in full force, and piped, taboured, and danced in costumes much of the same grotesque character. The streets were thronged with stalls, at which were displayed a large assortment of wares, including silver cups, diminutive toys—some in silver, such as those known under the name of *allacitas*—others being admirably executed tea and coffee services, utensils of various descriptions, furniture, chairs, tables, beds, and dolls, together with heaps of bags filled with flour, or powder, for the coming sport.

Parties of Choloos, both men and women, from thirty to forty strong, performed a running dance to the music of some half dozen guitars, and being supplied with bottles of *pisco*, with which they continually regaled themselves, the whole party was soon inebriated, and commenced singing a song, of which a few words only were distinguishable.

These parties reel on till they meet others who, like themselves, are disposed for a conflict, when a general battle ensues, powder

flying about in all directions, till the victors and the vanquished separate to furnish themselves with fresh supplies of their harmless ammunition, having all the appearance of so many jolly millers more than anything else. The higher mode of warfare is of a more scientific character ; parties of ladies and gentlemen, well mounted on horseback, form cavalcades of twenty or thirty in number, and, with their pockets well stored with powder and sweetmeats, gallop through the streets, pelting those at the balconies and windows, who seize every opportunity of returning the compliment with interest. These equestrian parties also meet others similarly mounted, and engage with them in conflict. And whilst thus attacking each other, the whole are sometimes waylaid and beset by a company of warriors on foot, who so blind them all with flour that they are soon put *hors de combat*, or beat a retreat for want of ammunition.

It is the custom for a party of about twenty-four, with two commanders, to visit all mansions and houses of consequence, having court-yards and galleries. These men are dressed with great taste, wearing large

Spanish slouched hats, with hatbands of feathers beautifully arranged—white shirts with bodices, in the style of the Swiss peasantry, over which is placed a broad blue or red belt, fringed with dollars, which in dancing produce an agreeable clatter. At the side a small pouch, trimmed with doubloons, presents to the eye the glitter of its golden charms. Their breeches are of black velvet, immensely large, *à la Turquie*, and slashed with red, being fastened to the knee by bunches of coloured ribands. Below this they wear blue stockings with clocks, and shoes adorned with large rosettes. Each individual carries in his hand a small truncheon, and the dance in which they engage is throughout all its arrangements precisely the old English morrice-dance.

The captains were decidedly the most conspicuous of the whole party. They were attired in old embroidered court suits, a profusion of frills and ruffles, flaxen bag-wigs of an enormous size, cocked hats, silk stockings, and singularly grotesque masks, which did not fail to excite the risible faculties of all the bystanders. In one hand they carried a prodigious postilion's whip, re-

markable for its extent of thong, and in the other an *eau de Cologne* bottle, with which they exhibited much drollery, affecting every species of dandyism, inhaling with studied air its odoriferous sweets as they haughtily gave the orders to the dancers, and then countermanded them. From one of their capacious pockets they occasionally drew forth a small mirror, in which they pretended to admire themselves, and as they set about to adjust their huge bag-wigs, they indulged the company by a volley of sharp sayings and witticisms, which occasioned great entertainment.

After the termination of the dance, one of the commanders requests the other to favour the company with a *cama clogei*. To this the latter expresses a decided objection, asserts that he is in a delicate state of health, and naturally of a timid and bashful disposition. His companion then proposes a stimulant in the shape of wine, and asks him to tell him candidly if he thought that it would give him the requisite strength and courage. He then begins to cough, says that he does not know, but that he has no objection to try. At this broad hint the ladies and gentlemen in the galleries imme-

diately send down some bottles, having partaken of which, the two commence dancing in good earnest, one of them, with handkerchief in hand, acting the lady to perfection. This part of the entertainment was so well done, and the various attitudes and manœuvres of the performers so extremely droll, that it was encored three times by general acclamation. Of all laughable exhibitions that I ever witnessed, I was as much amused with this as any. At its conclusion the dancers went through some more of their figures, and then withdrew to delight other audiences.

Another party, deserving of notice, attracted my attention, and that was a band of Indians wearing skull-caps, with lappels hanging behind, and ornamented with beads in the manner in which the North American Indians embroider their mocassins. On their shoulders and backs they wore wings, made from the beautiful crimson feathers of the Flamingo, giving them much the appearance of the angels which are depicted in the works of the ancient masters. During the course of the night many minstrel parties with their dancers perambulated the city, affording

unmistakeable evidence in their uncontrolled noise and uproar, that they had too well learnt the abuse of intoxicating drinks. Thus ended the day's diversion for the mob, who here, as well as in merry England, have the highest sense of pleasure in the indulgence of mere animal propensities. It must not be forgotten, however, that in the better ranks of society the day was celebrated in a more rational manner, and balls and parties brought about the union of friends and families to participate in those festive scenes to which these occasions usually give birth.

At the back of the city rise a number of hills, amongst which one is distinguished from the rest as Mount Calvary, from its noted resemblance to the original in the Holy Land. On a particular day in the year, what is termed the Festival of the Cross, is celebrated at this place, and there might be seen large numbers of Choloos and Cholas, habited in their picturesque costumes, and bending under the weight of their ponderous crosses, ascending the mountain side, to fix them on the summit. They undertake this arduous labour as a meritorious act of devotion, and right glad they are when

they have accomplished their task, congratulating themselves and each other on the successful termination of their pious work, and celebrating that event by a number of bonfires, around which they recruit their exhausted strength by very liberal potations. After this they return to the city to prepare for the festivities of the night.

At the foot of these hills is a small plain, called the Caxa del Agua, in which is maintained the reservoir which supplies the city. On the morning of the feast, this place is the resort of numerous parties of ladies and gentlemen, on horseback, who have thus an opportunity of exhibiting their prowess; the lady equestrians generally distinguishing themselves greatly for their graceful or daring riding. As night approaches, the streets leading to the fair present a gay and joyous aspect: the young ladies of the city on the occasion of this feast, which lasts three or four days, allowing themselves great licence, both as regards costume and behaviour. They attire themselves in the Cholo fashion, their faces being so concealed and disguised that a husband would find it a difficult matter to recognise

his wife, or a lover his affianced. On the evenings during which this festival lasts, parties of both sexes, having thus laid aside their proper characters for the occasion, meet at each other's houses, and endeavour to discover their friends without being recognised themselves. There is generally great work for the imagination, in laying open the most successful attempts at deception.

The men mask and dress themselves in a variety of curious costumes, ingeniously made for the purpose. A great deal of the diversions of the evening take place on the plain to which I have already alluded. Parties of twelve or fourteen young ladies might be seen, preceded by some half-dozen guitars, and followed by a motley group of Turks, monkeys, warriors, and devils both white and black, all keeping time with their hands and feet to the running dances of the country. Then come servants of all colours and sizes, carrying small carpets and a supply of food and drink for the occasion. These masqueraders having selected a suitable position, spread their carpets, and arrange themselves in the form of three sides of a square, the ladies and musicians being

squatted in the first row, the gentlemen and servants behind. No sooner do the musicians commence with guitar and voice the bay-larcitos of the country, than the whole party join, beating time with their feet. The gentlemen then select their partners, and they all go through the graceful movements of the dance, much to the delight of hundreds of spectators, who, at the conclusion of this portion of the amusement, loudly clamour for its repetition.

The appearance of the plain, as seen under the unusual aspect which these evenings present, is truly pleasing to the senses, and in spite of the ideas of frivolity that it might excite in the contemplative mind, savours much of the picturesque. In the gloom and stillness of night, the hum of busy voices is heard, where thousands of pleasure-seeking visitors are drawn together to while away a vacant hour in the enjoyment of innocent mirth, and the refreshing breeze. Tents might be seen, arranged in rows, where refreshment of various kinds is to be obtained. Here and there are clusters of stalls, where Indian women are busily engaged in the manufacture of *ajies* and

chuniocs, the whole being lighted up by the combined brilliancy of numerous candles and lanterns. To this, music adds its charm, in the pleasing strains of the guitars and voices.

In the background, and, as it were, keeping aloof from any participation in the vulgar amusements of the populace, were the more distinguished spectators of the mirthful scene. These select groups of the *élite* of the city were composed of some of the most exalted and refined members of society, and as being not uninterested observers of what was passing before them, appropriately sanctioned with their presence these periodical outbursts of harmless fun and jollity.

The occasion of this masquerade seems to be equivalent to our leap-year in England, the ladies being at this time allowed a greater liberty than usual in expressing their sentiments to the opposite sex, for indeed they have not the fear of blushes before their eyes, nor are they otherwise deterred by any dread of compromising their characters or offending against the rules of delicacy.

The habitual intemperance pervading almost all classes of society is here very

remarkable. It is a painful thing to witness the extent to which the abuse of intoxicating drinks is carried, even in the very highest ranks; and the vice is committed so openly that even in the eyes of ladies it scarcely seems now to be regarded as a crime. So far, in fact, from discountenancing the practice, they seem to delight in making you its deluded victim. As a mark of particular regard and esteem they will pledge you in the strongest drinks, compelling you to drain your glass each time, until, assailed on all sides by the irresistible influence of their beautiful eyes, you soon find yourself in by no means a questionable state of unusual hilarity or unconsciousness, from the combined effect of the various liquors you have taken. A custom such as this would be more honoured in the breach than in the observance, destroying, as it does, that delicate sense of propriety which gives such a charm to civilized life. It is to be hoped that, with the advance of education and enlightenment, it will gradually subside into disuse, and so great a stain on the character of the people may be for ever obliterated.

As may be supposed, when their betters

set them such an example, these remarks apply with double force to the lower orders. These indulge their tastes in a similar, though a coarser manner, and when they can gain access to spirituous liquors, know no bounds to their intemperance and unbridled licence. In fact, everywhere, in all ranks of society, from the highest to the lowest, drunkenness seems to be the besetting sin. No social meetings can take place without recourse being had to stimulants, and the certainty of the natural result. The first advance in courtship cannot be made without their aid. They are the all-essential concomitants upon every occasion. In the streets at night their effects are but too evident. In the coldest season parties of six or eight men, with a proportionate number of females, are to be met with at the most unseasonable hours, singing vociferously and dancing, or, I should rather say, reeling in a far advanced state of intoxication to the strumming of a couple of guitars. Little can be done towards the amelioration of the condition of the people, either in a religious or political point of view, whilst thus enslaved by so degrading a vice.

During my residence at La Paz, I was a witness of the scenes which occurred during the Revolution of the 12th of March, 1849. At this date a despatch was received by General Belza, informing him of a revolt which had taken place in favour of General Bollivian at Oruro, in which the whole of the officers in command had been surprised, and the treasury robbed to the amount of 50,000 dollars. Orders were immediately issued for all the battalions to proceed without delay to the scene of action, and a few hours later General Belza and his staff followed with the cavalry. Thus, without any warning, the city was left to the care of a few armed policemen, and quite at the mercy of the Choloos and Indians, who on several occasions threatened to sack it, and murder every foreigner who might be resident there. This was a pretty state of things—enough to alarm the timid, and rouse the just fears of even the stout-hearted. However, the remainder of the day, and the whole of the following night, passed off most tranquilly. But early in the morning a well-laid plot clearly manifested itself, having, no doubt, been long fomented by certain officers

and agents of the late President José Bolivian.

These having tampered with the police, and otherwise recruited their numbers, mustered in a very short time from a hundred and fifty to two hundred men, well armed. Such of the authorities of the place as had not fled at the first intelligence of the proposed insurrection were immediately seized, and General Bolivian was proclaimed without any opposition. The Choles, who had suffered severities and rigour under the rule of that president, formed another party in favour of General Belza; but, being without arms, they were driven without difficulty from their posts, as they disputed the possession of street after street with stones or any such missile as they could lay their hands on. Under the continued fire of the other party they were forced back upon the heights, where, under the direction of the Argentine adventurer Lopez, they were made to assume a more orderly mode of attack. Picquets were despatched in various quarters for supplies of muskets and fire-arms. Reinforced with these, they threatened to storm the town; and soon, watching their oppor-

tunity, they rushed from the heights like a torrent, making their way along the principal streets leading to the grand Plaza, under a continual running fire from their opponents.

Thus, with the advantage of arms on the one side, and the superiority of numbers on the other, the contest lasted with fluctuating success until nightfall, when the Choloos were at length driven to the former position on the heights. The mortality of that day amounted to eighteen killed and about forty wounded. Amongst the former were several innocent sufferers. A beautiful girl of fifteen years of age, belonging to a wealthy family, was shot through the head, in her own apartment, whilst imprudently looking on from the window at the scene below. The same ball striking her father on the breast, but without doing much harm. Two females, who were retiring to their dwellings near the scene of action, also met a similar fate. On the following day a repetition of the same attacks and repulses continued till night with similar results, the Choloos, as before, being defeated in their attempts to make themselves masters of the city.

In the meantime the authorities of the

place had forwarded urgent messages to General Belza, informing him of the disastrous state of things, and demanding succour. Rumours became current, that his arrival would take place on the morrow, accompanied by a strong force, and that the battalions were already advancing by forced marches. The Bolivian party, on hearing these tidings, took the alarm, and quietly evacuating the city at the dead of the night, left their enemies, the Choloos, masters of the city.

However, this indescribable *finale* to the struggles of the last two days, was but an exemplification of the old proverb, "out of the frying-pan into the fire." The victors, thus left in easy possession of everything, were then assembled and addressed by the Prefect, who expressed his high sense of their valour, and thanking them for having saved the city, stated his determination to supply them with arms for the preservation of order. This being accomplished, results of a very different nature from those anticipated began to transpire. These misguided men, finding that they had now all the power in their hands, began to use it for

their own selfish purposes, and instead of contributing to the peace and order of the city, caused terror and confusion wherever they went. They forced themselves into private houses, plundered the shops, destroyed the papers and archives of the Government, and levied contributions on passengers in the public streets; using threats, if not violence, in case their demands were not instantly complied with.

This state of things^{*} caused greater consternation than the occurrences of the few days previous. Fear was depicted on every countenance, and the hearts of the citizens were painfully excited at the dismal forebodings of the future. Certain houses were marked for plunder; twelve in the street in which I resided were of the number, including the one which I myself occupied. Many of these were saved by the exertions of the good and pious fathers of the Recoletes, whose heroic conduct and Christian virtues on this distressing occasion gained for them universal applause. Wherever danger and violence reigned, there were they to be seen, cross in hand, imprecating the vengeance of Heaven on the heads of the disturbers of the

public peace. With tears in their eyes, and almost choked with emotion, they exposed their sacred persons to the fury of these monsters, until at length, their reason convinced, or their hearts softened, by the eloquent appeals of the reverend fathers, some, less obdurate than the rest, slunk away with shame, leaving their misguided companions to resist, as best they could, the fervid eloquence of these ministers of God.

A wealthy Spaniard, named El Catalano, proprietor of a large and elegantly furnished mansion, the lower stories of which were well stocked with foreign goods to a large amount, suffered particularly by the sackage of his premises. This person, thinking to stop the fury of the mob and save his property, threw several thousand dollars amongst them, to secure which, they almost trampled one another to death. However, so far was their cupidity from being satisfied by this bountiful largess, that it only the more inflamed their zeal in their work of depredation. They immediately began to lay their hands on everything they could find, and those things which they could not carry away with them, such as large and valuable

articles of furniture, were thrown out of the windows and utterly destroyed.

This house would, no doubt, have been entirely razed to the ground but for the exertions of the good fathers, whose appeals were at length listened to, and thus the remainder of the goods was saved. They likewise pleaded successfully on behalf of many other houses, and by dint of malediction as well as entreaty, the work of demolition was stayed; not, however, till irreparable mischief had been done. It would be impossible to enumerate the various acts of barbarity and wanton destruction to which the town was subject whilst under the dominion of these savages; and as night approached, fears for the public safety were redoubled, as those whose courage had stood them in good stead during the events of the day were paralyzed at the prospect of the deeds of violence which would be committed under the cover of darkness.

All their worst fears would have been realized, had it not been for the exemplary friars, who again came to their aid, and forming companies of six, each headed by persons carrying a crucifix and lanterns,

patrolled the streets during the night, directing their footsteps wherever there seemed a danger of disturbance and outrage. It was reported that one of these fathers fell a victim to his pious zeal, being butchered whilst in the performance of the hazardous duty he had voluntarily undertaken for the public good. The kind offices, however, of these worthy men were not bestowed in vain, for little or no mischief was perpetrated that night.

On the next day, General Belza and several battalions entered the city; and no sooner was the President installed in his house, than he gave orders that all the mansions and stores of *pisco* belonging to General Bolli-vian, together with the private dwellings of his relatives, should be given up to the Choloos for plunder, as a reward for their valiant conduct in support of the government. If matters were bad before, they now became ten times worse. The natural consequences of drunkenness and rapine were soon visible everywhere. The rabble congregated in the streets, and even under the windows of the President's house, yelling forth their drunken shouts of *Evviva Belza*, until, in order to appease them, the General

himself was obliged to parade the streets with his staff, and, hat in hand, to acknowledge the compliment of their uproarious applause.

I was standing at my door, returning the salutation of the President, who, followed by a crowd laden with plunder, was passing in front of my dwelling, when I was addressed by a Cholo and a soldier, who came up at the time, carrying a large quantity of books, the fruits of their pillage, which they offered to me for sale. On my saying that I had no need of them, they became very abusive, at the same time making a snatch at a gold watchguard which I wore round my neck. Thus assailed, I found my only chance was to give it them in the true English fashion, and by dealing them a few judicious blows, I scattered them and their books in all directions. This so astonished them, accustomed as they had been hitherto to have it all their own way, that they kept their distance, and packing up their books, quietly withdrew out of harm's way; not, however, without informing me, to my comfort, as they retreated beyond all reach of danger, that they would soon murder all foreigners.

This little incident took place in mid-day, and within sight of the President himself.

So much for his policy in entrusting the lives and property of the citizens to the tender mercies of these lawless wretches. As might be expected, the remainder of that day and the following night were passed in excesses of every kind, and the city seemed given up to a set of drunken marauders, who committed street robberies and plundered private dwellings with perfect impunity. I was unfortunate enough to be one of their victims. They gained entrance into my house, and demanded money. I told them I had none to give them, upon which some of the party indulged in very big words; and, at the same time, in order to make their threats take more instant effect, they began to draw something from under their ponchos. At first I was disposed to reason with them, telling them that I was under the protection of the British flag, and that any attempt on their part to enforce their claims, would only bring down a just vengeance on themselves; but afterwards I felt more inclined to try to cut down the party with my cavalry sword, and should certainly have attempted it, had

I not been strongly advised by a gentleman present to endeavour to get rid of them at a cheaper rate.

I prudently followed his counsel. The leader of the party had hitherto kept them back, and after a few more words of parley they all left me, as I afterwards found, to enter the apartments of a beautiful Bolivian lady, whose husband was then absent, frightening the poor creature and her servants almost to death. I immediately followed them, and partly by persuasion, and partly by force, prevailed on them to leave the house, having promised to give them a few dollars when beyond the threshold of the door.

Descending into the court-yard to complete my bargain, I found twelve or fourteen more determined looking fellows; and fearing an augmentation of numbers, I quickly hurried the whole party beyond the gateway, promptly paid their demands, and having securely barred and barricaded the gate, thanked my stars at having got off so well. On returning to the lady from whose premises I had expelled these ruffians, she pointed out to me a considerable sum of money, which all

the while had been deposited on a table in the room ; but, strange to say, neither the men nor myself had taken any notice of it.

Thus continued this state of things, day by day ; but as time wore away, order began to be again established. Occasionally, such of the soldiers as had joined the insurgents were brought into the city, having been taken prisoners by the Indians ; but greatly to the credit of the authorities, acting under the directions of General Belza, they were but slightly punished, being merely for a time held prisoners, instead of being obliged to suffer the penalties of martial law. At this juncture, news arrived at La Paz that Potosi and Cochabamba were in arms, and that the presence of the General and his forces were necessary to quell the insurrection. Before leaving, however, he appointed General Braun, a German officer, who had gained distinction under the Republic, during the presidency of the late revered Santa Cruz, as Commander-in-Chief of the National Guard, a corps organized from among the residents and shopkeepers (including even foreigners), comprising several companies, which patrolled the streets at stated hours during the night.

By means of these salutary precautions, the city was maintained in a state of the utmost tranquillity, and affairs soon began to resume their wonted security.

On Saturday, the 24th of March, a French officer, named Colonel Vizenden, who had been secreted in the house of an ecclesiastic, was arrested by the police authorities, and heavily ironed, charged with being an agent of General Bolivian, as having caused the whole of the outbreak throughout the Republic; and of having also, by means of his agents, his manœuvres, and his money, fomented and encouraged the late insurrection at Lima. This gentleman was a man of brilliant parts, speaking the English language with fluency and elegance.

I took the opportunity of paying him a visit, whilst under confinement, and was readily admitted by the officer on guard. On entering his prison, which was so dark that I did not perceive him, I pronounced his name, and was answered by the poor fellow, who was heavily chained, from beneath some ponchos with which he lay covered. He was exceedingly glad to see me; and on my expressing my sorrow at

finding him in such a position, said jocosely, "Be of good cheer; all will soon be arranged to our satisfaction!" Seeing him so happy and confident in the expectation of his release, I left him a few books to beguile away the tedious time, fully satisfied that all was right. Little, however, did I imagine that this was the last time that I should ever see him. On the following day he was escorted to Oruro, and there tried by court-martial, and condemned to be shot. Thence he was brought back again to La Paz.

One evening, whilst conversing with some friends, my attention was attracted by crowds of persons running in one direction; and on making inquiries, I ascertained that it was the unfortunate Frenchman who was the object of their curiosity, and who on the following day was to meet his fate. Early in the morning his execution took place. He exhibited the utmost resignation and bravery whilst undergoing his sentence, and died in the observance of the religious duties befitting the occasion. The impression produced by his fortitude and Christian demeanour was considerable. He gained the good opinion even of his enemies. They so far

commiserated his fate as to procure him the rites of burial, and he was consigned to the tomb amidst evident demonstrations of silent and sincere grief.

CHAPTER VI.

Route to Sorata—La Catea —Ancoma — Capaguaya — Bridge of Quilapitune—Joya—Tipuani. Its productions and natural advantages. Description of the town. Gold mines in the neighbourhood. Less important mines in the district—Guanay.

THE road from La Paz to Sorata is continued along a plain for nine or ten leagues, having the range of the Cordilleras at a distance of a league or two on the right hand the whole of the way. On the left hand the plain extends very far, the Corracora range forming the background. As you approach a mass of rock that rises suddenly out of the level, the small town of Las Pienas strikes upon the view. It contains a population of from 250 to 300 inhabitants. After passing several well-cultivated fields of wheat and barley,

amongst which a number of *haciendas* are prettily situated, the road for a league or two gradually ascends. When the eminence is gained, the snow-capped peak of the majestic Illampí is seen soaring above the clouds in awful grandeur, distinguished in extent and elevation from its compeers in the mighty chain of which it forms a part.

As the traveller passes onward, the view of this snowy range is occasionally intercepted by a succession of high bluffs, but the sudden prospect which is afforded to him every now and then, as some opening or chasm reveals the distant scenery beyond, charms and delights his senses by its terrible sublimity. Soon afterwards scenes of a different character attract his attention. After crossing the river *Alsa*, and ascending the opposite embankment, the great Lake of *Tiquicaca* will appear before him, spreading its even and placid surface for a considerable distance. At *Tiaguanaco*, on this lake, are preserved the famous ruins of the palace of the Incas, imparting to the spot, already so abundant in natural beauties, the additional interest of historical association.

After descending by a circuitous route for

about half a league, the town of Sorata is seen embosomed in a deep *cabrada*, which presents a valley of a most picturesque description; its gentle undulations, verdant with rich and luxuriant cultivation, contrasting well with the bleak and snowy peaks seen in the distance. This beautiful valley is entered by means of a rude bridge, consisting of nothing but a large rough stone thrown across the river of Sorata, which winds its quiet course almost imperceptibly in this secluded region. A neat house has been built near the spot, and belongs to Senor Yldefonzo Villarnil. Half a league further, on a gentle ascent, stands the town of Sorata. It possesses little attraction for strangers, the Plaza presenting a very lonely aspect, although, from the appearance of some of the dwellings, they seem to be inhabited by persons of the first respectability. It is said that its inhabitants are noted for their kindness and hospitality. I cannot speak from experience, as, not being desirous of availing myself of their assistance, I had no opportunity of putting their reputation to the test.

After leaving Sorata, there is an ascent of about three leagues, till you arrive at a place

called La Catea, at the foot of the mountain Illampi, where there is a house built for the accommodation of the major-domo or administrator of a large *hacienda*. At this point of the journey, travellers generally rest awhile, to make tight the girths of their beasts of burden, and to see that the whole of their equipage is in good order, ere they make the commencement of the long and toilsome ascent of the extensive range of the Cordilleras.

From La Catea to Ancoma, which lies on the other side of the mountain, is a distance of five leagues. At the latter place are the remains of an Indian village, and, to judge from the ruins which time has left, evidently a place well inhabited, and of considerable importance.

At Capaguaya there opens to the astonished traveller a scene truly wonderful, and to which no description whatever can do adequate justice.

On both sides of a deep *cabrada* rise stupendous mountains, o'ertopping the very clouds as they appear to vie with each other in their upward extent. In the midst of all this sublime magnificence nature has not neglected

the favoured spot which is here enclosed. It abounds in a most luxuriant vegetation; woods of the most beautiful and varied kinds are here produced in great quantity. Flowers and plants, too, render the air fragrant with their balmy odours. This little oasis presents great charms to the senses, where all around, though terribly grand, is of a sterile and less smiling character. From Capaguaya there is the distance of one league to the river and bridge of Quilapitune. The descent at this place is one of the most extraordinary and terrific which it is possible for the imagination to picture. Nature, in some of her wayward moods, seems determined to daunt curiosity and stem the current of enterprise; but man, bold and resolute, sets dangers at defiance. In the enjoyment of bodily vigour, and the exercise of his highest prerogative, a reasoning mind, he learns to overcome seeming impossibilities, and perseveres in spite of every obstacle in the pursuit of pleasure or of wealth.

Such were my thoughts as I looked upon the scene and witnessed the preparations that were made for our progress under the difficult

circumstances in which we now found ourselves placed. The road along which we had to pass was of a most irregular description; whether formed artificially or by the wear and tear of ages, in some strange convulsions of nature, I cannot determine, but the effect was not very cheering, even to the most fearless mountain traveller. Our way lay along a succession of enormous giant steps, cut out of the solid rock, along which human beings and animals had to get on as best they could, being obliged at times to jump, at the risk of their lives, many yards from one projection to the other.

Before making the attempt to arrive at the river at the bottom of the abyss, it was necessary to relieve the animals of the burden of their saddles and baggage, which had to be carried down the rough and precipitate descent on the backs of the servants, who drove the mules and horses loose before them. Should any accident befall man or beast by reason of a false step, he is inevitably hurled a distance of five or six thousand feet to the depths beneath, beyond all human means of rescue. Fortunately we arrived safely at the

bottom, only to wonder at our having survived without ill consequences the various chances of danger and of death.

The bridge which crosses the river is of the following construction. On each side of the river a stone pier is erected, from the basement of which proceed several long poles that are well maintained in their position by means of huge stones and hide cables. These poles gradually slope towards the river, forming two inclined planes, and are secured at their extremities by lassoes of raw hide, wetted, of great strength and durability. On this framework or cradle are placed at given distances pieces of wood resembling the rounds of a ladder, and over these are laid branches of trees and brambles, and a quantity of loose earth, which in course of time becomes sufficiently solid for use.

After having passed this primitive bridge, we found that the distance to Joya was about two leagues, which, though so inconsiderable, was fruitful in many a dangerous adventure. We here encountered some most difficult passes; the peril of every onward step being great in the extreme, and I verily believe that we should never have accom-

plished our arduous undertaking, had we not been continually cheered by the hope that we had got through the worst part of it. Our happy ignorance of the future that was before us, combined with a natural tendency to indulge in the delusive dreams which our desires suggested, served to inspire us with the necessary courage, and made us reckless of the dangers to which we were momentarily exposed. Nerved for the occasion, we boldly encountered perils, the bare recollection of which was enough to make our very blood run cold. It was the retrospect alone which revealed to us their true character.

From Joya to Zaviga is a distance of six leagues, and includes several stations on the road. At the latter place there is another extraordinary bridge, made of the trunks of long straight trees resembling ash. These are laid across the river, being attached to two rocks. Pieces of wood are tied to them horizontally, ladder fashion, as before, but not being furnished with branches of trees, brambles, or earth, the traveller is unable to find any sure footing, and is, therefore, obliged to crawl across on his hands and knees, having the by no means encouraging

prospect before him, in case of a mishap, of a terrific plunge in the waters of the yawning abyss beneath. When cattle and horses are to be conveyed across, they are made to swim from bank to bank, and strongly secured against being carried away by the stream by lassoes of hide.

From Zaviga to Tulu it is half a league ; Tulu to Nayrapi, three leagues ; Nayrapi to Paymanta, two leagues ; Paymanta to the river of Toro, a league and a half. Over this river is a bridge, at which is the principal toll on the road, a small house, in which resides the toll collector, who levies on man and beast according to a scale of prices, being at one extremity.

The climate of Tipuani is, without doubt, one of the most pernicious in the world, fever and ague prevailing to a fearful extent. In the year 1848 this village was nearly depopulated by these scourges, young and old sinking beneath their baneful influence, being hurried to a sudden grave. Toro, Romanplaya, Unatuluni, and Sanguanita are not subject to these maladies to so great a degree. This is not to be wondered at, since the character of the climate perceptibly

changes at every turn or winding of the *cabrada* as you advance towards Tipuani.

The vegetables and natural productions of Tipuani are celebrated for their prolific nature and their luxuriant growth. Sugar cane, coffee, cocoa, cotton, arrowroot, pineapple, plaintain, and all tropical fruits and vegetables, together with every species of grain, here thrive in the greatest perfection. Rum is likewise distilled here in large quantities. Owing, however, to the enormous rate of wages paid to labourers, the treasures which this valuable soil contains are greatly neglected, the current value of its produce not being sufficient to justify the labour necessary for its due cultivation. *Peones*, or common labourers, earn from six royals to a dollar a day, and such as are qualified to undertake the work in the mines receive from twelve royals to two dollars a day. The disproportion between the cost of product and the marketable value of the food raised tends greatly to check any spirit of enterprise.

The village of Tipuani presents to the eye of the stranger one of the most desolate and miserable localities which it is possible to

imagine. It consists of a number of houses built of an irregular form, and chiefly constructed of poles fixed in the ground close to each other, and then plastered over with mud, so as to form a kind of partition or wall. There are exceptions in the case of several houses built of raw brick. The Plaza differs in no respect from the rest of the place, but exhibits the same dismal and wretched character throughout. In one corner stands a temporary building, which I ascertained, on inquiry, to be the parish church, but in such a sad state of dilapidation as to speak little for the reverence in which the sanctuary of God is held in this bigoted country. When we consider how little its sacred portals are entered, we need be at no loss to account for the degraded immorality of the district.

The inhabitants consist chiefly of Choloos, mulattoes, and blacks, who are employed in the mines, and whose vices and profligacy surpass all description. The intemperance to which they are addicted would of itself render them capable of any crime, but the low standard of their morality is such that they need not the stimulus of drink to urge

them on to the foulest crimes. However, there are two or three white families here which form an exception to the general rule. The curate, too, who is an Italian, holds a high reputation, and although at first sight he appears to wear a severe and repulsive expression of countenance, report speaks in strong terms of his great hospitality and kindness to strangers. The number of inhabitants in this place amounts to about four hundred and fifty to five hundred souls.

In the district of Tipuani are gold mines, which are classified according to the manner in which they are worked. These four distinct classes are as follows:—Banquria, Playalta, Cochea, and Serniadura. The first is worked in the mode following,—a large shaft (*pozzo*, or well) is sunk to the depth of the primitive bed of the river, the circumference of this shaft depending wholly on the locality. When the water occasioned by filtration is completely extracted, by means of chain pumps and other contrivances, the workmen are set to form *frontoneas*, or horizontal shafts, around the principal one. They continue working along these minor shafts till they come to the *veneria*, in which is

found the gold. This earth is taken carefully out by the miners in *capuchas*, or leather buckets, or in *tempinas*, or aprons, fastened round the neck and shoulders of the workman. Whilst the horizontal shafts are being formed, the progress of the work is often impeded by huge rocks, which it is necessary to blast ere the shaft can be continued in that direction.

Around the base of these *bancas*, or rocks, are frequently found quantities of gold, in large *pepitas*, or grains, weighing from a quarter of an ounce to an ounce, or more. The *veneria*, or earth, on being removed from its bed, is conveyed to a place called a *concha*, a large space prepared for its reception, where it is deposited in heaps until the works cease for the season. At this time temporary channels or sluices are formed to convey water to the spot, when the washings take place. The *veneria*, after being washed several times in water, until perfectly free from all particles of earth, is removed at the end of each day, during the time the operation continues, to the houses of the proprietors, and there weighed and put up into

bags of a portable size, which are carried by the Indians on their backs to Sorata.

In the Playalta, or second class of mines, the ground is generally removed for the distance of three or four yards, until the original bed of the river is arrived at, where is usually discovered a *veneria*, or dark earth, varying from six to twelve inches in depth, though it is occasionally less. All the surplus earth being thrown aside, the richness of the metal is assayed; a *batea*, or wooden trough, is used, in which the *veneria* is washed with great dexterity, the water being repeatedly changed, so that all earthy particles are eventually expelled, and the pure metal alone remains, affording a criterion both as to its quantity and quality, and thus enabling those who desire to ascertain the character of the works, to judge as to the richness or poverty of the *veneria* in which it is found.

The Cochea, or third class, is thus worked:—A large drain or sewer is made from the bottom of the hill towards the river, about three feet in width and the same in depth. It is lined with raw bricks or flat

stones, the bottom being paved with round stones called *tortas* (cakes), which are found in great abundance in the bed of the river. The sides of the hill are dug away by the *peones*, or labourers, so as to form a perpendicular surface for the purpose of forming horizontal *frontanes*, or shafts, from eight to fifteen yards in depth, according to the locality. Water is then conveyed by means of channels from the neighbouring hills and *cabradas*—oftentimes at vast manual labour and expense from places far distant from the scene of action—into large reservoirs, from which it is made to descend by a sudden burst on the broken ground, so as fully to saturate every portion of the soil. Thence it passes into the shafts, displacing the earth in all directions. The portions of the ground thus dislodged are so arranged by the miners that on a second application of this great body of water they are entirely swept away, the earth and all opposing bodies being forced by the violence of the cataracts through the channels into the river or surrounding places, leaving all the particles of gold fixed in the crevices of the *tortas*, which form the pavement of the sluices.

When the mining season is over, and before the rains commence, which destroy and inundate everything, these *tortas* are taken up, and the earth and gold which remain in them are carefully collected and subjected to the same operation as before explained.

The Serniadura is the fourth class. These mines are always worked in the wet season, in consequence of their being situated on the side of a hill, there being no means of bringing a sufficient body of water to the works but by taking advantage of the heavy rains which descend in torrents from the mountains. The sides of the hill are cut perpendicularly, or nearly so, and the loose earth being arranged on the slopes, or at the bottom, the rains, when they descend, fall precipitously from the heights, and carry away with much violence into the channels prepared for their reception, large quantities of earth, which are deposited in a pit or reservoir, paved with *tortas*. When the dry season sets in, this earth is collected and carefully washed, and the gold extracted as before.

There are several gold mines to be met with in the district around Tipuani. At Toro

is an establishment which belongs to Don José Zavala, a native of Spain, and Mr. James Whitley and Co. This mine promises to be very productive. The next is at Romanplaya, about two leagues from Toro, belonging to the same company. It has been worked for many years with very great success, and is still very productive. The next establishment is called Unatuloni, about two leagues from Romanplaya. Its proprietors are a Mr. Fink, a German, and a Mr. Portallis and Co., from the Argentine Republic. This mine has been worked for some time most advantageously, and still promises very well. The Sanjuanita mine is under the superintendence of Senor Villomil and Co., and fully repays the expense of working. Besides these, there is the Cangalli mine, belonging to Senor Zovala, Whitley, and Co.

All the neighbourhood of Tipuani—even the town itself, in part—has been worked by the Company of Villomil with almost incredible success. Having been fortunate enough to hit upon those reservoirs of the precious metal termed *boyas*, they soon amassed large quantities of gold, and realized an enormous

fortune in a very short space of time. In addition to the above-mentioned principal mining establishments, there are hundreds of an inferior description, some of which are still worked under every species of disadvantage, whilst others are wholly deserted. Some of them scarcely defray the necessary expenses, and are only persevered in from the hope of falling in with a *boya*, which would fully make amends for years of failure. There are also numerous mines on the sides of the hill, which are now deserted, from the want of the due means for the conveyance of the water which is required for washing the gold, whilst abundance of this precious fluid, which might be serviceable for this purpose, is already collected in reservoirs and depositories, but at so vast a distance, that it would require incalculable trouble and ingenuity, together with a good supply of capital, to render it of use in mining operations.

From Tipuani to Guanay is a distance of about eight leagues. The road passes through a very picturesque and interesting country, differing very much in character from that between Sorata and Tipuani. Long ranges of low hills rise on both sides, and through

a large extent of broken meadow-land flows a gentle river, which winds its circuitous course through banks interspersed with flowers and carpeted with verdure.

The town of Guanay appears at the foot of a mountain, and at a distance suggests the idea of an island detached from its side. This is the effect of the *mirage*, and is produced by the brilliancy and extreme rarefaction of the atmosphere. The principal inhabitants of the town are Indians, who are said to be originally from Mojos, and whose chief occupation consists in navigating the rivers in *bolzas*, or rafts, constructed of a sort of cork-wood exceedingly buoyant. On these rafts large quantities of the natural produce of Mojos and Reyes are brought to Guanay. At a short distance below the town, the river of Tipuani and that of La Paz, which takes a circuitous course round the Illemani, through many deep and winding *cabradas*, unite, and being afterwards joined by the river Mapiri, which, having its source four or five leagues below Sorata, flows in a north-westerly direction to this spot, the whole forms a considerable body of water, which steers its course through Reyes, and there

forming a junction with the Bermijo and Pilcomay rivers, sweeps along this vast tract of country, till it loses itself in the mighty Amazon.

Having made a lengthened stay in the city of La Paz, and explored its neighbourhood, I bent my steps towards the capital. The course of my journey thither lay through a tract of country little explored by strangers. It was full of adventures of a novel, sometimes of a painful character, the recital of which, together with some description of the city of Chuquisaca, will form the subject of the two next chapters.

CHAPTER VII.

Scene on the Punas—Adventure at the Post of Ceinko
 —Calamarca—Hayohayo—Chicta Sicasica—Panduro
 —Caracollo.

ON leaving La Paz for Chuquisaca, you ascend to the Punas, where the road assumes all the monotony which these table-lands usually present. There is, however, something to feed the imagination and delight the eye in the noble chain of the snowy Cordilleras, which continues in sight for a considerable distance. Occasionally, the Punas verge on the beautiful valley of La Paz, which follows the course of these giant hills, bringing to view numerous *haciendas*, Indian villages with their churches, smiling meadows, and fields of waving *cébada* and rust-

ling maize, well irrigated by a variety of springs, which here and there form themselves into small lakes, on whose bosoms ducks, geese, and wild-fowl might be seen in great profusion.

I halted on the brink of a precipice to view again with wonder this extraordinary and beautiful panorama. I have gazed with delight in my younger years on the varied charms of Alpine scenery, my soul filled with awe, as, from tracing the silvery glacier or the fearful avalanche, my eye rested on the majestic peak of Mont Blanc, as it proudly soared above all its meaner competitors. I remember well the feelings that animated my breast as, whilst surveying the greatest and sublimest of nature's works, my own insignificance became so apparent, and tremblingly would I pour forth a prayer to Him, whose almighty power had framed it all, and at whose throne the supplications of the beggar or the prince receive an equal share of His regard. With what sensations, then, must I not have gazed on the enchanting scenes which the New World now offered me ! and truly, I was fixed to the spot in mute admiration, indulging, as it were, in a dream

such as only imagination has pictured in the highly coloured pages of Eastern romance.

There is a pleasure which the traveller only knows, who has explored distant lands, and in the buoyancy of health and spirits, and the enjoyment of the soul-inspiring influence of sunny skies, has breathed the invigorating atmosphere of those regions where all is beautiful. To a traveller amidst the grandest scenery of the Alps, it might appear that Nature had done her best; but, sublime as it is, it must be confessed that the New World—everything being on a much larger scale—contains to a larger extent the chief element of grandeur. The highest ranges of the Alps would lose their colossal dimensions when seen by the side of those stupendous natural elevations, for which the new hemisphere is remarkable; and no description can adequately convey a true idea of those sentiments of awe and wonder with which these latter inspire an actual beholder. In the present instance the contrast was most remarkable between the peaceful and terrestrial Paradise that lay at my feet, and the lofty mountains, whose tops pierced the very clouds, frowning with

a stern and chilling aspect on the smiling scene beneath. After having surfeited myself by a rapturous contemplation of so inviting a prospect, I relieved my eyes by bending my steps along an unattractive and barren road in the direction of Ceinko, a small village where I halted in order to procure some oranges, which proved most grateful after the excessive heat of the unsheltered Punas.

The post-house, a square building at which I arrived, was in a sad state of ruin. During the presidency of General Bollivian the whole of the posts in the republic were thoroughly repaired, rendered more commodious, and suitably furnished, the principal room in each establishment being papered and provided with a table, a chair, and a couple of bedsteads. Since that time, however, these salutary measures are no longer put in force. Everything has been allowed to fall into decay, accelerated, no doubt, by the disturbed condition of the country during its revolutionary factions, and the continual passing to and fro of troops. In these establishments there are generally two or three smaller rooms besides that which is

furnished, and these can be made available, if required. As regards fare, one can always procure a *chupe*, a kind of fresh stew, which forms a tolerable dish for the not over delicate stomachs of the hardy travellers in these climes. Sometimes, but rarely, he can indulge in the luxury of ribs of mutton, which is introduced as an agreeable addition to the usual repast.

On my arrival here, I immediately took possession of the principal room, finding it vacant, and congratulated myself on my being alone. I sallied forth to the *patio* or court-yard, to see after my goods, when I found a number of Indian postilions busily occupied in unloading my baggage mules. An altercation was taking place between them and a postilion whom I had brought with me from La Paz, relative to a pair of boots, which the latter had incautiously left loose amongst my luggage, and which had been slyly appropriated by one of the number on the instant of our arrival. I took the hint, and immediately ordered my goods and chattels to be removed out of harm's way, and safely deposited in the principal room of the inn, close to my bed.

Having completed these arrangements, and ordered my *chupe*, which was soon concocted entirely to my satisfaction by a female black cook, who had been in my employ for some time at La Paz, and was now accompanying me to Chuquisaca. After this, I retired to rest for the night, determined to rise early on the following morning, and anticipating some delightful repose after the fatigues of the day. This, however, the fates denied me; for I was just entering upon my first nap, when my sense of hearing was assailed by some loud harsh bellowing, and there came such a thumping and kicking at the door as to be enough to disturb the serenity of a saint. "Who are you? and what do you want?" said I. "Only to get in, and if you don't make haste and open the door, I'll knock it about your ears." Scrambling out of bed, and wholly forgetting that all my luggage was piled up in its vicinity, I stumbled first against one thing and then against another, making such a noise at every step, that I disturbed every one in the post, who soon began to collect, to ascertain the cause of the unusual clamour.

By this time I had gained the door, and

on withdrawing from it two huge pieces of wood which I had cautiously fixed against it to guard me against all intruders, there presented himself to my view, hidden behind an enormous pair of moustachios and whiskers to match, a military gentleman accompanied by an orderly. Entering the room without any ceremony, he began to make himself quite at home, at the same time applying to myself epithets that were anything but complimentary. I soon resumed my place in bed, piling the clothes upon me that I might the better mark his movements without being observed.

Finding that I returned no answer to the interrogatives which he put to me from time to time, and seeing from the unmolested manner in which he had taken possession of the room, that he had it all to himself, he turned round and vented forth his foul language on the master of the post, who, together with many others, had been aroused from his bed by the uproar which my unexpected visitor and myself had occasioned; then abused in like terms the *semonero*, and lastly, the orderly who was in attendance upon him.

After most effectually making every one fly before him, by a certain knack which he had of half unsheathing his sword at every demand, he soon found all his desires perfectly satisfied, and bed, *chupe*, and everything on which he had set his heart, were placed before him in the twinkling of an eye. All the while he was occasionally casting sheep's eyes in the direction of my bed, and as I had all along considered silence the best policy, I completely thwarted his designs of inveigling me into a quarrel, by shrouding myself closer in the folds of my capacious coverings.

Soon, however, I had my patience put to a most severe test, and I found it was not of that character to enable me to resist any longer the cool insolence of my unwelcome visitor. My servant had unadvisedly placed near the other bed, in a nook in the wall, two bottles of wine, in order that they might be out of the way of danger. They were no sooner seen by my self-constituted guest, than without more ado, or impertinent inquiry, as to whom they belonged, he began to uncork one of them, and proceeded to partake of its contents. This was too much for flesh and blood to bear. I could

no longer lie in bed and quietly witness so unwarrantable an appropriation of my property, but sprang upon my feet, in a state of indignation befitting the occasion, and presented my six-barrelled revolver at the head of the impertinent intruder; who, yielding to the influence which the application of this forcible argument exercised over him, suddenly desisted from his purpose, not however, without letting fall the bottle, in the agitation of the moment, and spilling the wine on the floor.

“Holloa!” said he, in an evident state of tremor; “what the devil are you about—are you going to shoot me?” “No,” said I, “I am only going to have a shot at the bottle, it belongs to me, and you know a man has a full right to do what he likes with his own.” “But if you do that you are sure to hit me.” “I can’t help it,” I replied, “if you are foolish enough to get behind the bottle, you must take the consequence.”

This mode of treating so much swaggering independence had the desired effect. The successful bully of the moment before, was completely brought to his senses. The recent introduction to him, of which my pistol

had been the means, had placed my friend on his very best behaviour. He stammered out an apology for his conduct, became all at once exceedingly polite and even amusing, and contrived, much to my discomfort, probably to revenge himself as best he could, for the fright I had given him, to keep me awake for the remainder of the night. Early in the morning I found my companion inclined to drowsiness, and when he was safely locked in the arms of the sleepy god, of which sundry loud and discordant snorings gave good evidence, I determined, in return for his incivility of the past night, to break in upon his repose by preparing for my departure. What with the entry of postilions, the saddling and packing of mules outside, and the general stir attendant on the preparations for my journey, more than sufficient noise was made, most satisfactorily to effect my purpose.

Up jumps my military friend, startled from the sweet slumbers in which he was indulging, probably under the effects of the sherry to which he had so unceremoniously helped himself, and inquires, in authoritative tones—
“What is the matter?” “Nothing,” replied

I, coolly; “I was only returning you the compliment of the serenade with which you favoured me last night, and I hope you will enjoy it as much as I did.”

When all my arrangements were ended, the master of the post discovered that my luggage was of too ponderous a nature for the poor beasts conveniently to carry, and that another mule was absolutely necessary. To this I demurred, and a violent altercation ensued, he maintaining his point by a volley of Amarah, a language I did not understand, and I as resolutely protesting in as choice Spanish as I could muster. As neither of us comprehended the language the other was speaking, we were left to judge of each other's meaning from the violence and gesture by which it was accompanied. The upshot of it all was that the master of the post, more to relieve his jaded animals than to save my pocket, consented to give me another mule free of expense; and thus furnished I quitted the premises, leaving my ill-bred companion grumbling at the disturbance to which he was subjected, and vainly endeavouring to compose himself again to sleep after the shock his nerves had

sustained, fully sensible, no doubt, of the danger to which he had exposed himself, in trifling with a gentleman who could so readily avail himself of fire-arms in his defence.*

On the first part of my journey from Ceinko I found the road rather flat and uninteresting, though an occasional ascent and descent produced a little variety. On each side of the way the country resolved itself into large plains resembling lakes of water of a brightness painful to the eyes, which was occasioned by vast beds of saltpetre which stretch along these Punas for many leagues.† The horizon is everywhere

* On account of the numerous revolutions which have taken place in Bolivia, during which the military have scoured the country in the name of the party to which they belonged, levying contributions by force, taking possession of the post-masters' mules, and plundering the Indians of their provisions, for which the latter received only blows in return,—these gentlemen, accustomed to have it all their own way, have continued to assume, even during the time of peace, an arbitrary and independent sort of bearing, which, no doubt, emboldened my friend of the post to play his tricks upon travellers. In this instance, however, he caught a Tartar.

† Along the course of these tracts of Saltpetre, the country people never think of venturing abroad without

lost to view, by reason of several small surrounding chains of hills, on which an occasional patch of green indicates the industry of some Indian family ; the natives, strangely enough, choosing such spots in preference to the plains below.

Whilst travelling along this road I was overtaken by an Abacanian, mounted on a powerful horse, and whom I recognised as a bootmaker at La Paz. I do not profess to be much of a physiognomist, but this man's character was, if I mistake not, visibly written upon his countenance. Everything in his features told so plainly of dissipation, roguery, and such like qualities, that, ere he spoke a word, I began to regard him as a very undesirable companion. After the customary salutation, he informed me that his destination was Tucuman, and asked permission to accompany me for six or seven days, when he discovered that my road lay in the same direction. Before returning him

having their eyes protected by masks with glasses of green or neutral tint, the brilliant reflection from the ground, under the influence of a mid-day sun, being such that there is the danger of a contraction of a severe disorder in the eyes, unless so protected.

an answer I calculated on my chances of being able to get rid of him without acceding to his request. Upon consideration I saw that it was impossible to give him the slip, since he was too well mounted for that, and that an uncourteous repulse would be decidedly impolitic, for I might find him a dangerous and disagreeable enemy in so desolate a journey. I made up my mind, therefore, to put a good face upon the matter, and make the best of a bad bargain; and so, with well-affected grace, I politely granted him the permission he asked.

Off we started, then, in the very best of fellowship, and soon came in sight of the town of Calamarca; the parish church, as is usual in these wild regions, with its white-washed *façade* and its more imposing size, forming a strong contrast with the miserable little mud-hovels that surround it, and affording a very distinct landmark to the weary traveller. On a small elevation that commands the town stands a clean-looking chapel, with an enclosure adjoining it, which no doubt is the Pantheon or cemetery of the locality. The post is a large building, forming three sides of a square, and containing a

great number of rooms, the largest of which, as usual, contain two bedsteads. The *patio* in the centre of the quadrangle is very commodious, the fourth side of the square being formed by *corrales* for the animals.*

On my arrival I found the great room occupied by a party of Argentines, who were dressed completely in character for the road, with their silver spurs and their silver-hilted stilletos stuck in the garters of their *polinos*, or gaiters. These gentlemen, who seemed old travellers in these parts, were carrying everything before them; ordering about the postmaster, the *semanero*, postilions, and Indians, without the slightest apparent scruple of conscience at the gratuitous trouble they were exacting from all around them;

* The best advice I can give to a traveller, if he has any saddled mules of his own, is to allow them to remain saddled till they are perfectly cooled, then to order half a quintal of barley, half of which he should place with his luggage, if he is fortunate enough to get a room to himself. He should then place the other half before the door, and let his animals eat their fill; for if they are sent to the *corral*, the Indians during the night rob them of their food, and the poor animals will be found the next day unable to perform their journey without any apparently assignable cause.

and although they, who never gave a *sous* for the trouble they gave, were waited upon most nimbly by the servants, I hardly found any one to notice me, who was patient and polite, and willing to pay for any accommodation I met with. However, I learnt a very good lesson in what I had seen; and, acting upon the hint, I began to issue my commands in a more authoritative tone, which had the desired effect, for I found my wishes executed most promptly, even to the neglect of the imperious Argentines.

Having contrived to get the worst room in the house, so that nobody should envy me, I enjoyed the luxury of being alone, and partook of some refreshment with good appetite, and soon retired to rest. In the middle of the night I was awaked by the patter of horses' hoofs, and learnt that another batch of travellers had arrived, and were busily looking out for quarters. They crowded so much the rooms, already too much occupied, that my companion, the shoemaker, had to seek another asylum, and sought refuge in my room; an accommodation to which I could not reasonably object, seeing that everything in the post belonged to all in

common. After smoking his cigar, spreading his ponchos, and arranging his saddle so as to serve as a pillow, he betook himself to rest, and I trusted soon to find myself in the enjoyment of the refreshing repose which my fatigues demanded.

Several times during the night, however, I was awakened from my dozings by the noise arising from the opening of the door of my room; and at length, losing all patience, I informed my companion that he risked his life by subjecting me to so much annoyance; for, being startled from my sleep, I might in the impulse of the moment, and without considering who he was, blow his brains out, and so end the matter. This announcement was evidently not quite palatable to his feelings; but, in justification of his conduct, he told me that he was expecting a friend from La Paz,—though, not to offend me further, he would for the future remain quiet. The expected friend soon afterwards made his appearance, and without any ceremony proceeded to enter my apartment.

Jumping out of bed in the dark, I, in the most emphatic and determined manner, informed the two that this second intrusion I

would most certainly resent by turning them both out; so, after a short conference between them, the friend left, and all became again quiet, so that I was left to my repose for the remainder of the night. Early next morning I discovered, to my astonishment, that the said friend was a half-caste negro gaucho, and as cut-throat a specimen of the race as ever I beheld in the whole course of my life, whilst, stuck in his saddle, there was the suspicious appendage of a knife at least a foot and a half long.

When I was prepared to depart, I was accosted by the Argentines, who seemed in some slight degree to have made my acquaintance at La Paz. Here, far from the city, where perhaps I might have known just sufficient of them to exchange the common civilities of life, and no more, they became, all at once, very familiar with me, taking advantage of a traveller's licence to claim as his intimate friends, when from home, those with whom he has hitherto been on terms only of mere speaking acquaintance. Away from the haunts of civilized life, a feeling of dependence one upon the other breaks through all the barriers with which

the forms of society have hedged us in, and in the course of five minutes persons acquire a knowledge of each other which they fail to arrive at, under other circumstances, during years of acquaintance.

The preliminaries of introduction were soon passed through with these my new friends. They congratulated themselves on their good fortune in meeting with me, and promised themselves much pleasure in my society during a few days, till the necessity of our separation, when our routes should lie in contrary directions. They expressed their disapproval of the companions who had so coolly taken possession of my quarters ; but, as these were travelling the same road as ourselves, they advised me to keep on good terms with them, as I had no alternative but to put up with their society. We all agreed to meet at the next post that night, but they regretted that it was out of their power to accompany me, as they had to wait for some baggage mules to join them, which would necessarily greatly retard their pace. I therefore started alone, with the understanding that they would overtake me before my arrival at the next post.

For the first part of my journey the road still continued level, the plain assuming, however, a different appearance to what I had hitherto seen. It was entirely covered over with clumps of brushwood of the myrtle class, which, as I proceeded, became thicker and stronger, forming a formidable cover and impregnating the air with its delicious fragrance. Here numerous coves of doves had fixed their habitation, and seem to accompany the traveller for several leagues.* In

* In travelling in these parts I was particularly struck with the great number of these birds, which accompanied my path, alighting on the ground generally twenty or thirty feet in advance of the mule I was riding. To an amateur sportsman the practice thus afforded him is, without exception, the most profitable he can ever enjoy. The birds can be shot with the greatest facility, without the necessity of his diverging many yards from the main road; and, as he proceeds leisurely from one post to another, he can bag some hundreds of them, if he thinks fit, and so provide himself with a good stew for his evening repast. On these plains the birds breed in vast numbers, unmolested by the approach of man. The Indians, being unprovided with fire-arms, have no means of destroying them, and I verily believe that they have a distaste for small birds, as they contrive no means whatever for capturing the little wanderers.

the midst of it all flows a delightful crystal stream, forming several pools and small lakes, whose moss-covered banks, caves, and natural grottoes, are pleasing features in the tranquil scene.

Whilst surveying the prospect before me, my attention was attracted to a gentleman seated on the ground near one of these mossy slopes, his mule being tethered to a rock that stood near him. I saluted him as I passed on and continued my route alone. However, feeling the loneliness of his solitary ride, he seemed to have made up his mind to overtake me, which he was not long in doing, and we entered into conversation. I soon recognised Dr. Cordero, of La Paz, one of the deputies going to congress. He was a gentleman of a sound and well cultivated mind, and gave me the benefit of his observation and experience in matters relating to the state. He expatiated largely upon the vast mineral resources of the republic, if only in the hands of a stationary and wise government, but "Alas!" said he, "since the extinction of the Spanish dominion, the dictators that have followed have consulted only their own personal ambition and the accu-

mulation of wealth, impoverishing the state by party feuds, and neglecting the true source of the industry, commerce, and greatness of a country.”

From this his conversation turned to his countryman, Bustamante, of whom he spake in the highest terms, showing how he had sacrificed fortune, happiness, and friends, for the purpose of seeking truth in the vast field of the civilized continent of the old world, satisfied if he could, by any means, make the fruits of his observation conducive to the advancement and enlightenment of his own country. The doctor acknowledged that it would have been better, had this task been undertaken by an older and more experienced hand; but the defects which must attach to the works of a young writer were, said he, so atoned for by the motives which led to their publication, and the zeal and earnestness which had been exhibited in the attainment and selection of the materials, that he could not but congratulate the writer on the good results likely to accrue from his extensive and disinterested labours in the service of his country.

So absorbed were we in scanning the merits

and demerits of Senor Bustamante's new work on the politics of Europe, that it was some time before we noticed that our patient beasts had conducted us to the dry bed of a river, where we were at last reduced to a serious dilemma, in having to choose between two cross-roads, leading in opposite directions. Being well mounted,* we had outridden our respective baggage-mules and attendants, and I had completely lost sight of my two unpleasant companions of the night before. This latter circumstance was certainly more a matter of congratulation than otherwise; but here we found ourselves—whilst evening was drawing on apace—in a desolate part of the country, and far from all habitations, without the

* A traveller who studies his own comfort, should endeavour to procure, before he commences his journey, a *mulo de passo*, as these animals are capable of maintaining through the day a certain steady pace, without causing the least jolting, thus avoiding the fatigue usually attendant upon long rides. Some of these animals are valued at from seventy to two hundred dollars. In fact, I saw an Englishman who had given for one that, to outward appearance, possessed few recommendations, the large sum of three hundred dollars. They are to be procured at Tacna, or, perhaps, better at La Paz.

shadow of a clue as to which road we should take. The idea of passing the night on the plains, where, after the sun has set, the air is sufficiently sharp and biting to be anything but agreeable, with the additional inconvenience of having partaken of no food since five in the morning, was a prospect by no means encouraging. The doctor declaimed most ruefully against the want of maps, directions, and sign-posts, to which the traveller in these regions is subject, but vented his indignation to no purpose; for here we were at a complete stand-still, and it was necessary to take immediate and determined measures to escape from the predicament in which we found ourselves. To reckon upon the chances of our meeting with any one who could relieve us from our dilemma was futile, as in a country so scanty of population, you may travel for whole days without seeing a human being; or, if you chance to meet one, without a knowledge of the Amarah dialect you are completely at fault, receiving the everlasting answer, "*Anue,*" to all your inquiries.

After waiting some time in fruitless anxiety and complaint, I remarked that merely look-

ing about us, or remaining dormant, was not the way to mend the matter. To the truth of my assertion, the doctor signified his acquiescence, but when I told him that I proposed that we should cast lots to determine which of the roads we ought to take, he was not so satisfied as to the soundness of my advice. This was a mode of solving difficulties which had never entered into his philosophy; but not being able to suggest a better method, after a little hesitation he consented to my proposition. I was fortunate enough to be the winner of the toss, and according to agreement, had now the power of deciding upon our course. I, therefore, selected the road which most pleased my fancy, which, to our great joy, turned out to be the right one. It led us directly to the post of Hayohayo, where we were glad to find the food and shelter we required, the doctor congratulating me in high glee, at the success of my novel mode of determining cases of doubt.

Diverging a little from the highroad, we found the post, so desirable a termination to our day's journey, to be a square building, smaller in dimensions than such buildings

usually are. Having entered the post-master's room, I drew forth from my holsters a bottle of excellent sherry, together with sundry cigars, with which the doctor and myself regaled ourselves with much *gusto*; the latter acknowledging that the forethought of the English in providing necessaries was proverbial, and that, on the present occasion especially, it met his decided approbation. In fact, I found my new friend rather addicted, than otherwise, to the creature comforts of this life; and on the arrival of his baggage mules, after the lapse of two hours, he determined to push on to the next post, where he understood he should be able to find better accommodation. He was strengthened in his desire to do so, from the account he had from me of my road companions, whom I had unceremoniously left in the lurch, but whom I was expecting every moment to join me.

This was a very urgent reason to induce me to follow his example, and, indeed, he endeavoured most strenuously to prevail on me to accompany him, but I would not consent to leave the post till the arrival of my baggage, and of my friends the Argentines,

whom I had promised to meet there. With many good wishes for each other's success the doctor and I parted, congratulating ourselves at the acquaintance we had made, and expressing many a hope of being enabled to renew it on some future occasion. However, before his departure, the doctor was determined to give me a sample of his skill in his art, and also to show how he could leave a lasting impression on the good people of the inn. The postmaster was a tall, thin, emaciated individual, half Indian and half Cholo, possessing a most eccentric pair of legs, and altogether by no means prepossessing as regarded his outward man. It was on this person that the learned doctor proposed to exert his skill; so, assuming all the importance of which he was capable, drawing himself up to his full height, and casting a most scrutinizing look at the object of his kind attentions, he entered upon the following conversation with him, which, at the time, afforded me much merriment, and which, I trust, the reader will pardon me for recounting.

Doctor.—“Ahem! Judging from your complexion, you must be out of health?”

(his physiognomy resembled in colour a brass tea-kettle more than anything else that I can remember). Postmaster, answering tremblingly,—“I am unwell, senor.” Doctor,—“Ahem! suffering from a pain in the liver and back-bone?” Postmaster,—“Yes, senor.” Doctor,—“Ah! adhesion of the liver. Lost your appetite, and a great desire to drink, ay?” Postmaster,—“Y-e-s, senor.” Doctor,—“Humph!” Here the doctor was interrupted by the postmaster’s wife, a Cholo woman, who feeling called upon to interpose on behalf of her husband, declared that so far from lacking appetite, he was for eating anything he could lay his hands on; and as for drink, he would drink spirits for a month, if he had but the chance. The doctor, taken aback by this interference, soon recovered his self-importance, and checked the woman’s loquacity by a “Silence, woman!” Postmaster, seconding the doctor’s sharp rebuke,—“Silence, woman!” Doctor,—“Ahem! You are restless in your sleep?” Postmaster,—“No—yes, sir.” Woman,—“He never even wishes me a good night, and snores like a pig.” Doctor,—“Silence, woman!” Postmaster,—“Silence, woman!” At this

uncture, I was obliged to leave the room, or make a hole in my manners, by laughing outright, so I chose the former alternative.

On my return I found out that the Doctor had enumerated every malady under the sun, and had so frightened the poor man, that he really fancied himself ill, and promised to follow a course of treatment, which his sage adviser had prescribed for the long catalogue of diseases from which he confessed that he was suffering.

“You must derive much pleasure and satisfaction,” said I to the Doctor, “in performing so agreeable a task as that of ministering to the wants of the afflicted, and relieving them of their bodily ailments. They owe you a debt of lasting gratitude, and you must feel that the blessings which they invoke upon your head are not undeserved.” The Doctor blushed, and owned that he felt gratified, little thinking that I was making fun of him; for I certainly saw nothing to admire in his frightening a poor fellow out of his senses, and making him believe himself to be a doomed man, when in fact there was nothing the matter with him, merely for the sake of indulging in a

display of a little egotistical parade of his superior learning.

After the Doctor had taken his leave of me, I was for some time quite alone, my mules not making their appearance till some time afterwards, when, much to my satisfaction, they arrived safe and sound. The sun by this time had sunk below the horizon, and the air of the evening was becoming cool. Therefore, selecting a by no means comfortable room, in order that I might not be envied by my fellow travellers, as I was desirous of spending the night alone, I began to occupy it, having first piled up my ponchos to form a door, and barred the entrance of the night air through the window aperture as effectually as I could. After a while my two Argentine friends arrived, followed by my two unwelcome companions of the last post. These were obliged to provide themselves with all that was necessary out of doors, and we made them spend the remainder of the night *al fresco*, determined as we were not to admit them into our dormitories on any terms. They well knew that they had no chance of resistance against our superior force, and therefore

contented themselves with the accommodation they found in the court-yard.

I had now no fear of being molested, although my quarters were of so poor a description. My Argentine friends saluted me in a most friendly manner on their arrival, and pressed me most urgently to join them in their cups of tea-punch, in the indulgence of which luxury they were, it appears, in the habit of passing the night, occasionally with the accompaniment of a song, or a little strumming on a guitar. However, I politely declined their courteous invitation, preferring, after having partaken of a *chupe*, and sundry good cups of tea, to retire to rest and invigorate my body for the fatigues of the following day.

In the morning I was up betimes, and had my animals loaded, and made a fair start before any of my companions had even breakfasted. Whilst I was loitering about, previous to my departure, in order that I might settle the expenses I had incurred for my night's lodging and victuals, I had the opportunity of seeing a little roguery successfully practised. The friend, whom the boot-maker had introduced to my notice, and

would have forced upon me contrary to my inclination, had ridden an animal vicious in the extreme, and possessing sundry other defects, which made the beast not worth his fodder. He had probably been stolen, and this was an additional reason why his present owner should wish to part with him. The two friends, having trimmed him up during the night, and given him as respectable an appearance as possible, laid siege to the unfortunate post-master, and tried to barter this horse of theirs for a strong bay gelding, which took their fancy, and offered, as a piece of great liberality, to throw a pair of buff Argentine boots into the bargain. The bait took. These Indian Choloos, amongst their many other faults, have no small share of love of show, or vanity. So the worthy post-master was regularly cajoled into a disadvantageous exchange, and no doubt for some time afterwards repented of his folly, in thus being made so easy a victim.

Starting in the bright rays of a morning sun, and braced with the cool and balmy breezes of early day, I enjoyed excessively my solitary ride upon leaving the post, and began to consider myself admirably calcu-

lated for that mode of travelling, so often described by tourists, in which the Gouchoes cross their apparently boundless plains. On all sides there was a dense cover of heather of so gigantic growth that it seemed almost impenetrable, and, indeed, presented a decided obstacle to the most enterprising traveller, except in those beaten paths which had been occasionally worn there by the tread of animals. After disturbing numerous flocks of doves, which broke the current of my thoughts by the rustling sound they produced on leaving the ground, I began to enter a tract of country of a more mountainous character, and soon after reached the post of Chicta.

This is a large square building, containing accommodation for half a battalion, attached to which is a shop filled with all sorts of luxuries, bread, chocolate, *pisco*, *chichia*, oranges, and many other things not to be met with in many a day's weary march. In the corner of the spacious court-yard I observed a magnificent piece of Spanish ordnance, a remnant, apparently, of their former dominion, but now utterly neglected and scarcely noticed. Refreshing myself with a

draught of *chichia*, and the fumes of a cigar, I ordered my saddle mule to be well taken care of, and other post mules to be provided for my baggage, and then started again as fresh as if I had not already ridden fifteen miles. On entering the gorge or mountain-pass, through which I had to wind my way on leaving the posts, the scenery became grand in the extreme, hill after hill forming a mighty amphitheatre, at whose back the lofty peaks of the snow-capped mountains ascended to the very vault of heaven.

In the centre arose a beautiful *plateau*, covered with fine velvety herbage, on which numerous herds of tame llamas, divested by their Indian drovers of their heavy burdens, gracefully browsed in the quiet enjoyment of agreeable companionship; whilst on the hills and rocky prominences, their wilder brethren, the *becunas*, bounded from crag to crag, or gazed with wonder at everything which disturbed them in their lone retreat. On quitting this range, the hills became less high and more broken, assuming the appearance of a *cabrada*. At this point the glare arising from several pools of water, into which run streams impregnated by the salt-

petre beds, was so great that I was obliged to have recourse to my velvet mask and eye-glasses.*

Whilst my visionary organs were thus disguised I encountered several Indians conducting a number of heavily-laden asses. On seeing me, they crossed themselves and took to their heels, leaving their charges entirely at my mercy—no doubt imagining me to be a visitant from some other world, and, possibly, a dangerous character to be found at large in his rambles on this globe of ours. The locality through which I was passing is particularly subject to violent gusts of wind, which raise columns of salt or dust into the air, desolating the country around, and sweeping everything before them with a rapidity truly surprising. After passing these uninviting tracts of land, the road suddenly assumes another aspect. Ver-

* To avoid the ill effects arising from the extreme brilliancy of the snowy ranges, when lighted up by a noon-day sun, as well as the bright reflection from the lakes in certain saline districts, travellers generally provide themselves with masks, or eye-glasses, fixed in a leather band, which can be put on as occasion might require, and are extremely serviceable in relieving the eyes from the intense glare to which they are subjected,

pure and healthful vegetation now gladden the sight, and in the midst of a country teeming with all the delights of rural life appears the clean and prettily-situated town of Sicasica, with its large and commodious church, possessing some claims to architectural beauty. The houses and streets are excessively neat, and the post-house at which I stopped contains every accommodation for the traveller. The postmaster is a very superior man, and I must do him the justice to say that his mules are in first-rate order. Having taken in a fresh supply of new bread, oranges, &c., I loaded another set of mules, and started afresh.

I adopted a very successful stratagem to get rid of my suspicious companions at a former post, and that was, being well mounted on a valuable *mulo de passo*, that could with ease travel the whole day at the rate of four miles the hour, to start in advance of my luggage, and, arriving at the post an hour or so before it, to get all the refreshment and repose necessary for myself, so that, on the arrival of my baggage, it was only necessary to get it transferred to the fresh post mules that I had ordered, and again to set forth on

my journey. They, on the contrary, having to travel for a month or more, probably hired their animals for the whole period, and thus I was enabled to outstrip them; or, perhaps, seeing that I took no notice of them, they kept aloof, particularly as they knew I was well backed by my Argentine friends.

The road from this town retained its agreeable features, the adjoining country being well watered by a beautiful and pellucid stream. As I proceeded, the old Redacto claimed my attention; a large square adobe fortification, with its loop-holes commanding every approach; and, no doubt, during the early struggle for independence, a place of great strength and importance. Following the course of the little river till it loses much of its purity, and forms itself into a small lake, well impregnated by various minerals, I found myself close to the post of Panduro. This was a building like the rest, with similar conveniences. Having secured one of the smaller rooms, I partook of an excellent dinner, consisting of *chupe* (in the cooking of which, for the benefit of travellers, many Indian women are constantly

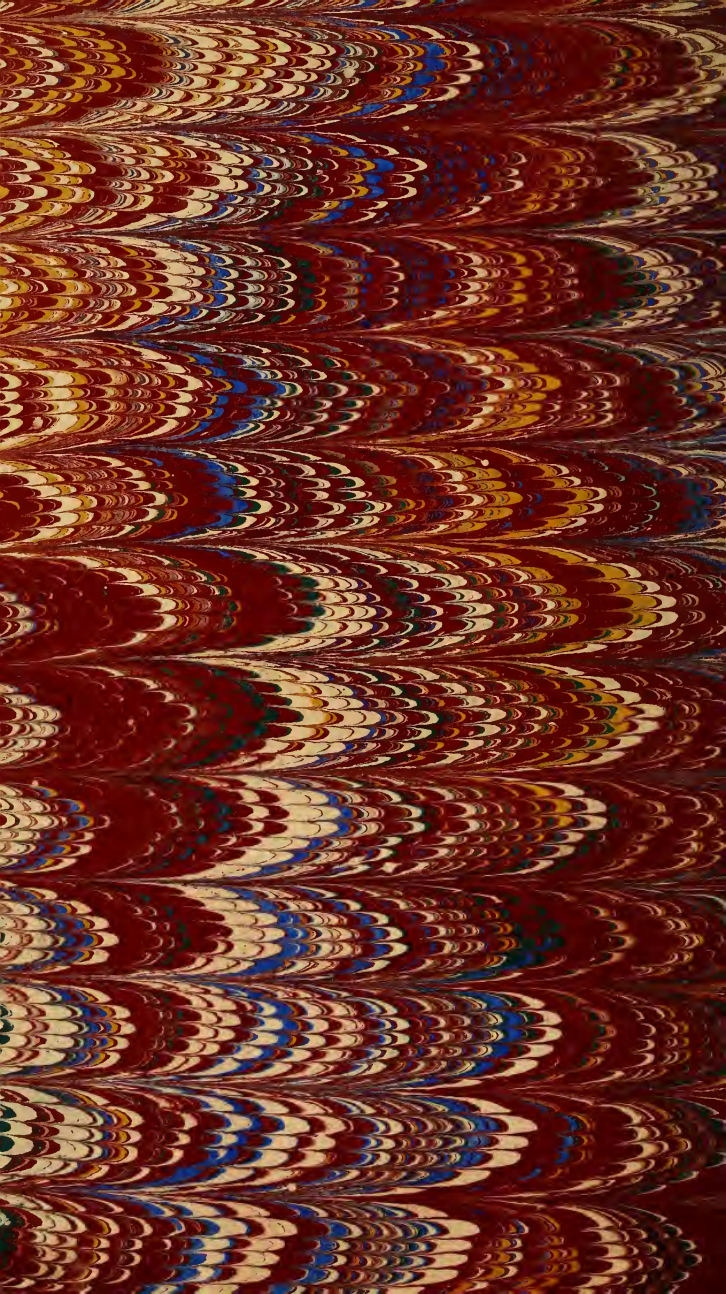
employed in all these establishments), and ribs of mutton broiled, a delicacy of the first order for the famished traveller. Whilst waiting for my baggage, I amused myself with a young vicuna, remarkably tame, with whom a set of Indian children were playing in the yard on terms of the greatest familiarity. He bounded about most gracefully, and came to feed out of my hand without showing any symptom of timidity. Retiring to rest after indulging in a refreshing cup of tea, I fell into a very sound sleep, and was not made aware of the arrival of my Argentine friends till the next morning, the sound of the guitars, their songs, and their midnight orgies having failed to arouse me from the deep repose into which I had fallen. Being generally astir in the morning before any of my companions, I got served first, and completed all my arrangements before they commenced preparations for action.

On leaving the post, I observed that the green and healthy appearance of the heather began to decline. It gradually became more and more stunted, and at last visibly disappeared altogether. The monotony of the road, however, was happily relieved by the

appearance of large herds of llamas, under the charge of Indian families; troops of donkeys laden with drugs and other necessaries, on their way from Cochabamba to La Paz, and occasionally large numbers of horses and mules, driven from the far Argentine provinces, in order to be sold in the principal towns of Bolivia and Peru. On descending from the brow of a hill, the town of Caracollo appears to view, and on a slight elevation on the other side of the road are a number of Indian monuments of very peculiar construction and shape, resembling in form and position, though on a far less scale, the Druidical ruins to be seen in various parts of England. These monuments are often to be met with in a journey through these parts, and are, according to the Indian tradition, the dwelling-places of the little people—dwarfs or fairies, and as such are supposed to possess supernatural powers and charms.

END OF VOL. I.











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TRAVELS IN BOLIVIA;

WITH A

TOUR ACROSS THE PAMPAS

TO

BUENOS AYRES, &c.

BY

L. HUGH DE BONELLI,

OF HER BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S LEGATION.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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TRAVELS IN BOLIVIA.

CHAPTER I.

Oruro—Machacamarca—Poopo—Huancani—Disastrous
• night on the road—Ancacato.

THE town of Caracollo covers more ground than is usually the case in those of its class. Its appearance is remarkably good, containing, as it does, a spacious Plaza, in which are a number of small shops where most necessaries are procurable. At one side stands the church, an inelegant and clumsy building. The streets, which are of a decent width, are composed of houses of but one story, and, as far as I could judge, sufficiently

commodious for the character of the place. The post I found much superior to the generality of buildings of this description. On presenting myself, I was told that all the rooms were already engaged; the principal saloon being occupied by the wife and daughters of a General of the Republic, who, with a retinue of servants, were on their way to La Paz. This circumstance precluding all intrusion, I immediately asked for an interview with the master of the post, and ordered him to hire me a room out of the building.

He soon complied with my request; and on being introduced to my apartment I found that I was to be located in a small hut of one room,—snug enough, it is true, had it not been more than half filled with wheat, as well as cocks, hens, and pigs, who seemed to dispute my possession of what they had hitherto regarded as their exclusive domain. I set to work, with two Indians, and turned them all out; made a good meal of some excellent *chupe* and a broiled leg of lamb, which I washed down with a cup of first-rate Hong Kong, and then went to sleep, as happy as a king. It is said that “Misery makes us

acquainted with strange bedfellows,"—so, in fact, does travelling; but I speak from experience when I say, that there is something agreeably exciting in anticipating the novelties of the morrow, when one has once become reconciled to the strange discomforts which travellers have to expect. At this place I parted with my Argentine friends, whose road here struck off in a different direction from mine, and, having no option in the matter, I was under the necessity of joining my two former companions; so, putting as good a face upon it as I could, we all started off together in tolerably good fellowship.

The morning was bright and exhilarating, its influence on my bodily frame being very evident from my unusually elated and buoyant spirits. Trotting cheerfully along under the brilliant rays of the morning sun, which had just then shone forth, and by his magic touch was making everything, as it were, start again into new existence, we entered upon a vast plain, carpeted with a yellow stunted grass, but otherwise devoid of verdure; and all this owing to the presence of beds of

saltpetre, with which the whole land far and near is impregnated. Attracted, no doubt, by this saline earth, thousands of doves take up their residence here; and, their plumage resembling the ground in colour, they are not perceived till the clatter of the mule's hoofs startles them from their hiding-place, and sets them fluttering in all directions. Then down they fly under the feet of your mules, showing a decided reluctance to get out of the path, as they rush madly into the way of danger. Passing near a large, shallow piece of water, literally covered with all sorts of wild-fowl, including widgeon, teal, snipes, ducks, and geese,—which, from their extraordinary size, I at first took to be swans—the road is coasted on one side by a range of hills, which mark the vicinity of Oruro. The plain on the other side is relieved of its otherwise barren aspect by the church of some picturesque Indian village, and several fields exhibiting the well-directed labour of the husbandman. After this, Indian cottages and little verdant patches, where cattle and sheep are occasionally seen grazing, occur frequently, showing plainly

the approach to a large town, or capital of a department.

The plains of Oruro are noted for being almost daily visited by hurricanes and whirlwinds, which sweep over the ground with dreadful fury, raising into the air columns of dust to an incredible height. So great is the force of the wind upon these occasions as to carry everything before it; and stories are related of mules and their riders being overthrown, and man and beast much injured, during the prevalence of these hurricanes.

The approach to Oruro is one of the most miserable it is possible to conceive. The houses, which are to be seen on both sides of the road, are in a most dilapidated condition, some even without roofs, others mere half-finished huts, but all presenting a most ruinous appearance. As one advances towards the centre of the town, things begin to assume a better aspect. The streets are formed of houses of one story, exhibiting a clean and comfortable exterior, and holding out some promise of an agreeable welcome to the weary traveller. I took up my quarters at the "Sun," the sign of the *fonda*, or

hotel, which is kept by a man of the name of Brown, of English extraction, I believe, though an Argentine. I found him a jolly sort of host, and willing to do all in his power to render me comfortable. The sleeping-rooms are excellent, containing everything necessary in the way of furniture, the walls being covered with an elegant French paper. There are two very great essentials in which Oruro is deficient, and those are, provisions and water. The latter is sold at a very dear rate, and ladled out with the strictest regard to economy. As to provisions, they can scarcely be purchased at any cost, for the landlord had the greatest difficulty in procuring me even a very ordinary dinner, which, not being over-delicate, and having come provided with a pretty good share of appetite, I enjoyed as much as if it had consisted of the most sumptuous fare.

Why the town should be so badly off, in the matter of food, I cannot imagine; for there is plenty of wild-fowl in the neighbourhood, which only require shooting; and I saw no reason to think that the fertility of the surrounding country was incommensurate

with the population of the place. In the principal Plaza (for there are two) stands, as usual, the cathedral and a number of shops. The principal feature, however, of the town is the *Fortaleza*, the grand *depôt* of ammunition and military stores belonging to the Republic. The building is of a very mediocre character, consisting merely of a quadrangular mud fort, in which are mounted a number of beautiful Spanish brass guns, which would, I fear, if discharged, shake the edifice to pieces. The engineer officers, who constructed this fortification, must have known but little of their profession, for its position is so low that it is commanded by a number of adjacent hills. It could, therefore, be of no manner of use, for a few shells from a 13-inch mortar would untenant it in a moment, even if the concussion did not crumble the whole affair to atoms.

The post here is the worst and the most ill-supplied that I met with on the road, particularly in regard to mules. On making application, I found that there was not a single mule in the whole of the establishment; and had I not fortunately secured one

of a batch that returned soon after my arrival, I might have had to remain many days before I had another chance of finding one. I considered myself lucky in not being detained, as I understood had been the case with many previous travellers, from this scarcity of animals.

Having to present my passport, according to usage, to the *Intendente de Policia*, I discovered the said official to be a friend of mine, whom I had known at La Paz. He was overjoyed at seeing me, and insisted on my remaining and taking coffee with him in the evening. This I consented to do; and had the gratification of meeting with his daughter, a beautiful dark-eyed girl, who pressed me so much to give her a sample of my performance on a guitar which she put into my hands, that I could not refuse, and executed a favourite air from an opera, to the satisfaction of my small audience. This trifling act of complaisance on my part, and the gift of a few cigars to the old gentleman, who was a most enthusiastic *connoisseur* in the art of smoking, had made my visit so agreeable, that so far from sympathizing with

me in my complaint of the difficulty of procuring mules, they only regretted that any were to be found, and wished that my visit to Oruro could have been prolonged beyond the morrow. This was impossible; my arrangements had been completed, and early in the morning I started across the plain in front of the fort, arriving, at last, at a number of yellow sand-hills, the particles of which are of such a very fine description, that in those diurnal tempests which agitate the country around, they are put in motion and scattered all over the plain, occasionally burying animals with their baggage under an impenetrable shroud.

Leaving these, the plain partially recovers its yellow stunted grass, and occasionally a few dwellings, with patches of cultivated ground, are seen. All at once you find yourself in the bed of a large river, where, in the dry season, are several small rivulets, in which ducks and wild-fowl might be seen basking in the sun. After gaining the opposite bank, and, at a slight distance from it, the post of Machacamarea appears in sight. Having arrived within the enclosed court-

yard, I selected my apartment, and proceeded to unload my luggage, permitting my black cook to occupy one corner of the room, as she stood in dread of my two suspicious companions, who were in our rear. They soon made their appearance, and took possession of the adjoining apartment, which was separated from ours merely by a mud-wall, which did not reach quite so far as the roof, so that utter privacy was entirely out of the question.

After having made a hearty dinner, I was smoking a cigar on the earthen bench at the door of the building, when out started Mr. Bootmaker and his companion through the archway, in a tremendous hurry. I felt a little surprised at the manœuvre, but pretended to take no notice of it; however, during the interval of their absence, I secured a brace of pistols, and awaited the sequel.

In a very short time they returned, accompanied by three or four others, as cut-throat a party as ever I beheld. One, a black, a very ill-looking fellow, two Gauchos, and a Cholo youth—all armed with knives a foot and a half long; on alighting from their

steeds, they saluted me slightly, an act of condescension which I appeared little to regard, and then commenced blustering and bullying the inmates of the post for *cebada* to give to their animals. Fortunately the postmaster and postilions at this place were of a superior class to any I had previously met; fine-looking, powerful men, well dressed with European trousers and belts, in which were stuck formidable knives, contrary to the general usage of the poor timid aborigines of the country. These Indians, probably not liking the appearance of their customers, demanded payment before executing their orders. This was the signal for a general row. However, the Indians stood firm, and gained their point, which gave me much confidence, as I foresaw that if any foul play were attempted during the night, we were in a position to muster a strong party to defend ourselves.

When tranquillity was restored, I placed a pitcher at some twenty paces distance, and taking my pistols, amused myself by breaking it to pieces. This feat, I perceived, gave great delight to my Indian allies. Certain

signs took place between us, which assured me of their friendly inclinations. They began to be more attentive to me than ever, leaving the other party to get on as best they could. Feeling convinced that in the event of their proceeding to violence, we should be easily able to overpower them, I retired to my apartment, placing my luggage against the door, in order to secure it; and after the fatigues of the day, soon fell asleep. Not so my poor black cook, who sat crouched in the corner of the room, and trembling with fear the whole of the night; not being able to close her eyes, as she told me in the morning, from the continued whisperings she heard in the adjoining apartment. She had gathered enough of the purport of the conversation that was being carried on, to be a complete justification of her alarms.

It appeared that these suspicious travellers who had so much courted my society, were possessed with the idea that I carried a large sum of money about me, and they were concocting a plan for easing me of it. Different modes of attack were suggested. Some proposed to scale the wall, others to force the

door; but on the bootmaker interposing, and stating that I was well armed, and certain to kill, or at least wound some one or other of them, their courage seemed to fail. He further urged that their previous dispute with the Indians would make them all take my part, and their proximity to Oruro, where the *intendente*, being my friend, would set on foot a vigorous pursuit, must necessarily ensure any of the party, who escaped from the fray unhurt, being ultimately taken; this argument appeared to all of them conclusive. They determined to defer the attack to some more fitting opportunity, hoping to gain their end at some lonely post, whence they could strike into the woods, and so in a very short time elude all pursuit. In some of these sequestered spots murders are repeatedly committed upon travellers, the assassins avoiding all towns and habitations till they arrive at the *Despoblado*, those vast and desert tracts, lying between Bolivia and the Argentine provinces. Thus many a poor unfortunate traveller is waylaid, without his friends or relations being able to receive further tidings of him, or ascer-

tain the slightest circumstance respecting his fate.

Early in the morning, as I was preparing to depart, my hangers on, who would have robbed me if they could, came to me with all the coolness imaginable, and offered me their services, should I in any way require them. Of course I politely declined their proffered kindness, particularly as I was furnished with two sturdy postilions and the voluntary escort of the master of the post, mounted on a good strong horse. They then requested to know where I should sleep on the following night, to which I replied, two posts in advance, though I had made up my mind to remain at the next post—Poopo, a large town, and the residence of a governor and attendant authorities. Thus satisfied, they wished me a pleasant journey till our next meeting, and I departed, well pleased at having so easily baulked their curiosity, and thanking my stars for my fortunate escape from my unscrupulous companions.

From Machacamarca to Poopo the road presents little variety, following invariably a range of lofty hills, till after several leagues there is a sudden break, when in the midst

of a delightful valley appears the town of Poopo. In the time of the Spanish rule this was a place of considerable importance, and contained a large population. Being the site of a rich mining district, the silver mines were formerly very productive, as is proved by various large buildings situated in all directions, used for the purposes of machinery, which are now all deserted and in ruins.*

Amongst the curiosities of the place the church stands first. It is a clean, white-washed edifice, resembling at a distance one of the Chinese buildings with which one's ideas are familiar, owing to its numerous unconnected parts, walls with divers small windows or holes, small pilasters, and sundry other architectural eccentricities. A river runs through the town, dividing itself into two streams, one of pure water, the other of a reddish hue, impregnated, no doubt, with iron, or

* An intelligent miner, who happened to be at this post, informed me that these mines were abandoned from the want of enterprising capitalists, and the requisite machinery for getting rid of the water with which they were flooded, below which, he had no hesitation in saying, there was unbounded wealth.

some of the various minerals which abound in the neighbourhood.

Having domiciled myself at the post, and ordered my dinner with the greatest composure, feeling myself perfectly safe from any danger of intrusion, and laughing in my sleeve at having so completely taken in my ill-intended companions, one of the officers of the town, deputed by the governor to sign my passport, paid me a visit, and expressed a hope that I would spend the evening at his house. I politely acknowledged the compliment, but begged to decline the invitation, pleading as my excuse the fatigues I had undergone, and the necessity for my leaving early in the morning. I profited, however, by his presence to detail the circumstances of the unpleasant position in which I had found myself placed at the last post, and expressed to him my conviction that the miscreants were without passports. He told me that he would give directions that the sharpest look out after them should be kept, and then retired. Shortly after one of the Gauchos made his appearance, seemingly surprised to find that I was making this post my resting-

place. He asked me whether it was my intention to proceed, so as to gain the next post by nightfall, as I had proposed. To this I made answer, that I had made up my determination to remain, having received an invitation from the governor. On gaining this information he rode off at full speed, not even wishing me farewell; and thus, no doubt, he escaped being arrested. No sooner was he gone than I was visited by another government official, who told me that he was stationed at Huancani, and that he hoped to have the pleasure of seeing me, as I passed through that town. On this assurance we parted, and early next morning I started with the full purpose of availing myself of his invitation, and, perhaps, of passing an agreeable hour or two in his company.

Following the course of the hills, I found I was travelling through a tract of very verdant country, whose pleasing undulations gave great variety to the scene. A river of a tolerable breadth flowed at my feet, forming itself into pools, and winding along between its moss-covered banks, which abounded in the picturesque. On the opposite side of this

stream was the post of Paznia, where I was much struck with the comeliness of several Indian women, five or six in number, who were engaged in cooking or attending to other domestic duties. They were rather short in stature, and to all appearance not more than fourteen years of age; having all the buoyant vivacity of youth, with regular features, brilliant black hair, plaited into two tails, which reached down the back to a considerable length; handsome and well-formed feet, exceedingly small, and a bust of such prolific rotundity as might vie with that of the matronly beauties of more northern climes. All these perfections were toned down to a tint of the richest *sepia* imaginable, so as to give the *tout ensemble* a charm which is quite indescribable.

The head-dress of these fascinating creatures was anything but unbecoming. They wore a *tapa*, or sort of guard against the intense heat of the sun, made of wicker-work, covered tastefully with black velvet, which falls in graceful folds, or waves with the passing breeze, and protects the head from the effect of the sun's rays or the pelting

rain. A loose robe, in which a child is generally borne, is made fast to the front of the chest by a knot. It is usually made of a species of woollen stuff, striped, not unlike the Turkish patterns which are seen on shawls or scarfs. Then there is the *polera*, or petticoat, several of which are worn, according to the style and station of the individual, and form a sort of balloon round the body. They are generally made of blue Indian cloth, puckered into many hundred folds which fall gracefully. At the bottom there is a large flounce of the same material, over which is fastened a ribbon, or silk of a lighter blue. The feet are generally bare, or merely protected by a sandal of hide.

Having partaken of some *chupe*, refreshed my animals, and transferred my cargoes to fresh mules, I started for Huancani. Being mounted on a powerful mule, I rode on, unintentionally, far in advance of my luggage, and in a very short time lost all trace of it. My attention was soon occupied in noticing the natural phenomena of the earth and heavens. The hills in the distance assumed an extraordinary effect, from the clouds which

enveloped their bases cutting them out into all manner of curious and eccentric shapes. There were castles and animals, and various other objects, according to the imagination of the beholder, appearing to stand out in bold relief upon the sky. I observed the same effect to be produced on a large herd of llamas with their Indian drovers, all seeming to float in mid-air, and presenting a strange picture to the astonished vision. As I advanced further I was struck by the aspect of the *cordón* of hills which had completely changed their character. Rocks of enormous magnitude appeared to be split in all directions, forming large chasms and water-courses, over which stupendous blocks of stone, which had broken loose from their mountain bed, were stopped in their impetuous course by some projecting cliff. Then again, immense inaccessible caverns would seem to frown on the lonely traveller like gaping mouths, ready to swallow him up. Further on, this giant quarry forms a prodigious amphitheatre, where terrace rises above terrace till they assume the appearance of mighty towers, bastions, and ruined castles ;

in fact, every possible combination of form which man's inventive mind could imagine. This natural museum of curiosities and wonders skirts the road on one side, the other consisting of wide and open plain for a considerable distance.

At the first of these rocks and precipices stands the small village of Huancani, a miserable locality, and not containing one decent house. As I passed through it, scarcely a living being was to be seen, except every now and then a few children playing about together in groups, in a perfect state of nudity. I looked about in all directions for my friend, from whom I had received so pressing an invitation, but without success; and being little tempted by the appearance of the place, I rode on. My course lay through a defile in the rocks, which opened into a spacious plain on the other side, covered with heather, and bringing to view several Indian farms and their surrounding patches of cultivated ground. Coming at last to a point whence two roads diverged, I was fairly brought to a standstill, not knowing which of them to take.

Having now ridden sixteen leagues, my appetite for food was beginning to give me some little uneasiness, and my poor beast and myself had become utterly jaded.

At this moment I was fortunate enough to fall in with a countryman, who was driving a number of laden mules, but instead of asking him my way to the post of Cattariri, which was close at hand, I inquired for the town of Ancacato, which was at a distance of six leagues. Of course the information I received was anything but encouraging, but, being anxious to find some place of shelter, I pushed my way on through a pass in the direction indicated, and found myself in a plain, fragrant with a thick cover of wild thyme and other sweet herbs, and completely encircled by the opposite side of the range of hills I had passed long before. The sun was now fast sinking beneath the horizon ; but as I looked towards it, I thought I could discover indications of houses, trees, and cultivated fields, strongly marked against the sky. Accordingly, putting spurs to my poor, worn-out mule, well knowing that in these regions twilight is of short con-

tinuance, and that very soon all would be darkness, I pressed on for this land of promise.

As night advanced, the objects which I had seen receded from my vision, and soon were entirely lost to view. I now began to feel very uneasy, but recollecting that I should soon have moonlight to guide my steps, I cheered myself with this reflection, and continued my course. However, even this spark of hope seemed destined to fail me; for, in a very short time, dark and opaque clouds began to obscure the horizon, and the landscape was speedily enveloped in impenetrable gloom, made only the more terrible by sudden flashes of light, followed by loud and reverberating peals of thunder, which made the earth tremble under my feet, and echoed in the cavernous recesses of the surrounding hills. My poor beast now began to show symptoms of fatigue, and as he slowly progressed, being unaccustomed to travel by night, started back with fright at every dark object that presented itself on the road. Once or twice he nearly ran the risk of unseating me, as a terrific flash of forked lightning illumined the heavens,

and brought out into vivid distinctness the brink of the precipice that lay beneath me, at the bottom of which, a river fought its disputed way over contending rocks, breaking over them in foaming cataracts, whose dinning roar was too plainly heard in the lull of the storm. Then followed the loud clap of thunder with its deafening crash, and the pent-up rain bursting its barriers, forced its passage through the air in a perfect deluge of water, through which the electric flame was occasionally seen darting from cloud to cloud, and lighting up for a moment the dark arch over my head. Cold, famished, and drenched, I now threw the reins upon the neck of my mule, and gave up all in despair.

The poor animal, with the instinct peculiar to his race, after turning his head, and putting his nose close to my leg, to ascertain, as it were, that I was still safe upon his back, began to creep cautiously along, till he found a descent, then feeling his way to a ford, he conducted me to the opposite bank, occasionally stopping and looking round, expressing, as best he could by his dumb motions,

that all was right. It was no pleasant thing to be thus benighted, in such a fearful night, so many thousand leagues from my native land, in a country where a person might travel all the day without meeting with a fellow-creature. Had I chanced to find one upon this occasion, it is ten to one but that he would have understood only one of the primitive dialects of the country, and his words and his gestures would have been to me alike unintelligible. But, nothing daunted, when I saw my poor dumb animal putting so good a face upon the matter, I took from my holsters a small flask of sherry, and refreshing myself with its invigorating draught, I yielded myself up to his guidance.

He continued slowly on his way, now stumbling down declivities, and now scrambling up opposite embankments and elevations, occasionally starting at his own shadow, as the struggling moonbeam at intervals darted a ray of light upon the scene. At length, observing something in the shape of a human habitation, I hastened to satisfy myself that it was not all an illusion, when I was over-

joyed to find myself at last in the midst of an Indian village. I quickly dismounted, looking in vain for a light in every direction, for nothing so cheering met my eye. However, I mustered courage to knock at one of the doors, and, receiving no answer, endeavoured to force an entrance, but my efforts were unavailing, as everything was too well secured. Hastening from door to door, I met the same fate, and then, as a last resource, I began to parade the streets, and bellowed till I was hoarse. But not a sound was to be heard; not even a bark of defiance from some hostile dog. A death-like silence reigned around, recalling to my mind those cities of the dead of which we read in some Arabian tale.

My spirits, indeed, began to flag, as not even an echo responded to my necessities. Sadly mounting my poor mule, I prepared to wander from this scene of desolation and death, and having with some difficulty gained the road we had left, I determined to follow its course, come what might. The storm had now wasted its fury, and the hoarse murmur of the wind was fast subsiding. By

the uncertain light of a pale, watery moon, which the broken clouds occasionally brought full in view, I observed mountain upon mountain gathering around my track, and before me the entrance to one of those *cabradas*, or mountain-passes, so awfully grand in these regions, from their dark and dismal character.

Descending into this enormous gorge, we continued our course by the side of a large stream, whose turbulent wrath was echoed from a hundred caverns, as it battled its way over shelving rocks; whilst sudden gusts of wind, sweeping through deep caves and fissures, whistled dolefully, in sympathy with the gloomy scene around. We progressed, at times, in pitch-like darkness, and seemed to be making our way through the very bowels of the earth; and then the dim light which the fleeting clouds disclosed, would conjure up the gigantic rocks into fearful forms of superhuman shape, whilst the dark shadows which they threw across our path, struck terror even into my poor worn-out beast, who was now almost dead from fatigue. After enduring for some hours the horrors

of this gloomy place, I emerged from it at length, and found myself in the dry bed of what, during the wet season, must have been some mighty river, now only watered here and there by a few shallow streams. Hitherto I had been occasionally able to trace the footprints of animals, notwithstanding the darkness of the night, on the road I had been taking, and judged, therefore, that it might eventually lead me to some large town. But after fording these numerous streams I entirely lost my trail. However, by a slight glimmering of light which was emitted through the dark canopy of clouds, I fancied that I could discover a number of houses in the distance, and being desirous of arriving there with all speed, I forced onwards my reluctant mule, who seemed little disposed to advance further.

At last he stopped suddenly short, when, after having fruitlessly used every effort in my power to induce him to move another step, I gave up the task in despair. Just at this juncture, the moon shone forth, and I discovered, to my dismay, that what I had imagined to be streets and houses were no-

thing more than detached fragments of rock, at a distance from the road, and on the other side of several deep hollows, which now yawned before my astonished gaze, ready to engulf me.

Overcome with fatigue, cold, and hunger, I now dismounted from my mule, determined to incur no more risks of breaking my neck over one of these dangerous precipices, but to pass the night on the damp ground, and wait for the morrow. However, the restlessness of my poor animal would not suffer me to carry out my plan; therefore, throwing myself again upon his back, I gave him the reins and left all to chance. Deeply lost in my sad thoughts, as my mind dwelt upon the happy scenes I had left in my native land, I then felt with double force the danger I was now in, of never seeing home and kindred more; I began to grow quite disheartened, imagining that I had struck out into one of those interminable tracks which lie on the road to the Argentine provinces, and where I should in vain look for shelter and a friendly greeting from my fellow-man.

Whilst thus musing, the friendly moon

shed a light upon my path, and I plainly saw I had gained once more the beaten track where others had travelled before me. I must now have ridden at least twenty leagues; and pursuing my course according to the footmarks in the road, I found myself, after some time, to be approaching a village of some considerable extent. As I entered it I perceived several good houses, and selecting one somewhat larger than the rest, I hastily knocked, but received no answer. I then impatiently hurried from door to door, but with no better success. At length I was greeted by the barking of several dogs, which cheered me considerably, and I renewed my efforts with every sanguine hope as to the result. Presently I heard the sound of loud talking proceeding from one of the houses, and going up to the door, detected, amidst a volley of abuse and complaint, the word, "*ladrones*" (thieves). I thought it now high time to disabuse the minds of the inmates as to any idea of my hostile intentions; but so far from my pitiable story inducing them to give me the food and shelter I craved, I distinctly heard them, whilst

I was expostulating with them in bitter terms, in the act of removing their furniture and moveables, and heaping them up against the door, in order the better to secure themselves against the danger of my anticipated invasion.* Abandoning all hope of making an impression in this quarter, I tried my success with the other houses, but received in answer the invariable "*Anu;*" nor did I find my eloquence of any avail, backed as it was by an offer of two or three dollars if accommodated with a guide to the next post, or a lodging for the night.

I had come to the determination of sleeping in the streets, and of waiting for the morning light to assure the cautious villagers that I was indeed the poor misguided traveller that I professed to be, when I chanced to see a light through the crevices and under the doorway of a cottage in one of the byelanes. Rendered desperate by repeated fail-

* The Indians of some of these *punas* are proverbially known for their want of kindness to strangers, having to the present day that mistrust of them which originally had its origin in the severities practised upon themselves by the Spaniards.

ures, I immediately set spurs to my mule, who, participating in my feelings, made direct for the door, which I was preparing to strike with the butt end of my riding-whip, when he brought his head in contact with it with such violence that he burst it open. On looking within I saw two Indian women busily employed in cooking and serving some warm food to a Cholo who was reposing on the ground, wrapped in his ponchos. On my sudden intrusion the whole party started off in a fright. They soon, however, returned to hear my tale. Addressing the man in Spanish, I related to him all my misfortunes, and offered him any reward to conduct me to the next post, which he informed me was that of Catariri; or to supply me with food and shelter for the night for myself and mule. To all this he answered sulkily, and gave me a decided refusal. I then appealed to his compassion, telling him that I was a stranger in the country, that my poor animal was perfectly exhausted, and myself famished and ill from want of food and exposure to the weather, that my luggage and cook were awaiting me at the next post, and that with-

out speedy assistance, I must die on the road. However, this appeal availed me nothing; even the Indian women positively declined my company, and the man shook his head, and gave me a curt negative, as before. Seeing that I was loth to depart, and perhaps anxious to rid himself of my importunity, he told me that if I pursued the road I should find a post at a distance of half a mile on the other side of the village.

On hearing this news, I was soon again in my saddle, disappointed as I was to have to start afresh, alone, in pursuit of my night's lodging, my poor starved beast showing great unwillingness to leave the neighbourhood of the houses, as, no doubt, he anticipated, in common with myself, that his long and perilous journey was now brought to an end.* After wandering about for more than an hour in the direction in-

* These animals, on a long journey, become so accustomed to their rider, and the casualties of the road, that their instinct is quite astonishing. At night, if any strange object presents itself upon the road, the mule is sure to give notice by the pricking of his ears, snorting, and general impatience to avoid it. In the day

dicated by the Cholo, without seeing any signs of a post, and being as unsuccessful as before in my attempts to gain admission into any dwelling, I retraced my steps to the village, enraged at the deception practised upon me, and determined, now at last, to take vigorous measures to gain my object.

Arriving at the door at which I was before so unceremoniously repulsed, I again found it secured, and on my demanding admission was flatly refused. I was determined not to stand this any longer, and, therefore, rushing at the door with all my might, I soon brought it off its hinges, and with a pistol in one hand, heedless of the screams of the women, I seized the man by the collar with the other, telling him that if he did not immediately bestir himself and show me the post of which he had spoken to me, I would blow his brains out. This resolute appeal on my part had the desired effect. Muttering something to himself, the purport of which I neither knew nor cared for, the fellow without time, if any great *hacienda* resembling a post lie upon the line of road, he is sure to make for it. Small Indian villages he takes no notice of.

more ado set out as my guide, and in a short time led me to a large square building in the outskirts of the village, and at a considerable distance from the main road. Having indicated to me the place I was in search of, he speedily decamped, probably, from the specimen he had witnessed of my determination when roused, rather fearful of the man he had to deal with. However, by this manœuvre, he lost the dollar I was but too happy to give him to reward him for his trouble, and atone for the fright I had occasioned him, notwithstanding his unkindness and want of humanity.

I was now, as I afterwards discovered, at the post of Ancacato. The master of the house, who, it appeared, was absent on some urgent business, was represented by an intelligent and mysterious-looking little individual, half Indian and half Cholo, who spoke Spanish very fluently. After I had detailed to him all my mishaps, he expressed every desire on his part to make me comfortable, but informed me that the principal room had been taken by six of the most ruffianly-looking fellows he had ever seen in

the whole course of his life. They had already robbed him of his forage, and threatened to take his life, if he gave the least alarm. To all their insolence he had been obliged to submit, as he and two postilions were at the time the only persons left in charge of the house. I soon recognised, from the description he gave me, my old enemies at the former post, and needed not the advice of the little Indian to creep cautiously to my room at the other end of the building, which, after the toils and perils I had undergone, was a great luxury to me, notwithstanding that it could boast of neither a window nor a door, and that on a night unusually cold.

Here ensconced together with my little friend, we contrived to pass the night very agreeably, he furnishing an excellent *chupe*, cooked outside the building, not to create suspicion, and I producing a bottle of brandy which I always carried in my holsters, to cheer our spirits, and warm our chilled frames.

Our conversation, for obvious reasons, was carried on in whispers, but notwithstanding our perilous position, we were rendered merry by the liquor we had imbibed, and became as

friendly as possible, indulging in many a smothered laugh at the stories with which we entertained each other. All this time I was not thoughtless of my poor mule, who was well fed and concealed away in an out-house, as the Gauchos, and such like people are in the habit of rising early in the morning, and carrying away all the valuable beasts they can lay their hands on. I was fortunate enough to procure a few sheep-skins to form my bed, which, after the fatigues of the day, was as soft to me as a bed of down, and there I slept till morning, in spite of the knowledge that I was resting under the same roof with such dangerous companions.

It was not a little singular, that with all my precautions to avoid these robbers and cut-throats, I had at last so unwittingly put my head into the lion's den. However, by my studied silence and good management I kept these gentry entirely ignorant that their intended victim was so near a neighbour, and completely in their power. Early in the morning they were on foot, and helping themselves to many things belonging to the master of the post, they started on their

journey, leaving me to congratulate myself on my narrow escape from having fallen into their hands.

Being able now to breathe freely, I thought it prudent to send the postilion to Catariri, to inform my servant as to my whereabouts, and request him to come on with my baggage on the next day. Whilst awaiting their arrival, I derived much amusing and interesting information from my generous host. He told me that the postmaster himself could neither read nor write, but that he had an amanuensis—a man of brilliant education, who did everything in that way for him, and who was sent for to go many leagues away when his services were required. He then assured me that he was extremely attached to my countrymen, many of whom he had met in the course of his life, and for whom he should always entertain the greatest regard. All strangers he designated by the term *Latins*, and professed to be able to speak their language. I asked him to give me a specimen of his ability, when he spouted a little Spanish with Latin terminations, interlarding his discourse occasionally with

Ave Marias, Paternosters, and other prayers. After a short pause in our conversation, I chanced to take out of my *alforja* a copy of the Evening Mail, when my learned friend requested the loan of it. Complying with his demand, I was astonished to hear him read it aloud after his fashion for above an hour, adding his Latin terminations, and appearing to regard himself as if he had indeed performed some most astounding feat.

I then took the liberty of inquiring if he understood the meaning of any of the words, to which he replied with the most perfect *sang froid*, that he comprehended all that he had been reading, and that he was quite charmed with it. This was really too much for my patience and gullibility, and I could not refrain from fairly laughing outright; at which my friend was so far from being indignant, that he seemed to regard it as a great compliment, and readily joined in chorus with all his might. Soon after my baggage arrived in custody of my servant, who was delighted to find me at last safe and sound, as he had despatched Indians in search of me in all directions, throughout the whole

of the previous night. After the necessary arrangements for my departure were concluded, I amply rewarded my amusing little friend for his kindness and trouble, and finally bade adieu to Ancacato, with all its reminiscences.

CHAPTER II.

Luvichoco—Calapaeni—Macha—Polcapillo—Aullagas—
Its silver mines—Caracara—Challoma—Mamaguasi—
Chuquisaca—General description of the town, its
churches, and monasteries.

It was no small satisfaction to me, on leaving the post of Ancacato, to think how fortunate I had been in recovering my lost mules and baggage, and in escaping from the many dangers of the road to which I had been exposed. I now started afresh in tolerable spirits, and not much the worse for my fatigues and want of food on the previous day. The country upon which I was entering seemed to promise greater variety than that through which I had already passed. The extensive and monotonous plains were

fast disappearing, and noble mountain scenery had commenced to supply their place. Leaving the stony and cold bed of the river, together with dismal *cabradas* and rocks, fruitful in painful suggestions of my late unlucky adventures, I now began to ascend some high hills, from the summits of which I could discern a mass of mountains forming chains and groups on all sides, and separated from each other by verdant valleys and deep glens, in whose bosom flowed rippling streams, sparkling like gems in the bright rays of the morning sun.

Traversing hill and dale alternately, I at length arrived at the bed of a river, which in the wet season must have been of considerable magnitude, but now reduced to the dimensions of a very diminutive stream; and ascending the opposite bank I climbed up the steep declivity, till I gained the brow of a hill, whence I looked back upon the valley beneath. From this point I had a perfect bird's-eye view. In fact, at such a height was I standing from the valley, that I took a troop of laden mules who were crossing the bed of the river for a flock of sheep.

The descent required nearly an hour and a half to accomplish, principally in consequence of the road taking a very zigzag course ; and when I arrived once more at the bed of the river, I found that our way lay across the opposite mountain at a very inclined angle. So difficult was the ascent, that my poor beasts were very much distressed, being obliged to pause almost every moment to take breath.

When the summit was gained, the descent was more gradual, and the country around appeared more habitable and accessible to man and beast. Here and there I perceived many an Indian dwelling with their *corrales* filled with sheep or llamas, which were now undergoing the process of being sheared, as this was the season for that operation. Crossing the bed of a mountain torrent at the bottom of the hill, I now began to ascend a succession of slopes, one after the other, until I had at length reached a considerable eminence, where the eye rested over a very extensive and varied tract of country. The sun was at this time sinking beneath the horizon, and lighting up everything with his

golden beams. Vale after vale gradually assumed a darker shade, whilst lofty hills and projecting cliffs only stood out in bolder relief on the dark sky. Beneath the ridge on which I stood was a plain of some magnitude, carpeted with nature's loveliest green, through which, under a deep and moss-covered embankment, a silent river pursued its eccentric course, giving life and beauty to all around. In the distance were to be seen those clusters of mountains so peculiar to the southern hemisphere, the outlines of which grew fainter and fainter as the shades of evening gradually spread themselves over the scene. Descending from these acclivities to a *plateau*, which was situated between two hills, I reached the post of Luvichoco, and there determined to fix my resting-place for the night.

This post is inferior to many on the road, although the room I occupied was tolerably snug and warm. It was but slightly thatched, so that as I lay in bed I had an opportunity of pursuing my studies in astronomy. After partaking of a good dinner, together with tea from my own provisions, with a very

great relish, I retired to rest in the very best humour. I invariably found that a box of Santa Cruz cigars was an indispensable adjunct on a journey; as, by dispensing these judiciously to postmasters and postilions, you gain the good-will of all. On this occasion, as on many others, I was not slow to secure the good graces of those around me at so easy a rate. After a sound night's rest I arose as fresh as ever, and eager, now that I was approaching so near the place of my destination, to push on without delay. Having settled all demands, I departed under a clear azure sky, with the bright rays of the morning sun to cheer me on the way.

The mountain scenery, as I passed along, was truly beautiful; hill and dale, richly clothed with verdure, alternating as far as the eye could see, when everything was lost and blended with the indistinct horizon. Here I met, on his way to La Paz, the mounted courier, undergoing his arduous task, for the paltry pittance which the Government affords him.*

* I am informed that these *employés* are extremely ill-paid for the services they render, from the fact of the

My journey hitherto had extended over a tract of country twelve or fourteen thousand feet above the level of the sea. I was now about to descend from this remarkable elevation, by a series of gradations, to a considerably lower level, and a warmer temperature. The road began to wind round large mountainous ridges of loose and broken rocks, some of them of enormous magnitude, and split and shivered into every possible form, no doubt by the action of the water in the wet season, when they occasionally detach themselves, and fall with a terrific crash over steep precipices into the valleys beneath. I found the descent to be of a most perilous and fatiguing character, having, in the course of its circuitous windings, passed over a distance of scarcely less than three leagues. The plains below are traversed by a river of clear water, which runs into a small lake alive with every species of wild-fowl. At a short distance is the post of Calapaeni, which Indian couriers, who perform the whole journey on foot, undertaking to convey packages of letters for the trifling sum of a few dollars, and arriving only a few days later.

deserves notice, as containing the very best accommodation, and, in all respects, being infinitely better than many others I found upon the road. Being fatigued with my day's journey, I was not slow to avail myself of the advantages it offered, and determined to pass the night there.

Next morning I was very early in my saddle, and anticipating much pleasure in meeting with fresh novelties, as I continued my journey. Habit is second nature; and now I had become so inured to the kind of life I was leading, that I thought little of the mishaps which occasionally crossed my way, and had learnt to value the agreeable excitement to body and mind, which was afforded me during so interesting a tour. This day I passed over several large tracts of level ground, occasionally varied by low mountain ridges; the stunted grasses of the plain giving way to broken ground, and the road being strewn with large stones of a reddish colour, owing to the iron with which the soil is impregnated.

After descending into the bed of a river, where sundry small streams were meander-

ing over loose stones and pebbles, and rounding a promontory which jutted out into the road, the town of Macha appeared in sight, imbedded in stony hills, where the iron ore might be seen throughout their whole extent. Macha is a poor and miserably-built locality, containing only two tolerable buildings, namely, the church and the post-house. To add to the discomfort of the place, it appeared almost deserted; but I afterwards learnt that, although the country immediately around seemed so sterile, there were rich lands at no great distance, and capable of profitable cultivation. To these the inhabitants emigrated from the town, for a certain length of time every year, thus accounting for the state in which I found it.

The post, unlike the other buildings, was large and commodious. Here I monopolized a small room, with a window towards the street, the walls of which were covered with every kind of doggerel verse in praise or depreciation of the several Presidents of the Republic; written, no doubt, by the officers of different parties on their march, or travellers desirous of leaving behind them

specimens of their wit and ingenuity. Having partaken of some refreshment, I was sitting at the window smoking a cigar, when my attention was attracted to an Indian idiot youth, almost in a state of nudity, who howled like a dog, and kept on grinning at me. He was surrounded by a number of canine friends, who seemed perfectly to understand him, and, in fact, appeared to be his only companions, for the Indians who passed by took no manner of notice of him. Finding in my *alforja* a small loaf of bread and part of a German sausage, I threw them down to him. The first he commenced to devour with the greatest voracity, but having regarded the meat for some time very suspiciously, he at last gave it to his dog companions, who, less scrupulous than himself, soon fell to work, and devoured it up in an instant.

Being fully recruited by a night's rest, I re-commenced my journey on the following day in high feather. Taking my way through the town, I ascended the hills at the back of it; an exploit of some difficulty, since, from their being literally covered with fragments

of iron ore, imbedded in stones of some magnitude, scattered about and standing in every direction, a single false step might have thrown down the mule and impaled the poor traveller alive on one of the many projecting points that bristled around him. I now entered a *cabrada*, walled on one side by mountains some thousand feet high, occasionally forming precipitous slopes, covered with verdure, as far as the bed of a flowing stream beneath, where large blocks of stone, of many hundred tons' weight, detached apparently from the heights above, hindered its course, causing many a rushing cataract that foamed and bubbled as it fought its way. On the other side, rocks and shelving precipices, together with the loose earth, undermined by many a running spring, rendered travelling extremely perilous.

Occasionally the loud thunder of some ponderous fragment of rock greeted the ear, as, loosed from the mountain pinnacle, it swept its desolating course to the plains beneath. The pathway abounded in difficulties, and in some places was hazardous in the extreme. Often not more than two feet

in width, it crossed a shelving precipice, under which, at the depth of many fathoms beneath, roared an impetuous stream. At other times it leads the traveller between high walls of rocks, in a passage where there is scarcely room for his mule to go through, and where he incurs the risk of having his limbs broken by the projecting points of rugged stone.

After advancing more than half-way through the pass, the road becomes wider, and the hills less high; and after skirting the ruins of a deserted Indian village, which, from its position, and the character of its mineral range, must at one time have been a place of mining importance, the path, instead of the high and dangerous flight it had lately taken, approaches now the moss-covered banks of a rippling stream, almost to the water's edge. The river gains in breadth as it advances, resolving itself into shady pools, whose feathered tenants, disturbed in their aquatic gambols, rise majestically in the air, and describe a circuitous flight in astonishment at the profane foot of the stranger, who dares to molest their solitudes. Again

alighting in some secluded spot, they bask in numbers in the warm sunshine of this tropical clime. On leaving the *cabrada* several towering detached rocks are seen, resembling the ruins of some ancient fortress, passing by the side of which, the traveller crosses the river, and descends into a lower plain of some extent, till the road brings him to the bed of another river, between banks of red earth and gravel, where herds of llamas are gathering their frugal meal from scanty tufts of grass scattered here and there. After ascending the opposite bank, the post of Polcapillo came in sight, at which prospect I quickened my steps, and soon found myself comfortably reposing within its walls.

This post-house I discovered to be much superior to others that I had met with. It contained good rooms, well papered and cleanly, and the accommodation better than that afforded at most of the public buildings upon the road. I remained here merely sufficiently long to procure myself some refreshment; and having ordered fresh mules for my baggage, and seen it properly balanced and secured, I started again on my travels,

and soon found myself near the entrance of another mountain pass.

I had scarcely reached it when I observed the indications of a gathering storm. Soon my ears were stunned by several loud explosions, like the sound of distant artillery booming along the horizon. Fearful of being exposed to the pelting rain which I knew would follow, I set spurs to my poor beast, and hastened, accompanied by my cook, as fast as my mule could carry me, in search of some cave or mountain shelter, the atmosphere all the while becoming momentarily colder, and more obscure. However, the tempest, travelling at a rapid rate, soon overtook us, and the bursting clouds enveloped us in a shower of hail, of such dimensions that it was impossible to face it. Our animals, which required no entreaties to turn their backs upon the storm, could not, by force of whip or spur, be made to move. The aspect of the *cabrada*, dismal from its wild, rocky caverns, was rendered more awful owing to the darkness of the atmosphere, and the occasional flashes of forked lightning dashing against its walls of stone; while the

mighty thunder, bursting above our heads, echoed from rock to rock, and vibrated in the deep chasms of the subterranean defile. In one of those moments of repose which took place amidst this strife of the elements, the hail had ceased, and in its place the wind was driving before it volumes of snow, which wound and wreathed itself around every object in many a graceful form. Then a fresh hurricane burst from the vault of heaven, scattering the fallen snow in all directions; and darkness more terrible than ever forbade our progress, where yawning precipices threatened instant destruction.

Thus my companion and myself, bending before the storm on our terrified beasts, wandered, not knowing whither; and fearing the certain death to which we were exposed in advancing further, we endeavoured cautiously to retrace our steps, and in so doing we became immersed in a morass, sinking to our very girdles,—a danger from which we with difficulty escaped.

The storm having expended its fury, and the face of the heavens being now partially cleared, we were enabled to discover our

way, and once in the right road we followed the course of the bed of the river, till at last we emerged from the defile. Passing a number of roofless and deserted houses, we followed on in the same direction, one side of the road still maintaining its rocky and ponderous character, until it joined a stupendous range in advance. We then descended to the depths of the valley beneath, having two outlets which wound around the base of these chains; and here we could behold mountain on mountain piled before us, forming a series of giant steps, till lost in the clouds above, in the midst of which stood perched, like a crow's nest, the town of Aullagas. The approaches to this place were by means of a narrow footpath, worn by constant use, across the steep and rugged rock, by the side of which a mountain torrent foamed and roared as it dashed from crag to crag, and formed several beautiful falls and cascades in its progress to the vales beneath.

When I had gained the elevation on which the town was built, I found one long street thickly peopled by Cholos and Indians, all of them miners. There were numerous small

shops, containing necessaries for the inhabitants, who number between six and seven hundred. This is, in fact, a noted mining district,* the various entrances to the several

* The extensive mineral range, in which is situated the town of Aullagas, abounds with silver. It is found in different degrees of purity, and at one time the locality was crowded with mines, which were worked by the Spaniards, with great profit. Hundreds of labourers were then employed upon the works, and speculators amassed large sums of money. Since then, most of the rich mines have been flooded, and fallen in, or abandoned from the want of capital and machinery. However, some of the works are still carried on, and, I understand, profitably, although solely by means of manual labour.

The mode of working these mines is as follows:—A number of *peones*, or day labourers, are drafted to a mine, and provisioned for three days. The proprietor provides a quantity of crowbars, sharply pointed, by means of which an incision is made in the quartz, or rock, the bars being continually changed as they become blunted. When the aperture has been made of a sufficient depth for blasting, the rock is exploded, and thus they proceed throughout the whole of the period. The substance to be operated upon is often of such a degree of hardness, that little progress is made after a great deal of manual labour has been bestowed upon it. After an explosion, the fumes of the powder will hang about the mine for hours, often producing very baneful

workings being visible by the small apertures which strike the eye at different elevations on the mountain's side. I now turned off through the town, passing by a succession of small dwellings which formed a continuation of it, and descending to the plains, enjoyed the beautiful prospect of the purple hills rising around me in awful grandeur, and encircling me as in an amphitheatre. After crossing the plain, and admiring, as I went, several small lakes, whose surface mirrored the fleecy clouds as they swept over the firmament, I ascended a number of rocky hills, one above the other, following in a circuitous direction a small path, which seemed to have been either hewn or blasted, where an accumulation of pointed fragments of stone rendered my progress anything but effects upon the unfortunate miners. The *malaria* in most of the mines is of so deadly a character, owing to the extreme want of ventilation, that the greater part of the *peones*, after following their occupation for any length of time, suffer greatly from ague and constitutional disease of the lungs, together with expectoration of blood, which is sure to be followed by a speedy death. The average rate of life in this sort of mine rarely exceeds thirty years.

agreeable; as, without the greatest care, I was in danger at every step of breaking my shins, or falling prostrate over some sharp angular projection.

When I had attained the summit, my senses were staggered at the prodigious depth below me. I had now to make my descent on the other side, and found it extremely perilous, as it was formed by a series of enormous steps in the rock, so far apart that my mule had to jump from one shelving precipice to another, at the imminent risk of injuring himself in the fall, or (what was of vastly more importance to myself) of breaking his rider's neck. The whole course is characterized by a quantity of white stone of a chalky character, which reflects the sun's rays so powerfully, that I was completely blinded; and, perhaps, from that cause escaped many a fright I should otherwise have experienced. I may safely affirm that, without one exception, this is the most stupendous descent I met with during the whole course of my journey. At the base are several springs issuing from moss-covered banks, which form wells, and flowing into

the narrow entrance of a *cabrada*, become little streams, gaining in width as they advance.

On one side the barrier is composed of rocks almost perpendicular, of some thousand feet in altitude, covered with shrubs and verdure, on which were feeding numerous goats and flocks of sheep with their lambkins, sporting from crag to crag, and hardly distinguishable owing to their vast altitude. On the opposite side the embankment is of a less imposing character, presenting a honey-combed, cavernous appearance, and where many *Biscachos* were seen appearing and disappearing in the declivities. I still followed the gradual slope of this pass; and on emerging from it, another of those extraordinary descents came in view—being, however, on a smaller scale, and presenting a less terrible aspect. This accomplished, and safe in the plains below, I began to feel myself greatly fatigued with the exertions I had undergone, and, overwhelmed with the grandeur and magnificence of the scene, my mental faculties were as completely prostrated as my bodily energies were exhausted by sheer manual exertion.

By this time the sun had nearly set, and knowing that in a very short time it would be completely dark, I urged my way as fast as possible for the next post. I soon fancied that I had arrived at it, supposing that some buildings which I saw under the delusive influence of the dim twilight were the desired haven, but I was doomed to be disappointed. I hastened from house to house, hoping that each succeeding one might be that of which I was in search; but, on a nearer view, they all turned out to be poor tenements, no doubt belonging to some small Indian farmers, and each firmly secured and uninhabited.

All at once a light appeared in the distance, and I determined to make for it, thinking that, at all events, I might be able to procure some information from the inmates of the dwelling whence it proceeded. I had no sooner started off, in the direction in which I had seen it, than it suddenly vanished, and after a short time appeared again at a greater distance off and quite in an opposite direction. Giving up all hope, therefore, of following so inconstant a guide, I retraced my steps to the path I had hitherto

followed; and, after fording a river, I luckily found a road winding over some rocks, apparently newly hewn or blasted in order to form a passage, but at such an acute angle that the ascent was fatiguing and painful in the extreme, and certainly not to be surmounted in darkness, except by the incredible sagacity of a patient mule. In broad daylight a degree of confidence is inspired which overcomes all difficulties, and makes the mind less alive to the dangers of the way; but when all is wrapt in gloom and darkness, there is such uncertainty at every step, that the imagination greatly magnifies the real dangers which exist, and conjures up horrors which have no foundation but in the mind. Such was my case, as I was borne by my patient beast I knew not where; night having now completely set in, and there being no clue by which I could discover in what direction I was travelling, or whether it would conduct me to some friendly habitation or not. After much exertion in making the ascent of these steep rocks, the summit was gained, when a long and dreary expanse of *pampas* presented itself.

After keeping on the road for some leagues, I arrived at a farm-house, where I gained the information that the post was but a short distance in advance. Cheered with the good news, I hastened on with all speed, but still without seeing any signs of the wished-for dwelling. I began to think that I had either passed it or taken a wrong road, when, all of a sudden, my mule brayed with all his might, and showed a disposition to strike out of the road along which we were progressing. Considering this rather a good omen than otherwise, I trusted myself entirely to his guidance, and, to my great joy, after a short time, I could distinguish through the gloom the square form of a building. No traveller in the desert ever greeted the welcome caravansary with more satisfaction than I experienced when I found myself at last within the walls of the post of Caracara.

With the exception of a tolerable sleeping room, this place afforded very deficient accommodation. As for provisions, they were not to be had for love or money; so that I found, had I not been provided with my own stock, which now came in quite *apropos*,

I must, chameleon-like, have fed on air. Fortunately there was fodder for the animals, although it was sold at a price enormously high. After I had satisfied my appetite, I was informed, to my comfort, that a man had been murdered in the neighbourhood a few days before, by robbers from the capital. This was not calculated to give me very pleasant dreams. However, the fatigues I had undergone during the day made me sleep soundly enough notwithstanding, and on starting again in the morning I merely took the precaution to see that my holsters and pistols were in first-rate condition, and available if wanted.

The ground was this morning white with a fall of snow, which had taken place during the night. Crossing a small stream soon after I had recommenced my journey, a number of singular-looking rocks appeared in clusters, and increased in magnitude till they assumed a towering aspect, wild and rugged in the extreme; the road gradually narrowing till it was lost in a terrific cataract, of fearful impetuosity, which, during the wet season, must render the way wholly impas-

sable. My hardy mule, however, with that sagacity and precaution peculiar to his species, here picked his way in places where a human being, on foot, could not by any possibility have ventured. Gaining the plain, I soon entered some lower grounds, where the change of temperature was plainly perceptible, and nature wore a warmer and more agreeable aspect. As I advanced, I passed several small ridges, and by degrees descended lower and lower, till, at the bottom, where flowed a clear stream, I entered a *cabrada* of some width, having green sloping hills on one side, and on the other high mounds filled with slate quarries, with the *stratum* protruding through the surface in a transverse direction, and extending for many hundred feet in length. The bed and embankments of the river were of the same character, and appeared to have been hewn by the action of the waters in forcing their course.

Hitherto, scarcely a tree was to be met with; but now, on both sides of this pass, shrubs, flowers, and trees, were seen in great abundance. After passing, about midway,

several *ranchos*, or small Indian farm dwellings, and approaching the extremity of the *cabrada*, the sides approximate, and the rocks assume a very grand and imposing character; whilst at their base flows a beautiful crystal river, reflecting the clear blue sky through the noble willows which wave their drooping branches in the balmy breeze. Here would a Claude or a Poussin revel with delight in the midst of nature's loveliest charms. In rich exuberance she displayed beauties which might vie with the most elaborate pencillings of the imagination—picturesque grottoes and caves; peaceful little lakes, on whose soft bosoms rested the fair water-lilies, whose forms were reflected as on a sheet of limpid glass; and then the rich fragrance of the sweet flowers which had sprung into life in this calm and sheltered retreat. All this combined to render the picture complete, and the different features of the scene at once charmed the senses, and pleased the fancy with the infinite resources which nature has at her command.

At this spot I encountered two military men on horseback; the first, a spare, dimi-

native gentleman, proved to be the celebrated General Agrada, renowned for his valour in the history of his country. He was accompanied by his *aide-de-camp*, and on seeing me, bowed politely and passed on. I now, at last, emerged from this almost interminable pass, and made towards a range of rocky mountains, from whose sides projected many a stunted tree and shrub, the road following in a short space of time the blasted or broken rock, in a path of the rudest construction. It continued through a series of ascents and descents of the most formidable character, and in some places seemed perfectly impracticable.

All at once the road leaves these mountain windings, and opens into a flat and extended lawn, whence the view was most grand and beautiful. In the far distance the constant undulations of mountain and dale were lost in the blue horizon. On the edge of a precipice of apparently fathomless depth, I perceived that two pyramids of stones had been piled, and surmounted with crosses and decorated with garlands of flowers, probably placed there by some devout Indian girl, as her morning

offering. On this table-land, in the midst of the mountain range, is a picturesque *hacienda*, and extremely interesting from its romantic situation. It is furnished with a number of watch-dogs of most savage aspect, who seemed disposed to do their duty most heroically, as on my near approach they rushed out from its portals, breathing defiance in no unmistakeable manner.

The sun was far advanced in his course when I arrived at a steep descent, at the bottom of which ran a stream, where a number of Indian drovers were quenching their thirst, as the several herds of llamas under their charge, disburdened of their loads, were browsing and refreshing themselves in the running waters. Many of their owners were busily employed in kindling fires, in preparation for their evening meal, and close beside them were piled their cargoes, in pyramidal order, ready for the morning's start. After ascending the steep and broken side of the opposite embankment, a visible change took place in the appearance of all around. Luxuriant trees in full verdure, and beautiful flowers, bloomed under the

more genial influence of a warmer temperature. Thick copses began to show themselves in all directions. The air was sweetly impregnated with a thousand odours, and the busy hum of myriads of insects vibrated upon the ear, as night cast her sable mantle on the closing day.

Gradually descending from the rocky eminence, I came to an open space, where enormous stones and shingle lay scattered in all directions. I perceived, on a slight elevation, a chapel dedicated to the Virgin, opposite to which were a few Indian cottages, with their accompanying patches of cultivated land; and not far from this spot were the ruins of the post, which had been washed away by the impetuosity of the river during the rainy season. Whilst the house was being rebuilt, the postmaster had constructed a sort of hut for himself and his family, but as there was no accommodation for any one else, I was disappointed in my expectations of finding shelter for the night, and, the day drawing fast to a close, I had no alternative but to be satisfied with some slight refreshment, and to push on for the next post. However, I

had the pleasure of knowing that I should be favoured by the light of the moon, and accordingly I started afresh, and after a steep ascent, gained the plains.

Continuing for some distance across a flat piece of country, a winding descent led me to a lower plain of considerable breadth, skirted on both sides by some gloomy-looking rocks. After crossing some streams, and a tract of broken ground, I found my way into a rich valley, filled with luxurious vegetation. The gentle murmur of numerous springs stole agreeably on the senses; and as the bright moon arose in the heavens, shedding her brilliant light upon the scene, many a flourishing vale, together with dense woods and thickets, imperceptibly crept upon the sight. After passing through a tract of country abounding in orchards, in which the trees were bending with delicious fruit, I came to an open copse; and after that descended into a hollow, which formed the entrance to one of the most magnificent and extensive *cabras* I had met with in the whole course of my journey.

In the centre of this mountain passage ran

a river, which, breaking over rocks, formed numerous cascades and pools, near which drooped noble willows, reflecting their graceful branches in the waters beneath. The narrow entrance was overshadowed by trees and shrubs which grew spontaneously on the banks, and creeping plants intertwining themselves with many a variety of beautiful flowers, hung in festoons, or formed a canopy which hid from the traveller's gaze the glories of the bright firmament over his head. Occasionally some high rock would cast its deep shadow across the scene; and then, again, all would stand revealed before the dazzling light of the starry orbs, shining aloft in all their wonted splendour.

Enjoying the delights of this sylvan Paradise, I passed several small houses and farms, occupied chiefly by persons who are engaged in distilling a kind of spirits of wine, here called white brandy, and much consumed by the Indians and the lower grades of society. Crossing the stream, and ascending the opposite embankment, I passed through a small forest of trees, and emerged upon a lawn, whence the view on all sides was most majes-

tic. Looking down into the valley beneath, the eye is bewildered with its great depth, and the variety of objects which court the attention. Dark green forests, and clumps of towering trees, cast their black shadows to mingle with the shades of night. The roaring waters in the distance strike but as plaintive murmurs on the ear, and gentle zephyrs, awaking from their slumbers, gather in their course the choicest perfumes from Nature's loveliest flowers, to sweeten the nightly hours of repose. Slowly the morn ascends, and tips with silvery light the forest head. Under her soft beams the rugged monarchs of the wood stand boldly forth, and the deep vales are made to reveal their treasures through her talismanic charm. At intervals are heard the croakings of the *sapo*, a small reptile of the frog species; but the sounds it gives forth are of a most pleasing and enchanting character, and resemble the notes of a harp more than anything else that I can remember. These sounds are echoed far and wide by numbers of these animals, who appear to sing in concert, and produce a melancholy pleasure, as they suggest to the mind of the

contemplative traveller, a train of thought, in which friends, and kindred, and home, and bygone days may find a share. Descending from this point towards the valley, I came to a small level, surrounded by small *haciendas*, and immediately afterwards arrived at the post of Mamaguasi.

This post, although within but six leagues of the capital, possesses few conveniences. The master was absent, and nothing in the shape of refreshment was to be procured; so that, had I not been fortunate enough to have my own private stock to fall back upon, I must have fared badly enough. Added to this annoyance, I was informed that not a mule was to be found there. I therefore made bold to lay an embargo on the animals I had brought with me from the last post, much to the discomfort of the postilions, who were very anxious to decamp. To make sure of their not leaving me in the lurch during the night, I had the harness and trappings deposited in my room. I was not able to get very comfortable repose; for, as my dormitory could boast of but half a door, I was continually awaked by certain nocturnal

robbers of the canine species, who amused themselves by foraging amongst my provisions, and obliged me several times to quit my bed, forcibly to eject them. As day dawned, I was glad to get up and pursue my journey, promising myself various indulgences to make amends for the bad accommodation I had experienced.

The road lay along the bed of the river, and narrowed as I advanced, until the trees on either side entirely met and formed a delightful grove, underneath which flowed the crystal stream which occasionally formed, on its moss-covered banks, little pools and recesses of singular beauty. All at once the road diverges from this track, ascends the side of the *cabrada*, and traverses a number of hills. On the opposite side a vast plain stretches for some distance, when a succession of mountain chains follow each other to the very horizon, producing an effect extraordinary and picturesque in the extreme. The road, winding along a series of barren rocks, disclosed numerous hills, in the valleys between which I could discover many small farms and homesteads, all teeming with the

fruits of man's industry. Crossing this chain of hills, a vast plain presented itself to view, surrounded on all sides by sterile rocks and hills, between which and the plain on one side, but in a lower level, is situated Chuquisaca, the capital of Bolivia.

This city, like all other Spanish towns, being planned on a geometrical principle, presents, at a distance, very much the appearance of a draught-board. Its characteristic cleanliness, from the fact of all the buildings, public as well as private, being periodically white-washed afresh,—its conspicuous churches, Alameda, and flourishing trees and gardens, produce a very pleasing and agreeable aspect. Descending into the plain and crossing a small river, I found myself in a very short time within its precincts.

This city, once the princely residence of the Viceroy of Spain, is small in regard to its territorial extent, and, according to the present statistical calculation, does not reckon more than 1,400 souls. The first remarkable object on entering the town is the Alameda, or public walk. It is walled on all sides, and contains a zoological garden,—not of

living specimens as in England, but representations of wild animals and birds ranged on pedestals. A strange effect is produced by these groups, which are not only grotesque in point of shape, but create much amusement to strangers from the little attention which has been paid to the respective proportions of the several animals represented. Thus, for instance, an elephant, a cat, and a parrot, are all of a size ; and as regards zoological information, are far from supplying the place of real specimens. The whole of these works of art, together with the gardens, *parterres*, &c., have been given to the city through the munificence of General Belza ; and will, when completed, form a delightful place of recreation to its inhabitants. The town entrance to these gardens consists of a couple of triumphal arches, and near at hand are a Grecian temple and a reservoir of a very rude construction.

Not far from this public place of resort, is a chapel of a very elegant style of architecture. It is approached by a succession of steps, and is surrounded by pillars ; and was built by General Belza, to commemorate his

miraculous escape from assassination on this very spot. The Plaza de San Juan de Dios is little worthy of remark. In the centre is an obelisk or pillar, and on one side of the square, an hospital has taken the place of a church and convent which formerly stood there. From this Plaza a short street leads to the Plaza del 25 del Mayo, 1809, which is a magnificent square, covering an area of some thousand feet. The cathedral and palace form one side of it, and the remainder is filled by the Palace of the Congress, the Policia and Cavilda, and a few small shops. Over these are constructed balconies, which afford an agreeable lounge for the ladies in the after part of the day. *Cafés*, billiard-rooms, and sweetmeat-shops abound here; and outside most of the houses seats have been erected, which are a fashionable resort during the beautiful moonlight nights with which this climate is favoured. Numerous promenaders are then to be seen enjoying the society of their friends, and inhaling the refreshing breezes of the evening air. The houses in most of the streets forming the centre of the city are large and commodious,

and the more important edifices are built in that peculiar Moresco style in which the ancient Spaniards excelled, and which still indicates the former wealth and magnificence of their original projectors.

The city contains eighteen churches. Among the rest, the cathedral, without making any pretensions to architectural excellence, presents, externally, a very pleasing appearance. As regards its internal arrangements, contrary to the general custom, simplicity and good taste prevail to a very great extent. On grand occasions the nave is richly carpeted, and the grand altar, which is a little temple in itself, is decorated with a profusion of lights, supported in magnificent candlesticks of massive silver; and numerous *bouquets* of flowers, tastefully distributed, add greatly to the general effect. The aisles of the building are in accordance with its unpretending character, their only decoration being an occasional picture of some scene in the life of our Lord, or the martyrdom of some saint. There are two choirs, the smaller one, at the back of the grand altar, containing an organ and instru-

mental accompaniments, used only on particular occasions. At the extremity of the building is the grand organ, and a place for a full orchestra. The chapel-master, or director of the music, is one of the most refined and polished composers of the old *sonata* and *rondo* school, and, at the same time, a first-rate performer on the violoncello. His power in execution is as great as his taste as a composer, and this is evinced by the exquisite melodies which he draws forth from that elegant instrument, the Spanish guitar. The musical gems to which his genius has given birth, are sufficient to immortalize his name: many of them have found their way into Europe, and have drawn from the great Spohr the tribute of his unqualified approbation.

The church and monastery of San Felipe contain all that is requisite to throw a charm around the monastic life. There is a pleasant garden, with its fountain and trees, and around it are a series of arched galleries leading to the several rooms of the devout fathers. Not long since, a pious layman bequeathed to this order an adjoining house, consisting of very extensive premises, which

have been united to the original monastery by means of passages; but all the additional conveniences are utterly neglected, as the establishment, which is capable of containing so large a number of inmates, is, in fact, occupied by so few. In the interior of the church, which is characterized by great plainness and good taste, I observed, suspended from the roof, two archiepiscopal hats, probably intimating that, from amongst the brethren of this order, two had been raised to that dignity. The order of the Recoletas, composed chiefly of foreigners, and particularly Spaniards and Italians, possess a church and a monastery on a small hill commanding the town. These friars muster pretty strong, and are much respected for their devout demeanour, and enterprising and industrious habits. They exist principally by charity, but cultivate a large extent of ground, and dispose of the produce. The church and monastery of San Agostino formerly belonged to the Jesuits, and contained accommodation for several hundreds. On the expulsion of that body, the church was converted into a temporary theatre, and the monastery into

the great Tambo de San Agostino, one of the important caravansaries of the capital.

The church of San Francisco is built after the old style which was in vogue in the palmy days of the original fathers to whom it belonged. It is very richly ornamented, and possesses some curious carving, illustrative of that epoch. The choir is decorated in this way by representations of all the saints in the calendar, exquisitely executed and of much value even as antiquarian relics, though but little esteemed by the present proprietors of the building. The roof, likewise, exhibits that richness of design and elaborate ornament by which many of the rooms in the Alhambra are distinguished, the beautiful Saracenic decorations blending most gracefully with the style belonging to the old Spanish school of architecture. The convent of Santa Clara is, like that of La Paz, numerously occupied by the ladies of that order, who, on becoming members of the community, bestow a large dowry on the establishment for the common use. The church has been newly built, and decorated in a more modern style than the remainder

of the edifice, which is generally characterized by simplicity and good taste. The grand altar represents the *façade* of a temple, the columns of which are pure white with a gold moulding, and a most charming effect is produced by the background being painted of a clear celestial blue colour. A soft light shed over the whole from a window behind, covered by a gauze of the same delicate tint, very much enhances this effect. At the other extremity of the church, and facing the altar, is a frontage, resembling that of a prison, formed by iron railings, placed at some distance from each other, and divided into two tiers. Within these the shadows of the nuns, as they pass to and fro to chaunt their dismal prayers and responses, are just perceptible.

In the external appearance of the church of San Domingo there is an evident mixture of the Spanish and Moresco styles of architecture. The outer wall has a vast number of ornaments, and over these there are several minarets, which give the whole a very Oriental character. The belfry joins the *façade*, and is a very skeleton sort of structure, con-

sisting of small arches, in which are suspended the bells, attached to beams. These are approached by means of a wooden staircase at the side of the building. This church formerly belonged to the Dominicans, who possessed an extensive monastery on this spot. After the expulsion of the Jesuits, the establishment was discontinued, and the whole reduced to a curacy (*curato*).

The interior of the building has pretensions to architectural excellence. The general style of decoration is extremely chaste, and the effect produced, on the whole, very pleasing. The buildings which originally formed the monastery are now devoted to other purposes. A portion has been converted into a post-office and apartments for the postmaster-general. The greater part of them, however, have been demolished, and on their site has been erected a large government building, containing a great variety of offices connected with the state. Amongst these is the Palace of Justice, a large quadrangular building, enclosing a court-yard, with a fountain in the centre. A gallery on the upper story, supported by arches, sur-

rounds this court-yard, and gives it a light and agreeable appearance. The space which it incloses amounts to 1,600 square yards. There are two inferior ones of less dimensions.

The church of San Miguel formerly belonged to a monastery, and externally presents a pleasing aspect. Attached to it is a large bell tower, which is situated in an inclosed yard, where some fine trees add a great charm to the general effect. The interior is, without exception, as beautiful a specimen of a place of religious worship as it is possible to conceive. It is decorated after the manner of the palace of the Alhambra, at Grenada, the roof being supported by two gables, exhibiting a most elaborate design of Moresco fretted-work. The grand altar is a gorgeous mass of carving, richly gilt, receiving light from two windows, artfully contrived, so as to throw their subdued and effective light without being seen. A small dome arises about a third of the length of the church from the altar end of it. This is supported in the same manner as the roof, and exhibits the same exquisite fretted-work.

Two elaborately-carved gates, covered with gilding, enclose small chapels, in one of which stands the baptismal font, of the same rich and costly construction, and both are surmounted by small domes of beautiful workmanship. There are several pulpits, of which language would fail to convey an idea, so rare and wonderful is the variety of carvings by which they are decorated. Other parts of the building contain altars, around which, from the roof downwards, is ranged a complete gallery of the most beautiful religious paintings extant, in enormous gilt frames, in keeping with the general character of the rest of the edifice.

Amongst this collection I am persuaded that many originals of the great masters are to be found. My opinion is based upon the merit which attaches to the works themselves, and also to the probability which exists of the monks, who amassed this species of property, having the means and opportunities of procuring these originals, and of having availed themselves of such opportunities. We must take into consideration the powerful influence exercised by all Roman Catholic

orders, after so long a sojourn in the New World, and the bigoted reverence with which they have come to be regarded, both by the Spaniards and the poor simple Indians, who are glad to make any pecuniary sacrifice in favour of such persons as they look upon with superstitious awe. These communities, by grants, bequests, and exactions, under the pretence of a spiritual claim, gradually became exceedingly rich and powerful, and probably, with a view of facilitating the adherence of new converts, their policy and ambition has been to render their churches as beautiful and imposing as possible. With unbounded wealth at their command, they would, therefore, naturally endeavour to secure the very best works of art, and commission agents in the Old World to come to terms with the most skilled artists, and to pay them accordingly, money being no object. In this way I account for so many fine and rare paintings being found in these countries, though, of course, as may readily be supposed, inferior copies have found a market, or specimens of the handicraft of inferior workmen, not worthy of the name of art.

Another circumstance is worthy of notice. Several of the friars were no mean artists themselves, as is abundantly testified by many elaborate and gorgeous decorations, executed by themselves or under their directions. I remember some specimens of rich carving wrought by these men, which so struck my fancy that I made a careful drawing of them, as an example of monastic industry and skill. Persons of such refined artistic knowledge would, of course, naturally pride themselves on the possession of the productions of the best masters. Inferior works, or, at all events, such as would be inferior to their own capabilities, they would not tolerate. In what I have said, I refer more particularly to the character of the paintings which are treasured up in the capital of the Republic.

The supreme courts of law and equity hold their sittings at Chuquisaca, and it is to these tribunals that all appeals must be made. A host of judges, law officers, and satellites, belonging to these courts, swarm to a prodigious extent, and live like drones on the fat of the land, whilst, in fact, they render in return no adequate service to the

community. The judges themselves are very undignified in their manner, and whilst appearing to make much of all technicalities, soon by a nod and a wink agree as to the disposal of the case. And as the rule is that their discussions are strictly private, no attempt is made by the public to gain admission, or to gainsay the wise decisions at which they are supposed to arrive. The general rule seems to be, that causes last as long as any money can be gained by their prolongation, and the practice of paying all fees in advance seems to be invariably insisted upon. No funds—no law, seems to be the principle, and also that he who pays the largest fees eventually gains the cause.

Besides those who live by law, there is an almost innumerable host of learned doctors, as they style themselves, belonging to another class, the *padres* and *curatos*, who make their earnings out of the superstitions of the people. These are to be met with in all societies, and form a very dominant party. The *élite*, however, of this commonwealth, consists of a trading aristocracy, who perhaps call themselves merchants, though they keep

shops of their own, and some of them very ordinary ones. A great assumption and pride of bearing is manifested in their general demeanour, and on feast-days and holidays they are conspicuous for their display of dress and equipage. The very young men who the day before have stood behind the counter and measured out, perhaps, a few yards of ribbon, are to be seen on these occasions mounted on richly-caparisoned horses, with silver ornaments, and exhibiting all the swagger and airs of *grandees* of the first class. This peculiarity, however, may have descended to them from their ancestors, the Spaniards of the old world ; and although in this respect, their conduct may have struck me as unbecoming, I am far from deprecating their close attention to business ; for I hold it to be highly creditable for a man to be industrious in his calling, whatever may have been his antecedents.

There being no distinct trade of a pawn-broker in the Republic, every one is allowed to lend money on articles of value, at any rate of interest which he can procure. The general charge for one dollar per month is a *medio*

(3d. English), some extort much more. There is an enormous quantity of silver plate in use in the capital, and this is often left as security by those who are desirous of borrowing money, even to ten times the value of the loan. The great scarcity of money, and the intemperance of the middling and lower classes, cause them to squander away with astonishing rapidity whatever they borrow, and their want of industry so completely puts it out of their power even to redeem the goods which they have pawned, that they are almost in every instance utterly sacrificed, or claimed to pay an exorbitant interest.

The chief amusements of the place consist in the pleasures of social intercourse. Parties and cavalcades are formed for the purpose of visiting the neighbouring *quintas*, and here the true spirit of a pic-nic may be seen in the highest perfection. These little country-houses are often furnished in the rudest manner; a chair or two, a table, and a wooden bedstead, comprising all the moveables. It is often the case that a large party finds a great lack of plates, knives, glasses, and other necessaries, and great diversion is

occasioned by the unavoidable shifts to which they are driven. A sudden storm has often obliged a large number of ladies and gentlemen to pass the night in two or three miserable rooms; but the novelty of the adventure causes a great deal of merriment, in spite of the discomfort and want of accommodation to which the whole party is subjected. Persons of the better class in this city are, for the most part, very affable and obliging, and fully appreciate the society of a stranger, if he be deserving of their confidence. Balls and concerts form the staple of their means of entertainment. The young ladies are devotedly fond of dancing, and the charms of music are felt by all, engendering that sensitiveness and refinement which it is always so calculated to produce.

During my residence here I made several agreeable acquaintances. The family of Senor Dorado holds a high position in the city, from the fact of one of his sons, a secretary in the ministerial department, having married the daughter of the present President, General Belza. To be on good terms with the authorities, or, as we say in England, to

have a friend at court, is one of the greatest blessings which can be experienced in these countries. It has been remarked that the English are a nation of shopkeepers. However true this may be, it is equally so in speaking of many provinces in the New World. Senor Dorado is a merchant, dealing in general goods, wholesale and retail; and in conformity with the practice of even persons of the greatest distinction in this country, keeps a retail shop, where he is happy to serve you with articles from the value of a *medio* to that of thousands of dollars.

A young man of the name of Balza, an Argentine by birth, inherited a large fortune, which his father had accumulated by a successful business in the Republic. Together with his mother, he conducted a retail establishment in the city, in which he sold goods of foreign manufacture in all their varieties. To give the reader a fair idea of the degree of liberty which exists under the Government of these South American States, it may suffice to mention that, for some expression which this young man incautiously let drop, he was seized by order of the

Government, and forced to become a common soldier. Not content with subjecting him to the degradation of being drilled twice a-day in the Grand Plaza, close to his own dwelling, where he had been accustomed to every luxury which riches could furnish, he was obliged at last to leave the city, and march with his battalion three hundred miles on foot. After this punishment, so disproportionate to his offence, the Government relented, and the young man was allowed to return to the bosom of his family, and follow, without further molestation, his usual daily avocations.

A Monsieur Grog, once one of Napoleon's dragoons, has taken up his residence here. He had received from the English, in one of the numerous engagements in which he had taken part, a striking memento of the mortal strife, which has made him limp for life. This gentleman possesses one of the best shops in the place, and, according to general report, is immensely rich. Owing to his having married a native, and being himself a naturalized subject, the Bolivian Government had raised him to the post of Judge of

Commerce, a situation of some consequence. I had also the pleasure of the acquaintance of Senor Rosquellas, the noted violinist, who accompanied the celebrated Madame Catalini during her provincial engagements in England, some twenty years since. He was a Spaniard by birth; and having accumulated a large fortune at Buenos Ayres, which he managed to squander away in mining speculations, he retired with his wife, an Irish lady, to Chuquisaca, where he carries on a retail business, which gives him a comfortable independence. His son is a talented pianist and professor of the French language, and is acquiring much wealth as well as fame in instructing his various classes.

The archbishop of the province is an aged man, and much beloved by the poor, as once or twice a-week he causes alms to be distributed for their benefit at the Episcopal Palace. He was, I believe, nominated to his office as head of the Bolivian Church by the present President; but it appears this appointment gave umbrage to the Court of Rome, so that Mother Church has hitherto withheld her credentials, although I understand they are now anxiously expected.

Amongst other persons of distinction or importance whom I met with in this place was Colonel M——, the American *Chargé d’Affaires*. This individual was one of the heroes of Mexican notoriety, and who had been presented by the United States with a sword for the services he had rendered. He was of a very eccentric turn of mind, keeping aloof from all society, and his peculiar manners fully justified the strange opinion every one had of him. He was incessantly talking to himself; and, as he paced along his rooms, would address his flag and his sword, and return suitable answers to his own questions, in the highest tone of declamation. I can vouch for the truth of these little peculiarities, as I had the misfortune to live the next door to him, and heard distinctly every word which he uttered under the circumstances above-mentioned. Another strange vagary of his was to have a pair of pistols invariably placed before him on the table, whenever he granted an interview to any of the natives. This, in the course of time, operated in such a manner as to prevent any of them from approaching him at all. The quarrels which occasionally took place

between this man and his servant were most alarming, and were likely to lead to serious consequences. The latter often sought refuge in the adjoining houses, saying that his life was in danger, his master having cut at him with his sword, and threatened to shoot him. At length this eccentric being was recalled by his Government, to the great delight of the Chuquisacans, who allowed him to leave the town without a single farewell. The English *Chargé d'Affaires* was the only person that paid him the compliment of escorting him out of the place on horseback.

Monsieur Favre, the *Chargé d'Affaires* belonging to the French nation, was married to a countess belonging to the old *regime*, whose son was always getting into some mad scrape or other. He was a little man, with a visage deadly pale, and a beard *à la Juive*, and black as a coal. This extraordinary little personage was always speculating as to the amount of electricity that was in the air, and he always settled this point according as he fancied his own system to be more or less charged. Besides this, he had such a horror of the little vegetable called an onion, that if

by chance such a thing were ever found in any of the dishes used at his Excellency's table, he was ready to faint. The countess was a lady of unusual volubility of language, and such eccentricity of dress, that the good folks of Chuquisaca stared again and again with astonishment. These people were in the habit of giving a series of grand parties, evidently wishing to make themselves the lions of the place, and they thereby exposed themselves to much criticism.

The real lion of the place, however, was the Brazilian *Chargé d'Affaires*, Monsieur Lisboa. This gentleman, his pretty and amiable wife, and his family of lovely children, were truly beloved by all. He was remarkably affable and hospitable, keeping open house for every one that desired to join his circle. For many years he had resided at Paris, and had doubtless imbibed, during a residence in that capital, many of those good qualities and polished manners which are peculiar to the French nation, without at the same time descending to those petty frivolities which distinguish them. I may safely assert that few persons ever left their

consular duties, after many years' absence from their native country, so much to the regret of those amongst whom those years had been passed, as did M. Lisboa, when he finally bade adieu to his Bolivian friends. He was universally respected, and his removal from amongst them occasioned many an expression of sincere regret.

For the benefit of the rising generation of the Republic, Chuquisaca can boast of two universities, besides several seminaries. The degree of doctor of laws is most liberally bestowed, so that there is scarcely a man, or even a boy, but possesses an appendage of this nature to his name. The consequential airs and self-important bearings assumed by the inhabitants of this city, have become the theme of general ridicule throughout the whole of the Republic; so much so, that the common saying in the other provinces is, that the very dogs of the capital are doctors of law. The colleges are superintended by clerical professors, who are Jesuits, no doubt professing to belong to some other order, to avoid their expulsion from the country. These crafty men instil a sound instruction

into the minds of the youths under their charge, in which the doctrines of their creed occupy a prominent place, and qualify them afterwards for that position in life they are destined to fill. The costume of the collegians has a very pleasing effect, when they are walking in procession, or assisting at any of the grand services in the cathedral. It consists of a blue cloth toga, turned up with red, and decorated with a silver badge on the breast.

One of the judges, a man of letters, but of dissolute habits, was not a personification of Justice, as respects her blindness. The charms of beauty had evidently not been lost upon him, as was clearly evinced by the number of pretty Cholo girls, with infants in their arms, of whom he was the reputed father. One of these women, whose claims upon him had been utterly disregarded by this administrator of justice, unfortunately had no means of redress, as it was hardly to be expected that the judge who presided over the tribunal to which alone the case could be carried, would condemn himself in the matter. However, she was determined to

shame him into an observance of his duty, and made an appeal to her fellow-citizens in the following fashion. Having dressed up her little one as a judge, with wig and robe, and all the other paraphernalia belonging to the office, and affixed to it, both before and behind, the name of its father, written in large characters, she carried it in procession through the city to the sound of a drum and trumpet, with a crowd of women, children, and the lowest rabble, who joined in a long-continued volley of shouts, groans, and hisses, coupling, at the same time, the name of the learned doctor with the most opprobrious epithets. This curious proceeding was effectual in gaining the mother's cause, and the judge and father was but too glad to come to any terms, to avoid so glaring a scandal.

A building which was once a church and monastery, has been converted into an hospital; and the poor creatures who trust themselves within its walls, have often too much cause to repent of their choice, in the cruel treatment which they there receive. A set of young men, calling themselves doctors and

surgeons, congregate here to receive professional instruction from their seniors in years, but who are about as ignorant as themselves. Their presumption, however, surpasses everything; and the poor victims who are entrusted to their care are treated in so barbarous a manner by these heartless and ignorant practitioners, that scarcely a day passes but masses are said in the chapel for the poor sufferers who have died under their treatment, should their relations possess the means of paying for them. The intention of the institution cannot but be admired; and it is a great pity that the excellent purpose to which it has been devoted should be so utterly defeated. The authorities in the country should, by means of their agents in Europe, secure the services of some talented and well qualified gentlemen to fill the post of surgeons to this useful establishment, and thus lay the foundation of a school of medicine for the proper instruction of the native practitioners.

I remember the case of a young man, servant to the American *Chargè d'Affaires* at Chuquisaca, who took to drinking *pisco* to

such an extent that he brought on a fearful attack of *delirium tremens*. This poor creature was sent to this hospital, and on my going there, in the course of the same day, to see if I could be of any use to him, I found that he was dead. The fatal result was no doubt accelerated, in this case, as in many others, by the want of judicious treatment.

In the neighbourhood of Chuquisaca are two mountains, called Macho and Embra, which form a background to this interesting city. With respect to these, there is a vulgar superstition, which has been handed down by the aboriginal races from father to son, and seems to have inoculated the present Choloos. It is, that these mountains are filled with the precious metals; but that the spirit, or spirits, of the place, have caused the waters of the subterranean rivers to accumulate over these riches, so that if, at any time, the cupidity of man should venture to disturb their repose, an overwhelming deluge of water would rush down upon the city, and destroy everything in it.

Several springs, which issue from these

mountains, supply the water which irrigates the numerous *quintas* and gardens which abound in this locality. It then escapes into a deep ravine, where, during the wet season, a formidable river presents itself; but under the parching influence of a summer's sun, this dwindles down into a mere running stream, sometimes scarcely discernible on the sands, or pebbly bed of the river. This outlet forms the main road for the numerous troops of laden mules and asses by which the commercial enterprise of the country is maintained; the former conveying goods of European manufacture, or the auriferous treasures furnished by the several mines which cover the surface of this favoured land; the latter, the fruits and necessaries of life produced by the patient industry of the frugal Indian. One side of the valley, in which the city is situated, presents a forest of mountain-peaks, not unlike, in appearance, the glaciers of Switzerland. In the opposite direction, the river winds amidst fertile hills and slopes, covered with pretty gardens and cultivated fields, and

forming the rustic retreat of the wealthy inhabitants, which, during the sultry days of the hot season, constitutes a desirable and fashionable watering-place.

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CHAPTER III.

Preparations for homeward journey— Chuchiwassí—
 Bartolo—Puna—Bellin—Perilous travelling—Caisa—
 Disturbed night at Quirbe—Storm near Cotagaite—
 Accident to the cargo mules, and rise of the waters—
 Moncharachi—Visit in the neighbourhood of Nacareno
 —Tambo del Negro Muerto—Humaguaca—Menura—
 Leon.

HAVING determined to take the overland journey to Buenos Ayres, on my way to Europe, I commenced making the necessary arrangements. Two fine young men, in the capacity of *herrerros*, with nine strong mules for saddle and baggage, were soon engaged to convey me to Salta, as well as a noble horse called Moro, which had been long in my service, and whose pedigree was unri-

valled for the famous pace suited to long journeys, and so much esteemed by the natives of the country. As it was essential that I should be well provided with a good stock of provisions, and some articles of culinary apparatus, I managed to get together something like the following medley assortment:—*charque* (dried beef), *chalmas* (dried mutton), preserved meats in tins, biscuits, rice, tea, coffee, chocolate, sugar, pepper, salt, potatoes, *aji* (red pepper pods), wines, spirits, syrups, porter, a bladder of lard, some butter and cheese, a frying-pan, tea-kettle, chocolate-pot, stewpan, lantern, sperm candles, soap, and, though last not least, a box of cigars.

Having thus a little personal property to protect, and having learnt from experience how lax are the notions of the people of this country, as regards the *meum* and the *tuum*, I furnished myself with a good supply of defensive weapons, as the following enumeration will show:—A rifle, a double-barrelled fowling-piece, two brace of pistols, two swords, and two Gaucho knives. An Italian cook, named Battista, whose services I had

hitherto found most invaluable, was an indispensable addition to my party, in a tedious journey of more than two thousand miles across the Pampas. Having had my saddles, harness, lassoes, and saddle-bags well examined and put into thorough repair, and having procured a good *armafraz* (a leathern bed and bedding-cover, strapped in the centre and thrown over a horse), as well as several warm and waterproof ponchos, I found myself in a tolerable condition for undertaking the dangers and fatigues of the road. And this, notwithstanding that it was now the rainy season, and the dreary month of January; and the probability of my being impeded by the swollen rivers, and exposed to the absence of all respect for travellers amongst the hostile armies of the Generals Urquiza and Rosas, who were about to come to an engagement on the plains of Buenos Ayres. After having taken leave of my numerous friends, a party of whom escorted me on horseback for more than a league on my journey, I bade a last adieu to the city of Chuquisaca, the fair capital of the Republic of Bolivia.

My road for some distance lay in the dry bed of a river, following the course of which I passed through a most agreeable tract of country, in which were dispersed several *quintas*, or bathing residences, belonging to the good people of Chuquisaca, as well as several large *estancias*, with their usual appurtenances. As I journeyed along, a slight dulness hung upon my spirits at the thought of leaving, perhaps for ever, a place endeared to me by many ties of enduring friendship, and where I had beguiled many a pleasant hour in the society of those I loved and honoured. My thoughts, however, were soon diverted from such reminiscences, and the painful feelings they occasioned in my mind, by a *rencontre* with a party of young ladies, whose acquaintance I had made in the city whence I was now taking my departure. Accompanied by their parents and a retinue of servants, they were returning to the capital, after a long visit to a distant estate, with smiling faces and the anticipation of a renewal of those pleasant scenes in which they had formerly participated. The opportunity, so unexpected,

which now offered itself, of wishing me a hearty farewell ere I finally turned my back on this hospitable country, was eagerly seized, and with many kind wishes for a prosperous journey to myself and cavalcade, my good friends left me to pursue my way alone, and indulge in my solitary contemplations.

The road now leaving the river bed, and taking the direction of a gradual slope on one side of the valley, the ruins of an old post-house were passed, and several herds of asses, laden with bales from Potosi, and accompanied by their Indian drovers, broke the monotony of the way. Having sent on the luggage mules, Battista and myself drew in rein at an excellent post-house which presented itself; and, having entered the large court-yard, slackened the girths of our animals, and seen them well baited, we began to look after ourselves, and make arrangements for our own creature comforts. The postmaster, an intelligent man, with a fine open countenance, was nearly bent double with rheumatism; and, entertaining the common opinion amongst the ignorant

country people that all foreigners are doctors, would insist on my prescribing for his malady, offering me money, or anything else that his house afforded, if I would but procure him relief from his sufferings.

Not wishing to disabuse his mind of so harmless a delusion, I brought out from my stores a mixture which I had for sprains, and "mine host," on its first application, pronounced himself so much better, that I was not sorry to have tried the experiment of palming myself off upon him as a veritable doctor. At all events, my unexpected success was only another proof of the intimate relation between mind and body, and of the strange influence exercised upon the functions of the latter by the force of imagination. We now partook of some *chichia*, a peculiar drink of the country, and some bread and cheese; and, finding our strength greatly recruited, we took our leave of my convalescent patient, amidst a perfect shower of benedictions, and were soon again toiling along a hot and dusty road.

After a ride which afforded little variety of scenery, we reached the post of El Puerto

Cadimago before sunset, where I had the good fortune to seize on the vacant furnished room, which I should rather call unfurnished, as it contained nothing more than the *adobe* table, and recesses, formed in the building. Another party, consisting of three men, who, from their appearance, seemed very undesirable *compagnons de voyage*, were obliged to take up their quarters and put up with every possible inconvenience in a shed close by. I called the postmaster, and insisted upon having my room swept out, and afterwards accompanied him to procure my *cebada*, for which I was charged the enormous rate of fourteen royals per quintal. Finding that the house failed to furnish us with more than a few eggs, I found it necessary to have recourse to my own stock of provisions, and in a very short time my cook had provided me an excellent dinner.

The room which we occupied being *minus* the usual appendage of a door, I was awoke in the night by a troop of dogs, who invaded the apartment, and threatened to carry off the remnants of our feast. As I liked neither their intrusion at this unseasonable

hour, nor the predatory habits in which they were fain to indulge, I got up and administered to them some wholesome chastisement, which had the effect of enabling me to pass the remainder of the night in quiet. By break of day our fellow-travellers were on foot, so I awoke Battista, and we began to get ready for a start; and, everything being completed, we were again in saddle, with just light sufficient to enable us to discern our way. As time wore on, and objects became more distinct, the ground on one side of the road appeared scattered with large fragments of broken rock, whilst the green mounds on the other showed perfect forests of peaked rocks standing on end, chiefly covered with a dark green coating of moss, and representing the most extraordinary and grotesque shapes imaginable. Having passed through this scene, our attention was attracted by the stern gaze of an eagle or vulture, who watched all our movements, and then darting into the air, rose aloft till lost in the glittering beams of the morning sun.

The post of Chuchiwassi being at hand, I suffered my baggage mules to pass on, and

remained behind with Battista to partake of some breakfast. An excellent omelet, a cup of chocolate, and some *foie gras*, rendered us fit to face again the heat and fatigue of a long day's journey. The post contained a very comfortable room for travellers, possessing the luxury of a door and window covered with hide, a thing not often to be met with in these localities. A little shop was attached to this establishment, where sundry delicacies were procurable—a perfect godsend to the poor famished muleteer. As our day had commenced so early, we contrived to make considerable progress. We entered by an angular cut into a *cabrada* of unusual width, having a very rocky and lowering aspect, the strata of various hues running in curves in all directions, whilst in a strong and rapid current the river wound its course round fragments of rocks detached from the neighbouring cliffs. Alternately passing over craggy precipices and the gravelly bed of the river, we gradually picked our way, and then beheld, on a slight elevation, the neat and clean-looking post of Lagunillas, with its trim garden and cultivated grounds. As we arrived in the vicinity of the place we ob-

served a little bustle amongst some neatly-attired young people, who had noticed our approach, but they were disappointed in their expectations of having a nearer gaze at us, for we passed on without making any stay.

The *lagunillas*, or small lakes in the neighbourhood, are greatly visited by sporting gentlemen who recreate here for a few days at certain seasons of the year, and generally take up their quarters at the post, on account of the superior accommodation to be met with there. Issuing from the *cabrada*, a beautiful little lake presented itself, surrounded by a circle of hills, amongst which it reposed like a mirror, whilst many of its feathered inhabitants glided along its shining surface, or rose in detachments with a noisy clatter, as we slowly approached their secluded haunts. On the margin of the waters, and in very close proximity, were several houses, no doubt frequented by the votaries of the chase. We were confirmed in this opinion by observing several men of a superior class, who had just dismounted, and were about to enter them.

Passing from this quiet scene, the country

opens into a wide and extended landscape, the winding stream continuing its course amidst green and rich pastures, and knolls, well wooded in all the luxuriant beauty of the wet season, surrounding several *haciendas*, which here appear in greater abundance than is generally the case in these thinly populated districts. After a long day's ride, every house which appeared in the distance filled us with the hope that it was the wished-for post, and finding our mistake as we advanced, we rode up to every Indian that we saw upon the road, and were still doomed to the disappointment of being told that the object of our search was at least two leagues further.*

* I may here remark, that the natives of the country have for the most part very vague ideas of distance. I have been told again and again, by different persons, that a place to which I was bound was two or three leagues off, and have found in the end that I have been nearly half a day in reaching it. This continual postponement of the desired release from the fatigue and constraint of a journey on horseback, is peculiarly trying. The effect of travelling for a long distance on horseback is seldom felt for the first or second day; but, after that, a stiffness comes on, and any little inequality or bad arrangement in the saddle or equipment is sensibly felt.

However, to our great joy, on the opposite side of a partly dry water-course, or river bed, our anticipations were at length realized in finding that we had alighted upon the post of Bartolo.

This post numbers several buildings, surrounding a large quadrangle, with a shop for necessaries and a good supply of forage, at a reasonable price. I here met with a young pursuivant of General Belza; and from him I learnt that the General had made his first public entry into Potosi since his recovery from the effects of his attempted assassination, and that the people of that city were celebrating the event with processions, bull-fights, and fireworks. I passed several agreeable hours with this young gentleman, who was travelling with his guitar *en troubadour*, and who sang and played till the hour of rest, to an audience of muleteers, Indians, and Choloos.

Soon after daybreak, I bade adieu to my friend of the previous evening, and was again in motion. Our journey this day lay through a flat and uninteresting tract of country,—for the most part, a kind of potteries, con-

nected with the town of Puna. This town has a very pleasing appearance. It contains a good Plaza and church, together with a tolerable sprinkling of decent shops, where fruits and many luxuries not often to be met with, are easily procured. Fixing my quarters at the *posada*, or hotel, I took possession of a large room, which I gave orders to have well swept out. A woman then presented herself, and offered to make me some *cupi* (a kind of Irish stew), compelling me to pay in advance, as, perhaps, I had a roguish look about me which did not entirely meet with her approbation. Having found three stones in the yard, she placed some fuel under them, and then the pot on the top, and in the course of an hour I had my dinner cooked under my very nose.

The meal was scarcely swallowed, when my two *herrereros* came in with the doleful news that no provender was to be had for our animals. These men possess one very good quality, and that is, that they never take any food or rest for themselves, under any circumstances whatever, till their animals are duly provided for. This, perhaps, is

more a necessity on their part than a virtue, as their living depends exclusively upon the condition of their beasts. Finding how matters stood, I sent at once for the *corregidor*, who soon presented himself, and confirmed the truth of the story I had just heard, telling me that the foragers of the cavalry, attendant on the General, had laid an embargo on the whole of the *cebada* and food for animals which they could find, in the name of the Government, thus leaving chance travellers to shift for themselves as best they could. However, the *corregidor* was kind enough to let me have two quintals of corn out of his own store, for which I paid him most liberally. My poor animals, who, to the sorrow of my two *herrereros*, had had a banyan time of it, after all the fatigues of the day, now made up for lost time, and on the following morning we were all in a condition to start afresh on our journey.

By break of day we were again *en route*; and, as I rode along, I was much interested in observing the natives engaged in the manufactures peculiar to this part of the country. The ingenuity with which the

Indian overcomes a host of difficulties, was to me most surprising. Without tools, and solely by his hands, he works the clayey soil, and models wares of all sizes; and turns them out, if not altogether graceful articles, at least durable ones. The character of the ground during the day presented several varieties of that peculiar earth which is adapted to pottery purposes. After rather a monotonous ride, the post of Bellin was reached; and having selected my little room, a comfortable meal was prepared me by Battista, from my own stock of provisions, after which the master of the post made his appearance, and, as afterwards proved the case, to my great annoyance. He was one of those persons sometimes to be met with even in more civilized parts of the world, who have always an appetite for anything good to eat that comes in their way, and form a ready acquaintance with a bottle, never leaving it till they have completely drained it dry. This fellow carried his propensity to a greater extent than I had ever seen. He not only put his dirty fingers into my dish, drank out of my bottle with the

greatest *nonchalance*, and smoked my cigars as coolly as if they were his own ; but actually appropriated the bottle, when he had helped largely to diminish its contents. In fact, he monopolized everything ; and in place of paying any attention to my constant rebukes, he bothered me with a volume of stupid questions, and at last put me out of all patience.

Disgusted with his conduct, and more particularly so, as he had done me so completely out of my dinner, I told Battista, privately, to get me a bottle of *pisco*. This was placed before my tormentor, who soon became dead-drunk, measured his full length upon the floor, and snored away like a pig. I now took up my gun, and went out for a ramble ; but, on returning, found the postmaster as I had left him, and still sound asleep. Thinking that we might now as well rid ourselves of his company, Battista and myself carried him away, neck and crop, and bundled him into a sort of shed, hard by, where we left him to recover, at his leisure, from the effects of his debauch.

The next day we started off, under a blue

sky, the bright rays of a tropical sun lighting up as extraordinary a scene as I ever witnessed. Two *cordons* of mountains, which had become visible during our journey of the previous day, began now, as we left the post, to be more distinctly marked, and their bold outlines were clearly perceptible, as they gradually closed in around a plain covered with wildwood and aromatic shrubs. Large rocks, detached by some convulsion of nature from their original positions, were standing in a group, and bore some resemblance to the Druidical remains of Stonehenge on a large scale, affording a safe retreat to man and beast in tempestuous weather. The ground in the neighbourhood was intersected by numerous streamlets, issuing from springs, and around them the shrewd Indian had taken care to cultivate many a field of maize and waving *cebada*. The sides of the mountain-pass presented primitive rocks of granite, and the various *strata* appeared impregnated with the several metals which had long lain dormant within their bosom. From the shelving ledges and peaks of the rock, the trees, that nervously grasped their hard

bed, where a thin crust of earth afforded their only nourishment, spread their overhanging branches in strange and fitful shapes, and threatened every moment to overwhelm the passing traveller.

As we advanced further into the ravine, the exuberance of vegetation increased at every step, the steep and rugged sides almost meeting over our heads, whilst deep at their base, the gulleys furrowed by the mountain cataracts rendered travelling attended with uncertainty and danger. As we pursued our slender track between the walled barriers on either side, we had to climb over fragments of pointed rocks, sometimes as smooth as a glacier. Then we wended our way along the intricacies of numerous peaks several hundred feet in height, with bare room to pass along rough-hewn steps, two or three feet apart; and by the very effort of my poor beast to rise or descend according to the nature of the path, I was in continual danger of having my limbs broken, or of being hurled from my saddle to the depths beneath.

At other times I had to pass over large

surfaces of stone, of twelve or fourteen feet in width, the edges being broken off at an inclined angle, and presenting as perfect a plane as if chiseled by the mason's hand. In these cases, it was wonderful how the instinct of danger in my mule, as well as his tenacious mode of footing, and exactness of balance, sufficed to carry me safely through the dangers which beset me on every hand. The path would occasionally follow a steep ascent, along a road strewn with broken fragments of stone, mixed with pieces of iron, or greatly impregnated with that metal. These would give way under the foot, and roll downwards, much to the terror and alarm of such as happened to be immediately following in the same route. At length, after many a struggle and many a pause, all dangers were surmounted, and we found ourselves standing on the summit of this ample range. The view on all sides, from this point, was wonderfully grand. The prominent peaks of the several hills, at different elevations, some of which were lost in the hazy clouds that hung upon their lofty heads, seemed to resemble a beautifully delineated chart.

Casting my eyes towards the opposite side of the mountain-range, I was astonished at the extraordinary depth of the plain beneath, forming one of those stupendous *plateaux* of land which are situated between Bolivia and the adjoining provinces of the Argentine Republic. The descent into this region presented to the anxious gaze of our party an accumulation of dangers and horrors which it is very difficult to depict in words. It consisted of rude steps, hewn out from the solid rock, at a most inconvenient and appalling distance from each other, and winding around solid blocks of stone in every possible variety of intricate turning, making the traveller giddy and confused, as he sees on the brink of the yawning precipice at his side, merely a few stones piled upon each other, to mark the boundary between himself and eternity. My mule made two or three slips, and miraculously saved himself by coming with his four feet all of a heap within an inch of the chasm; and in addition to the terror with which my precarious position, and the sudden jerk, which might have proved fatal to us both, inspired me, I was

made more sensible of my danger by the noise of the little balustrade of stones rolling over the cliff, and cutting the air with a whistling sound ere they reached the depths beneath, when the report, as of a piece of ordnance, as they each in succession struck the earth, was echoed and re-echoed from every cavern and subterranean channel.

I was persuaded by experience that the best and safest mode of making an ascent or a descent in passing along these terrific scenes, was to close my eyes, and having given my mule free bridle, to rely solely upon his sagacity for overcoming every danger. I did so upon this occasion, but not before I had taken a glance at the scene beneath me, and had noticed many a little wooden cross, resting on a pyramid of stones, which marked the spot where some unfortunate traveller had met his fate. This was no cheering view; but as my eye wandered along the large and rugged rocks which were many feet in altitude, and in many instances rent asunder by some fierce mountain torrent, I could discern, at the very bottom of the picture, enclosed in this rude frame of nature,

and in beautiful contrast with its savage wildness, a peaceful little Indian village, surrounded with all its rustic charms, and exhibiting its neat gardens, and pastures well stocked with sheep, browsing in quiet security. Closing my eyes, in order to shut out from my mind as much as possible all sense of danger, how I longed to be beside them ! But all things have an end ; and in process of time, I found that I had made the descent in safety, and was once more on level ground, and partaking with much relish and satisfaction from a horn of water with which a comely Indian mother, who sat near her dwelling, surrounded by her chubby little family, most kindly provided me.

We now left the range of hills, and pursued our way across the country to the banks of a large river, or rather of what might claim that appellation after the heavy rains which fall at the usual season of the year. Along the vast bed, a shallow stream was now running at a very rapid rate. Continuing our course in the direction of the river, we passed several

well-cultivated gardens and fields filled with abundant crops, due to the Indian's assiduous industry. With great ingenuity he constructs tier after tier of patches of ground, which are well irrigated by means of water-channels, destined to convey to the soil those liquid treasures which in these parts are the very life and soul of husbandry. Passing several small villages agreeably situated amidst young woods and waving crops, we continued on until the river passes along a steep slope, descending with great rapidity under the cliffs which now stand out higher and bolder. It then divides, and pursues two distinct courses. As we advanced, the little town of Caisa presented itself, hidden in a recess, and consisting of a Plaza, church, parsonage-house, and a number of mud-houses.

The post was rather a superior building, and under the superintendence of a very intelligent man, half soldier and half farmer, who had been married to a remarkably pretty little woman, who appeared dressed out after the most approved European fashion. She, in company with her husband, was

just putting her foot in the stirrup in order to pay a visit to Potosi, and take a part in the festivities by which the visit of General Belza to that city were at that time being celebrated. Fortunately, we entered the house before they set off, and I was enabled to procure a supply of bread, newly baked, and also ten or twelve quintals of dry *cebada*. I determined to sojourn at this place for a day or two, in order to give my animals a little rest and dry food, and sent one of my *herrerros* to bargain for the purchase of a sheep. Not being successful, I made him order the *corregidor* to get me one, as my passport strongly enjoined all postmasters, *corregidores*, and other functionaries, to render me every assistance in their power, and to provide me with all necessaries of which I might stand in need.

The *corregidor* himself soon appeared, with an Indian woman carrying a small sheep. The woman cried most piteously, and supplicated us most eagerly to spare her lamb. I asked her how much it was worth. She said four reals, upon which I offered her eight; and, as I put the dollar into her hand,

her lamentations became louder and louder over the dire bereavement to which she was exposed. However, as she stuck by the money, the *corregidor* and myself tugged away at the lamb, and it was as much as our united efforts could accomplish to succeed in the capture of our mutton.*

After dinner I watched the arrival of about forty Indian women, and soon afterwards two troops of asses, laden with fire-wood and jars, made their appearance, escorted by twenty Indians. In a few minutes the court-yard was in a state of bustle and confusion; the asses being divested of their burdens—the bundles of wood which they carried were piled about in all directions, and furnished some fifteen or twenty fires, large earthen jars filled with water being placed over them to boil. Two or three women who were attending to

* It is a singular circumstance that, although these Indian women often possess flocks of sheep numbering several hundreds, it is difficult in many cases to persuade them to part with a single one. These people often pass month after month without partaking of a particle of animal food, although literally surrounded with it. They only do so whenever a sheep or a lamb dies, in which case a feast is immediately made of the carcase.

these operations, were continually throwing into these jars small balls of triturated maize, which was then stirred up with a wooden spoon. The night having set in rather dark, the glare of the numerous fires, and the forms flitting about amongst them, resembled a gipsy encampment, and produced a very picturesque effect.

This scene continued throughout the night; the process which was carried on being the manufacture of *chichia*; and as three days and three nights are requisite properly to complete it, any neglect on the part of those engaged in it is very apt to injure the quality of the liquor. After watching them for some time I retired to rest, and after the enjoyment of some refreshing repose, and a comfortable breakfast on the following morning, I returned again to observe the progress made by the *chichia* makers. I was informed that the expense of this affair was defrayed by a rich landed proprietor, who was about to give a grand *fete*, which was to last for several days, during which he would regale the numerous Indians upon his estate according to annual

custom. During the continuance of this *fete* eating, drinking, and dancing are carried to a great extent, and many are reduced to a state of beastly intoxication, both sexes generally quarrelling and fighting until they are entirely prostrated by the effects of this general debauch. After an agreeable ramble with my fowling-piece, during which I filled my pockets with turtle doves, which formed an admirable adjunct to the stew I had ordered, I retired early to bed, and on the following day we bade adieu to Caisa.

On leaving this town we returned to the bed of the river, and followed its numerous windings, as the beautiful cactus reared its white head on each side of the way. Being provided with first-rate animals, Battista and myself thought to be very clever, and pushed on as fast as we were able, in order to arrive at the next post before our guides and baggage. We imagined that there could be no mistake about the road, but had not started off together very long, when we found that it diverged in two opposite directions, and there we stood looking at each other, and then at the roads, consulting together,

and sustaining the several arguments for each. As ill-fate would have it, we at last took the wrong one, as we found out to our cost, for we had the pleasure of riding six or eight leagues for nothing. We had wandered about for some hours, when we found ourselves again in the bed of the river, and saw, to our joy, on one of its steep banks a village and its church. As we approached it, the ringing of many bells, and the assemblage of a vast concourse of persons in all directions proclaimed a *fete*.

Riding up to a building that had all the appearance of a post-house, I inquired if this were the village or post of Quirbe. Around the open *porte cochere* were loitering a crowd of as ill-looking and cut-throat a set of fellows as I ever beheld. More or less intoxicated, they were quarrelling and gambling to a fearful extent, their poor horses being picketed here and there around the building. I was about to repeat my question, when three or four of these fellows sallied forth from the portal, seized hold of the bridle of my horse, and, in place of satisfying my demand, insisted upon my instantly showing

them my passport. I thought it prudent to comply with this request, taking the precaution to hold the document in my hand. Having done so, I peremptorily ordered them to take their hands off my horse, which, not being complied with on the instant, I partially drew my sword from its scabbard and set spurs to my steed. This example was immediately followed by Battista, and away we went, leaving the group to hasten after us, or leave it alone, as they might think fit. After watching us for some time, they adopted the latter course, probably considering that it would be the safer for them in the end.

Pulling in our reins, when fairly out of their reach, we found ourselves about as wise as before relative to the road to Quirbe. At this juncture we were fortunate enough to overtake an Indian, whom, in consideration of a small piece of money, we were enabled to enlist in our service. He undertook to put us in the right road, and soon after we had placed ourselves under his guidance we entered upon an open tract of country, in which I could trace several homesteads

shaded with trees. I immediately inquired of our guide if he could point me out the post, upon which he answered me in one of the primitive languages of Peru, at the same time shaking his head, giving me to understand that it was not in sight. After crossing the bed of a river we were met by a man mounted on a white horse, who politely bowed to us, and on entering into conversation with him we discovered him to be the master of the very post of which we were in search.

“First catch your hare,” as Mrs. Glass well remarks. We thought ourselves now quite secure of our game, and promised ourselves, in a short time, all the bodily comforts for the enjoyment of which our long ride had well qualified us. Accordingly we dismissed our Indian guide, and joined company with our friend of the post, who informed us that he had just returned from the *fête*, where he had been much entertained by the fun and amusement which it had afforded. He gave us a full account of all he had seen, the dancing of the Indian women, dressed out in their gala costume, under garlands and fes-

toons of flowers which had been hung around the church—the horse-racing of the men for prizes,—several fights, and gambling in all its varieties; but that which seemed to have given him the greatest delight, was the sight of whole parties of men, women, and children reeling about under the effects of liquor.

As we advanced, my friend expatiated largely upon the accommodation which his house afforded; but judge of my surprise, when, after crossing some fields of maize, and arriving at some detached huts, with rooms hardly large enough to swing a cat in, he introduced me to them as his premises. One was occupied by the post-master, his wife, and numerous progeny; another by his stock in trade, consisting chiefly of *Aparachos* (pads and mule trap-pings); and the third was now to be devoted to myself.

On my arrival I was too hungry to notice anything till I had taken some dinner; but after having partaken of a savoury meal, prepared by Battista with materials selected from my stock, and the side of a sheep,

deliciously grilled, I was enabled to survey my apartment at leisure. The rafters of the room attracted my particular attention. On close examination they turned out to be composed of the wood or dried pith of the cactus. This wood is of a yellowish hue, and perforated all over with small holes like a honeycomb—though sufficiently strong for the purpose to which it was applied. I admired the ingenuity of these people, who have learnt to turn everything to some profitable use, and even the scarcity of wood is not felt, when they can so readily make use of so apparently unpromising a material in its place. Candles being lighted and beds made, in one of which I took up my position, and regaled myself with a cup of tea and a cigar, I prepared myself for some refreshing rest, thanking my stars for having led me to these quarters, such as they were.

I had scarcely closed my eyes, as a prelude to some delightful dream, to the charms of which I had resigned myself, and the candles had been extinguished, when, lo and behold, a quantity of strange things came tumbling down upon my face, and the bed in which I

lay. I could distinctly hear the noise they made in falling, but it was too dark for me to distinguish what it was that had so inopportunately broken in upon my repose. My first impulse was to call Battista, who, I found, was sitting up in bed, and wondering, like myself, at the strange thing that had happened. The next moment I began to cry out with pain, feeling myself bitten all over. My companion did the same, and as we jumped about from the agony we experienced, we came in contact with each other with such force (it being completely dark), that we knocked each other down, throwing over, in the scuffle, the candles and other articles which came in our way. The noise we had occasioned alarmed my *herrerros*, who rushed into the room with sword and pistol in hand, and carrying a light.

The scene which presented itself was most astounding. Every hole in the cactus roof was besieged by troops of *Bichuchos*.*

* This insect resembles in colour a black beetle. It is somewhat less in size, and armed with large tusks or fangs. It is very quick in its movements, and subsists entirely upon human blood.

Hundreds had forced their way into the room, and owing to my sitting position, had found their way under the bed-clothes, and were actually eating me up. Thinking it best to leave them in possession of the apartment they had so unceremoniously invaded, I hastily seized my garments, and was dressed in a very short space of time. Then having gone out into the open air, taking my saddle for a pillow, and spreading a *poncho* for my bed, I lay down upon the cold ground, and slept as well as I could under the circumstances. Rising by break of day, I called my servants together, and with no pleasing reminiscences of the post of Quirbe, or my adventure of the previous night, I bade adieu to it without regret.

A few leagues from this place the country presents a perfect forest of underwood, the trees all appearing of a stunted growth. We passed several asses laden with pears, which proved quite a God-send. We purchased an abundant supply, and munched away at them as we continued our journey. The scene soon began very visibly to change its character, and we entered upon a plain

covered with short underwood, and skirted on each side by enormous cliffs. In front lay a beautiful champagne country, to arrive at which we had to cross a clear, broad, but shallow stream. On the other side stands the picturesque town of Santiago de Cotagaité. At this place I was overtaken by two officers, well mounted, who proved to be friends whom I had previously known at La Paz. The license of the road and the recollections of our former acquaintance, put us on the very best of terms, and the *rencontre* was most agreeable to us all. They heartily responded to my imprecations upon the post of Quirbe, informing me that several persons had suffered as I had done, and that the place was generally at night time avoided as the plague, though occasionally resorted to during the day for the purpose of baiting cattle. We were about to enter upon general topics, when two or three slight indications forewarned us of a coming storm. There was a general buzz of insects, that seemed hurrying to and fro in great bewilderment. Every breath of air had long since ceased, and yet at intervals low murmuring sounds

appeared to roll along the earth. The clouds hung in heavy masses, and a sulphurous odour pervaded the atmosphere.

My friends loosened their ponchos, and covered over their bodies, advising that we should gallop at full speed towards Cotagaite. This was no sooner said than off we started, but had not proceeded far before a line of silvery light shot across the road before us, and as quick as thought the opposite cliff, consisting of a block of stone of many hundred tons in weight, was shivered into a thousand pieces. At the same moment the thunder burst over our heads, booming and vibrating in all directions, the sound of which, mingling with the loud noise occasioned by the falling fragments of rocks, produced a most deafening effect, and added considerably to the terror of the scene. In a few seconds a deluge of water came down upon our devoted heads, and our animals, in spite of spur or entreaty, ran under the trees and turned their backs upon the storm. Our shelter was too slight effectually to screen us against the effects of the rain ; but, drenched as we were, we endeavoured to make a fresh start, as the storm travelled

quickly a-head. The rain, however, continued with unabating fury; but on we urged, our steeds crossing with some difficulty the river, which had now become considerably swollen from the many cataracts which had been formed in the neighbouring hills.

On arriving at the town we galloped into the Plaza, where we found, as well as in the adjoining streets, a perfect sheet of rushing water. I was conducted by my companions to the post, a large, and I may even say, a magnificent building; for, without any exception, it was the best house of the sort that I had ever met with in Bolivia. A commodious well-papered room, furnished with tables and two bedsteads, promised us a more agreeable night's rest than we had experienced at our last place of stoppage. The dinner almost bordered on profusion. There was *chupe*, grilled fowl, lamb, and sweetmeats; and we enjoyed these delicacies with so much relish that we quite forgot our ducking. A young gentleman, son of a rich landed proprietor in the department, who possessed several valuable estates in the neighbourhood of this town, offered me his services in any way

that might be desirable. So pressing was he in his civilities, that I was at last obliged to accept a box of cigars at his hands. He likewise gave me a note to a certain postmaster, on the road, who was one of his dependants, requiring him to give me the best information as to the route I should take, it being given out that on the road to Tupisa the waters were so high as to destroy all land-marks.

The next morning, thoroughly refreshed, after a breakfast of chocolate and eggs, we mounted our horses in excellent condition. From the circumstances under which I entered the town of Santiago de Cotagaite, and the hasty visit which I made there, I am unable to give the reader any idea of its general aspect. On leaving it, however, I passed through several broad streets lined with superior houses, and near to a capacious Plaza and imposing cathedral. We were soon beyond the precincts of the town, and having arrived at a homestead situated in the midst of much cultivated ground, I delivered my credentials to the postmaster, a little, thick-set, talkative, and important-

looking individual, who sat lounging in a chair, and smoking under the shade of some fig-trees. Having read the letter, he jumped up and became all at once very obsequious, observing that he had expected us for some days, and hoped that we would remain and partake of his hospitality. However, as I had determined to proceed without making any further stay, he mounted a mule which was already saddled, and accompanied me for a short distance, in order to put myself and my servants in the right track.

He informed me of the swollen state of the rivers, and detailed several serious accidents that had happened in the vicinity, from the unusual rise of the waters, many of which had been attended with loss of life. Having counselled me to avoid the city of Tupisa and make a bold cut for the frontier, and pointed out several other particulars of the route that I should take, he respectfully withdrew, leaving myself and party to find our way as best we could, according to his directions.

The country now assumed a very hilly character, and a series of precipitous and

winding ascents and descents formed the principal features of the scene. The sides of the mountains soon exhibited a very fresh and green aspect; the storms which accompany the rainy season having now set in, and which visit this district regularly every day about four o'clock in the afternoon. It was about this time of the day when—the thunder rolling, and the rain descending in torrents—our cargo-mules reached the top of an embankment and commenced their descent towards the river beneath, which ran at a depth of a hundred feet or more. The road at this part was composed of a sort of earth called *grada*, which, when wet, is extremely slimy and slippery. The moment the poor animals, three in number, had placed foot on it, the character of the soil and the weight of their loads made them slide over from the top nearly to the bottom, turning a complete somersault in the air and alighting on their backs, much to the detriment of the trunks and wares which they carried. The scene was ludicrous enough, if one could but divest oneself of the idea of the pain the poor creatures were suffering.

The *herrero* no sooner saw his valuable mules starting off at this rapid rate than he sprang from his horse and prepared to follow, forgetting, in his anxiety to save his beasts, the slippery nature of the ground. Having placed his feet on the declivity, away he went, now sliding on his back, now walking upright, at other times almost on all fours, but describing in his descent all manner of antics in order to save himself, amidst the peals of laughter of myself and Battista, although we were, in reality, seriously concerned at the danger to which he had exposed himself. Just at this moment, an Indian woman, who had witnessed the scene, screamed out to us and pointed out a deep gully at hand, which I saw at once was accessible, and although it was more easy for an Indian than for a European to arrive at it, I contrived, by dint of spur and grumbling, to urge on my horse, who scrambled down by a series of jumps and sliding, till we found ourselves safe in the place indicated—a sort of trough worn by the waters, in some parts scarcely wide enough to enable us to avoid, without dodging, the abrupt and

pointed projections to be met with in the tortuous course.

After following a slight declivity, we found that we had at last arrived at the river's bed, and Battista and myself were congratulating ourselves upon our safe descent into a place of security, when a rushing sound, like the roaring of the ocean, caught our ears, and presently a gust of wind forced its passage to where we stood, accompanied by subterranean reports, which accumulated every moment. Our horses became so terrified that they were quite unmanageable. Battista and myself were carried we knew not where. The animal which I rode jumped up a side of rock almost perpendicular, and thence scrambled to a ledge, where I contrived to hold him in, trembling and snorting. The curious phenomenon was then explained. The heavy rains which had of late deluged the country around, and particularly the previous storm, had caused such an accumulation of water in the neighbouring mountains, that it had swept along the plains beneath till it had reached this chasm; then, with the fury

of a cataract, it had rushed in a fearful body, carrying along before it stones, branches, or any other obstacles that impeded its course.

I looked forth from my perch with anything but satisfaction on the increasing tide, which whirled with a vehemence indescribable, foaming and splashing, but, worst of all, increasing to within a few feet of the station where I had planted myself. The thought of being drowned without a chance of succour in this secluded spot in the wilds of Bolivia, far from the country of my birth, with no friend near to heed or pity me, took full possession of my mind. These painful reflections damped my spirits for a time, but I was soon cheered when I looked abroad and fancied that the noise of the rushing waters was abating. It was happily true—the dashing waves were gradually subsiding, and I saw before me the hope of a release. I thanked God and took courage, and after a time ventured to dismount, and having carefully led my horse down the declivity, waded along the shallow stream. I now beheld Battista seated, like a crow, on a projecting stump. His mule had made her way half up

the cliff, and was quietly eating on a little *plateau*, occasionally leaving off to catch a glance at her master. It is worthy of observation that these animals, after having been ridden for some time, show an extraordinary attachment to their masters, which they evince by many a curious trait of sagacious instinct.

Descending from our exalted position, we jointly managed with some difficulty to get possession of the mule, and ultimately landed her safely, where she could find some firm footing. After this, issuing into the bed of the river, we began to breathe more freely and laugh at our former fright. We soon encountered some Indians, who informed us that they had seen our men and baggage, and that they were slowly advancing towards the next post. Following a road which led for some distance along a high embankment at the side of the river, we came across two large plantations, encompassed by mud walls, where the appearance of the crops betokened much care and skill in husbandry. This gave us an assurance that our journey for the day was nearly ended; but still we saw no *hacienda*, and had to trudge on, hoping every moment to catch sight of some

welcome asylum after our dangers and fatigues.

Having wandered from the river in search of the domicile we made so sure of, we found ourselves, after a short time, again close to its banks. It had in this part extended itself to a kind of lake, and was covered with wild ducks. Feeling inclined to secure something in this uncertain country, Battista and myself loosened our guns, and in three or four shots we contrived to make ourselves masters of several fine birds. As we advanced after this, the great object of our wishes at length came in sight. The *hacienda* of Moncharachi, newly built, or at least recently repaired, offered us its welcome shelter. We were shown into one of the rooms that had just been finished, and was beautifully whitewashed and plastered. It was paved with bricks, and had commodious benches. Adjoining was a comfortable bedroom, and a smaller dormitory for my companion. The *major-domo* of this large establishment was a black, who paid us every attention, providing us with an excellent dinner and forage for the animals, and all at a very trifling expense.

At this place we were joined by our lost mules and baggage, none the worse for the disaster they had met with. Here we contrived to pass a very jolly evening, and in the morning arose in pretty good time for the prosecution of our journey. At first starting we had to follow along the base of a range of high hills, with the dry bed of a river on the other side, in which a spring murmured, as its crystal water sparkled in the sun's rays. Large trunks of trees and shrubs formed little islands and peninsulas, and here and there a slip of the alluvial soil had given rise to natural gardens, in which flowers and aromatic shrubs shed their fragrance on the surrounding air. An aperture in the hills through which our path led, soon brought us into an extensive plain covered with underwood, and gradually sloping downwards as far as the broad river of Nacareno. Numerous small farms, with their enclosed fields of maize, orchards, and gardens, covered the approaches and banks. The number of large wood-pigeons which flocked about amidst the maize was incredible. Allowing, therefore, our baggage to advance towards the ford, Battista and myself kept

up a little sport for some time, till our pockets were quite crammed with the fruits of our industry. Then, observing some men and horses fording the river in the distance, we were determined to follow in their track.

This river has an enormous breadth, and at its full must be wholly impassable. We were fortunate enough to find it in parts so shallow, that the bed was plainly visible, leaving here and there little streams of deep and rapid water, which it was necessary to ford carefully. Guiding our animals in an angular direction, the great body of water was avoided, and the opposite bank was reached. Our road now lay through wooded lanes, hedged in on each side by well planted fences. Fields of maize and *cebada*, and orchards and gardens, prolific in fruits, flowers, and vegetation, were met with in great profusion. The roads were remarkably good, and the several indications of active industry would bear a comparison even with some of the rural districts of England. The town of Nacareno is entered. Men and women, attired in their holiday dresses, and mounted on horseback, continually arrive,

the women being seated behind the men on the same horse. Booths are filled with gew-gaws and finery, or useful implements and goods of various descriptions. Indian women are to be seen squatted on the ground, whilst before them are fires, over which hang suspended frying-pans and pots filled with their several savoury contents, which hissed and bubbled, and scattered their enticing odours far and wide.

Riding up to the post-house, the master of which was the justice of the peace, I found that learned functionary, together with the greater part of his assistants, in a state of the most beastly intoxication. This happened to be the *fete* of the patron saint of the place, and I immediately saw that I should have the greatest difficulty in enlisting any one in my service. Not being able to make anything of the chief magistrate, who endeavoured to embrace me whenever I put any question to him, and was continually calling upon a pretty young female with a child in her arms, and probably his wife, to procure him more drink, I sent for the Commandant—a smart, talkative young officer

—and asked him if I could by any possibility find food and lodging for myself and party.

This gentleman advised me most strongly not to remain in the place, as the people had been drunk for the last three days; but proposed to take me to the house of a friend of his, an Alquisil, at the distance of about three leagues further, where he promised that I should find every accommodation. Thinking this plan to be a good one, though tired and hungry myself, and my poor beasts and attendants much in the same condition, I immediately ordered them to advance, as the day was rapidly drawing to a close. My military companion managed, by incessant talking, to beguile many a weary league, for I was fully sensible that the distance mentioned by my guide had been long passed, when there was no symptom of our having arrived at our destination. The night set in dark and dreary, as star after star became hidden behind an opaque mass of clouds that had been gathering around. Distant peals of thunder announced one of those fearful storms, so common in the wet season, and of which I had already had painful experience.

Drawing my poncho close around me, in order the better to face the hurricane that was fast approaching, I found the darkness thicken at every step; and the fear of falling into some pit or chasm made me on the alert, as, after each succeeding flash of lightning had struck painfully on the sight, its intense brilliancy almost depriving me of the power of vision, I was left, after it had passed by, in a state of utter darkness, and obliged cautiously to grope my way. Following each other and our guide by a continual interchange of shouts, we passed from the main road into what seemed to be a very doubtful passage on the borders of a wood, amidst rocks, underwood, and a large number of streams, which flowed in all directions from the high land, at the bottom of which the forest spread its extensive range. The height had become so fearful, and the darkness so profound, that the young officer was quite at a loss how to find his way to a house which he told me he had, perhaps, visited a hundred times before. He exerted himself to the utmost to succeed in his object, scrambling up to the top of a hill, whenever he

beheld a light, in order to gain some information or a guide, and then hastening back to me to communicate the result of his errand.

The rain was, if possible, more violent than ever, when he returned to me with the joyful intelligence that the house was close at hand. We could discern some lights at a considerable height above, and were requested to follow the Indian guide as closely as possible. The Alquisil's house was situated on the brow of a hill, composed of rocky cliffs at the base; and through these a rough path wound its course, difficult enough at daytime and in fair weather, but, now that the intense darkness was only occasionally relieved by a passing flash of lightning, it was all but impracticable. Besides this, owing to the incessant rains during the night, the waters from the higher lands had so greatly accumulated that they only found vent by rushing impetuously over the hill's side, and formed furious cataracts along the steep rocky steps by which we had now to ascend. By the continual use of our spurs, and an occasional shouting, one after another

of our party managed to dash through this watery pass without more serious damage than a good wetting, which completely finished what the rain had begun.

We had now reached a place of safety. The Alquisil, his pretty daughter—whom I soon discovered to be the attraction which made our kind friend the Commandant so well acquainted with the locality—his wife, and another relation, received my military guide and myself with a hearty welcome. And this we thoroughly appreciated, although we were received into nothing better than a miserable mud hovel, two rooms of which were immediately placed at our disposal; and, as regards refreshment, a cup filled with a liquor half tea and half *cana* (a spirit distilled from the cane, and much above proof), was all that was offered us. However, as we had plenty of provisions of our own, this made little difference, and we found our host and his family very well disposed to join us in partaking of our humble meal. On the following day we hailed one of those bright mornings, unequalled in any other land, which the traveller so often meets with in

this country, and having thanked our friends for their hospitality, we finally bade them adieu.

Passing over a number of small hills which commanded an extensive view of a beautiful country, clothed in Nature's loveliest garb of green, we caught sight of a goodly town, with its church and Plaza, and neat houses, with walled gardens adjoining, filled with every variety of fruit and vegetable. The farm-houses in the suburbs, with their excellent pastures, in which sheep and horned cattle were grazed, invited us to draw in rein; but we did not do so, but continued our course along the plains, whose monotony became tedious, as league after league was passed, until at length the town of Mojo appeared in view, resting on its scathed and barren foundations. Its straggling and ruinous streets of mud-built houses badly white-washed, and petty shops ill supplied with provisions, mark it as a place of little importance, although it bears a high repute for its *panaderos* and bread. I took up my quarters at the post-house, a little way out of the town; but the Commandant, a polite officer,

offered me a domicile for the night at his own quarters, as well as a dinner *à la militaire*, both which, for company's sake, I was very glad to accept.

Procuring a good supply of bread the next morning, I pushed on for the last post in Bolivia, before entering upon the provinces belonging to the Argentine Republic. We had risen with the lark, to pursue our way across plains which exhibited little variety, and after a tedious and short ride, we arrived at some *corrales* and cultivated fields. Near to these a small river marked the boundary of Bolivia, and in the vicinity stood the post of Laquica, consisting of a number of small tenements, forming the enclosure of a courtyard. The master, a tall, Quixotic, sedate-looking personage, assumed a very great air of importance, attributable, as I learnt, to his holding the office of justice of the peace. In these countries, this function is often bestowed upon men who can neither read nor write, and are incapacitated, through sheer ignorance, from properly performing the duties of their office. As is usually the case, their assurance and obstinacy keep pace with

their ignorance, and there is little chance of the latter being cured, so long as they adhere, with pig-headed tenacity, to any opinion, however absurd.

After having had our cattle well attended to, and partaken with considerable relish of a side of lamb, which I was fortunate enough to obtain, I asked his judgship to join me in a glass of wine, to which he consented without hesitation. In the course of our conversation together, he informed me that a number of my countrymen (doctors, as he called them, according to the mistaken notion of the natives of these countries with regard to foreigners) had, from time to time, passed that way, and taken advantage of the shelter of his roof. He had offered ten dollars to one of them, if he would operate upon a wen which gave him a great deal of uneasiness, but that individual refused to make the attempt under twenty dollars, and therefore the incumbrance remained *in statu quo*. He hoped I would be more reasonable, and insisted that I should at once commence the operation; to which I demurred, telling him that all foreigners were not doctors; but to

no avail, so far as regards my attempt to disabuse his mind of the delusion under which he laboured. I now wished him good-night, in order to retire to my bed, and my would-be patient taking the hint, soon withdrew.

The next morning soon found us in the province of Salta, and after a long day, characterized by scarcely any variety of scene, three little mud Indian cottages represented the first post on the new territory on which I had entered. This was the post of Cangreco, and the postmaster (as we should say in Ireland) consisted of an old woman, who, when I arrived, was very busy in sweeping out the room, and supplying fuel to the fire. The accommodation at this place was detestable, and I experienced a great want of comfort during my stay here. Whilst I was partaking of the meal which my hostess had provided me, an old Indian, who was, no doubt, the husband of the woman, made his appearance, took a seat in the middle of the room, and watched me as a cat would a mouse. He soon began to show a disposition to share with me several things with which I was

furnished, intimating his desire by certain very unequivocal signs.

Having complied with his exorbitant demands, I endeavoured to escape from his importunities by retiring to my bed; but this did not suffice to get rid of him, for he arranged his things with the utmost composure in the same room with me, and quietly betook himself to rest. At first Battista and myself proposed to carry him gently out, but upon reflection it occurred to us that it would be rather too bad to turn a man out of his own house. We therefore allowed him to remain, when he commenced snoring to such a degree, that it was past all endurance. We then resorted to the old remedies of whistling, coughing, and such like noises, and finding that the desirable result did not ensue, we began to throw about boots, and other articles that came to hand. Not one wink of sleep did we have during the whole of that live-long night, our companion being determined to annoy us in every possible way. We hailed the dawn, therefore, with unspeakable pleasure, and prepared to leave him to his own devices.

Before we took our departure, I saw a bargain struck between one of my *herrerros* and a man who had been obliged to rough it on the outside of the house, with his horses, mules, and baggage. This individual exchanged away a splendid horse, which was merely a little lame from a sprain, for a small cob, which had been sold to my young man but a few days previously for six dollars. It appears that the other had taken a fancy to it, and actually, with merely a few dollars in addition, took it in exchange for a really valuable animal. I have often heard of the people of this country being possessed with these childish fancies, and of their making great sacrifices, in a pecuniary point of view, merely to satisfy some foolish whim. Having now arranged my cavalcade, and put everything into marching order, I left, without regret, the post of Cangreco, heartily wishing never to see it more.

After travelling for some leagues, we reached the entrance of a rocky *cabrada*, with a rapid river running through its centre. The entrance was so narrow, and the appearance of the rocks so threatening, that much

danger was incurred in making way over the fragments that lay strewn upon the ground. After much rain, the *cabrada* is, in fact, impassable, but we contrived at last to obtain a fair footing, and passed through it without difficulty. On leaving it at the other side, the dry bed of the river extends to an enormous width, covered with pieces of rock, the stream being confined to one narrow channel, except where it is divided into forks, which again joined the parent stream further on in its course. Two well cultivated farms were passed, and numerous cottages with their gardens; and afterwards appeared in the distance, the colossal building of the *Tambo del negro muerto* (caravanseray of the dead negro).

This building, I was informed by the *major-domo*, a Spaniard, was erected by a company at Potosi, and the speculators expected to realize large fortunes by the various purposes to which the establishment was to be devoted. All the herds of cattle that could be collected from the adjoining provinces, were to be assembled here once a-year, and then a great slaughter was to take place; the hides to be tanned, and made

into leather, and the meat dried, and formed into *Charquè*, or *Chalones*, these being the only food generally to be met with in the mines that cover Bolivia, and articles in most general demand. The fat and grease were, likewise, to be melted down, and made into candles and soap for the same market. Besides this, the grounds belonging to the *hacienda*, being very extensive, were to be cultivated with *cebada*, and a large profit derived from its sale. The accommodation for travellers at the house was most excellent. It contained large stores of every good thing to tempt the appetite, as well as of several articles much in demand; and the proximity of this establishment to the Bolivian frontier encouraged the hopes of the speculators, and gave a great air of feasibility to their scheme. Should the French persevere in their contemplated exploration of the central rivers of South America, and more particularly of those of Bolivia, and discovering their navigation to be practicable, see the importance of fixing stations,—this *hacienda*, lying, as it does, exactly in the line of communication, would become a very necessary link in assisting the general traffic.

Having passed an agreeable evening in the society of the polite and intelligent Spaniard who had favoured me with the above detail, I retired to my comfortable apartment, regretting that there were no more of these establishments upon the road. By break of day I was again in saddle, and soon found myself in the river's bed between high rocky banks, which increased in altitude as we advanced. Everything resembling a tree or a shrub had completely vanished from the scene, and in their place appeared forests of cactus of every variety of size, some measuring even as much as twenty feet in height, and many of them, being in full bloom, exhibiting their beautiful flowers of crimson or pale blue. Following along by the base of the hills, several of which we crossed, we advanced towards a high mountain range, startling, as we proceeded, a herd of fifty or sixty *becunas*. Before I could loosen my rifle they had turned the corner of a hill in beautiful style, and having come up to another hilly brow, they stopped short, and turning round, stared boldly at me.

Although I was convinced that they were out of shot, I could not resist the temptation

of bringing my trusty Manton to bear upon them. However, it missed fire, and away they went again, leaving me to the indulgence of a hope of more successful sport another time. We now crossed the higher range of hills, and following in due course a lower level, we came to a regular defile, in the centre of which ran a watercourse, the drainage of the neighbouring slopes, which were beautiful with the fresh verdure with which they were plentifully covered. As I looked occasionally to the summits of the hills I could plainly behold little parties of *becunas* quietly feeding, as if they knew by instinct that they were out of range.

On entering a valley which resolved itself into the adjoining plains, the elevation of the mountains gradually diminished. As we advanced, several cultivated patches of ground began to inform us of the near habitation of man. We passed several small clusters of underwood and clumps of prairie grass, the background presenting a high range of dark-looking rocks, at the base of which flowed a noisy river; and afterwards turning to the right, the pretty little town of Humaguaca

was clearly visible. Its neatly whitewashed houses, together with its conspicuous church and steeple, all in the midst of flourishing gardens and cultivated fields, formed a pleasing picture; and I was about to enter the place and indulge in a closer inspection of it, when my attention was attracted to a small lake surrounded by green sward, in which a number of fine ducks were swimming and sporting about.

Jumping off my horse and making a slight *detour*, I let fly both the barrels of my gun one after the other, and bagged a couple of birds. Whilst I was engaged in this amusement my horse took it into his head to move on, so that I was obliged, in order not to lose sight of him, to give up my sport and follow in his track. The started birds, however, made a long circuit in their flight, and thus afforded me the opportunity of trying my luck another time. Having thus beguiled the way, I soon found myself pacing along the streets of the town, and having discovered the post-house, I secured the accommodation of an excellent apartment. There was plenty of forage for my cattle;

and, with a good supply of bread and mutton, I contrived to fare most sumptuously. The place seemed to abound with water-melons and a kind of peach; but the latter, not being ripe, was anything but palatable. Everything about me partook of the character of the little town, which was exceedingly clean and rural.

I had an introduction to the curate from the Bishop of La Paz, and having paid a visit to the reverend gentleman, found him ensconced in a very comfortable parsonage, and with his cassock off and his sleeves tucked up, busily employed in gardening, and the very picture of health and contentment. Around him were playing a number of little children, the very fac-similes of himself—his little nephews and nieces, *as he called them*. The good man apologized to me for the state of *deshabille* in which I had found him, and immediately conducted me to his dwelling, where he introduced me to his relative, the housekeeper, who made me heartily welcome. In the course of the evening I received a visit from the *padre* in full canonicals, to make amends for the little

ceremony with which we had made our first acquaintance. The postmaster, a rosy bustling Argentine, had, I found, come to an understanding with my young men relative to their animals, and it was agreed that several mules and the lame horse should be left under his care, in order to feed on *alfa*, which appears to thrive most abundantly in this province.

On the following day we took our departure from Humaguaca, crossing over large plains covered with prairie grass, formed into little clumps, and of such an extraordinary growth that a man on horseback might easily be concealed behind them. Sometimes we followed the course of a stream, the pools formed by which gave shelter to a few ducks, at which we occasionally had a random shot. Farms and cultivated grounds every now and then came in sight, and sometimes a town with its church and Plaza, conspicuous objects in the distance. Leaving these, a river of some consequence was forded close to a high embankment, under which it sped with great impetuosity. The road all at once turned into a plain, covered with fragments

of stone and chalk, which were so intensely glaring in the rays of the sun that it was impossible to look at them.

We had now arrived at the entrance of that high range of dark forbidding rocks before mentioned, and the wind in this channel blew all of a sudden such a perfect hurricane that we were nearly blinded by clouds of white dust which arose with the air from all quarters. Closing our eyes, which, as the Yankees would say, smarted "pretty considerably," we urged on our horses and went a-head. After proceeding for some considerable distance, sometimes following the course of the river, at other times diverging from it, we at length began to descry in the distance several houses and trees, and soon on the road-side appeared the post of Menura. This building gave the choice of but one small room, which I verily believe had never been swept out since the time when it was built, the dirt and filth having accumulated to such a degree that they might be taken away in shovelfull. An officer who was staying here, and who told me that he had been expatriated from

Bolivia, as one of the party of General Bolivar, came fortunately to my rescue, and persuaded me to accept a part of his room, which was the only one deserving the name of a room in the whole building.

After treating the poor fellow to a hearty meal, to which I largely contributed by the execution I made amongst a flock of pigeons or doves, which were continually perching on some fig-trees almost at the door of our dwelling, I prepared to retire to rest. Before doing so, however, the officer joined me in a cup of tea, which he concocted himself, not sparing the cognac; and I was truly delighted to see how the poor devil enjoyed himself. I must have been a perfect godsend to him. He told me that he had barely escaped with his life, without a single farthing in his pocket, and in possession merely of an old musket without any powder. He had, however, maintained himself by turning lawyer, and as, within twenty leagues round, none of the civil functionaries were able to read or write, all letters, communications, or documents of any sort were brought to him, with something in kind as a retaining fee.

By this means he had managed to keep his head above water, and would continue to do so, till some favourable opportunity should offer itself for enabling him to return to his native country.

Being tired with my ride I early sought my bed, but before I closed my eyes I mentioned to my new friend my suspicions relative to certain black things that I saw crawling upon the roof. He informed me that these were my old enemies the *bichucos*, and that I had only to put out the light for a few minutes when I should be besieged by a regular army of them. This announcement so frightened me, after all that had happened on a previous occasion, that I determined on the instant to sleep in the open air, and actually did so, in spite of the remonstrances of my friend, who told me that I should thereby run a very serious risk of catching cold. He, on the contrary, remained in doors to have "a hunt," as he called it, and, when tired of this amusement, he fell asleep, to be half devoured by these ravenous insects. What remained of him the next morning presented a piteous sight; and, having left

behind me certain legacies in the shape of powder, shot, cigars, and many little creature comforts, all which were most gratefully accepted, I took leave of my late companion, and resumed my journey.

Quitting the bed of the river, we followed its course along the bank, close to rich pastures and cultivated fields. Every now and then, we passed a Gaucho's house, with its *corral*, and three or four fine Argentine horses. These houses are always made of wood, of one story in height, and have a rough verandah in front, which is used for a variety of objects. Underneath this, are placed, in various positions, the bedsteads of the family, serving the double purpose of seats by day and of beds by night, even in the open air—weather permitting. In front of the house, a small clearance is made, which serves as a sort of court-yard. This is generally divided from the road, or plain, by large posts, with a wooden barrier on the top, on which some red coverings or bed-clothes are laid. In other cases, they are formed of bamboos. Attached to these posts are several horses; and it is invariably a

feature of a Gaucho's house, that a saddled horse is fastened to the railings in front of it. The rooms are roughly furnished, the kitchen being a shed at the back of the building. On a sort of gibbet, usually at the side of the house, is to be seen a whole bullock or part of one suspended, and ready for the family use. The females are generally dressed in a very slovenly manner; often exposing the neck, shoulders, and arms, by the falling off of a shawl, with which they enwrap themselves, in order to cover the *negligé* attire of a solitary *chemise*. The petticoats which they wear are ample, and have a very neat appearance.

The men are mostly good-looking men, and many of them not dark, with brown hair, without a moustache, and having the whiskers trimmed after the English fashion. They are always well-dressed, wearing riding boots of drab leather, with heavy spurs, generally of silver. Their jackets, when dressed in their best attire, are of blue cloth, beautifully embroidered with black silk lace. This description answers that of a person in a superior rank of life. The

common *peon*, or labourer, dresses as he can.

As we advanced, we saw many fields with cows and oxen, and as many as twenty or thirty horses grazing in them. Our road, after this, for some time lay over a plain between two rows of hills, which, at first, were composed of mere sterile rocks, but afterwards appeared decked with a rich carpeting of verdure. As we descended deeper into the vale, the hills became of a greater altitude, and appeared covered with trees and flowers, forming Alpine scenery of great beauty. At the bottom of a steep slope ran the dangerous river of *Las Piedras*. This river, which is bad enough for travellers even in the dry season, was, now that the periodical rains had set in, almost rendered impassable by reason of the rapidity and force of its current. It takes its name from the circumstance of a stream of large stones being continually hurled along in its fury, destroying all footing to the poor animals that attempt to cross its waters.

Our mules resisting all persuasion, and the men themselves appearing disinclined to

make the advance, owing to the report of some persons having been drowned there a day or two before, I lost all patience, and putting spurs to my faithful steed, made him enter the water, where I observed that it flowed with unusual fury, assuring me of its shallowness. Two or three times I found the poor beast was carried away by the stream, but a desperate effort brought him out of the current, and we gained the opposite shore, some hundred feet, at least, below the point from whence we started. The cargo mules no sooner saw me safe on the other side of the river, than they took to the water, and, as it were by instinct, followed in the very steps by which my mule had accomplished her task, arriving at the opposite bank without any casualty. Battista, who had lingered some time behind, lost the exact place of the ford, and was carried away by the rapid current, mule and all; and would inevitably have met his death, had it not been for the timely succour of a *lasso*, well thrown by one of the young men, which happily caught the mule, and dragged him to the shore. It was some time before

Battista recovered from the effects of the fright and wetting which this unfortunate adventure occasioned.

The country now entered upon was perfectly tropical, with its prolific growth of vegetation and rich exuberance of trees, shrubs, and flowers. The pretty town of Leon, with its detached houses, formed a complete Arcadian garden. The only thing that seemed to me to detract from the healthy character of the place, was the oppressive aroma of the flowers, and the fœtid smell of the growing vegetation. Stopping at the post, which appeared occupied by a numerous family, I observed, near at hand, the sheltered porch and gallery of a rustic church, overhung with clusters of ripe grapes, situated in a retired garden, and surrounded by a little forest of peach trees, with small heaps of their ripe fruit piled underneath. Having had my baggage stowed away in a place of shelter, I prepared to enjoy this little Paradise.

A plentiful supply of eggs, milk, and fruits gave me all that heart could desire; and these, together with a few well-selected

articles from my private store, set Battista to work *con amore*. Whilst preparations were going on for our meal, I ventured to the river, hard by, resolved to act upon the advice that had been given me, to hold fast to a strong branch for fear of accidents. The strength of the current was prodigious, and was very near carrying me away. I however managed to get out, and, refreshed with my bath, returned all the more capable of enjoying my dinner. The master of the post and his people brought me large trays and baskets filled with delicious fruits, and laid them down in heaps before me.

After doing full justice to the ample fare provided, we arranged our beds for the night. I kept my light burning whilst I enjoyed a cigar, when the general buzz of insects all around became most overpowering. Whilst I was listening to the various sounds which caught my ear, I perceived several frogs, no doubt attracted by the light, dancing about my bed. Their size was prodigious, and their numbers such, that not at all relishing the intrusion, I drew my sword, and cut and slashed away till I was tired, as I sat upon my

bed, to the great amusement of my party. Finding all my efforts useless, owing to the continued reinforcement of these animals, to diminish their number, and knowing them to be perfectly harmless, I covered myself over in my bed, and went to sleep. Had I been a Frenchman, I might perhaps have dreamt of *fricasees*. As it was I enjoyed an excellent night's rest, and was ready on the morrow to make a fresh start.

After an excellent breakfast of chocolate, eggs, and fruit, I received from the pretty daughter of the postmaster, a beautiful and tastefully arranged *bouquet*, and a little basket of choice fruits, for which I presented the blushing *brunette* with a paper of French *bon-bons*. At length I quitted this agreeable place, and its good inmates, but shall ever have a lively and pleasing recollection of the few short hours which I spent in this delightful valley of Leon.

CHAPTER IV.

Cuculli — Loss of our Mules — Casa Grande—Salta—
 Preparations for crossing the Pampas—Capital sport in
 the Lagunas—Swollen state of the rivers—Bad roads
 —Bivouac in a storm—Carnival time at a farm-house
 —Insurrection in the Province—Tapia—Tucuman.

WE started from Leon in sufficient time to be at Cuculli in the middle of the day. After traversing a flat and uninteresting country for many leagues, this city stood out in bold relief against the blue horizon, presenting, as seen from the distance, a fort-like appearance, owing to the uniformity of the buildings of one story high, which are of a massive character, and generally built of brick. The disposition of the streets, which cross each other at right angles, form blocks, but the

churches, and more particularly the cathedral, with their spires pointing upwards in different localities of the place, add a decidedly interesting feature in its general aspect. As we entered a long street, lined with splendid mansions, and stores, and shops, containing every species of goods, everything betokened a high degree of civilization. There were the loungers, parading up and down, and decked out according to the latest Parisian fashion. In the grand Plaza are some large buildings, which have some claim to architectural beauty, and amongst the rest the cathedral, which, by the imposing character of its proportions, adds greatly to the importance of the place.

On turning out from the Plaza, we arrived at the *Tambo*, a large hotel, which is built somewhat on the principle of a monastery. A large square yard is surrounded by a number of small rooms, the doors of which open upon it. These rooms are furnished with a bedstead, a table, and a couple of chairs, and each traveller, by paying in advance, retains possession of the key for as long a time as he pleases. The manager of

this establishment was a female, who likewise kept a sort of store, where many articles of food and sundry beverages might easily be procured. This lady was exceedingly obliging, and soon provided me with a dinner, which, perhaps, was more abundant than choice; but, nevertheless, proved very acceptable to me under the circumstances. As rumours of an alarming nature reached me relative to the advance of the hostile armies of Generals Urquiza and Rosas, which were likely to make the transit across the field of occupation, I thought it advisable to call upon the Governor to ascertain if there were security for travellers. Around the door of his house were a number of soldiers, in the cut-throat garb which distinguished the followers of General Rosas. This consisted of red woollen plush trousers, full, in the Turkish fashion, but only extending to the knees, and loose skirts of the same; a red cap, or *bonnet de police*; a belt round the waist, from which was suspended a cavalry sword; and at the back, conspicuously stuck in the girdle, the grand weapon of the country, the redoubtable *cuchillo* or knife.

The Governor of Cuculli was a tall, powerful man, and, as I understood from report, rapacious and despotic in the extreme. He was very much detested, and having exerted all his energies to uphold the power of Rosas, he had so compromised himself with General Urquiza that, as I afterwards learnt, he had to seek his safety by flight, on the overthrow of the former. On the occasion of my visit, he received me with great courtesy, and gave me the advice to remain at Salta, until I could glean some positive information as regarded the contending armies. I was informed that the Tambo, the decorations of the church, and many public improvements had been set on foot and maintained at the expense of a certain patriotic *padre*, who did more for the public weal than the functionary who was entrusted with the peculiar charge of it.

Sending my luggage on in advance, I recommenced my journey, passing on my way through the Plaza, where stood rows of the huge waggons of the country, with their enormous wheels, and the oxen attached, by which they were drawn—some of them form-

ing complete butchers' shops; others filled with pumpkins, water-melons, and various kinds of fruit and vegetables. Leaving the town, and descending to the bed of the river, we hoped soon to overtake the *herrerros* and guide. The morning was beautifully fresh, and the footsteps of the mules were distinctly visible along the track we were following. Fancying ourselves in the right road, we made great exertions to overtake the rest of our party. The banks on both sides of the way were covered with fresh grass and mosses; and the delightful shade of the numerous trees that lined them screened us most effectually from the intense heat of the noonday sun, and enabled us to travel along with comparative comfort. After following for some time the winding course of the river, in whose clear and cool waters I continually beheld myself mirrored—as perfect a brigand as was ever produced upon the stage, we all at once diverged from it, and took our course across the country, up hill and down dale, in the momentary expectation of seeing some signs of our lost mules and baggage—but all to no purpose.

The view, as we journeyed along, was most extensive, and included a variety of objects. We looked abroad on a fine champagne country, covered with verdure, the trees and thick cover being very abundant, and every now and then we came across a beautiful clearance of fine pasture land. Meeting a large party of men and women, gaily decked out in their holiday clothes, full of fun and mischief, and with much clamorous hilarity attempting to lift one another out of their saddles whilst their horses were in full career, I stopped them to inquire if they had seen anything of my missing party. They answered me in the negative; but told me, as I should soon have to ford rather a dangerous river, of two roads which would lead me to the best points for crossing it. In the road which we ultimately took there were some steep descents, and we soon found ourselves passing along groves which were skirted by dense wood, in which game of various kinds was flying about in all directions. The graceful and natural arrangement of the trees at times formed impervious forests, and occasionally we entered upon

avenues with adjoining slopes, in which were great cavities having the appearance of abandoned quarries, and filled sometimes with stagnant water. Traversing some lanes, at the sides of which a tract of cultivated land presented itself, we discovered two or three cottages; and I was just about to ride up to one of them, to make some inquiry, when we encountered a tall Gaucho mounted on a strong horse, and having acknowledged his salutation, I informed him of our anxiety respecting our young men and mules.

This fellow declared that he had seen them take the other road, and offered to accompany me to the ford of the river, close at hand, and otherwise assist me till I should fall in with my missing cargoes, which, he assured me, would take place at the junction of the two roads, two or three leagues farther on. Gaining our confidence, Battista and myself consented to take him for a guide; and as the heat of the sun was then very oppressive, I proposed a halt for a short time by the side of a clear spring in the shade. Overhauling our *alforjas*, we soon found bread, roast meat, *foie gras*, and biscuits, together with a small

bottle of French brandy, of which we all partook with considerable appetite, especially the Gaucho, who enjoyed the treat amazingly, and was much interested in an examination of the fire-arms which I carried.

Mounting our horses after the feast, we set out for the ford, which we at length passed; not without some difficulty, from the fact of there being several large holes in the ground beneath the deep and silent waters, which it was as necessary for us to avoid as the boisterous rapids of the river. After riding for some time through groves and byeways, we found ourselves again at the river's side. It had now become very shallow and extended, forming basins, pools, and little eddies, surrounded by moss-covered banks. Our Gaucho friend proposed that we should repose here for a short time, whilst he explored the other road that ran close by. He at the same time asked my permission to procure a sheep for us, as the next post, he said, would afford us no provisions in any shape; and my people, who had taken the longest road, and therefore would be fatigued with their journey, would derive great benefit from this precau-

tion. I foolishly complied with his request, giving him three royals to market with. The heat being very oppressive, myself and my culinary friend settled down for a comfortable sleep, suffering our animals to graze quietly on the herbage that was close at hand. We awoke very warm and uncomfortable; and as our guide had not returned, we proposed a bathe in the river, and enjoyed the luxury.

Still no Gaucho made his appearance; and, therefore, mounting our horses, we began to reconnoitre, hallooing as we advanced, but all to no purpose. We soon discovered that we had been fairly sold, and determined to make the best of our disappointment. The fellow had, in fact, done himself more injury than us; for, had he taken us to the post, or assisted in regaining our lost mules, I fully intended to give him a dollar for his pains. There was now no remedy but to follow the course of the road, which appeared to have been well trodden, and we jogged along it, in hopes that we might succeed by the exercise of our own ingenuity. We several times crossed the bed of the river; and barren heaths, wilds, and thick woods followed each

other in quick succession, but still no post appeared. At length a woman driving a few asses passed along from the opposite direction, and informed me that the post was not near, but that a little further on I should fall in with the Casa grande (literally, the "large house,") corresponding to what we should call the squire's mansion in England.

After continuing in our route for a league or two with these cheering words still ringing in our ears, the sky all at once became overcast, and all the indications of a coming thunder-storm began to show themselves. As it was now very desirable to make as little delay as possible, we urged on our animals to their greatest speed. Entering a large plain, skirted on one side by hills covered with wood, we could plainly see on the opposite side of it, and divided from it by a river, the Casa grande, with its surrounding grounds. This sight gave us great encouragement, and away we galloped, forded the river in a trice, and hastened to the house. No less than between thirty and forty horses, some of them richly caparisoned, appeared, picketed to the railings; and under

a spacious verandah a large party of ladies and gentlemen had just assembled to celebrate, with feasting and dancing, the birthday of the daughter of the master of the house. Certain forerunners of a storm were beginning to manifest themselves in some heavy drops of rain which were just falling as I rode up, and soon there was a general stir amongst the company for the purpose of getting the horses and saddles under cover. I addressed myself to some of the gentlemen, telling them of my mishap in being separated from the rest of my party, and excused myself on the plea of the approaching storm and the lateness of the hour, for venturing to intrude amongst them. The master of the house and a fine-looking European friend of his now came forward, told me that I was quite welcome, and afterwards introduced me to some of the ladies. The manner of all was most courteous, and I feel a lasting debt of gratitude to these good people for taking compassion on the poor stranger, and showing him every possible mark of attention.

The storm at length burst in all its fury,

the clouds discharging a sheet of water with such rapidity and force, that the river which I had lately passed with so much facility now became a little lake, on the brink of which I could discern my lost mules fruitlessly attempting to ford its waters. After a time they were compelled to withdraw, and I lost sight of them. The interior of the house was prettily decorated for the occasion which had drawn the company together. Beautiful flowers were intertwined with leaves and branches, forming every variety of device and garland, and festoons were suspended all around the several apartments. Refreshments of all kinds peculiar to the country were abundantly served, and consisted of preserves, cakes, sweetmeats, and a large assortment of exciting beverages. Music afforded its resource, and guitars were in great requisition. To the accompaniment of these pretty duets were sung, and *charangas* and choruses were ably performed by several of the party.

The convivialities of the day soon commenced in good earnest, and happiness and good-humour began to manifest themselves in

every countenance. Dinner was announced, and the whole company proceeded to take their places for the forthcoming feast. Long tables had been ranged along the centre of the room, and groaned beneath a profusion of dishes, which included every delicacy that could be thought of. The fare consisted of soups containing meat cut into small pieces, potatoes, *chochos* (fresh Indian corn), and other vegetables, stews coloured red with *ajis* (red peppers), roast ribs of beef flavoured with onions, red pepper, and *tomatas* or love apples, a whole roast lamb, preserves, pancakes, cheese, honey, and a variety of sweets. The principal drinks were *chichia* and *alvea*. There were others, of which I did not partake.

The young gentlemen amused themselves at table, by presenting to their favourite ladies a choice piece of meat, or other delicacy, on the point of a fork, and the compliment was acknowledged by a similar return. Several speeches were made in proposing and responding to a variety of toasts, which were drunk with much enthusiasm; and then commenced a singular pastime, according to the

custom of the country, which, I should say, would be "more honoured in the breach than the observance." It consists of the ladies and gentlemen shooting into each other's eyes little pellets of bread, which, though productive of great entertainment, may yet lead to serious consequences. After the company had exhausted themselves with these sports, everything was cleared away, and the young ladies of the house delighted all present by singing some of the pretty airs of the country. As every one, in due course, was called upon to contribute towards the amusements of the evening, I, like the rest, came in for my share, and having taken up a guitar, accompanied myself in singing Rossini's beautiful air of "Largo al factotum," which gave such general satisfaction, that I was requested to repeat it several times in the course of the evening.

I now received more marked attention than before, the Argentines being so passionately fond of music; and although the Spanish ladies are generally very reserved to strangers, they became, on this occasion, very talkative and complimentary. Dancing

at length commenced in good earnest ; and as I was reluctantly compelled to stand up amongst them, several partners were selected for me, who kindly put up with my *gaucheries*. Quadrilles, waltzes, and polkas had their run, and a noted country-dance, called *Cieleta Cielo*, wound up the entertainment at about three or four in the morning. Conspicuous amongst the dark beauties who figured in the happy scene, were three handsome sisters, with light auburn hair, the daughters of our kind host's European friend, who had been so ready to grant me the hospitalities of the house. When beds were thought of, the best rooms in the house were devoted to the ladies, and the gentlemen had to seek accommodation for themselves in every nook and corner. Six or seven took up their quarters in the same room, and saddles, saddle-cloths, ponchos, and everything suited to the purpose were made available on the occasion. A numerous party found shelter under the verandahs, the beds being formed in rows, in which, after the fatigues of the dance, they slept away soundly till morning.

The grey dawn at last broke upon the scene,

and the party, having accomplished a hasty toilet, sat down to a meal of chocolate, coffee, and grilled meats. Then dances, songs, and all sorts of games were proposed, and bade fair to detain us all for the remainder of the day. However, as my mules and their cargoes at last made their appearance, I was under the necessity of preparing for my departure. The announcement of my intention made several of the ladies and gentlemen propose to be my escort, in order to be present at another party that was to take place that day, at the house of the father of the three young ladies. Having bade adieu to our kind host and his family, the cavalcade started, and rendered the first part of my journey exceedingly agreeable. Our course lay along a good road, skirted on one side by hills covered with large trees and underwood, and on the other by a wide tract of open country, through which a broad river quietly meandered. We descried in the distance a number of large *haciendas* in close proximity, and resembling a small town surrounded by rich gardens, woods, and fields, all redundant with vegetation of a

tropical growth. Some of these buildings were in the Moresco style of architecture, and on an extensive scale, having large galleries and colonnades very conspicuous on the exterior. My amiable friends had now to leave me, but urged me to accompany them to partake of the festivities of another day. This I politely declined, on the ground of the necessity of my arrival at Salta as soon as possible; and with many regrets on both sides, the parting at last took place, leaving me a pleasing reminiscence of the happy hours I had spent in the Casa grande.

By the time I had finally bade adieu to my kind friends, my mules were completely out of sight, and I endeavoured to make the best of my way along the road in order to overtake them. On this occasion of my being left in the lurch I was perfectly alone, as Battista had advanced with the rest of my party. After a time I came up to a cross, whence the road diverged in two directions, and I was quite at a loss as to which of them I should take; nor had I an opportunity of making any inquiries, as the few houses which were in sight were at a considerable

distance from me; and thus being left to judge for myself, I unfortunately came to a wrong decision and struck out into the wrong road.

For some little way it appeared to be well trodden, and I felt assured that it would lead me to Salta; but I soon found myself involved in a maze of windings, covered with thick underwood, which increased in size every instant, until at length it amounted to a perfect forest. The road itself dwindled into a little footpath, which was so much intersected by others crossing it in every direction, that I was puzzled every moment, as to whether or not I was pursuing the right one. Riding had become extremely painful and dangerous, for there was such an accumulation of branches overshadowing the path, that I was obliged continually to bend my head to avoid being thrown off my mule. My course became more and more uncertain; and after a time the path was entirely lost.

In all directions there was nothing but jungle, deep gullies, and dried watercourses; and occasionally an abrupt slope and hollow in the forest, walled in on all sides by broken

cliffs, and hills covered with wood. Riding carelessly along for some time, and hoping every instant to find myself again in the open country (many of these byepaths being used by the natives for the purpose of making short cuts in their journeys, or to enable them to avoid bogs and other impassable tracts), I discovered that I had lost my road, and I began to think seriously of the predicament in which I was placed. I now wandered about for two hours, and only rendered myself more and more perplexed in the multiplicity of paths that attracted my attention, and fearing to make a choice, lest, after all, it might not turn out to be the right one.

I did not exactly like this state of things, and began at last to shout out most lustily; but there was not even an echo to encourage my hopes. My poor beast, which was very much jaded, and had been knocked about most unmercifully by the branches of the trees during the course of this unpleasant ramble, seemed as anxious as myself to be relieved from our dilemma. A Gaucho, who was riding upon the top of the hill, on hearing my halloo, left his horse and came down to

me. I hailed his approach with great joy, and promised him a couple of royals if he would extricate me from my difficulty. This he accomplished in fine style; leading me, however, by as breakneck a sort of road as was ever travelled by mortal, before or since. I no sooner found myself safe on the other side of the range, than I gratefully presented my guide with his well-earned wages; and determined, if possible, to steer my way better in future.

I was now in the right road, traversing a delightful tract of country, the river winding its serpentine course along the fertile plains. The road led directly to this river, which was approached across what appeared to be a beautiful meadow, and accordingly I started off in order to cross it; but found to my annoyance, that the greater part of it was a morass; and I had scarcely placed my foot within its bounds, before myself and mule went down into a deep hole, and came out again in a most pitiable plight. Halting on the brink of the river, I called to a man whom I saw driving asses, and asked him to come and wash us a little, as we were sadly

bespattered with mud. On his approach, I shrunk back with perfect horror, for he was a real living skeleton; the victim of some dreadful malady which had consumed his frame. I gave him a piece of money, and was glad to dispense with his services. Crossing the river, I fell into the highroad, when small farms and cottages indicated that Salta was not far distant. Another river was crossed, and my course lay along its banks, which were a series of slopes covered with trees and shrubs; and on a large plain, opening towards the right, appeared the straggling and ruinous city of Salta.

The approaches to it consisted of buildings, partly inhabited and partly in a state of decay, walls newly made, and others threatening every instant to fall. The streets presented the appearance of *Pantanos*, (mud ditches,) and passable only for pedestrians, on stones and planks of wood, placed by the inhabitants before their doors, for the general convenience. The effluvium arising from these was most offensive, so that I passed quickly through the city, and was much struck with the forlorn and deplorable state of everything

I saw. On the grand Plaza stands the Cabeldo, (police-guard,) and around the doors were lounging about or lying down forty or fifty of the Gaucho soldiers in their red attire. After this, I passed on to the Tambo, a new building, as yet in an unfinished state, but promising excellent accommodation for the traveller. It was an enterprise undertaken by a Senor Oreburo—a man of great energy and of great consideration amongst his fellow countrymen.

Without exception, Salta is the dirtiest city in the whole of the Republic. It contains many large and good houses, but the streets are no better than mere sewers, filled in the wet season with mud and water, and in which a little river rushes impetuously along after a thunder storm. Whilst on my way through the place, I had a visit from a little Irish apothecary, of whom I chanced to purchase some few trifling medicines, and who was so delighted at meeting with a person who could speak to him in English, that he asked my permission for him to call upon me, before I left the town. During the visit, a terrible storm took place, so that poor

Paddy was obliged to take off his boots and stockings, tuck up his trousers above his knees, and wade home like a duck. In dry weather, the dust here is intolerable, and the streets are almost as disagreeable as in the rainy season.

The shops and stores have little in their outward show to recommend them, but internally they are very neat, and well stocked with goods of every variety, principally of French manufacture. I bought a hat at the shop of a superior French hatter, who informed me that very little business was stirring, through the tyrannical and barbarous conduct of the governor. This man is a monster in human form, and no one is secure from the effect of his villanies. Proscriptions are put in force to such an extent, that scarcely a family of consequence and means is to be met with throughout the province. Contributions are levied on all Europeans as well as natives, as often as the whim takes him; and if these are not complied with on the instant, a prison, seizure of goods, or even a worse calamity, is sure to ensue.

At this time, great exertions were being

made to levy and organize a militia, for immediate active service; a certain young officer, a native of Tucuman, and of good family, having appeared in the province with from a hundred to a hundred and fifty partizans, in order to revolutionize the people, overthrow the government of General Rosas, and proclaim that of General Urquiza in its stead. They did not, however, come to any decisive action; and finding a great stir, in opposition to their cause, fell back on Tucuman, where, no doubt, they felt greater assurance of success. The Governor, whose politics were those of the Government, and who felt great interest in upholding Rosas' power, caused a reinforcement to be made, which was soon got ready, to the amount of about three thousand men.

The shops at Salta are generally well lighted at night, and produce a very pleasing effect. It is the custom here in the evening for the gentlemen to take the ladies out for a ride. They are, for the most part, mounted on good horses, gaily caparisoned, with a cloth or carpet, sometimes of a very costly material, placed behind the saddle. On this the lady

is seated, and supports her balance by slightly holding the gentleman, who is in front of her. In the suburbs of the town are cottages, and delightful gardens, crowded with luxuriant vegetation and fruits; and on the banks of a large river which runs through farms and plantations, the equestrians take their evening ride. This river affords a bathing-place to the people of the town; and persons of all ranks may be seen here at all times of the day, participating in this refreshing enjoyment. The market-place, which is situated in a street next the Plaza, presents, early in the morning, a scene of much excitement and bustle. It is crowded with blacks, (formerly the slaves of the Spaniards, but now free,) who are the principal fruit-vendors and gardeners in this locality. There is a large abundance of fruits, vegetables, eggs, fowls, beef, and milk. On one or two occasions, I was enabled to procure some fresh-water fish from boys who had been angling in the river.

By the persuasion of some gentlemen, (who, it appears by the sequel, were in-

terested parties,) I was induced to purchase a carriage, to make the journey across the Pampas to Buenos Ayres. The commission I entrusted to a gentleman of a very respectable exterior, who inspired me with the most perfect confidence, and the result was, that a purchase was made, and the large sum of 300 dollars paid down. To prevent my troubling myself much about the matter, I was made to believe that the gentleman who was engaged on my part in the transaction was perfectly qualified for his task, from his knowledge of the country in which I was about to travel. I transmitted to this individual letters of recommendation, and felt myself quite secure in his hands; but, as I afterwards discovered, he was playing a dishonest game for the benefit of himself and others, and I was, unfortunately, his too easy victim.

A morning or two previous to my departure I was introduced to my future servants, as complete a set of ruffians as ever I set eyes on. The captain (Martinez) was a man between forty and fifty years of age, of moderate height, though strongly built. The

character of his countenance, his rough beard and matted hair, indicated extreme dissipation, and his general appearance betokened cunning and treachery. The second, Pizarro, was a tall, smiling old Gaucho, more than six feet in height, and very robust and active, though his age, I was told, must have been nearly seventy years. This fellow, as well as his companion, was dressed in red. The next, a *peon*, was a perfect animal, one who could sit down and eat half a sheep at a meal, or even more if he could get it. His name was *Obecaro* (Sheep-eater), and he was the ugliest wretch I ever beheld, and as thick and clumsy as the beasts he fed on. Another *peon* was a good-looking young Gaucho, very gentle and obliging, though, at the same time, very lazy. The last, also a *peon*, belonged to the cattle contractor, and was as fine and active a man as it was possible to see. He drove forty horses before him.

The carriage which I had purchased at length came to my hotel, covered up with a sort of cover or cloth, which I was told was intended to screen it from the powerful rays of the sun, but which I afterwards discovered was designed to conceal a large

multitude of defects. My new servants set to work to cut bands out of two or three bullock-hides, so as to form lassos to bind and strengthen the wheels and other parts of the vehicle. This completed, a hatchet, lantern, bill-hook, nails, and other sundries, were carefully stowed away within. I furnished myself also with a supply of *mati* (herbs drunk as tea, or rather sucked through a tube) for the Gaucho men, together with *aguardiente* (brandy of the country distilled from cane). Then there was added plenty of provisions, such as preserves, bread baked for my especial use, and answering admirably, candles, tea, chocolate, coffee, wines, brandy, and two bottles of currant-syrup,—a delightful and refreshing beverage; peaches, grapes, and figs; the latter the finest that I ever beheld. I had to give to each of my men several dollars as payment in advance, with positive orders to sleep under the coach the night before my departure, not only for the protection of my valuable purchase, but to prevent themselves from getting tipsy, drunkenness amongst this people being a very prevalent vice.

My *herrereros* had taken their leave of me

some few days before I finally quitted Salta. These young men had conducted themselves with the greatest propriety during the whole of the journey I had made in their company. They were remarkable for their extreme honesty and attention to myself, and had become so much attached to my faithful horse Moro, which excited very general admiration from every one, that, finding it no longer possible to retain the noble animal, I made them a present of him, with the understanding that he was to be kept for their own private use, and kindly treated. This they swore to do, with tears in their eyes, caressing the beautiful creature which had so well performed his difficult task without once relaxing from his inimitable *paso* (pace), or showing the least symptom of distress.

Before leaving Salta, I was introduced to a Hamburg doctor, an obliging sort of fellow, and withal very clever, but unfortunately with rather too decided a bias for the bottle. He had resided in the country for thirty years; and knew, therefore, how to give me very profitable advice. This person offered me for four hundred dollars an excellent

carriage or omnibus, which was nearly new, having performed only one journey, and quite worth the money. The chance of so advantageous a purchase came too late, as I had already parted with my money for a very treacherous vehicle, at least twenty years old, and only patched up for sale. I mention these circumstances in order to caution others, who may have to pass along the same road, never to place any dependence on letters of recommendation. The actuating principle of all, (even of gentlemen, who, from their position, should be above such mean actions,) appears to be, to cheat and plunder you if they can. The best plan is, in all cases, to go and judge for yourself, live at your hotel and, as an introduction may only put you into their clutches, to avoid, if possible, accepting the hospitality of others.

Having a desire to have my hair cut, I inquired for a barber, and was informed that there was but one in the whole city. Waiting upon the learned professor, I found him from home and left word for his attendance upon myself. He never came, so I called again on him, with the same success as

before. At last I was fortunate enough to find him at home, and, after waiting for some time, till it came to my turn to receive the benefit of his scientific skill, I found that I had to pay six royals for the honour of being operated upon by so experienced a hand. He ought, verily, to do a thriving business if all his customers pay him at the rate of *three shillings* for so trifling a service.

On the morning of my departure the forty relay horses were driven on in advance, and Battista and myself followed, mounted in our carriage, (which, after all, was a comfortable and roomy affair, sufficiently accounted for from the fact of its having been built, as I was afterwards told, many years before for a bishop or a priest,) with my rifle and guns placed in loops along the roof, and my swords and pistols disposed at the sides, and ready for use in case of need. The horses were put to, to be mounted by postilions rigged out in scarlet, as a party of gentlemen on horseback stood in readiness to escort me a little way upon the road.

The signal having been given, off we went, dashing along the ill-conditioned streets,

through pools of water and quagmires, and in danger of being jolted out of one's very skin. The country immediately on the outside of the city presents to view numerous plantations, and farms, and tracts of land, capable of the highest state of cultivation. The natural richness of the soil is so great, and the vast quantities of decayed vegetable matter is calculated to form so rich a manure, that abundant crops might easily be procured at little expense as well as trouble. The grape here is so prolific, that the most delicious wines might be made and exported; but the despotic character of the Government discourages industry in the people; and, owing to the want of security which is experienced, all foreign enterprise is utterly checked. The sugar-cane might be cultivated with advantage, and the manufacture of cotton, where the plant thrives so well, would be a lucrative undertaking. Peaches, figs, and other fruits, are luscious to a degree, and will bear competition with those reared in any other climate in the world. Salta is noted for its workmanship in saddles, bridles, and horse-furniture in general. Boots made of the

tanned leather used by horsemen, form a portion of the export commerce of the province. Large troops of horses and mules, collected from the interior, are sent twice a year to the markets of Bolivia, and even Peru, and are generally sold with great profit.

Having got rid of my friends, we rattled on for some leagues in our crazy vehicle, when the pole of it broke, which put me quite out of temper with the people, who had palmed off upon me such a patched-up concern. I determined, however, to do the best with it, in place of having to send it back to Salta; and having dismounted close to a farm, purchased the shaft of a plough, and by my own exertions encouraged my men to cut it into form, and then strongly lash it to the carriage. Whilst they were engaged in finally adjusting it, I incautiously took off my glove, when, the moment that I did so, a black fly, an inch or more in length, flew down upon me from some felled timber, and stung me to such a degree, that I danced about with pain. This lasted for some hours, the pain reaching to my very shoulder. It

then subsided, and left no ill result behind. All being now in travelling trim, we mounted the vehicle once more, and moved on with some caution, not to put our temporary carpentry to too severe a test. Passing open country and thick woods alternately, for some time, we arrived at a large *hacienda*.

These buildings here began to assume a more fort-like appearance, having few windows near the ground, and being provided with a tower, or flat-roofed defence, in case of necessity. Continuing on our journey, we came to a sort of common, with a number of houses scattered about, having the appearance of a straggling town. At the entrance was a large house, the *hacienda* of a colonel in command of the district. This gentleman offered us refreshment, and on learning of the accident which had befallen us on the road, sent a *peon* on horseback a considerable distance to procure the assistance of a smith to perfect our work, and to remedy a defect in the axle of the wheel, which we had only just discovered. As these things could not be accomplished in an instant, I made up my mind to remain some little time, and set my

people to work to make a new pole for the carriage, by the time the blacksmith arrived.

The Colonel introduced me to a lady relation of his who was staying with him, as well as a jolly friar, who was travelling through the country, and had taken up his quarters at the same house. The son of our host, a lad about seventeen or eighteen, and half silly, completed the *coterie*. The domestic economy was anything but agreeable. It was the custom for the inmates never to partake of anything during the day until dinner-time, which was between twelve and one; and considering the early risings to which I had become habituated, and which were necessary from the intense heat of the climate, I bade fair to fall into a decline from the want of proper sustenance. To do justice to the daily fare, I ought, perhaps, to have mentioned that some *bombilas* of *maté* were partaken of before the arrival of the mid-day's meal.

The heat became very oppressive; and as I was in the habit of bathing two or three times a day, I adjourned, according to cus-

tom, to a small river which ran along the outskirts of the town, shaded by a grove of trees, and affording holes and little spaces sufficient for some half dozen to bathe at once. I had not long arrived at such a place as this, that chanced to be vacant, and had just commenced to enjoy the coolness of the water, when two females made their appearance. I coughed, and made other noises, thinking that there was some mistake, and that on seeing me, they would instantly decamp; but no—they sat down, quietly undressed themselves, and jumped into the water. This laxity of manners and want of the common decencies of life, to which I had been accustomed, quite put me to the blush. I immediately got out, walked to a neighbouring thicket, and having dressed myself as quickly as possible, went away. The Colonel, on my telling him of this adventure, laughed at my extreme delicacy, and having finished the operation in which he was engaged, joined me in the house. In process of time I overcame my scruples, and was in the habit of frequenting the river many times in the course of the day. I generally found

every little retreat crowded with males and females, who appeared not to take the least notice of each other.

The *padre* was a regular sportsman and was provided with a gun, but he was put out of conceit of it, and fell desperately in love with my ammunition and arms, on comparing them with his own. I appeared to understand his hints only so far as I thought prudent, but made him a present of some powder, caps, and some patent cartridges. One or two flying shots which I made at some doves that flew over the house astonished everybody, and stamped me in their eyes as a first-rate hand. The natives seldom attempt a flying shot, but secure their game in trees or on the ground.

During my stay I witnessed a scene which, even in this lawless and uncivilized country, proved the superiority of moral over physical force. A strong, muscular-looking Gaucho came to the porch of the Colonel's house, hat in hand, in the greatest affliction, and crying like a child. He stated that a certain man had beguiled away his wife, and held her in some place of conceal-

ment, which he had sought for in vain, and was broken-hearted at his want of success. The Colonel promised him redress, and sent him away. The guilty party was summoned and appeared, knife in girdle, a very giant in stature, and with a savage, and sullen countenance. The Colonel received him alone, and in that secluded spot, without soldiers to protect his authority, addressed the culprit as follows: "What have you done with ——'s wife?" The man, looking on the ground, said that he knew nothing of her. "That is false: I order you to go to ——" (mentioning by name one of his men) and tell him to put you in the stocks, till I authorise your release." The man bowed and went away, and did as he was told. Some hours after I was passing another part of the common, and saw him lying down with both his feet in the stocks, expiating his crime with the utmost indifference. Having completely established the security of my coach, I at length took my leave of the Colonel and his family, and we made the best of our way along the road, to make up for lost time.

Shortly afterwards we entered what appeared to be an interminable forest, and made a gradual descent, passing under the shadow of several wide-spreading trees. We were excessively alarmed by a very large spider that found its way into the vehicle. It was as large as a small crab, covered with a furry coat, and poisonous to a degree. However, we got rid of him, and so escaped the danger of his bite. At sunset we had arrived at the *Lagunas*, or small lakes. The heavy rains had caused them to overflow their bounds, the road and both sides of the adjacent forest being one continued sheet of water. As the night was fast setting in, and the relays of horses had been considerably delayed in their course by several of them having strayed away from the rest, I determined to pitch my tent here for the night, and on the following day harness together twenty horses, if necessary, to drag us through the waters.

Arrangements for our encampment were soon made. Large branches of decayed wood were brought from the forest, and a bonfire was formed sufficient to roast an ox. A whole

sheep and part of a bullock, provisions we had procured at the last town where we rested, were placed upon it, and were soon roasting away and shedding abroad their savory odours. Shouldering my gun, I went with Pedro, one of my young Gauchos, to explore the lake, and in a short space of time such a sight opened upon us as is rarely equalled, exhibiting to a sportsman all he could possibly desire. Leaving the beaten road, and advancing to the margin of the lake, a large expanded sheet of water presented itself, walled in on one side by an extensive field of rushes, and surrounded in other parts by wood, which approached the water's edge, and, occasionally, where a number of inlets were fringed by the surrounding timber, appeared as so many groves. Various parts of the water were literally swarming with ducks, some of which of a larger size than the rest, and of a black colour, were very conspicuous. Amongst them a large number of geese might be seen, but they were mostly out of the range of my gun.

The clatter and noise made by this feathered crew was almost intolerable. The

sound of my approach, or the rustling of the boughs as we forced our way through the tangled wood, caused all the birds to retire to the opposite side of the lake, where they were quite unapproachable; and, not having the means of surmounting the watery barrier, I was compelled to satisfy myself by taking an aim at a solitary brace or two, which I by chance surprised in some secluded creek. I beheld flight after flight of these birds arise into the air after the report of my gun, appearing like so many black clouds, and after a moment or two, when they had described their circuit, they would settle down again as before. Not being successful with my fowling piece, I took to my rifle, and soon brought down a splendid black duck, and a brace of the others. This was before sunset, and in time for dinner, so that Pedro was immediately on the alert, and having divested himself of his clothes, went into the water, and, like a retriever, brought the birds ashore.

The evening and the subsequent night turned out very fine, and we enjoyed ourselves amazingly around our blazing fire, as we lay squatted on the ground, and reclining

at our ease, watching the progress of the dinner. I have often, in the course of my travels, seen a sheep killed and dressed on the instant, an iron ramrod being run through the carcase, when it would be done to a turn over an enormous fire of burnt embers, and eat better, and more tender than with all the art which a Soyer or a Gunter could devise. Appetite is decidedly the best sauce, and on this occasion we all fell to in good earnest, and pronounced our primitive meal most delicious. We afterwards managed to pass a tolerably comfortable night, in spite of the chilling air and a raw mist, occasioned, no doubt, by the presence of so large a body of water in our vicinity. Pedro, in the morning, discovered that he had some symptoms of ague.

At break of day we assembled our relays, of which, three horses it appeared had been lost in the night. Ten were attached to the carriage, and drew us with some difficulty through a great mass of water, which extended for several miles. The manner in which the Gauchos urge on their beasts is very singular. By dint of hallooing and

screaming, and an unstinted use of the lasso, whip, reins, and spur, they encouraged the animals, who seemed to understand their business, and exerted themselves to the utmost. Our relay horses were driven before us, so that if any of the others gave the least symptom of distress or fatigue, their places were immediately supplied. I must mention the extraordinary address shown by the *peon* in charge of the horses. He drove them pell-mell before him, and scarcely had he brought up the stragglers before others diverged from the course and began to feed in different directions, running singly into the wood, or rushing through in numbers. This young man galloped in after them, passing in and out among the trees, or bobbing under their branches, and adroitly finding his way through apertures which seemed hardly large enough to admit his body, with the danger of being torn to pieces by thorns, or of having his brains dashed out by coming into contact with some projecting branch.*

* To protect their limbs in passing through a thicket, the Gauchos attach to their saddles two large pieces of

The waters had now risen to such a height that it was necessary to abandon the track of the main road. The men acted as pioneers, selecting a passage through the forest, which they made practicable, by hewing down branches of trees, and removing such other impediments as might hinder the progress of the carriage. This was a tedious undertaking, and required several hours to accomplish. During the whole day, our view was bounded by the forest, and we had nothing to enliven the scene, except an occasional small deer that crossed our path. A little before sunset, the time we generally looked forward to, as the termination of our day's journey, we emerged on a *plateau* of grass land, situated on a mount which commanded a view of the forest around, as far as the most distant horizon. The clearance was very extensive, and embraced the whole of the flat elevated ground. A Gaucho house or farm stood on one part of it, but appeared to be abandoned; the doors being all open, and tables, bed-bullock hide, the hairy part being turned inwards. These stand out on both sides, and lap over the thighs on passing along where the road is very confined.

steads, chairs, and utensils of all kinds, being scattered about in the utmost disorder.

We soon lighted a cheerful fire, in the formation of which my men paid little respect to the personal property above-mentioned. A *peon* was mounted and despatched for water to a *cabrada*, which appeared in the distance, and near to which flowed a fork of the river. The musquitos here were intolerable and tormented us sadly, nor did even the vicinity of a rousing fire, prevent their stinging myself and my men to a most disfiguring extent. The side of a fine bullock, which we had kept in reserve, was dressed to our liking, and a hearty meal of it put us in excellent spirits. Making some inquiries, relative to the abandonment of this homestead, I ascertained that this locality, appearing to offer great advantages to the graziers, for their herds of cattle, they settled here, till a number of the tigers of the country, attracted by the cattle, made the place quite untenantable. The slaughter made by these animals became truly fearful, and the inmates of the house being occasionally besieged in their very dwelling, and finding great incon-

venience from the scarcity of water, at length determined on entirely evacuating the place.

Under the circumstances, we were glad enough on the following morning, to descend from our woody amphitheatre, and find ourselves out of the reach of the ravages of these tigers, without the loss of any of our cattle. Advancing gradually towards the neighbourhood of the great river Pasagis, the roar of it, as we approached, made me more apprehensive of the impracticability of a safe passage. I was not, however, to be daunted, but made my men descend to the beach and unload the vehicle. During this operation, I partook of an excellent breakfast, at the house of a man of superior class, and from him I gained much information, relative to my future journey. His house, which was well built and commodious, was opposite to several small dwellings, and a chapel, which was occasionally visited by a neighbouring priest. I soon had the ferryman at my command, and his solitary boat was immediately put into requisition, to convey myself and everything belonging to me, to the opposite side of the river.

The breadth of it appeared considerable, and, after heavy rains, must form an insurmountable barrier to all traffic and communication. The carriage, unburdened of its dead weight, was despatched to an advanced position, some distance up the river, and there made to pass over in a transverse direction, so as to afford as little resistance as possible to the running stream. This mode of transit answered perfectly well, and it was got over without the slightest accident. Whilst all this was progressing, I ventured to take a bathe, but was fairly driven out of the water, by swarms of wasps which infested the banks, and settled upon any part of the person that might be exposed, inflicting a sharp wound, as if made by a lancet. They frequently made me jump from the pain which their stings occasioned, but the sensations which I felt, quickly passed over, and I experienced no further annoyance from their bites.

Having gained the other side of the river in safety, the task of re-loading was soon accomplished. The character of the country was rather different to that of the tracts

through which we had lately passed. I saw several houses at a distance from each other, and some signs of a little cultivation. At one of the houses I purchased a side of a bullock of a negro, who seemed to be the proprietor, and partook of a cup of delightful water, which came from a spring close at hand. We were *en route* again as soon as possible, as the day had considerably advanced; and the roads, still hemmed in by the frost, were wretchedly bad, owing to the repeated transit of the caravans, which cut them up and form ruts, rendering them impassable to any other vehicle.

These caravans of carts, sometimes from sixty to a hundred or more in number, start from Buenos Ayres at certain seasons of the year, loaded with all sorts of merchandise, to be conveyed to the provinces and capitals of Cordova, Tucuman, and Salta. Though supported on two wheels, these waggons are of a ponderous construction, having beams and timbers fit for a seventy-four gun ship, and wheels from six to seven feet in diameter. These heavy vehicles often break down through the badness of the roads, and the

shattered wrecks of them are sometimes to be seen, left to rot and decay by the wayside. My men were now continually employed in repairing the roads, ere the carriage could pass along. At times deep pits appeared, as well as landslips and ruts; and all these had to be filled up with branches, stones, or earth, and reduced to a level, before we could proceed.

The sun had already sunk. Dark clouds were gathering around as we hastened on, intending to gain the nearest place where water was to be found, but we had to travel some distance before we made a halt for the night. The imperfect light of the closing day, combined with the carelessness of my people, who were hurrying heedlessly along, caused the coach to be thrown over a small embankment. As chance would have it, there was no serious damage, although I found myself in an instant most uncomfortably standing upon my head, which was thrust into my crushed beaver; and Battista lay buried in the materials of his profession, and almost smothered in eatables. Just at this crisis the horses had become disengaged

from the vehicle, and were quietly walking off, when Battista and myself had to extricate ourselves from our position as well as we could. Leaving my hat firmly fixed into the earth, I regained as good a perpendicular as was possible under the circumstances, and precipitately made my exit from the coach—not where I entered it some hours before, but out of the window.

The weather, which all along had been most threatening, now made up its mind to be thoroughly disagreeable, and, profiting by our misfortune, seemed determined to give us a good ducking. We had been at much pains and trouble to collect the materials for a fire; but now the undesirable supply of water from above, made it impossible to ignite them, yet although the rain came down upon us, and all around in torrents, we were denied the water we so much needed for drink. That which the muddy pools and puddles contained had been rendered quite undrinkable; and as the storm, which was accompanied by thunder and lightning, bade fair to continue throughout the night, it was no use to waste time in speculating upon the

chances of future success, especially as we had a monitor within us, urging his irresistible claims. Accordingly we piled up additional withered branches of trees on the fuel we had already collected; and a fire was soon made to burn, in spite of wind and weather.

The next essential was water; and the discovery of a small pond that seemed to promise well, was hailed with delight, although its outward appearance was anything but prepossessing. A covering of greenish weed prevented its waters from being seen; but the nature of its quality was soon made apparent by the appearance of some hundred of frogs, who were swimming about therein, with great activity. They were of two sorts, one of which identified itself by a continual croak, harsh, hoarse and loud; and this was responded to on the part of the other, by a note, long, clear, and sonorous, but mournful and melancholy in the extreme. The water, which, under any other circumstances, would have been rejected as thick, dirty, and disagreeable, was now swallowed with the utmost avidity by the whole party, parched, as we all were by the excessive heat we

had endured throughout the day. During the night the thunder rolled, and the rain fell in torrents, whilst the lightning played about our devoted heads in awful sublimity. Our fire raged like a furnace, nearly roasting us on one side, whilst the other was exposed to the fury and inclemency of the elements.

Thus we went on till break of day, when a fresh morning set in, with all the glory and beauty peculiar to these climes; and for the moment we forgot all the disasters of the previous night, as we contemplated the prospect of a cheering sunrise. All was now bustle in the camp. Every possible device was suggested for righting the coach; the Gouchos, who, by-the-bye, are glad of any excuse for sparing themselves bodily exertion, proposing that we should try what we could do with lassos and horses. I soon put a stop to the discussion, by making every one literally put his shoulder to the wheel, and thus, by using the axle at the same time, we at length brought our coach to *terra firma*, in capital style. It had suffered no serious damage; and in a few minutes we were again travelling along the road. This day we

were doomed to another long stoppage. A whole caravan of *charetas* (carts) was discovered a-head, each being drawn by six oxen. The road not being sufficiently wide to admit of our passing them, we had to pull up, and remain for some time imprisoned in a nook, whilst the slow, ponderous and creaking machines passed along at their leisure. In one of these carts were two ladies, who, I found on inquiry, were on their way to join their husbands at Salta; and had been already two months upon the road. I partook of some *maté* with them, and in return for their kindness, made them a present of some little delicacy, for which they were extremely grateful.

On leaving the wood, signs of cultivation began to appear. Presently, detached houses came in sight, with their gardens and fruit trees; one of these, a little way apart from the high road, being the post of Concha. As we were busily employed in making preparations for our daily meal, hundreds of men, newly levied, with their animals and baggage, passed along, in all the pomp and circumstance of glorious war, on their return

to their homes, after a campaign of only a few days. My friend the German, too, made his appearance, having under his charge a very beautiful woman, who turned out, on inquiry, to be the *chère amie* of the redoubtable Governor of Salta. The doctor partook of a bottle of claret with me, and then withdrew, wishing me a safe and prosperous journey. I was much struck with a bullock hide poncho, which he had in his possession, and which was so admirably tanned that it could be bent like a silk handkerchief; being, at the same time, impervious to wet.

After passing a refreshing night at this place, the next morning found us on our way, through lines of Gaucho farms, with cattle browsing about; and flourishing fields of maize and other crops. The heat being rather oppressive, I ordered a halt close to a small lake, or, to speak more correctly, a large pond, to afford us the opportunity of taking a little refreshment. The noise occasioned by our sudden stoppage, threw up a flight of woodcocks, and I had no sooner discharged my gun at them, than a number of ducks arose, giving me delightful sport. These

had scarcely settled again, before a flight of snipes were on the wing, so that I was quite bewildered, and had hardly time to load my gun, before it was again brought into requisition. I must have committed great havoc amongst those birds; but owing to the boggy nature of the soil, was enabled to recover but few of those that I had killed. The great congregation of birds at this spot was to be accounted for from the absence of water for many leagues round.

After wasting two hours at this sport, I thought it prudent to move on, but having been cautioned not to go to the next post, as it was the *fête* of the postmaster—an unmannerly hind, who, according to custom, would take the licence of being drunk for a week at a stretch, (and the possibility of obtaining horses during that period was out of the question,) I determined to go to the house of a Gaucho farmer, a man of rather a superior class. This place we soon reached; the house presenting a long *façade*, and containing a large number of rooms. The first was occupied by the master and mistress of the house, though roughly furnished; the second

was a sort of store, where liquors, cloths, materials for female dresses, knives, spurs, and other necessaries were sold. The third was a sort of barn, in which meat was hung up for sale. It appeared to be used for another purpose, for here I saw several females taking their *siesta*, secured from the heat of the noonday sun.

The whole front of the house was furnished with one general verandah, beneath which its inmates took refuge during the intense heat of the day. The horses of five or six visitors, tied to the barrier in front of the dwelling, betokened no lack of company. The master of the place received me with the greatest civility, and his wife and two or three female relatives gave me a cordial welcome. I had just commenced to feel myself quite at home, when, wholly unsuspecting what was brewing, I found myself all in a moment completely smothered with flour by some of the ladies, who rubbed my face and head all over with it, to the general amusement of all present.

I was not long in discovering that this was the carnival time; and on looking round, I

found that Battista had shared the same fate as myself. We now, by his assistance, soon armed ourselves with a good supply of flour from our own stock, and had a glorious revenge. Notwithstanding this frolic, we were all good friends, and as the day wore on, not liking my miller-like garb, I went to the river hard by, and took a delightful bath. Returning to the party fresh and clean, I was foolish enough to anticipate a cessation of all hostilities, but I was mistaken. My appearance amongst them was the signal for a renewed assault, and in a few minutes my dress was as white as ever. I therefore made up my mind to undergo the ordeal, and cheerfully entered into the innocent mirth of the company, although freely indulged in at my expense. After this I made a bargain with the wily Argentine for a relay of forty horses, for which he made me pay full dearly; but I was glad to get on at any rate, as the state of the country, from various reports which came to my ears, was anything but tranquil.

On the morrow we forded the river, consisting of several channels, and entered upon

an open country, which we traversed for many leagues, till we arrived at the small town of Franca. Feeling inclined to see if we could get any bread, or luxury of any description within it, I made my entry, and looked out for the best shop in the place, out of a number of perhaps not more than two or three. This one appeared to belong to the *alcalde*, or judge, and unfortunately had been bought up by the troops we had previously met upon the road. However, I managed to get a few loaves of bread, and on looking round, when leaving the shop, I discovered a bottle of Macassar oil.

Feeling astonished that such an article should have found its way into central America, I demanded of the *alcalde* some explanation of so strange a circumstance, but he was unable to solve the mystery, telling me that that little bottle had puzzled himself and neighbours for many a day. I told him what it contained, and gave him half a dollar for it, glad to possess anything that brought back to my mind pleasing recollections of old England. He was but too glad to part with it, as he would be thus spared further fruit-

less discussion, to which its presence there was continually giving rise. I procured also at this place, some bottles of Carloon wine, which afterwards proved very grateful to us upon the road. In our subsequent journey we began to meet those numerous troops of horses and mules that form, at certain seasons of the year, the successful speculations of the Argentine provinces. These supply the Bolivian market, as well as that of Peru, and make a lengthened march to the very gates of Lima.

Entering a plain covered with thicket, I was astonished to find it swarming with snakes of a most venomous character, which were basking in the sun, and gliding about in all directions. I here met with some horsemen, who gave me some particulars respecting an engagement which had recently taken place a little further on. They were as follows:—The young officer before mentioned, who had made his appearance with his followers in the vicinity of Salta, and who, finding no sympathy there, had fallen back upon his native city in hopes of better success, arrived at the latter place with about

a hundred and fifty men, and summoned the governor to admit them and proclaim the supremacy of General Urquiza. This the governor positively refused to do, as they were not able to present their credentials, showing their power to treat on such a subject. He, however, offered to admit them as neutrals, until the voice of the province upon the question should be ascertained.

This liberal offer was at once rejected, and an immediate engagement ensued; the levies from the city, and the reinforcements from Salta, amounted to about three thousand men; and against such a force as this, this handful of adventurers, who were thus attempting to revolutionize the province at their own charges, without the sanction, or even knowledge, of General Urquiza, were placed in battle array. They fought most valiantly, but the overwhelming numbers opposed to them rendered their desperate courage of no avail. The greatest part of them were killed, and the rest taken prisoners.

The young hero, whose firmness and intrepidity deserved a better fate, cut his way,

accompanied by two or three of his closest friends, through the surrounding columns. At this juncture the horse of one of these retreating officers was shot, and fell to the ground, throwing his rider, who was instantly pounced upon by the soldiery. The commander, upon this, jumped from his horse, and, striking at all who approached him with his sword, endeavoured to extricate his friend from under the fallen beast. He succeeded in doing so, and was about to assist him to mount upon the crupper of his own, and so possibly make a hasty escape, when the *balas** were thrown with so much precision that the commanding officer had his legs entangled in them, and so securely bound that he fell to the ground. In a moment he and his comrade were made prisoners. A hasty court-martial was formed: he was sentenced to die, and was shot dead

* Three stones covered with hide, and attached to as many thongs. These swung round the head by one of the thongs, and the whole then let loose, it sweeps along the earth with much velocity. When in its flight it encounters any resisting obstacle, it twists itself around it, and makes it perfectly secure.

upon the spot. The other prisoners were kept in custody, till on the following day the news arrived of the defeat of General Rosas, in the great battle which took place near Buenos Ayres.

The presence of a few farms upon the road announced the vicinity of the small town of Tapia, passing through which, we arrived at the post, an establishment consisting of three empty mud cottages, tenanted by two dirty women and several dirty children. In this uninviting place nothing but a little *choelos* (Indian corn green in the pods,) could be got for love or money. I made my bed in the open air, as the fear of vermin before my eyes would not suffer me to trust myself to the uncertainties of more sheltered accommodation. The next morning, owing to my own forethought in having bespoken it the evening previous, I had a plentiful supply of milk, which was procured for me, before the cattle were turned out of the *corral*. It appeared to me very strange that the people at this post should lack everything but meat, and live a hard sort of life, without the most common luxu-

ries, whilst they had such quantities of milk without making any use of it.

On leaving the place early in the morning, we entered a forest, which stretched over a succession of steep hills. We had arrived at the bottom of one of these, and were about to make the ascent of another yet steeper than the rest, when we were overtaken by a violent thunder-storm, accompanied by some heavy rain. This hill being formed of *grada*, our horses could get no footing, and we completely stuck fast in the mud. Every expedient was tried to overcome the difficulty of the ascent, but all to no purpose. At last, a number of horsemen who happened to be passing by at the time, came to our aid, and we began to be confident of success. Ten horses were attached in couples to the carriage, but their efforts were unavailing. The instant that we had gained a few paces it was found necessary to place branches of trees under the wheels to prevent their retrograding further than they had advanced. At length a thought struck me, and that was to place two horses on the top of the hill, and attached to the others by

means of lassos tied together. This contrivance succeeded admirably, and the lumbering machine was brought up in a trice.

After getting out of our disagreeable predicament, we found that we were about entering upon a most beautiful and enchanting tract of country, the outskirts of the delightful city and province of Tucuman. *Haciendas* with their rich cultivations of sugar-cane, maize, and other crops, indigenous to the soil, were met with in great abundance. Little forests of orange trees, forming groves and, avenues struck upon the sight in all directions. On one side of the road, a beautiful park with its adjoining garden and orchard conducted to the country residence of the Governor, a man of sound and sterling worth, a friend to commerce, and a great encourager of foreign talent, and whose judicious outlay of the public money is abundantly evinced by the many and varied embellishments he has added to the city. The house in which he resided seemed of a superior order and very comfortable, and provided with all the appurtenances necessary to a country life.

On making our entry into the city, we passed along several streets of good houses, and soon found ourselves in the Plaza, a spacious quadrangle formed by some new buildings of a very superior character. The principal church or cathedral, which was near its completion, promised to be a most beautiful structure, with its imposing towers elegantly decorated by French artists. Besides this, there were several other showy edifices, such as the Cavildo, a well-designed and appropriate building, numerous *cafés*, shops, and private dwellings.

Instead of taking up my quarters at an hotel, I sent on one of my men in advance, to secure me furnished apartments at a private house. The houses in this city are generally on a large scale, having the whole of the tenements on the ground floor. These surround several court-yards, and include rooms and kitchens for servants. Close at hand is a garden and orchard of orange trees planted in rows. This umbrageous retreat is often occupied by the family during the day, as the intense heat of the sun within doors during some portion of it, is almost

insupportable. The night, when the moon is up, and people walk abroad to enjoy the cool and refreshing air, is the *acme* of all that is charming. Every doorway presents the prospect of a select party of ladies and gentlemen in the enjoyment of social intercourse; the former, fan in hand, tastefully dressed in white, and exhibiting, like their Spanish ancestors, a solitary rose as a head-dress, in the midst of their beautiful black hair. The apartments are well lighted, and show, through the open windows, many an article of costly and well-arranged furniture. Parties of ladies, followed by female black servants, are seen hurrying along to go the stated round of visits. Then, at a later hour, they congregate in the saloons, and amuse themselves with singing, music, and dancing. At a certain season of the year most of the families of distinction in this city visit their estates, and return again to town to look to their shops and stores. If a community ever deserved the name of shopkeepers, the term is applicable to the inhabitants of this place.

During my short sojourn there, the news arrived of the overthrow of Rosas, and the

proclamation of General Urquiza, giving a general armistice to persons of all parties and opinions. This intelligence was received with great rejoicing, and the illuminations which took place in consequence sufficiently bespoke the general sentiments of the people. It was curious to notice the universal metamorphosis which took place in the course of a few hours. The compulsory badges of the *Unitarios*—a red ribbon worn by every male round his hat, and another attached to his button-hole, and inscribed with a representation of death, and invectives against the Federals, together with the blood-colour red of the Rosas—were changed, on the instant, for the unpretending blue of his now successful antagonist.

The ladies of the country are exceedingly kind to strangers. No sooner do they hear of an arrival than they send their servants with presents of fruit, flowers, sweetmeats, and preserves, together with friendly greetings and invitations. When the strangers happen to be ladies, they sometimes make a personal visit. On the evening of my arrival a serenade was performed in my honour, as also on

several subsequent occasions. The house which I rented was in the suburbs, and had a delightful orange orchard attached to it. It was very lonely, and people were continually endeavouring to frighten me by detailing awful murders, which, it was stated, had taken place on the premises and in the neighbourhood. All this, however, did not prevent my being very comfortable in my seclusion, where I lived quite retired, and away from the general bustle of society. I made the acquaintance of several amiable and agreeable families. Amongst the rest, those of Dr. Frias and Senor Silva. The members of the latter made themselves rather conspicuous by singing from their balcony the national anthem in favour of Urquiza.

One of the wheels of my carriage having fallen to pieces, I was obliged to have a new one made by an Italian wheelwright, who did not fail to make me pay pretty dearly for the job. Finding it necessary to purchase a supply of sundry articles for my use upon the road, I visited the shops of several French persons who were living here in

great comfort, and seemed to be making money. If the tide of immigration could only be diverted for a time towards this quarter, it appears to me that this province is capable, in an agricultural point of view, of largely supplying an export commerce. The sugar-cane, coffee, cocoa, cotton, fruits of the most delicious kinds, and an abundance of superior cattle, offer to the enterprising and industrious a certain field of ultimate success. The united provinces of Cordova, Tucuman, and Salta, have already gained a well-merited reputation for their tanned leather, saddlery, and boots, superior to that of other parts of South America.

CHAPTER V.

Los Pozos—Santo Iago—Saladella lakes—Mode of crossing the river—Abundance of game—Cordova—Los Indios bravos—Deer-stalking in the Pampas—Locusts near Gallegos—Il Rosario—Tornado—Buenos Ayres—Description of the city—Some account of General Rosas—Monte Video: its important mercantile position—Passage to Genoa and London.

I LEFT Tucuman with the conviction that it stood unrivalled as the garden of the Argentine Republic. On quitting the place, the road, which consisted of an agreeable mixture of wood and plain, and occasional large tracts covered with aromatic shrubs, became after a time almost impassable, owing to a deep marsh which had been caused by the late rains. Our progress was consider-

ably impeded by our being obliged to drive through a little forest of young trees and bushes, which were bent down under the weight of our heavy vehicle, and regained their form as soon as it had passed. It was now necessary to be on the alert, as the road was reputed to be infested with robbers. The stages in this province were much shorter than usual; but, by taking the precaution to send some one on in advance to advertise our approach, we avoided the unpleasant necessity of having to wait until the postmasters could collect their animals, which were, in many instances, grazing at a distance of several miles.

The post of Talachussi furnished the first relay. The next was that of Los Pozos; and, as we reached it about sunset, I determined to cut short our day's work, and take up our quarters there for the night. The accommodation afforded us consisted of one small room in a mud hovel, the postmaster and his family occupying a similar dwelling. As there were several *peones*, or day-labourers, at the place, two or three young women belonging to the establishment were busily

employed in preparing their food. Thus we had three large fires blazing away at once, at each of which certain culinary operations were going on, which were watched with the most intense interest by the respective parties congregated about them. A fine sheep was procured for us, and in a very short time prepared for the spit. Then, seated in a circle round the fire, our party looked on during the process of roasting, every now and then turning it round, whilst our appetites were rendered, if possible, keener by the tantalizing sight.

Having well feasted ourselves, we retired early to rest, and were up again with the early dawn. When our horses were ready, we resumed our journey, and passed the posts of Bramella, Topero, and Acausta, without anything of note transpiring beyond the ceremony of catching the horses in the *corrales*, by means of the lasso. Some of these animals, just fresh from grass and half broken in, commenced all sorts of antics. The mode of taming a horse, under these circumstances, is very curious. The Gaucho upon his back immediately sticks his spurs, generally some

pounds in weight, into his sides, makes him go at full tilt, pulls him up short, turns him round and round, brings him up again—and so on, till he is quite exhausted. This does not last more than five minutes, but, at the end of that time, the fiercest horse is rendered as docile as a lamb.

At the last-named place we rested for the night, the accommodation being of a similar description to that we had found at the previous post. The next day brought us to the town and province of Santo Iago. It is a long, straggling, and uninteresting place, without half-a-dozen decent houses to boast of. The intense heat which we here experienced, together with the swarms of musquitos which buzzed about, and the dismal prospect of a host of forlorn and ruinous houses, were enough to give a person the horrors. The post itself, fortunately, was an exception to the general rule, containing one good room which was habitable, the other buildings connected with the establishment being detached. My men procured a sheep, which, together with an abundance of grapes, pomegranates, and other fruits, brought to us

by the women for sale, furnished us with an excellent meal. The Governor of this place is a very superior and gentlemanly person; and, I believe, much liked and respected by the people.

How to account for the want of improvements in the town, and sundry local defects which intrude themselves upon the notice, I know not. I took a stroll as far as the river, for the benefit of a bathe, but the force of the stream was so great that I was taken completely off my legs, without the power of resistance, and the result might have been fatal, had I not happily caught hold of a projecting embankment which stood in the way. The delights of the bath are much resorted to in this intensely hot province; and men, women, and children paddle about in the water together, in a promiscuous manner, quite unfamiliar to our northern notions; but, as with us, habit becomes a second nature, and there such things are done quite unblushingly. The governor of the place kindly presented me with an open letter, addressed to the postmasters on the

road, enjoining upon them the prompt execution of my commands. This proved to me of very great service during my stay in the province. The torments which we had endured throughout the night from myriads of troublesome musquitos, made us by no means disinclined, when morning came, to continue our journey.

When I left Salta, I was presented by a considerate friend, with two bottles of cana, mixed with *cascarilla* (Peruvian bark), with the positive injunction to take a wine-glass full the first thing every morning, to keep off the ague, which is sure to attack travellers in passing through the extensive forests and marshes to be met with on the road, unless the proper precautions and remedies are used. This injunction I had entirely neglected, and I had scarcely quitted the precincts of Santo Iago, before the effects of the malady upon myself became very apparent. After a time all vestige of the forest was lost, and nothing was to be seen but large plains, with here and there patches of cover, near to which a few ostriches, who were industriously feeding, alarmed at our ap-

proach, took to flight in beautiful style. We made our first change of horses at the post of Igero; but at the succeeding one, that of Perco, we lost the greatest part of the day, owing to our having to deal with a drunken postmaster, whose horses were many miles away grazing, and whom we had the greatest difficulty in prevailing upon to send for them. We found that we had no alternative but to pass the night at the house, as the horses could not be collected and brought up before the following morning. Taking my gun, therefore, and a boy for a retriever, I managed to bag a few birds, and thus while away the time very pleasantly.

On my return to the house, I observed a bird, somewhat resembling a teal, flying into a nest, formed on the branches of a large tree which stood in the yard. On my making a noise, it soon took wing again, when I fired, and it fell to the ground. This successful sport quite delighted the old postmaster and his household, who seemed from that time to be more civil on the strength of it. We gained one thing by our unintentional delay, and that was a plentiful supply of meat, milk,

and eggs. The following day brought us, by a slow descent, to the Canada post, after which we arrived in the vicinity of the Saladella lakes, which are very extensive. We determined to pass the night at the post of Bockeron, and early in the morning to procure saddle-horses for myself and Battista, so as to have some hours' sport, whilst the carriage and baggage passed the dangerous river of Saladella—an operation requiring a great deal of time.

It was at this river, that the Brazilian *Chargé d'Affaires* and his family met with a serious accident in the loss of a nursery-maid, and I believe, one of his *peones*, who were drowned whilst making the passage. The mode of crossing the river is somewhat singular. A couple of strong men throw themselves into the water, holding in their mouths a lasso, attached to a dried bullock's hide, the corners of which are looped up, so as to form a kind of seat. Into this, the passenger cautiously enters, as the least indiscretion is likely to occasion an upset. Once quietly settled in this precarious birth, he floats with ease, and is drawn across the water by the

swimmers, who land their burden in safety on the other side. This process is repeated for each individual of the party, and at last the luggage is similarly treated. The horses are generally made to swim across much higher up the stream, where the breadth is greater, though the current be less strong.

The mode usually adopted for getting the coach across, is to attach long lassos to it, before and aft, and then drag it through the depths by horse-power. This I particularly objected to, on account of its wetting the interior; and therefore, I had it conveyed much higher up the river, when it made the transit in the shallows without any inconvenience. The cause of the sad accident to the unfortunate maid-servant, is attributed to her fear of passing across in the skin, choosing in preference, to keep her place in the carriage. The fatal catastrophe was occasioned by the heavy rains, which had rendered the current in the shallow parts of the river so strong, as to carry it away for some distance; and finally, to immerge it before rescue could arrive. The scene at this ferry is remarkably agreeable and exciting. An accumula-

tion of passengers, and troops of mules and horses are gathered together, on both sides of the river, awaiting till their turn arrive, to make the transit. A few fires might be seen burning, and around these were seated small parties, preparing their daily meal. In some places, those who have already passed the river are to be seen fast asleep upon the ground, wearied out with the unavoidable exertions they had used in the conveyance across of their cargoes and baggage.

After a night in which I was well-nigh devoured alive by the musquitos, Battista and myself mounted our horses and started off well prepared for the chase. We soon came up to the precincts of the lake, the nature of the marshy ground in the neighbourhood preventing a very near approach to the great body of water. This, judging from the view we had of it from the point whereon we stood, appeared to be very considerable. The thousands of ducks, geese, and, I am told, even swans, which fluttered about in all directions, is inconceivable. So great was their number that they formed large black patches on the water, resembling

little islands, the perpetual noise and clatter which they made alone dissipating the illusion. On the report of my gun flights of them arose, one after the other, into the air, like a succession of dense clouds.

The musquitos, which were bad enough before in all conscience, now became quite intolerable. They arose on the margin of the banks of the Saladellas in such myriads as to make everything appear as if seen through a veil of thin gauze. Any portion of the face or hands left exposed, but for a moment, was immediately covered with them, and the poor horses, whose bodies were more unprotected than our own, were annoyed beyond description, and they writhed in a most restless state of suffering beneath the terrible infliction. It was in the midst of as fine a sport as heart could desire that I could scarcely get a shot, and was fairly driven from the field by the invading army of these, my tiny enemies. Right glad was I to gallop off from the scene of my defeat, and to find myself at last at a narrow part of the river, where I might enjoy the luxury of shooting without any of the attendant evils I had just

experienced. This situation was likewise much frequented by ducks, hares, and small coveys. Unfortunately, the birds invariably kept over the water, and although I occasionally brought one down, I had the satisfaction of seeing it carried away with the stream, without ever a chance of getting possession of it. As the day advanced I left the scene of this amusement, and, having rejoined my people, jogged on as usual.

Having changed our mules at the post of the Guardia Monté, we hurried on as fast as we could, and soon accomplished the next stage, and purchased a few eggs at the Cimbolar post, in case of need. With fresh cattle, passing La Orketta, the night had long set in before we reached the post of Kachi, which turned out to be the best we had met with for many a day. We were furnished with a clean and comfortable apartment, water to wash with, and other comforts rarely to be met with in these localities. During these overland journeys washing is not so easy an operation, since it is necessary to besmear the face with cold cream, lard, or grease, to prevent the skin from cracking or peeling

off through exposure to the air, and the intense heat of the noon-day sun. After dinner, tea, cigars, and a refreshing night's rest, we left this, the last post in the province of Santo Iago. The Pampas now began to stretch their weary levels on every hand, an occasional patch of wood or cover at times relieving the monotony. Here numbers of ostriches, in their native fields, might be seen feeding in careless security.

We now entered the province of Cordova, and arrived at the post of Bella, which was kept by a military officer, the commandant at the station on the frontiers. I found him remarkably kind and hospitable, but, owing to a slight illness, obliged to keep his bed. I recommended him to try the effect of some trifling remedy which I gave him, and so confident was he of the result, that scarcely had he made the first trial before he felt, or fancied he felt, himself better; so astonishing is the faith which these people repose in any medicine administered by a foreigner.

After leaving this place a severe accident happened to one of my men, named Cose; an excellent fellow, successor to Pedro,

who, having taken the ague, was prevented from proceeding further than Tucuman. Cose was riding one of the leaders at one of those sharp turnings where it is necessary to pull at one of the traces to prevent its being entangled in the feet of the wheelers, when his fingers became caught in it, and one was taken clean off, bone and all. This made the poor fellow exceedingly faint, so that I was obliged to leave him a horse that he might overtake us at leisure. He joined us again just before sunset, as we were entering the post of Piedritos.

This place most certainly verified its name, for nothing was to be had but *stones*, and my poor Gauchos had to retire to rest with empty stomachs, and dream all sorts of invectives against the people of the post, and their own hard fortune. Early next morning we were all glad to get away ; and so, without loss of time, horses were put to the carriage and off we started. As we galloped over the Pampas to the post of Rosario, we found Cose, who had preceded us, with the horses ready for the relay, so that we were again *en route*, without a moment's delay.

At this point we encountered another carriage, containing certain delegates from the conqueror, General Urquiza, on their way to regulate the affairs of the province.

These gentlemen were exceedingly glad to see us, and gave us perfect assurance of the practicability of an easy journey to Buenos Ayres; the army, after the decisive battle that had been fought, being newly organized, and confined within its encampment in the suburbs of the city. The vast extended plains of the Pampas, with scarcely an object to rest the eye upon, and utterly devoid of any signs of life or human habitation, strike the traveller with a feeling of melancholy loneliness. This enhances greatly the pleasure of a casual meeting upon the road, and as the two coaches now stopped abreast of each other, all parties seemed to participate in the general delight, in which the very horses seemed to share. After numerous kind inquiries about absent friends, and the exchange of a few passing jokes, the whips cracked once more, and away we started, perhaps never to meet again.

At the post of San Pedro, which we next

reached, we made a purchase of some ribs of beef which hung temptingly for sale. The enormous number of cattle which abounds in the Pampas is most astonishing. Thousands of mares, in fold, crowd upon the sight, as a long series of *haciendas* appear in the distance. Cows and bullocks are in like proportion. It is no uncommon thing for a *hacienda* to have as many as twenty or even thirty thousand head of cattle upon the estate. Passing by the post of Tala, that of Entequassi afforded us shelter for the night. The next day brought us to the post of Belesdero, where we purchased a splendid capon, and some *choelos*. As we advanced, there were indications of our near approach to Cordova—once a city noted for its learning and refinement, and the centre of Jesuitical power in this part of the New World. Many of the *haciendas*, which now began to multiply on both sides of the way, were of a monastic character, having small chapels attached to them, and surrounded with flourishing gardens, and grounds filled with luxuriant timber, betokening the agricultural taste and industry introduced by

the fathers. We now entered the Alto-grande post, which was soon followed by that of Salista, which formed the termination of our day's work.

This establishment, consisting of several neat and comfortable buildings, was kept by a Cordovan widow, and her two daughters, who were very fair samples of the beauty of the province. These ladies rather prided themselves as blue-stockings, and certainly went so far to keep up their character, as to maintain a continual battery of small talk, which seemed quite inexhaustible. Another qualification which they possessed, was an unbounded curiosity to see everything that I had with me. This was harmless enough in its way, did they not go the length of asking for everything which they saw. I did not exactly fall in with these little peculiarities, but had I not contributed a few trifles from my general stock, I certainly should have been kept up talking all night; and, as I was in need of rest, this was not at all what I wanted.

In the morning, we galloped away to the post of Il Pozo de la Baca. The country

had now become truly beautiful, exhibiting a perfect terrestrial Paradise; and in the midst of this rustic garden, cultivated to the greatest extent, and abounding in luxuriant wood, stretched upon a level plain, stood the city of Cordova. The spires of many churches were seen, and several large, imposing buildings, once used as monasteries, but now deserted and fast falling into decay. On the expulsion of the Jesuits, this city lost its importance, and its commerce took another direction, from the fact of the wealthy Spaniards, who had been drawn there by a devotional regard for the abode of the learned fathers, no longer continuing to take up their residence there.

The last post before we arrived there, was that of La Boca de Rosario, opposite to which was a monastery, with its church and gardens. The exterior of the church which I inspected, was still in excellent condition, and in point of decoration was extremely chaste, possessing none of those tawdry ornaments which so often disfigure the religious buildings in these parts. Gold cornices, on a white ground, composed the

panneling, and the roof consisted of elaborate stonework, in very high relief. There were two altar-pieces, one for the grand altar, and the other for a small chapel, but both of these appeared to be but bad copies of an indifferent style of art. The monastery itself was in a far more dilapidated state, its several cells and galleries seeming to be made a receptacle for all sorts of agricultural materials and implements.

In the centre of the court-yard were the remains of what once was an elegant fountain; but now there was only a small trickling stream, as clear as crystal, overflowing its shattered basin. The gardens, which had evidently been laid out with care, and due regard to order, were now a mass of wild and unruly vegetation, some of their avenues and shady walks being quite impervious to the sun's bright rays, and offering the coolest retreat possible for quiet solitude and meditation. There were orange orchards in abundance, and throughout these were erected avenues of brick columns, supporting beams, on which the rich and prolific vine luxuriated, forming with its thick clusters,

a perfect roofing of its luscious fruit. The grateful banana, the pomegranate, and the pine-apple, were mingled in the wildest profusion; and nature's choicest fruits and flowers, as they thrive in their savage exuberance, formed one continued and entangled maze. This monastery no longer retains its former sacred and venerable character, having for some time been devoted to other purposes. It has now been sold for a *hacienda*.

With many reflections, which a saunter in these deserted grounds called forth in my mind, I bade adieu to this interesting spot. Advancing upon the road, my attention was continually diverted to various buildings once belonging to the Jesuits, which line the wayside. I noticed a splendid mansion, originally a monastic college, but now converted into a seminary or national school, belonging to the city. Attached to all these buildings are spacious grounds, where these men of leisure spent a great part of their time in the study and practice of agricultural pursuits. The Jesuits, as a body, were not only men of great learning, but did not

think it beneath their dignity or calling to render themselves useful to their fellow-creatures, by the introduction of the several arts and sciences in those countries in which they settled. The benefits which they conferred on the natives of these countries, not only rendered them more civilized, but so influenced their minds, as to make the dogmatic precepts of religion take a firmer hold upon them than they would otherwise have done. Where the Jesuits took up their abode, poverty, which makes men for the most part attentive only to those subjects which appertain to their temporal welfare, was wholly unknown. Abundance of grain, wine, and poultry, fruits, and every article of vegetation, stocked the market. The idle and profligate learned lessons of industry from their religious pastors, who not merely contented themselves with teaching to other men their duties, but actually set them the example of careful and industrious habits. They performed themselves the offices of daily labour, guiding the plough, and toiling with their own hands in the several departments of

agriculture. I am very far from desirous of justifying their tenets, or entering upon a metaphysical discussion on the peculiarities of their creed. This I leave in other hands, as beyond my province or capability; but this much I will assert, that as regards the temporal benefit which they conferred upon the countries where they established the Roman Catholic religion, the Jesuits are entitled to our highest praise. They taught the indolent to work; and so far enlightened the ignorance of the poor savages with whom they came in contact, that they were, in process of time, enabled profitably to apply their industry to the proper culture and enjoyment of the fruits of the earth. In a country where nature had been so peculiarly bountiful, this was no difficult task; and we now see many parts of the New World, in spite of the superstition and utter ignorance on many other subjects which still prevail, teeming with the richest grain, and offering to the stranger, the fairest fruits, and other products of the ground, that were ever reared by the hand of man.

Coming up to the bed of a large river, in

which two or three shallow streams were silently flowing, we passed over it with the greatest ease, and reached the opposite shore in safety. A number of women, in rather scanty attire, were seen washing clothes upon the banks. Driving through a jungle of underwood, we now began to approach the suburbs of the city, indicated by numerous cottages, in the front of which several children, in a perfect state of nudity, and covered with dirt and sand, were amusing themselves. On seeing our carriage they ran into the houses to tell their parents, and presently we had quite a concourse of persons assembled at their doors to see the strangers pass along. The city of Cordova, which, at a distance, had a very prepossessing aspect, lost many of its charms, as we advanced nearer. The streets and houses, which in former times must have been worthy of its fame, were now almost in ruins, and, in many cases, wholly deserted. An air of gloom and desolation seemed to hang over the place. This might be partly accounted for by the character of the Government, the man who now holds the post of Governor being entirely

without education, though despotic and tyrannical in the extreme. He is extremely grasping and avaricious, and although his son married the daughter of a Scotch doctor, who had resided in the country for more than thirty years, he is so suspicious of all foreigners, that he loses no occasion of showing his dislike.

I believe that this ill-feeling towards them is more particularly shown in the case of the French, of whom a great number are residing here, and who have incurred his bitter hatred owing to their noisy and egotistical boastings of liberty, a thing not to be tolerated in a country which is governed on the principle of arbitrary rule.

During my stay here I took up my abode in the house of a friend, but had scarcely set my foot within the house before I was attacked by as severe an attack of the ague as could by possibility be endured. My host, being acquainted with a Yankee doctor, who lived close by, and who was regarded as a very tolerable man in his profession, sent word to him of my illness, requesting his attendance, and telling him, to render him

all the more upon the alert, that his patient was a countryman, in fact, an Englishman. This information had not the desired effect. "Let him die," said the Yankee, closing his Christian answer with an oath. I was at the time suffering too much to stand much parleying, and, therefore, pocketing the insult as best I could, I sallied forth to the Plaza, and entering a chemist's shop, ordered half a tumbler of Peruvian bark. Mixing this with water, I swallowed it on the instant, and the fever soon passed away. In the evening I repeated the dose, with the addition of some Quinine pills, and in a short time I found that I had accomplished a radical cure.

The above-mentioned American and several Frenchmen possess large establishments in this city for the tanning of leather, which is so much used in this and the adjoining provinces. This, no doubt, is a most profitable speculation. I found it necessary to change here the whole of my dollars for the abominable paper money of Buenos Ayres, the postmasters upon the road in every instance indignantly refusing to receive the former. I

likewise had to get my coach made more secure, as it was threatening to fall to pieces, and I had no wish to encounter the delays and inconveniences of another break-down.

Having conducted these and other necessary arrangements, I gave orders for our start early the next morning; but when the time came, I found two out of my four Gauchos so drunk, that they could hardly stand. Notwithstanding this, I had the horses put to, and the two delinquents lifted on their respective mules, where, like true Gauchos, they contrived admirably to keep their seats, although, from the helpless predicament in which I had just seen them, this was an exploit on their part which I should not very confidently have ventured to predicate. We soon arrived at the first post, that of La Punta del Monte, the vast Pampas over which we travelled still exhibiting enormous herds of cattle that stretched away on all sides to the very horizon.

The post of Olivar, which we next gained, begun to assume that fortified aspect which indicated our near approach to the country of the *Indios bravos* (savages). Each house

had a tower or citadel attached to it; and, from this, an effective defence might be made against the Indians beneath, who always make their attack on horseback. These strongholds being built of brick or mud, afforded great security in the night-time; for the Indians, who often shoot arrows with brands of fire attached to them, against the houses, occasionally set fire to their roofs, which, for the most part, are thatched with straw, and the inmates are thus consumed within their own trenches.

The post of Oncativo formed our resting-place for the night, where a number of Frenchmen—manufacturers and artizans—as well as some inhabitants of Buenos Ayres, but then residents at Cordova, who left the latter city soon after ourselves in order to gain the benefit of our well-armed equipage, hastened on to overtake us. This gratuitous offer of their company was not in the least disagreeable, since we generally arrived at our night's lodging two hours before them, and had the first choice of all the rooms; and during the night, the additional reinforcement of twelve persons armed, and mostly

Europeans, gave us great confidence, as we were thereby enabled the better to make face against the Indians, their mode of warfare consisting of surprise, and their plundering parties never exceeding a hundred, or a hundred and fifty at the most.

After exchanging civilities with our fellow-travellers, we started again early in the morning, leaving them to follow us at their leisure. The plains now began visibly to lose their character of pasture lands, their horned inhabitants gradually diminishing in numbers, and the *haciendas*, which hitherto appeared in close proximity to each other, now occurred but occasionally. The vast monotonous level stretched away on every hand in great luxuriance, varied only by dark patches, occasioned by a few scattered dry thistles of the past year. Numerous hillocks, perforated by small holes, marked the burrows of colonies of *biscachos* (an animal resembling a European rabbit, but with a tail like a squirrel). At the mouths of these burrows these little creatures generally piled up several dried stalks of the giant thistle peculiar to these parts, which,

in a great measure, concealed their haunts. I perceived also many bones of birds and small animals congregated in the vicinity, no doubt with a similar object. During the greater part of the day this situation is wholly monopolized by a few owls, which, when disturbed, shrink from the gaze and near approach of the casual passer-by. The *biscachos* are to be met with in great numbers on the outside of their burrows at the times of sunrise and sunset, and then they afford plentiful occupation to the enterprising sportsman.

We passed the posts of Los Esquinillas and Chinaris, and finally made that of Tro-pochio our halting-place for the night. The stages being very short, we arrived here in good time; and whilst the cooking was going forward, in preparation for our dinner, I took up my gun, hoping to get some sport, as a considerable quantity of wood and cover stood in the vicinity of the post. My attention was soon attracted to a number of monster hares, which made off before I had time to get a shot at them. After running for some distance, they turned round and

commenced feeding and gamboling as before, when I fired away at them for some time, making some of them roll over. However, they managed to get again upon their legs, and scampered away. At last, having loaded with a charge of patent shot, I was lucky enough to send it right through one unfortunate animal. He rolled over in reality, and, when I came up to him, I found I was well rewarded for my pains. The weight of this puss was such that I was obliged to drag it after me, it being a great deal too heavy for me to carry upon one arm. The flesh of this animal differs from that of the European hare, in that the meat, instead of being dark, as with us, is perfectly white, like that of the rabbit.

The other coach arrived at the post much later than our own, on account of one of the wheels catching fire; and on our companions making their appearance, we all spent a most comfortable night, in mutual security. On the following day we passed the posts of Billia Nueva, La Heradura, and Lescina Medran; the latter place being a little town, in which was stationed a detachment of sol-

diers, supposed to keep the barbarous Indians in check—this being a part of the country which they thickly inhabited, and known by the name of the Santa Fé Province. The pastures had now become extremely beautiful—their magnificent crops of herbage, which seemed sufficient to fatten cattle for the supply of Europe, being all but deserted, and serving as food only to some herds of deer that were scattered over the extensive meadows. The sight to a sportsman is, as might be supposed, beyond description exhilarating, consisting, as it does, of hundreds of these fine deer, which he passes every day; but they take to feed at so respectful a distance from the high road, that, except in the case of a couple, or more, which had wandered within rifle shot, I had no opportunity of testing my skill in bringing them down.

It would be feasible enough for a party of gentlemen to make a pilgrimage to these parts for the purpose of a shooting season. It is only necessary to take a passage to Rio Janeiro in one of the Brazilian line of steamers, thence in a small steamer to Monte

Video and Buenos Ayres, and from the latter place in one of the Italian schooners to the Rosario, or Santa Fé. A ride, then, will bring a person to these shooting-grounds, and this may easily be done in about forty or fifty days. A hunting party, well equipped, may bid defiance to any attack from the hostile Indians, and actually revel in sport. Besides this inducement I may mention that the ground is literally covered with partridges, some of them being of an enormous size. As the coach passes on, coveys of these birds arise on both sides of the way, striking the ear with the sound of their peculiar flutter. Many will appear to rise from under the very horses' feet, whilst others will run along the ground and scarcely be distinguishable from it, so great is the resemblance between the colour of their bodies and that of the soil. On starting, soon after day-break, I have seen traces of them in the long grass extending like longitudinal lines from various parts of the plain to the spot whereon I was standing. A young Irish friend of mine at Salta gave me a very interesting description of his deer-stalking during a journey of some

months which he had made through these districts on his way to Salta. I will endeavour to tell his story in his own words.

“ We travelled in carts, and leaving them at sunrise, with three guns and a guide, we traversed the plain, which was literally strewed with partridges. These we quite disdained to shoot at, as we could almost kick them with our feet.* Besides this, we were afraid of firing from fear of disturbing the deer. However, we had quite enough to do in keeping off the musquitos, which abound here to an incredible extent, and disturbed our equanimity considerably. A person is, in fact, for ever slapping his own face ; but, by adopting the plan in vogue in this country for keeping at bay these relentless persecutors, I found that I was saved a deal of trouble and annoyance. The mode is this :— You take your silk handkerchief and double

* This I firmly believe to be a fact, as I have often bought of the boys at the posts dozens of these birds which had been thus caught. A long stick is furnished with a noose and a slip-knot at the end of it. This is thrown over the necks of the birds, and in this way numbers of them are entrapped.

it so as to form a triangle; you then place it upon your head, pinning it under the nose so as to let two points dangle loosely in front and the other behind. The eyes and nose only are thus exposed; and the action of walking produces such a delightful artificial breeze, that, besides the enjoyment of the luxury of a cool head, you have the satisfaction of effectually keeping the musquitos at a distance. Having gained the banks of a small stream, which formed a little bay, the only watering-place for many a league round, myself and my companions took up our positions in such a manner as that, the instant one shot should be fired, each of us in succession should fire his gun at the herd, as it passed rapidly by us. Lying down in the long grass, we awaited in solemn silence the approach of the opening day. A faint ray of light was seen in the East, and as it became gradually stronger it cast a slight streak of red on the fleeting clouds.

“Just at that moment a black line was seen on the distant horizon, and then another in a different quarter; then several others; and, presently, herds of deer were plainly

perceptible, advancing in single file to one common centre—the watering-creek, where we were lying in ambush. Our hearts beat within us with a sportsman's delight, as we descried these nimble animals coming on apace, holding aloft their wide-spreading antlers, and shaking their fat haunches, in anticipation of a cool and refreshing morning's draught. Many of these columns pushed on into the water without perceiving us. One large buck, taking the direction to where I was concealed, nearly stumbled over me, and was so astonished at the unexpected meeting that he turned upon me, and tried with his horns to pin me to the earth. Feeling rather uneasy in my novel situation, I fired off my musket without taking any particular aim.

“The report was no sooner heard than the confusion amongst the hosts of these deer was indescribable. I began to be quite frightened at my close proximity to such overwhelming numbers. Had I ventured to rise, I should assuredly have been knocked over again by the force with which they rushed by. As it was, I remained perfectly quiet, and hundreds of them, in their fright

and agitation, cleared me at a bound. Never, my dear friend, since old Ireland was old Ireland, has been witnessed the like to this. The only thing at all approaching it, which I can remember, is a shindy at which I was once present at Donnybrook fair. The terror which had seized me, and the noise made by these numbers of deer, as they rushed past me, had wholly prevented my hearing the reports of the guns of my companions. As the sound of the retreat of the deer died away in the distance, we all arose from our hiding-places; and overjoyed was I to find, not far from me, my old friend with his antlers spread upon the ground, kicking and rolling about, with a hole right through his body. Close at hand, to my astonishment, I found a beautiful doe, quite dead, shot in her stomach, and I reasonably concluded from this that I had shot two birds with one stone. My companions, likewise, had been equally fortunate, and between us we found that we had managed to bag four fine deer. We now hastened to our caravan, and there was a general feast on the fruits of our day's sport.

“ A few days afterwards, I felt desirous of having another turn, but the captain of the *Charetas* was peremptory as to our proceeding onwards without delay. On conversing with my two brother sportsmen, upon our strange adventures some days after, we all agreed that we had never seen anything like it before; and that the thorough disorganization of the numerous herds of deer, consequent upon the alarm we had given, from their fear of running foul of each other—the clatter of such a large number of horns, as they occasionally came into contact—the trampling of hoofs, and the rustling and tearing of the grass, together with the sight of these beautiful creatures, leaping over each other in their haste, formed as singular a scene, as it could, by possibility, be the lot of any one to witness.”

This was my friend's account of a day's deer-stalking in South America; and the whole affair, though to others it may seem too highly coloured, is, to myself, who had now the opportunity of personal observation of the prodigious quantities of deer in these regions, perfectly intelligible. My readers

will bear in mind, that we had just arrived at Lescina Medran, when I broke the thread of my narrative, to tell them of the sporting wonders, of which this country can boast. This post presented at night much animation and bustle, whilst the soldiers were blowing their horns to call the small garrison to their quarters. The arrival of the coach, too, added spirit to the scene. Numbers of persons were selling their meat, fowl, eggs, and *choelos* as they found customers, and at the same time, filled the timid portion of their auditors with painful forebodings, as they detailed dismal stories of rapine and murder, committed by the *barbaros* in times gone by. We had, fortunately, profited by the application of the adage, "First come, first serve," and found ourselves comfortably refreshed by our evening's meal, and ready for repose, when the new arrivals were only just commencing to make their arrangements. It was not long before we were wholly oblivious of all around us, and wrapt in our soothing slumbers.

In the morning we started early, and in the course of the day we saw realized some

of those exciting scenes, which had been so vividly pictured before us on the preceding evening. The first post was Las Tres Cruces, presenting a number of small cottages, behind which was a stockade, formed of the prickly pear, ten or twelve feet high, and surrounded by a dry moat, in the shape of a long quadrangle. This place served as the nightly retreat of the whole village; and within, in a small building, were kept a number of guns and carbines, furnished by government for the defence of the post. On my arrival there, observing several women and children congregated to watch our progress, I made some inquiries of them, relative to the forays of the Indians. I soon learnt that scarcely a person in the place had escaped some calamity in the death of a relative, through the inroads and murderous propensities of these savages. One woman had seen her husband, brothers, and father, butchered before her eyes, and fainting at the sight, had been left for dead in the road. A man with whom I conversed, told me that during his absence, his wife and children had been taken away, and that he had not the slight-

est clue as to their whereabouts. My Gaucho, Pizarro, lost his father and mother, by their being consumed in their house, which had been set on fire by the Indians.

The men belonging to this village are generally occupied in guarding and tending their cattle; but one man, who had been left alone in care of the stockade, and as a protection to the females who were left, was suddenly attacked. Having arms and ammunition, he deliberately shot at the invaders, through holes in his entrenchment, and actually killed nine Indians as they galloped round the trenches, brandishing their long lances and uttering their discordant warcries. After this fatal attempt, the Indians became alarmed, and hastily departed, carrying away their dead, thinking the place to be garrisoned with soldiers. Most of the little children that I beheld here had been reduced to orphanage by these terrible onslaughts of these savage tribes. It is reported that one of these tribes is headed by a European, a dissipated *desperado*, who never gives quarter to any of his countrymen. He is joined by the idle and the

profligate, and then these bands go forth on their errands of murder and plunder. The Indians invariably kill all the males that may chance to fall into their hands. The women, if young, are carried away by them, and become their wives. Sometimes even children are taken. It is stated, and I believe on very good authority, that several European or native women, on their way to join their husbands at Chili and other places, have been captured by these wretches, who have made them their wives and had children by them. One lady belonging to Chili, and said to have been a very beautiful white woman, shared the same fate, and became the mother of a family during her captivity. Her relations, who discovered the place of her confinement, opened negotiations with her captors for her release, offering a large sum of money as a ransom. The chiefs of the tribe gave her the option of returning to her friends, if she felt so disposed; but she positively refused the offer of her liberty, and remains to the present moment an Indian squaw.

I was informed by an officer who had lived

for some time amongst them, whilst negotiations between them and his Government were pending, that their life is one of great excitement and pleasure. They reside in a sort of encampment, and lead a kind of roving, gipsy life, almost *in puris naturalibus*. Hunting parties are continually made amongst them, with the full range of the plains to the very foot of the Cordilleras; and abundance of game, cattle, and fish supply all their wants.

The next post at which we arrived was called *El Frayle Muerto*, and takes its name from some legend concerning a dead friar. Then we passed in succession that of *Cancon*, *Barancas*, and *Saladilla*; at which latter place, after a long day's journey, we put up for the night. These several posts possessed, more or less, the means of defence against a sudden surprise from the neighbouring Indians. The general mode adopted for this purpose seems to be to surround their fastnesses with moats; the minor defence being, as before stated, a hedge of prickly pears,—very insufficient fastnesses, were not the Indians so indolent, and gifted with so little ingenuity. It is

said that these tribes, being accustomed from their earliest infancy to ride on horseback, are capable of doing very little when on foot, and they certainly exhibit little inclination for pedestrian exercise. At the post of Saladilla we all slept within one of the moats; but found a great paucity of creature comforts to keep up our courage—a small supply of eggs being all that we could obtain. Early on the following day, in reconnoitring the neighbourhood, I started a couple of foxes; but they were too quick for me, and I was unable to get a shot at them. The partridges, if possible, seemed here to be in greater profusion than ever.

At the posts of Lobaton and La Cabeza del Tigre, where we stopped to exchange horses, we found them to be unusually scarce, owing to so many of them having been taken away for the use of the cavalry. However, we were very fortunate, and had few impediments to arrest our onward journey. The post and village of La Cruz Alta, at which we next arrived, were all included within the precincts of their defences. Whilst our relays were being brought out and attached to

the carriage, the people came to us and offered for sale two small land tortoises, which were baked and turned out excellent. They likewise brought us some milk, which, with the aforesaid fare, would form a strange *melange* for a London exquisite; but "*à la guerre comme à la guerre,*" and thus, under the circumstances, myself and staff considered it a most delicious treat.

At the post of La Guardia de la Scena, we again rested for the night. This place is delightfully situated, and it is a pity that so beautiful a country should be almost entirely monopolised by savage tribes. The observation which I made in passing through the territories occupied by the Indians was, that they possessed the fairest portion of the land. Here the fine levels of the Pampas are free from the thistles which cover the plains in the vicinity of Buenos Ayres, and the quality of the pasture is unrivalled. It is, unfortunately, suffered to waste its unprofitable luxuriance till it perishes with decay, or is consumed by the parching heats of a tropical sun, to spring up again in the same rich and exuberant loveliness, to perish unheeded as

before. The terror inspired by the savage habits of the Indian tribes has wholly prevented the buildings of *haciendas*, or the pasturing of cattle in this locality; and the consequence is, that what otherwise would be a perfect paradise has now become, from the sheer want of cultivation and the industry of man, a wilderness where Nature's gifts are vainly lavished.

The next day brought us to the post of Arrequito, and thence we passed to that of Desmuchados or Gallegos, where we found it necessary to come to a stand still, from the fact of one of the wheels of our coach having taken fire, and nearly burnt the box out. This delay was compensated by our being enabled to lay in a plentiful supply of meat, as well as a superabundant stock of partridges brought in by some boys for our benefit.

After leaving the post of Desmuchados or Gallegos, and at some considerable distance from it, the day being unusually clear and not a cloud to veil the piercing rays of a mid-day's sun, I perceived, all at once, far in advance of me, a cloud gradually spreading itself along the horizon, of a density so

opaque that it ultimately dimmed the brilliancy of the sun, and made it appear as if partially eclipsed. Thinking that, probably, it was an approaching *tornado*, I began to take the usual precautions against it, when one of my men informed me that the extraordinary effect I saw was produced by locusts. I immediately applied my glass to my eye, and could plainly distinguish myriads of these insects coming on towards us.

Our course lay through the very midst of the flight, and as they drew near each individual could be clearly recognised; the whole body of them forming what might be compared to a veil of gauze, through which the earth and sky were more or less obscured as it was wreathed like large volumes of smoke by every zephyr or gust of wind. When we got into the midst of them, they came down upon us like hail, the coach being literally covered with them, inside and outside. The earth and every object on it, every tree or blade of grass exhibited one living mass of these destructive insects. In size and appearance they resemble large grasshoppers, having four wings of a green

and red colour. It was a painful reflection to me when I considered* that they were spreading their devastating presence over so large a district, leaving famine and desolation in their rear; and that the beautiful country, over which my eye now ranged, should, in the course of a few days, become a barren waste, and that the fruits of the labour so frugally exerted should be thus utterly destroyed. The time of their passing us in one dense and almost interminable cloud was at least two hours and a half, and estimating from this circumstance the extent of the ground which they covered, I should imagine that it must have been a tract of many square miles.

This insect has been known, on several occasions, to visit Monte Video, destroying every particle of herbage, and spreading themselves over the streets and houses till driven into the sea by some fortunate gale of wind. I have been told by persons who have witnessed this occurrence, that the sea at the time appeared as if covered with floating islands, and that when thrown upon the beach by the tide, their bodies had formed

such enormous heaps, that it had been found necessary by the public authorities to consume them by fire, to prevent the pestilential influence they would exercise by being suffered to decay.

As we advanced from this point the post-houses began to exhibit fewer precautionary arrangements, and the cattle and sheep were feeding at large upon the plain. On the ensuing day the posts of Mananteal and La Cadella de la Orketta furnished their supply of horses till the last post, that of La Cessilla Luna de Seston, brought us into the vicinity of the city of Il Rosario. Thistles now began to usurp the place of the fine grass crops of the Pampas. Numerous farms and tenements, cultivated fields and wild patches denoted that we were at a distance from the Indian territory, and that the boundary was far in our rear. Stretching along the banks of an important tributary of the mighty La Plata was seen the city of Il Rosario, and many neat houses newly built, as well as stores and shops, many of which were in course of erection, indicated for some distance the suburbs of this little port.

On entering it the streets and Plaza exhibited several good houses, and a neat-looking church, having two towers or belfrys. A grand hotel, to be undertaken by a Genoese, was on the point of being opened. I took up my abode at a Spanish *Posada* near the Plaza, and continued to make myself as comfortable there as circumstances would permit. After recruiting myself a little after my journey, I descended to the beach to take a general survey of the post, this town being built on a cliff some hundred feet above the river. A number of small craft, chiefly schooners commanded by Italians, engross the traffic of the place. The swampy state of the banks of the river and an abundant growth of vegetation engender so intolerable a number of musquitos, that I was fairly driven from the water's edge, and obliged to take refuge in the heights above, in order to rid myself of my tormentors.

There was a billiard-room in an hotel that was kept by a person from Gibraltar, who claimed to be a countryman of mine, calling himself an Englishman. Through the introduction of one of my fellow-travelers in the other coach, which arrived soon

after ours, I became acquainted with a most amiable family belonging to the town, at whose house we spent the evening together. Our kind host, who received us most cordially, had three interesting daughters, of whom two were single and the other a charming young widow. After various songs accompanied on the guitar, we took *maté* together according to the custom of the country, after which minuets, waltzes, and other dances formed the diversion of the evening, and we left much delighted with our entertainment, and the hospitality we had experienced.

The port of Il Rosario is famed for the daring of its inhabitants, in being the first to receive with open arms the combined forces of Brazil and General Urquiza, and to render their aid in the overthrow of the tyranny of Rosas. It was at this place that these combined armies disembarked to try the issue of their struggle which ended so successfully for the cause of liberty. I have no doubt that in the course of time it will become a city and port of some consequence, should the exploration of the great inland

rivers be followed up as proposed by the French, and the projected stations be finally established for a regular steam navigation into the interior of Peru and Bolivia.

The wheel of my carriage having been set to rights, and myself fleeced by an exorbitant Genoese for the services he had rendered me in so doing, I prepared for my departure. I had some difficulty in procuring horses; but I was determined to go by land in spite of the solicitations of several captains of schooners and some of my late *compagnons de voyage*, who were about to accompany them. The prospect of the crowded state of these small craft in the present instance, and a knowledge of the imperfect accommodation which they afforded, were quite sufficient to deter me from choosing that mode of transit; but the additional annoyances I should have had to encounter in an occasional contrary wind, detaining me in some creek or other to be half eaten up by my old enemies the musquitos, and half broiled under a scorching sun, made me not hesitate for a moment as to the conveyance I should choose. I now

engaged a new hand—a fine young fellow—to ride ahead of me and get ready the relays, so that on the arrival of the coach there should be no unnecessary delay. He did his part to perfection, and I found his services most valuable. At the time of leaving this place, the post was deficient in its usual supply of horses, so that I was obliged to hire some of a private individual in order to get over the first stage.

After passing the post of Pandos, we arrived at that of Pavon, where we took up our quarters for the night. The plains all along exhibited the young verdure of the season, as well as the withered remains of the thistles of the preceding year. During the summer, the plains in the vicinity of Buenos Ayres and for many leagues on the road to Mendoza are covered with fields of thistles, which grow to such a height that a man on horseback may easily be concealed amongst them. In the autumn their stalks become thoroughly dried by the heat of the sun, when they afford excellent fuel, and are used for that purpose. In the dry season they sometimes become ignited, and dreadful

indeed are the consequences, if the flames be stimulated by a gale of wind. The thousands of cattle which are feeding upon the plains become mad with fright, and run with impetuosity before the devouring element. Were it possible to behold this scene without personal danger, it would be the sublimest thing a traveller could witness; but, for my part, I am quite content to see it in imagination, and for my own sake, and that of others, can dispense with the awful reality.

We gained the post of Pasqual Belzara without loss of time, as horses were always ready awaiting our arrival; and in the course of this and the following day we made up for any delays to which we were subjected, by travelling at greater speed when once upon the road. In this way we passed the posts of Pas de las Holmas Portequello, Penualba, Canâda de Gomez, and Requa, resting for the night at the latter place. The posts had now become respectable farm-houses, well-built of brick, with well-furnished rooms, and well-attired domestics. The yards were filled with turkeys and poultry, which furnished

our daily meal, and a plentiful supply of meat was always to be obtained. On the next day we arrived at the bridge of San Antonio; but no one appearing to claim the toll, we passed on, skirting the town on our way. I noticed here several tame ostriches, with which the children were playing before the doors of the cottages, and many of them even riding on their backs. The road now became anything but agreeable by reason of a number of small rivers, streamlets, gullets, and watercourses, which intersected the plain. Many a Gaucho appeared in sight, making his way on horseback, at his usual half-gallop pace, to visit some neighbouring *hacienda*, or to attend one of the numerous village festivals which repeatedly take place.

At the next post of La Cana de Souci, we had to put up with worse horses than we had hitherto met upon the road. They broke down before we had proceeded very far, and we had the greatest difficulty in continuing our journey. This was the effect of the late war, which became more evident the nearer we approached to the capital. The cattle everywhere were perfectly ruined.

However, we managed to get on as far as La Canāda de la Cruz, where we proposed to remain for the night. All the way from Il Rosario, the plains had still presented vast herds of cows, calves, and oxen, together with thousands of sheep, with their numerous lambkins. The fresh morning air was, however, often tainted by an assemblage of the carcasses of these animals, which had perished from various casualties, and which were left to putrify on the green sward, under the fierce rays of a burning sun. The last day before our arrival at the capital, we passed the posts of La Bella Lucan, La Canāda, Esquoard de Marchis, and Las Figuras.

Just as we left the latter place, the sun was sinking low in the horizon. The aspect of the sky had been very threatening throughout the day, and the dark, ominous cloud which had lowered in the horizon, had, by degrees, spread itself over the whole firmament. Not a breath of air was stirring, and a sulphurous vapour seemed to pervade the atmosphere. The whole face of nature was still, and not the motion of a blade of grass disturbed the painful silence. All at once

clouds of dust arose in the air, and obscured the whole heavens, and, travelling with terrific fury, rushed past us with overwhelming force. The hurricane had burst its leash, and plunging onward, roared along the plain and swept away everything that obstructed its course. Trees, roofs of houses, cattle—all were carried along in the vortex, and dashed with fury to the earth.

For a time the clouds of dust wholly prevented my distinguishing the form of any object. My ears were assailed on every hand by the appalling sounds which accompanied the destruction that was going on, but the force of the tempest and the dust which it raised, had entirely hindered my power of vision. Presently, however, I could discern my Gauchos, horses and *peones*, crouched down beneath sheds, or any place of shelter that happened to be at hand. After this the heavens opened, and a shower of fire descended on the earth, making the long extent of plain hiss and crackle, as it flickered along its course. Then a deluge of rain poured down, which continued unabated for some time, although the first fury of the tempest had long since passed over. In the midst of

this drenching shower, I came forward to summon my men, as I was determined to press onwards that night, in spite of all hindrances. They would fain have urged me to remain, but soon found that all remonstrance was useless, as I was most peremptory.

By dint of extra exertions, and the labour of extra horses and postilions, we contrived to drag the carriage through the large sheets of water continually to be met with, and which were the consequence of the incessant rain. Night had set in. After we had advanced for some distance, gardens, *quintas*, and small farms, began to line the road. We now knew that we were in the vicinity of some large city. Soon afterwards larger buildings appeared in sight, and then we found ourselves passing along streets in which shops and stores occurred at intervals. Then we crossed a market-place, crowded by numerous carts, which bring the meat from the country, and fruits and vegetables from the neighbouring *haciendas*. A church and a Plaza succeed. We had entered the important city of Buenos Ayres.

Thirty years before, I had already visited

this capital in furtherance of a claim which I had upon the Government of the country on behalf of my near relative, General Conte de Behague, in consequence of a contract made with him by the *Chargé d'Affaires* in England for military plans, fortifications, telegraphs, and military stores and equipments, as well as the general organization of the army. I had the pleasure, during my residence here at that time, to make the acquaintance of several agreeable families, and, amongst the rest, I was introduced to the amiable wife of General San Martin, the liberator of these provinces.

The city, as seen from the river, presents rather a monotonous aspect, from the similarity in point of height and general appearance of its buildings, which are here built upon the geometrical principle which is observed in most Spanish cities. Occasionally, however, domes, steeples, and observatories, break this painful regularity. The old fort, with its crazy walls, the entrance of which faces the Plaza, still exhibits its forbidding front in the direction of the sea. Around its bastions is a dry

ditch, which is crossed by means of a draw-bridge, and the walls are still graced by some of those noted brass guns for which the Spaniards were once so famed. These command the angles of the fort, at one of which is a long esplanade, planted with trees, and provided with seats for the accommodation of pedestrians. This Alameda is well kept and regularly watered, and forms an agreeable resort, and a fashionable *paseo* or lounging-place for the inhabitants of the city. The quay is built of brick and stone, and offers a sufficient resistance to the encroachments of the water. This city is subject to visitations of the Pampero wind, which blows towards these shores without a moment's warning, driving before it an immense body of water, and flooding the sands for a distance of six or seven miles. I have heard that, before the construction of the quay, shipping of all kinds, from the largest man-of-war at a distance of nine miles from the coast, to the smallest craft that rode apparently in safety in the inner roads, were exposed to the severest accidents from the fury of this wind. A sudden fall

in the glass, or a distant cloud in the horizon, when, perhaps, the heavens were otherwise perfectly serene, were all the indications of the approaching hurricane; and then, in an indescribable short space of time, ships of all kinds would be driven from their moorings and carried over mountains of waves, till they reached the beach, where they would be crushed against each other, or even the very houses. The numerous wrecks with which at low tide the sands are everywhere bestrewn, sufficiently attest the accuracy of these details.

The end of the Esplanade forms a delightful carriage-drive, and on the side towards the water there is an extensive and agreeable view of the river and outer roads, with their numerous shipping. Outside the beach, where, during low-water, an embankment of hard earth and rocky substances contains several basins and channels, the margins of which are covered with a mossy and velvety carpet, hundreds of negresses, engaged in their avocations as washerwomen, afford, by their gambols, songs, dances, and quarrels, continued amusement to the passers-by.

On the side towards the land, there is a succession of villas of graceful construction surrounded by beautiful gardens and pleasure grounds. A road has been formed at great expense for a distance of nearly four miles, to the delightful summer residence of General Rosas. It contains every convenience which the climate requires, and is laid out with the utmost taste and regard to comfort. The grounds are intersected by canals, and small lakes, on which are several small steamers and boats, which are kept for the amusement of the residents. In one part a neat-looking brig, which is well preserved and stands in the midst of a forest of trees, is used as a summer-house. The present inland situation of this residence was obtained during one of those dreadful irruptions of the water to which I have alluded. At the period of my visit it formed the head-quarters of General Urquiza, and the whole line of road between it and the city had become a regular encampment, the whole course being filled with cavalry, infantry, and artillery, and hosts of soldiers were dressed in the unsightly garb of Gaucho troops.

At this place, which was known by the name of Palermo, I had the opportunity of meeting with General Urquiza in company with a few friends. He had a very easy soldier-like bearing, and was remarkably gentlemanly; but, if report speaks true, he is, without exception, the severest commander who ever had the reins of power, suffering no act of insubordination, and punishing the delinquent in all cases with instant death.

The public edifices of this city have little in them to attract the attention of the curious. The churches, for the most part, exhibit that unfinished character so often to be met with in Italy and Spain, and the Cathedral itself is no exception to this rule. Externally it presents the pillared *façade* of a Roman temple, but its interior is utterly devoid of ornament, although its plain whitewashed walls give it an air of cleanliness and simplicity rarely to be found in Roman Catholic countries. However, on days of great observance a great display of crimson cloths and velvet, and an astounding show of plate, lent by the faithful for the occasion, entirely change its character. During my stay here a ludicrous scene took

place in the course of one of the nightly solemnities that take place in Passion week. The church, as usual, was crowded by females, and in accordance with the solemn occasion it was but sparingly lighted. A profound silence prevailed, and all seemed intent on their devotions, when some young men of the town, in rather too unseemly an exuberance of fun and frolic, put out the lights, and immediately fell to kissing the young ladies and knocking down the old ones. The consternation was dreadful, screams rent the air, and a general rush ensued, in which many were trodden under foot. Alarm was depicted upon every countenance, and the greater part knew not the cause of the awful scene of confusion and uproar which was going on. At last, tranquility was restored, and several arrests were made by the authorities. The sequel I never heard. It was afterwards affirmed by some that this was a *ruse* set on foot by some thieves in order to secure their booty in the confusion that ensued—others gave the version of the affair which I have done; but, at all events, in either case it does no credit to the parties concerned.

The palace built by General Rosas in the city as his residence, is deserving of notice for its solid construction and the beauty of its finish. This building occupies one block of a street, and comprises a number of squares or court-yards, with suites of apartments running into them, having verandahs forming a covered communication between them. Good English coach-houses and stabling give it a degree of comfort which seems seldom to be thought of in these localities. An elegant observatory and signal-towers with flat roofs form the principal features of this dwelling as seen from the outside. It was unfurnished when I saw it, probably from the fact of its having been but recently finished, or, as currently reported, from its having been sold by the existing government. On one side of the Plaza is a public building, in which, besides several smaller rooms deserving of notice, is one magnificent saloon which was used for a grand banquet and ball given by the citizens of Buenos Ayres in honour of General Urquiza, on the occasion of his triumphal entry into the city after the decisive battle that settled the fate of Rosas.

The grand Plaza is separated from a smaller

one by an arcade, where are a number of shops facing the fort. A row of posts and chains is the only thing to be found in the whole of this vacant space, betokening the great neglect of necessary improvements, and the want of ordinary embellishment which is so generally manifested throughout the Republic. The Cabeldo is characterized by the main guard of the police, consisting of a number of negro and Gaucho soldiers, who are always lying about or sleeping in the neighbourhood of the Plaza. The theatre, which was in the possession of a French *vaudeville* company, might be put on a footing with one of the most inferior establishments in London. The Hotel de Paris, at which I took up my quarters, is very large and commodious, as is the case with most of the establishments which are undertaken by the French; but it now appears very much neglected and almost deserted, and possesses little attraction for the stranger.

On the only elevation which commands the city there are military barracks and a parade. This was the position taken up by the ill-fated and imprudent General Whitelock, who could

from thence have easily bombarded the city, till it submitted to his will, without losing a man; but, instead of this, he made his attack through the streets, where each house, being flat-roofed, presented a regular fortification, and the armed inhabitants showered down from above such a host of missiles, and kept up such a deadly fire that the poor soldiers fell like corn before the sickle, causing the disgraceful capitulation which followed. These barracks having been constructed for the purpose for which they are now used, are the best in the place. The other quarters are generally formed in the dilapidated and deserted monasteries, formerly belonging to the Jesuits.

The English and foreign merchants residing in this city have established an English club-house, where a limited number of beds is provided for bachelor members. This fine establishment is conducted by a committee of gentlemen, and contains every possible convenience, including a reading and news-room, as well as one for billiards; and, in fact, economy, comfort, and every facility for commercial intercourse, have been consulted in all its arrangements. The foreign

population of this city includes a great number of shopkeepers, who form quite a little Paris of elegant shops. Hatmakers, tailors, *coiffeurs modistes*, and bootmakers predominate amongst the French; merchants, storekeepers, publicans, and boarding-housekeepers amongst the English; and amongst the Italians, warehousemen and captains of small craft trading to the inland ports on the mighty Plata.

The immigration of Irish to this place must have been on a very extensive scale, since all the hotel and boarding-houses, which are invariably European, have them in their employ. They are also to be found in great numbers on the farms in the neighbourhood of the capital, which are held by Englishmen, and which supply the city regularly with butter, eggs, and milk. The difficulty in finding a washerwoman is indescribable, and would scarcely be credited. I had to send my servant in all directions before he could find one, and then I discovered that I could enlist her in my service only on these conditions—first, that I should await her leisure, and next that I should pay at the rate of three or four royals for

each article! The market-place contains extensive accommodation in a number of distinct compartments, for meat, fish, vegetables, and fruits; and every variety of choice delicacy is to be procured, including an abundance of excellent fish upon all occasions, as well as a large supply of partridges and fowls. The Irish being so prevalent here, a large chapel attached to one of the churches was granted for their use, and an officiating priest belonging to the same nation provided, during the Rosas administration.

As I have had occasion repeatedly to refer to circumstances connected with the political affairs of this country, a few facts and details respecting the life and government of General Rosas may not be unacceptable to my readers. After the heroic delivery of his country from the Spanish yoke, the valiant General San Martin resigned the reins of government, and the consequence was, that a grasping ambition to wield the power of the State seized many of the leading families and military chiefs, who were divided into so many parties or heads of factions, each waging bloody and desperate war upon the others. The city of Buenos Ayres was thus continually subject

to a succession of *prononciamentos* and petty revolutions, tending to the insecurity of life and property. Two Presidents have been known to hold supreme power in the course of the same day, and one President was no sooner installed, than an antagonist arose to dispute his claim.

The terror and alarm caused by this state of things was paying very dearly for the independence which the States had gained, through the exertions and courage of their brave deliverer. Great and learned men, such as Rabadivea and Pintos, endeavoured to stem the torrent of those disorders which had been introduced by an unsettled state of society; but to no avail. The former of these I was personally acquainted with, and I may safely say that no man ever deserved more than he did the respect and devotion of all classes, and these he fully enjoyed. In the midst of all the confusion and anarchy which reigned in these parts, Rosas appeared, and with his Gaucho hordes of *Colorados*, or Reds, rushed in from the provinces like a whirlwind, obliterating all factions in a combined opposition to a common foe.

Having at last established himself in power,

he began systematically to crush the heads of other parties, and continued this course for a space of thirty years or so, until the whole country was perfectly overridden by his creatures. It is asserted that regular lists of persons and families, whom it was politic to put out of the way, were placed in the hands of these ferocious Gauchos, and that the commands of their superior were fully carried out at the nocturnal visits which they paid to their victims. A long list of this kind was found in the house of Rosas, after his defeat, containing the names of some hundreds of persons who were immediately to have been executed, had the result of the last battle been in his favour.

This determined tyrant built his power entirely on the support of the lowest of the people. Any pretensions of the nobility, or claims to popular notice on their part, were instantly discountenanced. At length some of the generals of this usurper, who thus held their power on so slight and deceitful a tenure, began all of a sudden to discover to what an insecure foundation they were trusting, and breaking from the bonds which

held them, joined with earnestness and enthusiasm the already formed party of the Unitarios, of which General Urquiza was the head. A treaty was soon set on foot with the Emperor of Brazil; and, succoured by so important an ally, they soon waged war with the oppressor, in a manner of which he had little dreamt. It has been often urged by Rosas, as an excuse for the many cruelties which he practised, that they were called for by the necessities of the case, and that he had no other way of keeping in subjection the turbulent and dissatisfied spirits with whom he had to deal. This severe and bloodthirsty man had a daughter, and it is pleasing to turn away from the contemplation of the many vices which disfigure his character to those beautiful traits of humanity and tenderness which distinguished hers. Maniseletta was loved and honoured by all; pity lurked within her soul, and every attribute of womanly feeling was there. This good creature, with tears and supplication, often prevailed with the harsh tyrant when other means were useless. At her entreaties, many a life was spared, and many a prayer of gra-

titude has ascended to heaven for the rescue of a father or a brother from his impending fate, at her kind interference.

General Urquiza and his allies who were under the command of Admiral Wingfield, the commanding officer under Lord Cochrane in the Brazilian navy, forced the passage of the river with little or no opposition. The men and artillery were landed near Il Rosario, and the detachments having pushed forward, fell in with a large body of troops belonging to Rosas, who were immediately engaged and put to flight. The main army, in the meantime, marched forward to attack a strongly fortified position on several hills, which was taken up by General Rosas, and well covered on all sides by a numerous body of artillery. These preparations were superintended by Rosas in person, and, it is said, on some observations being made by one of the best of his generals, as to the arrangements which had been made, he was immediately superseded. This unreasonable conduct is no doubt to be attributed to a mistrust which Rosas had, probably not without cause, of most of his leading men.

On the day of the battle he was indefatigable in visiting his various batteries, and reviewing his military preparations. General Urquiza and his allies made the attack in columns, under the fire of a hundred and fifty pieces of artillery, and although mowed down by grape and canister, these brave fellows still pushed forward and disputed every inch of the ground, till battery after battery fell into their hands. Rosas remained giving orders on one of the batteries which still was standing, till he plainly saw that all was lost, and then had the satisfaction of seeing one of his black myrmidons deliberately level his gun at him and fire. The shot, however, made but a slight wound in the hand, and this circumstance, as well as the general retreat, declaring now too evidently the fate of the day, the defeated commander slipped away in the confusion which followed, and made his escape to the city unobserved.

Soon afterwards, at the house of the British *Chargé d' Affaires*, a man presented himself and inquired of the *valet* for the Hon. R. Gore. The answer he received was that that gentleman was from home. The applicant, who wore a

poncho covered with dirt, with his face begrimed with gunpowder, and his hand bound up in a handkerchief, appeared faint and ready to sink, and showed great disinclination to leave the house. The valet, however, told him that his orders were peremptory not to suffer any stranger to enter the house. The person addressed then said, "I am General Rosas, will you let them shoot me in the streets like a dog?" At this appeal the valet admitted him immediately, took him into his own room, washed him, and after having supplied him with food, made him sleep for some hours upon his own bed. At night, dressed as a marine, the fugitive embarked in H.B.M. steamer the *Locust*, and soon found himself safe on board one of the Brazilian line of steamers bound for Southampton. Had he, by any chance, fallen into the hands of the people, he would inevitably have been torn in pieces, so great had now become the popular indignation against him.

Having made up my mind at last to start as soon as possible for England, I took my passage on board one of those large Mississippi boats

which have been sold to either a Brazilian or Buenos Ayres Company, and ply between the last mentioned port and Monte Video. The steamer, called *Il Rio de Janeiro*, afforded an excellent table and every needful accommodation to the passengers, and in the medley group which composed them, provided a never-failing fund of pleasure and amusement. The appearance of the city of Monte Video is most prepossessing. It is built on an eminence which forms a small peninsula, being washed on three sides by the sea, and from the various sea-breezes to which its situation exposes it, must be a very healthy spot. It is calculated to maintain an extensive commerce, and would, doubtless, long have enjoyed it, had not the vitality of the little Republic sunk under the obstinate persecution to which it was subjected by Rosas, in the person of his savage and overbearing Lieutenant Orebbe. This persecution lasted nine years or more, during which time the unfortunate city was exposed to a continual siege.

On the opposite side of the bay is a mound similar to that on which the city is built, and it was here that the hostile forces car-

ried on their operations. The harbour is safe, and generally crowded with shipping. The large men of war, of which a great number of all nations is always stationed here, take up their position at a distance from the port, seaward. At the time of my visit, the Brazilian fleet, under the command of Admiral Wingfield, was in the offing. Notwithstanding the devastating effects of war, this city, Phoenix-like, is again rising from her ashes. Lines of bastions and batteries are daily giving place to scenes of commercial enterprise and agricultural activity. The husbandman labours with his ploughshare and his sickle, where deadly engines of war once vented forth their flames. Streets lined with new and extensive buildings are to be met with at every turn. Elegant French shops attract the eye, as their well stored windows exhibit the beautiful fabrics of European manufacture. So great is the number of foreigners who are domiciled in the city, that it has quite the appearance of a colony of strangers, the natives of the country forming but a small proportion of the entire population. The

Basques predominate. After that the Italians take the lead. Little good has been effected by the maintenance of a foreign legion for so long a time, under the auspices of the celebrated Italian leader, Garibaldi. The present troops of the Republic are the emancipated negroes, officered by native whites.

In the grand Plaza stands the cathedral, a large edifice of a commanding exterior, although internally its arrangements partake of great simplicity. On occasions of great solemnity, however, the decorations and ornaments of the church are on a scale of great magnificence. The Hotel de Ville is a ponderous unfinished building, and contains the police-station and various shops and stores, together with the Hotel de Paris kept by a French cook, who at one time belonged to a French vessel of war. For the accommodation of a few rooms and board for three persons, I was charged here at the rate of a doubloon a day. There are several other hotels in the city. That of *Il Comercio* bears a good repute. The whole place, including its suburbs, literally swarms with

cafés and *estaminets*. That of the Bal d'Oro, which is a large establishment near the quay, carries off the palm, and is much frequented by the officers of the French navy. The various dwelling-houses are provided with flat roofs, and these, combined with a number of observatories, which are the constant resort of the inmates, give the city a lively and agreeable aspect.

The market-place, which formerly formed a part of the old fort or citadel in the time of the Spaniards, is well supplied with every species of provisions. Its display of fish far surpasses that of Buenos Ayres, both as regards variety and quality. In the course of my rambles about the town, I could plainly trace the ravages of war, particularly in the suburbs, where all the houses, trees, or walls, likely to impede the advance of an enemy, had evidently been intentionally thrown down. The entrance to the town, landwards, had been protected by a large battery, erected on heavy beams of wood, faced with brick-work, and furnished with casements, which had been erected at the expense of the foreign merchants, and super-

intended by a British naval officer. During the siege the inhabitants of the place often took walks with their families as far as this fort, when the enemy generally commenced a fire of twenty-four pounders, out of range, so that the spent shot came rolling into the road, and afforded excellent sport to the little boys and idlers in the neighbourhood.

The English houses of commerce seem to hold the supremacy in the wholesale trade; those of other nations, perhaps, in the retail. I noticed a beautiful building, highly decorated, which, I was informed, was destined to be a house of amusement like that of the gas-lights at Hamburg, and would include music and dancing, and bodily refreshments, in its bill of fare. I visited also a small and insignificant *café*, kept by a Frenchman, called the Museum of Arts and Curiosities. The proprietor I found to be a man of vast intelligence, having in his possession paintings and engravings of great value, and coins of the utmost rarity and antiquity, together with sundry other curiosities, which in Europe would fetch a great value. I learnt from this man that, during the course of the

siege, and before the erection of the large battery above mentioned, many soldiers belonging to the invading army used to steal out on dark nights into the suburbs, and murder the poor unoffending citizens thus taken by surprise.

The city possessed amongst its other attractions a theatre, at which, at the time of my visit, an Italian company was performing *Norma*, Mademoiselle Ida Edelviza being the *prima donna*. The Government seems to be highly unpopular, and probably will not hold together for any length of time. As a maritime and commercial port, Monte Video holds a very desirable position, and will, doubtless, before long supersede Buenos Ayres, as the first port on the coast for the disembarkation of goods for the internal consumption of the country. The effects of the cessation of hostilities begin already to be seen in a great outlay of capital; and in the course of a few years, when commercial relations are on a better basis, and security to life and property is better insured, this city will rise into greater mercantile importance than any other in this part of the New World.

I now bade adieu to South America, to carry with me to England the reminiscences of the pleasure I had experienced, and the dangers I had encountered, whilst travelling through its extensive territories. There has been for many years a direct communication between the ports of Genoa and Monte Video, facilitating that tide of Italian immigration which, judging by the numbers of Italians to be met with in many parts of the country, must of late years have been very considerable. Hearing of the sad ravages made by the yellow-fever at Rio de Janeiro, and as time was no object to me, I took my passage in a sailing vessel to the former port; and in a Genoese brig, commanded by Captain Gastalde, as kind and worthy a man as ever breathed, I was landed safely in London, after a propitious and agreeable passage.

THE END.

