

joined General Scott's army, remained faithful to their tyrants.

Notwithstanding the temper and conduct of the natives, the pledges of the Proclamation were as scrupulously observed as circumstances would allow. Our army in its early marches through the country, moved like a rich and powerful benefactor, scattering with a lavish hand, unheard of wealth among the rabble in its path. But ignorance, pride, jealousy and bigotry, were not to be thus overcome. Estimating over much their own resources and the ability of their numerous army, or perhaps encouraged to believe from the division of opinion in the United States on the subject of the war, that we would eventually withdraw from the contest—their government, without the prestige of a single victory, continued to prosecute an active and relentless system of hostilities. At length, when it was discovered that our generosity and mild treatment had failed to produce the desired effect upon the population, and that they frequently committed the most savage outrages upon our troops, the Secretary of War instructed General Taylor to draw supplies from the enemy without paying for them; and thus, by making them feel the weight of war, become interested in the restoration of peace. Beginning to understand the character of the foe, and perceiving the effect of the policy previously avowed, he says in his letter: "It is far from being certain that our military occupation of the enemy's country is not a blessing to the inhabitants in the vicinity. They are shielded from the burdens and exactions of their own authorities, protected in their persons, and furnished with a most profitable market for most

kinds of their property. A state of things so favorable to their interests may induce them to wish the continuance of hostilities." But General Taylor never availed himself of this authority to levy contributions, and we continued to pay liberal prices for everything obtained from the enemy.

How differently would the dissolute and brutal soldiery of Mexico have conducted themselves in an enemy's country! How differently, indeed, did they often act in their own. We have the authority of their historians for asserting that their marches through their native provinces were sometimes marked by the worst excesses and crimes; that, "they left behind them, by their unbridled license, an imprint of horror in the towns through which they passed; seizing upon vineyards, sacking shops, and even murdering poor poulterers to take away their fowls." So disgusted was an intelligent Mexican whom I knew, with the arrogance and extortion of his own troops, that he did not hesitate to admit frankly, that he preferred the presence of the American army to his own; since from the former he was sure of obtaining a fair compensation for his property. To a standing army, and an established national church, does Mexico owe most of her troubles and her poverty. Her government, existing only by the consent of the army, is in turn compelled to sustain that army at all hazards and sacrifices. It is now well understood that the recognition of the independence of Texas had been deferred, and the war with that state nominally prolonged by the various military rulers of Mexico, merely as a pretext for the exaction of supplies, which were afterward squandered in the maintenance of their ill-gotten and much-abused power.

The government, being supported by bayonets, always totters, when, from its want of credit, and miserable domestic policy, it suffers the pay of the troops to fall in arrear. Woe to it in such dark hours, for then thrives that baleful mushroom, the *Pronunciamento*. Nearly all their revolutions, since their independence from Spain, have been conceived by ambitious generals, and achieved by a greedy soldiery.* In these civil wars, the church, of course, is careful to side with that party most favorable to its interests; and it has been truly remarked by one of our envoys to Mexico, that, "no political movement can succeed there, to which the priesthood is opposed."

The Mexicans have a very well written constitution; but what is the best system of government worth to those who have not moral and intellectual power enough to compel its observance? Where the minds and hearts of the people are not properly educated, there can be no real freedom; and to

*Even mercenary motives have sometimes been wanting to excuse the disloyalty of the army—as witness the following passage of history from the Mexican "Notes of the War:—"

"During the last month of the administration of Paredes, in consequence of the reverses suffered by our troops on the other side of the Rio Bravo, it was agreed to organize the same expedition which Santa Anna afterward resolved upon. To realize it, pecuniary resources were wanting, and a contract was accordingly made with the church for \$1,000,000, which sum was estimated as being more than sufficient for the division that should march from the city of Mexico. The state of internal politics, and the fear, above all, of abandoning his prey, detained Paredes in this city, even after Congress had given him permission to march from Mexico, with the forces that were in garrison, and to place himself at the head of the troops of the North. This delay began to consume, without profit, the loan from the clergy, which, being for the most part wasted, obliged Paredes at last to take the forces and relinquish the government, at the end of July, for the purpose of joining the army of the North. Then he made payments for the march to all the corps, to all the officers and chiefs; with which, a few days after, they flew to the citadel to proclaim a new revolution; and assisted by the very money that ought to have served to march to Monterey. Infamous intrigues, to which we owe principally the unfortunate issue of our contest at the North."

attempt the establishment of a republic among them, is the very folly of building upon sand. Until directed by wisdom and virtue, all popular efforts in Mexico, as in France, will terminate in a military despotism, or in the crime and folly of a Reign of Terror. In the words of the leading Democratic paper of New York—which in April, 1853, announced the return of Santa Anna to his native shores—"What is chiefly wanted in Mexico, is virtue and intelligence among the people; an intelligence which can not be bamboozled by priests, and a virtue which will subject the military to the civil power; together with such practical energy as will convert the generous resources of nature into the food of industry, instead of the nutriment of idleness and beggary." Whether these wants will ever be supplied, whether the military will ever be made subject to the civil power so long as she perseveres in what her recently exiled President, Arista, terms, "that grand enigma, that squaring of the circle—nationality," is exceedingly improbable. For every President constitutionally elected by the people, the army can easily make a half-dozen "*ad interim* Presidents," as the usurpers are called. Look, for example, at the changes of administration in the three years that intervened between the annexation of Texas, and the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. In that brief period, I believe Herrera, Paredes, Salas, Farias, Santa Anna, Pena and Anaya, were severally at the head of affairs. Was there every such a political whirligig? That certainly was such "rotation in office" as one might suppose would satisfy the most greedy spoils-seeker that ever fought in the ranks of Jacobin or Empire club. Nor has the con-

dition of the country materially improved since the termination of the war. It has been somewhat more tranquil, but it is the calmness of indolence and humiliation. The indemnity, paid in annual installments by the United States, has perhaps been the means of sustaining the government, and of saving her thus long from anarchy.

The future of Mexico is one of the saddest and most embarrassing political problems of the day. That a country of such extent and resources, enjoying a position which commands two oceans, (the advantages of which, by the proposed Tehuantepec road, it has been left to foreigners to demonstrate,) and with eight or nine millions of inhabitants, should be in such a hopeless condition, is a peculiar phenomenon in history. It is scarcely possible that Santa Anna, who has again become "the Supreme Government," can avert, for more than a brief season, her ultimate fate. Even well-informed and patriotic Mexicans now cease to regard, with aversion, the "manifest destiny" of their country. Ex-President Arista seems to look forward to it with hope and encouragement. He says, in a late letter to his government: "I desire the happiness of my country, and to attain it, I see no road but through federal institutions, and, if it be desired, annexation to the United States, in which Mexico will meet an inexhaustible fountain of riches and prosperity, notwithstanding she may lose that grand enigma, that squaring of the circle, called by General Santa Anna, Nationality. The day will arrive when this will happen." There can be but little doubt that a majority of the people of the United States are prepared to annex Mexico at once, and "the rest of mankind"

at the proper time; yet a voluntary proposition, on her part, for a peaceful amalgamation of the two republics, would perhaps be but coldly embraced, if not rejected by some of our ardent annexationists, who rejoice in more violent delights. To their palates, stolen fruits are always the sweetest. In whichever manner the Mexican States may come into our Union, it is more to be hoped than expected that they would be at once relieved of the incubus which has so long oppressed them; or that the people, long tantalized by the *mirage* of liberty, would be able to appreciate its living waters when offered to them in all their freshness and purity. Nor is it certain that the connection would be very beneficial to us for sometime at least, especially if the whole of Mexico should be *swallowed at one gulp*—as is sometimes *mildly* proposed by our annexationists. In that event, it is likely that—be she ever so well "licked" before deglutition—we should find her one of those morsels which, "though sweet in taste, prove in digestion sour."*

*It will be seen by the following extract from a recent speech delivered by the Nestor of the Democratic party, (Gen. Cass) that the venerable Senator is of the opinion that the gastric juice of the body politic has not been in the least reduced by the digestion of a brace of Mexican states. But considering the fact that those were very thinly populated, it might be advisable to swallow the remaining nineteen or twenty at many, and perhaps smaller meals. This would enable us to manage an island or two *by way of desert*. Meantime the South American states may consider themselves as *in a pen*, fattening for our capacious maws. In good time they will doubtless furnish Brother Jonathan with excellent thanksgiving dinners.

In a speech upon Mr. Mason's resolution (in Senate, December 23, 1852,) calling for the correspondence concerning the proposed tripartite treaty with England and France, for the safeguard to Spain of the island of Cuba, General Cass took occasion to say, *inter alia*—"As to the general subject of annexation, I have no new views to disclose. It is pretty well known that I have a capacious swallow for territory, though I am free to confess that I can wait awhile patiently, if necessary, and spend the time in digesting our last acquisitions. They sit lightly on the

The volunteer army assembled at Camargo was composed chiefly of young men, who had just attained the age at which the enthusiasm of youth and vigor of manhood are united.* The "Young Guard" of Napoleon did not contain in its ranks more energy, valor, and daring, than was to be found in that youthful mass. There were soldiers in various regiments whom I had known when "we were boys together," who contemplated the prospect of an arduous campaign with more pleasure than they ever did a recitation in Thucydides or Juvenal. To many of them, a battery was a more agreeable object than a black-board, and I am convinced that some of my old school-mates would have assaulted a bristling *tete de pont* with more alacrity than they had aforesaid evinced in demonstrating the *pons asinorum*.

stomach, and promise to promote the health of the body politic to a degree surpassing the most sanguine expectations of those who expected most from the measure."

In the admirable speech from which the above is quoted, the eloquent Senator is particularly severe upon the press and people of Great Britain for their Pharausaical pretensions, and justly denounces the inconsistency with which, after acquiring empires by the sword, on the most frivolous pretexts, they presume to arraign this country for its rapacity.

* "The volunteers of Mexico, were the picked men of the nation, who, devoting themselves to a service more than a thousand miles from home, went to it under the strong impulse of adventure and love of martial glory. They consisted of the young, the ardent, and the brave, who, for the time, renounced all domestic pursuits and marched to the field, animated by the hope of distinction, and disenthralled from all civil cares and engagements. Thus fortified by resolve, stimulated by love of the profession, cheered by loud acclamations of friends, unimpeded by domestic solicitude, and filled with the ardor and courage of the national character, they more resemble the chivalry, which a few centuries ago, assembled around Gonsalvo de Cordova, or Gaston de Foix, in their descents upon the fields of Italy, than they do any army of modern times. The skill, concert, impetuous valor and persevering labor of their assaults, will be the theme of commendation from military critics in centuries to come, while the brilliancy of their victories over such disproportioned numbers, and the rapidity of their conquest of the strongholds of Mexico, will be regarded as the marvels of the age in which they were achieved."—*Hon. J. P. Kennedy.*

Many adventurous spirits who had failed to obtain desirable places in the Infantry, and who were determined to participate in the war even as privates, attracted by the loose discipline and hazardous service of the Texan Cavalry, had become Rangers. There were two regiments of Texan troops with the army, commanded by Colonels Hays and Wood, comprising the brigade of General Henderson. Their knowledge of the character of the enemy and of the military frontier, acquired in their long border struggle, rendered them valuable auxiliaries in the invasion. Of this far-famed corps—so much feared and hated by the Mexicans—I can add nothing to what has already been written. The character of the Texan Ranger is now well known by both friend and foe. As a mounted soldier he has had no counterpart in any age or country. Neither Cavalier nor Cossack, Mameluke nor Moss-trooper are like him; and yet, in some respects, he resembles them all. Chivalrous, bold and impetuous in action, he is yet wary and calculating, always impatient of restraint, and sometimes unscrupulous and unmerciful. He is ununiformed,* and undrilled, and performs his active duties thoroughly, but with little regard to order or system. He is an excellent rider and a *dead shot*. His arms are a rifle, Colt's revolving pistol, and a knife. Unaccustomed to the saber or to move in mass, the Rangers are of course unable to make a charge upon, or to receive one from well-armed and well-disciplined troops. But when an

* Some wag (doubtless the same individual who remarked that the Georgian costume was "a shirt collar and a pair of spurs,") has described the Texan uniform as "a dirty shirt and a five-shooter."

enemy's line is broken by the rapid volleys of their rifles, they then "pitch in promiscuously," and finish the work with the "five-shooter,"—delivering their fire right and left as they dash along at full speed. And it must be confessed that for a chaparral skirmish, or an "up and down and cross over fight" upon house-tops, such as that of the third day at Monterey, the Rangers have few superiors. Centaur-like, they seemed to live upon their horses; and, under firm and prudent leaders, were efficient soldiers, especially for scouts and advanced post-service, where the necessity for unintermitting vigilance left them no opportunity for indulging in the mad-cap revels and marauding expeditions for which they are somewhat celebrated.

Before the end of August, all the regular troops were *en route* for the interior; and intelligence was received from General Worth—who had taken possession of Cerralvo—that the enemy was in force at Monterey, and would probably stand siege. Upon this, General Taylor determined to lose no time in moving forward the volunteers, and bringing the matter to an issue of arms. On the 28th, the subjoined order, decisive of the long debated question, "which of the new regiments and brigadiers will Taylor take to Monterey?" was published.* We of the First Ohio regiment were much

*Orders
No. 108.

Head-Quarters, Army of Occupation,
Camargo, August 28, 1846.

1. The limited means of transportation, and the uncertainty in regard to the supplies that may be drawn from the theater of operations, imposes upon the commanding general the necessity of taking into the field, in the first instance, only a moderate portion of the volunteer force now under his orders.

2. In addition to the mounted regiments from Texas, four regiments of volunteer infantry will be held ready for the march, constituting two brigades and one division, to be commanded by Major General Butler. The 1st Kentucky, and 1st Ohio

rejoiced at our good fortune, and heartily condoled with those less successful and loudly lamenting men, who, after coming so far to share in the glory of a campaign, were compelled, by "the limited means of transportation," to remain for weeks and months inactive upon the malarious plains of Camargo.

The reader will perceive, from Order No. 108, that the four regiments of infantry, comprising General Butler's division, were reduced to a strength of 500 men each. These, with the two regiments of Texan Horse, constituted a force of 3000 volunteers, which, with about the same number of regulars, invested Monterey. The allowance of transportation for the march, were as follows:

regiments will form the first field brigade, under the command of Brigadier General Hamer; the 1st Tennessee and the Mississippi regiments, will form the second field brigade, to be commanded by Brigadier General Quitman.

3. The regiments designated will be reduced to a strength of 500 men each, exclusive of officers, by leaving behind all sick and disabled men, and all who shall not be deemed capable of undergoing the fatigues and privations of the campaign. These selections will be made under the direction of Major General Butler, in the first, and the brigadier generals in the second divisions—a board of medical officers being convened in all doubtful cases. It is for the good of the service, and the reputation of each regiment, that the selections be rigid.

4. In announcing the above arrangements, the commanding general feels that he is disappointing the hopes of many regiments and superior officers, who looked forward to a participation in the campaign. But they will see that he is controlled by the necessities of the case, and that it is impossible to gratify the wishes of all. The selections have been made solely with a view to promote the interests of the service, and the successful prosecution of the war with present means. The general hopes, that after penetrating the country, and ascertaining its resources, he shall be able to bring forward other corps now unavoidably left in the rear.

5. The volunteer regiments, remaining at this place, will be temporarily brigaded for instruction and camp service. The 2d Kentucky, and 2d Ohio regiments coming under the command of Brigadier General Marshall, and the other regiments or battalions, under that of Brigadier General Pillow, the command will be exercised by Major General Patterson, or, in his absence, by the senior brigadier general, who will take measures to institute a rigid system of police and discipline.

By order of Major General TAYLOR:

W. W. S. BLISS,
Assistant Adjutant General.

To each division and brigade head-quarters,	1 wagon.
To the field and staff of each regiment,	4 pack mules.
To the officers of each company,	2 " "
To every eight non-commissioned officers, musicians, and privates,	1 pack mule.

Three wagons in addition were assigned to each regiment, one for the transportation of water, and two for such articles as could not be packed on mules.

Such was the small force and limited means of transportation with which General Taylor took up his line of march for the interior, and which he was careful to place upon record, in a communication, dated September 1st, 1846, to the government. But doubtful as the result then seemed, his bold advance, under the circumstances, had a show of confidence, which, if it did not intimidate the enemy, at least inspired our own troops. In consequence of the short allowance of mules, a great amount of baggage had necessarily to be abandoned at Camargo. But no complaints were heard on that account; indeed, the troops selected were all too glad to go, to stand upon the manner or order of their going. Such was their enthusiasm, that they would cheerfully have marched in their shirts alone, rather than have missed the *fandango*, as they facetiously termed the anticipated battle at Monterey.

Taking advantage of our wants, a number of native horse-dealers daily visited our camp, offering mustangs and mules at prices previously unheard of in that region. These leather-clad jockeys were the most arrant knaves I ever encountered, and, in selling their animals, rarely failed to sell the purchaser also. The wild, half-broken mustangs generally

escaped in a short time to their native chaparral, for, "the Unicorn could not be less willing to serve thee, or abide by thy crib;" or, if detained by strong halters, were often claimed by other Mexicans, who had doubtless shared the purchase money with the vendors. In the prevailing desire to conciliate the inhabitants, and live up to the Proclamation, these false claims of ownership were, in many cases, recognized upon the bare assertion of the claimant, and the property restored; perhaps to be re-sold and re-claimed again by the same villainous confederates. Indeed, it was ascertained that one notorious rogue had sold the same mustang to five different persons; the animal having escaped from each successively, and been re-captured by the same lasso. The writer himself can not deny having been victimized by these Camargo cheats. After purchasing two mustangs—both of which disdainfully curled their noses at the wholesome oats given them, and finally, breaking from their pickets, disappeared in the chaparral—I determined to invest in mule flesh. My speculation in that article, however, was equally unfortunate. Shortly before our departure for Monterey, a Mexican brought a fine mule to my quarters, which I immediately bought. After tying the money carefully in his pocket-handkerchief, the fellow departed, politely wishing me much luck with the mule. He had hardly got out of sight, before another sombrero-covered wretch hastily approached my tent, and with well-feigned excitement, claimed the animal, averring, as usual, that the other Mexican had stolen it from him. Understanding the game, I declined to give up the mule until the thief (*ladron*, as he kindly termed his countryman and

colleague in guilt,) was brought back to the camp for punishment. Upon his expressing an unwillingness to aid in the arrest, I bade him *adios*, upon which hint he vanished. I retained possession of the mule until the army reached Cerralvo, at which place I received an order from head-quarters, through a Colonel K., of Texas, who had charge of the mule train, to transfer the beast to him, for the use of the quarter-master's department, to which, it was alleged, the mule had been hired by some Mexican, who claimed to be its owner. As I sought no explanation of the trifling, though not unprovoking affair, I have never learned by what evidence the gentlemen at head-quarters satisfied themselves that the right of property was vested in Mr. Insolent Ranchero; and I have mentioned the incident simply to illustrate the character of the border Mexicans, to show how groundless were their many complaints of ill-treatment, and how over careful General Taylor was of their rights, real or pretended. The writer is clearly of opinion that his government is still indebted to him for the value of the mule aforesaid; and, (between us, good reader,) if the practice of allowing compound interest upon musty old claims, comes to be generally recognized by the Treasury Department, our investment may not prove to be such a bad one, after all; especially if we keep our mule out of Congress for a half century or more. My companions were of course much diverted at the result of the matter, and really I could not but admire the shrewdness displayed by the Mexican jockeys, in hiring the animal to our government, since they well knew that its claim would at once outweigh that of any individual officer or soldier. General Ampudia's

proclamation* of August 31st, threatening death to all the natives who continued to traffic with the Americans, did not distress us very much, after our dealings with the Camargo people. Before leaving Camargo, the business of these horse-traders was broken up, in our quarter of the camp at least, in an amusing manner. A party of them having entered our lines one afternoon, were for some time quietly permitted to exhibit their horses and horsemanship, in which last they possessed considerable skill. Their greatest feat, and one which they practiced most, was that of bringing their animals from the most rapid stride to a sudden halt. This, which was properly esteemed as a great accomplish-

*The following is a copy of Ampudia's bulletin, which, (as Gen. Worth remarked in his letter from Cerralvo, transmitting it to Taylor,) "is ingenious, and well calculated through the clergy, to operate upon the fears of the ignorant Mexicans:"

"Considering that the hour has come for taking energetic and timely measures to free the department of the East from Anglo-American rapacity, and that by the laws of nations and of war, every traitor to his country, or spy of the enemy, should suffer the penalty of death; and, finally, considering that it is my indispensable duty to oppose a barrier to the torrent of evils caused by the contraband traffic which has been carried on in the most barefaced manner with the usurpers of our sacred territory, in virtue of the powers confided upon me by existing laws, I have determined to decree:

"1st. Every native or foreigner, who of his own accord, shall give aid directly or indirectly to the enemy, shall be shot.

"2d. Those who, after the publication of this decree, shall continue to traffic with the enemy shall suffer the penalty stated in the preceding article.

"3d. The authorities of every branch of the public administration will take care, strictly, and under the most rigid responsibility, that these provisions be punctually fulfilled.

"4th. This decree is intended to produce action among the people, since all citizens have the right, and are under obligation to denounce any infraction of it, and to apprehend the criminals in order to deliver them up to the judicial authority; and, that it may reach the notice of all, and that none may allege ignorance. I order it to be published and circulated among all to whom it belongs, to see that it be faithfully executed.

"Given at Head-Quarters, Monterey, August 31, 1846.

PEDRO DE AMPUDIA."

ment, by a people much addicted to *halting* and *dodging*, they were enabled to do by means of a ring-curb that is universally used. After the usual preliminary display had taken place, the natives, by preconcerted arrangement, were gradually surrounded by all the soldiers of the regiment not on duty. One of the volunteers—a famous wag—then mounted a barrel, and announced to the crowd that he proposed to sell at auction, “for the benefit of whom it might concern,” the collection of live-stock before them. He invited particular attention to it as the most miserable assortment of *spavined*, *sore-backed* and *shoulder-shotten* mustangs, mules and Mexicans, ever seen in any market; and humorously added, that possession would not be guaranteed unless *strong halters* were used upon either the animals or their thievish riders, *especially the latter*. During the delivery of these and other preparatory remarks, the Mexicans—profoundly ignorant of their meaning, and wondering much at the position and merriment of the Americans—were either watching the speaker, with looks of astonishment and alarm, or peering anxiously around for some avenue of escape through the crowd.

The volunteer auctioneer, familiar with all the cant phrases of the horse-market, then proceeded with admirable spirit and wit to sell the animals, some by measurement and others even by the pound, “Commissary weight.” This innocent fling at the Commissariat was received with great applause. He pleasantly commented the while upon the various qualities of the stock; now insisting that the ponderous ears of a certain ugly, brown mule, indubitably proved his “*Andrewluisian* blood;” and again, swearing that a shabby, little gray

pony was a noble steed, indeed, a perfect Tartar, and would carry any ambitious gentlemen as far as Montezuma’s Halls, to the tune of

“Yankee Doodle came to town,

Upon a little pony,” etc., etc.

At this scene in the farce, some of the grave-looking Mexicans could not refrain from joining in the general laughter caused by the song and comic action of the auctioneer, who, while he sang, continued to saw with his right hand upon an imaginary fiddle in his left. Thus the sale progressed amid much lively and good-natured competition in the crowd surrounding the kicking mustangs and braying mules. Not the least diverting part of the affair, was the dialogue that followed the sale of each animal, between the auctioneer and purchaser, concerning the terms of payment, and which generally resulted in the granting of credit for some indefinite period, or the acceptance of a draft on the Mexican Treasury.

At the conclusion of the sale, the auctioneer remarked, that,—“flattered by the unexampled patronage he had received, and encouraged by the *animated* condition of the market, he would shortly invite the attention of the public to a *small invoice of excellent donkeys* or rather to *some small donkeys in excellent voice*, soon expected to arrive from the chaparral.” With these words the wag descended from his stand; the crowd dispersed, leading away their purchases to their quarters, and followed by the excited Mexican owners, who now began to comprehend, though they did not seem to relish the joke. After playing for some time upon the fears of the avaricious jockeys, their animals were

restored to them, and they left the camp under whip and spur. Nor did they again venture to traffic within our lines. As to the promised invoice of asses, it may be added that the sale was not allowed to take place upon their arrival, inasmuch as those musical little beasts were daily employed in transporting needful supplies to the camp.

On the 4th of September, General Hamer's brigade crossed the San Juan, preparatory to marching on the 6th. The weather was intensely hot, and we anticipated a thirsty, dusty, and fatiguing journey. We had, I think, but one rain during our stay at Camargo, but that was a memorable one. Though it "overcame us like a summer's cloud," it nevertheless excited our special wonder. It occurred one sultry afternoon in the latter part of August, when the sun was low in the west. Sitting in the shade of our tents, and looking toward the east, our attention was suddenly arrested by a dark cloud that was unrolled from the heavens, like the drop-curtain of a theater, and which completely shut out the distant landscape. It advanced rapidly, and we soon perceived that it was one of those showers, peculiar to the *tierra caliente*, which are concentrated in a single drop,—a mass of water from earth to sky. Their force is soon spent, but most unlucky is the traveler on whom they chance to fall. This cloud began to discharge itself not far from us, and swept directly toward the camp. Rainbows were playing upon its broad surface, giving it the appearance of a vast and beautiful curtain of variegated silk, shaken by the winds; while the sound of the falling water as it broke upon the earth was really terrific. It steadily approached, every moment becom-

ing more fearful and audible, until, like a thousand horse "thickly thundering on," it swept over our camp with a force that almost crushed the awe-struck sentinels to the ground. In a few moments the storm was o'er, the cloud had sunk into the bosom of the earth, and the last glancing rays of the sun shone upon a scene of bright tranquility, as well as upon (to quote the immortal Mantalini) some "demd, damp, moist, uncomfortable bodies."