

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



our men why they did not kill him when he was in their power!

On our next day's journey we passed a small rancho known as La Lorn, and at night reached the once wealthy but now insignificant hacienda of San Juan de los Llanos, or St. John of the Plains. By this time, although all of us had set out from San Luis in good health, several of our party were down with the small-pox, and suffering incredibly from being compelled to travel, and from want of proper medicines. There was no way of leaving them behind, however, and the poor fellows were carried along in the wagons furnished at Zacatecas, receiving such attentions as it was in the power of their companions to bestow.

After an exceedingly long and tiresome mountain march, through deep and ragged barrancas and up steep and rugged precipices, such of us as were on foot or had animals reached the little mountain rancho of Arparos late on the afternoon of the 17th of January. The wagons were taken by some round-about and more level road, and did not join us until late at night; yet even they had been several times upset, and were much shattered by the roughness of the journey. The little adobe church at this rancho was cleared of its holy furniture to accommodate some of our party, while three or four of us hired a room of one of the villagers in which to pass the night.

Nothing can exceed the grandeur and picturesque beauty of the site which has been chosen for the little rancho of Arparos. The road to it, in both directions, leads through rugged mountain gorges and across swift-running streams—now climbing steep acclivities, and then descending into deep and secluded barrancas—dark and dreary except when the sun is at his meridian.

The prickly pear, or nopal, here attains much perfection, but other than this there is scarcely a blade of vegetation save here and there a small patch of corn, found in some little valley where the wash from the surrounding mountains has formed a soil.

The next day we reached Silao, a town containing some four or five thousand inhabitants, and situated in a fertile plain. Here we met an American physician, and an English gentleman to whose house a small party of us were invited to supper. He was a resident of Guanajuato, and a very influential man in that city; but during a portion of the year he made Silao his residence on account of the superior salubrity of its climate. We found his wife, who was an English lady, a kind-hearted, interesting woman, disposed to render every attention to such of our party as were ill with the small-pox, and there were now some twelve or fifteen on the list. She sent them a large quantity of hot tea and such other necessaries as she thought they would stand most in need of, while her husband said that he would leave for Guanajuato early the next morning, and use all his influence with the authorities to induce them to allow such as were really unable to travel permission to remain at the hospital in that city.

By making an early start on the morning of the 19th, we were enabled to reach Guanajuato before the middle of the day. Our approach and entry into that city were characterized by one of the most laughable exhibitions that occurred on the whole route from San Miguel to Mexico. It is almost impossible so to describe the scene as to give it full effect, but I shall make the attempt.

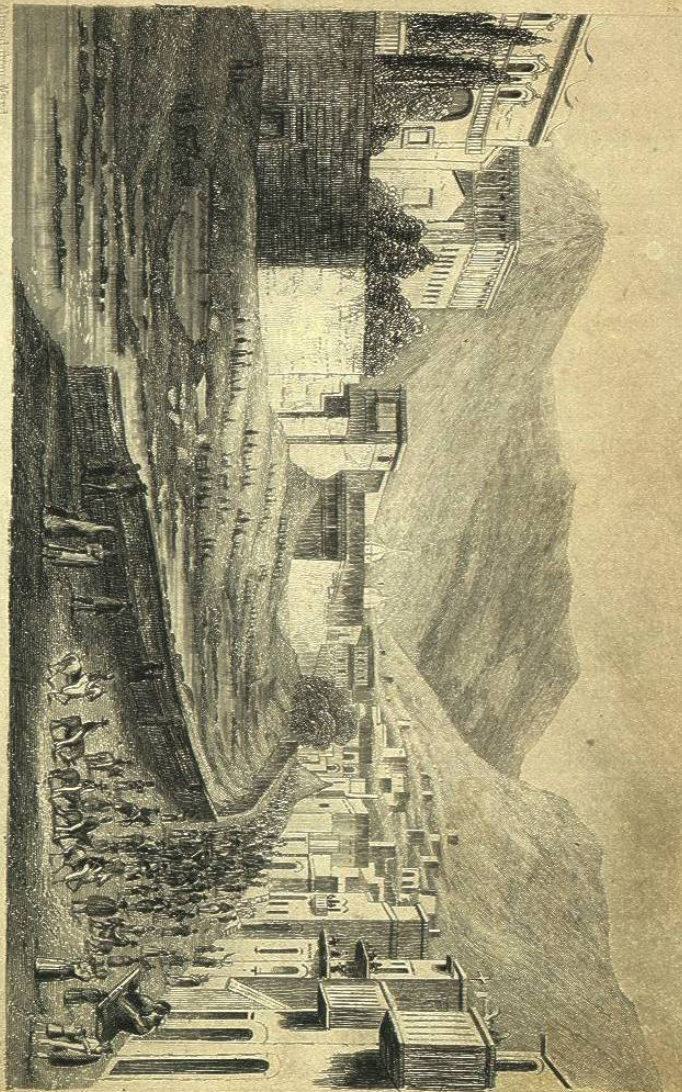
When within some five miles of Guanajuato numerous market-men were encountered, driving before them the donkeys that had borne their produce to the city.



As many of our men were foot-sore from the tedious mountain march of the previous day, the officer who had charge of us immediately pressed the animals into service, and told the Texans to mount them. It was in vain the owners of the animals expostulated, and told our captain that they were in haste to return to their homes—he not only reiterated his order for our men to seize the unsuspecting donkeys by the ears and mount them at once, but commanded their owners to assist in driving them. As we gradually approached the city the number of asses increased, and before we entered the suburbs every Texan was perched upon the back of a donkey, without saddle or bridle, and of such low stature were many of the animals, that their riders were fairly compelled to draw up their legs to keep their feet from dragging on the ground.

The whole scene was ludicrously rich, and afforded infinite amusement not only to the guard of dragoons who accompanied us, and the throngs of men and women gathered upon either side of the streets, but to the Texans themselves. In fact, all appeared to enjoy the comical appearance of our procession, save the donkeys and their unfortunate owners.

Shouts of every description rent the air as we thus journeyed along. "Here comes the Texas heavy light cavalry," some fellow would cry aloud, and the next moment, perhaps, he would measure his length upon the ground by one of those peculiar pitches and kicks understood and practised only by animals of the donkey race. At every step some one of the animals would take it into his head to run away—his next neighbour, very likely, would at the same time make up his mind not to move at all; an obstinate whim which it is extremely difficult to beat out of a jackass. Shouts of



CITY OF GUANAJUATO.

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laughter from the Texans would ensue as some one of the animals indulged in an extra freak of eccentricity, and mixed with the laughter the muttered curses and deep imprecations of the owners could be distinctly heard. They were anxious to be relieved as soon as possible from this extra duty which had been imposed upon them, and accordingly pressed their overburdened animals along by those incentives a Mexican knows so well how to use. "Hip-ah! burro!"\* resounded on every side, accompanied by blows and kicks—"Tchew, tchew, tchew," an unmeaning sound, but used as an encouragement for the animals to move faster, was freely administered at every step.

When once within the city, among its dark and narrow streets, the services of the donkeys were dispensed with, and their unfortunate owners set off for their homes in no good-humour. We were then taken completely through Guanajuato, and finally lodged at the soldiers' barracks—clean and airy quarters. My description of our singular entry into one of the proudest and richest cities of Mexico falls far short of the real scene itself—it is utterly impossible to draw a correct picture of a performance which not one of those who took a part in it, either as spectator or actor, can ever forget.

We had scarcely reached our quarters before we were visited by numerous foreigners—English, Irish, and American—who at once inquired into the wants of the prisoners, and promised to render every assistance. As was the case at San Luis Potosi, Colonel Cooke's party not having passed through the place, the foreign residents had not been called upon to contribute and render assistance to their countrymen in distress.

\* *Burro*—the Spanish name for a jackass.



Accompanied by the Mexican physicians attached to the hospital, several of the foreign medical men examined such of our party as had the small-pox or other diseases, and permission was granted for eighteen of them to be taken immediately to the hospital, there to remain until their recovery, or till death should release them from their sufferings.

Among those more severely affected with the loathsome malady, now rapidly spreading among us, were Captain Caldwell and poor Fitzgerald. The latter was delirious when we placed him in the litter which bore him to the hospital, and strong fears were entertained that he would sink under the disease; but he recovered, and was shortly afterward liberated through the exertions of the British minister; he has since been retaken by the Mexicans, and shot while heroically assisting his comrades to escape. Captain Caldwell also recovered from the small-pox, and was released by Santa Anna with the rest of the Texan prisoners, but, as I have before mentioned, has since died in Texas. Of the eighteen left at Guanajuato, five died and were buried at the place—the remainder were sent to Mexico on their recovery, and confined with their comrades at the Convent of Santiago. They described their treatment as extremely kind and attentive while in the hospital, and on their arrival at Mexico they were all well dressed.

An attempt was made by our foreign friends to induce the commandante to allow us to remain at Guanajuato one day; but as all the sick had been taken care of, and the governor was not in the city, he did not feel at liberty to grant the request. Finding themselves unable to delay our departure, our friends redoubled their exertions in obtaining contributions, and the next

morning a large sum of money and a generous supply of clothing were distributed among our men. At no place on the route did the foreigners contribute with greater liberality to the relief of the unfortunate Texans than at Guanajuato, and among those most indefatigable in obtaining these necessaries was the gentleman at whose house we had taken supper at Silao.

It was at Guanajuato that I first heard of the arrival, at the city of Mexico, of one of my associates in business, although the gentleman who gave me the information could not learn his name. Before I received this news I had half made up my mind to accept an offer made me to escape, an American gentleman I had met on the road suggesting a feasible plan, and proffering me every assistance. I was to be provided with a horse, a servant who spoke English, and a passport, and could take either the route to Tampico, or to Mazatlan, on the Pacific, the escape to be made at some town or rancho between Guanajuato and Queretaro. The gentleman appeared, according to promise, at the place appointed; but by this time I had heard of the arrival of my associate, and in addition to this I was allowed my parole by the officer then in charge of the prisoners. To run away under these circumstances would have involved an honourable officer in difficulty, and brought more rigorous treatment and closer confinement upon my companions; and taking these circumstances into consideration, I gave up all thoughts of escaping. Had I anticipated the sickness and loathsome imprisonment yet in store for me, I should not have visited the city of Mexico, and should have saved the United States and Mexican governments reams of correspondence in relation to my humble self and case.

About ten o'clock on the morning of the 20th of Jan-