

the Spanish, perhaps the easiest of languages to learn. This may account in part for its prevalence, to a convenient extent at least, even among the wild Indians within the sphere of Spanish conquest. First our men learned to ask, *leche de vaca, leche de cabra?* of the milk boys: goat's milk is far the more common, but is not popular with us.

A slave of the house, a captive when young from the Utah tribe, makes down every night our pallet beds. Major—is particular; and his persistence in minute directions to the girl, in very voluble English, of which she comprehends not one word, is so ludicrous, that our respectful attempts to smother our mirth usually result in a grand explosion. The major then, quite red in the face, laughs in a minor key.

Armi o on his retreat, dispersed the militia, and took with him the few regular troops, save some deserters. He had to abandon his artillery; and it has been all found and brought to the city: there are nine pieces; one is marked, "Barcelona, 1778."

A small fort is to be immediately commenced, on a hill which commands the town.

The great square or plaza, level, unpaved and rather sandy, has on each side a zequia, or canal, with rows of small cottonwood trees; this has a very pleasing effect in a hot, dry, and barren country. It is farther adorned with very comfortable porticoes,—*portales*,—on three sides, including the palace; these are extensions of the flat roofs to the edge of the side-walk, where they are supported by round pillars, which are whitewashed; they serve as the only shelter for the market; and are lined with shops, nearly all kept by Americans. One or two streets are similarly improved, but in general they are narrow and present to the passenger only a plain and nearly continuous wall; each extensive house having only a large strong folding door, and one or two windows; these have invariably a projecting frame and turned wooden bars; a sash seldom glazed—strong shutters opening inwards.

On our first Sunday the bells invited us to worship. I went to the parochial church: although built of adobes, it is sufficiently lofty, and has two steeples, or towers, in which hang three or four bells. With the usual wax images, it is adorned with numerous paintings—one or two of some

merit. There was some music, of violin and triangle, and no spoken service. The streets and shops were thronged, and nothing indicated there that it was the Lord's day.

The General has issued a proclamation denouncing the penalties of treason against any found in hostility, in the Territory of New Mexico. He has directed the laws and decrees here found existing to be translated by Captain Waldo, Missouri Volunteers, with a view to their revision.*

After the full submission of the territory, and the

* The patient reader of these dry details and descriptions, which largely share the dullness of almost all realities, who looks out hopefully for some scintillations of humor as a merited relief, will sympathise with me in the loss of Don Santiago; but in bidding him farewell, I will incur the guilt of an anachronism, by giving you here a characteristic trait or two, in exigencies which soon befell him, as they will do, the most common and prosaic mortals. He got authority, as soon as we arrived, to push on with his friend and faithful imitator, Gonzales, to Chihuahua, he being in fact a habitant of that state (perhaps, indeed he was *sent*).

There arrived, Gonzales *was* soon sent to calaboose, for rehearsing in his cups, the Don's mountain speech, as was predicted; but Magoffin too, was incarcerated, as a *spy*: his life was really long in danger; but I am happy to record that he managed to dissolve all charges, prosecutions and enmities in three thousand three hundred and ninety two bottles of champagne wine; (by a close computation,) and he lived to be remunerated by our government, as I particularly know. But the secretary said to him, mildly, "Mr. M. ten thousand dollars is a very large item for wine." "Yes," responded the Don with gravity, "but Mr. Secretary, champagne at \$37.50 a basket counts up very fast." Try it yourself!

appointment of a temporary government, it becomes Gen. Kearny's duty to march for California, with such available force as he may judge requisite, to repeat the same rather dramatic exploits. New Mexico has furnished the scene of a good rehearsal at the least.

With this view the additional regiment and battalion were ordered; and these reënforcements, are supposed to be now well on their march.

Capt. A. R. Johnston, A. D. C. has been especially charged with the important subject of routes to California; two are represented as probably practicable; the more northern by the "old Spanish trail," which appears on some maps—and was suggested by the Secretary of War; Green River, and a sand desert of ninety miles are considered its great obstacles; and unless the reënforcements arrive soon, difficulty from snow is also apprehended. The second route by the river Gila is perhaps less known, but is pronounced to be too broken and mountainous for wagons, but to have more grass.

August 28th.—The General has decided to send a second column by the southern route; leaving the Rio Grande about one hundred and fifty miles be-

low, and thence by the Rio Gila; this is certainly impracticable for wagons. The probability that the Gila will become our national boundary, and reports of Aztec ruins, give great interest to this expedition. Captain Cooke has been selected to command it.

The fact that the Spaniards, in their northern explorations, found here an isolated race quite advanced in civilization, compared to some tribes to its south, might prove an interesting study; that it is a fact, there is still existing proof enough, besides the name, New Mexico; it is kindred to the question of Aztec civilization.

Was that an original civilization? A tradition is reported by their conquerors that points to an European origin. It is well known that our continent was discovered and repeatedly visited about A.D. 1000 by Norsemen; *c'est le premier pas qui coute*; what more probable than that such adventurers should be attracted, step by step, toward a more genial, and to them a stranger clime!—should have coasted as far as Mexico,—beyond their power of return;—to communicate to an ingenuous race, their own moderate stock of knowledge and civilized arts; and especially that remarkably accurate astronom-

ical knowledge of time, which may well be ascribed to navigators. Gradually absorbed, in five hundred years, should we not look for just the traces which were found, viz., an improved physical race;—sensible progress in art and social science;—and a tradition.

General Kearny has reported to the Secretary of War, that he has written to General Wool, directed to Chihuahua, that his expected reënforcements promise to be more than needed, in which case he will order a regiment South to report to him; and should General Wool not need them, he can order them on to General Taylor.

The Navajos, the Spanish spelling of their name, which is pronounced Navaho, are a numerous, and warlike tribe who dwell in fastnesses of the mountains westward of the Del Norte; they have advanced few of the usual first steps of civilization, and therefore very remarkably as manufacturers; for they make ponchôs, a blanket and blanket shawl, with a slit in the middle for the insertion of the head. Besides being waterproof, they are handsome, some of them approaching the India shawl in beauty and costliness. In fact the Navajos are richer than

the mass of the people, whose flocks and herdsmen they harry; they have repressed their progress and lived on their spoil; the inhabitants have even been restrained by the government from making war upon them, except by special permission; and it is charged that Armijo used them as an effectual check to any resistance to his arbitrary oppressions.

The influence of the Spanish protection of this and the neighboring provinces against unconquered Indian tribes, began to cease about the year 1832; and from that date they have decayed; it is estimated that the number of sheep is eighty per cent less than then. I am assured that one man has lost 250,000! The people are almost confined to villages.

Except in narrow valleys and narrow strips, mostly wooded, reached by mountain showers, the whole province, alluvion as well as table-land, is so arid as to *seem* uninhabitable. There is some rain, but an elevation of from four thousand to seven thousand feet, and the absence of forests and even groves, make it almost nugatory. Irrigation is necessary in the river lands, and is effectual, where practicable, on the hills.

There are, indeed, the mile or two wide river bottoms of the Rio Abajo, (lower river,) of only four to five thousand feet elevation, which although very sandy, are quite productive, and of charming climate; but the want of fuel makes even that best district unattractive. Thus any considerable immigration cannot be expected.

It should not be omitted that the precious metals have been long known to be very diffusely found here; but no one seems ever to have made a fortune in the mines. A pains-taking culture by irrigation, and sheep pastures, are the main supports of a sparse population in New Mexico.

They make sugar, from the corn-stalk; butter—rather a test of civilization—scarcely any; no oats or rye are produced, few potatoes; onions, very fine, and chile Colorado, are the chief vegetables; melons are plenty.

Yesterday the 27th, the General, or Governor, gave a ball to all the officers, and to citizens generally in the government house; it was a political, or conciliatory affair, and we put the best face on it. The women are comely,—remarkable for smallness of hands and feet: as usual in such states of society,

they seem superior to the man; but nowhere else is chastity less valued or expected.

There was an attempt at cotillions; but the natives are very Germans for waltzing—and they possess musical ears as well. Their favorite, called appropriately the *cuna* (cradle) is peculiar; it is a waltz; but the couple stand face to face; the gentleman encircles his partner's waist with both arms; the lady's similarly disposed, complete the sides of the cradle which is not bottomless, for both parties lean well back as they swing around. There were men present in colored cotton trowsers secured by leathern belts, and jackets, but they danced well. The American merchants were of course, very genteelly represented; there were twenty or thirty of them. The supper was good, particularly in cake. The fiddlers accompanied their music at times by verses, sung in a high nasal key. I was surprised, but amused to hear one of our captains join in this;—and he could waltz them all blind;—but we got him from the navy.

The ball went off harmoniously, and quite pleasantly, considering the extravagant variety in its make up. But we did not feel particular—out here.

August 31st.—A report is believed that a Colonel

Ugarte is entering the southern extremity of the territory with some five hundred regulars, to meet and re-inforce General Armijo; this must hasten the march south, which has been announced.

Four hundred wagons of supplies have been reported on the way out—as also Colonel Price's regiment.

The greatest expense of this invasion, possibly, will be found in the matter of transportation. The territory seems quite unequal to feed its seventeen hundred conquerors; they have received for weeks but nine ounces of ground wheat per day, and no sugar or coffee! The men must make out a living from other resources;—but they receive no pay, and scurvy is making its appearance.

I marched from Santa Fè yesterday with half of my dragoons, afoot, twenty-six miles;—seeking to establish a grazing camp on the Galisteo. After leaving the *zequias*, which invade for several miles the gravelly table land, we were without water for near twenty, and the camp is a mile from grass. The ox teams with baggage lately arrived from Missouri, set out half a day in advance, but did not come up, and so we bivouacked; after a hot day, the night

being rather frosty, I caught a slight cold. It is a healthy country, but catarrhs and pleurisy are not uncommon.

September 1st.—Last night an officer came for dragoons to man a battery of four howitzers, and with an order to hold myself ready—until farther orders—to march south at an hour's notice; the General having received some confirmation of the junction of Armijo and Ugarte; we are also to move over to the main southern road to-morrow.

September 2d.—We marched, accordingly, eighteen miles, leaving the nearly dry Galisteo for the table land. In a vale at noon, finding some grass, although there was no water, I stopped an hour to graze; this on Dugald Dalgetty's principle, which in this country must be applied to horses and mules. Approaching the Rio Grande we came to the broken descent of a small stream, and a rancho; a few cottonwoods or poplars added much attraction to its appearance,—so rare is this only "ornamental" tree; and we saw the dust of the mile long column of the General's march toward the south.

The little valley of this farm-house looked quite green; but, as usual, the grass had been closely

cropped; one of the merchants bound for Chihuahua—they are all still involuntary Micawbers—having here established his caravan; his mules contended with the farmer's sheep, asses and goats for a subsistence.

And so we camped a mile further, on the dusty upland where we found scant buffalo grass and that called grama.

Professor Torrey seems to have pronounced buffalo grass "polygamous by abortion;" the phrase, if possible to be understood, referring to his belief that its flower is not fertile. But I have gathered much of its fruit—like large grains of oats truncated. But I have also seen, with the pregnant *if*, that I could believe my eyes, the buffalo and the grama, so very different in most respects, growing from the same root! if that constitutes vegetable polygamy; but they are the very same in being frost-proof and good substantial food for the granivora.

The baggage wagons having gone astray, we had until after dark a prospect of being supperless and shelterless, even without fires; for it is by many expedients that we manage to have fuel, even for cooking.

A message from the General sets at rest, as unfounded, the prospect of hostilities further south. Colonel Ugarte did march over the border; and if Armijo had proved a good soldier, our conquest might well have furnished better elements for an epic. We are commanded to devote ourselves to preparing the horses for the California expedition.

September 4th.—Yesterday the General left his column and baggage and turned aside, escorted by a squadron of dragoons, to visit the Pueblo Indian town of Santo Domingo, having been invited to do so, several days ago. Not having been present, I will give a picturesque description of the visit, by a staff officer, the more interesting as concerning this tribe without the pale of citizenship, but more moral, and superior in some other respects to the mass of the people; their extraordinary abstinence from mixture of blood reminds one of the Jews.

He writes: "From height to height, as we advanced, we saw horsemen disappearing at full speed. As we arrived abreast of the town, we were shown, by the guard, posted for the purpose, the road to Santo Domingo. * * We had not proceeded far, before we met ten or fifteen

sachemic looking old Indians, well mounted, two of them carrying gold-headed canes with tassels, the emblems of office in New Mexico.

Salutations over, we jogged along, and in the course of conversation, the alcalde, a grave and majestic old Indian, said, as if casually, "We shall meet some Indians presently, mounted and dressed for war, but they are the young men of my town, friends, come to receive you, and I wish you to caution your men not to fire upon them when they ride towards them."

When within a few miles of the town, we saw a cloud of dust rapidly advancing, and soon the air was rent with a terrible yell, resembling the Florida war-whoop. The first object that caught my eye through the column of dust, was a fierce pair of buffalo horns, overlapped with long shaggy hair. As they approached, the sturdy form of a naked Indian revealed itself beneath the horns, with shield and lance, dashing at full speed, on a white horse, which, like his body, was painted all the colors of the rainbow; and then, one by one his followers came on, painted to the eyes, their own heads and their horses, covered with all the strange equipments that

the brute creation could afford in the way of horns, skulls, feathers, tails and claws.

As they passed us, one rank on each side, they fired a volley under our horses' bellies from the right and from the left. Our well-trained dragoons sat motionless on their horses, which went along without pricking an ear or showing any sign of excitement.

Arrived in the rear, the Indians circled round, dropped into a walk on our flanks until their horses recovered breath, when off they went at full speed passing to our front, and when there, the opposite files met, and each man selected his adversary and kept up a running fight, with muskets, lances, and bows and arrows. Sometimes a fellow would stoop almost to the earth to shoot under his horse's belly, at full speed, or to shield himself from an impending blow. So they continued to pass and repass all the way to the steep cliff which overhangs the town. There they filed on each side of the road, which descends through a deep cañon, and halted on the peaks of the cliffs. Their motionless forms projected against the clear blue sky above, formed studies for an artist. In the cañon we were joined by the

priest, a fat old white man. We were escorted first to the padre's, of course; for here, as everywhere, these men are the most intelligent, and the best to do in the world, and when the good people wish to put their best foot foremost, the padre's wines, beds, and couches have to suffer. The entrance to the portal was lined with the women of the village, all dressed alike, and ranged in treble files; they looked fat and stupid.

We were shown into his reverence's parlor, tapestried with curtains stamped with the likenesses of all the Presidents of the United States up to this time. The cushions were of spotless damask, and the couch covered with a white Navajo blanket, worked in richly colored flowers.

The air was redolent with the perfume of grapes and melons, and every crack of door and windows glistening with the bright eyes and arms of the women of the capilla. The old priest was busy talking in the corner, and little did he know the game of sighs and signs carried on between the young fellows and the fair inmates of the house. We had our gayest array of young men out to-day, and the women seemed to me to drop their usual

subdued look and timid wave of the eye-lash for good hearty twinkles and signs of unaffected and cordial welcome—signs supplying the place of conversation, as neither party could speak the language of the other. This little exchange of the artillery of eyes was amusing enough, but I was very glad to see the padre move towards the table, and remove the pure white napkin from the grapes, melons and wine. We were as thirsty as heat and dust could make us, and we relished the wine highly, whatever its quality. The sponge cake was irreproachable, and would have done honor to our best northern house-keepers. Indeed, wherever we have feasted, the sponge cake has been in profusion, and of the best kind. After the repast, the General went forward on the portal and delivered a speech to the assembled people of the town, which was first interpreted into Spanish, and then into Pueblo.

It is impossible to arrive at the precise population of the town, but I should judge it to be about six hundred, and the quantity of ground under tillage for their support about five hundred acres. Six miles lower they passed San Felipe, "suggesting pictures we see of castles on the Rhine."

We marched yesterday toward Santa Fè in search of grass; winding among the hills we passed several spring branches; making inquiries at the houses, the people were evidently averse to our stopping, regarding us perhaps, in the light of a swarm of locusts; and so, there was generally good grass several miles further on; they object to selling the green corn. Camp at last was established twelve miles from the city, in a long strip of green meadow, clipped indeed, but making a pleasant camp. A sod for the floor of a tent is here a luxury.

September 5th.—Making a virtue of necessity, or really having a surplus, the small farmers begin to sell their patches of corn; it is cut at the root, brought in wagons to camp, and fed at night to horses, ear, blade and stalk; and there is not a particle of litter in the morning. The poor horses are taken about nine o'clock, several miles, to graze on the scant grass of the upland, where there is no water, and are brought in at three o'clock. It is not a pleasant duty to herd them on a bare prairie six or seven hours, through the heat of the day; there was a little rain this afternoon.

Near us is a house prettily situated on a point

of hill overlooking corn fields; but its chief beauty is a small grove of cottonwoods; the little fields fill the irregular valleys, and are without fences; even here they are irrigated; the soil, of hill or table land and valley is nearly the same; the high ground near Santa Fè is in cultivation.

The sheep here are very small, the wool quite coarse; but the flesh is of excellent flavor. The wool, without a market, is used for mattresses, which are very well made and comfortable, and for carpets and packing blankets.

To the philosophic observer of the infinitely wise adaptations throughout Nature, it is not surprising that in those portions of our earth rendered barren by elevation, want of rain and excessive evaporation, there is always found a configuration which makes irrigation easy and suggests it. I have seen, in Utah, an irrigating ditch, on upland, straight for miles!—I have pronounced ground of gravel and sand, producing nothing but a few stunted weeds of one species, as utterly worthless,—and afterward beheld it green with almost tropical profusion,—its latent germs vivified by water.

The few rich men live in the Rio Abajo; their

extensive plastered and whitewashed residences, built around large courts, are quite imposing; and each contains, the key of their wealth, a store of necessaries for their dependent laborers. This is the system of peonage; at their own prices they manage to keep the poor peons always in debt, and this legally binds them and their families to endless service and dependence; and they can be cast off, without any provision in their old age. They have been informed that they shall soon have a voice in their own government. Doubtless this flagrant servitude will be gradually broken up; but when shall such people be capable of self-government! There will be a territorial government for thirty years*—and the language will not change faster than the color of the citizens.

All the advantages seem to be with the conquered. What for us? except the convenience of a rounded boundary; it is not the route to California; these routes will be above or below.* The proclamation of Governor Kearny "announces his intention to hold the Department with its original boundaries [on both sides of the Del Norte] as a part of

* These words were written Sept. 5th, 1846.