

of their earthly divinity. The British government having neglected to insert an article in their treaty with Mexico, requiring of that government to make valid the marriages of British protestants performed in that country; and also, to give power to her consuls to administer the matrimonial ceremony,—Englishmen are subject to the inconvenience and expense of visiting the city of Mexico, and there by bribery to obtain the nuptial tie of the Archbishop; the marriage being null and avoid otherwise, both by the religious canons and the laws of the land. Of what avail are the high fiats of heaven, or the positive statutes of a country, if money is to set aside the one, and cover the other? Verily, the god of Mammon is supreme over heaven and earth—the Dictator, too, perhaps. An instance of the above described state of things came under my own knowledge; as the parties I became acquainted with, and a happy couple they were; where it cost the gentleman two thousand dollars to *illegally* marry his wife.

## CHAPTER XI.

Gratitude to T. Ducoine. Left the city of Mexico the 8th January. A Mexican passenger. Attempted conversation. Chocolate. Arrangements. My first day's journey. Extensive plain. Mountain scenery. Volcanic eruptions. Valleys divested of forest. The soil generally shallow. The rocks. Haciendas. Stone walls. Orgono hedges. Fields without enclosure. The manure of a hacienda. Splendid scenery. No improved roads north. Natural ways. Mijico. Dined at Cula. Description of Dinner. Chille. My first night's lodging. When day dawned. Table land. Arroyo Zarco. The mother of the driver. Fast driving. Cross-bar broke. Ladrones. San Juan del Rio. Conversation and smoking of two Mexicans. View of Gueretero. Aqueduct. A priest and and the revolution. A walk at night. Plaza lights. Lost. Guitar. Moonlight. Starting of the diligencia. Ladrones. Escape. Celaye. Monument. Mexicans dressed as Indians. The Pope and the Catholic religion. Three Spaniards of old Spain. Language. Politeness. Landlord. Cotton goods. Third day's travel. Guanajuato. Conversation and entertainment. Departure from Guanajuato. Mines of Guanajuato. Magnificent present. Detection of fraud in the Mint. Level country. Siloa. Leon. Arrival at Lagos. Lake region. Loss of sleep. Settlements with my Mexican friend. Waked up alone. Chocolate. Letter of introduction. My difficulty. Fruitless efforts to be understood. Fortunate arrival of a Mexican. Attention of the inhabitants. Doctor Tesus Anaya. Interpreter. A large party of travellers. Tyler's message to Congress. Manner of warfare upon Mexico. No want of water at Lagos. Vegetables and fruits. Bathing. Walk. Paintings of the houses. American negro. Practice of medicine in Mexico. Angel Gabriel. Simon's wounds. The evening of the second day. Arrival of the diligencia. An American passenger. Proposed journey.

I SHALL ever feel grateful to Mr. Theodore Ducoine, a native of Philadelphia, of the largest American house in the city of Mexico, for the assistance he rendered me in forwarding my departure from the capitol; which took place on the night of the 8th of January; a day memorable in the history of my own country.

I left the city of Mexico in the diligencia for Lagos, a distance of four days' and nights' travel. When I was awakened to take my seat, I found that there was one other passenger, and that the individual I was destined to travel with, was a Mexican, and had all the appearance of a gentleman.

Having taken our seats, the Mexican saluted me by saying, "*Bueno noche Senor,*" Good night, Sir,—to which I responded, "*Nil gratias Senor,*" I thank you, Sir; by which I presume my fellow passenger very naturally concluded, from my answering him so readily, that, although a foreigner, I was familiar with the Spanish tongue. No sooner had we passed over the pavement of the city, than he began a conversation with me in his own language, to which I was obliged repeatedly to reply, "*No intendi, Senor,* I do not understand, Sir; for I had not been long enough in the country to have studied the Spanish; and I could not consequently undertake a conversation in that language. However, he seemed to persist in his loquaciousness, while the only defence I had, was to keep up a volley of English, which, for short periods, would attract the attention of the Mexican, as he did not understand a word I said.

Having become fatigued in attempting to render himself agreeable to me by talking Spanish, he at length in a most inquiring manner said—"*Parlez vous Français, Monsieur?*" "*No, Senor,*" which effectually silenced my talkative companion, who, apparently in despair, or disgust perhaps, wrapped himself up in his cloak, and my following his example, we thus, with our mutual thoughts locked up in our minds, played the *dummy* to each other until 10 o'clock the next morning—that proving to be the time of taking our chocolate.

After taking some refreshment, the diligencia being ready for its departure, I offered the lady of the house some money for my repast—but she refused to take it, pointing to my Mexican friend, to whom I shook my head, to intimate that he was not to pay for me; at the same time offering him money. This he refused, repeating often "*Lagos,*" from which I inferred that he would settle my bills as far as that place, as I was unacquainted with the language of the country. Having no objections to such an arrangement, I also said *Lagos*, accompanying my repetition of the name by placing one dollar upon another, to inform him that I would settle with him at *Lagos*. Thus we travelled on with this understanding, which we amicably arranged at the end of our journey.

My first day's journey to *Lagos* was more interesting to me than I had imagined it would be, as the face of the country presented a different aspect to that which I had already seen. Between Vera Cruz and the city of Mexico, the mountains all run parallel with the Gulf, north and south. But as I had left the valley of Mexico, I found myself before the break of day on an extensive plain, shut up on all sides by lofty mountains, which looked as if they would alike defy man or beast to pass

their steep and rocky heights. Although these mountains presented a view, as if they were natural fortresses to imprison all within them, yet at some depression, or as it were gateway, they would offer egress for the traveller, and when passed would only present to the beholder the same plain, surrounded on all sides like a vast amphitheatre of mountain scenery.

The mountains in Mexico present an entire different appearance from any other in North America; for with very little exception they are uncovered with forest, and mostly without verdure of any kind; saving the grey and green moss. The mountains in resemblance looked more like spued spiral earth of a frosty morning, but upon a more gigantic scale, than any other familiar object known to my mind; having innumerable saw-tooth points and forms of peaks in every zig-zag direction. Indeed, such is the origin of their creation; for not by cold had they been spouted upwards, but by fire; and as the beholder casts his eyes up the giddy heights, and imagines the time when those volcanic eruptions were in existence, they are almost deluded, and it seems as if nature is yet in ebullition, fearfully shooting porphyritic rock high up to the heavens.

All the valleys surrounded by the mountains as above described, from being so thoroughly divested of forest growth, would appear, but that some of them are spotted with towns and castles of haciendas, to be vast prairies.

The plains are in fact the table lands proper, while the chains of mountains are the Cordilleras of Mexico. The plains have a fertile soil, but the Spaniards have applied the axe to every thing like brush-wood and forest trees. But although the soil is rich, it is most commonly of a blackish complexion, when not of a gravelly limestone grey appearance. It is generally shallow, and I could observe from the washed gullies that it was not more than from six to twenty-four inches in depth; and it was not unfrequently the case that the rock protruded near the surface of the earth, and that where the land was the least rolling, it had been washed away, and left a barren level rock for many miles in extent. For those whose misfortune has never obliged them to travel upon a plain of solid rock, it is not easy to imagine its disagreeableness; the clatter of the unshod hoofs of the little animals, the lofty bounces and downward plunges of the diligencia, will never be forgotten by myself. The rock is not always of a solid body, for some plains have an appearance of the bed of a river, covered by quartz stone, such as is found at the bottom of most rivers in the United States, (and which is

used for the paving of streets), and indeed must have been the beds of immense lakes in by-gone times.

The lands, as before remarked, whether poor or rich, would produce admirably, which must be attributed to the climate, that is where they are capable of being irrigated. Some of the plains would be divided into two or more haciendas, the larger one of which would be hemmed in by a stone wall of miles in extent—while occasionally a smaller farm might be met with, hedged in by the evergreen orgono, a variety of the species of prickly pear, and the maguey, which would be growing so thick upon the sides of ditches as to effectually obstruct the passage of any animal likely to be detrimental to crops. I could not altogether discover the utility of the stone fences, which in most instances must have cost years of labour, and much money, unless they were designed for permanent landmarks, or costly ornaments, for they enclosed mostly land that never had been, and never could be cultivated.

Yet, on the contrary, it was not uncommon to see hundreds of acres of land growing in corn and wheat, having not a vestige of inclosure around them. Such fields are watched by the farmers to prevent the stock from feeding upon the crops; and the Arieros take good care that their horses and mules do not diverge from the highway upon the farms. It was wonderful to see the little attention required to prevent the animals from going astray, and nipping down the tempting green corn; exhibiting the fact that the brute creation can be taught honesty—why not the Mexicans? One thing I must not forget to mention, which must excite the contempt of the American agriculturist—the manure of a hacienda is never spread over the land, but in every instance is thrown out of the way in heaps, and when the winds and sun have sufficiently dried it, it is set on fire and suffered to consume. A gentleman once told me that he had seen a pile on fire for twelve months, the conflagration being very slow.

The scenes as presented in the valleys are beautiful beyond description. The lava heights of those deep blue and brown peaked mountains, surrounding me on all sides, mantled by the azure sky, presented a majestic appearance, while the extended plains beneath wore a pleasing aspect. In such a view all my apprehensions of ladrones were forgotten, and the only thing which would occasionally recall me to the painful consciousness of my journey, was the violent concussion of the wheels of the diligencia against rocks, and a plunge in and over some deep furrow, worn perhaps by the attrition of ages, of animal's hoofs in the fields. There are no improved roads north of the city of Mexico, excepting just at

the entrance of some of the larger towns. The whole plains are crossed and recrossed by thousands of paths, called natural ways, those of which are travelled by vehicles are such as have been most frequently beaten down, and are therefore the smoother and firmer.

On my first day's journey, I passed the town of Mejico, a place of not much importance, and fast tumbling to decay. However, a considerable garrison of soldiers was stationed there. We arrived at Cula about three o'clock, where my Mexican friend gave me to understand, much to my joy, that we were to dine; for after a night's travel, I had subsisted all of that day upon nothing but a cup of chocolate. Dinner being ready, I sat down to a meal the like of which I had never before seen, for it was entirely Mexican, and not like the Casa de la Diligencia hotels kept between Vera Cruz and the capital, which were conducted by French landlords, the diet therefore partaking of both French and Mexican variety.

Boiled rice was first served up, which being removed a stew was then introduced—of what kind of meat it was composed I was at a loss first to conjecture, but as my appetite had become in some degree satisfied, it partook more of the flavour of the goat than of mutton. There was also a bowl of chili on the table, which my friend intimated to me not to touch—but I had no idea of letting an opportunity slip of tasting every food used by the Mexicans; so I helped myself to a couple of spoonsfull of the stewed red pepper, and having *walloped* a piece of my meat in the chili, with the hope of taking the goat flavour from it, I then applied it to my mouth. But a hard time I had of it, for my tongue felt as if it had been seared by a red hot iron, yet I continued to nibble and turn over the sauced meat from side to side, with the hopes of finally conquering the fiery portion, and of making a quick swallow of it; as the tears trickled down my cheeks the diet refused to go to my stomach, and fell back again into my plate.

My friend, convulsed with laughter, held his hand between myself and the vessel of water, and shouted—*bina! bina!* Not understanding what he meant, I began to think that he intended to insult me, by eating of what he intended to be a private dish; but I was not kept long in suspense, for a bottle of claret wine was introduced, and a Mexican girl popping the cork out in no time, filled a large glass and offered it to me to drink; and as the astringent draught passed down my throat, I not only thought that it was the best wine I had ever drank, but felt as if a brand had been snatched from the eternal burning. I could eat no more, although I had a better

appetite than when I first began ; and taking a glass of wine I left the table, leaving my friend in full possession and enjoyment of his chili sauce.

My first night's lodging was in the castle of a hacienda, the name of which has escaped me now ; and having there enjoyed my meal without the use of chili, I slept until two o'clock when the diligencia again commenced its journey. One thing I observed, and it is to be admired, that Santa Anna had not only, for the good order and government of his people, garrisoned with soldiers all the towns through which I passed, but the haciendas also, which was designed to keep his fickle fellow-citizens from rebellion, and to hold in awe the marauding banditti who infest the highways.

When day dawned I still found myself upon the same table land, and surrounded by the same mountain scenery as on the day previous. The plain of Gueretaro, over which I had that day to travel, was greater in circumference than either of the valleys I had left behind me, and possessed a more even surface, and generally better looking soil ; yet there was less cultivation as I did not once see water until I arrived at Arroyo Zarco, where myself and friend sat down to a repast, which, whether denominated a breakfast or dinner, I cannot tell, as it was then past the meridian. However, I was more particular than on the day before, and, having better fare, I indulged freely upon boiled rice, broth, stews, tortillas, and frijoles, while my friend sharpened his appetite by mixing chili sauce with every thing he ate. Arroyo Zarco was of less elevation than any of the valleys I had passed, and yielded an abundance of delicious fruit ; and there, for the first time, I partook of several lemons, which were sweeter than any orange I had ever before tasted.

Previous to our leaving Arroyo Zarco, the mother of the driver of the diligencia took a most affectionate leave of her son ; and, while she embraced him, she implored all the saints to protect him harmless from the ladrones. All being seated, the driver cracked the whip, and his waiters letting go the lassos, with whoops and shrill whistles, the animals set off with furious speed, seeming as if they would break their necks, or else endeavour to break those of whom they were drawing. Our driver did not, for hill or gully, slacken his speed ; but, Phaeton like, he hurled on, more regardless of consequences than any other Mexican driver I had travelled with. His animals at length, in an exhausted condition, arrived at the rancho, where there was to be a change, and from the severe jolting I had received during the last ten miles, I determined to get out of the diligencia to relieve my limbs ; my Mexican friend followed my example. When I had descended, I dis-

covered the driver exerting an unusual haste to put into gear the second team, and I noticed that he often raised his head, and cast a lingering look to the rear as if expecting the approach of some one.

The team being harnessed, the driver asked us to take our seats, and, with all the usual noise on such occasions, the animals, on the onset, plunged so vigorously forward that, without having moved the diligencia but a few feet, the cross-bar in front of the tongue snapped in twain, by which accident, not being furnished with another, we were subject to a delay until the broken bar was repaired.

I took this opportunity of descending to the ground, and the first thing that attracted my attention was the driver looking to the rear as before ; I determined also to keep my eyes turned in that direction. It was not long before I espied six men, well mounted, making for us with full speed. My friend shook his head, and the driver went sluggishly to work to mend the cross-bar. Three of the men dismounted close by ; the other three rode directly up to us, one of them stopping close by my side.

It was not difficult for me to understand who these men were, and I was not unprepared to meet the emergency ; for in each of my breeches pockets was a six-barrel pistol, and to my side a good Bowie knife. I kept my hands upon my pistols, determined not to commence self-defence too soon, but with a watchful eye take advantage of the first move of the ladrones. The chief, as I presumed him to be, of this banditti, commenced a conversation with my friend, while the remaining five had, in the mean time, surrounded myself. The conversation, I could discover, was all appertaining to me, and while thus in suspense I resolved to disencumber myself from my guard, and accordingly stepped forward from them ; but they followed, and my friend shook his head at me. The driver had for some time finished his repairs, and was waiting the issue of what might happen. They returned, and myself and friend again took our seats, and the diligencia went ahead. When he arrived at Gueretaro the Mexican gentleman informed me, through an American we met there, that what had prevented our being plundered was, that he assured the ladrones that we had no money, more than would pay our expenses to Lagos, and that as I was a foreigner, and had two six-barrel pistols, they would have to hazard too much for the little they would gain.

In the evening we passed San Juan del Rio, where our company was increased by another Mexican taking passage with us. Our new companion was of genteel appearance, and I

felt myself sufficiently entertained for the balance of the journey to Gueretaro, by listening to the discourse of the two countrymen, and the continued exchange of politeness between them; first one and then the other pulling out their little bundles of cigaritos, and circling the smoke through their nostrils; and at times so voluminous were the clouds, that the diligencia reminded me of an old Virginia smoke-house in the pork season.

By the setting of the sun we arrived in view of Gueretaro, a beautiful town, situated in a ravine near a mountain. The valley of Gueretaro was what the Mexicans called a hot country, and it was therefore with much delight that I beheld there the orange, and other fruit-trees, in bearing. The city of Gueretaro contains about ten thousand inhabitants, and is one of the best improved places I saw in the Republic. The well-finished aqueduct from the mountain to the city is supported on arches, and painted red; and as it stretches over the green valley it has an elegant appearance. Gueretaro is a cotton-manufacturing city. One of the factories is owned by a Mr. McCormick, an enterprising American gentleman.

Gueretaro is famed for its revolutionary efforts: it is related that the revolution commenced at that place by a conspiracy formed by a priest; but a few days before it was to have been consummated one of the party, who was possessed of the secret, having been arrested for a crime for which he was to suffer death, fell upon his knees before the prefect, and made declaration that if the judge would spare his life he would divulge the secrets of a conspiracy, of which he was an accomplice, which confession would save the Spaniards from otherwise inevitable destruction.

The prefect, having consented to the reprieve of the criminal upon these conditions, was informed by him of the insurrectionary designs of the Mexicans of that city. But the priest having in time the exposure of the plot communicated to him, hastily summoned all the bell-ringers of the city at his house, where he invited them to drink wine. The men having become intoxicated, he then directed them to go to their churches, and ring all the bells, and proclaim revolution and death to the Spaniards. The stratagem succeeded, and before sun-set on that day, all the Spaniards, who had not secreted themselves, were barbarously slaughtered, and the warrior-priest proclaimed general of the rebellious forces.

After myself and friend had taken some refreshment, he invited me to take a walk, and although it was night, we went over a good part of the town. The most of the people whom we met were either soldiers or priests. The plaza was an in-

teresting scene; at least an hundred torches were blazing at once, sending up their light; while some of the people were retailing their goods, seated under their expansive parasols, other buyers and sellers would be seen standing in groups around piles of fruits, as the musical rippling of the water, spouting high in the air from the fountains around the plaza, glanced back the beacon lights. Having been satisfied with our stroll, we attempted to find our way back to the Casa de la Diligencia, but failed; and, after following my friend through several streets without success, we again returned to the plaza, where he inquired for the direction, by which we reached our hotel.

On arriving at our room my friend appeared to be in ecstasies at hearing a guitar played in the house, and he did not seem contented until he had obtained the loan of it, and the instrument was being strummed upon by his own fingers. He was an excellent performer, and, whether it was from the music of the guitar and his voice, or in consequence of my fatigue, I fell asleep, and did not awaken until the diligencia was ready to depart, between two and three o'clock in the morning.

No other seats were taken besides those of myself and my friend to my right hand. At that still hour of the night, when nothing could be seen by the bright moonlight but the heavy walls of the houses, it did appear, when the diligencia started, by the usual shouts of the drivers, and the thundering noise of the wheels over the pavements, that soldiers and citizens must have been waked from their slumbers.

Onward we hurried for about three squares, when we made a sudden turn round a corner, at which I perceived men dressed in serapes, stationed along the sidewalk of the street; and as the driver passed each one he was commandingly hailed. He did not heed them however, and cracking his whip urged the speed of the animals; but it seemed that the last man of the party did not intend that the driver should escape him, for he raised and pointed a carbine of some sort, vociferously calling to the *coche*, driver; the poor man was obliged to draw in his reins, and, as six individuals were approaching, the head of the party had the temerity to put his foot on the step of the diligencia. While in the act of thrusting his head through the window, I thought of my six barrels, and as the ladron showed his face, it was at the muzzle of my pistol, which he had no sooner seen than he stepped back and inquired if that was the Mexico diligencia? and the driver answering him that it was the Guanajuato, we were permitted to go on. For the remainder of that night, with