

calling me a deserter, and other opprobrious epithets. An Irishman, however, was here, who took me away from the rest, went to his house, and gave me something to eat. To him I related my history, and that my present determination was to reach the Pacific, get on board an American vessel or man-of-war, and return home. In proof of the truth of my story, I gave him my notes to examine, that I had kept up to that time. He tried to dissuade me from going, pictured the dangers of the journey, its length, &c., &c.; but all this could not intimidate me. I had counted the cost, I said, and was prepared for any exigency that might occur. I then asked him if he would do me the favor to get me a passport under the character of one of the San Patricio company, for then I could get on safely. He replied that at the present time a great excitement existed against that body on account of the result of the late battles in Mexico, in consequence of which none of the company had been to the city for several weeks; therefore it was not in the power of any of them to help me. He gave me much good advice, and many directions relative to my journey; and when it came night I took leave of my kind friend, contrasting in my own mind his conduct toward me with that of those John Bulls to whom I had spoken in the morning.

After leaving the factory, I took a circuitous route, through the back streets of the city, to the road leading to Guadalajara. I this night traveled some twenty miles, and went to the mountains to rest during the day. The valley through which I was going was very level, and in the vicinity where I was, well cul-

tivated. The inhabitants were not scattered along the road, but dwelt in small villages, where the owner or dueño lived. His laborers always lived in houses scattered around their master's. These haciendas are not unfrequently ten, and even fifteen miles apart.

While in the mountains I built a fire, where I roasted some corn and potatoes that I took from the fields in the valley below. My course I knew to be west; and the only way I could lay my course was by noticing which way the sun went down, and, when it was clear, looking for the north star. Even then I was liable to lose my track, for so many roads led off from the main one that I was constantly liable to take the wrong one. This, in fact, was the case two days after leaving Queretaro. The road I took appeared to be plainer and more traveled than the other, hence I concluded it was the one for me to take. It led off through another valley, and directly off from the road I wished to take.

I, however, continued my journey ten nights, lying by during the day. When I came to a large town, I avoided it by making a circuit entirely round it, and coming into a road—as near as I could judge, the same one—on the opposite side. I continued to travel thus for several days longer, when one morning I was discovered by the smoke of my fire by a poor ranchero. He asked me to his house, and I went; he placed before me some victuals, of which I ate heartily. The fellow seemed kindly disposed, and not very inquisitive. Of him I asked the road to Celaya, that being one of the first towns I should come to after leaving Queretaro. I then told him I

was going to Guadalajara. He then told me of my mistake; that I had taken the wrong road, and was some fifty or sixty leagues out of my way. The town I had passed was San Miguel, and the only way for me to get back on the right road was to return the same way I came, there being no other road near there on account of the mountains. At all events, this route was the nearest for me to take.

This was a gloomy consideration, to think that so much time and distance was lost, and that the danger I had passed must be encountered again. However, the die was cast; it was now neck or nothing. My life and liberty were at stake on the one hand, and an ignominious death awaited me on the other. With these two important considerations, I cheerfully retraced my route. The rainy season had not yet passed, though it did not rain as much as formerly; still, nearly every night I was wet through to the skin. The day, however, was usually pleasant. At last I reached the same valley that I should have kept at first, having traveled an entire month without gaining a single inch of headway.

The appearance of the country that I passed through was pretty much the same as the parts already described, only not quite so much cultivated, doubtless owing to the fact that there was less water to irrigate it.

Having found the right road, I set forward with good courage, not in the least disheartened by my late misfortune. After traveling two nights I reached Celaya. This town I passed through just after dark, having been concealed in sight of it all day. I found

it quite a large and beautiful town; I made no stop, however, but passed through as quickly as possible. I was wrapped in my blanket just like a Mexican, to avoid being distinguished from them; and by this means I went safely through. That night I traveled about twenty miles, and in the morning went to the mountains for concealment.

On my way there I came to a rancho. Some men were around, and just mounting their horses apparently to go on a journey. I waited till they were gone. Seeing no man about the house, I soon after went in, and was welcomed by the women, of whom I asked the favor of something to eat; a request with which they at once complied. To the honor of the Mexican women be it said, that when addressed in a respectful manner, they always supplied me with whatever I needed, if it was in their power to bestow it. I then asked of them several questions relative to my route, all of which they readily answered; I also ascertained that the men who had gone away in the morning would not return till night. On hearing this, I asked the privilege of resting there a while to take a good sleep. This they readily granted.

Behold me now sleeping in a house for the first time in six weeks! As a general thing, I did not think it safe to go to a rancho if there were any men about, and only in one instance had I done so since leaving San Juan. I might possibly not have been molested at any time, but I did not like to run the risk, at least, till I was out of hearing of Queretaro. I considered it best to pick a precarious living in the mountains and sleep there, rather than trust this peo-

ple, of whom it might be said that their dwellings are "the habitations of cruelty," and whose prominent characteristics are robbery, treachery, and bloodshed. Toward night I left this truly hospitable roof, and pursued my way through the fields—off the main road, yet parallel with it—till dark, when I again resumed the highway.

This night I passed through another town safely, being molested by the barking of the dogs, but fortunately meeting with no inhabitants. The valley had now contracted to about half its usual width, and was quite thickly settled, a circumstance which proved rather annoying to me. For the most part I kept the mountains during several nights, because of the difficulty of getting by these houses unperceived and unmolested. The danger was greater than in a village, for this reason: should any one be stirring, or any unusual barking of the dogs occur, it would at once create suspicion that all was not right, and a pursuit would be the result. I, however, got along safely; but I was rather put to it for food. Two days had now passed, and I had found nothing to eat; on the night of the third, I saw a little squirrel, gave chase, and killed it. But I was so near some houses that I dared not make a fire to roast it, and withal so hungry that I could not wait that process, so I just skinned it, and ate part of it raw; the other part I saved for my breakfast, and this I thought was the best meal I had ever eaten.

The land here is very fertile, and capable of producing two crops per annum, and it is cultivated to the utmost of its capacity. In addition to corn, beans,

and red pepper, tobacco and sugar-cane are raised with facility and in great abundance. The two latter afford rich returns to the grower, but with regard to tobacco, so many restrictions are placed on it that but few raise it. As the law now is, all the tobacco that is raised must be sold to government at a fixed price, the producer first getting a license to raise it from the proper authority. It is then manufactured at the expense of government into cigars and cigarritos, and sold to the estancos by the wholesale. Estancos are houses licensed to sell cigars and cigarritos. Tobacco that is imported has to pay a duty so high that it in effect amounts to a prohibition. To prevent the smuggling of tobacco, guards are stationed at regular distances, who have charge of a certain extent of territory. Notwithstanding their vigilance, large quantities are annually smuggled; and during my traveling in the night, I saw several caravans of mules and asses loaded with this article. They acted like myself, traveled by night, and laid by in the daytime.

As I have now for a moment left my narrative, I will describe their manner of manufacturing sugar. The mill is a frame made firm and solid, about four feet high and five long, and from two to two and a half wide. Two cylinders, made of solid wood, about two feet long and from fifteen to twenty inches in diameter, are filled with thick, heavy cogs, in such a manner as to mash the cane nicely; these are placed upright in the frame. Below the whole is a trough, so fixed that it will catch the juice as it is pressed out in the mill above. A long sweep is fastened to

one of these cylinders, to which the horse is attached. When the cane is ground and pressed, the juice is carried to the kettle, which is placed over an arch, and is as large as a potash-kettle; here it is boiled down until it is thick, and then placed in earthen vessels to cool, after which it is wrapped in husks and sent to market. On the largest plantations, where the sugar-cane is raised extensively, they have not apparatus to make over two or three barrels per day, so little idea have they of machinery to do a large quantity of work and with little labor.

To show how they stand as to mechanical work, I will describe their manner of shoeing a horse. It takes from three to five, according to the disposition of the horse. No. 1 twists a rope round the horse's upper lip and holds him. No. 2 holds up the foot for No. 3 to pare the hoof and fit the shoe. If the horse is fractious, No. 4 stands by ready with the nails and iron with which to clinch them. To assist in doing this, No. 5 helps to hold the horse steady. From this it may justly be inferred that they consider it is a vastly hard job to shoe a horse. It is indeed a job not unfrequently requiring a whole day. I will now resume my narrative.

The next morning, after finishing my squirrel, I hunted around for something else to eat. In the mountains generally I could occasionally find a little wild fruit; but here, for some reason or other, none could be found. Houses were not far off. I therefore determined to go and see what could be seen without exposing myself too far. I gradually crept up to a house, in the rear of which, in a yard, I saw

some meat hanging up to dry. There was quite a large quantity, and I resolved to have some of it at any rate; but as people were around the house all the while, it was dangerous to attempt it then; so I lay concealed in the bushes nearly all day, when, to my great satisfaction, all hands left the house just before night; not a soul remained behind; and when they had got sufficiently distant, I went into the yard, secured what meat I could carry, and then hastened with all speed back to the mountains. This I considered decidedly the richest haul I had made; it certainly was made just in the nick of time, as without it I believe I should have perished with hunger. Being partly dried, I could eat it without roasting.

I did not remain long in that vicinity, but hastened on as fast as possible to avoid a pursuit, should any be made. I traveled all that night, during which time I made thirty miles. The next morning I came to a ranch, where lived an old man and woman; of them I obtained some tortillas, roasted some of my meat, and made a very good breakfast. I had now been on the road about eight weeks, and thought that for the future I might travel in the daytime and lie by during the night, and I changed my mode of traveling accordingly.

That day I traveled fifteen miles, and kept the main road all the time. The next day an incident occurred that very nearly frustrated all my plans. I was going along at a good pace, when, looking back, I saw, about half a mile behind me, four men, riding on horseback at a rapid rate. I at once suspected that they were after me, and began to look for means

of escape. The mountains were one mile distant on either side of me; the land was all cleared, and not a bush was to be seen. In any case, should I be seen running, it would excite suspicion and cause a pursuit; so I turned off into a corn-field, got over the fence very deliberately, and slowly walked some rods into the corn, then threw down my bundle and went to work pulling up weeds, and occasionally a hill of corn, especially when it was in my way. By this time the men on horseback came up, and when in front of me halted. I worked harder than ever, and they soon passed on. When they were out of sight, I took my things under my arm and started for the mountains.

For two entire days I did not go into the road again. What corn and potatoes I got enabled me to save my meat till this time, and afforded me plenty to eat. After this my eatables began to grow scarce again, making it necessary for me to look and find where another supply could be had. All that day and the next I could find none, but the third day I found some at a house at which there were only some children. What to do I knew not. The thought of robbing children was hard to bear, especially as they had previously given me something to eat. Under these circumstances, I bethought me of my rosary or string of beads, with a cross attached to it, that was hanging uselessly round my neck. This little trinket I valued as nothing, but they almost revered it. I therefore showed it to the children; they kissed it reverently, crossed themselves to it, and had a good deal of other flummery, alike senseless to me. I

asked them if they wanted it; they said yes. I then asked them how much meat they would give me for it; they said as much as I would wish. I then took down some nine or ten pounds, which they readily gave me for this, to them, inestimable article. They also gave me some tortillas. I then left the house, and went to the foot of the mountain, where I built a fire, and cooked some of my meat.

The next morning I pursued my journey, and that day passed through a town, the name of which I do not remember; but it was not a large, nor do I think a very civil place. While passing along the streets, with my blanket on my shoulder, a Mexican came up to me, and desired me to go with him to the alcalde's office. This I declined doing. He then called to some one to come and help him; and they two took hold of me, one on each side, and marched me off to that functionary's. Here a large crowd was waiting for me. I was in some minutes before any questions were put to me, during which time I comprehended that I was under arrest, and the cause of it; I also knew that if they persevered in their inquiries my guilt would be manifest, at least to them; and the only way in which I could extricate myself from my dilemma was to play the fool. The first question they asked was, "Where is your passport?" I made no answer, only by an idiotic grin on those around me. "What is your name?" another grin was the reply. They kept me in the office nearly two hours, during which time I played the fool to their entire conviction. I made all sorts of noises. I would spit and drool all over myself; in short, I so completely deceived them

that they at last said, "Poor fellow! let him go," which they soon did, motioning to me to go to the door. I, however, did not take the hint, but stood gaping round, to the infinite amusement of the by-standers. At length they took me by the hand and led me to the door. I passed into the street, looked up on both sides at the houses, and would pick up a stone and throw it up in the air, then look at them and laugh. But all this while I kept moving toward the edge of the town, the crowd of gaping, wondering fools following on all the while. They followed me as far as the suburbs of the town, and then suffered me to depart. As soon as I had got out of sight, being fearful of pursuit, I struck off to the mountains, where I remained two days, as I wished by all means to avoid the road for the present. The cause of my arrest was a suspicion that I was a spy. They had heard something of a prisoner's escaping from Queretaro, but nothing sufficiently definite to hold a thorough examination relative to it. Had I been recognized at this place as an escaped prisoner, I would, without doubt, have been shot, for I was considered as under oath not to try to get away at all.

My long traveling and constant exposure had so reduced my system that I was at present hardly able to move. I was afraid that a serious sickness was about to stop my further progress, at least for a while; I therefore looked for a house in some retired place, where I might safely stop for a few days, until my strength was somewhat recruited. Two days I dragged my weary limbs along before I found a place which would answer my purpose. The house was

near the mountains, about two miles from the main road, and occupied by an old man and four children. I plainly told him of my situation, of my ill health, and utter inability to proceed on my journey, and asked his permission to remain in his house until I had recovered my health so as to be able to proceed. To this he gave his consent; and I take pleasure in saying that during the time that I stayed with him he treated me like a father. In his attentions to me he was constant and unremitting. I remained here three weeks; and this rest restored me to my usual health. I will now give some account of the appearance and productions of this part of the country.

Volcanic action appears to have been prevalent at some former period through this region, as numerous specimens of lava occur; and in some places, where vegetable matter has not accumulated above it, it appears in one solid mass along the sides of the mountains from the top to the bottom. There appeared, in one place, to be a path made smooth by the lodging of some melted substance. The surface is smooth, and varies in width from one to five rods. I was not able to go to the top and examine its appearance there; but my kind host informed me that on the top is a hollow basin going down to a great depth. This seemed to establish the fact that at some former period a volcano existed here; but, so far as I could learn, there is no historic account of it.

The country is entirely covered with chapparal; these are bushes covered with thorns, and varying in size, but seldom growing larger than a common-sized apple-tree. The wood is hard, and looks like

*lignum-vitæ*, being of a very firm and close grain. It is so full of oil that it makes an intensely hot fire. Throughout the chapparal occurs that sort of vegetable called *cactus*, of which there are several kinds. One species resembles the prickly pear; but here it grows to a height of fifteen or twenty feet, and branches out in all directions. On this grows a berry as large as a common-sized apple, but it is unfit for use. This fruit is called tunas (pronounced *toonas*). There is, however, another kind, that bears a great resemblance to the one above described, but differs in this, that the other has large and long thorns resembling a cambric needle, whereas the latter has none, and the fruit, when ripe, is of a pale blue, and good to eat. From this fruit they extract the juice, and when fermented it forms an excellent drink, called *colorado*. This species of cactus they frequently transplant when small, and place where they want a fence. It grows rapidly, and forms a strong and durable hedge.

There are three other kinds which are very common. One grows to a great height, sometimes thirty feet, and every year's growth is marked by a joint or notch round the entire stalk. It is generally six-angled, and covered with thorns. This also is used for fences, and will make one so tight that a bird could not fly through. Another kind much resembles the one last described in appearance, only it is smaller, triangular, and spreads over the ground instead of standing upright. Another kind, and the last I shall mention, is entirely different from any of the others, never growing over five feet high; it is large at the bottom, and rounds off at the top. The

largest does not exceed twenty inches in thickness. Near the ground it is of a deep red color; on rising higher it is a bright yellow, and as it draws to the top it fades to a very pale yellow color.

The century plant also deserves to be noticed. It grows to the height of ten feet, or rather the leaves do, for there is no body to it. The leaves, according to its length, vary in thickness from one to two inches, and are about six inches wide, gradually tapering to a point, on which is a sharp thorn. By cutting to the center of this plant, a liquid is extracted, which, when fermented, is much used as an intoxicating drink, and called *pulque*. The plant is called by the Mexicans *Mescal*. They distill it, and make from it a liquor of the same name. The leaves (or, more properly, stalks) they pound up and soak until all the fibers can be taken out, when it is dried and manufactured into ropes, for which, by its strength, it is well adapted. This plant is also used for fences.

Of the animal kingdom I could not speak, not having seen much worthy of notice. One animal, however, which I noticed, is the horned frog. It is of the size of a common frog, and very similar to it in shape and movements, but it has the additional perquisite of a horn on each side of its head. These vary in length, but they never exceed half an inch; it has a row of smaller ones on its back. There is a kind of spider called tarantula, which is larger than the common spider, and contains a deadly poison.