

about the corners of his eyes; but farther than this he did not indulge in outward expressions of mirth.

Among those who visited our quarters during the day were several of the wealthiest foreign merchants of the place. As Colonel Cooke's party had not taken San Luis in their route there had been no call upon their charity, and they immediately set about raising a handsome subscription of money and clothing for the more destitute among the prisoners. It was laughable to see some of the latter, who had for months been arrayed only in rags, now suddenly transformed into shabby-genteel dandies by the timely assistance of a suit of fashionable, although second-hand garments.

At night a small party of us were again permitted to visit the town without a guard, and the next day the commandante of San Luis permitted all the Texan officers to ramble about the town on their parole. In the forenoon I visited a very gentlemanly Scotch merchant of the place, and was introduced to his lady. She, too, was a native of Scotland, but had been many years a resident of San Luis, and was very affable and lady-like in her deportment. She was also very liberal in her gifts to the prisoners—especially to such of them as were her countrymen.

A performance was given in the afternoon by the equestrians, the large arena in which the bull-fights take place having been neatly fitted up by the company. To this performance we were all invited, and some eight or ten accepted the invitation. We found the arena tolerably well filled with the better classes of the place, and among the audience were many extremely well-dressed ladies. They wore not a little jewelry, and many of them had rich and showy mantillas; but by far the greatest charm about them was

their large, liquid, black eyes, so full of deep and impassioned feeling. The riding of the American equestrians appeared to be new to the audience, and was greeted with repeated shouts of applause, while the antics, eccentricities, and jokes of the Mexican clown, all of which had been drilled into him by the wag of a Yankee who managed the concern, proved highly diverting to the crowd of ragged urchins in attendance.

A small party of us had received an invitation to supper that evening, with a German who had lived in Texas and who spoke English, and while seeking his dwelling we accidentally entered the house of another German, who was one of the wealthiest merchants of the place, and lived in a style of great splendour. Some five or six of us found ourselves suddenly in a richly-furnished drawing-room, in which were seated several Mexican ladies. They manifested not the least constraint, but invited us to be seated at once, and entered into conversation with such of our party as could speak the Spanish. The master of the house, too, politely invited us to take wine with him, and although we did not see the gentleman, whose invitation we had accepted, in the room, there was nothing in the deportment of those present to denote that we were unwelcome or even uninvited guests. After we had spent some half an hour in this way, the real individual of whose hospitality we had intended to partake arrived in search of us, and then for the first time we discovered our mistake. After a profusion of apologies on our part, which were deemed entirely unnecessary by the parties upon whom we had thus unceremoniously intruded, we took our leave, but not until we had been urged to take another glass of wine. Even the ladies joined in saying that all apologies were unnecessary, and fairly laughed the thing off as a most excellent joke.

Arrived at length at the house for which our visit was intended, we there found an excellent supper and wines of the choicest description waiting for us. After passing a couple of hours in their discussion, and in speculation as to what disposition the Mexican government would make of us after our arrival at the capital, we returned to our quarters in the convent. Here we ascertained that we were to renew our march the next morning, and as I found Falconer, who had not been allowed to leave the convent, busily employed in writing letters, I embraced the opportunity again to address Mr. Ellis, then our minister at Mexico. I also wrote numerous letters to my friends in the United States, all of which, through the assistance of the friend who took charge of them, arrived in safety.

It was on the morning of the 12th of January that we took our departure from San Luis Potosi, leaving six or seven of our sick in the hospital—men who were down with the small-pox and other diseases, and utterly unable to travel. A large supply of clothing was distributed among the more destitute the evening before, and also a small sum of money to each man—contributions which had been raised principally among the liberal foreign residents.

Roblado, much to the satisfaction of the prisoners, left us at San Luis. Among our unfortunate men he had obtained the cognomen of "Salezar the Second," and by his acts of petty tyranny and cruelty to such as were on foot, had doubtless well earned the title. Our new guard was composed entirely of cavalry, whose commander was a polite and gentlemanly person, disposed to grant us every favour and indulgence. I have forgotten the name of this officer, but he had been a prisoner himself in Texas, and frequently spoke of the

excellent treatment he received while in that country. An incident extremely interesting occurred when he first appeared among us. It seems that at the retreat, after the battle of San Jacinto, this officer was wounded in the chase, captured by a Texan, and afterward quartered by him at the house of a gentleman, who dressed his wound and bestowed upon him every attention. In the person of Lieutenant Casey, one of our officers, he immediately recognised his former captor and benefactor, and the nature of the meeting between them it is easier to imagine than describe.

Passing through a fertile and thickly-settled country, the fields many of them fenced in with the organo and prickly pear, we reached the hacienda of Las Pilas early in the afternoon, and halted there for the night. I recollect but little of this place, other than that I hired a very pretty girl to wash a shirt and handkerchief. The next day we continued our journey through the beautiful valley of San Francisco, one of the most fertile in Mexico. On the 14th of January we arrived at El Jaral, the celebrated residence of the count of that name, who is deemed one of the wealthiest proprietors in all Mexico. The town, which is owned by Jaral, has a fine church, and an immense slaughter-house, where about a thousand sheep and goats are said to be killed daily for their hides and tallow alone. The residence of the count himself is a large and imposing building, although destitute of architectural beauty.* The dwellings of his peons, or labourers, and there are some two thousand of them, are mostly rude adobe huts, destitute of

* Ward, in his useful work upon Mexico, says that the live stock owned by the Marquis del Jaral at one time numbered three millions, including horses, mules, horned cattle, sheep, and goats. The famous General Mina, with his small but gallant force of Americans, took this town in 1817, and, according to the statement of the proprietor, robbed him of \$300,000 in specie.

furniture and every comfort. You may call them by what name you will—Mexican citizens, freemen, or what not—many of them are to all intents slaves—serfs, subject to the will and pleasure of the lord of the immense manor.

We had proceeded but a short distance from El Jaral when we encountered a singularly grave, and, at the same time, ludicrous procession. Borne on the shoulders of four men came first a litter, on which a corpse was lying. This was decorated with flowers of different species, and the bearers were carrying it to El Jaral for interment. Not a creature, save the four men who bore the litter, was attached to this singular funeral procession, but immediately in the rear, and as if enjoying such protection as it afforded, was a female driving a little scrubby, half-starved donkey in the same direction. Upon the back of the ass, with his head turned towards the animal's tail, a large and extremely fat live hog was riding—the first of the swinish race I had ever seen mounted. His four legs were confined, two on either side of the animal which was bearing him along; and the hog was ever and anon changing the position of his head from one side to the other, in order, apparently, to take the greatest possible comfort under the circumstances. I cannot say that his equestrian performance was altogether as graceful as some I have seen, or that he had that dauntless bearing which gives to feats of horsemanship their greatest charm; but he certainly manifested a resignation and stoical indifference which could hardly have been expected, and we laughed outright as the dwarfish donkey, with his whimsical rider, trotted past us, chief mourner, as one of our men remarked, for the person borne upon the litter. I have often heard of a "hog in armour," but never expected to see a hog on horseback.

It is singular enough, and a matter which strikes every traveller with wonder who journeys through Mexico, with what facility the *arrieros*, or muleteers, can confine almost any burden upon the backs of asses and mules. Frequently we met moving fodder-stacks along the road—many of them nearly the size of a common load of hay—and as no living thing could be seen about them, their appearance at first struck us as curious in the extreme. Large bodies of wheat-straw, square and compact, and reaching within an inch of the ground, could be seen approaching us, and it was only when we bent close to the earth that their locomotive power could be seen. By looking in this position the four feet of the animal beneath the stack could be discovered—head, body, ears, and all being alike concealed under the bulky load which was packed, with the greatest regard to symmetry, upon his back. Almost the entire transportation business of the country is carried on in this way, and the traveller sees boxes, bales, barrels—in short, every species of merchandise—carried from one point to another securely packed upon the backs of mules and asses.

The *arrieros* of Mexico are the most hardy, brave, generous, and trustworthy of her inhabitants—a class of men in whom the utmost reliance can be placed, and whose calling, requiring them to be constantly roaming from point to point and mixing with the world, supplies them with a fund of anecdote and the legendary lore of the country, and renders them well-informed and exceedingly entertaining companions. From what I saw and heard of them they are universally to be trusted with any charge, and their word may invariably be depended upon—which is a good deal more than can

be said of any other class, as a body, in Mexico, whether civil, military, or ecclesiastical.

The dress of the arriero is a pair of green or blue broadcloth pantaloons, foxed or trimmed with velvet or morocco, and slashed from the knee downward, while the sides are ornamented with a profusion of bright bell-buttons. Under these he wears flowing linen drawers, and both are confined around the waist by a gay sash. The bosom of the shirt is often elaborately worked, and over this a close-fitting jacket, decorated with a large quantity of bell-buttons and braid, is worn. Attached to his heels are an immense pair of iron or steel spurs, the rowel of a circumference equal to the palm of his hand, and having little steel ornaments at the sides, which tinkle at every step. A wide-brimmed hat, partially pointed at the top, covered with oiled silk, and around which gold or silver braid and tassels are confined, sits jauntily upon the head; and thus equipped, and mounted upon his richly-caparisoned horse or mule, the Mexican muleteer is one of the most picturesque, as well as showy horsemen in the world.

The stock in trade of the arriero consists of as many mules as he has money to purchase, with an *aparejo* for each. The latter is nothing more than a heavy, clumsy pack-saddle, confined to the mule's back by a hair-girth, and kept from slipping too far forward by a wide crupper, which is frequently embroidered, and has the name either of the mule or his master, or, perhaps, a couplet of poetry or some old Spanish proverb applicable to the calling of the arriero, worked with thread upon its sides.* At night, the mules are formed

* On the crupper of a pack-mule I remember reading the following: "Between women and wine the poor arriero gets nothing."

in line and unpacked, and then either driven to pasture or fed at the corral attached to the meson. In the morning, the animals walk directly up to their saddles, and there stand patiently until packed. Not unfrequently does it occur that each mule knows his own particular *aparejo*, and unerringly picks it out from a hundred ranged in a row; should one of them, more stupid or careless than his fellows, chance to take his stand in front of another's saddle and load, the real owner soon convinces him of his mistake by a shower of well-directed kicks; and as if all felt it a duty to punish stupidity, the unfortunate animal generally has a dozen pairs of heels flying at him before he finds his own *aparejo*.

The work of packing, when, as I have before stated, boxes, bales, barrels, and every species of merchandise are thus transported in Mexico, occupies an incredibly short time, the arriero superintending his *mozos*, or servants, and directing them how and upon what mules to pack the heavier articles. When all is in readiness for the journey, he leads the procession, followed by some more steady and aged mule, which is looked upon by his followers as the bell-wether of the gang. So tightly drawn are the girths, that the animals are not only galled, but frequently find much difficulty in breathing, and in the early part of a day's journey manifest not a little pain and uneasiness by tossing aloft their heads, and giving utterance to loud grunts or groans; yet it is deemed impossible to fasten their loads securely without thus torturing them, their backs and sides, when unladen at night, giving painful evidence of their sufferings during the day. When on the road not one of them can be coaxed or beaten into passing their leader, and when he comes to a halt they also stop until he moves

again. Whenever anything breaks, or a pack becomes loose, the mozo is at hand with a blind to place over the mule's eyes, and a piece of raw-hide in his pocket to repair damages. Thus the whole business is reduced to a system.

Such is the arriero of Mexico, and such he will continue to be until the mountains of his country are cut down, and the steep, craggy, and difficult paths are turned into beaten and open thoroughfares. He looks to the interest of those who employ him with scrupulous care; takes every precaution to guard the goods intrusted to his charge from being either stolen or damaged. He has a nod and a sly wink for every pretty girl he meets in his many miles of travel, can carol every rude madrigal known in the land, loves his honour and his religion, hates the ladrones and léperos, and despises lying and deceit. Would that all the inhabitants of Mexico were arrieros, or as honest as are these roving landmen.

CHAPTER IX.

A Night at San Felipe.—Meeting with one of Mina's Soldiers.—Santa Anna, and the Estimation in which he is held by his Countrymen.—San Juan de los Llanos.—Sickness and Suffering.—Tedious Mountain March.—Picturesque Scenery.—Arparos; its romantic Situation.—Arrival at Silao.—An American Physician.—Kindness of an English Gentleman and his Lady.—Approach to Guanajuato.—Singular Entry.—Laughable Scenes.—Arrival within the City.—Visits from the Foreigners.—Fitzgerald and others taken to the Hospital.—Liberal Contributions.—Opportunity to escape.—Departure from Guanajuato.—Singular Location of the City.—La Puerta.—Arrival at Salamanca.—System of Recruiting Volunteers.—Celaya.—Generous Conduct of Cortazar.—Sunday at Celaya.—The Cathedral.—Singular Customs of the Indians.—Cock-fighting at the Theatre.—"El Campanero de San Pablo."—A Spanish Play.—Lady Smokers.—Departure from Celaya.—Fertility of the Baxio.—Calera.—An early Morning March.—Distant View of Queretaro.—Arrival within the City.—Singular Currency and amusing Anecdote.—Soap a legal Tender.—A Stroll through Queretaro.—American Prisoners.—Spanish System of Shaving.—Texans Stoned in the Market-place.—A Mexican Restaurant.—Adventure with a Friar.—Return to our Quarters.

THE night following our departure from El Jaral we passed at San Felipe, the second town taken by Hidalgo in the early part of the Mexican Revolution. At that time it was said to contain sixteen thousand inhabitants; there are not half that number now, unless I am much deceived. At this place several of our party were treated with much attention by a Mexican gentleman, who had been one of Mina's soldiers. Of Santa Anna, and his ambitious projects, he was far from speaking in complimentary terms; but this was the case among all classes. From the best-bred gentleman down to the lowest lépero, all were loud in their curses of the despot and his schemes, and the question was often asked