

considered it altogether prudent; for, while I might be of assistance to him, the money he had in charge was a superinducement for the attack of marauding parties.

While at Durango, the two brothers, Stalknits, invited me to a ride of two miles in the country, to visit their cotton factory. The buildings of their establishment were as commodious as any others I had seen of the kind in the Union, working twenty thousand spindles, and their complement of looms. The yarns of the factory were all wove into fabrics, with the exception of thread for sewing purposes. The conductors of the manufacturing department were all New Englanders.

A young lady who had been engaged at that factory for the last six years was desirous of returning home, and requested that if I should again take Durango in my way to the United States, that I should be her protector! My gallantry would not permit me to refuse, and I assured her that it would be a pleasure to me to play the part of knight-errant on her dangerous voyage home.

The wife of the principal superintendent, a lady of much intelligence, seemed to be very desirous of visiting her native country. She was a woman who had seen trouble, for she informed me that the only infant of her bosom, of two years of age, upon having departed this life, was refused the rites of burial, for the reason of its not having received Catholic baptism; which fact I do not consider egregious, as the creeds of some of the Protestant denominations deny to children admittance into heaven under any circumstances; when Christ himself said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." But I will not dispute with priests. I will rather take the word of God, for I believe in the doctrine, "Let every man be a liar, so God be true."

The infant was preserved in a lead coffin, and deposited under her bed, until the period should arrive when she should lay it by the side of her kindred.

## CHAPTER XVII.

Journey commenced. Camino Real. Cacario. Dining and sleeping. Separation from the conductor. Splendid view of the valley Guatemepe. Animals feeding on the plain. Distance on the table-land deceiving. Despatched my guide to secure lodgings. Countess of Guatemepe. Her hospitality. Prayers and a dance. Departure for Chinacates. Indian news. Dissatisfaction with my interpreter. My guide's rebellion. Disagreeable journey. Arrival at Chinacates. Six-barrel pistols. Ridge of the mountain. Conversed with an Englishman. Mexican artizans. A New Englander. Disgraceful transaction. Santa Argo. Indians committing depredations. Reflections. Solicitude for my men. Conversation with my interpreter. San Dilla. An old Mexican account of the Indians. Excitement in the village. My servant Marcelino. Advice of friends. My own deportment. Several small villages. Two mountains. Want of men at Catarine. Indians who had killed many travellers. Six mules loaded with dead men. Boca the mouth. Notice not to proceed farther. Some days delay at the Boca. Madre Montes. Separation from company. Bivouac. Battle at night. March for Canales. Recovered from injuries. Battle in the day. Death of an Indian. None of my men killed. Pursued my journey. Mountain scenery and travelling. Early history of the country. Frost. Reach Canales. Curiosities and freaks of nature. The Madre Montes. Despatched my guide to engage lodgings. Disappointment. Stake my tent. My interpreter complains. His suspicions. Proposition to me. My refusal. Buckled on my belt. Fell asleep. Marcelino. The ascent of the next mountain. Dreadful suspicion of my interpreter. Stupendous scenes of nature. White bear. A mountain that overlooked the others. Like Balboa beheld the Pacific. Extensive sublimity. Distant view of Canales. Two little boys. Departed brother.

My journey, or trouble, I would rather say, was commenced on the 15th instant, by crossing first a low rocky mountain, and then another of no better travelling condition, which consumed one half of the day. When we landed upon the plain of Cacario, I found it to be so perfectly level, that the *camino real*, (the principal road,) was often, for a mile at a time, full of water; while the land generally was boggy. At one o'clock, under a large cotton-wood tree, that stood in the midst of the plain, I stopped to "noon it."

While partaking of some refreshments I despatched Marcelino to a rancho close by for water, but on the way his

animal was bogged, and it was with difficulty extricated. But what was of more serious distress to me was, that in the catastrophe my servant broke one of two bottles of brandy I had purchased at Durango, at the dear rate of two dollars each. The brandy I expected to have found a restorative in my moments of excessive thirst and fatigue, as also a pleasant medicine in times of indisposition—but as the old adage has it—"there is many a slip between the cup and the lip." It was not until after sun-down that I arrived at the meson of the Hacienda campus Cacario. The conductor reached our quarters first, and upon my dismounting, I was glad to see that dinner was in preparation. After we had satisfied our hunger we commenced preparing for sleep. As there were no seats in our room, bags of money supplied their places, but my carter being made up, I soon stretched myself upon it, whilst the old conductor extended himself across the only door in the room.

The following morning we made an early start, and about mid-day, having arrived at a high rolling country, the conductor and myself parted, my having to take the right-hand, for Guatemepé, while he turned to the left. After travelling until about three o'clock, over a low mountainous region, we hove in view of a level country, which, for the extent of landscape, and lake-scenery, was as sublime in appearance as the valley of Mexico.

To our right, a lake for many miles skirted the mountain, having arms of water jutting from the main surface, like bays from a miniature sea; while far in the plain, at some ten or twelve miles in distance, sat the casa grande, and the ranchos of the hacienda campus of Guatemepé.

For a season I enjoyed the prospect of hundreds of animals feeding upon the plain, and drinking the water of the lake: but the desire of resting from the toils of the day urged me forward to reach the great house, where I might indulge in sweet repose. And so anxious did I become, with my quarters in sight, that it did seem that the more I travelled the less I approached the object of my mark, as if deluded by enchantment. Distance, upon the table-lands of Mexico, is as deceiving, if not more so, as upon water. The highly rarified state of the atmosphere, in the elevated regions of the country enables the beholder to see with a distinctness objects that are far remote, in a manner unknown in the latitudes of the United States. Travellers, who are careful of their eyes, upon the plains wear goggles, to prevent the continued strain of looking through the vast space, as well as to break the force of the

periodical south-west winds, as also the rays and reflection of the sun.

At a proper period, I despatched my guide to secure me lodgings, to the Conde of Guatemepé; for I had no idea of stopping at the ranchos if I could help myself to better accommodations. As I approached the house, my servant returned and informed me that the countess had refused to receive me, owing to her lord being from home, and could not entertain company: however, in another moment, I received a messenger who said that his mistress had consented, as an especial favour, that I should put up at her casa grande. I have before used the titles of nobility common in Mexico, and here I will remark, once for all, that they are now only applied as a courteous compliment, and not as a matter of right.

Wealth, in Mexico, is sufficiently respectable and powerful, without the dignity of names, bestowed on her former nobles. The countess was a lovely and hospitable woman, of between twenty and thirty years of age. She furnished me with a handsome apartment, where I feasted upon the good things of my own store and her supplies. There was other company at the castle besides myself, and, at the tolling of the same oration, by the bell of the church, which was a part of the same building, prayers were said, and then the guitar and a dance were introduced, which lasted until eleven o'clock, when all retired to rest.

From Guatemepé I resumed my journey on the following morning for Chinacates, distant about forty miles. My direction, the most of the day, was over a continued range of low mountains, leaving the great and extensive valley of Guatemepé to the right. For several minor reasons, I had from the time of my departure from Durango, been dissatisfied with my interpreter; but I said nothing to him until I had some strong suspicions of the unfriendly intentions of the man. I had been informed that, at a distance of two or three days' ride from Guatemepé, a hard battle had been fought between a party of five hundred Camanche Indians and a thousand Mexicans, the latter being defeated. This intelligence, I was of the opinion, my interpreter was turning to an account injurious to the advance of my journey; for he had imparted it to my servants, and would himself, every cross we came to by the sides of the road,—which, the reader must recollect, were erected over murdered persons,—shout aloud, *Los Indios!*—(The Indians!)

Discovering that his exclamations had an undesirable effect upon my men, I remarked to him, that I was sensible that I was surrounded with danger, but if he persisted in alarming my servants, which might result in their desertion, he might

return to Durango, or take any other direction he chose, for I believed his course of conduct to be prejudicial to me. He insisted that he was entirely innocent of an intention of harm, and implored that I would forgive the indiscretion, and think no more of it. He knew as well as I did that, if I discharged him, I could not employ another interpreter, for my last chance had escaped me, and that I must need one in future more than ever. I expressed myself satisfied, but took care to watch and divine, if I could, his every action.

My guide became rebellious, and would stop and have long conversations with every one whom he met. This conduct I had been advised by all of my friends to prohibit, but so excited had the man's mind become, that it was impossible to make him desist.

Thus my disagreeable journey was continued the whole day, until my arrival at Chinacates, a rancho belonging to the estate of the Conde of Guatemepé. I dismounted at the house of the administrador before sunset. The governor was from home, but his wife came to the door and invited me in, which I did, and, to my great astonishment, after I had become seated on the bench behind the long table, she took from a box a six-barreled pistol, the only one that I had seen in the country, besides my own, and walked across the floor. I drew from my belt my pair of similar weapons and laid them upon the table, so that she might behold also that I had twelve shots, which had a desirable effect; for she appeared no sooner to discover them than she laid aside her own. The woman, I knew, did not intend hostility, but as that part of the country was very much infested with marauding land-pirates, she had ever been accustomed to be prepared to meet the worst. However, the husband soon arrived, and I fared well.

My ride, the next day, was mostly upon a ridge of a mountain, which would, at times, bring me in view of the great valley of Guatemepé. No incident worthy of remark happened during the day, saving that, on one occasion, I was interrogated, in my mother-tongue, if I was a foreigner, and, upon replying in the affirmative, I had the pleasure of conversing with an Englishman. Having exchanged intelligence from the different points of our journey, we cordially took leave, as if each of us had been old acquaintances. It was Sunday, and, at the hour of four o'clock, P.M., I was safely lodged in the town of Santa Argo.

Santa Argo has mines, and is situated upon what is called the Santa Argo river. The mines are not now worked, for the reason of the poverty of the ore. The attention of an enterprising Mexican company has, at that place, been directed

to the manufacturing of cotton, and I was credibly informed by the superintendent of the factory, the company had borrowed their capital, and were enabled to make a handsome profit, paying thirty-seven and a half per cent. upon the loan.

Thus it can easily be perceived, how dearly the Mexicans have to pay for cotton fabrics — so much for protection and home markets! The New Englander related to me what the swindler would call a smart, but to others a disgraceful account of a Mexican gentleman of Saltila, who having determined to go into the cotton manufacturing business, visited the factories of the United States, for the purpose of securing perfect machinery. Upon his arrival he made, through a merchant, as his broker, a purchase of a cotton factory machine, at the cost of twenty thousand dollars, and had it shipped to his home. He also engaged an American artizan to go to Saltila, and put it together. But all having arrived, upon examination, it was discovered that no two wheels of the whole fabrication belonged to one another, being all mismatched, some too large and others too small, like the cannon balls that were too great for their guns, not a wheel could be turned, nor a shot fired. Thus, while the Mexican character falls short of correctness, it is nevertheless taken advantage of sometimes. Still it is to be hoped that the twenty thousand has never done the swindler any good.

The Mexicans are very ingenious and apt artisans, acquiring with much celerity the skill of any of the mechanical branches. They never serve the long apprenticeships, that are so common in the Union and in Europe; but having worked at a trade some one or two years, they think themselves sufficiently proficient to carry it on; and thus quit their tutor and set up for themselves.

Indeed it is but seldom, generally in Mexico, the mechanic has ever received a day's instruction in his particular trade; but of himself, dependent alone upon the force of his genius and invention, transacts his peculiar business to the satisfaction of his customers.

Like the Chinese, the Mexicans have a good imitative capacity, and make any thing by pattern very tolerably. It is the part of the accomplishments of a gentleman to know how to shoe a horse or mule; and all, when they travel, take with them an assortment of shoes and nails, so that if it should become necessary to shoe an animal, a shoe is selected and nailed on. The buttress is never used, for a horse is never shod until his feet become tender, or he has to travel in the rainy season. Hence it is that mechanics, who emigrate to Mexico, do not prosper well, excepting in some of the large cities, for the la-

zarones all profess to be good bricklayers, carpenters, tailors, saddlers, watchmakers, and shoemakers; while the blacksmith only finds his art profitable to him in large factories.

My journey on the next day was one of much vexation. My servants had learned at Santa Argo, that the Indians had, after the battle spoken of, scattered, and were committing depredations in every direction. For the life of me I could hardly keep them together, for they would spur up to every individual they saw, to make inquiries of them respecting "los Indios." My interpreter, in the midst of my difficulties, utterly disgusted me by his apparent want of confidence. It is true, that to have been attacked by Indians would have been an unpleasant reflection, yet it was no less so, that we were momentarily hazarding battle from Mexicans; and I was persuaded, that if there was any correctness in the Indian intelligence, my travelling was rendered the more safe, for the dreaded Indians would only drive home the ladrones, and my chances would be lessened for a rencounter, in having none but the Camanches for my enemies, and I looked upon them as the lesser evil of the two.

There were other reflections to prevent my retreat, for I considered that by it I would gain nothing but delay, without bettering my condition; and at any future period my dangers would be no less, and, if battle from Indians or Mexicans was to overtake me, I felt determined to meet it, and abide the result,—for "I had set my life upon a cast, and would stand the hazard of the die."

I felt much uneasiness on account of my men, for fear that their resolution might falter, and they positively refuse to proceed farther, or cause expensive delays, which latter I had every reason to believe, was the intention of my interpreter. At all hazards I was determined to travel to the Boca, two days' journey from San Argo,—for at that point, I was informed, travellers would rendezvous and depart thence in large parties. My interpreter declared that he would do more for me than for any other person alive, but he abhorred the idea of an Indian scalping knife,—and that, as for himself, he would prefer a death-bed scene, to one on the mountains or the plains.

I did not believe that the man was a coward, but that he had other views in his silly conversation, and I felt perplexed with difficulties. My interpreter was a peculiar man. He had a solemn and melancholy countenance. His often meditative dejection evidently showed that he had deep thoughts brooding in his breast,—whether they were those of sadness, or his expression of melancholy was caught from the people he re-

sided so long amongst, or the unfriendly buffetings of the world, I could not divine—and I felt tempted to probe him.

The more easily to effect my purpose, I inquired of him, if he desired to return with me to the United States? His reply was, that he felt satisfied with Mexico, and might, perhaps, at some future period, visit the Union. I was not satisfied with this evasive answer, and commenced describing the facilities of travelling, the improvements, the comforts, wealth and prosperity in every part of the United States; when he interrupted me by asking if I had seen the city of ——. I informed him that two years had scarcely passed away since I had spent some months in the place named, and commenced describing it,—he wept. I explained to him the flourishing condition of the Union. I told him that the numerous denominations were, in one common unison, quietly enjoying the freedom of conscience and the worship of their God. He replied that he did not believe there was a God, and that, if he had had faith, he might not have been with me on that day. He added, that, as a matter of course, he had joined the church of Mexico—but the clergy proving to be the most immoral people he had ever known, he felt confirmed in his original opinions.

This conversation needs no comment, for it was evident that I had obtained the object of my investigation—the man was a refugee from justice.

At about one o'clock we arrived at a village called San Dilla. The doors of the houses were all closed, and I saw but one wretched old man sitting in the shade, who said that an Indian had, on that morning, been seen on the top of the mountain overlooking the town, and had fired a rifle, the bullet striking upon a house-top. This was the reason, he stated, for the houses being closed, the better to save the lives and property of the inhabitants. He remarked further, that for himself he had lived long enough, and had no property to lose.

Enough had been told, and my men all dismounted, and I followed their example, with the hope, that by the following morning their fears would be quieted. The noise of their arrival, and our knocking at a door for admittance, had the effect it seemed, of waking the inhabitants from their slumbers. The news soon spread through the village, and I could hear from every quarter, "los Americanos." It was not long before a well dressed young man came and invited myself and my interpreter to partake of some refreshments at his house.

On the morning of the 21st, I gave directions for our departure from San Dilla, but my interpreter began making ob-

jections, which I silenced by positively commanding them to be made. All appeared reluctantly to obey, and we commenced our march. My situation was one of the most unpleasant and delicate imaginable. I was shut out from conversation, which entirely placed me under the dominion of my interpreter; as so far from his attempting to diminish the fears of my men, and stimulate them to action, it appeared that he only encouraged them in their evil forebodings.

However, I was not without some comfort, for Providence rarely deserts an individual entirely destitute of friends. My principal servant Marcelino seemed to pay me more marked attention, and appeared to be solicitous for my welfare. I noticed that he would often cast a watchful eye around to my interpreter and myself, taking occasion to pat his breast, with his left hand, (which in Mexico signifies bravery,) to assure me of his firmness. I was satisfied that he was courageous, for his deportment had ever convinced me, that he was both honest in his intentions, and firm at heart.

Yet, to counterbalance these good impressions, my best friends in the country, who, while they unhesitatingly expressed their doubts of the success of my journey, had particularly advised me, that when servants became the most attentive, it was then that danger was to be apprehended; for a conspiracy was evidently formed against the master.

The attentions of Marcelino were, nevertheless, grateful to me, and I could not but conclude that his motives, under all the circumstances, were pure; and that he was the only friend and advocate I had in the number of all my men. My own deportment was difficult to maintain; having to stimulate Marcelino by my confidence, while at the same time it was necessary in many ways to express my distrust of the others, including particularly my interpreter. I did not intend to quarrel with the latter right out; for if things so far lost their balance, I would, if no other chance of safety offered, be sure of obtaining the first shot. Besides, I was desirous to make him useful to me in a trying moment, when any interpreter would be better than none.

My journey on this day was immediately up the banks of the same stream, upon which the town of San Argo is situated. Its course was between two mountains, which appeared rapidly to converge as we advanced. We passed several villages, all of which seemed to be in a state of excitement.

At Santa Catarine I met with forty men, who were equipping themselves for an excursion in the mountains, to hunt a small party of Indians, who had within the last few days

killed many travellers; and between that town and the Boca I met six mules, each loaded with the melancholy freight of a dead man. The bodies were those of a lawyer of Durango, who was on his way to Culiacan to be married; two others were young doctors, who had accompanied to wait upon him in his anticipated joyous occasion; the other three were servants. They had come to their end mostly by Indian arrows, the body of the lawyer having six sticking in it, besides having the flesh of his throat cut away.

Late in the evening we arrived at the town of the Boca, situated immediately in the point where the eastern mountain joined the western one. Most appropriately had the village received its name, for in English it signified the mouth, and it was in fact the mouth of the great valley of Guatempe.

I felt rejoiced in overcoming the many difficulties on my way to this place; for I had been advised by my countryman of Santa Argo, if Indians were talked of on the way, not to stop short of the Boca. The Alcalde gave me notice not to proceed farther without strengthening my party, or waiting for another company, and thus my progress was conditionally impeded. My journey to Canales would be one hundred and ninety miles, across the Madre Monte, the mother mountain; so called by reason of the vast piles of mountains thrown together, which are not found in any other part of the country. The Mexicans say the Madre Monte is the parent of the Cordilleras and the Rocky Mountains.

I was delayed some days at the Boca, to recruit the number of my company, which was accomplished by the arrival of some more travellers. On the 26th instant, I departed from the Boca, (one of my servants having deserted me,) with a party of twenty men, besides one hundred animals. As the way over the mountains was only a narrow path, winding along the sides of precipices and heights, just admitting the passage of one mule, with his rider, or pack, at a time, we became scattered during the first and second day's toil, and our independent companies separated; for the drivers could not attend to the general interest, the animals of their masters engrossing their attention severally. It was with great difficulty they could be managed; consequently our whole strength did not encamp together.

On the 28th instant, the parties both front and rear had not been seen by us for several hours, and Marcelino expressed his apprehensions that we would neither find grass nor water for that night, the animals having to find their own livings, as provender cannot be packed for them.

It was not long, however, before a place was found where

all our wants could be abundantly supplied, and we did not hesitate to bivouac there. I had always been accustomed to read and hear of Indian fights, and no sooner were our mules turned loose, and our meal was over, than I directed the men all to select their places at a distance from the burning fires, where they should sleep, and examine well the ground, so that in case of an attack mistakes might not be made, of friends for enemies.

My order having been obeyed, at the hour of dark each one reposed at his well-known chosen spot, while arms and ammunition were all put in readiness for battle at any moment. It proved to be well that I had taken these precautions; for, between the hours of two and three o'clock at night, we were attacked by a party of either Mexicans or Comanche Indians, or perhaps of both; for they frequently unite for purposes of plunder. Judging from the reports of their guns, our enemies were about twelve in number, while my own men consisted of the interpreter and four servants.

Upon the first alarm being given by the shrill whistles and soul-shrinking yells of the savages, my men all stood up to the tree, or rock, against which they had been laying and returned the fire of the enemy like brave men. This, random firing seemed to last for about one hour, when the Indians left us in possession of our camp.

On the following morning no dead nor wounded savages were to be found. Two of my men were wounded, and I sustained a further loss by one of my mules being missing; and had they not all fortunately been hobbled, the action of the night would have produced a stampede by which I would have been left destitute. No sooner had the sun dawned than we were all mounted, and with my three remaining pack-mules I commenced my line of march for Canales. There was no retreat, and my readers may depend upon it every one of us, as the saying is, "kept his eye skinned," looking every moment for Indians. About one o'clock, P. M., as we ascended a mountain height, where there was some level land, thickly wooded and very rocky, we were suddenly brought to a halt by a shower of arrows from Indian bows. We had nothing to do but fight, and my party scattered; some dismounted and stood behind their animals, while others kept their seats on their saddles. As for myself, (unless I chose to follow the example of the man who was a little lame,) I determined to take my chance upon mule-back; for, added to my Zacatecas injuries, I had not yet recovered from a stage upset, upon Mount Airy, Va., about twelve months previous.

My men commenced a brisk fire from their several positions,

I could occasionally discover the huge body of an Indian, who was not prudent enough to conceal himself, and took two deliberate shots at him, which seemed to have no other effect than to knock fragments from around him, with my double-barrelled gun. I then resolved to try what effect a bullet from my long rifle-barrelled pistol would have upon his head. Having, with deliberate aim, pulled the trigger, the long barrel told well the tale. By this time my favourite servant, who had never left my side, seeing the big Indian fall, became furious for battle; and my eyes catching a glimpse of his long sword, I immediately gave the order, "Charge! Charge!" My interpreter, true to his duty, reiterated, "*Carga! Carga!*" which was no sooner heard than every soul was seated in his horned saddle, and with one accord the huge Spanish spurs were driven into the side of our animals.

With all the enthusiasm of Indian fighting we in our turn raised the shout and the war-cry, and by an energetic movement drove the enemy before us. It being impossible to chase far an Indian foe, over rocks and mountain cliffs, I considered present safety better than complete victory, and accordingly called off my men.

Upon examining the big Indian, I found that he wore a wooden mask, having a long red tongue hanging from its mouth, besides many serpents and horns nodding and dodging from the top of his head and round his shoulders. His leather clothing was stuffed with moss, such as is used in the United States for filling the cushions of sofas and mattresses. None of my men were injured. I had an arrow to pass through my hat, and two through my Mexican blanket, at the horn of my saddle. These Indians had notched two arrows at a time, and are generally reputed to be very certain of their aim. A battle with arrows is of course noiseless.

Mounted on my little mule I continued to pursue my journey. It is not considered safe to travel on any other animal over these mountains, as the mules are very sure-footed and sagacious; often having to make a delicate step, or jump, on a craggy steep; in which case he will, with great sagacity, pause and balance himself, apparently to feel if his rider is firmly seated; and then, as quick as thought, he makes the bound which lands his feet on the opposite rock; a slip from which would inevitably have precipitated both man and beast down a deep and craggy vortex.

To give some idea of the height of the Madre Monte, I will remark that the traveller is often obliged to consume the whole day in ascending a mountain; which when overcome, to his astonishment he beholds that upon the supremacy of

heights, as he had imagined the one he has just ascended, he has but to commence another arduous and giddy task of reaching an eminence, perhaps greater than the other. And what overpowered my philosophy was, that the tops and the glens of these mountains, many thousand feet above the level of the plains, abounded in water, and I have been informed that some of these heights are covered with bog, while a well cannot be sunk deep enough in the plains to obtain water.

The abundance of water is the only difficulty to be contended with in mining upon the mountains, while at the same time there is nothing so needed on the plains below as the liquid element. From such experience in Mexico I am forced to look upon that country as a natural paradox. It is—and is not—a contradiction in humanity, religion and nature. When the mind of the traveller resorts to the early history of the country, and beholds the formidable natural barriers which the Spaniards had to overcome, he is astonished at the remarkable rapidity with which the aborigines were subdued. The spirit of discovery and of conquest once kindled, the romantic excitement it produced was overpowering, and with an enthusiasm which nothing but a like cause could engender, and an avarice never to be satiated—the Spaniards swept over plain and mountain with an irresistible power, and subdued a continent, the dominion of which extended to the limits of Cancer on the north, and Capricorn on the south.

On this night I bivouaced on a greater elevation than I had before done, and on the next morning I had the pleasure to behold a fine frost, with which my blankets were covered. It was the only one I had seen in the country, and I could not withhold the temptation of touching it with my fingers, and cooling my hands with the white dew of heaven. It was however, short lived, but as long as it lasted I could not take my eyes from the pure sight, or suppress the thoughts of my own native hills of Virginia.

My guide informed me that I could, on that day, reach Caneles, and the cheering news seemed to animate my whole party with the thoughts, that one more ride would put us beyond the danger of Indians, and into an inhabited country. Shortly after we set out, we had to ascend a mountain, which brought us in view of a snow-capped peak which reached far above any other point. Having descended the opposite side, we travelled along the bed of a river for some four or five miles. The stream was shut up between two mountains, whose rocky and precipitous heights prohibited a pathway along its sides. Many were the curiosities, and the freaks of nature that I beheld in the singular formations of the rocks.

On the top of a high point on one of these mountains was a flat rock, just the shape of a man's hand, which sat upright on a wrist. The mammoth hand could not have been less than one hundred feet in height. It appeared to point due north and south, as if to prevent the traveller, who was confined between these wild and rugged barriers, from becoming bewildered, and thus lose his proper direction. All the rock of the mountains seemed to be of a rotten lime and sandstone order.

The Madre Monte is a vast mountain, having hundreds of smaller ones piled upon her broad bosom. By a perception of the imagination she seems in sportive magnificence to fondle and cherish her nestlings at the bleached and pure white nipple of her breast.

We travelled on that day over a continuous range of mountains. The day was drawing to a close, and yet Caneles did not appear. My men were all gay—now singing merrily and then vauntingly yelling the Indian war-whoop. In the evening I despatched my guide forward to engage me rooms at a meson in town. He had been absent about two hours, when at sunset we overtook him on the top of a mountain. His countenance seemed so dejected that I began to apprehend some calamity. However, I was soon undeceived by his informing me that he had been mistaken in his calculation, and that it would not be until the following day that we could reach Caneles.

On receiving this unwelcome intelligence, we hastened down the mountain, by which time darkness overtook us. We dismounted and kindled our fire, and unpacked the animals. I caused lights to be set around the ground in different directions, so that I was enabled to review all immediately about us. We were on a wet place with a soft soil. There was just level space enough to stake my tent, for the first time since it had been in my possession. My carter also I had determined to sleep on that night, for the only time since I had been in the mountains, as a prudential step for the preservation of my health; and accordingly gave directions for the work to be done.

My interpreter complained much of my guide, expressing his want of confidence in him, saying, that he should not be surprised if he was in league with a marauding party for our destruction, by his deceiving us on that day. I endeavoured to quiet the man's fears, by saying that I believed him innocent of any bad intentions, and told him that mistakes were common to every person, and that it was evidently as much his interest to take us to Caneles, as it was our own to get there.

My tent pitched, and my carter erected, I, for the first time in four days and nights, took off my belt of arms, and laid it on the common pile of weapons at the mouth of the *marquee*. My servants busily engaged themselves in preparing dinner. While they were thus employed at the fire, a little distance from the tent, my interpreter gravely approached me, and said that he confidently believed we would be attacked that night, and he felt desirous to make a proposition to me, which was, that he and I should leave the camp and lay upon the way side, to attack the Indians when they would be stealing upon us. I replied that I should rest myself that night, though the mountains should be covered with howling devils, threatening to devour me alive.

He was meditative a short time, and again remarked, that as I was unwilling to accompany him, and he did not want to see me taken by surprise, as I had been on the night previous, he wished permission to adventure alone, that he might give the alarm before the enemy could storm my camp. A thought at the moment gleamed through my mind, and I resolutely informed him, that all the arms in the camp belonged to me, and that he should carry none of them with him. Suiting the action to the word, I stepped between him and the weapons. The interpreter instantly sank to the earth, as if death had overtaken him.

I raised my belt and buckled it round my person, then put my gun and holster-pistols in my carter, and motioned to my servants to put on their arms. I noticed that the conversation and actions of the interpreter had attracted their attention, and they all obeyed me. Marcelino drew his knife, and seated himself behind the suspected man, and signified by a motion of his hand, that if he moved he would let him have it—to which I nodded assent.

With a heart and head that ached, I could eat but little. My good servant seeming to insist so much, by his signs, that I should lie down, I concluded to do so, but not to sleep. Exhausted nature, however, was supreme to my will, and I no sooner extended myself, than the world was lost to me. Marcelino awoke me in the morning before my interpreter had arisen. I had him aroused, and when chocolate was over, for fear of an attack, and thinking that, perhaps, I had judged him too harshly, I handed him back his weapons.

We commenced our day's journey by ascending the next mountain. Having travelled some distance upon its ridge, my interpreter dropped his hat, and dismounted to pick it up. I had passed him but a short distance, when I concluded to look around. Not hearing the tread of his animal, I suddenly

turned my head and discovered the man in the act of pointing his gun at me, over his saddle. I wheeled instantly, and drawing my rifle pistol, made towards him. He said that he had a second time dropped his hat, and was only in the act of mounting his horse when I saw him. I commanded him to mount, telling him, that if he dared again to get behind me, under any circumstances, it must prove fatal to one of us, and we continued our travel.

The scenes of nature through which we passed were of the most stupendous kind,—consisting of mountains, rocks, cataracts, and deep glens. The deer, the wolf, and the wild turkey inhabited the dense forests—nor was there any habitation between the Boca and where we then were. I heartily desired to see Caneles.

I was informed that there is a species of grizzly bear that lives in the clefts of these mountains. They are said to be as white, and in fact the same animal, as those found in the ice regions of the north. They are supposed to have made their way from the regions of the north, their native clime, upon the long range of the Rocky mountains. I had to admire the abundance and beauty of the game I witnessed. But my guns had not been loaded to harm them. I had no shots but for defence.

By the middle of the day we had ascended a mountain that overlooked all others in the vicinity. The air was cold, and we all drew on our serapis. My guide seemed desirous to show me some object. I inquired of my interpreter what it was. He informed me that it was the Pacific ocean.

From the position I occupied, like Nunez de Bilboa, on the heights of the Isthmus of Darien, I looked over land until it was lost in the vast immensity of misty space—the vapours of the waters of the ocean exhibiting a marked contrast to the dry and clear atmosphere of the parched land. The sight was sublimely extensive, yet I did not enjoy the view as much as if I had been more happily conditioned.

We descended a high mountain, and my guide gave the joyful intelligence that Caneles was in sight, and pointed out the opposite height that also overlooked the town. At length we came to the brink of the mountain, which commanded the view of a vast ravine, in the bottom of which, situated upon a bold and rapid stream, is the town of Caneles.

The mountain was precipitous. We made a slow zig-zag progress, making an angle at almost every ten or twenty paces. My journey down the height, with Caneles constantly in sight, was three hours at least. And thus, upon the evening of the 28th instant, I dismounted at the house rented for