

canary and that of a crow—thought they could discover a soothing influence in the notes of a nightingale which they missed in the braying of a donkey. But as the testimony of Tweed went directly to prove the charge, and was a perfect gem in its way, I shall give it as nearly as possible in his own words.

“Yer oner,” said Jimmy, with a ludicrous mock-gravity and quizzical leer of his dexter eye, “yer oner, as I was walkin’ across the corral last evenin’, I heerd sthrange, mystarius, and most unnath’ral sounds issuin’ from the officers’ quarters up stairs—sounds resimblin’, yer oner, those made by a sawmill, whin in the full tide of manufacthuring boards. Well, me curiosity bein’ excited, I bethought meself I’d be after investigatin’ the thing; so whin I was *abajo*, yer oner, which is the best Spanish I have at prisent about me for the foot of the stairs, I heerd the sthrange sounds louder and louder than iver. Up the steps I wint, and whin I was *arriba*, which manes, yer oner, the head of the stairs, divil a bit did it stop at all, at all. What in the name of all the saints, thinks I to meself, has put a sawmill in operation here away? for I still thought it was one, yer oner; so I opened the door cautiously, poked me head in slyly, and what should me own eyes see and me own ears hear but Captain H. himself, essayin’ a bit of a ditty, yer oner.”

“Doing *what?*” questioned the judge.

“Essayin’ a ditty, yer oner—attempting a stave of a song—and—”

“Enough,” interrupted the high functionary upon the claret box. “If you mistook the singing of Captain H. for those sounds ordinarily produced by a sawmill, the case is clear enough that he has undertaken a task which neither nature nor cultivation fits him to carry success-

fully through, and I shall fine him one dollar and fifty cents for the attempt.”

In this way a number of cases, some for bad singing and others for speaking bad Spanish, were disposed of, and with the proceeds the merry wags procured a sufficiency of provisions and *chinguirite*, the latter a species of common rum manufactured from the sugar-cane, to hold a wild revel that night among the ruins of San Cristobal.

CHAPTER XI.

Supply of Money received.—Our Sick examined.—Visited by a large Party of Americans from the City.—Hopes of Liberation still offered.—Reflections as to the Nature of my Case.—Departure from San Cristobal.—Start for the City of Mexico upon Asses.—The easy Gait of the genus Donkey.—Arrival at the Shrine of “Our Lady of Guadalupe.”—Flimsy Imposture which caused its Erection.—Anecdote from Latrobe.—Nuestra Señora de los Remedios.—Mexican Beggars.—Tiresome Travel across the Plains.—The Garita.—Mexico, as seen in the Distance.—Arrival within the City.—Forlorn appearance of the Texans.—Commiseration of the Women.—Anecdote of Major Bennett.—Arrival at the Hospital of San Lazaro.—Hideous appearance of the Inmates.—A dreary Night.—Visited by the Hospital Physician.—His Prescriptions.—Description of San Lazaro and the unfortunate Lazarinos.—Speculations as regards the Leprosy.—Happiness among the Lepers.—New Sports and Dances.—We are visited by Mr. Mayer and other Americans.—Our Food at San Lazaro.—Kindness of the Mexicans in their Hospitals.—Smuggled Food.—Visits of the Physician.—Removed to other Quarters.—Worse and Worse.—Find our Room overrun with Chinchies.—Our Friends gain Access by Bribery.—Departure of Mr. Lumsden and Friends for the United States.—Thoughts of an Escape.

On the day following that on which the singular and laughable trials took place, and the wild feast that followed them, a sum of money was received from Mexico for our men. On the same day, two or three physi-

cians were sent out by Santa Anna to examine our sick. A report now obtained currency to the effect that such of the prisoners as were able to walk would be escorted immediately to Puebla, or the castle of Peroté, in the direction of Vera Cruz, while those who were unwell would be taken to some hospital in the city. The physicians pronounced eighteen unfit to travel, and as I was labouring under cold and fever at the time, I was placed on the list. Of the others, almost all were afflicted with the small-pox, in some stage of the disease.

The day before our removal from our miserable quarters at San Cristobal, we were visited by a large party of Americans, among them Mr. Henry E. Lawrence, of New-Orleans, who had but recently arrived from the United States with despatches for Mr. Ellis. They all gave me every hope that I was speedily to be liberated, and seemed confident that I should return to my home in company with them; but I was led to believe differently. The publication of the Chihuahua letter, I felt assured, would be used by the Mexican government as a pretext to detain me, and at the time I could not think the measures taken by Mr. Ellis to effect my release as efficient as they should have been. I knew that a temporizing policy would never procure my liberation, and that so long as the subject of my imprisonment was left open to argument, I might be kept until my head was as white as the summit of Popocatepetl. I looked upon my own case in this light: I conceived that I had not in any way forfeited my claim to American protection, and that therefore an immediate demand for my release should be made. On the other hand, if I had lost my rights as a citizen of the United States, and should our minister view my case in that light, I neither wished nor expected that he would say or do anything in my be-

half. I was a citizen either of the United States or of Texas—if of the former, my imprisonment was unjust; if a Texan, I only hoped that nothing might be said in reference to my case, and in that event I should immediately set about making my escape. But while all this was passing through my mind, my friends told me that Mr. Ellis was using every exertion to procure my release, and that I was wronging him by harbouring a different opinion.

Will the reader, for one moment, place himself in my situation? He will then, if an American citizen, be better able to judge of my feelings. I had left New-Orleans, as I have before stated, with the openly-avowed intention of making a tour through both Texas and Mexico. I had armed myself, previous to starting, with a passport and other documents plainly defining my position, and on reaching Texas had still farther fortified myself with letters from influential gentlemen in that country, in which it was expressly stated that I had no connexion whatever, civil or military, with the Santa Fé Expedition—was subject to no control. On approaching the confines of New Mexico I had left the command, determined to take no part in whatever might occur. The first settlement I entered peacefully and openly—I attempted no disguise, for in the honesty of my intentions I could see no necessity for dissimulation or concealment. I was arrested, searched, robbed not only of property, but all my papers, and then, without a hearing or without a trial, forced to undergo the fatigues and dangers of the long march to Mexico. Arrived in the vicinity of that city, I made known my case to the United States minister; I informed him of the circumstances of my having left the Texan expedition upon the prairies, of my having been robbed of my papers

and liberty on first reaching the settlements of New Mexico, with other important facts, and referred him to Messrs. Van Ness and Falconer, then at liberty, for the proofs. I also mentioned Colonel Cooke and Doctor Brenham, who, although they had lost their liberty, still retained their honour, as gentlemen who would corroborate my statements. I knew that in *thought* I had committed no offence whatever against the Mexicans, and that even in *deed* my actions could not, by the wildest and broadest construction, be perverted or magnified into crimes at all adequate to the punishment I had already received.

Such were my thoughts whenever my own case passed in review before my mind; and when to these are added the facts that an English companion, whose position had certainly been more inimical than mine, had at once been liberated by the Mexican authorities, and that the imbecility and inefficiency of my government were a theme for the constant taunts and jeers of the Texans by whom I was surrounded, the American citizen, proud of his birthright, will be brought to see and feel the full bitterness of the situation in which I was placed. The fault lies not with the *people* of the United States, but with the *rulers*; for the fact is notorious that a fear of losing political influence has induced those in power to sacrifice the independence and jeopard the honour of the country on more occasions than one. Full well does the Mexican government understand this weak point in our foreign policy, else we never should hear of our countrymen being arrested, robbed of all their evidence, denied a hearing, thrust into loathsome prisons among malefactors, compelled to labour in chains, and all to gratify the caprice or feed the revenge of some such tyrant as Santa Anna.

On the morning of the 9th of February, and in a frame of temper by no means amiable, I was ordered to prepare for the march to the city of Mexico. But a short time previous, General McLeod, and such of the prisoners as were able to make the journey, were marched off in the direction of Puebla, on foot and under a strong guard. They had scarcely gone when fifteen poor but hardy donkeys were driven up in front of San Cristobal for us to ride—three of our party being so weak that litters were provided to transport them. Mounted upon the donkeys, and with a gang of beggarly léperos to drive them, were put *en route* for the great city of Mexico, distant some twelve or fourteen miles. In mere jest, and to cause uneasiness among the more inexperienced, we had frequently, while upon the road, spoken of the probability of our being compelled to enter that city mounted upon asses, as a species of punishment: little did I think, when I was giving all credit and colouring to these stories, that I was actually thus to make my own entrance—ride into the city of the Montezumas upon an unsaddled and unbridled donkey!

Than a jackass there is perhaps no animal with a gait more easy; but to see a full-grown man mounted upon the back of one of them, without bridle or saddle, and with no other means of guiding and directing his course than by pulling his ears, is ludicrous in the extreme, to say the least of it. The patient animals, however, jog quietly along, their noses close to the ground, ready to pick up any bit of orange-peel or chance blade of grass, and in the situation in which I then was I would hardly have exchanged the sluggish little animal on which I was perched for the proudest charger in Christendom.

After we had passed through a succession of poor villages, and across an arid plain, the lofty and imposing dome of the Cathedral of Our Lady of Guadalupe appeared in sight. We soon entered the little village which surrounds the cathedral, our commander ordering a short halt to rest and obtain water and refreshments.

I did not enter this noted church, but its history was told us, and is interesting as showing by what nonsensical superstitions and barefaced impostures the poor Indians were originally gulled by a crafty priesthood. There are different versions of the story, but they agree in the main circumstances. Some three hundred years ago not a solitary hut was standing in a village which now contains its thousands of inhabitants, and probably one of the richest and most magnificent religious establishments in the world. Near the site of the church, shortly after the conquest by Cortez, a poor and simple shepherd was tending his flock, not a dwelling in sight save those in the distant city. Suddenly the Holy Virgin appeared to this wandering shepherd, clad in celestial raiment, and with a face of pure and heavenly beauty. She pointed to a small hill near, and then told him to go forthwith to the city and tell the bishop it was her will that a chapel should at once be built upon the spot, to be dedicated exclusively to her. The affrighted man went to the city that night, but fearing the bishop would not believe his story, he did not communicate the holy errand upon which he had been sent. The next day the Virgin again appeared to him. With much trembling he told her that he feared to open her message to the bishop, lest that dignitary might ridicule him as a fool or an impostor. She again commanded him to communicate her desire to the bishop, and on his second visit to the city the shepherd made known

to him all the circumstances. The bishop laughed at the man as an impostor, and desired him to bring some token that he had communicated face to face with the Holy Mother. He returned to his flock on the third day, and was again visited by the Virgin. She asked him if he had well performed his holy mission, to which he answered by telling her the result of his conference with the bishop. "Go," said she, "to yon barren rock," at the same time pointing to the desolate hill, "and bring me a bouquet of roses which you will find there." The poor shepherd, albeit knowing full well there were no roses or flowers of any kind upon the spot, obeyed her mandate. What was his surprise when he found the roses as she had described them? He gathered a beautiful nosegay, and on returning to his singular visiter she told him to proceed with it at once to the bishop, and place it in his hands as an evidence of the truth of what he had seen and heard. He now cheerfully obeyed, and presented the flowers as commanded. On receiving them, the bishop discovered, imprinted upon the roses, an exquisite miniature of the Holy Virgin—a miniature of such surpassing loveliness and finish as at once convinced him that other than the hand of man had painted it. Its divine origin, as the legend goes, now seemed to him unquestionable.

With unwonted pomp and ceremony he had the miraculous bouquet borne about in procession, the request of the Holy Virgin was at once obeyed, and a temple dedicated entirely to her service was immediately erected on the spot she had pointed out. The fame of the miracle spread far and near, and rich presents came flowing in from all quarters. The reigning monarch of Spain endowed with costly furniture and religious trappings the sacred cathedral of *Nuestra Señora*

de Guadalupe, she was ordained the patroness of Mexico, and to the present time her temple is noted as among the richest in the world. Such the flimsy imposture, and such the result. The lower classes of Mexico still believe that the Virgin really appeared to the shepherd, and flock in thousands to her shrine at Guadalupe.* As I have before stated, I did not visit the interior of the temple, but those who have describe it as gorgeous and magnificent beyond comparison. The exterior I can answer for as being of grand dimensions and admirable architecture—partaking, so far as I was able to judge, of the Moorish and Gothic styles. A crowd of poor wretches—léperos, mendicants, and females in tattered attire—were lounging about the spot, and several of them even went so far as to ask alms of us, a party of sick, ragged, and miserable objects—calling upon every saint in the Mexican calendar to shower down prayers and blessings upon us in a torrent of abundance if we would but give them a solitary *claco*.†

* The entertaining writer Latrobe, in his work entitled "The Rambler in Mexico," says that there is only one rival to the dominion of Our Lady of Guadalupe in the affections of the common people of the valley of Mexico, and that is *Nuestra Señora de los Remedios*, whose shrine is to be seen in a village near the base of the mountains west of the city. The léperos and poblanitas, the latter the more common girls of the city, pin their faith, in case of any impending danger, upon the wonder-working image of her of Los Remedios; and in cases of great emergency, as during the prevalence of the cholera in 1833, she is brought with great pomp into the metropolis. On one occasion it was settled that she should pass the night in town, as the weather was unfriendly, and a suitable lodging was provided: but when morning dawned, "Our Lady" had vanished! The fact was, that nothing could keep her away from her own flock at Los Remedios, where, accordingly, she was found at dawn in her usual place, covered with mud, however, from having walked a number of leagues in a dark and rainy night! And this miracle is believed! Alas! poor human nature!

† A piece of copper money, worth one cent and a half. An immense batch of *clacos* were coined in 1842, but whether their intrinsic value was one cent and a half I have my doubts. Santa Anna, with some of the other government officers, probably made a "pretty penny" by the copper war which raged in Mexico during that year.

The road from Guadalupe is a wide, straight thoroughfare, planted on either side with trees of rich foliage, and leads directly into the heart of the city of Mexico. As the hospital to which they were escorting us was situated at the extreme end of the city, near the point where the Vera Cruz road enters, the captain of our guard struck off across the arid and desolate plains which lie between Guadalupe and Mexico, with the intention of finding a much nearer route. We were not in the least annoyed at this change, as not one of us felt anxious to show off our donkey-estrianism, if I may be allowed to coin a word, in the heart of one of the proudest cities of the world. All, or nearly all, too, were extremely unwell, and we were anxious to reach our quarters, roll ourselves up in our blankets, and obtain rest and sleep after the fatigues of the march.

Had we proceeded directly by the road, instead of endeavouring to find a shorter route, we should have reached our destination much sooner; for we found the plains cut up by gullies and partially-dry canals, with here and there a small lake or pond by which our course was obstructed. After turning and buffeting about three or four hours to gain as many miles, we were at length fortunate enough to reach the Vera Cruz road, and following this, we soon passed the *garita*, or gate, and entered the great city of Mexico. While upon the sandy plains, the immense number of domes, steeples, and towers of the proud metropolis of the New World, as its inhabitants are wont to term it, were plainly visible, presenting a view than which nothing can be more grand and imposing.

A more forlorn, wretched, ragged, and pitiable set of Christians surely never before entered the place. Three or four were in the very worst stage of the small-pox