

news was that, owing to the late rumors, an order had been given to stop all of the San Patricio company from leaving the city, which order was to be carried into effect the next morning. He further said that the young man with whom I had lately associated, and with whom I slept, had that morning informed the officers at the quartel of my real character, and some inquiry had consequently been made for me. He had heard my comrade say that he would bring me up there the following morning. On this they rested satisfied, not thinking that I would hear of my danger before that time.

As I would have my liberty until the next morning, and as I had to go down to my lodgings, where this young fellow was, to get my clothes, I determined to take such measures as would effectually silence him for a time. I then went to a druggist and got a good dose of laudanum, bidding my companion meet me there at such an hour and be ready for a start. I then went down to the house where I lodged, and found this base scoundrel awaiting my arrival. He seemed glad to see me, and soon began telling of a job of work that we could get at the quartel, and that he had promised to go up with me the next morning to see about it. I readily promised to go, and ordered some coffee made. When it was done, I went to bring it in where we were sitting. On the way I poured most of the laudanum into his cup, and then gave it to him. We drank our shares, and in a very short time he wondered what made him so sleepy—I, at the same time, wondered what had made him such a scoundrel. He soon fell asleep, when I

picked up my clothes and bid him an eternal adieu, sincerely hoping that he would wake out of this sleep after I was out of danger; but if, on the contrary, he did not, I considered myself perfectly justifiable in doing as I did, for my life should not be forfeited through the treachery of one whose sole object was gain.

I now went to the place appointed, where my companion was waiting my arrival with some anxiety. He did not know what means I had used to get away, nor did I ever tell him. We knew the road which we were to take, and pushed on at as rapid a rate as possible. My comrade was excited by the fear of being forced to join their army again (which, he said, would have been worse than death), and I by the fear of a pursuit and recapture, which would have been certain death. We traveled all that night, and, as we were fresh, made good speed.

In the morning we laid by and slept a while, and then resumed our journey. That day we came to a guard-house, some twenty leagues from Guadalajara, where was stationed a small garrison of soldiers. When we came up the officers were pitching quoits. We showed them our passports; they signed them, and gave us some money. We then quickly passed on, for we knew this was a dangerous experiment. Had these officers received the orders respecting the San Patricio company, it would have ended our journey. Our reason for applying to them was to ascertain if such an order had been given out, for, had it been so, we should be liable to be arrested at any future time, even if we passed this station. We there-

fore determined to ascertain at once the extent of our danger. After they had signed our passports, we knew that at present no danger was to be apprehended.

We now pursued our journey, free from any apprehensions of a pursuit, and traveled as fast as we could. We had been informed that there were no towns of any size on our route, with but two exceptions, Eztzlan and Ahuacatlan. We were therefore in great danger from robbers on this road, as there were large numbers of them.

On the second day's march my comrade began to drink again; at every house we came to he would stop and drink until he could drink no more, and then would go, as he best could, to the next one. In this manner the day passed off, and we had gone only ten miles. On balancing his accounts the next morning, he found that he had lost or drank away all his money, amounting to five dollars. I now told him plainly that this must be the last time he got drunk; for if it was repeated, I should leave him, as it was running too much risk to conduct in that manner among the Mexicans, when we were almost entirely depending on them. My remarks seemed to have the desired effect, and he promised that the like should not occur again. I had some five dollars, and he had to look to me for his daily food.

There was nothing to distinguish this part of the country from other portions that we had passed through. It was very rough and rocky; the mountains seemed to draw nearer together; and there were very few spots capable of being cultivated. Univers-

al desolation seemed to reign; and at some distance ahead, it seemed as though the mountains came together, leaving no passage between them, which afterward proved to be true.

We now pursued our journey with some security and comfort. My comrade begged for even one dram of liquor whenever we passed a place where any was sold. He would beg with all possible ardor; but it was all in vain. No liquor would I furnish; but provisions, such as he or I needed, I would cheerfully provide.

The fourth day we came to a small town entirely surrounded by mountains. We here went to the alcalde; but he refused to furnish us with a room, and even threatened to confine us in jail. For what reason he took this course, I can not imagine. However, he did not execute his threat. We then went to the meson, where we found some officers who were going to Guadalajara. They ordered us a room, and gave us some money.

The next day we came to a small place at the foot of the mountains. The houses were poor, miserable huts, not fit to be called houses, and occupied by, if possible, still worse-looking inhabitants. As I could see nothing but rocks and musquit bushes, I could not conceive what they lived on. I went to several huts, and inquired for something to eat; *no hay! no hay!* (there is none), was the invariable answer; and I verily believe they told the truth. We then moved on, to get out of this place as soon as possible.

We now began to ascend a high mountain. The road leading up its side had been dug from the solid

rock. On the outside was a thick and solid wall, built, I suppose, to prevent any one from falling off the side. The road wound up with a zigzag course, something like the shape of the letter S. When we arrived at the top, on looking down we could see the houses very indistinctly; but not a moving object could be seen. From here the road was level for a short distance, then again was another mountain for us to climb, the road winding up and walled as before.

After we had got to the top of this second mountain, we again saw a level country and a few houses. I also saw a field of corn, and concluded that where there was corn there must be something to eat; so we stopped at a house, and got a good meal of tortillas, jerked beef, and beans. We then started on. A short distance from this house we passed a large gun, a thirty-two pounder. I was told that it had been left there by the Spaniards during the Mexican revolutionary war. Here it now was forming a portion of fence. They had attempted to bring it from Tepic into the interior; but so rough, rocky, and mountainous was the road, that they could take it no further. I was told that during that war, this portion of the country had been the scene of many sanguinary battles and many bloody massacres; and afterward, during my residence here, I was shown places that had been entirely destroyed; men, women, and children had been mercilessly butchered, and not a soul left alive to tell the sad tale. We now came to Tiquila, a rough and savage-looking place, where we remained for the night.

The next morning we left at an early hour, and

about noon came to a place called Magdalena. Here we called on the alcalde, who gave us a dinner free of charge. We then passed on. Some of the country was marshy; and at a distance from the road was a lake. It did not appear to be deep, but it was of considerable extent. As we wished to go to La Venta, the nearest good place to stop, we were forced to hire a man with two horses to convey us thither, as it was nearly night, and the distance was about three leagues. For this service I paid one dollar; and right glad was I to do it, for the inhabitants looked as though they would like to cut our throats, and we were afraid to trust ourselves with them for the night.

The horses were soon ready for a start, and we put them on a good round trot. For a short time we made good headway; but it soon grew dark, and our road was among rocks and gulleys. We then went slowly, our guide in the mean time enlivening our spirits by telling us of a robbery and murder that had been committed a short time before, close to where we then were. It was as dark as it could well be, and our guide lost his way. This perplexed us, for we knew not but he was connected with those robbers, and had conducted us to this place to bring us into their power. He went to search for the way, leaving us alone, and we made up our minds to sell our lives dearly, should we be attacked. He, however, returned after an absence of half an hour with the cheering report that he had found the road. We now pushed on with all speed, and about ten o'clock arrived at the meson where we were to stop. The landlord, before he would consent to let us stay, de-

manded our passports. When he had read them, a room was given us. We then got supper and went to sleep.

In the morning we paid our bill and started. We were only seven leagues from Etztlán; but the road was extremely rough, and surrounded by high mountains. About three o'clock we came to that town, and presented our passports to the alcalde. He gave us a shilling each; and my comrade soon drank to intoxication, abusing the Mexicans to the best of his ability, so far as his limited knowledge of the language would allow. He called them bastards, thieves, and cowards. Such language exposed him to severe punishment; and the only wonder is how the alcalde and the rest of the gentlemen restrained themselves under these insults. I was requested to take him into the office, and make him lie down until he got sober. I accordingly went and spoke to him with this purpose, when he turned on me, and in a most insulting manner said, "Who are you? You are not one of the San Patricio company, but a prisoner—" Before he could say the rest I had knocked him down, and after he fell I knocked him till he could say no more. One of the constables now came up to take me off; but, before he could do so, the alcalde seized him by the coat collar, thrashed him about a few minutes, and then let him go, with orders not to interfere any more with me. After I had sufficiently punished the miscreant, I left him, but he was unable to move. The constable was then ordered to take him into the office, and there leave him till he had slept off his drunken fit.

I here became acquainted with a lawyer named Don Pedro Martínez, who, after having conversed with me some time, at last inquired if I understood grammar, geography, and arithmetic. I answered in the affirmative. He then wanted me to write a little for him. I did so. He seemed to regard this as a great curiosity, and showed it to all who came round. He then asked if I understood Latin. I said I did, and Greek also. He then got a law-book, with some Latin reading in. This I read to him readily and correctly. Some Greek sentences that he found I also read to him. He now said that if I would go to his place, and teach his boys the English language, he would board and clothe me; and when I could speak and write the Spanish language better than I now could, he would put me in good business in the mines, of which there were many. This offer I determined to accept, not only on account of my drunken comrade, but also from the fact that, as yet, the American fleet was not at San Blas, and I knew that I could leave at any time after they did arrive. He said his place was twenty leagues distant, and that he should start thither on the next Monday. This was Saturday. As my money was about gone, he gave me sufficient to last till that time.

The lawyer now took me to see some of his friends among the higher classes, and I was treated by them with great kindness. They seemed to be free and frank, and conversed without that reserve which is often displayed toward strangers in other countries. But as it was getting late, I returned to the alcalde's office. My comrade was yet in a profound sleep.

I rolled myself in my blanket, and went to sleep also.

Next morning my fellow-traveler woke up very early and aroused me from my slumbers. His first remark was, "Well, I was a little tight last night, was I not?" Then he began making apologies. I stopped him short by asking if he knew what he had said to the alcalde, and the rest who were standing by, the night before. He said he did not. I then told him, and added, that the alcalde was going to put him in jail as soon as he came into the office in the morning, and that he would have done so last night if I had not begged him to forbear. At this he burst out with the exclamation, "My God! my God! what shall I do?" After a few moments, I told him that his only course was to leave as soon as possible, and not let the alcalde see him there at all. To this he consented; and forthwith he packed up his things. I told him that I should go no further with him, on account of the offer I had had. He advised me to take it. I then divided my money with him, and we parted. I have never seen him since, and my impression is that he was killed on the road; for, when I was afterward in Tepic, I inquired at the British consul's relative to him, but was informed that he had never been there. I had heard that one of my companions was killed about this time, but never supposed that it was he until my arrival at Tepic.

The next day being Sunday, I went to church. There was but one, and that not extraordinary. Two fat and lazy-looking priests stood at the altar, going through their ceremonies, while the congregation were

all kneeling, and every few minutes crossing themselves, and thumping on their breasts, with solemn faces. While a few devout persons were here worshipping, the Plaza was filled with people buying and selling; and, in other places, some were gambling. The day finished off with cock-fighting, at which large numbers attended, and heavy bets were lost and won.

This is a fair picture of a Sabbath in Mexico. The people generally attend church in the forenoon. After that, it is gambling, drinking, and fighting; and it not unfrequently ends in murder. The priests are greatly to blame for this, for they not only attend these places, but also bet, both with the greasy *ranchero* and with the well-dressed aristocrat.

The next morning the lawyer came to the alcalde's office, saying that he was ready for a start, and wanted me to go with him to his house. We there found the baggage packed on the mules, the horses saddled, and all ready to depart. The place to which we were going was called Iztlan. We took the same road that I had traveled the week before, until after we descended those high mountains which I have already described. We stopped at a rancho after dark, not being able to finish the journey that day.

My friend, previous to starting, had armed me with a brace of pistols and a sword. His fear of robbers was great; and he asked me many questions as to whether I would be afraid if we should be attacked. He seemed to be satisfied with my answers, for he sent me on ahead in company with his secretary. A portion of the road was very rocky, and, after it became dark, it was difficult to discern the path. After

a while we were called back by those in the rear, and, from the noise that was made, I thought they were either attacked by robbers, or that something else serious had happened, so we put our horses on a full run to give them assistance. On arriving there, we saw that the difficulty was quite serious. The lawyer's wife had lost the path, and her horse had got into the midst of huge masses of rock, and was pitching and rearing, trying to extricate himself. The lady, being unable to maintain her seat, fell on one of those rocks, and was nearly killed. When we came up she was utterly unable to move, and was supported by her husband and the two servants. Martinez now ordered a bottle of aguadiente (that is, brandy) to be brought from his saddle-bags, handed it to his wife, who drank a little, and took some himself. It was then passed to all hands. The secretary, I now found, drank with a right good will, and the bottle was passed back and forth between us until we had nearly drained its contents. In about an hour we succeeded in getting the lady on her horse, and then proceeded to the place where we were to stop.

As this secretary will figure largely hereafter as my comrade, a short description of him will not be out of place. His name is Jesus Murguir. Jesus is pronounced like Khesoos. *J* sounds like *kh*, the accent on the last syllable, the *u* sounding like double *oo*. This is a very common name in Mexico, and is given to both males and females. The sex is distinguished by prefixing *don* for males and *doña* for females. Other names also are common to both sexes, the termination *o* denoting the masculine, and *a* the feminine

gender. But as it is not my province to write a treatise on the language, I return to the secretary. He was of a slender make; his complexion was perfectly white, with keen, piercing black eyes. He was one of the most jovial companions I ever met with, generous to a fault, and as regardless of money as of the ground he walked on. His parents lived in the town whither we were going, and were the wealthiest in the place, counting their property by hundreds of thousands. The only faults that I could charge to Don Jesus were drinking and gambling, to both of which vices he was a most abject slave; and by these he had lost a splendid fortune. I frequently conversed with him on the subject of their national religion, the character of their priests, &c. In reply, he said that the Mexicans were all fools to be thus led by the nose by a set of worthless vagabonds, as he termed the priests, bishops, and all who were connected with the Church. He said that he had not been at confession for fourteen years; and when he was married, he refused to confess, but deceived the priests, so that they performed the marriage ceremony. I asked him what he should do if he was going to die. He said the priests were but men as he was, and some were much worse; therefore they must be unsafe agents to take care of the souls of men; and if he was going to die, he would confess to his God, as the supreme Ruler of all, and the only Being who was able to forgive. These were rather heterodox sentiments for a Catholic, and would have consigned him to the tender mercies of the Inquisition, had there been any in the country. I afterward found many wealthy individuals,

who thought and felt the same, as I will show hereafter.

On account of the illness of Don Pedro's wife, we remained at this rancho three days, and on the fourth proceeded on our journey. We took the same road that we had previously taken for about three or four leagues, until we were near Magdalena, when we turned to the south. For several leagues the road was through a fine and beautiful valley, until we came to a small village, where we baited our horses and took dinner. We then pushed on over the mountains. After crossing these, Don Jesus pointed to the town where we were going. As yet I could see nothing but a large forest; not a house was visible. The country round us was level, and appeared to be well cultivated. The village now could be discerned among the trees. The road passed by two beautiful little lakes. About four o'clock in the afternoon we entered the town.

CHAPTER X.

I become acquainted with the higher Classes.—Their Manners and Character.—Appearance of the Ladies.—Peculiar Mode of Salutation.—The Clergy.—Different Classes.—Their Revenues.—Character of the Priests.—Service for the Dying.—Crosses and Medals.—Description of the Country round Iztlan. — Mines. — Mode of extracting Silver. — Visit to a Silver Mine. — Account of a peculiar Tribe of Indians.—Causes of Indian Degradation.—Mode of Protection against the Cold.—Mexican Dogs.—A great Festival.—Theatrical Performances.—Placed in a Dilemma regarding Matrimony.—A singular Trait.—My Expectations are frustrated.—Character of Don Pedro Martinez.—Interior Arrangements of Mexican Houses.—Music.—Rumor of President Polk's Death.—How received.—Sad Results of the War.—Cause of the frequent Revolutions in Mexico.—Cock-fighting.

Soon after our arrival, the house was thronged with visitors, who came to welcome the return of Don Pedro. I was introduced to them all, and they seemed to regard me with much curiosity; many of them, probably, had never seen a foreigner before. In the evening my patron, as the Mexicans called him, paid a visit to several of his friends, and nothing would do but I must go with him. At every place where we called, the lady of the house would, after some conversation, bring me a glass of wine or a cup of chocolate. I was afterward frequently invited to their houses, and treated as though I had been a prince; not that they really considered me as a person worth minding, but as a man in distress. They considered I had claims on their sympathy, and they strove to