

order. The bodies were put into coffins and delivered to their friends.

I must observe, to the credit of the populace, that the whole was conducted in the most solemn and decent manner, which I attribute to the effect of the religious feelings of all who were present. It formed a strong contrast to an execution which I once witnessed in France, soon after the revolution, when the rabble of Rouen behaved with the most disgusting ribaldry and obscenity.

## CHAPTER XX.

Domestic Animals :—Horses, Mules, &c.

MEXICO possesses a fine breed of light, active, spirited little horses, which are used only for the saddle; some are of great beauty and well broken in, being extremely elegant in their paces, and very sure-footed. The men excel those of most countries in the art of riding and managing these noble animals; but the usage they receive is very different from that in Europe—for they are hardly fed, lodged, and treated. Their principal food is chopped straw; the leaves and stalks of the maize, or Indian corn; and, whilst working, the grain of the maize, and sometimes barley. I have seen good green oats in the neigh-

bourhood of Xalappa, but never saw them given to horses in a dried state. Whilst on a journey they are not suffered to drink: very few are shod, and those that are, seldom have more than two shoes. Their saddles and accoutrements are very large and heavy: they are easy and safe for the rider, but it is a rare thing to see a horse return from a journey without a sore back. I have always preferred my English saddle to the Spanish, and in several journies performed in company, my little nag was the only one that came back uninjured.

Nothing on entering the kingdom of Mexico strikes the newly arrived European as more ridiculous than the huge, heavy, unwieldy trappings with which the *pasanos* encumber these pretty animals. An immense saddle, with large *armas de aguas* of skin dressed with the hair on, hangs down to the horse's knees in front, whilst a

heavy petticoat-like covering of stiff jacked leather, called a Cortez shield, encloses the whole hind parts in a most uncomfortable manner, as far as the haunches, where it terminates in a heavy deep fringe of iron resembling a bundle of jack-chains, whose jingling noise, and the uneasy capers it causes the tormented animal to make, seem to constitute the principal felicity of Mexican dandies in their perambulations through the city, or on the *paseo*, which is the Hyde Park of Mexico—where they display their persons and equestrian skill, decorated in showy *passano* dresses, and armed with the enormous spurs used in Europe in the 14th and 15th centuries, the rowels of which are some of them above twelve inches in circumference, and have a small bell attached to the side of each, whose music, joined with that of the rattling iron fringe, de-

notes the consequence and approach of the ambling cavaliero.

The ladies of the city of Mexico seldom appear on horseback; when they do they are seated in a clumsy box-like side-saddle, placed on the right side, which prevents them from sitting in a graceful manner. Lately, however, some young ladies of distinction have ventured to appear like European female equestrians; and I hope we shall soon see the women of New Spain enjoy their rational liberty, and take air and exercise like those of other parts of the civilized world. I have seen ladies here riding astride the horse, but this is by no means usual. The Pisana or country lady is often seen mounted before her cavaliero, who, seated behind his fair one, supports her with his arm thrown round her waist; and, as females here wear neither hat nor bonnet, he, as a mark of po-

liteness and attention, places his hat on her head, and supplies its place on his own by a handkerchief.

Horses enjoy the full privilege of wearing their ears and tails unmutilated, and it is considered a beauty and perfection to carry the latter between their legs—to which the frequent use of the Cortez shield greatly contributes. It seems to an English eye at first a defect, but how infinitely preferable is it to our ridiculous, brutal, and unnatural custom of cutting off the ears and part of the tail of this generous and useful dependent on man, and nicking the remainder to the bone, roasting and torturing it to make it turn in a contrary way to what was intended by nature. Surely the humane laws lately enacted to prevent barbarity to animals ought to extend their influence to prevent so frightful and absurd a practice.

The horses in Mexico are never littered; they sleep on the bare stones, and I never saw a curry-comb nor a substitute for it. Tied up the whole day in the yards of the city, they remain patiently waiting their evening meal; they are often turned loose together, when it requires the use of the lasso to catch them. This is thrown with great dexterity by every ostler or servant, and the moment the horses or mules feel the rope on their neck they stand perfectly still, but without it will not suffer themselves to be saddled or bridled. The horsemen are, as I have before mentioned, extremely expert. I have often observed with pleasure a number of young men, in sport, amusing themselves by riding after and endeavoring to unhorse each other: they whirl round suddenly, and, seizing their adversary's horse by the tail, bring him to the ground by destroying the equilibrium.

With the greatest dexterity and agility they single out a bull in the open plains, and in the same manner bring the furious animal to the ground with little risk to themselves, their horses being so sure-footed as seldom to make a false step, even on roads and on rocks where the best English hunter would fail.

Horses are bred in great numbers at the different haciendas in the provinces, where they are sold very cheap. They run in a state of nature till wanted, when they are caught with a lasso, hoodwinked, and immediately mounted. For the first fifteen or twenty minutes, they exert their whole strength to throw the rider; but finding their exertions ineffectual, they patiently submit, and generally give but little trouble afterwards. The bit used in this process is a terrible instrument, something like that of the Mamelukes.

The Ex-Emperor, who was remarkable for his personal strength and prowess, was said to be very much attached to the taking of bulls and horses in the above manner.

The superb stable and stud of the Conde de Regla, in the city, contain the finest specimens of horses and mules in the country: the building, formerly a convent, though unfinished, might almost vie with the famous one at Chantilly: the horses are many of them of exquisite beauty, and some of great speed and fine action. Of this the public may judge from the models executed in wax by an Indian, and from that of El Volante (a horse of singular form and great velocity), presented to me by the Conde. The mules used for his carriages are, for size, strength, and form, much the finest I have ever seen; many are near eighteen hands high, and of proportionate strength. In the stable of the Conde they

enjoy the luxury of sleeping on boards, but are not littered.

Mules are universally preferred in this country for drawing carriages of every description, as well as for transporting goods and for travelling long journies, being stronger, and capable of enduring more fatigue and privations than the horse. In the carriages used by the nobility and gentry in Mexico and the other principal cities, two handsome mules only are used, yoked with singularly elegant harness; but the heavy clumsy travelling carriages on the public roads are usually drawn by eight or nine mules, and driven by two postillions. These vehicles, when laden for a journey with the household furniture, beds, provisions, &c. which custom renders it necessary to carry with you, make such an appearance or set-out as an Englishman has no concep-

tion of. Each article has to be unloaded every night, and carried into a place (I will not call it a room,) to remain till morning, when all must be repacked and reloaded, an operation which often requires two hours. From the time of being yoked to the carriage to their finishing a journey sometimes of from forty to fifty miles, do these patient animals continue their unceasing exertions over wretched roads, in the hot sun, without tasting food or even a drop of water. Neither horses nor mules (except those belonging to the great,) are ever dressed, but they have a custom of washing them, on their day's labour being finished, by sprinkling them copiously with cold water, which they consider an operation very refreshing and beneficial to health.

The full harness and equipment of a Mexican cavaliero is often very expensive

and elegant—the saddle, bridle, and their accoutrements being richly embroidered in gold, silver, and coloured silk. The boots, (or rather wrappers for the leg,) the spur, leathers, and coverings of the wooden stirrups, are embroidered, and some of the leggings only are so elegantly ornamented as to cost 150 dollars the pair; and the whole dress, if it have any pretence to fashion, cannot be purchased for less than six or 700 dollars. The saddle-room of the Conde de Regla contains many coverings for the horse, of great value, some being composed of valuable fur and lion skins, superbly mounted in gold and silver.

The price of horses varies as much as in England; a good handsome one may be purchased for twelve or fifteen pounds. Trotting being considered as a great defect, I bought one of the finest trotting horses in

the city, and a good figure, for twelve pounds, on account of its having this great fault; but those that are showy and graceful in their paces will often sell for 200 pounds, or even more. Mules bring high prices, if handsome and well broken in for the saddle; the clergy generally use them, and they will sell for two or three hundred dollars. The ordinary kind are used for the conveyance of goods from Acapulco and Vera Cruz to the capital, and it is common to meet a drove of near one thousand of them in company, laden with bales of merchandise of two or three hundred weight. Some of these muleteers are rich, and it is remarkable that a robbery of them is scarcely ever heard of. I have seen the great square of Mexico nearly filled with mules, loaded with silver for Vera Cruz, each mule carrying two

thousand dollars; and was told that there was no instance known of these rich convoys having been pillaged.

Asses are common here, but not so fine and large as in the south of Europe: they are employed in large droves for conveying burthens, but are not so usually met on the great roads as mules.

Prodigious herds of horned cattle are seen grazing in all the great plains and near the haciendas:—they are so like our black cattle in the southern part of Scotland that I almost hailed them as my country acquaintance; but the resemblance is chiefly in the exterior. The beef is in general hard and dry, but this may probably arise from the slovenly and injudicious manner in which the butchers perform their office, as well as from their mode of cooking. I have only once or twice met with good roast or boiled beef,

and that at the tables of English or American residents. Veal is not allowed, by law, to be killed.

Early every morning great numbers of cows with their calves are seen in the streets, when the warm milk is sold as wanted; and the city is also supplied from the haciendas in the neighbourhood. Butter is dear, and not of the finest quality; it is principally brought by the Indians, made up very neatly in the leaves which cover the heads of the Indian corn or maize. I have tasted good cheese of the country, but it is rare and dear. Small Dutch cheeses are common here, and I once, as a stranger, by chance, saw a specimen of our renowned countrymen from Cheshire, in company with a real Yorkshire ham.

The sheep here are rather handsome in appearance whilst living, but are not a valuable kind. They have long slender limbs

and large horns; their wool, perhaps for want of attention, is not fine, and the mutton lean and tasteless to those accustomed to the fine English breeds.

Flocks of goats are common in the mountains; and in the months of April and May the markets are well supplied with kid little inferior to lamb.

PIGS.—A fine breed of these useful animals is kept by several persons of wealth, as an article of trade, in the city of Mexico; and the care and attention paid to their cleanliness and comfort so far exceed any thing I have seen elsewhere, that a short account may be useful, by furnishing hints to our farmers, brewers, distillers, &c. by whom large numbers of these valuable animals can be kept. The premises where the business is carried on are extensive; consisting in general of a good dwelling-house, with a shop, slaugh-



ter-house, and places for singeing the pigs; large bowls for rendering the lard; salting and drying rooms; and lard rooms, with wooden binns for containing the rendered fat, which is an article of great consumption in Spanish cookery, being used as a substitute for butter. There is also a soap manufactory, in which the offal fat is manufactured, and apartments where the blood is made into a kind of black-pudding and sold to the poor.

Behind all these are the sties for the hogs, generally from 800 to 1000 in number, which occupy a considerable range of well-built sheds, about thirty feet deep, with the roofs descending very low, and having the entrance through low arches, before which is an open space, the whole length of the yard and about twenty-four feet wide, in the centre of which is a kind of aqueduct built of stone and filled with clean water,

supplied from a well at the end of the premises.—The hogs can only put their noses into this water through holes in the wall, which prevents their dirtying it, as it passes through the whole division of the yard. This is the only liquid given them, and their food is maize or Indian corn, slightly moistened and scattered at stated hours on the ground, which, in the yard as well as the place where they sleep, is perfectly dry and clean. They are attended by several Indians with every possible care, and have a cold bath on the premises, which they are frequently obliged to use, as cleanliness is considered essential to their acquiring that enormous load of fat from which the principal profit is derived. Their ease and comfort also seem to be studiously attended to; and the occupation of two Indian lads will cause a smile on the countenances of my musical readers, when

they are informed that they are employed, from morning till night, in settling any disputes or little bickerings that may arise among the happy inhabitants of this community either in respect to rank or condition, and in singing them to sleep. The boys are chosen for the strength of their lungs, and their taste and judgment in delighting the ears and lulling the senses of this amiable harmonic society; and succeed each other in chanting during the whole day, to the great delight and gratification of the audience, who seem fully to appreciate the merits of the performers.

The proprietor of one of these establishments himself attended us, and explained with much complaisance the use of the various apartments; he assured me that the premises cost him 60,000 dollars, and that his sales before the revolution amounted to about 2000 dollars per week: indeed,

his display of diamonds, and his three splendid carriages with fine horses, standing in the yard, bespoke him a man of some opulence and importance. His stock are bred at a hacienda or farm belonging to him, near Otumba, and driven to Mexico, to be fattened, when about eight months old. The breed is said to have been brought originally from the Philippine Islands.

**DOGS.**—The breed of this useful domestic animal seems to be entirely left to chance: a few Spanish pointers only are to be seen, the rest are a mixed mongrel race of every description, of which some are large and kept as house-dogs. Every village swarms with them; they are a perfect nuisance from their numbers and being always loose. Travellers can scarcely pass a village or house in the night

but they rush out, and by their noise alarm and sometimes even seize the horses; a tax on them, well enforced, would either remedy this evil or produce a good revenue.

A very curious and diminutive species of wild dog is found in the mountains to the north east of Durango. They are only eight or nine inches long, in form something like a greyhound, with a large high projecting forehead, long ears, and a long tail. They burrow in the ground, and are said (which, if true, is very extraordinary,) to feed on grass and other vegetable substances. They are sometimes brought to Mexico, and when domesticated, and improved in their food, they increase in size. Those I have seen were about ten or eleven inches long, and appeared to be a timid weakly race, though not very good-na-

ture. I procured one at Mexico, which had just arrived from the north, but it died in a few days.

Mexico produces an animal which seems to connect the wolf, fox, and dog: it is called the Cocytie, and is about two-thirds of the size of the wolf, which it greatly resembles in shape and colour. While travelling, I have frequently heard their clamorous cries in the night, when hunting in concert in large packs. They are destructive to lambs, poultry, &c. but never attack men. I have seen them near the road when travelling in the day;—they suffer you to approach almost within gun-shot, and then move off very deliberately. A young one which I endeavored to rear made its escape, and could not be retaken. The smell of them is stronger and more disagreeable than that of the fox.