

names whom he has banished from their own families and homes, for no reason but because they were in his way. Assassinations, robberies, violent debauchery, extortions, and innumerable acts of broken faith are themes upon which I am armed with abundant and most veritable detail; but my readers would sicken, and my narrative leads me another way. A few remarks and I have done with him.

The mien and deportment of Armijo are not ill calculated to strike a timorous people with awe; for, as I have before remarked, he is a large, portly man, of stern countenance and blustering manner. Not one jot or tittle of personal bravery does he possess, but is known to be a most arrant coward. In all the revolutions that have taken place since he first courted power, his own person has never been exposed, if we except one instance. In a skirmish with some Indians he received a wound in the leg, from which he still limps; but the action was not of his own seeking, and his conduct on this occasion was that of a man engaged in a business anything but to his liking. He has made great capital, however, of his crippled leg, and, like his great exemplar, Santa Anna, is determined that his subjects shall never forget that he received it while encountering their enemy. But the master-stroke of this great man was the capturing the Texan Santa Fé Expedition. These small squads of tattered soldiers, taken piecemeal, in his grandiloquent bulletin he multiplied into a legion of Buckramites—for which act of most heroic daring he was, all in good time, knighted by Santa Anna. He knows his people thoroughly, having studied their character with a most acute discernment. A common remark of his is, "*Vale mas estar tomado por valiente que serlo*"—it is better to be thought brave

than really to be so—and thus, by blustering and swaggering, he keeps the timid natives in subjection.

It may be thought singular that no attention is paid to Armijo's tyranny by the general government; but his policy is only part of that which has obtained in many of the departments. In our own confederacy, we regard intelligence as the great bond of union; the reverse is the case in Mexico—a sufficient test to prove that the so-called Republic is no Republic at all. To General Manuel Armijo I will now bid adieu; but I cannot do it without again saying, that, however much he may be astonished at seeing his portrait thus taken, he cannot urge a single syllable against its fidelity.

CHAPTER XVII.

Unrealized Hopes.—A Brood of unhatched Chickens.—We are quartered with our Companions.—Arrival of "Old Paint."—Joy at seeing the Veteran.—Another Meeting with Friends.—Stories of Suffering.—Liberated Prisoners again confined.—Armijo and Lewis.—Departure for the City of Mexico.—A long and gloomy March before us.—The Brute Salezar in Command.—Bustamente and the Women of San Miguel.—Causes of the Failure of the Santa Fé Expedition.—Arrival at a deserted Mission.—Sufferings of the Prisoners from Cold.—More of Salezar's Brutalities.—The dreary March continued.—Arrival at Pino's Rancho.—Farther Sufferings.—A cold Camping-ground.—Hard Fare.—Frostbitten Feet.—Horrible Threat of Salezar.—San Domingo.—Kindness of the Women.—San Felipe.—First Sight of the Rio Grande.—Algodones.—A Second "Black Hole of Calcutta."—Arrival at the Indian Village of Sandia.—A singular Rite.—Description of the Inhabitants.—Alameda.—Scene in an Oven.—Misery makes us acquainted with strange Bedfellows.—Sufferings on the Increase.—Bottoms of the Rio Grande; their Fertility.—Albuquerque in Sight.—Heron and Wild Geese.—A dashing Mexican Horseman.—Lieutenant Hornsby abducted.—Arrival at Albuquerque.—The Family of Armijo.—Farther Kindness of the Women.—General Pike's Journal.—The Pretty Girl of Albuquerque.

I AWOKE on the morning of the 17th of October with full confidence that I had passed my last night in prison.

Neither myself nor my companions thought it could be otherwise. I had received assurance after assurance, from every quarter, that as soon as the Texans were on the march an order for my release would be made out and issued by Armijo; and so sanguine were my illusory hopes that such would be the case, that the evening previous I had spent in speculations as to my future movements. On leaving New-Orleans, in the preceding May, I had fondly anticipated reaching Santa Fé by the 1st of August, at farthest, and the city of Mexico by the 1st of October, after having seen all the "sights" between the two points. It was now the middle of the latter month, a period so late in the season as to render my returning to the United States, by way of Bent's Fort and Independence, impracticable, so that I should be forced, as I then thought, to go as far as Chihuahua, at least, into the interior of Mexico. From that point I determined, if it would facilitate my journey home, to leave the main route to Mexico and travel directly to Matamoros. I even made my calculations, in case Armijo would not give up my horse, to purchase him of his present owner if possible; or if I was disappointed in once more obtaining possession of this tried and faithful steed, I at least determined upon purchasing a large and untiring mule which had belonged to Van Ness.

A larger brood of unhatched chickens has probably never been counted. When the sun had appeared above the eastern summits of the mountains which environ San Miguel, I was ordered to march, with my three companions, to the quarters occupied by the main body of Texan prisoners. Our meeting was an occasion of strong and diverse emotions—joy once more to shake the hands of those with whom we had shared the

perils and hardships of the prairies, gloom to see those friends in plight so miserable.

But a few minutes elapsed ere "Old Paint" Caldwell, with his nine comrades, was escorted from the house of our friend Vigil and placed in line with the other prisoners. A low but cordial shout of welcome arose on the still morning air as the men saw the veteran approach, and warm were the greetings as he shook hands with the eager crowd that pressed around him. Question followed question in such quick succession that no time was given to answer; stories of suffering and of wrong were broken off half finished, in such haste was each man to unbosom his rapid-crowding thoughts. The burden of the stories on every side was of starvation, murdered friends and broken Mexican faith, mixed with deep curses upon the head of Lewis, whose perfidy was by this time generally known.

Before these first greetings were over, Lieutenants Scott and Burgess, with young Howard, were escorted in from the rancho of old Antonio Baca. Here was another meeting of deep joy alloyed with melancholy; the latter had a brother among us, and all had warm friends. My friend Falconer, too, reduced in flesh, but still preserving the full measure of his buoyant spirits, we found in the crowd.

Even up to this period I had not lost all hope of being liberated: Armijo had released four of the Texans, then why not me? He had all my papers in his possession—documents proving incontestably that I had no part or lot with the expedition he had been fortunate enough to capture—and with such proofs in his hands, upon what grounds could he detain me longer? He had none other than his arbitrary will—the supreme law of New Mexico. But whatever hopes I might have entertain-

ed, up to this time, of being released, they were now banished on seeing the four Texans, who had for several days enjoyed unconditional liberty, marched in among us. They knew not the cause, could divine no motive which might have induced Armijo to this singular step, unless Lewis was at the bottom of it. At one moment the governor had liberated these men, and assigned them all lucrative situations: they had scarcely tasted the sweets of freedom before they were again arrested, brought in, and penned with their imprisoned comrades. Not a doubt exists that to Lewis these four men, as well as myself, were indebted for months of suffering, peril, and imprisonment: the traitor probably thought that we had found out and would make his treachery known to the Americans at Santa Fé, and thus render the place too hot for his comfort or safety. He had a certain influence with Armijo, which he might have used for the melioration of our lot; but the same cowardly impulse which urged him, by base means, to save himself from the Mexicans, now caused him, in a more traitorous way, to save himself from his own countrymen.

After we had been paraded in the plaza of San Miguel, and the ceremony of counting us had been gone through, it was ascertained that the notorious Salezar—the greatest brute among Armijo's officers—was to have charge of us. This was considered unfortunate by all, and even our old and tricky friend Bustamente, who came up to bid us farewell, privately took occasion to manifest his regret that such a cold-blooded wretch was to have charge of us. The women, too, who had been so kind to myself and companions while in San Miguel, now came up and shook our hands for the last time, many of the girls affected even to tears at the

gloomy prospect before us, and openly warning us to beware crossing Salezar in any of his demands or wishes. The beginning of a cold and disagreeable winter was at hand, as we set off on foot upon a journey of over *two thousand miles*—we were in the hands of a brute whose only delight was in cruelty and blood—should we be fortunate enough to withstand the fatigues attendant upon the journey, an uncertain fate awaited us at its termination; thus, with hope lending hardly a gleam of sunshine to the dark clouds before us, the reader can easily imagine that our condition was gloomy in the extreme.

And what mistake had brought this sorrowful issue to our enterprise? In as few words as possible I will answer the question. In the first place, the expedition began its march too late in the season by at least six weeks. Had it left Austin on the 1st of May, the grass would have been much better, and we should have had little difficulty in finding good water both for ourselves and cattle. In the second place, we were disappointed in obtaining a party of the Lipan Indians as guides, and were consequently obliged to take a route some three hundred miles out of the way, and in many places extremely difficult of travel. Thirdly, the government of Texas did not furnish wagons and oxen enough to transport the goods of the merchants, and this, as a matter of course, caused tedious delays. Fourthly, cattle enough on the hoof were not provided, even with the second supply sent for by the commissioners from Little River. Again, the distance was vastly greater than we had anticipated in our widest and wildest calculations, owing to which circumstance, and an improvident waste of provisions while in the buffalo range, we found ourselves upon half allowance in the very middle of our long jour-

ney—a privation which weakened, dispirited, and rendered the men unfit for duty. The Indians also annoyed us much, by their harassing and continual attempts to cut off our small parties and steal our horses. Finally, the character of the governor of New Mexico was far from being understood, and his power was underrated by all. General Lamar's estimate of the views and feelings of the people of Santa Fé and the vicinity was perfectly correct; not a doubt can exist that they all were and are anxious to throw off the oppressive yoke of Armijo, and come under the liberal institutions of Texas; but the governor found us divided into small parties, broken down by long marches and want of food, discovered a traitor among us, too, and taking advantage of these circumstances, his course was plain and his conquest easy.

Far different would have been the result had the expedition reached the confines of New Mexico a month earlier, and in a body. Then, with fresh horses, and a sufficiency of provisions for the men, the feelings of the inhabitants could have been ascertained; the proclamations of General Lamar would have been distributed among them; the people would have had an opportunity to come over to Texas without fear, and the feeble opposition Armijo could have made, and I doubt whether he would have made any against the Texans in a body, could have been put down with ease. Had it been evident that a majority of the inhabitants were satisfied under their present government, and unfriendly to a union with Texas, then the goods would have been sold, and the force withdrawn—at least, such was the tenour of the proclamations. No attack would have been made upon the inhabitants—that was expressly understood; but had Armijo seen fit to commence hos-

tilities, his power in New Mexico would have been at an end. Fate decreed otherwise, and by a series of unforeseen and unfortunate circumstances the expedition was thrown into his hands.

To return to our present gloomy situation. A guard numbering nearly two hundred men, mounted upon horses, mules, and asses, and miserably armed with bows and arrows, lances, or worthless muskets, rode upon either side of us, single file, as we trudged along on foot. We had questions innumerable to ask each other, and during the day I learned from Mr. Falconer and others the particulars of their journey across the Grand Prairie,* and of their capture. The story was one of great hardship and suffering. The implacable Cayguas had harassed them continually, killed several of their men, and at one time rode directly through the camp, and succeeded in *stampeding* no less than eighty-seven horses, which were never recovered. When we left them, on the 31st of August, it was thought that they would hear from us at farthest by the 10th of September, but the 15th of that month came, and still no tidings. On that day a council of officers was held, at which it was determined to wait five days longer, and then, if no news should be received of Colonel Cooke's party, it was resolved to burn the wagons and goods, and make the best of their way back to Texas by forced marches, living upon their horses and mules, after the beef should have been exhausted, until they could reach the buffalo and hunting range. Unfortunately the guides sent back by us, after we had passed the Angosturas, reached General McLeod's encampment on the 17th of Septem-

* By this name I designate the immense prairie we crossed after ascending the *steppe*, or chain of high hills, west of the Palo Duro. It is the *Llano Estacado* of the New Mexicans.

ber, when immediate orders were given to resume the march towards Santa Fé.

To show how unfortunate had been our choice of route, after leaving the main party on the Palo Duro, it is sufficient to say that the guides we sent back traversed the distance in three days and a half—whereas it had taken us fourteen. The distance must have been, by their route, nearly two hundred miles; yet by travelling night and day they were enabled to make their journey in the short time mentioned. The guides, too, were enabled to find, what we had supposed impracticable, a road for the wagons up the high and precipitous steppe, and when once on the summit, instead of taking the northwest course which had brought us directly upon the deep chasms and other obstructions, they guided the command in a due west direction, finding a smooth road, and heading the chasms entirely. Had Colonel Cooke known this route on leaving the main body, the fate of the expedition might have been different.

But even on gaining the Grand Prairie, and with the bright hopes of soon reaching the settlements, and a sufficiency of food before them, the sufferings of the men composing the main party were still intolerable. The Caygüas pursued them some distance, hovering upon their flanks and rear, and cutting off several small parties who had been driven by hunger to seek for grapes, plums, or game. The men were out of salt, their daily allowance was only one pound and a half of starved and sickly beef, which was probably two thirds bone, and their wants had caused great debility and disease among them. It is only necessary to mention, in order to show the great sufferings they endured, that every dog in camp—and several of the Indian curs had followed us—was killed and greedily devoured.

Snakes, lizards, tortoises, polecats—in short, almost every living and creeping thing upon the face of the prairie, were eaten with avidity, so ravenous was their hunger. Not a vestige, save the horns, hoofs, and larger bones of the beeves, was left—the wolves and buzzards were even cheated of their just allowance, the hide and entrails, for all was devoured.

On arriving at the Laguna Colorada, a small sheet of reddish water south of the Angosturas, the advance of General McLeod was opposed by the Mexicans under Colonel Archulete. Out of more than two hundred men, it was now found that the Texans could muster but about ninety who were really fit for active service, and these would have been obliged to act on foot entirely, as their horses had been either run off in the *stampede* on the Palo Duro, or kept so closely within the lines that they could not obtain grass enough to sustain their strength. Many of the men who had lost their horses, weak and dispirited from long marches and want of food, had secretly thrown away their arms to lighten themselves upon the road, and, in the mean time, that subordination, without which all efforts are useless, was in a measure lost. In this desperate condition, unable to hear a word concerning the fate of either Colonel Cooke or of two small parties they had sent out, and with the promise of good treatment and that their personal effects would be returned to them, a surrender was made. Many of the men, as well as officers, were ready and willing to bide the issue of an action in case their advance was opposed; but they were overruled by the majority, and thus was the fate of the expedition sealed. The men had no sooner laid down their arms than they were searched, robbed, tied, and most grossly insulted, and then, with hardly pro-

visions enough to sustain nature, marched hurriedly to San Miguel. Of their arrival in that place I have already made mention. I will now continue the journey towards the city of Mexico.

The 17th of October, the day on which we started from San Miguel, was warm and showery. Our route lay towards Santa Fé, and over the same ground myself and companions had travelled the day on which we first met Armijo. About sundown, foot-sore and completely exhausted after a hurried march of thirty miles over a rough and hilly road, we reached the old ruin of Pecos—in former times a mission and a fortress, but now uninhabitable, and fast crumbling to decay. Salezar drove us into an enclosure amid the ruins, and there herded us for the night in quarters not fit even for brutes, and without giving us a morsel of food!

Immediately to the north of Pecos, and within a few miles, rose a lofty mountain whose summit was now covered with snow. On the other side of this mountain, and immediately at its base, lies the little mud-built city of Santa Fé, a place towards which we had been journeying for months, but which we were not destined to see.* As I have before remarked, the day had been hot and sultry, with a shower in the afternoon sufficient to moisten the ground. The only baggage in possession of the prisoners, besides the slight and ragged clothing upon their backs, was a single blanket for each man. In this each immediately rolled himself, and then

* General Zebulon M. Pike, in the narrative of his imprisonment in New Mexico, says that Santa Fé, from the mountain's sides, has the appearance of an immense fleet of flat-boats on the Mississippi, while Albert Pike, in his interesting sketches, likens its general features to those of an extensive brick-kiln, or rather a succession of brick-kilns. Either comparison is doubtless correct, for such certainly is the appearance of all the towns in Northern Mexico through which I travelled.

stretched his weary limbs upon the cold, damp earth, vainly hoping that he might obtain rest and forgetfulness in sleep—but no such good fortune awaited us.

As if to increase our sufferings, a chill, biting wind sprang up, at dusk, fresh from the snow-clad mountain north of us, and in less than an hour it was so bitterly cold that to sleep was impossible. In vain did we crowd close to each other, in vain did we nestle in the little hollows formed in the uneven ground; the piercing wind penetrated our scanty covering and benumbed our every energy. I tried to rise, as did many of the unfortunate prisoners; but the cold wind had so stiffened our limbs, rendered in the first place heated and sore by the long mountain march, that we could scarcely move or turn over without enduring tortures the most excruciating. In this way, and without an hour's sleep, we passed our first night on the long road to Mexico.

Early in the morning we were ordered to continue the march, and without food. Salezar did, previous to starting, distribute some fifty small cakes among one hundred and eighty-seven half-starved men; and the manner of this distribution showed the brutal nature of the wretch. Calling the prisoners around him, each with the hope that he was to receive something to allay the sharp cravings of hunger, he would toss one of these cakes high in the air, and then, with a glee absolutely demoniacal, watch the scramble that ensued as it fell among the suffering throng. It was a game of the strong against the weak, this struggle for the few mouthfuls of food which Salezar threw among them. The better attributes of our nature, the kind sympathies and generous forbearance which lift man above the brutes, were for a time overwhelmed, in a majority of the pris-