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Transcriber's Note:

Obvious typographic errors have been corrected.

LOS GRINGOS:

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OR,

**AN INSIDE VIEW OF MEXICO AND CALIFORNIA, WITH WAN-
DERINGS IN PERU, CHILI, AND POLYNESIA.**

BY LIEUT. WISE, U.S.N.

**NEW YORK:
BAKER AND SCRIBNER,
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1849.**

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PREFACE.

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The title—*Los Gringos*—with which this volume has been christened, is the epithet—and rather a reproachful one—used in California and Mexico to designate the descendants of the Anglo-Saxon race; the definition of the word is somewhat similar to that of Greenhorns, in modern *parlance*, or Mohawks in the days of the Spectator. Although many of the scenes were passed in those countries, yet the narrative takes a wider range, and embraces portions of the South American Continent in Brazil, Chili, and Peru,—together with visits to some of the groups of the Pacific at the Sandwich, Marquesas and Society Islands.

The sketches embodied in the narrative were all written on the field of their occurrence: the characters incidentally mentioned are frequently *noms de mer*.

It is not expected by the Author that even the most charitable reader will wholly overlook the careless style and framing of the work, or allow it to pass without censure; nor has it been his object to deal in statistics, or any abstract reflections, but merely to compile a pleasant narrative, such as may perchance please or interest the generality of readers; and in launching the volume on its natural element—the sea of public opinion—the Author only indulges in the aspiration—whether the reader be gentle or ungentle—whether the book be praised or condemned—that at least the philanthropy of the Publishers may be remunerated, wherein lies all the law and the profits.

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NEW YORK, *October, 1849.*

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CHAPTER I.

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It was on the last day of summer, 1846, that a large vessel of war lay in the stream of Boston Harbor; presently a dirty little steam tug, all bone and muscle, came burroughing alongside. The boatswain and his mates whistled with their silver pipes, like Canary birds, and the cry went forth, to heave up the anchor. Soon the ponderous grapnell was loosened from its hold, and our pigmy companion clasping the huge hull in his hempen arms, bore us away towards the ocean; by and by, the unbleached canvas fell in gloomy clouds from the wide-spread spars—the sails swelled to the breeze—friends were tumbling over the side—light jokes were made—hats waved—cheers given, whether from the heart, or not, was a problem, and then there came a short interval in the hoarse roar of steam, as the pigmy's fastenings splashed in the water—then all was silent; and the stately ship, dashing the salt tears from her eyes, turned her prow, in sadness, from her native land.

There were many, no doubt, of those six hundred souls on board, who leaving home with the sweet endearments of domestic life fresh upon them, were looking forward with blanched cheeks and saddened hearts, to years of distant wanderings. And there were others, too, equally indifferent, and regardless of the future—

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"With one foot on land, and one on sea,
—To one thing constant never,"

who, perhaps, never had a home—tired of the shore—were eager for change or excitement; but I question much, if there was one on board, of all those beating hearts, who did not anticipate a safe and joyful return. Alas! how many of these fragile aspirations were never realized. Numbers

found a liquid tomb beneath the dark blue waves, or died a sailor's death in foreign climes, far away from friends and kindred, or returned with broken constitutions, and wasted frames, enfeebled by disease, to linger out a miserable existence on the native land they still loved so well.

A fortnight we sailed moderately and pleasantly in a race with the sun towards the equator. The pole star slowly but surely declined in the north; faces began to assume a more cheerful aspect; we became reconciled to our fate; to banish those hateful things called reminiscences, which, even though pleasant, only make us regret them the more, when gone forever. Thus we entered the tropic, and then lay lunging and plunging in the doldrums—clouds dead and stupid, with the sun making all manner of gay transparencies, at the rising, and most particularly at the setting thereof. Then came another week of *una furiosa calma*—a furious calm, as the Spaniards have it—bobbing about in undulating billows, and the tough canvass beating and chafing in futile anger. It was thus we learned, those of us who had not made the discovery before, what a really animal existence one leads on shipboard; a sort of dozing nonentity, only agreeable to those who have no imaginative organizations desirous of more extended sphere of action.

It does passibly well to eat and sleep away life—that is, presuming the dinners be hot and eatable, and nights cool and sleepable—in smooth seas, and under mild suns; but when the winds are piping loud and cold, the vessel diving and leaping at every possible angle of the compass, with the stomachs of the mariners occasionally pitched into their heads, as if they were dromedaries, with several internal receptacles apiece, devised purposely to withstand the thumps and concussions of salt water; when the ship is performing these sub-marine and aerial evolutions I take it, as a reasonable being, there can be found a stray nook or two, on hard ground, far more comfortable and habitable. And by way of parenthesis, I beg leave to recommend to any and all unfortunate persons given to aquatic recreation, and troubled with the disease whilom called sea-sickness, to divest the mind and body of care and clothing, tumble into a swinging cot, and on the verge of starvation sip sparingly of weak brandy and water, nibble a biscuit, and a well-roasted potato. I made this important discovery after being a sufferer ten years, and pledge a reputation upon the strength of that martyrdom, of its infallible virtues.

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Indeed, there are but two kinds of sailing at all bearable. I allude, of course, to those who take to it *con amore*, and are not compelled to crowd all dimity to weather a lee shore and the almshouse; one where the glorious trade wind fills the bellying canvas, and the vessel slips quietly and swiftly along with the gentlest possible careening; without hauling and pulling of cordage, nor heavy seas, nor heavy rains, but the light, fleecy clouds flying gracefully overhead, the waves blue and yielding, the watch dozing lazily in the shade, and the decks clean and tidy—it is a pretty sight, to see a noble ship properly manœuvred, come swiftly up to tie wind, the sails laid rapidly aback, with lower canvas brailed up in graceful festoons, and the buoyant hull rising and falling on the gentle swell, like the courtesies of Cerito or Ellsler in Sir Roger de Coverley, with all the drapery of dimity fluttering around them. Then, again, in that blue sea of seas, the Mediterranean, where more than half the year one may sail over level water, with none of the ocean swell, with delightful breezes only strong enough to fan the light and lofty sails to sleep, the shores of Italy or Spain lifting their green-clad hills along the beam, or the ever varying islands of the Grecian Archipelago coming and going, as you dart rapidly through their straits. Ah! in those times, and in those seas, ships are possibly enduring, but of all monotonies, that of shipboard is the dullest, most wearisome and detestable.

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Week after week passed away, one day like another, nothing to chronicle save the birth of a sailor's pet in the shape of a tiny goat—taking a shark—the usual pious Sunday homily, and on a certain occasion one Jem Brooks, whose residence, in company with other cherubs, was somewhere aloft in the main-top, whilst in the act of dropping a boat into the ocean, some mishap attended the descent, and he dropped overboard himself, thereby cracking the small bone of his leg, with a few other trifling abrasions of skin and flesh. Iron life buoys that no one as yet ever did comprehend the mechanism of, always fizzing off the port-fires in broad day, and enshrouding themselves in utter darkness at night when only needed, were instantly sent after the aforesaid Jem Brooks, who imbued with the wit and tenacity of his species in extremis, seized one of them, and in a short space returned pleasantly on board.

This was all that served to enliven our stupid existence. The winds coquetted with all the perverseness of a spoiled beauty, at times blowing provokingly steady, then we went reeling over the seas, with piercingly blue skies above us, and all reconcileable elements to our journeyings, excepting the breeze ever blowing so pertinaciously in the wrong direction; at others we managed to cheat Eolus out of a puff, and steal a march upon him, right into his breezy eyes, but then again he gave a wink, distended his huge cheeks, and blew us far away to leeward. It was truly trying to the nerves to be crying patience continually, when there was no appeal—we could not exclaim with Dryden:

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"The passage yet was good; the wind 'tis true
Was somewhat high; but that was nothing new,
No more than usual equinoxes blew."

There was naught new nor usual about it, wind and weather were a mass of inconsistency; a few more revolutions of the sun, and we should have found ourselves stranded in the Dahomey territory, or other equally delightful regions, bordering on the Bight of Benin, in Africa; even the good old captain of marines began to look worried and anxious, paid nightly visits to the sailing master, and with the most earnest and imploring tone, would ask—"Well, Master! how *does* she

head?" as if he reposed full trust in his sagacity, and for God's sake to ease his mind, and let him hear the worst at once. Surgeons, pursers and secretaries, went off their feed, and from being rather over sanguine at times, burst forth with lamentable wailings in the poignancy of their despair. The captain of the ship, too, reviled creation generally, and was rather snappish with officers of the watches; hinting that the yards were not trimmed, ship steered properly, and other legal animadversions. Then the lieutenants, kind souls, abused the master, taxing him with manifold crimes and delinquencies for bringing adverse breezes, did those sagacious creatures, and at other times becoming jocose, would advise him to kick the chronometers several times around the mast to accelerate or diminish their rates, and talked loudly of requesting the Commodore to follow the first bark we might encounter, to the end that we should get safely into port—in fact, we were all, morally speaking, in a state of gangrene; morbid, morose and our circumstances getting more desperate hourly; but the longest night, except in the winter season off Cape Horn, has its dawning: the wind veered fair, whitening the ruffled water to windward, the noble frigate recovered her long lost energy, and with white sails swelling from trucks to the sea, shook the sparkling brine from her mane, and left a foaming wake behind; the thick, mucky, sticky atmosphere that clung to us upon entering the tropic, was quickly displaced, by refreshing and grateful breezes.

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We crossed the dividing line of the sphere, rushing and splashing down the slope on the other side, carrying the whole ocean before us: myriads of flying fish flashed their silver-tinted wings as they broke cover, and flew upward at our approach. Porpoises and dolphins would dash around the bows, try our speed, and then disappear, perhaps, with a contused eye, or bruised snout from a sparring match with the cutwater; on we bounded with the cracking trade wind, tugging the straining canvas towards Brazil.

The mess was large, and composed of strange materials—men of gravity and men of merriment, some who relate professional anecdotes and talk knowingly of ships, and sails and blocks, and nautical trash generally, others, would be literary characters, who pour over encyclopedias, gazetteers and dictionaries, ever ready to pounce upon an indiscreet person, and bring him to book in old dates or events; then there is the mess grumbler, the mess orator, a lawgiver and politician, and always an individual, without whom no mess is properly organized, who volunteers to lick the American consul in whatsoever haven the ship may be, for any fancied grievance, but particularly if he happen to be poor, and not disposed to give a series of grand dinners upon his meagre fare of office.

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All these individual peculiarities we had sufficient leisure to indulge in, and although I have asserted that ship-board is the most horrible monotony in life, and hold to mine oath, yet Apollo tuned his lyre, and old Homer took siesta, thus by example, if anything can relieve this dulness, it is in the very contrast, where the mercury of one's blood is driven high up by cheering prospects of favoring gales, and anticipations of a speedy arrival, after a tedious passage.

Our amiability returned with our appetites—alas! too keenly for the doomed carcass of a solitary pig, grunting in blissful ignorance of his fate, in a spacious pen on the gun deck. Juicy and succulent vegetables had long since vacated the mess table, and the talents of our *cordons-bleus*, Messieurs Hypolite de Bontems, and François, were constantly phrenzied with excitement, composing palatable dishes, from the privacy of tins of potted meats, and hidden delicacies of the store rooms. We all became sociable, quizzed one another good humoredly—some declared they had been dreadfully spooney with some fair girls before leaving home, but were better now, and thought the marine air wholesome for those complaints. Others, again, still remained faithful, compared their watches with the chronometers, to determine the exact difference of time on certain periods designated beforehand, with may be a choice collection of stars of the first magnitude, to gaze at by night. Nevertheless, there was a radical change for the better; we became more companionable, hobnobbed across the table, after dinner, heard with calm delight orchestral music from the flutes and fiddles of papa Gheeks and family—an old gentleman from *faderland*, whom the sailors, in their ignorance of German, had baptized "Peter the Greeks," a soubriquet by which he universally went—and one of our mess had the humanity to inquire if the small French horn, or octave flute, had tumbled down the hatchway, and whether he broke his neck or was merely asphyxiated. We even ceased grumbling at the servants, and to a man all agreed that the passage had been of unexampled pleasantness.

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Nothing checked our headlong speed, and the fiftieth day from Boston saw us close to the high, desolate mountains of cape Frio, within plain view of the little rocky nook where the English frigate Thetis made a futile attempt to batter the island over, but went down in the struggle. 'Tis said the gun room mess were entertaining the captain at dinner, who somewhat oblivious to everything, save being homeward bound to merry England with a ship laden with treasure, disregarded the sailing master's wishes to alter the course, and the consequence was, after night set in, the frigate struck, going eight knots—providentially the crew were saved. The long Atlantic swell was rolling heavily against the bluff promontories, and the surf lashing far up the black heights, giving many of us a nervous disinclination to making a night expedition among the rocks, going to sleep with a dirty shirt and mouthful of sand, without even the consolation of being afterwards laid out in clean linen, to make luncheon for vultures; but since it takes a complication of those diversions to compose a veritable sea life, we banished perspective danger, and indulged in speculations upon the pleasures of port.

"The far ships lifting their sails of white
 Like joyful hands; come up with scattered light,
 Come gleaming up, true to the wished for day,
 And chase the whistling brine, and swirl into the
 bay."

REMINI. OF LEIGH HUNT.

The approach to Rio Janeiro, so far as God's fair handiwork is considered, presents a bold, natural, and striking grandeur, and is, perhaps, unsurpassed by that of any other land on earth. The mountains spring abruptly from the sea, in massive, well-defined outline, assuming at different points the most fanciful and grotesque shapes. Those to the southward make in goodly proportion the figure of a man reclining on his back, even to feet and eyes, while further inland are seen the narrow tube-like cones of the Organ Mountains, shooting high up into the sky, and then lower down, and around, are strewn lesser hills, sweeping and undulating from vale to vale, in an endless succession of picturesque beauty.

Passing the strait that opens into the bay, which appears narrower than it really is, from the steep sides of adjacent heights, the river expands, and stretching away on either shore, lie graceful curves and indentations, whose snowy beaches are fringed with pretty dwellings, half hidden beneath the richest tropical foliage. To the left stands the city, built amidst a number of elevations, but like Lisbon, it has neither spire nor dome to relieve the eye along the horizon. Yet this drawback is in a measure lost sight of in contemplating the frowning peak of La Gabia, which seems to hang over, and shade the town itself; but take all in all there are few lovelier scenes the eye can gaze upon, than Rio.

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Just ten years had passed since I sailed from this noble bay, and although I had been the wide world over, in stirring scenes, quite sufficient as I indeed supposed to drive all recollections of it out of my head, into dim obscurity and forgetfulness, yet as we approached the harbor, every point and islet, fort, tower, reef, grove, and hamlet, started vividly before me, as all appeared when I was a boy, and the long years between dwindled away into minutes, and I fancied it but yesterday since we had parted.

I greeted Lord Hood's nose like an old acquaintance, as it reposed in gigantic outline, towering above the surrounding mountains; the small island near the shore with the white tower that was then just begun; the Sugar Loaf with its smooth surface of rocks, and on the other side the Slaver's Bay—palmettos swinging their finger-like branches to and fro; and beyond, the fortress of Santa Cruz, with the sickly yellow diamond of Brazil, waving above; indeed, when the long speaking trumpet was shoved through an embrasure, I knew the old soldier's melancholy howl by intuition. At last the harbor's mouth was passed, we rolled up our sails and sank peacefully to rest on the quiet bosom of the bay.

A mob of us tumbled into the boats; the ashen sails, plied by sinewy arms, soon bumped us against what was once to me the Palace Stairs, but either the water had receded, or land encroached upon the bay, for where the waves once washed the sea wall, and where many a time I have sat kicking my heels in the surf, sucking oranges the while, is now forty feet from the beach, and the wall itself stands in the silliest manner imaginable, quite in the middle of the square. To the left is a tall modern range of warehouses and the hotel Pharou. Swarms of cigar-smoking bipeds were lounging edgeways from the cafés and billiard rooms. I recognized many old familiar faces of the boatmen, and among other rare birds, the overgrown eunich organist, who used to be the wonder of my boyhood—there he stood as of yore, exercising his curiosity in scrutinizing the new comers.

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The tenth of a century makes vast strides towards changing the appearance of things in these electrical times, and although I discovered no difference in beauties of dale, hill or mountain, for the Organos still shot their needle-like peaks as high up into heaven, the weather was quite as calm and hot in the mornings, and as breezy in the afternoons, the same bells were heard ringing the most confused of chimes, squares were as crowded, streets no wider, and negroes as numerous and spicy as ever; yet what I mean is, the animus of the town itself had been transmogrified. The beautiful bay was traversed by hateful little beetles of steamers, drawing long lines of sooty black smoke through the pure air, instead of multitudes of picturesque lateen craft, with the musical chants and cadences of the negro oarsmen, skimming and singing over the water. Then, too, streets were filled with omnibii, cabs, gigs, gondolas, and all other conceivable inventions for locomotion, serving to make one uncomfortable from the very strivings to avoid it: I forgive the entire African races for whistling the latest polkas, or rather *sistling* through their closed teeth, for holding to the ancient custom of affectionately interlacing little fingers, as they come dancing, chattering and jabbering along the streets. Fleas, too, were as lively and vigorous as ever, and I thought I recognised one centenarian, who hopped on me with an ardor truly delightful, upon stepping on shore at the palace stairs. The shopping Rua Ouvidor was still the same incongruous assortment of French and German shops, with here and there an unobtrusive counter, behind which some Levite displayed ebony trays of twinkling brilliants, enough to make the mouth water, eyes wink, and pocket bleed, should a purchase be thought of. Black nurses still held their juvenile charges out from the lattice-work doors and windows, with little bare legs dangling outside, to favor any chance pedestrian with an eleemosynary kick, should he come within reach. Then the same interminable lines of slaves, each a bag of coffee on his head,

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preceded by a leading chorister, with small rattle, by way of accompaniment to the harsh chorus, as they pass swiftly on with a sharp jerking trot to the shipping or warehouses of the port. All this was still the same to me, but in general it was not my Rio, not the spot where my first and boyish impressions were formed, of the voluptuous, luxurious life under tropical suns. The march of invention is rapidly reducing everything to a standard of its own, and I could only sigh over the innovations constituting refinement in civilization, where it seems so little needed.

A very great improvement, in all praise be it said, had taken place in the order and cleanliness of the city—we were not accosted once by mendicants, when formerly they were as thick as lazzaroni in Naples. The police was large, remarkably well organized, and the riots and assassinations of former days were unheard of. The cafés and hotels have kept pace with the times, where one may satisfy his gourmanderie with a certain show of epicurianism, provided his palate be not too delicate for many kinds of fishes and vegetables, with mayhap, at rare intervals, a taste of monkey or paroquet. Yankee ice is very generally used, and a philanthropic person had hung out a banner with "Mint Juleps" inscribed thereon, but the thirst for these cold institutions is not so much felt as in some parts of the United States; for here the weather, though hot and enervating, has not the oppressiveness and lassitude of our summers, and besides, fluids are made sufficiently cool and cooling, through the medium of unglazed water jars, swung gently in the breeze.

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We saw one deformed African attached to a small tray and sign, on which was legibly painted "ginger-beer," evidently meaning ginger pop. We execrated that monster on the spot, and said to ourselves, what is the necessity for leaving home, if we are to be stared out of countenance by our household gods, at the antipodes.

Another trifling peculiarity attracted our attention. I allude to the trumpet-shaped water pipes, sticking boldly out from below every balconied window, of all colors and sizes, reminding us of misshapen angels, with puffed out cheeks, and trombones, invariably found in the upper angles of miraculous, or scriptural paintings: fortunately there was no rain, or we might have been gratified with a douche that the great Preussnitz himself would have been proud of.

By no art or teaching can His Imperial Majesty, with "all the Senate at his heels," be induced to give a respectable currency to the country. The stamped paper of the empire in rais fluctuates like quicksilver at the mart, and it is next to impossible to form any reasonable conjecture what change may take place from day to day. In lieu of this, copper coins, nearly the diameter of ship biscuits, valued from twenty to forty rais, and commonly called "dumps," are used in every day traffic, but should a person require more than one dollar at a time, it were advisable to employ a negro and basket to transport them.

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Among the devices before touched upon, in the way of ambulation, was one which amused us excessively. Nothing less than a four-mule omnibus, driven by the most remarkable Jehu ever beheld—evidently one who had seen, or at least heard of, the natty style things were conducted at Charing Cross before rails were laid. I had the honor to be propelled by this individual a number of times, and it was well worth a "dump" to see him pull on a very dirty buskin glove, the manner he handled the rope reins, give his glazed hat a rap, and button up a huge box coat, with the sun pouring down a stream of noonday fire; then an encouraging yell to the leaders, swinging himself from side to side, away he rattled to the astonishment of every wonder-loving person in the neighborhood. The mules acted up to their natural propensities; at times dashing along the sidewalks, and against houses; again coming to a dead halt, and favoring each other with a few slapping salutes with their heels; then off they clattered once more, until about to double a sharp corner, when if they did not bolt into the pulperia opposite, like a Habanese volante, the conductor, with the most imperturbable dignity, would crack his leathern whip, shout like a devil, and do his possible to run over a covey of miserable lame blackies, who would start up in great bewilderment, like boys catching trapball, without knowing precisely in which direction would be safest to dodge the eccentric vehicle. I always cheered my friend with reiterated marks of approbation, as I look with leniency upon the peculiarities of mankind, and ever make a rule to respect the absurdities of others. The Jehu whose accomplishments I have so faintly portrayed, can be regarded at any hour of the day, on the road to Boto Fogo, and he will be found quite as interesting an object of curiosity as the Falls of Tejuco, to say nothing of the fatigue and expense of the journey.

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CHAPTER III.

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Much of my time was passed with friends on the shores of the bay, a short distance beyond Gloria Hill, and I was in a certain degree relieved from the banging and roaring of cannon fired in compliment to distinguished personages, who appear to select Rio as the place of all others, where they may smell powder to their noses' content; to say nothing of being immured on ship-board after nearly two months' passage. Escaping these disagreeables, I had leisure to stretch my limbs on shore, and enjoy the perfumes of flowers and fruit from the stems that bore them.

It is in the direction of the beach, or, as the Portuguese have it, Praya Flamingo, on the road to Il Cateto, and the charming and secluded little bay of Boto Fogo, that most of the diplomatique corps, and foreign merchants reside. The houses are rarely more than two stories in height, a combination of Venetian and Italian orders of architecture, with heavy projecting cornice,

balconies and verandas, and washed with light straw or bluish tints.

The saloons are always spacious and lofty, with prettily papered walls, and floors of the beautiful, dark polished wood of the country. Nearly all those residences are surrounded by extensive gardens, blooming in bright and brilliant foliage, only matured beneath the burning rays of a vertical sun. There are no springs in Rio, and the grounds are irrigated by miniature aqueducts, led from mountains in the rear; sufficiently large, however, to float in their narrow channels, serpents and many other noxious reptiles, enough to make one's hair stand erect. It is by no means an uncommon occurrence to find the giracea, a venomous snake, insinuating themselves within the sunny marble pavements of steps and porticoes and I was assured by a resident, that one monster after having some four feet cut off from his tail, ran away with head and remaining half with a most cricket-like and surprising degree of celerity. Indeed I was myself a witness to the intrusion of an individual of the scorpion breed, who walked uninvited into the saloon, and was on the point of stepping up a young lady's ankle, when, detecting his intention, with the assistance of a servant, he was enticed into a bottle that he might sting himself or the glass at pleasure. Being somewhat unaccustomed to these little predatory incursions, I was particularly cautious during the remainder of my stay, to examine every article, from a tooth-pick to the couch, before touching the same. Another approximation to the same genus is the white ant, possessing rather a literary turn, and I was told, that it is not unusual for a million or two to devour a gentleman's library—covers and all, in a single night. I have never yet been able to conquer disgust for even docile, harmless, speckled-back lizards, and indeed all the hosts of slimy, crawling reptiles I heartily fear and abhor.

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We found the town in a furor of enthusiasm in admiration of the song and beauty of a French operatique corps. I went thrice and was well repaid for the dollars, in sweet music of Auber and Donizetti—there were two primas—for serious and comique—both, too, primas in prettiness. The Academy of Paris Music had never, perhaps, seen or heard of Mesdames Duval and her partner, but La Sala San Januario had been captivated with both, and beauty covers multitudes of faults, particularly with men, for what care we, if the notes touch the soul, whether a crystal shade higher or lower than Grisi, or Persiani, so long as they flow from rosy lips, that might defy those last-named donnas to rival, even with the brightest carmine of their toilets.

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The theatre itself is a very respectable little place, having three tiers and parquette. The royal box faces the stage, hung with damask. The whole interior of the building was quite Italian—every box railed off with gilded fret work, and lighted with candles swinging in glass shades. The Brazilians are fond of music, and all the world attended each representation, including the Emperor, Empress and Court. As I had, in times past, seen a good deal of Don Pedro, when he was a studious, meditative boy, at the Palace of Boto Fogo, I was somewhat curious to observe the effect of old time's cutting scythe on the Lord's anointed, as well as on the rest of us clay-built mortals. His face and shape of the head had changed very little, but he had grown immensely; tall, awkward, and verging on corpulency even now, though I believe he is only twenty-eight years of age. His Italian wife appeared much older. Both were well and plainly dressed, attended by some half a dozen dames and dons of the court.

The curtain rose as the imperial party took their seats, and there were neither vivas, nor groaning manifestations to express pleasure or disgust, from the audience. All passed quietly and orderly, like sensible persons, who came to hear sweet sounds, and not to be overawed by great people. I made the tour of the donas through a capital lorgnette, and although like Mickey Free, fond of tobacco and ladies, I must pledge my solemn assurances, that with the exception of something pretty, attached to the French company, there was not a loveable woman to be seen. I doubt not but there are rare jewels to be found in out of the way spots, secluded from public gaze, but it was terra incognita to me, and we saw none other than the light molasses-hued damsels, who are fully matured at thirteen, and decidedly *passée* at three and twenty. In the present age it is a questionable inference if saponaceous compounds might not be judiciously used in removing some few stains that nature is entirely innocent of painting; albeit, a lovely Anglo-Saxon of my acquaintance was vastly horrified at thoughts of a friend espousing one of these cream-colored beauties, valued at a *conto* of rais, and shiploads of coffee; and assured the deluded swain, with tears in her eyes, that it would require more than half his fortune to keep his wife in soap—supposing she should acquire the weakness or ambition to become enamored of fresh water.

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CHAPTER IV.

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"Uptorn reluctant from its oozy cave,
The ponderous anchor rises o'er the wave."

FALCONER.

On the twenty-ninth of October, the anchors were loosened from their muddy beds; a light land wind fanned us out of the harbor, and with a white silver moon, we began our dreary march towards Cape Horn.

The following night the ship was dashing over the seas eleven miles the hour. The bell had just struck eight, watch set, and the topmen came dancing gaily down the rigging, here and there one, with a pea jacket snugly tied up and held by the teeth, preparatory to a four hours' snooze in

the hammocks, when a moment after the cry, "Look out, Bill!—Overboard!—Man overboard!" was cried from the main rigging, and amid the bustle that ensued, the voice of the poor drowning wretch was heard in broken exclamations of agony, as the frigate swept swiftly by. Down went the helm, and sails were taken in as she came up to the wind, but by the strangest fatality, both life buoys were with difficulty cast adrift, and even then the blue lights did not ignite. A boat was soon lowered, and sent in the vessel's wake. An hour passed in the search, without hearing or seeing ought but the rude winds and breaking waves; and this is the last ever known of poor Bill de Conick.

He struck the channels from a fall of twenty feet up the rigging, and was probably either encumbered by heavy clothing, or too much injured to be able to reach the buoys. [Pg 21]

Friday, too, the day of all others in our superstitious calendar for those "who go down to the sea in ships:" even amid a large crew, where many, if not all, are utterly reckless of life, an incident of this nature sheds a momentary gloom around, and serves to make many reflect, that the same unlucky accident might have wrapped any other in the same chilling shroud. There are few more painful sights in the world than to behold the imploring looks, with outstretched hands, of a fellow being,

—"When peril has numbed the sense and will,
Though the hand and the foot may struggle still—"

silently invoking help, when all human aid is unavailing—before the angry waves press him below the surface, to a sailor's grave. Aye, there can be no more dreadful scenes to make the strong man shudder than these. Yet it seems a wise ordination in our natures, that the sharp remembrance of these painful incidents is so rapidly dispelled. This very characteristic of the sailor, his heedless indifference to the future, in a great degree makes up his measure of contentment in all the toils and dangers that beset his course, unconscious that time,

"Like muffled drums, are beating funeral marches to the grave."

A fortnight flew quickly by, the good ship going at as lively a pace. We passed the wide mouth of La Plata, buttoned our jackets, and slept under blankets. As the weather became colder, mammy Carey and her broods, with goneys, albatrosses, boobies and cape pigeons, swarmed around the wake, to pick up the stray crumbs. Divers hooks and lines were thrown out to entice them aboard, but for a long interval all efforts proved fruitless, until one morning, an albatross abstractedly swallowed the bait, and much to his surprise was pulled on board, like to a boy's kite. He measured eleven feet four inches, with enormous quills and feathers, and such a bed of down the monster had concealed about his oily person, was never known nearer than an eider duck. He had large, fierce, black eyes, too, with a beak sharp, and hard enough to have nipped a silver dollar into bits. Whales favored us occasionally with an inspection—rolled their round snouts out of water—tossed a few tons of foam in the air—threw up their enormous flukes—struck the waves one splashing blow, and then went down to examine the soundings. Thus we sailed along the dull shores of Patagonia, with the long taper top gallant masts replaced by stumps to stand up more obstinately against the furious tempests of the "still vexed Bermoothes" of Cape Horn, the bugbear of all landsmen, and the place of all others, where more yarns are spun, wove, and wondered at, than from China to Peru. He was a bold sailor any way, who first doubled the Cape, whatever others may be who follow. At last came our turn, and on the afternoon of the sixteenth day from Rio, the clouds lifting, we saw the dark, jagged, rugged bluffs and steeps of Staten and Terra del Fuego. The next morning we rounded Cape St. John, and were received by the long swelling waves of the sister ocean. If the great Balboa when standing on the mountains of Panama, regarding the placid waves of the equatorial ocean, could have known the tempestuous gales and giant seas of the polar regions, sporting around this snowy cape, he might possibly have been less overjoyed at his grand discovery. Our pleasant weather and smooth seas clung to us, to the last, and, as if loth to leave, gave one unclouded view of Staten Land, like a casting in bronze, with the bleak, snow-capped heights, tinged by the rising sun. An hour after the bright sky was veiled by mist, the rising gale, from the west, brought hail and chilling rain. We lost sight of land, reefed the sails close down, and then bid defiance to the storm. Nothing venture nothing gain, is as true with ships' rigging, as thimble rigging, and we staked all our hopes on a rapid passage. Sorry work we made of it. The very birds were obliged to trim their pinions with great nicety in beating to windward—even then a terrible gust ruffled their plumes, and away they were driven, eddying, and screaming, to leeward. Still we strove the tempests to disarm, by stout hearts, and tough canvas, with partial success, too, for even with adverse winds, we managed to get to the southward, besides making something in the voyage; blessed, also, by a cool, bracing atmosphere, and day and twilight the whole twenty-four hours. Though the sun in tracking his bright career in either hemisphere is supposed to tinge the land and sea beneath his blaze, with what is generally called summer, yet an exception to the rule exists in vicinity of Cape Horn. The days, it is true, are longer; in fact the night is day, but the sun diffuses no pleasant, genial warmth, and is only seen peering out from behind the clouds, with a careworn, desolate, blurred face, as if he was ashamed of his company, and had marched entirely out of his beat.

In all this time hardly an incident occurred to make us even wink, except, perhaps, the tumble of a topman from aloft, who was picked up with a fractured spine; and a little sauciness, reproved by our stout armorer, through the intervention of an iron rod upon the limbs of a tall negro, thereby breaking his arm in two places. One's bones are brittle in frosty weather, and young Vulcan was made to submit to severe personal damages. I must chronicle also the sudden demise [Pg 24]

of a venerable sergeant of marines, who departed this life one cold night, while relieving the guard under the forecandle—the next day he was consigned to the mighty deep, divested of all his worldly accoutrements, save a hammock and a couple of round shot, to pull him into eternity. We had not exchanged nautical salutations since leaving port, and well nigh believed the ocean was deserted; however, one day there came looming through the mist and rain, a large ship, with all her flaunting muslin spread, running before the gale—the distance was too great to make out her colors, but sufficiently near to cause some of us to wonder when our bark's prow would be turned in the same direction, and the sheets eased off for home. Speaking of ships, while at Rio an American vessel of war arrived, and our sympathies were universally enlisted on learning that she had been two long months trying to reach Valparaiso, but when off the Horn, or in fact after having passed it, she experienced tremendous hurricanes and giant waves, which blew the sails to ribbons, tore away the boats, shattered the stern frame, and left her altogether in a most distressing and heart-rending condition, consequently she put back. It was worthy of remark, however, that she came buoyantly into the harbor, tricked out in a brand new suit of clothes, and when a number of officers went on board to survey her pitiable plight, they could find neither leak nor strain, and very sensibly concluded she was one of the staunchest and best corvettes in the navy, as indeed she was. John Bull took back his mails and declared he would never take advantage again of a crack Yankee sloop-of-war to forward important dispatches by.

Our pleasures were now limited, no one raised his nose above the taffrail if not compelled; our chief resource was reading, and after absorbing heaps of ephemeral trash drifting about the decks, we sought the library and poured over ponderous tomes of physics, history or travels. Books find their true value a shipboard—cut off from all amusement of the land, we derive the full benefit by reading, for more than reading's sake, or for the purpose of killing time in silly abstraction, and many a stupid author is thoroughly digested, and many labored narrations of voyages are carefully studied, whose narrators have "compiled very dull books from very interesting materials," and they should be grateful to governments for purchasing, and thankful for indifferent persons to peruse them.

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On the advent of Saturday nights, when the wind was blowing cold and dreary, we sought the lowest depths of the frigate. *Facilis decensus averni*, in other words, "'tis easy to dive into the cock-pit"—there in a cozy state-room, we made a jovial little party, conducted on strictly private principles, for the purpose of seeking medical advice. We consulted a pot-bellied gentleman, with a small copper kettle on his head, illumined by a spirit lamp, whilom, termed Doctor Faustus—unlike the Sangrado practitioners, the Doctor constantly poured out instead of in. One humorous fellow, the President of our club, who was rather stout on his pins, and *carée par la base*, poured forth wit and hot water by the hour, diversifying both occasionally, by ravishing strains on the violin, and chanting Virginia melodies, which acted on the heels of one of our attendants, in a complicated series of jigs, called the double shuffle.

At last the fates befriended us; a new moon appeared, and the west wind having apparently blown itself out of breath, a breeze sprang up from south-east and commenced blowing the sea and ourselves in an opposite direction; snow fell thick and fast, driving the thermometer below freezing point, and barometer running rapidly up. As the flakes fell and adhered to rigging and sails, the entire mass of ropes, spars and hampers were soon clothed in icy white jackets. The sun broke out for a moment and converted a showering cloud of snow into a magnificent bow. Rainbows of sun and moon are beheld by the million, but seldom a novelty like a *snow-bow*! The ship was hurried along at great speed on the sixtieth parallel, until reaching the meridian of eighty, when we bore away to the northward. Congratulating ourselves with the hope that the clerk of the weather had forgotten to announce our arrival to the court of winds in the great South Pacific; faint delusion!—off the gusty isle of Chiloe, we had a hug from a gale, which, however, exhausted itself in a few hours, and then left us to flounder about on the mountainous backs of waves as best we might—then there was an interval of rain and squalls from all quarters, when the breeze again came fair, and on the second of December, we anchored at Valparaiso, just five weeks from Rio Janeiro.

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CHAPTER V.

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There can be no greater satisfaction to a wind-buffed rover, than sailing into a new place, and the consolation of knowing there are still others behind the curtain. It was thus we felt, and after rounding the Point of Angels, and casting anchor in the Bay of Paradise, fancied ourselves quite in altissimo spirits, if not precisely in cielo.

On approaching the Chilian coast, the eye of course seeks the white-robed Cordilléras, and well worthy the sight they are—forty leagues inland, cutting the sky in sharp, clear outlines, with peaks of frosted silver, until the attention is fairly arrested by the stupendous peak of the Bell of Quillota, and Tupongati, the colossus of all, tumbling as it were, from the very zenith—then nearer, diminuendoing down to the ocean, are generations of lesser heights, each, however, a giant in itself, until their bases are laved by the Pacific. It is a grand *coup d'œil* at rise or set of sun; but there is a sameness about masses of reddish rocks, ravines and mountains of the foreground, and one is apt to doubt the immense height of those beyond, from the gradual rise around. Moreover, there is nothing striking or diversified, as with their tall brothers in Switzerland or Asia; snowy tops without glaciers; frightful chasms, and sweeping valleys, without

torrents or verdure; all this is nature's design, but the decorations have been forgotten, and bare walls of mount and deep is all that appears finished. [Pg 28]

Little can be said commendatory of Valparaiso; and truly I think the most rabid of limners would meet with difficulty in getting an outside view from any point; for, owing to formation of the land, furrowed into scores of ravines by the rush and wash of creation, with the town running oddly enough along the ridges, or down in the gullies, it becomes a matter of optical skill, for a single pair of eyes to compass more than a small portion at a glance.

The houses are mean; streets narrow and nasty; the former are built of adobies—unbaked bricks of great thickness—or lathed, plastered and stuccoed; the latter paved with small pebbles no bigger than pigeons' eggs, and only those running with the shores of the bay, are at all walkable. A little way back in the *quebradas*, or broken ground, is like stepping over angular Flemish roofs, and with a long leg and short one, to preserve an equipoise, you may walk along these inclined planes without any serious personal danger, save what consists in liquids thrown on your head, and the torture endured by your corns.

There is not a single public edifice in Valparaiso worthy of even passing admiration. The custom house is most conspicuous, facing the port; the theatre fronts one of two small squares, and but a few meanly built churches are to be found, packed away, out of sight, under the steep hills back of the city. Improvements, however were planned, and rapidly progressing. The port for many years had been steadily rising in wealth and population, under the sure incentives of a large foreign trade, and the enterprise of foreign residents; and all that appears necessary to make the city much in advance of other commercial rivals in the Pacific, is that Dame Nature should play excavating Betty on the next earthquake, and remove a few of the obtrusive hills that encroach so abruptly upon the bay. [Pg 29]

There is an unusual bustle pervading the quay and streets, for a Spanish Creole town. As ships cannot approach the unprotected shores to discharge their cargoes, the port is crowded with multitudes of lighters and whale boats, constantly passing to and fro, while porters, bending under packages of goods, copper, and produce, are moving from the *duana*, or warehouses, to the mole and beach. Videttes of mounted police are posted at every corner, and small guards of soldiers in the streets, supervising the exertions of gangs of convicts at work for the authorities. In emulation, also, of the means of locomotion in vogue at Rio, there has been introduced a ricketty contrivance, of the cab genus, called *birloches*, to which is attached a horse within the shafts, and another to caper at the side, similar to a Russian drosky, until a relay is required, when they are changed. They rattle through the town with reckless speed, urged by lash and spur of the driver mounted on the outside beast. The same system is pursued on the longest journeys, with merely the addition of a larger drove of animals to make up their own posts from the cavalcade—the only respite from labor remaining in the privilege of travelling at the same rate without the load.

Shops are sufficiently numerous, filled with manufactured goods from Europe and the United States, with lots of gimcrackery from China. In the old *plaza* at night, almost every inch of ground is occupied by itinerant venders of wares, toys, shoes, combs, fried fish, fruit, and *dulces*; each squatted on his own cloth counter, with paper lanterns at the sides. The proprietors of these ambulating establishments are women and children. A fine band discourses delightful music, on alternate evenings, and when one feels disposed to say pretty speeches to pretty damas, moving gracefully around, and enjoy what is in reality a touch of Spanish life, it were as well to saunter an hour on the *plaza*. [Pg 30]

Valparaiso is extremely disproportioned in breadth to its great length, necessarily so, from the jutting elevations that hang over it. Immediately back of the heart of the city are a number of these salient spurs, on one of which is planted the Campo Santo—foreign and native cemeteries—while those to the right have been, by trouble and means of the foreigners, cleared away into small esplanades, having neat and pretty cottages, surrounded by shrubbery—one, the flora pondia, a very beautiful, but diminutive tree, blossoms luxuriantly, with delicate, white flowers, shaped like inverted cones, or bells, and although shedding no odor during the day, yet at night it fairly renders the air oppressive with perfume. These lofty turrets command fine views of bay, shipping, and port, fully repaying the fatigue of getting up, in the absence of dust, dirt and noise.

To the left, bordering close upon the harbor, is a long curving promenade, called *El almendral*—almond grove—for no other reason possibly than that there is not a vestige of trees or verdant leaves to be seen. Away at the southward, in the opposite extremity of the city, on what the sailors designate as the fore and main tops, is another succession of sharply riven ravines, filled and faced with clusters of one storied dwellings, from the summits down to the narrow gorges between. It requires some geographical knowledge to explore these regions, and though the toil of clambering about the uneven chasms and numerous lanes, be not pleasant, yet one is recompensed while mounting the steep acclivities by the most novel and striking views of the sea or city at every turn—never being able to determine where the next flight will lead—whether but a few yards from the spot just left, with a bird's eye view of the shipping, or shut up in small causeways between redly-tiled roofs, with the scene closed by barriers of whitewashed walls, and even after attaining another airy eminence, under the belief of having the broad ocean spread out at your feet, one is startled to find himself gazing quite in another direction. These tops, with the *quebradas* between, are portions of the terrace, where we spent some pleasant hours, dancing the *samacueca*, or fandangos, to the tinkling of guitars, swept by nimble fingers of sloe-eyed Chilians. We were always received courteously and sincerely, and in making ourselves [Pg 31]

particularly agreeable, have been occasionally treated to a sip of weak rum negus.

Once, accompanied by a friend in these exploring rambles, we had the good fortune, through the medium of cigarillos, smiles, and a smattering of Castilian, to make the acquaintance of a hospitable old lady and her two pretty daughters. Carmencita was my favorite—lovely Carmencita! She was very pretty—large, very large black eyes, half shut with roguery, or coquetry; an adorable plump little figure, and what with a fairy touch of the guitar, a soft, plaintive voice, and a fondness for cigarillos, we thought her one of the most enchanting amourettes imaginable. Poor Carmen! She had just lost by the fell destroyer her lover, who was a superintendent of mines in San Felipe, but who had the generosity during his last moments, to leave his tender sweetheart a handsome legacy, a letter to the French consul, and his blessing. Pretty Carmen! She preserved each and all of these interesting relics, with great care, and although, "Souvent femme varie, bien fol est qui s'y fie," she resisted all further assaults upon her heart—confessed that I had *buen sentimientos*, but, nevertheless, she had resolved to live and die within the severest rules of platonism.

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I know not how or why, but there certainly is an irresistible charm, that floats like a mist around Spanish creoles; indeed, creoles of all nations have a style of fascination peculiarly their own, which renders them truly bewitching, with the power of retaining their spells as long, and as strong as any. Not that their features are more beautiful, eyes brighter, or manners even as refined as those in older countries, for they are not; but still they have soft, languishing eyes, rich, dark hair, and pliant, graceful forms, combined with the greatest possible charm in woman, earnest, unaffected, and amiable dispositions.

It is to be wondered at, too, that in remote countries, where so few advantages are attainable in education, knowledge of the world and society, that they should be so well supplied with pretty airs and graces. It can only be attributable to that sublimated coquette Nature herself, who provides those little goods the gods deny.

We had the pleasure of attending a number of *tertulias*, or evening parties given in the houses of native residents, and witnessing the dances of the country. The *tertulia* is easy and sociable, without form or ceremony. The *bayles* are more staid affairs, where ladies are seated in silent rows by themselves—men very hairy and grummy—taking advantage of intervals in dancing to lounge on the piazzas, swallow a few mouthfuls of cigar smoke, (not a bad institution this in warm weather,) and exclaim, *dios que calor!* (how hot.) At one of these assemblies we first saw a minuet called the *samacueca*. It was undertaken by a beautiful young married lady, in company with a rather corpulent old gentleman, and danced in a very sprightly, rogueish manner. The prelude and music is similar to that of fandangos, but the movements and *motif* are far more indelicate, and it is by no means a matter of difficulty to divine the meaning. Although these innocent ballets would no doubt shockingly jar the nerves of a more refined audience, and many a performer might be considered "too fine a dancer for a virtuous woman," yet I am convinced that among these unaffected creoles, naught is seen in the least degree improper, but they are regarded from infancy as the harmless customs and amusements of their country. As an individual I am fond of a notion of cayenne to existence, and only clapped hands, or cried, *brava! buena! bonita!*

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The opera was in full blast—the house large and convenient, with very pretty scenic displays, and quite a brilliant constellation of Italian stars to illumine the proscenium, but on no representation did there appear evidence in the boxes that the manager's purse was filled. We had the honor of being presented to the primo basso, Signor Marti, who conversed pleasantly with a melodramatic voice from apparently very low down in his boots. We listened to his sweet *seguidillas* with rapture.

We found the climate truly delightful. It was the summer of the southern ocean—pure, pleasant breezes with the sun, and clear, calm, sparkling nights by moon or stars. Little or no rain falls, except in the winter months, and as a consequence where the soil is fine and dry, dust covers everything in impalpable clouds, at the same time affording a desirable atmosphere for that lively individual, the flea!

On the coast of Syria the Arabs hold to the proverb that the Sultan of fleas holds his court in Jaffa, and the Grand Vizier in Cairo; but so far as our experience went in Valparaiso, we could safely give the lie to the adage. As an unobtrusive person myself, I have a constitutional antipathy to the entire race, and invariably use every precaution to avoid their society—all to no purpose. They found me in crowds or solitudes—alighted on me in swarms, like the locusts of Egypt, destroying enjoyment on shore, and I fully resolved never to venture abroad again, of mine own free will, until some enterprising Yankee shall invent a trap for their annihilation.

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I remember one mild afternoon sauntering on the almendral, when my attention was drawn to a lithe, young damsel on the sidewalk, who, whilst tripping along with a dainty gait, suddenly gave her foot a backward twist, with a dexterous pinch at the pretty ankle, and again went on like a bird. She had captured a flea! but it was a style of piedermain worthy of the great Adrien; a feat I was prepared to believe nearly equal to mounted Cossacks picking up pins from the ground with their teeth, at full speed—in fact, something really wonderful, and although I was quite confounded, and almost speechless with amazement, yet I followed mechanically in order to see what she could or would accomplish next. Nor could I repress some audible expressions of encouragement; but the fair *donçella*, unconscious of having performed anything remarkable, gave me a look, as much as to say, in the language of a touching nautical ballad—

"Go away young man—my company forsake."

So not wishing to appear intrusive, I returned pensively to mine inn.

Fashions in ladies' dress are similar to those in Europe or the United States, and even among the lower orders the bonnet is worn; but to my way of thinking, a Spanish girl's forte is in a black satin robe and slippers, a flowing *mantilla*, fine, smooth jetty tresses, and a waving fan to act as breakflash to sparkling eyes!

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Of the men of Chili, or at least those of them whom transient visitors encounter in the usual lounging resorts of *vaut-riens*,—theatres, cafés, tertulias, plazas, and other purlieus, they cannot be said to compare with their captivating sisters—for a more indolent, hairy, cigar-puffing race of bipeds never existed. In dress they ape the faded fashions of Europe, retaining, however, the native cloak costume of the *poncho*. It is a capital garment for either the road or the saddle, leaving free play to the arms, and at the same time a protection from dust or rain. It is worn by all classes, and composed of the gaudiest colors, occasionally resembling a remarkably bright pattern of a drawing room carpet, with the head of the wearer thrust through a slit in the centre.

The President of Chili during our visit was General Bulnes, a soldier of distinction in the civil wars of his own state, with a laurel or two won in numerous bloody blows dealt upon the neighboring Peruvians. As the hero of Yungai, his Excellency was elevated to his present position by the bayonets of the troops, but latterly he evinced a keen sagacity in reducing to a small force this army of vagabonds, who are prone, in South American republics, in the absence of more agreeable occupation, to amuse themselves with hatching conspiracies for the purpose of slitting the throats of their former coadjutors.

There was but one regiment of infantry, and a few hundred cavalry in Valparaiso. The militia system, as with us, had been partially introduced throughout the provinces. It answered every purpose at much less expense than regular troops, indeed excellently well, as a police, and to the credit of Señor Bulnes' subalterns, good order was most strictly and promptly enforced in his seaport.

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Every one subscribed to the opinion that the government was firmly established, which may have been attributable, in some measure, to the decided argument suggested by the President. Shooting, instead of talking, down all opposition. By these decided proceedings he has been enabled to keep turbulent spirits in check, and under fear of his displeasure, there had not been a revolution for a long time, which was, in itself, surprising.

Chili undoubtedly possesses resources within herself to become one of the most prosperous and flourishing of the independent states of the South American continent; and could the government be induced to take proper steps to invite a more general emigration, and make it the interest of emigrants to settle permanently in the country, by their vigor and enterprize, the true development of the mining and agricultural wealth might be easily accomplished, and this communion of interests might be the means of securing Chili from the doom which seems destined to await her sister republics. But notwithstanding the rapid strides of liberality throughout the world, it appears that the rulers of all the rich soil of America, washed by the Pacific, still maintain a cramped policy, actuated by religious intolerance, and an indolence unknown elsewhere. Destitute of energy themselves, the voracious foreigner soon fattens on their resources, and in the end, having no ties to bind him to a country where the religion precludes his forming closer domestic relations, embarks his easily acquired fortune, to end his days under an enlightened government.

It is indeed melancholy that such baneful influences do prevail, when the whole universe is subscribing to more liberal notions, but as I do not purpose preaching a capucinade for or against the Chilians, or take any extraordinary measures to discover vice or follies, what might be termed the pursuit of knowledge under difficulties, and apprehensive lest any one should entertain ideas of me widely at variance to my real and confirmed opinions, I simply assure them, I have long since given over all philanthropic researches for that which does not affect my heart or digestion. I once lived with a Russian, who was blessed with a stomach and organs durable as the platina of his native mines, and he ever assured me, after first finishing a flask of absinthe, that hard hearts and good digestions were the only true elements of happiness in life. Becoming a convert to this doctrine, I care not for the foibles or follies of mankind, so long as people do not pick my pockets, or tread on my toes. I take more delight in seeing a child skip the rope, a monkey at his tricks, or a fish jump out of water, than all the palaces or churches on earth, and I had much rather chat an hour with a pert *dame de comptoir*, than dine with Señor Bulnes—nor were my spirits affected by learning the vast amount of copper exported, or the quantity of tea and tobacco smuggled; neither dispensations reduced the price of billiards, or induced laundry women to lave linen a whit the whiter; thus the truth being apparent that I am an indifferent worldly person, I make the merit of my necessities, in striving to live the space allotted me in the world, and not for it.

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And now, if I be forgiven for venting this egotistic digression and harangue, I promise to make my mouth a *mare clausum* in future, for all personal grievances.

We were aroused one morning at peep of day by the heavy, booming report of a gun from the frigate, and on tearing open our eyelids, saw the chequered cornet flying at the fore, the signal of sailing. Anathematizing ships and seas, we shook fleas and dust from our heels, and repaired forthwith on board. Breakfast over, the shrill whistles of boatswain and mates called up anchor; much easier said than done, that ponderous instrument being loth to leave his bed. And it was not until after a tremendous amount of cursing and heaving had been expended, that it deigned to be roused out at all; even then, the ship under topsails, with a fresh breeze, and forty fathoms water, the strain was enormous—when by a sudden surge, owing to a number of nonsensical contrivances of iron teeth biting the breathing cable, they let go their gripe, and out flew the chain, making the whole vessel tremble from its quivering jar and whirl. When its fury was a little exhausted, the brawny compresses were drawn, and the unruly gentleman brought to a stand. Then great apprehensions were felt for the seamen in the chain lockers. They were pulled out alive, with only a broken leg, and a multitude of painful contusions. How they escaped being torn into atoms, in a confined box; six feet square, during the frightful contortions and vibrations of the immense iron snake, was little less than a miracle.

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At noon we were clear of the harbor, and as the sun went down, he gave us a last glimpse of the Bell of Quillota, and his tall companion, Tupongati. The wind was fair, we murmured that beautiful saline sentiment, "The ship that goes, the wind that blows, and lass that loves a sailor." I sighed adieu to Carmencita, ordered my valet of the bedchamber, Giacomo, to arrange my four poster of a hammock, and then in dreams forgot the past.

The fourth day out we passed near to a cluster of desolate, uninhabited islands—St. Ambrose and Felix—the first about two miles in length, and rising abruptly from the ocean, to the height of fifteen hundred feet. Numbers of queer-shaped, pointed, rocky islets, white with guano, were grouped along the base of the island, and through one was cut, by some action of the water, a well-defined arch, open to the sea, like a telescope.

Pursuing an undeviating track, with glorious seas, skies and winds, on the last day of the year we crossed the equator, in a longitude of 110°. During this period there were two deaths; one a good old man from Deutschland, named Jerry Wilson. On being asked an hour before he expired, how he felt—"First rate," said Jerry, and no doubt he is now, if not then. The other was a youth named Tildon, caused by a spasmodic affection of the throat, so as to prevent swallowing food, until he absolutely starved to death. He made his last plunge as the sun went down. The stately frigate, careless of all, went flying with wide-stretched pinions, towards her destination, at a speed of Jack the Giant-killer's boots. On the 20th of January, land ho! Alta California! For forty-eight hours, we sailed lightly along the base of a compact ridge of mountains that rose like a sea wall, seamed into ten thousand furrows, the summits fringed with lofty forest trees, and not a cloud visible in high heaven, then appeared a green, shelving point, of waving pines and verdure, terminated by a reef of fearful, black rocks. Giving this a wide berth, we shortly entered a wide, sweeping indentation of the coast, in shape of a fish hook, with the barb at the southern end, furling our sails, and moored ship in the Bay of Monterey, forty days from Valparaiso.

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CHAPTER VII.

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Before resuming the thread of this narrative, it may be as well to give a brief summary of events that had transpired previously to our arrival.

Pending disturbances between the United States and Mexico, when the quarrel had not reached an open rupture, much excitement prevailed in Upper California, through the agency of a few foreigners, who wished to revolutionize the country. At this epoch, Mr. Fremont, of the U. S. Topographical Engineers, was in the heart of California, engaged upon scientific explorations, ostensibly in relation to the practicability of the best route for emigration to Oregon. There is reason to believe, also, that he was instructed to feel the geographical pulse of the natives, as well as the mountain passes. Be this as it may, Mr. Fremont was encamped near Monterey, with sixty followers, when José Castro, a Mexican officer in command of the province, issued a proclamation, ordering Fremont to leave the territory immediately, and at the same time threatened to drive every foreigner away also. Fremont and his party, after holding Castro's bombast in contempt, and his troops at bay, at last began to march, quite leisurely, towards the northern route for Oregon: these occurrences happened early in the spring of 1846. On the 13th of June the first movement began, on the river Sacramento, near Sutler's Fort, and one of the tributaries to the head waters of San Francisco. This attack was composed of a few lawless vagabonds, who, carrying a banner of white, with a red border and grizzly bear, styled themselves the "Bear Party:" they were of all nations, though claiming citizenship in the United States. After stealing a drove of horses, belonging to the Californians, their numbers were increased by other marauding gentry to forty, when moving rapidly around the northern shores of the Bay of San Pablo, they surprised and captured the little garrison of Sonoma, under charge of General Guadalupe Valléjo. Then they committed excesses, without the slightest recognized authority, but purely, it appears, from love of a little independent fighting and thieving on their own private accounts. Meanwhile a large naval force had been hovering on the Mexican coast for a year previously, awaiting the first blow to be dealt on the other side. Intelligence of the battles on the Rio Grande reached Mazatlan in June, and Commodore Sloat, who was there at the time, sailed for Monterey with the squadron, arrived in July, and on the 7th hoisted the American flag,

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and took formal and legitimate possession of the territory. The same course was pursued at San Francisco. A week afterwards the frigate Congress arrived, and Sloat, transferring his pennant to Commodore Stockton, returned home. The new Commander-in-Chief then sailed for San Pedro, three hundred miles down the coast; where disembarking a force of three hundred seamen and marines, he marched towards the capital of Upper California, Pueblo de los Angeles, a town some thirty miles inland. On the route, he found a body of five hundred men, under Pico, and Castro, the military governor of the territory. The Californians broke up their camp and dispersed, before getting a glance of the sailors' bayonets. Stockton occupied Los Angeles, received the submission of the native authorities and citizens, placed a small garrison, returned to San Pedro, where he re-embarked for San Francisco; in the interim the settlements of the valleys of Santa Clara and Sonoma were occupied by American forces.

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Fremont overtaken on his way through Oregon by Lieut. Gillespie, retraced his steps to California, and learning the U. S. flag had been hoisted in Monterey, proceeded with a battalion of settlers to the lower country, where they were duly enrolled. At San Francisco news reached Stockton that the natives, six hundred strong, had risen after his departure. The Savannah sailed to aid the small garrison, which, however, had been obliged to capitulate, and Captain Mervine, with three hundred men, was beaten by a much smaller force.

The Commodore sailed again in the beginning of November, and landed at San Diego with about 500 men. While at this place, General Kearny with 100 dragoons arrived from a toilsome march of nearly three months from Santa Fé. At the Pass of San Pascual, he fell in with a Californian force under Andreas Pico, and after a severe skirmish, beat them off, though with great loss to himself—eighteen of his saddles were emptied, including three officers, and as many more badly wounded. Forming a junction with Commodore Stockton, they left San Diego for San Angelos. After a toilsome march of 150 miles, through a broken and mountainous country, on the 8th and 9th of January, their passage was opposed by Governor Pico and Castro, at the river San Gabriel and plains of La Mesa, heading a body of 500 cavalry and four field guns; after an obstinate resistance, the Californians were put to flight. Subsequently, they fell back upon Colonel Fremont, who, with the volunteers, were en route to unite with the naval forces from San Siego. The Californian leaders again capitulated and signed an armistice. This was the position of affairs on our arrival at Monterey—a few days later General Kearny arrived, after his difficulties with Commodore Stockton and Fremont, in relation to the governorship of the territory.

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The news we received was by no means inspiring, nor even the perspective view of matters becoming better. Among minor details, the wreck of the schooner Shark, at Columbia river—the drowning of a launch load of sailors and two officers, in San Francisco, and a host of more trivial misfortunes. The vessels of the squadron were dispersed up and down the coast, necessarily scattering men and officers at different posts, for the purpose of retaining and subjugating the country; but of course rendering the ships generally inefficient, from the great diminution of their complements. The natives had been confounded and bewildered by speeches and proclamations—relays of fresh commanders-in-chief, who, amid their own official bickerings, never ceased forming new governments, organizing armies, appointing officers, civil and military—but what served in a great degree to urge matters to a crisis, was the banding together of a few mongrel bodies of volunteers, who enhanced the pleasure of their otherwise agreeable society, by pillaging the natives of horses, cattle, saddles, household utensils, and the like, in quite a marauding, buccaneering, independent way; all of course under the apparent legal sanction of the United States' government, and not a doubt but demanded by the imperative necessity of their patriotic plunderers themselves. The result was easily foretold. These miserable Californians, who at first were not averse to subscribe to our laws, and to come under the flag peacefully and properly, were soon screwed up to such a maze of fear, uncertainty, and excitement, as to make all future arrangements an affair of exceeding difficulty. Besides, another important obstacle intervened; they were to be convinced that the Americans really intended to hold permanent possession of their country, and not to make another revoke, as could be reasonably inferred from the invasion of a few years previous, when we so quickly resigned the conquest—a tergiverse proceeding, which they, as well as more enlightened nations, were somewhat at a loss to comprehend. Thus judging from experience of the past, they had no desire to make themselves obnoxious to their Mexican rulers, in case a like event should occur again; and consequently, in the absence of a sufficiency of those convincing arguments done up in military jackets and trousers, with muskets by their sides, to overawe even a thin population over so great an extent of territory, the natives, even those at first most favorably disposed, seized the lance, took a decided stand, and with the prospect of doing more fighting than was originally contracted for.

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These were the causes principally instrumental in bringing about the last outbreak. But the Californians, without organization, arms, or competent leaders, though with all the elements to prolong the contest, seeing fresh arrivals of ships and troops appear on their coast, were induced to throw by the lance for the lasso, and agree to an honorable capitulation. Milder influences prevailed; steps were taken to tranquilize people's minds by a spirit of conciliation dictated by good sense. Useless and annoying restrictions were abolished, property of every description was returned or liberally paid for, prisoners discharged, paroles annulled, the blue jackets, playing soldiers on shore, were ordered to their respective ships, and the volunteers disbanded. All this tended in a great measure to reassure the natives of an amicable endeavor on our part to make the new yoke rest as lightly as possible on their shoulders.

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The rain came down in a steady drizzle, as we anchored in our new haven, but as the falling water thinned, and rolled partially along the land, we discerned an endless succession of green gentle slopes and valleys, with heights of just a medium between hills and mountains, rising gradually from the shores of the bay, clothed and crowned with magnificent vegetation. We did not call to mind any land naturally so picturesque and beautiful. Afterwards, when our excursions had extended for many leagues in all directions, we were ever amazed to perceive on every side the loveliness of plain, hill, and valley still the same. Indeed, for leagues in some directions it presented the appearance of extensive artificial parks, decked and brilliant with a carpeting of rich grasses and flowers, shaded by noble clusters of wide-spreading oaks, all entirely free from undergrowth.

The town of Monterey, if it could be dignified by the title, we found a mean, irregular collection of mud huts, and long, low, adobie dwellings, strewn promiscuously over an easy slope, down to the water's edge. The most conspicuous was the *duana*—Custom House—a spacious frame building near the landing, which unquestionably had in times past been the means of yielding immense revenues to the Mexican exchequer, but now its roomy store-houses were empty and silent. Neither men nor merchandise disturbed its quiet precincts. Notwithstanding the rain, numbers of us resolved to dare the moisture, and I, for one, would wade about on land, up to my neck in water, at any time to get quit of a ship after forty days aquatic recreation; but here there was no resisting the gratefully green appearance of the shores around us: we were soon stowed in a boat—the oars dipped smart and strong in the water, and we went merrily towards the land. Indeed I have invariably observed that men-of-war's men are wont to use their arms with much vigor, on first pulling on shore in a strange port; a physical characteristic which I am led to attribute to a desire on their part to test the virtues of any liquid compounds to be met with in the abodes of hospitable publicans. The anchorage was barely half a mile from the shore, and in a few minutes we disembarked at a little pier, that only partially served to check the rolling swell from seaward; but what's a wet foot in a fit of enthusiasm, or a heavy shower! Nothing, certainly, so we scrambled up the slimy steps, and while on the point of giving a yell of delight, to announce our arrival in California, my pedal extremities flew upwards and down I sank, making a full length *intaglio* in the yielding mud—this was my first impression, but after getting decently scraped by Jack's knives, I became less excitable, and took intense delight during the course of the afternoon, in beholding my companions going through precisely the same performances. By cautious navigation we reached the main street, then our progress was dreadfully slow and laborious. The mud—a sticky, red pigment, lay six good inches on the driest level, and at every step our feet were disengaged by a powerful jerk, and a deep, guttural noise from the slippy holes; occasionally, too, we were forced to climb ungainly barricades of timber, with here and there a piece of ordnance gazing ferociously out into the surrounding country. Although a casual observer might naturally have supposed that the mud would have offered a sufficient barrier to all the armies ever raised, still, as trouble had been brewing, and most of the garrison withdrawn for an expedition into the interior, these precautions were quite an imposing display, which was, no doubt, all intended. At last, by dint of perseverance, we attained a firm foothold in the barracks, and then had breath and leisure to look around.

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Monterey, before the war, contained about five hundred people, but on our advent there was scarcely a native to be seen: all the men had gone to join their belligerent friends in the southern provinces, leaving their property and dwellings to be guarded by their wives and dogs; even their ladies bore us no good will, and our salutations were returned by a surly *adios*, extorted from closed teeth and scowling faces. The dogs were more civil, and even when showing their fangs, were sagacious enough to keep beyond the chastening reach of Yankee arms. There were a goodly number of sentinels on the alert, prowling about, with heavy knives in their girdles, and the locks of their rifles carefully sheltered from the rain; and at night it became a matter of some bodily danger for an indifferent person to come suddenly in view of one of these vigilant gentlemen, for with but a tolerable ear for music he might detect the sharp click of a rifle, and the hoarse caution of "Look out, thar, stranger;" when if the individual addressed did not speedily shout his name and calling, he stood the merest chance of having another eyelet-hole drilled through his skull.

All this at the first rapid glance gave us no very bright anticipations; everything looked triste and cheerless. Upon inquiring, too we were shocked to learn there was nothing eatable to be had, nor what was yet more melancholy, naught drinkable nor smokable: everybody was so much occupied in making war, as to have entirely lost sight of their appetites. We began to indulge the faintest suspicions that somehow or other we had gotten into the wrong place, and that California was not so charming a spot as we had been led to believe; however, there was no appeal, and fortunately for our health and spirits, as we were leaning listlessly over the piazza of the barracks, staring might and main at the little church in the distance, we beheld a body of horsemen coming slowly over the Verdant plains, and soon after they drew bridles, and dismounted before us. The *cavallada* of spare horses were driven into the corral near by, and we were presented in due form to the riders. It was the most impressive little band I ever beheld; they numbered sixty, and, without exception, had gaunt bony frames like steel, dressed in skins, with heavy beards and unshorn faces, with each man his solid American rifle, and huge knife by the hip. With all their wildness and ferocious appearance they had quite simple manners, and were perfectly frank and respectful in bearing. Their language and phraseology were certainly difficult for a stranger to comprehend, for many of them had passed the greater portion of their

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lives as trappers and hunters among the Rocky Mountains; but there was an air of indomitable courage hovering about them, with powers to endure any amount of toil or privation—men who wouldn't stick at scalping an Indian or a dinner of mule meat;—and you felt assured in regarding them, that with a score of such staunch fellows at your side you would sleep soundly, even though the forests were alive with an atmosphere of Camanche yells. They were the woodsmen of our far west, who on hearing of the disturbances in California enrolled themselves for service in the Volunteer Battalion—more by way of recreation, I imagine, than for glory or patriotism. In truth, the natives had good reason to regard them with terror.

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We soon became quite sociable, and after a hearty supper of fried beef and biscuit, by some miraculous dispensation a five-gallon keg of whiskey was uncorked, and, after a thirty days' thirst, our new-found friends slaked away unremittingly. Many were the marvellous adventures narrated of huntings, fightings, freezings, snowings, and starvations; and one stalwart bronzed trapper beside me, finding an attentive listener, began,—“The last time, Captin, I cleared the Oregon trail, the Ingens fowt us amazin' hard. Pete,” said he, addressing a friend smoking a clay pipe by the fire, with a half pint of corn-juice in his hand, which served to moisten his own clay at intervals between every puff,—“Pete, do you notice how I dropped the red skin who pit the poisoned arrer in my moccasin! Snakes, Captin, the varmints lay thick as leaves behind the rocks; and bless ye, the minit I let fall old Ginger from my jaw, up they springs, and lets fly their flint-headed arrers in amongst us, and one on 'em wiped me right through the leg. I tell yer what it is, hoss, I riled, I did, though we'd had tolerable luck in the forenoon—for I dropped two and a squaw and Pete got his good six—barrin' that the darned villians had hamstrung our mule, and we were bound to see the thing out. Well, Captin, as I tell ye, I'm not weak in the jints, but it's no joke to hold the heft of twenty-three pounds on a sight for above ten minits on a stretch; so Pete and me scrouched down, made a little smoke with some sticks, and then we moved off a few rods, whar we got a clar peep; for better than an hour we seed nothin', but on a suddin I seed the chap—I know'd him by his paintin'—that driv the arrer in my hide; he was peerin' around quite bold, thinkin' we'd vamosed; I jist fetched old Ginger up and drawed a bee line on his cratch, and, stranger, I giv him sich a winch in the stomach that he dropped straight into his tracks; he did! in five jumps I riz his har, and Pete and me warn't troubled agin for a week.” With such pleasant converse we beguiled the time until the night was somewhat advanced; when, finding a vacant corner near the blazing fire, with a saddle for pillow, I sank into profound slumber, and never awoke to consciousness until the band was again astir at sunrise.

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CHAPTER IX.

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The time passed rapidly away. The rainy season had nearly ended,—we were only favored with occasional showers, and by the latter part of February, the early spring had burst forth, and nothing could exceed the loveliness of the rich, verdant landscape around us. After the treaty and capitulation had been signed by the Picos at Los Angeles, their partizans dispersed, and all who resided in Monterey shortly returned to their homes. Every day brought an addition to the place—great ox-cart caravans with hide bodies, and unwieldy wheels of hewn timber, came streaming slowly along the roads, filled with women and children, who had sought refuge in some secure retreat in the country. Cattle soon were seen grazing about the hills. The town itself began to look alive—doors were unlocked and windows thrown open—a café and billiards emerged—pulperias, with shelves filled with aguadiente appeared on every corner—the barricades were torn down—guns removed—and the Californians themselves rode blithely by, with heavy, jingling spurs, and smiling faces—the women, too, flashed their bright eyes less angrily upon their invaders—accepted pleasant compliments without a sneer, and even Doña Angustia Ximénes, who took a solemn oath upon her missal a few months before, never to dance again, until she could wear a necklace of Yankee ears, relented too, and not only swept gracefully through waltz and contra dança, but when afterwards one of our young officers became ill with fever, she had him carried from the tent to her dwelling, watched him with all a woman's care and tenderness, as much as though she had been the mother that bore him, until he was carried to his last home. Yes, bella Señora, you may swear the same wicked oaths forever, and still be forgiven by all those who witnessed your disinterested devotion to poor Minor.

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Gradually these good people became aware that the Yankees were not such a vile pack of demonios as they first believed, and thus whenever guitars were tinkling at the fandangos, or meals laid upon the board, we were kindly welcomed, with the privilege of making as much love, and devouring as many *frijoles* as may have been polite or palatable. Upon visiting the residences of the townspeople, true to the old Spanish character there was no attempt made in show or ostentation—that is always reserved for the street or alameda, but a stranger is received with cordiality, and a certain ease and propriety to which they seem to the “manner born.” With the denizens of Monterey, even the wealthiest, cleanliness was an acquirement very little appreciated or practised, and I should presume the commodity of soap to be an article “more honored in the breach than the observance.” For being given to cold water as a principle of lady-like existence I was something shocked on one occasion, to find a nice little Señorita, to whom I had been playing the agreeable the night previous, with a chemisette of a chocolate hue peeping through a slit in her sleeve; her soft, dimpled hands, too, made me speculate mentally upon the appearance of her little feet, and I forthwith resolved, in the event of becoming so deeply infatuated as to induce her papa to permit a change of estate, to exact a change of raiment in the

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marriage contract.

The occasion of inspecting the arena of this young woman's vestments was during a visit to her portly mamma, and I may as well, by way of example, describe my reception. The dwelling was a low, one story pile of adobies, retaining the color of the primitive mud, and forming a large parallelogram; it enclosed a huge pen, or corral, for cattle, over which guard was carefully mounted by crowds of *gallinazos*. There were divers collections of Indian families coiled and huddled about beneath the porticoes and doorways, each member thereof rejoicing in great masses of wiry shocks of hair, quite coarse enough to weave into bird cages on an emergency; there were some bee-hive shaped ovens also, from the apertures of which I remarked a number of filthy individuals immersed neck deep, taking, no doubt, balmy slumber, with the rain doing what they never had the energy to perform themselves—washing their faces. This much for externals—men and beasts included, merely premising that the whole affair was situated in a quiet detachment by itself, a few hundred yards in rear of the village. My guide, though a good pilot, and retaining a clear perception of the road, was unable to convoy me safely to the house, without getting stalled several times in the mire; however, I reached terra firma, thankful to have escaped with my boots overflowing with mud, and then we marched boldly into the domicile. We entered a large, white-washed *sala*, when, after clapping hands, a concourse of small children approached with a lighted tallow link, and in reply to our inquiries, without further ceremony, ushered us by another apartment into the presence of the mistress of the mansion. She was sitting *a la grand Turque*, on the chief ornamental structure that graced the chamber—namely, the bed, upon which, were sportively engaged three diminutive brats, with a mouse-trap—paper cigarritos—dirty feet, and other juvenile and diverting toys. The Doña herself was swallowing and puffing clouds of smoke alternately—but I must paint her as she sat, through the haze. "Juana," said she, calling to a short, squat Indian girl, "*lumbrecita por el Señor*,"—a light for the gentleman—and in a moment I was likewise pouring forth volumes of smoke. She wore her hair, which was black and glossy, in natural folds straight down the neck and shoulders, dark complexion, lighted by deep, black, intelligent eyes, well-shaped features, and brilliant, white teeth. I saw but little of her figure, as she was almost entirely enveloped in shawls and bed clothes; the arms, however, were visible, very large, round and symmetrical, which of themselves induced me to resign all pretensions to becoming her son-in-law. She excused herself on the plea of indisposition for not rising, and it being one I surmised she was a martyr to every year or so, I very readily coincided in opinion, but in truth I found the Señora Mariqueta sensible, good-humored, and what was far more notable, the mother of fourteen male and five female children—making nineteen the sum of boys and girls total, as she informed me herself, without putting me to the trouble of counting the brood; and yet she numbered but seven and thirty years, in the very prime of life, with the appearance of being again able to perform equally astonishing exploits for the future. She named many of her friends and relatives who had done wonders, but none who had surpassed her in these infantile races. In Spain she would receive a pension, be exempted from taxes and the militia. On being told this she laughed heartily, and gave her full assent to any schemes undertaken in California for the amelioration of the sex. Her husband, who chanced to be absent, was a foreigner, but the whole family were highly respectable, and universally esteemed by their fellow citizens. After an hour's pleasant chat we took leave, with the promise on my part of teaching the eldest daughter, Teresa, the Polka, for which I needed no incentive, as she was extremely graceful and pretty.

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CHAPTER X.

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One morning, at break of day, I left Monterey for a tramp among the hills; the natives by this time had become pacifically disposed, and there were no serious apprehensions of getting a hide necklace thrown over one's head, in shape of the unerring lasso, if perchance a Yankee strayed too far from his quarters. The war was virtually ended in California: there was no further hope for gold chains or wooden legs; the glory had been reaped by the first comers; and I made the time and shot fly together, ranging about the suburbs. With a fowling-piece on my arm, and a carbine slung to the back of an attendant, we pursued a tortuous path, through a gap in the hills, to the southward, and after a four or five miles' walk we found ourselves at the Mission of Carmelo. It is within a mile of the sea, protected by a neck of land, close to a rapid clear stream of the same name. A quaint old church, falling to decay, with crumbling tower and belfry, broken roofs, and long lines of mud-built dwellings, all in ruins, is what remains of a once flourishing and wealthy settlement. It still presents a picturesque appearance, standing on a little rise, above a broad fertile plain of many acres, adjacent to the banks of the river, and at the base a large orchard of fruits and flowers. Following up the stream for some leagues, through the same rich level, crossing and re-crossing the pure running water, with noble salmon flashing their silver sides at every fathom, we soon bagged as much game as we could stagger under: wild ducks, quail, partridges, hares of a very large size, and rabbits. Not contented with this we left the valley, and struck through a narrow gorge of the adjoining hills. Here I caught a glimpse of a trio of *coyotes* and instantly blazed away with the carbine, which brought one of them tumbling down the steep, but much to my surprise his two friends followed, and actually bolstered up their wounded comrade, and assisted him out of sight before I could send another bullet. They were as large as wolves, of a light yellowish brown, with long sharp snouts, bushy hanging tails, and a gait like the trot of a dog. They are very disagreeable customers to sheep and other small fry, and, as I discovered subsequently, that when badly wounded, they have a very unpleasant way with their

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teeth. Continuing onward, and hardly recovered from my astonishment at the rencounter with the *coyotes*, when up bounded, within thirty yards, three large deer, and with the coolest impudence stared me full in the face. *Maldito!* the carbine was again in the hands of my companion, some distance behind, but I could not resist the temptation of giving a strapping buck a hail-storm of fine shot between the eyes. Even this only made the party a little frisky, kick up their heels, toss their heads, and wag their short tails. I was in hopes the carbine would reach me in time to send the lead more in a lump, but in another moment they sprang off like the wind, and the next seen of them was in company with a large herd, a mile away, with their graceful bodies and limbs standing in clear relief against the blue sky, I had not a doubt but that they were relating my chagrin as a capital buckish joke. By this time we had penetrated so far from ravine to hill as to have completely lost our bearings, and becoming quite bewildered, I began to entertain serious ideas of seeking some place of shelter for the night. My attendant, too, had fallen down two or three times from exhaustion, the sun was rapidly declining, and I was not at all pleased with the wild appearance of the hills and valleys that encircled us. Throwing away the greater part of our game, we made a toilsome effort, and reached the crest of an adjacent height, in hopes of getting a glimpse of the plains of Carmelo. Again we were disappointed; and while on the point of making the best of our bargain, by risking a hug from grizzly bears or panthers during the night, I espied a horseman slowly winding his way beneath us in the gorge. By discharging a barrel of my piece, and continued shouts, we soon attracted attention, and thus being encouraged by the sight of a fellow-being, we sprang briskly down the steep. However, our ally evinced no violent affection for us, and in a trice wheeled his horse up the opposite face of the acclivity; there he paused, well out of gun-shot, and presently I heard a shrill voice crying, "*Que es lo que quiere?*" "We are lost," I replied; "will you assist us?" With many a wary glance and movement, he at last came frankly towards us, and I then discovered an intelligent little fellow, about ten years of age, astride a powerful animal, which he guided by a single thong of hide. Slipping from the saddle, and letting his lasso fall on the ground, he doffed his broad glazed *sombrero*, and stood awaiting my wishes. On learning our situation he gladly volunteered to guide us, and in return told me that he had been all day seeking stray cattle among the mountains, that the bears were very numerous, and that we had described a wide circuit around the hills, and were within a short league of the Mission. This last was highly gratifying information, and mounting my worn-out attendant on the horse, our little guide took the bridle, and led the way towards the valley. It was quite dark on reaching the stream, and I felt thoroughly knocked up, but a few minutes bathe in the chill water gave me new life, and shortly after we were housed in the great hall of the Mission. It chanced to be Sunday evening, moreover, during carnival, and there were preparations for a more brilliant fandango than the usual weekly affair generally produced. A few horses were picketed about the great *patio*, and two or three ox-carts with hide bodies were serving for boudoirs to damsels, who had come from afar to mingle in the ball. But the company had not yet assembled in the old hall, that had once served the good *frayles* for a refectory; and on entering I was kindly welcomed by the Patrona Margarita, and her handsome coquettish daughter, Domatilda, who were the liege and lady hostesses of the Carmelo Mission. With her own hands the jolly madre soon prepared me an *olla podrida* of tomatoes, peppers, and the remains in my game bag. Then her laughing nymph patted me some *tortillas*; and after eating ravenously, and draining a cup of aguadiente, the hospitable old lady tumbled me into her own spacious couch, which stood in an angle of the hall, and giving me a hearty slap on the back, shouted, "*Duerma usted bien hijo mio hasta media noche*"—Sleep like a top until midnight. I needed no second bidding, and in a moment was buried in deep sleep. Unconscious of fleeting hours, I was at length restored to life, but in the most disordered frame of mind; suffering under a most complicated attack of nightmare, of which bear-hugs, murders, manacles and music present but a slight idea of my agony; and indeed, when after pinching myself, and tearing my eyelids fairly open, I had still great difficulty in recalling my erring faculties. I found my own individual person deluged with a swarm of babies, who were lying athwart ships, and amid ships, fore and aft, heads and toes, every way; and one interesting infant, just teething, was sucking vigorously away on the left lobe of my ear, while another lovingly entwined its little fingers in my whiskers. Nor was this half the bodily miseries I had so innocently endured. A gay youth, with a dripping link, nicely balanced against my boots, was sitting on my legs, with a level space on the bed before him, intently playing *monté*, to the great detriment of the purses of his audience. On glancing around, I beheld the lofty apartment lighted by long tallow candles melted against the walls, whose smoke clung in dense clouds around the beams of the lofty hall; the floor was nearly filled, at the lower end, with groups of swarthy Indians and paisanos, sipping aguadiente, or indulging in the same exciting amusement as the gentleman sitting on my feet. On either side were double rows of men and women, moving in the most bewildering mazes of the *contra danza*: turning and twisting, twining and whirling with unceasing rapidity, keeping time to most inspiriting music, of harps and guitars; whilst ever and anon, some delighted youth would elevate his voice, in a shout of ecstasy, at the success of some bright-eyed señorita in the dance: *Ay, mi alma! Toma la bolsa! Caramba!*—Go it, my beauty! Take my purse! Beautiful!—It took me but an instant to appreciate all this; and then, being fully roused to my wrongs, I gave one vigorous spring, which sent the *monté* man, candle, cards, and coppers, flying against the wall, and bounding to my feet I made a dash at the Patrona, drank all the *licores* on the tray, and seizing her around the waist, away we spun through the fandango. Long before rosy morn I had become as merry and delighted as the rest of the company. I bought a dirty pack of cards for a rial, and opened a monte bank, for coppers and paper cigars, and although a select party of Indios did their best to impose upon my youth and inexperience, yet on receiving their treasure of *centavos*, winning a hatful of cigarritos, and only paying half a one for *importas*, I comprehended by their guttural exclamations that their *compadre* was not so verdant a person as they at first imagined. Thus I left them to their reflections, and busied myself

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swearing love, and sipping *dulces* with the brunettas; vowing friendship to the men; drinking strong waters; promising to redress all grievances, to pay all claims out of my own pocket for the government; and ended by repudiating the Yankees, and swearing myself a full-blooded Californian. However, these ebullitions were partially attributable to the heated rooms, and *licores* of Madre Mariqueta; but when the golden sun came streaming into the house, the links had formed heavy stalactites against the walls; and notwithstanding the earnest solicitations of my new made friends, I jumped up behind my little guide of the evening previous, and galloped off towards Monterey.

Thus passed my first visit to Carmelo, and scarcely a week went by that I did not enjoy a supper of one of the Patrona's capital ollas, with may be a little wholesome exercise to digest it, at the evening fandango—it was the only place where could be seen a dash of native life, but even this lost its charm. During carnival, I made my homage to all who were docile enough, and I must add clean enough to receive it; but whether owing to a want of tact, fervor, or devotion, I failed to keep the mercury up to boiling point, and after presenting one slim little doña with a two shilling brooch of great magnitude and brilliancy—crushing dozens of variegated eggs on the shining tresses of others, and nearly driving a horse distracted through the agency of enormous spurs, in hopes to show my skill and win a smile from one in particular—I at last, through weariness and disgust, gave up the chase, and became a devoted lover of chasing still wilder game in the beautiful regions around. For days and weeks I did naught but ride and hunt, and became so inured to long fatiguing tramps and night bivouacs, that with the ever-varying excitement of the sport, I not only slept the sounder in the open air, but enjoyed better health than I had before known. The climate of the interior is far dryer, clearer and more salubrious than by the sea. On the coast we were frequently for many successive days, annoyed by raw, foggy weather, and on one occasion there was a light fall of snow, but every league inland gives a more genial invigorating temperature. There are very few unhealthy spots in either Central or Lower California. On the low banks and tributaries of the Bay of San Francisco, fever prevails to a great extent during the summer and fall, but elsewhere all epidemic disorders are extremely rare. The summer subsequent to our arrival in Monterey, a malignant fever attacked and carried off a number of foreigners, but this, although not severe upon the natives, was regarded as something extraordinary.

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In these hunting excursions I was often attended by some friendly hunter, whose time hung heavy on his hands, but usually by the same little fellow who had been my pilot through the Carmelo mountains; his name was Juakin Luis, and by far the most intelligent, handsome boy in the place. On Sundays, with his gala dress of blue velvet trowsers, red sash, glazed hat and silver rope around it, he was quite a picture. His knowledge of all the roads, most intricate paths and passes for many leagues, was remarkable, and at times I was almost confounded at his apparently instinctive sagacity—he knew the haunts and habits of game, was a capital shot, rode a horse like part of the animal, never daunted, never dismayed, never without an expedient, he was the most perfect child of the woods conceivable, and quite won my heart by his intelligence. He was always delighted to be my companion, for not being one of those wise children who knew their sires, his home was none of the pleasantest, for his dame was living with a cross-grained cobbler, in *relacione*, or as the youngster expressed it, she was wedded, *detras la iglesia*—behind the church—or in other words, had cheated the priest out of his marriage dues, and being, I fancied, rather given to aguadiente, the domestic felicity of the mansion was somewhat marred; consequently the boy was left to thrive upon his own resources. Sometimes the old lady endeavored to detain him from accompanying me, but I threatened to stop her grog, by reporting her conduct to the grave and reverend alcalde of the place, and thenceforth she contented herself by extorting a few rials from her child's store, at my expense.

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On passing the hut on the outskirts of the town and giving a shrill whistle, out sprang Juakinito, with his little black head and sparkling eyes shoved through the slit of his *serapa*, swinging the lasso in steady circles, and noosing his horse in the corral, the next moment would leap on his back, take the carbine or rifle, and off we sallied. At night we made fire, ate broiled partridges without stint, and slept under the same blanket. One of our excursions was to the river and plains of Salinas, about fifteen miles in a northerly direction, along the shores of the bay. These plains vary from ten to twenty miles in width, and extend fifty or sixty into the interior, and like the great plain of Santa Clara, have evidently at some former period been the beds of large lakes or rivers. The Salinas is walled in by compact ridges of mountains running transversely towards the ocean, from the main Sierra Madre of California. The river is a muddy rapid stream, subjected to heavy freshets during the melting of the upland snows, and coursing close along the southern edge of the plains. On approaching the heights above the plain, I suddenly checked the reins, perfectly transfixed with surprise; for never in my life had I beheld such a magnificent vista of its kind; one broad dead level extending far as the eye could compass, like a solid brilliant sea of grass and flowers, dotted here and there by vast flocks of sheep and cattle, with the margins of the stream marked out for many a league, with fringes of drooping willows. Descending the hill, we swam the river, and after a short ride along the verge of the plain, came to the *molino*—mill—and rancho of one Bill Anderson, who, with his head powdered by flour, like a lord of the olden time, received me cordially, and being furnished with fresh horses, away we started to slaughter wild geese. They were congregated in myriads, both white and grey, feeding on the rich short grasses, and when disturbed, the noise of their wings and throats was truly deafening—they were excessively shy, and finding even buck-shot not efficacious in doing its work from a fowling-piece, I was obliged to throw single balls among the masses, from the carbine; by which method, in a few hours, we had collected a respectable horse load; they were quite fat, and resembled the tame goose with us in every particular, except the bill being much sharper and smaller. During

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the wet seasons, a great number of natural canals intersect these lovely plains, and are filled with swans, wild ducks, snipe and curlew, besides multitudes of quails and cranes, with now and then a large eagle to fatten on them. As night set in, and the wolves were beginning to cry and howl melodiously after the wounded or sleeping birds, we returned to the rancho.

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Our host, the afore-mentioned Bill Anderson, was a Cockney: very hospitable, very much given to the bottle, and withal a great talker and liar. His history was a simple one. Leaving England as ship-boy, he deserted and drifted about the islands of the Pacific, until at last he found himself stranded on the shores of California. Here he shortly became a man of importance, from having been summarily carried out of the country, with the Graham party, who, like our Bear friends, had rendered themselves highly obnoxious to the native population. In course of time Bill was released, and returned; established a mill on the plains, married a Californian wife, and then got drunk at his leisure and pleasure. Bill received me again most civilly, as he also did a bottle of brandy. Whether attributable to my arrival, or necessity, I did not pause to inquire, but certain it is that a bullock was slain immediately thereafter; and, I presume in compliment to the carcass, an inundation of dependents of both sexes and of all hues and colors, had dropt in to share the feast. Bill and I, with little Juaquin retired to an inner apartment, which happened to be laid with a plank floor, and a good fire in the place; there was a very respectable preparation for supper, and being much too famished to mind the filth, I shut eyes, opened mouth, and ate away voraciously. Dogs soon licked the plates clean, in readiness for breakfast, probably; and in a couple of hours my thirsty host, from a too frequent application of the brandy to his parched lips, became very gloriously tipsy; and after indulging me with a full confession of many sins, and all his grievances, moreover his utterance becoming somewhat indistinct, I bade him adios, while about relating what he would observe to the "English Secretary of State, if he only had him there,"—pointing with the bottle to his dozing sposa.

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My shake-down was in a small receptacle for rubbish, fleas, and other lively furniture, which in getting at, I was obliged to pass a large room, laid out with about five-and-twenty of the servitors—men, women, and children—all in heaps. There were a number of limbs obstructing the passage, and I was obliged to push them aside, rather unceremoniously, I fear, for I was greeted by a volley of Indian guttural curses, sounding quite like a person who had swallowed a collection of shells, and was anxious to get them up more expeditiously than was possible. Being too tired and drowsy to heed their complaints, with Juaquinito I betook myself to mat and blankets, and never moved until break of day; when I arose, kicked up an Indian, and sent for fresh horses, and continued shooting geese and curlew, until the morning was far advanced; then, after swearing devoted friendship to Bill Anderson, his bullocks, and his wife, we departed for the port.

CHAPTER XI.

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We remained two months at Monterey; and then upon the assembling of the squadron, and the arrival of a new Commodore, rather than play *segundo violó*, and have the blue pennant of a Commander-in-Chief flaunting its folds in face of our red, we were glad to lift the anchors, and sail for the waters of San Francisco. Steering too far from the land, a northerly gale arose, and although the distance is but eighty miles, we were a week in gaining our destination, on the 29th of March.

The face of the coast presents the same general aspect as that to the southward of Monterey—one great sea-wall of mountains, split into deep ravines, and tufted with towering pines. Many of these trees that fringe what Humboldt terms the maritime Alps of California, are of enormous magnitude. A German naturalist, employed in scientific pursuits in the country, assured me that he had measured pines in the Santa Cruz mountains fifty-seven feet in girth at the base, and carrying the lofty tops upon a clear shaft for two hundred and seventy feet without a branch!

I have also seen, in my Californian rambles, pines of immense growth, taking root in the wild glens of rich and sheltered mountain gorges, shooting up straight and clear as javelins, with symmetrical columns that would make too taunt masts for the tallest "amiral" that ever floated.

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Near to the mouth of San Francisco the land recedes, and passing through the narrow jaws of the Straits, which are framed in by bold, precipitous, and rocky cliffs, where violent currents are sweeping and foaming in eddying whirls around their base, you soon debouch into the outer bay. It is like a great lake, stretching away right and left, far into the heart of California. To the north another aperture, and still another, leads into the Bays of San Pablo and Sosun, washing the valleys of Sinoma and Tulares, and fed by the rivers Sacramento and San Joaquin, after passing over the golden sands of the rich mines beyond. To the southward the waters are not so extended, and the bay laves the garden of California in the beautiful vale of Santa Clara. Green islands adorn the bosom of these vast estuaries, and everywhere are found safe and commodious harbors.

Our anchorage was near the little village of Yerbabuena, five miles from the ocean, and within a short distance from the Franciscan Mission and Presidio of the old royalists. The site seems badly chosen, for although it reposes in partial shelter, beneath the high bluffs of the coast, yet a great portion of the year it is enveloped in chilling fogs; and invariably, during the afternoon, strong sea breezes are drawn through the straits like a funnel, and playing with fitful violence around the hills, the sand is swept in blinding clouds over the town and the adjacent shores of the bay.

Yet with all these drawbacks the place was rapidly thriving under the indomitable energy of our countrymen. Tenements, large and small, were running up, like card-built houses, in all directions. The population was composed of Mormons, backwoodsmen, and a few very respectable traders from the eastern cities of the United States. Very rare it was to see a native: our brethren had played the porcupine so sharply as to oblige them to seek their homes among more congenial kindred. On Sunday, however, it was not uncommon to encounter gay cavalcades of young paisanos, jingling in silver chains and finery, dashing into town, half-a-dozen abreast; having left their sweethearts at the Mission, or some neighboring rancho, for the evening fandango. Towards afternoon, when these frolicsome *caballeros* became a trifle elevated with their potations, they were wont to indulge in a variety of capricious feats on horseback—leaping and wheeling—throwing the lasso over each other;—or if by chance a bullock appeared, they took delight while at full speed in the *carrara*, in catching the beasts by a dextrous twist in the tail; and the performance was never satisfactorily concluded until the bullock was thrown a complete summerset over his horns. These paisanos of California, like the guachos of Buenos Ayres, and guaso of Chili, pass most of their existence on horseback; there the natural vigor of manhood seems all at once called into play, and horse and backer appear of the same piece. The lasso is their plaything, either for service or pastime; with it, the unruly wild horse, or bullock, is brought within reach of the knife. Ferocious Bruin himself gets his throat twisted and choked, and with heavy paws spread wide apart, is dragged for miles, perhaps to the bear-bait, notwithstanding his glittering jaws, and giant efforts to escape. Without the horse and lasso, these gentry are helpless as infants; their horses are admirably trained, and sometimes perform under a skilful hand pranks that always cause surprise to strangers. I once saw a band of horses, at General Rosa's quinta, near Buenos Ayres, trained to run like hares, with fore and hind legs lashed together by thongs of hide; it was undertaken to preserve the animals from being thrown by the Indian bolas, and the riders, as a consequence, lanced to death. But I was far more amused one afternoon while passing a fandango, near Monterey, to see a drunken *vaquero*—cattle-driver—mounted on a restive, plunging beast, hold at arms length a tray of glasses, brimming with aguadiente, which he politely offered to everybody within reach of his curvettings, without ever once spilling a drop. I thought this better than Camille Leroux, in the polka, or a guacho picking up a cigarrito with his teeth, at a hand gallop! It is remarkable, too, how very long the Californian can urge a horse, and how lightly he rides, even when the beast appears thoroughly exhausted, tottering at every pace under a strange rider; yet the native will lift him to renewed struggles, and hold him up for leagues further. Nor is it by the aid of his enormous spurs, for the punishment is by no means so severe as the sharp rowels with us; but accustomed to the horse from infancy, he appears to divine his powers, and thus a mutual and instinctive bond is established between them. The saddles here, as well as those along the southern coasts, partake in build of the old Spanish high peak and croupe, and are really intended for ease and comfort to the rider. In Chili the pillion is used—a soft material of rugs, smooth and thick, thrown over the saddle frame; but it distends the thighs too greatly. The Californian is both hard and heavy, and murderous to the horse. The Mexican is best,—less cumbersome, more elegant in construction, and a great support to the rider. The stirrups of all are similar—weighty wooden structures—and the feet rest naturally in them.

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There is nothing either pleasing or inviting in the landscape in the vicinity of Yerbabuena. All looks bare and sterile from a distance, and on closer inspection, the deep sandy soil is covered with impervious thickets of low thorny undergrowth, with none of the rich green herbage, forests or timber as in Monterey. The roads were so heavy that the horses could hardly strain, nearly knee deep, through the sand, and consequently, our rides were restricted to a league's *pasear* to the mission, or across the narrow strip of the peninsular to the old presidio; but in the town we passed the hours pleasantly, became conversant with the Mormon bible and doctrine, rolled ten-pins, and amused ourselves nightly, at the monte in the *casa de bebida de Brown*; still there was a great stir and bustle going on. A number of large merchant ships had arrived, bringing the regiment of New York volunteers, and the beach was strewn with heavy guns, carriages, piles of shot, ordnance stores, wagons, tents and camp equipage, whilst the streets were filled with troops, who belonged to the true democracy, called one another mister, snubbed their officers, and did generally as they pleased, which was literally nothing. However, in due time, they were brought into the traces, and properly buckled to their duty, when their services were exerted in planting a battery of long 24-pounders, to command the straits, and their excitable spirits kept under control at their quarters in the presidio.

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This was Yerbabuena as we found it on our first coming—rapidly springing into importance, and bidding fair at some future day, even without the advantages to be derived from the mines which were then unknown, to become the greatest commercial port on the Pacific.

Previous to our arrival in the waters of Francisco, a frightful incident transpired amidst the Californian mountains, which goes far to surpass any event of the kind heard or seen, from the black hole of Calcutta, to smoking the Arabs in Algeria. It relates to a party of emigrants, whose shocking inhuman cannibalisms and sufferings exceeded all belief. The news first reached us in Monterey, and also that a party had been despatched to succor them. From an officer of the navy in charge of the expedition, and from one of the survivors, a Spanish boy, named Baptiste, I learned the following particulars: The number of emigrants were originally eighty; through a culpable combination of ignorance and folly, they loitered many weeks on the route, when, upon gaining the sierra, the snows set in, the trails became blocked up and impassable, and they were obliged to encamp for the winter; their provisions were shortly exhausted, their cattle were devoured to the last horse's hide, hunger came upon them, gaunt and terrible, starvation at last—men, women and children starved to death, and were eaten by their fellows—insanity followed.

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When relief arrived, the survivors were found rolling in filth, parents eating their own offspring, denizens of different cabins exchanging limbs and meat—little children tearing and devouring the livers and hearts of the dead, and a general apathy and mania pervaded all alike, so as to make them scout the idea of leaving their property in the mountains before the spring, even to save their miserable lives; and on separating those who were able to bear the fatigue of travelling, the cursings and ravings of the remainder were monstrous. One Dutchman actually ate a full-grown body in thirty-six hours! another boiled and devoured a girl nine years old, in a single night. The women held on to life with greater tenacity than the men—in fact, the first intelligence was brought to Sutter's fort, on the Sacramento, by two young girls. One of them feasted on her good papa, but on making soup of her lover's head, she confessed to some inward qualms of conscience. The young Spaniard, Baptiste, was hero of the party, performing all labor and drudgery in getting fuel and water, until his strength became exhausted; he told me that he ate Jake Donner and the baby, "eat baby raw, stewed some of Jake, and roasted his head, not good meat, taste like sheep with the rot; but, sir, very hungry, eat anything,"—these were his very words. There were thirty survivors, and a number of them without feet, either frozen or burnt off, who were placed under the care of our surgeons on shore. Although nothing has ever happened more truly dreadful, and in many respects ludicrously so, yet what was surprising, the emigrants themselves perceived nothing very extraordinary in all these cannibalisms, but seemed to regard it as an every day occurrence—surely they were deranged. The party who went to their relief deserved all praise, for they, too, endured every hardship, and many were badly frostbitten. The cause of all this suffering was mainly attributable to the unmeaning delay and indolence attending their early progress on the route, but with every advantage in favor of emigration, the journey in itself must be attended with immense privation and toil. The mere fact, that by the upper route there is one vast desert to be travelled over, many hundred miles in width, affording very little vegetation or sustenance, and to crown the difficulty, terminated by the rugged chain of Californian mountains, is almost sufficient in itself to deter many a good man and strong, from exposing his life and property, for an unknown home on the shores of the Pacific.

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CHAPTER XII.

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Tarrying a fortnight at Yerbabuena, we then crossed the bay and dropped anchor beneath the lofty hills of Sousoulito, where we busied ourselves filling up with fresh water. This anchorage is a great resort for whale ships, coming from the north-west fishing grounds, for water and supplies; the procurante of which was an Englishman, for many years a resident in the country, and possessing myriads of cattle, and a principality in land and mountains; among other valuables, he was the sire of the belle of California, in the person of a young girl named Marianna. Her mother was Spanish, with the remains of great personal charms; as to the child, I never saw a more patrician style of beauty and native elegance in any clime where Castillian doñas bloom. She was brunette, with an oval face, magnificent dark grey eyes, with the corners of her mouth slightly curved downward, so as to give a proud and haughty expression to the face—in person she was tall, graceful and well shaped, and although her feet were encased in deer skin shoes, and hands bare, they still might have vied with any belles of our own. I believe the lovely Marianna was as amiable as beautiful, and I know her bright eye glancing along the delicate sights of her rifle, sent the leaden missive with the deadly aim of a marksman, and that she rode like an angel, and could strike a bullock dead with one quick blow of a keen blade, but notwithstanding these domestic accomplishments and anglo-Saxon lineage, she held the demonios Yankees in mortal abhorrence; but who could blame her, they had murdered a brace of her handsomest lovers, and this in California, where lovers were scarce, was a crime not to be forgiven.

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One morning I shouldered a rifle—indebted to Don Ricardo for horses, and his beautiful daughter for a cup of water, and being attended by a little truant ship-boy as guide, who had been left to cure hides during the absence of his vessel, we dashed inland. Crossing a belt of mountains, we struck the sea shore, and turning to the northward, ascended a succession of steep hills, until we had gained a rocky table-land above—there was no timber to be seen, and except the stunted undergrowth netted together in valleys and ravines, all was one rolling scene of grass, wild oats and flowers. Near by was a small sheet of fresh water, caught by the rain and held in by a narrow plateau, swarming with water fowl, and framed by broken masses of huge rocks. It was a great resort for deer, and I found them herding in large bands of thirty and forty together, but from the nature of the country, so open and free from foliage, it required the utmost caution to approach within striking distance. However, I managed to pop the death billets into the hearts of two noble bucks, and while creeping down a gully for a shot at a third, I was startled by the shouts and gestures of the boy, "Here's a grizzly a-coming! here's a grizzly." Gott in heimmell, I mentally ejaculated—there is going to be a race. Away I clambered and ran to the nearest height—there was a huge black monster, the size of a bullock, coming from the direction of the lake, and tearing up the opposite ridge towards where the horses were picketed. The frightened beasts scenting their enemy, were plunging and snorting terrifically, until at last they broke their *riatas*, and plunged like mad down the steep—the boy was making his heels fly as if provided with a steam engine in his trowsers; then looking upon the mission as fully accomplished, I tightened my belt, and leaped in the tracks of my companion. I have no accurate means of determining the rapidity of my flight, but should any one feel disposed to test the full capacity of his lungs and legs, he can do so to the utmost, with a grizzly behind him. I little thought, the last time I saw one

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at the *Jardin des Plantes*, and took such interest in watching children feeding him with sweet buns, enclosing nice bits of tobacco, or a pinch of snuff, that I should encounter one of his brethren among the wilds of California, with the joke entirely the other way. We never halted until a good mile lay between Bruin's paws and our own, then we could see him lazily walking along the crest of a hill, with a saddle of venison in his dainty jaws. One of the horses in his anxiety to be foremost in the race, leaped over the boy, inflicting an unpleasant hoof tap on the ribs—fortunately the injury was not serious, and we contrived to catch one and lasso the other; but may the devil catch that bear, I was obliged to leave my strapping bucks to his tender mercies, and return to the ship, scared and chagrined beyond measure—laughed at, of course; still I deemed it far preferable than to be hugged to death, with the only consolation left in knowing that what part of one is not devoured will be carefully buried, according to custom, for another meal.

There is scarcely a resident in the mountains of Upper California who has not, at one time or another, been attacked by these formidable beasts. I saw the scars, left by the claws of one, on the broad back of a fine old Irishman; and he informed me, that after being torn from the saddle, he feigned death, until his friends, who were in sight, came up, and drove some balls into the beast, who never for a moment before removed his powerful jaws from within two inches of his victim's face. They are extremely hard to kill, and unless the bullets take effect in the head or heart, are only rendered the more infuriated.

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Previous to the adventure at Sousoulito, I had been in the habit of expending all my powder and prowess on Angel Island. It is a very picturesque little spot, about three miles in circumference, rising to the height of near eight hundred feet, and radiating in numberless ridges and ravines down to the water's edge. There are many fertile slopes luxuriating in fine trees and vegetation, and on all sides pure rills of water leaping into the bay. Lying in a wide sweep of the San Francisco, within a mile of the main land, the deer resort there in great numbers, to feed on the palatable herbs growing on the northern sides, and also for the close shelter afforded, beneath multitudes of the densest network of tangled thickets that ever man or quadruped has explored. Angel Island will for ever be a bright oasis in my hunting career, as it was the ground of my maiden prowess. Nor shall I soon forget the day, when, tired as possible after a long unsuccessful tramp, I happened to glance down a gentle ravine and beheld a sturdy buck nibbling daintily at the young shoots. Blazes! how the blood and excitement came dancing back through veins and wearied frame, even to the extremity of my trigger-joint! Up came the heavy tube! Click! crack!—and at the instant, the wounded deer sprang convulsively in the air and fell back dead;—down the gully—heels up;—the edge of a sheath-knife made a very respectable slip athwart his throat; and the same evening he was quietly reposing, among less gamey meats, under the eye of the sentinel, on the frigate's gun-deck. I have killed many a one since, but I shall never again feel the same thrill of triumph as that I experienced in this my first effort.

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I also had the good fortune to slay an elk on the same island, and I believe the only one ever found there. On seeing him rush past, I at first mistook him for a horse, but on perceiving the short cocked-up tail, small elegant head and branching antlers, I quickly changed my opinion; and as he paused a second on the brow of a projection below, to honor me with an inspection, I returned the compliment by laying my cheek to the rifle. Crack! Away he trotted—none but the does bound—apparently unhurt, and I followed in the wake; the next bullet made him squirm, and at the third I noticed a crimson stream pouring from his mouth; then feeling satisfied there was some essential injury done to his digestion, and coming again within range, about a mile from the last shot, I pitched another ball right through the spine: three or four frightful leaps, and down he went, plunging, groaning, and bleeding, to the foot of the slope. As I came up, he sprang to his feet, and with painful meanings attempted to give me a taste of his horns, so I let him have the *coup de grace* crashing through the brains. Upon examination, every shot was within four inches diameter, near the centre of the back, as I was each time compelled to fire, as he stood or ran, from below. It required the full strength of six stout men, with ropes, to drag the carcass to the beach—weighing, when dressed, over six hundred pounds, and we found him most delicious eating. This was my crowning achievement, the pleasure enhanced by entertaining no fears that the bears could rob me of the prize before getting to the boat; nevertheless, there were many speculations volunteered by malicious gentry on board, who, from the hair being somewhat rubbed off, in the transit to the beach, insisted that I had massacred a pack-mule, which was in itself mendacious slander.

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CHAPTER XIII.

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Having completed watering at Sousoulito, we left San Francisco and returned to Monterey. Even during the short period of our absence a rapid improvement was visible. Many Mormons had arrived, the streets were cleansed, and vehicles of a civilized build were occasionally beheld in the town. Some companies of the Volunteer Regiment were encamped on the slopes of the hills, and the artillery were busily at work throwing up fortifications on a pretty eminence, overlooking the town and harbor. Grog shops were thriving apace—handsomely patronized by Jack and the soldiers,—and monté banks and gaming were following *en suite*. Stone buildings were under construction; and among others, through the excellent management of the Alcalde, a large school-house presented a bold front to the uneducated natives; thus we had the vices and virtues hand in hand—no existing without them. There was also a little newspaper published weekly; for,

with the usual enterprise of our countrymen, and their naturally saturnine dispositions, they had pounced upon a fount of types, carefully secreted beneath the font of the church, and instead of being applied to their original purpose of disseminating the authority of Mexican rulers, they were made to preach the true republican doctrine to all unbelievers among the astonished Californians. The editor of this infantile journal was Dr. Semple, who although supposed to have been connected with the famous Bear party, wielded the editorial pen with the same facility as his rifle, and merits all praise for having been the pioneer of civil and religious liberty in the country. I only trust the Doctor may live to fill his ample pockets with gold dust, even though they be lengthy as his legs or editorials.

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Remaining barely long enough to take in provisions, we left Monterey on the 19th of April, and beating clear of Piney Point, with a spanking breeze, turned our prow towards the Mexican coast. A few days afterwards, during the night, we discovered the Island of Guadalupe, laid down in the charts more than half a degree too far south,^[1] though, singularly enough, correct in longitude. Fortunately we had changed the ship's course previously, for as the night was dark and cloudy we stood a chance of making a nearer acquaintance than would have been satisfactory to the noble frigate: in fact at all times we labored under great disadvantages in being destitute of maps of sufficient accuracy for the commonest purposes of navigation, and those at all useful we were obliged to compile ourselves from the rough sketches and experience of navigators frequenting the coast; still we made great speed, and the flying fish flew from before us as we entered the tropic. At midnight, on the 26th we doubled Cape San Lucas, the extreme southern point of that long finger-like Peninsular of Lower California.

Lower California embraces an extent of territory seven hundred miles in length, and varies in breadth from thirty to eighty miles; broken up into barren mountains four or five thousand feet in height, verging close upon the shores of sea and gulf. The country is very unproductive, and only serves to subsist a small population of probably not over ten thousand. There are a few narrow valleys, watered by the condensation of clouds and mist in the dry season from the naked heights, which serves for fertilizing strips of rich soil below, producing maize and fruits.

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The Jesuits have, centuries ago, even in these sterile regions, planted the banners of their faith, and the missions and villages that sprang up around them still exist. The principal places are Todos Santos, on the sea coast; San Antonio, in the interior; San José, La Paz, and Loretta, the capital, lying on the shores of the inland gulf. There are two excellent harbors—the Bay of La Paz, and another higher up called Escondida; both places having deep anchorage, and fresh water, for the largest vessels.

There is but little trade carried on with the Peninsula: a few small craft exchange country-made cheese and soap for domestic goods in San Blas and Mazatlan. Near Cape San Lucas had been found by the whalers a resort for a new species of fish, producing an oil supposed to be suitable for paints. One or two ships were filled, but we heard subsequently the material did not answer the desired purpose. There is the island of Carmen within the gulf, which contains vast lakes of salt, as inexhaustible as the guano beds on the Peruvian coast. This salt is of excellent quality; it is cut out in large blocks, stacked, and left to be washed by the rains, when it becomes ready for shipping. These are all the known inducements for trade, of the Peninsula and the Adriatic of the Pacific. Guaymas, situated nearly at the head of the gulf, and Mazatlan abreast the southern cape, though neither possess such safe havens, with so good fresh water ports, still have positions more adaptable for commerce on the main shores of Mexico.

At daylight we were boarded by one Ritchie, who played the *rôle* of marine postmaster for our squadron; and then steering for thirty miles along the high, barren, sterile coast, we hove-to off the little bay of San José; communicated with one of our ships-of-war; again filled away, and lazily fanned across the Sea of Cortés to our destination. This occupied, at a snail's pace, three long days, and the next morning we awoke within the scorching lines of the tropics—one-half the horizon bounded by a dull monotonous ripple of sea, and hazy sky, and the other faced by the high sierras framing the grand plateau of Mexico, and nearer a line of hot rugged rocks, and islets, and white sandy beaches, together with ranges of houses bordering upon the shores, and upon the hills; which was the goodly town of Mazatlan. We anchored, as it were, at sea, off the bluff promontory of Creston; an island itself, divided by a narrow strait from the main, and resembling a sleeping lion, with paws tossed before him. The British frigate *Constance*, a French corvette, another of our own, with two merchant vessels, comprised the entire nautical coterie. Our arrival caused some excitement in the town, and we were in hopes the authorities would either strike for independence, or declare themselves neutral, and thus open the port, as at the time we had no serious intentions of molesting them; but we were disappointed in our anticipations, and found there was naught to do save maintaining a dull, idle, passive blockade for a long month to come.

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The day after our arrival, two armed boats were sent to make a reconnoissance of the old harbor, for the purpose of selecting a suitable berth for the ships, in case an attack should be made. Not perceiving any bustle or stir pervading the town, we pulled warily in, until, on passing out from cover of the corvette's guns, we unconsciously raised the most infernal din imaginable. Drums rattled incessantly, dirty soldiers formed in companies; the Governor and suite attended by a guard of cavalry galloped up and down the beach. Consuls run up their national flags, women and children ran up the hills; all evidently in great consternation at the anticipation of a hostile invasion. On comprehending the true state of the case, we amused ourselves out of musket shot, by making feints to land, and by this method we kept three or four hundred filthy villains in a violent state of fatigue and perspiration, running and scampering from point to point to oppose

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us. No sooner did they get comfortably posted, and weapons in readiness on the cliffs, than in we would dash for the beach. At last the whole garrison turned out, and getting a field piece under way, manned by three jackasses, rather than give them the laugh against us, we thought advisable to edge out of range, and thus when they had cleverly pulled the piece into a commanding position, they could only greet us with a volley of execrations instead of grape shot. However, we completed our work by taking the requisite bearings and planting a buoy, which was cut adrift the same night for a large reward, and carried about the town in great triumph and procession, and generally believed to be a Yankee bomb. Indeed, these Mazatlanese were extremely wroth and patriotic during the blockade, and it was only a week preceding our advent, that they had illuminated the town in honor of Santa Anna's victory at Buena Vista. The fact was, the Mexican general's dispatch was not altogether so clear as the circumstances of the case demanded, and it admitted of a variety of constructions.

Still, after escaping the bolts of Mars, we came near being sacrificed to the cestus of Venus, for, on pulling towards a rocky ledge, we discovered two sunny-faced maidens, one attired in a red camisetta, and the other waiving a *manta*, in a most enticing and beguiling manner. Intercourse with fashionable society impelled me, from politeness, to regard them through a glass, and a capital spy-glass it proved to be, for I was able to discern thirty or forty of their admirers temporarily ensconced behind the rocks, and each, too, adorned with a musket. We halted, made a low obeisance, and retreated rapidly on board, leaving them the opportunity of forwarding a despatch by express, to head-quarters, narrating how *los Yankis eran repulsados en varios puntos*—how the Yankees were put to flight.

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On the following morning was captured the first prize—a miserable little schooner from San Blas, laden with plank and plaintains, rejoicing in the classic appellation of Diana, and having given the boats a smart pull, she was christened the chased Diana. The Patron was Italian, who wept like a pump—talked of his utter ruin, and starving *bambinos* to such an extent, that after taking and paying liberally for his fruit and lumber, he was permitted to depart; he afterwards proved to be an arrant rogue, and turned an honest penny while the war lasted, by smuggling powder to the Mexicans. He was too wily to be caught the second time.

At night there were always signal fires burning on the hill tops around the town, as a warning to vessels approaching the coast; but with all their vigilance and caution, our boats after being out all night, generally returned with some indifferent prizes—at best it was but pin-hook business, for we cared not to make war upon the poor, causing us constant annoyance, and after all the trouble the little prizes were released with lightened cargoes, and heavier pockets of the owners, for which no doubt, the scamps would have been pleased to be captured daily.

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In a few days our consort received orders to blockade Guaymas, a port of some commercial importance, nearly at the head of the gulf of California, and she accordingly sailed, leaving a small prize tender, a schooner of about forty tons, to be "turned over," in a professional sense, to the flag-ship—there being no more enterprising person than myself who cared to assume so imposing a command, I was at once installed in the skipper ship and was immediately paddled on board.

FOOTNOTE:

[1] The correct latitude is 29° 14'.

CHAPTER XIV.

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Leaping over the taffrail of the *Rosita*, without the aid of an accommodation ladder, I found myself the monarch of a peopled deck of fifteen trusty sailors, and a small boy, to whose trust, from sad experience, I confided nothing uncorked or unlocked. There were the same number of carbines, pistols, pikes, cutlasses, fishing lines and a few other etceteras, pitched in bulk on the floor of a small cabin, just sufficiently bunkish to stow my very worthy first lieutenant, Mr. Earl, and my own rather unportly self. This, I believe, comprised all the equipage that was to add dignity to the flag of so tall an admiral. Hoisting all sail in the afternoon, and bobbing about a number of hours, we came to anchor during the night under lee of the Venados Islands—piles of rugged red rocks, five hundred feet high,—steep, precipitous, parched, and arid: their situation was within a mile from the main land, and ten times that space from the frigate's anchorage; an excellent position for intercepting small craft, bound from the Gulf into the old port of Mazatlan. We soon had the little *Rosa* clean and trim; got up new spars, and on their tapering stems spread loftier muslin than those she had been accustomed to carry, which, in the absence of proper materials, the sailors had quickly fashioned out of duck frocks. Then we scrubbed her bottom, re-arranged the stowage, put on a new coat of paint, so that she worked like a top, sailed tolerably well, and with her Yankee pennant and flag might fairly make her old masters on the shore right proud of the little craft, and indulge, as they did, in some yearnings to get hold of her again. Our life was not one of quiet repose, nor were we overburthened with luxuries and comforts, but anything is better than the insufferable monotony of a ship of war, even though one loses in comfort by the exchange; for we had variety and excitement, which of itself is preferable to the tame stupidity of the quarter-deck of a big ship, or uninterrupted yawnings in the gun-room.

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We were boarded the first morning by three drunken Englishmen, in a whale-boat, who informed us that the frigate's boats had captured a fine schooner called the *Correo*. They also brought off what is consularly termed "a distressed American," a very sombre-hued person, who, by his own showing, gave us reason to believe him a Carolina nigger, whose asperities of wool and color had been somewhat softened by being engrafted on a more distinguished stock in the city of Boston. His profession was that of cook, and the most urgent cause of bidding farewell to a large and extensive assortment of friends in Mazatlan, was that he became involved by some unforeseen mercantile transaction to the amount of nine dollars, over and above his comeatable assets; for this dereliction from the paths of honesty, he was offered a choice of being half starved in the *carcel* or entirely starved out of it, with a musket in his embrace fighting the enemies of the republic. Amid so serious an accumulation of horrors, not being troubled with heavy baggage, he ensconced himself within the Englishman's boat, and was exhibited to us on the memorable occasion of his presentation, attired in a white beaver hat and trowsers of but one leg. A few words we caught of his opening address was to the effect that,—"*bress de Lord*, he was wunce more under de country's flag, and if dem Mexikers kotched him agin, dey'd have to fotch him dead." The following morning doctor Barret appeared newly skinned, in old clothes the crew had furnished, busy as a demon in the mysteries of the caboose; hinting his capacity for the office by proclaiming that he had been "head bottle-washer of a Liverpool liner, with glass nubs on de cabin doors!" The doctor soon became oracle of the schooner, and, albeit, tickled our palates with the most savory of messes.

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For a day or two we did nothing but cruise pleasantly around the islands, within sight of the Mexican pickets, sometimes landing on the larger Venado, and scooping up, from a natural bowl, a few gallons of fresh water that was distilled from the dew, and trickled down between crevices of the rocks. The climate, though excessively damp, was yet delightfully agreeable, tempered by the most regular succession of diurnal sea breezes. It never rains out of season, and were it not for the heavy night dews, the very birds would famish. Until now we had made no prizes, saving quantities of excellent fish jerked out of old Neptune's bosom, without going through the forms of condemnation by a court of admiralty. Once we made a swoop on a small shallop, manned by a couple of Frenchmen, but finding nothing for the trouble, and the Patron swearing he would, under cover of night, bring us on board something green and eatable, we set him at liberty, after whispering in my ear the request that Messieurs would discharge a carbine over his boat to preserve his honor; which mild compliment we promised to comply with. All this did very well, and we had begun to be quite happy in our independence. We discovered the best fishing rocks, clearest bathing beach, and purest pool of water, when the powers above us, kind souls, judged we were too far removed from the parental protection of their guns; talked about the possibility of our being cut out, and cut up, and so forth; and the little Rosa was ordered to take a nearer station by the Flag-ship. There we lay rolling and tumbling in the worst possible sea and humor, within a cable's length of the *Constance*, keeping a bright look-out on the town, and a brighter still on a surf chafing rock near our counter. Then again, we would run round little Creston, which forms a sort of gate-post to the new port, and get in comparatively smooth water, and bathe twice a day; eat sparingly, per force, and do anything to fill up the crevices of indolence; until at last we were again ordered to resume our former position, and the Rosa gladly stretched her wings, and the same day dropped her anchors at the old birth, under shelter of Venados.

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At the faintest crack of dawn the next morning, a sail was seen creeping close along the main land; in a few seconds we were springing away in the whale-boat, most of us sans culottes. The chase was a large sloop-rigged launch, with a great big sail, swelling to the land wind, and urging the vessel rapidly towards the harbor. She had a long start, but then eight ash oars acting on a light whale boat will make it skim like a gull over the water. We were upon them before they knew it, but on becoming aware of our proximity, and finding themselves within a stone's throw of the *garita*, they raised their voices in shrill notes for assistance from the garrison. I felt quite assured, however, that Mexican soldiers were not given to early rising. As a last resort the Patron put the helm down, hauled aft the sail, with intention of running, what I considered to be our property, on the beach. This proceeding laid me under the necessity of attracting attention, and covering his red shirt with a carbine, I shouted, *Mira!*—look out! He dropped as if actually shot, the sail caught aback, the launch fell off from the wind, and in an instant we were alongside. By this time the guard on shore were getting their eyes open, but before they comprehended the true state of the case, the distance was so wide between us, that burning powder would have been an utter waste of bullets; very possibly they consoled themselves, as did the Patron and crew, with paper cigars. The prize proved to be from La Paz, with a cargo of sugar, dried fruits, and cloth; but what was far more valuable in our estimation a few sacks of potatoes, upon which we levied tribute, and then sent the vessel to the Flag-ship. We had very little reason to plume ourselves upon this exploit, for the same afternoon we were placed in a nearly similar predicament. Whilst beating between the islands and main, with baffling light breezes, we became embayed, within a little indentation of the coast; and shortly afterwards a dozen Indian girls ran along the beach, making most polite and hospitable offers of service, if we chose to disembark. At the same time we could not help remarking the heads of numbers of desultory Mexicans, peeping out from the under growth that lined the banks. Our position was certainly somewhat critical, for the schooner had missed stays, and was sagging slowly into the rollers; and we became painfully alive to the fact that the little Rosa would inevitably return to her former masters. But, many thanks to San Antonio, the breeze freshened, and getting out sweeps, and using them with a will, we got the little lady's head off shore; the sails filled, and away we danced across the straits. This lucky change in our fortunes was not so well relished by our acquaintances on the shore, for immediately a troop of thirteen dragoons, with an officer, rode

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down to the beach, flourishing their long spears, in what we now thought a very furious and funny style, and then galloped and pranced along the shore, to our entire satisfaction. We saluted them graciously, by hoisting the American ensign over the Mexican, and thus bid them adios. From one of the lofty eminences of the islands, which commands an extensive view of the plains, and suburbs of Mazatlan, we perceived, near the scene of our escape, an encampment of about two hundred soldiers; so we resolved to run no more risks in future, merely for the sake of being lanced to death for their diversion.

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The next day we had another sail, and anchored near the upper island, dipped the last pint of fresh water from the basin, and, with one of the sailors I took a tramp over the hills—but such a parched, burning, suffocating promenade can be found no where else: here and there were dense, impassable thickets of cactus and aloes, and the air reeked with the odor of pelicans and nests swarming with young; while the newly fledged birds bore a strong resemblance to slim old gentlemen enveloped in yellow flannel morning gowns. On reaching the beach we were glad to plunge in a tepid bath, within a clear briny pool, shaded by a straight wall of rocks. Much refreshed, we rowed over to the windward *venado*, and having heard that deer had been seen, we started in pursuit. This island is less abrupt than its neighbor. On the eastern side there is a wide slope, and at the time of our visit it was covered with tall dry grass. Leaving a party to haul the seine and broil our breakfast, on the beach, we commenced the ascent, and seating ourselves on a pile of rocks, about the summit, we perceived that the prairie beneath had been set on fire, and was flying towards us with the most amazing rapidity. We quickly gained a rocky acclivity thirty feet above the ground, and had the satisfaction of seeing the red flames lick the naked rocks at our feet, scorch the undergrowth to cinders, and then pass like the wind coursing towards the other end of the island, leaving us nearly suffocated with smoke, but thankful to have escaped the flames. This incident was sufficiently amusing, without indulging in the excitement of the chase; and we retraced our steps over the charred and blackened soil to the beach, even then rather wanting in appetite for breakfast. The same evening, after a delightful surfy swim, and while my pleasant confrère was getting the arms recapped, nettings triced up, and all in readiness for the night's vigil, preparatory to a sip of cold grog, incited by fumes of a cigar, we saw a rocket let off from the main, and being presently followed by a long stream of fire, terminating in a bright galaxy of stars from the frigate, we supposed it to be intended to answer a signal from us for assistance, which proved to be the case; for in a few hours a large cutter, filled with men, came dashing alongside to aid us. We were grieved to thwart their anticipations of a skirmish, and not so grateful as we should have been for the extreme solicitude exercised for our well-being on board, for it was the means next day of telegraphing us down to the ship. "Come within hail," said the bunting; "anchor where you can comfortably." So it was up helm, and in the dusk, the Rosita crept stealthily under the sombre shade of Creston, and let go the *killick* at the gap beneath the signal-tower. We were neither so quiet nor secret in our movements as not to attract attention from the town, and shortly we could discern boats stealing along the shadows of the bluff, evidently reconnoitering. We had no fear of a surprise, for there was always three pair of eyes on the look-out, and a man at the mast-head. Mr. Earl and myself having no fancy for being overrun by mice and cockroaches, snoozed away on deck, always on the qui-vive; besides, the arms were constantly in perfect readiness, and the men to handle them as determined a set of matelots as ever grasped a cutlass; and notwithstanding we were lying within point blank distance of a contemptible three-gun battery, we took the precaution to anchor in line of the English frigate, feeling assured that our Mexican friends would be exceedingly loth to pitch a round shot at us, with the probability of hitting Mr. Bull on the horns; consequently, so far as mere safety was concerned, it did not in the least affect our repose.

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The next morning, after capturing old Jack's oyster-boat, which was of daily occurrence, in a friendly way, at two dollars the hundred, in company with the Correo, Captain Luigi, we sailed thirty miles down the coast, but finding the ocean deserted, and not so much as a canoe to be seen, we beat back; the next day made our official respects to the frigate, and thence returned to Venados. Here again, in the absence of more agreeable excitement; we trapped crabs, shot curlew, paddled about the beach, or amused ourselves hauling the seine. One afternoon, after taking immense quantities of fine fishes, of every size, shape and color, one scaly mullet of plethoric caliber, weighing some forty pounds, leaped five feet out of the net, clearing seine and floats, and terminated the performance by running a joust full tilt at a big burly Irishman, breaking the bridge of his nose, and keeling him over and over in the water like winkin'. "Take him off, be Jasus!" shouted Paddy, accompanied by fearful struggles in the water. It was rather a ludicrous incident to all except the sufferer. The same evening we had another visit from the oystermen, and the trio were more than usually groggy. Contrary to our advice, Jack determined to face the town once more, brave the captain of the port, and have a lark, as he said, off the two hundred and more *pesos* made on board the Yankee frigate. Away he went, but, owing to his faculties being somewhat obscured, and mistaking the channel, the boat got among heavy breakers, was capsized, and stove to atoms. One man was drowned, old Jack himself water-logged, and drifted on shore without a dollar, and the next morning was consigned to the *carcel* for trading with the enemy. The remaining companion was picked up at daylight on a reef of rocks, and taken on board our ship; but he, too, poor fellow, met with a violent death eighteen months later. However, unconscious of old Jack's misfortunes, it did not prevent us from feasting on his oysters; and the fires of the caboose were soon sparkling under broiling mullets, roasted potatoes, and what was to be a *chef d'œuvre* of Doctor Barret—a steaming chowder. We were about to begin a series of naval entertainments. Even our little French goblin-faced valet, Gashé, devoted his energies for once in his life to the matter in hand; and, by the way, if ever a being on this earth was gifted with ubiquity, this youth was he: there was no mischief dreamed of that he

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was not an adept in. When not attempting some unknown method of loading or priming a carbine or pistol, he was perched on the fore-truck, swinging on the main-gaff, stealing sugar in the pantry, smoking himself sick with a pipe, or playing pranks on the sailors; and on a certain occasion, when he tumbled on deck from the fore-cross-trees—a height that would nearly have killed a mere mortal—we all treated it as such a capital joke, and laughed so unmercifully, that the imp sprang to his feet, jumped overboard, and swam on shore.

The little Rosa was lying calmly at anchor—watch and lookouts at their stations—awnings closely tented, and veiled around the quarter-deck—arms and ammunition glittering beneath the light from a lantern swinging beneath the main boom, while the arrangement for the banquet was spread in two exact rows, along the lid of an arm-chest, with camp-stools ranged around. Captain Luigi and his mate brought their own spoons and white sugar. Our worthy boatswain, Mr. Mills, who came as lord of the seine, was our common guest, and was spooned and fed from the general contribution. We fell to and did full justice to the feast, pleasantly diversified by a narrative from Doctor Barret of his dark true-love in Boston, and a pitched battle that suddenly arose towards the close of the entertainment, between Monsieur Gashé and Captain Luigi's butler, a youthful Swede, called Baron Stockholm, who incautiously accused the valet of surreptitiously secreting divers table-knives and crockery, belonging to the Correo. Thereupon the fight ensued, and when finally concluded, much to the regret of the audience, our guests withdrew to a canoe, and paddled to their vessel.

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Soon after daylight the next morning, the report of a gun came booming from the Commodore. A large ship was lying becalmed in the offing; by the aid of the glass we could see the little bright-colored flags talking to the stranger, and presently our number was displayed, and the telegraph said, "Prepare to give up the schooner." Alas! shorn of our honors, we slowly hove up the anchor—made all sail—spliced the main-brace—and thus ended our fortnight's cruise in the Rosita.

CHAPTER XV.

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During the period of our blockade, which lasted but thirty-four days, there were no demonstrations made by the authorities of Mazatlan, to pronounce against their government, nor any steps taken on our side to compel them to do so. Finding there was no intention of molesting them, the alarm excited by our arrival soon subsided, and with the exception of exchanging a few musket shots occasionally, between the boats and shore, everything went on as quietly and peacefully as if no hostile force was at their gates. The commandante of Mazatlan was Colonel Telles, an Habanéro by birth, and withal a brave man. He had pronounced against Vegas, the President of the province, and the troops of the town being devoted to him, he, of course, like all other disaffected persons in Mexico, assumed supreme direction of affairs, and laid violent hands on all moneys in the custom-house. He was described as a pleasant convivial person, keeping quite a seraglio of his own, and altogether an eligible acquaintance; a character, of which at a later date, when there was better means of judging, we found no cause to change our opinion. Just previous to our arrival a messenger reached Mazatlan with instructions for Telles to resign his authority to General Bustamente, who was en route, and charged with full powers from the Mexican government, to direct the province of Sinaloa. Colonel Telles very discreetly incarcerated the emmissary in the cabildo, and begged him to inform his master, the General, that there was no necessity for disorganizing his ideas about the government of the port, as he, Telles, would retain authority so long as he deemed proper. It had the desired effect, for there was nothing afterwards heard of Bustamente.

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Leaving Mazatlan to be guarded by our consort, we sailed on the morning of the third of June, bound once more to Upper California. Long before dark, Creston had disappeared below the horizon, and the ship went calmly pushing her way towards the broad ocean. At meridian of the twelfth, the sun measured an altitude nearly vertical, our shadows vanished, and we resembled that facetious Dutchman, Mr. Peter Schemmell, who, it is said, disposed of his to the devil; at the same time while throwing the log, a voracious monster snapped up the log-chip, swallowed some fathoms of line, broke it, and went on his way unconcernedly, thus verifying the old song:

"A shark being on our starboard, boys!
For sharks d'ye see don't stand,
But grapple all they get at, boys!
Like sharks they do on land."

Without any other incident worthy of remark, we continued hugging the wind, and describing a great segment of a circle, until after passing through the prevailing north-easterly trades, we attained a latitude of thirty-six, and then being met by the west winds, we turned to the coast, and began sailing swiftly towards our destination.

The twenty-fifth day from Mazatlan saw us in sight of the red woods that fringe the Santa Cruz mountains, and that night as the moon sank glimmering down, we let run the cables in the bay of Monterey.

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Being charged with dispatches for San Francisco, an early breakfast and hasty preparations soon placed me astride a dragoon's saddle. Attended by an artillery soldier and six horses for escort and cavallada, I drove a sombrero hard on my head, the spur yet harder in the ribs of my cavallo, and away we sallied en route. The sun had passed the meridian when we reached the Salinas plains, and we stopped to change horses at the Molino—a simple performance for one who can swing the lasso at any time, but for those unacquainted with the mode, it is requisite to drive the beasts into the corral, near every rancho, and catch one at leisure. I found my friend Anderson as hospitable and convivial as ever, and, after a mutual exchange of greetings and drinks, we galloped off across the plains. Instead of the smiling grassy deserts, gaudy flowers, and narrow canals of spring, I beheld parched earth, large patches of wild mustard, and miles of wild oats. Before accomplishing many leagues, one of the best little beasts of the cavallada eluded the vigilance of my body-guard, and we were compelled to abandon him. However, I made a forcible loan of a black mare brousing by the road-side—according to the custom of the country—and which, indeed, proved an admirable ally towards the close of our journey. Before entering the gorge that leads over the mountains on the opposite side of the Salinas, we halted at a rancho—

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and peeping in at the door of an outbuilding, I discovered two industrious persons playing cards with much interest and deliberation—there was no cash up, but they assured me that each bean before them, which marked the game, was a transferable I O U for a bullock. One of the party was brother to the last Mexican governor of the territory—who absconded to Mazatlan, after showing a feeble and futile resistance to Commodore Stockton. He appeared somewhat pleased by the information I was able to communicate from his relative, Don José Castro, but not sufficiently so to interrupt the constant interchange of beans between him and his grave companion. We commenced ascending the pass that bars the road to the valley of St. Johns, and after winding a couple of hours slowly among the hills, gained the topmost ridge—which commands a fine triangular view of the rich slopes and plains below—and then soon accomplished the descent—passing the ruined village and dilapidated mission of San Juan, we galloped briskly around. On the road I enticed a mounted Indian into service by a taste from the brandy bottle, to act as *vacuero*—by no means a sinecure birth with such a lazy perverse set of brutes as we possessed—but I was grieved to find the soldier, sent as my guide and defender, had more than he was equal to in keeping himself and musket in the saddle. Moreover, he was neither amiable nor companionable—a serious crime for a traveler—and I was obliged at times, to drive and catch the horses, talk for him, and in fact, do all but eat and sleep for him—which last accomplishments he enjoyed in perfection, having a constitution like refined steel. I am happy to add, out of regard for the army, that he deserted shortly afterwards; although he forgot in his hurry to return a silver cup of mine.

Skirting along the banks of a rapid stream, the shades of night began to fall as we drew bridles at a small rancho of one Don Herman. Our host, as usual with the race, was making a slight repast on a paper cigar: he was very cordial, and good-looking, as was also his still handsome old sposa. Like everybody I encountered before and since in the interior, they inquired when the United States Government would pay for horses and cattle taken during the war. *Quien sabe*—who knows—always came to my aid, and I drawled it out much to the purpose. Indeed, though our Californian Volunteers be good men and true among their own kith and kindred, yet their mistaken ideas of what constituted civilized warfare made them the most unscrupulous of freebooters; and they could be tracked far and near in their thirst for their enemy's horses and asses.

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My host had no children, but, like Spanish padres, lots of nephews and nieces. Amid a detached group of young people, I observed a pretty little girl, as I at first supposed a child, nursing an infant, but on inquiry I learned that she was the mother at fourteen, and had been married two years and a half; a fact which beats East India jungles for the precocity of women. Again on the road, with the husband of the little baby-mother for guide, who, by the way, was a most consummate scamp, incessantly urging me to make a short detour of five or six leagues, to dance all night at a fandango; and on taxing him with his gallivanting, and inconstant disposition among the softer sex, he replied, with an air of triumph,—*O! yo he engañado muchas!*—Bless you, I've broken the hearts of dozens—although he did not inspire me with being so determined a Lothario as he himself believed.

On we spurred, and urged the jaded steeds some leagues further, when we came upon the rancho of Carlos Castro. I was half famished from a long day's fast, but there was neither bread nor edible matter in the hut. At last the buxom mistress asked me, *Quiere huevos?*—have an egg;—*caramba! si amiga!*—Why did not you tell me of this before? She was good enough to boil exactly fourteen, hard as bullets, but, what is equally incredible, I ate them all without salt; and then being in good humor with all the world, threw a peso in the kind Señora's lap, and with a lively adios, turned our horses' heads again towards the north star. The moon was riding high, round, and gleaming as the silver dollar I had just thrown the good lady, flooding the whole lovely plain, with its waving fields of yellow oats, and magnificent clusters of oaks, in one continuous vista of unexampled beauty. Five leagues beyond we struck off to the right, and after losing our path repeatedly, amid beds of water-courses, and bolls of trees, and when I was on the point of giving orders for a night bivouac on the sweet and yielding grain, we became aware of our proximity to a habitation by the usual barking diapason of half an hundred dogs and curs, and I was not sorry to swing my weary limbs from the saddle after a hard ride of eighty miles. In a few minutes I was stretched beside the proprietor of the rancho, Mr. Murphy, and as kind a specimen

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of the true Milesian as ever took leave of the Hill of Hoath. I knew that by the kindly tone of his voice; but I fell sound asleep, giving the old gentleman an account of the battle of Cerro Gordo, and never moved until long after sunrise. On awaking, I found myself in a dwelling constructed of pickets, driven perpendicularly into the ground, the apertures filled in with mud, and all covered by a roughly-thatched roof. The enclosure was rather a primitive, and I should judge temporary affair, to serve the first year or two of an emigrant's home. The dwelling was large enough, however, to comprise capacious beds in three of its angles, a couple of tables, dresser, chairs, and a variety of useful articles scattered around the earth floor, but all presenting a far neater appearance than usually characterised the ranchos of the country. I was not left long to conjecture the cause of this tidiness, for whilst lacing my moccasins, preparatory to a yawn and shake, by way of toilette, I was saluted by a very nice young woman, with the hope that I had slept well, and at the same time presented with a large bowl of water and clean towel, by the young lady herself, who was afterwards introduced to me by her good father, as his daughter Ellen. She was tall and well made, a very pleasing face, lighted by fine dark grey eyes, black hair, and beautifully white teeth. I learned from her own rosy lips that she was the first American girl that ever walked over the mighty barrier of the Californian sierras, which she accomplished with one of her brothers, leaving the wagons, and her friends, to follow on a longer route. They were a large family, and most of the children born in Canada, thence *locating* in Missouri, and so on to the farthest West in California. There were four stalwart sons, who had all more or less been engaged in the last troubles, and had shown the natives a choice mould of bullets from their unerring rifles. They treated me with the utmost kindness; and after partaking of a capital breakfast of new eggs, hot bread, cream and *lomo*—tenderloin—prepared by their pretty sister, I felt quite equal to a short tramp among the hills, particularly upon finding the horses well nigh knocked up, and requiring a few hours more rest.

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The rancho was situated on the northern verge of the broad valley, on the borders of a pure sparkling stream, surrounded in every direction, far and near, with golden lakes of wild oats, thickly studded and shaded by the oaks. In company with one of the boys, Dan, we followed up the course of the stream for a mile or more, and I then had the satisfaction of sending a ball through and through the shoulders of a large doe. Dragging the carcass down to the water, and divesting it of its jacket, we then did the same ourselves, and swam and plashed for an hour in the little torrent. At the same time, with an extempore rod, twine, hook, and a "devil's darning-needle" for bait, Dan pulled out from a limpid pool delightful salmon-trout, full two feet in length; I ate part of one, and a charming fellow he was. Leaving our deer to the varmints, we returned to the rancho at noon, dined, and again boot and saddle; struck the road, and six or eight leisurely leagues brought us to the settlement of Puebla de San José. Here I was most civilly received, and entertained by an American gentleman, Mr. Ruckle, to whom I bore a letter. Supper, good old sherry, a cigar, and four hour's sleep; up betimes, and sent the jaded animals on to the Mission of Santa Clara for a bite of grass. I remained to break my fast at the house of an agreeable white-toothed lady named Pico, and then, accompanied by Mr. Ruckle, we hurried along the road which traverses the plain, shaded by noble avenues of oaks and willows. The Mission stands but a league from the Puebla, presents a tolerably flourishing appearance, with a well-preserved church, clusters of out-buildings, and well-cultivated gardens. It is by far the most important and respectable settlement of its kind in this portion of the territory; and since the dispersion of the priests, and confiscation of church-lands, has still fortunately retained a mite of its former wealth and influence. The good Padres, a score or more years ago, were pleased to live well; and their well-filled granaries, cultivated grounds, and myriads of horses and cattle—in all praise be it said—were the first to induce the native Indians, who, in brutish ignorance and social degradation are even now but a remove from beasts of the field, to devote their time to some useful employment. By these means the shrewd Fathers never lacked comfortable houses to shelter them, nor raiment to clothe their sleek skins.[2]

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Tarrying but a few minutes at Santa Clara, and selecting the best horses of the cavallada, I parted with Mr. Ruckle and continued my journey; the first fifteen miles was wearisome labor with our worn-out beasts, and we stopped for breath at a ranchito of a pretty little widow, who did the amiable most refreshingly by handing me a dish of raspberries and cream. Seeing a filthy Indian poke them out of a bottle with a stick, occasionally giving it a suck, did not enhance the flavor of the fruit. A short league beyond, we came to another mud-built rancho, and our horses having apparently determined to proceed no farther, accordingly tumbled down; there were half a dozen women and children about the hut busily employed in cutting beef in long strips for drying; but they continued their occupation without deigning to cast even a glance of sympathy upon our pitiable plight. Indignation getting the better of my misfortunes, I kicked off the spurs and marched bravely up to the mansion; then, after dodging about under long fringes of raw beef, I was suddenly confronted by a stout dame, with a mass of meat clutched in one hand, and a dripping knife long as her arm in the other; this savage apparition rather abashed me, and I timidly inquired how she did? She merely gave a sharp upward jerk to her chin, with an ireful visage—as much as to say, "I'm in excellent preservation, don't bother yourself"—pointing to my foundered studs, I politely urged the necessity of procuring fresh horses! "*No, Señor! no hay!* the horses are all mares, the mares are wild—there is no one to catch them"—in other words—I'll see you in purgatory first. So I called up a little resolution, though far from feeling it, and letting the butt of my rifle fall heavily to the ground, I said, "Hark ye, my friend, if you don't speedily furnish me with beasts I'll make a seizure of that fine animal I see saddled in the corral; besides, I'm willing to pay liberally." At the word "money" the patrona's features relaxed, *tu no eres voluntario*—she remarked!—*por dios! no! mi alma yo soy de la marina, y Católico ademas!*—I'm a sailor and a good Catholic to boot. At this last admission and the sight of a handful of bright pesos, the

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whole party surrounded me—*ah! tan malicimos son esos malditos voluntarios! Ave Maria! El oficial no es herége—es Cristiano—y pagara los caballos—*ah, what light-fingered gentry were the Volunteers; but the gentleman is a Christian, not a heretic, and going to pay like a trump—they exclaimed. There was still some doubts as to whether I intended to pay in *effectos* or hard tin, and if I could make it convenient to liquidate a few outstanding claims which some of my countrymen had forgotten to adjust; but when satisfied on that point a small boy ran off to drive in the cavallada. Meanwhile the Señora poured me out a cup of aguardiente, touched her lips to it, and handed it to me to quaff. The drove of horses was soon brought up, and as a particular favor, the patrona selected her own nag to bear me—a small mare and natural pacer that rattled along at a great rate without whip or spur—embracing the party, we again mounted and started off in fine style. The country has the same lovely aspect as in the vicinity of San José; great level plains teeming in wild grain, and wide-spreading foliage of oaks, chesnuts, maple and willows, enclosed between high-swelling hills. In fact the country for more than forty leagues of this broad valley is so perfectly level that a coach could be driven in any direction without serious obstruction; however, there is one annoyance to which horses are subjected, in the multitudes of holes burroughed by a species of ground squirrels, very frequently bringing horse and rider to their faces. A few leagues rapid travelling brought us in sight of the southern arm of the waters of San Francisco, and skirting along its shores, by sunset we had left the low country, traversed the rugged hills of the sea-girt peninsular, floundered knee deep in the sandy road, and by nightfall I found myself comfortably housed with a generous batchelor friend, Mr. Frank Ward, in Yerbabuena.

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FOOTNOTE:

[2] This Mission, according to Vancouver, was established in 1778, by Franciscans, which, with one founded three years previously at San Francisco, were the northernmost settlements of any description formed by the court of Spain, on the continental shores of north-west America, exclusive of Nootka. Although the Jesuits had planted the cross on the lower territory, on the peninsula at Loretto (1697), they had not explored the west coast. Of all the numerous voyagers of note who have visited and written upon California—Perouse, Vancouver, Kotzbue, Belcher, Wilkes, and others—there is not one whose delineations are characterized with so much truth and simplicity as Vancouver,—not only in this territory, but in the groups of Polynesia. He must have been truly a good man. His intercourse with the untutored savages of the Pacific was ever tempered with justice and humanity. He did more than any succeeding navigator in stocking the islands with cattle, and his scientific duties were executed with exceeding accuracy for the means at his command. The English may well be proud of the renown he has shed upon the land of his birth; and his name will be for ever cherished in the Pacific, when the unscrupulous deeds of his great Commander shall have been forgotten.

CHAPTER XVII.

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Remaining but a few days in Yerbabuena, and when on the point of taking leave, I met with a brace of navy men, who were about to sail up the Bay for a hunt among the hills; so giving orders to the brave courier to join me at Puebla, I embarked with my friends one day at noon in a small launch, and a stiff sea-breeze soon wafted us forty miles; then entering a narrow creek, formed by high sedgy reeds that sprang from the shallow water, we performed a tortuous serpentine track, in a labyrinth that fairly required Ariadne's clue to thread its mazy windings; actually sailing sixteen miles to gain three, as the bird flies; at last we arrived at the *embarcadera* of San José; and after a fatiguing walk, at dark we came upon a tenement. The house was filled with women and dogs, who chattered and cheated, dinned and dunned us to such a pitch that we were obliged to seek shelter elsewhere; and accordingly we *packed* our saddles, blankets and rifles, and at about nine o'clock reached the estate of one Don Ignacio de Sylva. Our host received us with open arms, prepared a supper of beef and *tortillas*, and in return, we complimented him with strong rummers of punch; his fat spouse joined in the festivities, and when the evening was somewhat advanced, a shake-down was arranged for us on the floor of the *sala*, which, fortunately for fleas and ourselves, chanced to be laid with a floor of boards. My slumbers were greatly disturbed by being placed in full view of a pretty young brunette, whose light from an adjoining apartment threw her form in most distinct rays of animated beauty, amusing herself the while playing with a baby, whilst her filthy villain of a husband regaled himself for an hour or more with a *cigarrito*. My dreams were none of the pleasantest, and I was glad when day dawned to light me out of the dwelling, and breathe the pure morning air. *Como les gusta á los Americanos el fresco*, said our lazy host, as he sat wrapped in a blanket on a hide, observing me take a bath in a little rivulet near by; *se hace daño*—be the death of him—as he blew the cigar smoke from his lungs with a deep sigh! Notwithstanding his indolence we found him a most consummate extortioner, and after throwing every impediment in our way, he hired us miserable horses at an extravagant rate; and then mounting, we took the road over a dry, salt, marshy country. Passing the mission of St. Josephs, we never halted until reaching Puebla, where we were most kindly welcomed by Mr. Ruckle. The town is planted in the midst of the great plain, with small streams of water, which is much needed elsewhere, coursing on either side. The place contained some five hundred inhabitants, the dwellings all of the adobie mud-built order of architecture, with but one road between them: for ten leagues around the land is most fertile,

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and the country in many respects appears to possess great advantages, and has the reputation of being the garden of Upper California. We saw quantities of fruits, peas, peaches, and grapes, very unripe, but the natives like them the better green.

Under no contingency does the natural face of Upper California appear susceptible of supporting a very large population; the country is hilly and mountainous; great dryness prevails during the summers, and occasionally excessive droughts parch up the soil for periods of twelve or eighteen months. Only in the plains and valleys where streams are to be found, and even those will have to be watered by artificial irrigation, does there seem the hope of being sufficient tillable land to repay the husbandman and afford subsistence to the inhabitants. Sheep and cattle may be raised to any extent; as the gentle slopes, clothed in rich wild grasses, afford excellent districts for grazing.

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We breakfasted at the residence of a plain, sensible and industrious family of emigrants from Virginia, named Campbell; then strolling to the banks of a little rivulet, we took siesta beneath the shade of drooping willows, surrounded by groups of brunettas washing in the pools near by. In the afternoon my fellow travellers left me for their hunt among the mountains; and upon learning that Commodore Stockton was in the village, I immediately made my homage. He was by long odds the most popular person in California, and by his enthusiasm, energy, and determination, accomplished more, even with the limited means at his command, in the acquisition of this valuable territory, than any other man before or since, who has planted his foot on the soil.

The following day was Sunday, the Fourth of July, and moreover the fast day of the Patron Saint of California—*Nuestra Señora del Refugio*. Meeting Miss Ellen Murphy and brother on the road bound to high mass at the mission, I agreed to accompany them and return to their rancho in the evening. There was a large assemblage in Santa Clara, and we attended church. The building was oblong, painted roughly in fresco, and decorated with a number of coarse paintings, and lots of swallow-tailed, green and yellow satin pennants dangling from the ceiling. During service an indefatigable cannonier, outside, gave frequent *feux de joie*, from a graduated scale of diminutive culverins—made of brass in shape of pewter porter pots, half filled with powder, and the charge rammed down with pounded bricks—this with music of kettle-drums, cymbals and fiddles made a very respectable din; there were two gentlemanly priests of the order of Saint Francisco, whose acquaintance I afterwards made, who preached each a brief sermon with eloquence and force. Among the congregation were all the belles and dandies of the valley; the former kneeled demurely on little rugs or bits of carpet in the nave of the church; but the latter were lounging near the doors—their gala costume is quite in keeping with Andalusia—and one handsome fellow at my side took my eye, as I have no doubt he did that of many a brighter. He was dressed in a close-fitting blue cloth jacket; sky-blue velvet trowsers, slashed from the thigh down, and jingling with small filagree silver buttons; snow-white laced *calçoncillos*, terminated by nicely stamped and embroidered *botas*; around the waist was passed a heavy crimson silk sash; a gay woollen serapa hung gracefully over the shoulder; in one hand a sugar-loafed, glazed sombrero, bound with thick silver cords; and in the other, silver spurs of an enormous size, each spike of the rowels two inches long: all these bright colors—set off by dark, brilliant eyes, jetty black locks, and pliant figure—would have made him irresistible anywhere. Turning towards me, he asked, smilingly, *Porque no se arrodilla, vd en Misa?*—Why don't you kneel at the Mass?—*Tengo pierna de palo*, quoth I, quite gravely: glancing at my pins with much interest, to discover if they were of timber, he seemed to relish the joke, and we then sidled out of the church, and became firm friends on the spot.

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After service, I was introduced to many American emigrants, mostly Mormons, who, in a free and easy style, had taken possession of the outbuildings and tenements belonging to the Mission; and who, in their contempt for the kind and good Padres, and rightful proprietors of the domain, were not only averse to request permission to remain for a season, but were hugely indignant at the military Governor of California, Colonel Mason, for having issued a decree, requiring these lazy gentlemen to leave the lands of the Church. Notwithstanding their mutterings, a few weeks later they were summarily forced out by the bayonet.

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Whilst we were at mass, a serious mishap occurred to young Murphy. A juvenile damsel, whose cognomen was "sugar-plumb," and being the only eligible maiden for matrimony, I was assured by a hospitable dame, one Mrs. Bennett, "that she was the forwardest gill in the Mission," through some silly, childish freak, frightened my friend's horse, so that the restive animal broke the halter, and made long strides over the plain. A couple of drunken Indians started in pursuit, but having a quarrel on the way, one plunged his cuchillo up to the haft in his companion's thigh, which brought him, deluged in blood, from the saddle. We found this poor devil and conveyed him to town; but of the runaway horse and saddle, which was worth half-a-dozen Indian lives, or horses, we could learn nor see nothing. We made but a short stay in Puebla, and an hour before the sun sank for the day, we put foot in stirrup, and a long swinging gallop of seven leagues soon carried us to good Mr. Murphy, and a good supper.

The following morning I arose with the lark, took a long pull at the milk-pail, volunteered a little surgical advice to an Indian *vacuero* who being thrown from his horse, was suffering under a badly-contused thigh; he had bound the limb tightly with strands of hide, and was doing a new principle of local bleeding by puncturing the flesh with sharp stones—a mode of treatment very much in vogue with the natives. Under guidance of Dan, we mounted capital horses, and sallied out for a bear-hunt. Entering a gentle rise of the hill sides to the southward, we wound around the grain-covered slopes for two hours, seeing but a few stray deer, and a herd of wild horses;

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and although the traces of Bruin were everywhere visible, we were on the point of turning our steps homeward, when my companion grasped me by the shoulder, pulled me back to the horse's flanks, and whispered, "Thar's one! lie low, Captin! lie low!" It was a large he bear, walking about a little bowl of a valley below us, in the laziest, hoggish manner possible, going from side to side, rooting and tearing up the earth by wagon loads, in his search for ground-rats—his course being directly towards us. We dismounted, hitched horses to the lower branches of an oak, a few yards in our rear, divested ourselves of all but knives and rifles, taking the precaution to keep a bullet in our mouths, that they might slip easily down the guns in case of emergency, then crossing to the edge of the hill, we awaited the grizzly. He came nearly within point-blank range, when changing his track, he passed over to the other side of the slope. We tightened girths, mounted again, and rode around to head him off; when going through the same operations as before, we ensconced ourselves behind a giant tree, and remained perfectly silent; presently the monster entered a knoll of bushes, within forty yards of us. "Captin," said Dan, with his mouth close to my ear, "when I whistle, plug him in the head." I brought my rifle down, but at the moment of springing the trigger, I must confess feeling some inward quakings, from all I had heard of their ferocity when wounded, and accordingly I intimated a request to Dan that he would open the ball. [Pg 117]

Giving a low whistle, to attract Bruin's attention, the long barrel rested motionless for a second against the tree, and as the beast raised his head to listen, Dan let the hammer fall. *Maldito!* the cap only exploded; but it startled Bruin, who leaped from the shrubbery, and took to his heels. My turn came, and I sent him a bullet out of twenty to the pound; wheeling on his haunches, he showed a range of glittering jaws, and not seeing us, made off again. We once more got in the saddle, and rushed in pursuit. Dan had another glimpse—snapped again—I took a long range, and blazed away. Nothing done. On we galloped up the hills, and skirting around the summits, we began slowly to descend along the brow of a ravine, in which we anticipated finding the chase. We had nearly reached the base without perceiving him, when Dan, who was behind, shouted, "Mind your eye, Captin!" I heard a sharp, rattling growl, and within thirty feet below me was Bruin, licking a stream of blood flowing from his rump. He raised up, snarling with rage, with huge paws and claws distended; and when about making for me I fired right between the shoulders, and heard the lead strike *chug*. The moment after my horse plunged, took the bit in his teeth, and dashed across the valley. After getting him again under control, we tracked the bear over the crest of the hill to a small dense thicket, where we heard him groaning, and angrily snapping his jaws. Dan swore it would be "rank pison" to venture after him, and we both thought him hit too hard to crawl out alive. I was extremely disappointed in not beholding the last of him, but Dan consoled me by promising to pay him a visit with the dogs the following day; which he did, but the beast was half devoured by coyotes and gallinazos, so that it was impossible to save the skin. It was of a verity the most formidable beast I ever saw outside the bars of a cage: covered with long grizzly hair, dark upon the spine, and inclining to a yellowish tinge along the shoulders. He must have weighed fourteen hundred pounds. [Pg 118]

At noon, my escort and cavallada having come up, and all ready for the road, fully appreciating the honest kindness of the Murphys, I threw myself in the saddle, and departed for Monterey. We had but four horses—miserable beasts they were—one gave up the ghost before the spur had made a hole in his hide, and another was brutally murdered by my illustrious soldier, who being unable, in his stupidity, to noose him, brought the poor animal lifeless to the ground with two ounces of buck-shot from the musket. Apart from these annoyances, we had the utmost difficulty in urging those we rode into the settlement of San Juan. On the road I was favored by a specimen of native rusticity. A youthful vacuero accosted me, and walked his cavallo at my side; familiarly placing his hand on the barrel of my rifle, he frankly opened a discourse by asking if I had any tobacco; not fancying his impertinence, and thinking I detected a mischievous expression in his visage, I quickly replied, with my rifle at half-cock, *No tengo. Que tienes pues?* he added, with a sneer. *Dinero*, I responded, chinking the coin in my pocket, upon which he made a jocose grasp at that receptacle of my treasure, whereupon the solid tube of the rifle came in forcible contact with his nose, with such a violent collision that the claret spirted over the mane of his steed. He reined quickly back—the water standing in his eyes—made a demonstration of taking a whirl at me with his lasso, but observing the dark hole of my rifle staring him in the face, he contented himself by yelling *puñetero!* and galloped away.

I found St. Johns a detestable spot—half a score dwellings—the church, and long ranges of buildings of the Mission, more than half in ruins, and rapidly crumbling to the ground. Thirty years before, this abode of the Frayles possessed twenty thousand head of horses, three times that number of horned cattle, and a thousand Indian serfs to till their broad acres. Meeting the intelligent priests who had officiated in Santa Clara, they directed me to a house where a lodging was procurable. Crossing the deserted plaza, I entered a large ill-constructed adobie dwelling, where I was received by a filthy young Gascon, who appeared to be mayor domo, in the midst of a houseful of girls and women. I lost no time in doing the amiable to my agreeable hostesses, who in turn prepared a supper of dirty junks of beef, and still worse *tortillas*. *Bifstek à la god dem*—fingers before forks—*comme l'usage en Californie*, said the Frenchman, as he vigorously commenced operations. But the supper was so unpalatable and unclean a meal, that hungry as I was, I fain amused myself the while, puffing cigarillos, catching fleas, and drinking execrably sour country wine. The feast was barely ended, when a loud screeching, and violent commotion among the women attracted attention; and presently there came running towards me an old beldame with, *Dios de mi alma, es rd medico?*—the Lord preserve us, are you a doctor. *Si! si! amiga! Medico y cirujano bueno*—Yes, Jack of all trades—I replied, deeming it a fair chance of exhibiting a little irresponsible empirical practice. Upon inquiring the necessity for my professional abilities being called into play, I learned that the entire household had been exerting [Pg 119]

themselves the day and night previous dancing at a fandango, and that one of the *jovencitas* was attacked with fits, consequent upon her exertions. The poor girl was lying on the tiled floor, her head propped up by pillows, with loose dishevelled dress, and rich masses of dark hair strewn over her bosom and shoulders, like serpents in Eden. She was moaning piteously between the convulsions, and one old Hecate was striving to pry her mouth open with an iron spoon, whilst another was slapping her hands and yelling all the while, *Crescencia! Crescencia!* Kneeling beside the pretty suffering patient, and finding her pulse throbbing like a steam-engine, in my ignorance I advised bleeding; but this was out of the question, as nothing sharper than a hatchet, jack-knife, or old steel-pen, was to be had in the place; consequently, all left to be done was the application of hot vinegar and blankets. While superintending this process, and bathing her forehead, she went off again into spasms, clasped her arms around me, and for the space of five minutes I was favored with a succession of the warmest embraces; and, although it may not be generally credited, yet I'll venture to assert, that one may be seldom placed in a more trying situation, even if a charming girl has fits. *Crescencia* became calmer after this trifling ebullition, and was put to bed. I was anxious to sit up with the party during the night, but the *rieja* declined my services, and I retired to another dormitory, where I slept tolerably well on a table, wrapped in a blanket, with holsters for pillow. Arising at daybreak, I was concerned to find my horses had disappeared from the corral, which I had reason to attribute to the kind offices of the Gascon. However, I paid him a dollar to have them caught, and upon bidding adios I gave him a *souvenir* from the thick lash of my riding-whip, which was no doubt serviceable to other travellers who have succeeded me.

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We reached the Salinas Plains at noon; half way across my horse dropped with me into a ditch, so I scrambled out, packed saddle and duds on my own back, gained the molino, procured a Spanish brute from the proprietor thereof, and the same night arrived in Monterey. I regret to add, this was my last interview with Anderson—he was assassinated a few months later, by a person named Callagan.

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CHAPTER XVIII.

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The latter part of July found the frigate again moored off Yerbabuena, in the waters of San Francisco. A number of us had long anticipated the pleasure of a trip to the northward; and a fine prize schooner, the *Julia*, being unemployed, she was accordingly made ready, and, early one morning, our party, with a few trifling kits, were all snugly stowed away on board. With the broad pennant fluttering at the main, and all sails spread, we soon lost sight of the anchorage. The *Julia's* cabin had four berths sufficiently capacious for grown people, and two others, which were, in reality, intended for minors, or any adult under three feet in length; a settee ran crosswise, and the intermediate space filled in with a cozy table. Our mess amounted to seven, and the caterer had been careful to provide servants and cooks, cold hams and tongues, potted oysters and biscuits, silver-topped bottles of ale and stout, cases of pale sherry, bundles of havannas, and what with a haunch or two of venison, and lots of edibles, indiscriminately packed in huge baskets, we counted upon a sufficiency of *viveres* to allay thirst and famine for a week to come. Indeed, there's nothing answers so well as a profusion of "provender," to promote good humor and agreeable conversation. Major Dalgetty understood this practically and philosophically. Guitars, pretty spirituelle women, babbling brooks and shady lawns, with a bowl of chicken salad, do very well when one goes a picknicking in an omnibus, or canal boat; but when it is necessary to rough it a bit in open air and unknown regions, we require something more substantial.

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Passing through the inner straits, above Angel Island, we entered the bay of San Pablo, or Sinoma, and, with a pleasant breeze, steered for the upper shores. It is a vast, circular sheet of water, twelve miles in diameter, fenced in from the ocean, on one side, by a rim of broken hills, closely abutting upon the bay; while to the north and east, the land trends easily away, in less abrupt elevations, into the interior, leaving a base of wide, fertile plains and valleys, verging upon the shores.

A noble ship channel takes the direction of the eastern coast, leading into the straits of Carquinez, an opening quite similar to the outer passage from the sea. Our course lay in an opposite point, and, turning to the left, we sailed over shallower depths, until late in the afternoon, when, finding there was no water to spare betwixt the keel and the bottom, we dropt anchor, two miles from the land. The barge was presently manned, and leaving our butler, Mr. Bill Moulden, to exercise his care and corkscrew over the comestibles, we rowed to the entrance of a creek, where, after winding about in the serpentine tracks of an inlet for, at the least, ten miles, we at last jumped on shore at the *embarcadera* of Sinoma. The gentleman to whom we were bound, not being apprised of our coming, but two horses were to be procured, and the rest of us trudged along on foot. The road was perfectly level, walking good, and, with sparkling stars for lanterns, in an hour we found ourselves at the residence of General Vallejo, were ushered through a spacious *porte cocher*, into a large *sala*, and graciously received by the lady of the mansion, whose husband chanced to be absent on important business. It may be as well to state here, that Vallejo had been the most important personage in Upper California, both from family influence, intelligence and wealth. On the commencement of the war, notwithstanding the annoyance he had experienced from the Bear party, he espoused the cause of the United States; and, being blessed with a clear head and much discernment, saw at a glance the benefit derivable for California by a connection with a staunch Republic, in preference to letting the

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territory languish under the misrule of Mexico, or, perhaps, at some future period, to maintain the needy soldiery of a foreign monarchy. I believe myself within the mark, in estimating the General's landed property at one hundred square leagues, embracing much of the best agricultural and grazing districts in the country, with many of the most eligible sites for commercial ports on the waters of San Francisco. The little Pueblo of Sinoma stands with its back resting against a ridge of high hills, shutting in, on one side, a lovely plain, near fifty miles in extent, and presenting much the same pleasing aspect of golden lakes of wild oats and luxuriant oaks, as grace the vale of Santa Clara. The principal dwellings and barracks form three sections of a square—all, except one edifice, owned and occupied by the relations and family of our absent host. His residence was the largest—as usual, built of adobies—two hundred feet long, of two stories, having a tier of balconies above. The apartments we occupied below were well furnished, walls papered, books and cases, prints and mirrors in profusion. We were somewhat surprised, not believing so much refinement, in that which is termed modern civilization, existed in the territory. The Señora herself, assisted by a well-behaved youth, did the honors of the supper table; and after we had made a hearty meal, she retired and left us to the enjoyment of chateau margaux and cigars. During supper we were complimented by a serenade, sung by a number of Russians and Germans, whose harmonious chorus, and songs of "Faderland," almost carried us away to the Rhine. We sought the music room, shortly after, where the little daughters of our entertainers were performing on the piano. They had been properly instructed, and performed remarkably well; besides, they were pretty, becomingly attired, and, what is still more commendable, exceedingly well bred. Towards midnight we said *buenas noches*, and sought our beds, where, if we had been previously a little astonished to find ourselves surrounded with elegance, we soon had reason to return to realities, by the aid of the pincer-like stings of the curse of the country, *pulgas*, who, finding us tender and palatable, hopped about us for the remainder of the night. To evade their sharp bites, I tried to smoke myself insensible, and would no doubt have succeeded in deluding myself into slumber, had not my repose been again interrupted by a loud altercation between the Admiral's aid-de-camp and Captain Swayback, of the dragoons, who chanced to be billeted together. The former, through abstraction, had swathed himself, like to an Egyptian mummy, in all the clothes, and persisted in occupying the centre of the bed; moreover, hinting a disinclination to pass the night with any gentleman perfumed with tobacco. Upon this, the captain became jocose indignantly; and although admitting that, in his varied hardships and travels, he had been necessitated to bivouac many a time under worse auspices, yet he still had a mortal antipathy to share his pillow with a man; so, he betook himself to the floor, where, with blanket, an inverted chair for pillow, and a brilliant cigar illumining either corner of his month, he rendered the room dense with smoke until daylight.

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Early on the morrow we took a pleasant ramble about the village, and were individually hugged by a tame grizzly cub, who was altogether more ardent in his affectionate embraces than our recent acquaintance required—thence to breakfast on the accustomed *olla podrida*, which is a stereotyped mess everywhere with Spaniards and their descendants—though at times differently prepared—here it was flanked by *frijoles*. The meal finished, horses were standing, ready caparisoned, at the door, and whilst my friends amused themselves to their fancy, I seized a rifle, and in company with a young American, started on a hunt. We had ridden a league over the valley, when we perceived a small herd of antelopes; but they descried us, too, a long way off, and not without much trouble and hard riding, did I succeed in striking one with a bullet, flying, as I may say; for never before had I beheld such nimble heels. Another was wounded, also, but, with his companions, reached the highlands and escaped. The first had his fore leg nearly severed from his shoulder, but, notwithstanding it traversed around in his flight like a wheel, he still ran good four leagues before we approached near enough to kill him. We soon packed the meat on a horse, which is done by removing the entrails, breaking the back bone, and doubling the animal, horns and tail; then it is secured to the saddle. Two may be carried this way; but wo to the hunter, if the sharp, hard hoofs happen to prick his horse, the probability being that the rider will describe a summerset. Highly pleased with the exploit, we sent our prize to the *embarcadera*. The antelope abounds in great numbers in the vicinity of Sinoma. They pass more evenly over the ground than deer; are far swifter, and extremely shy. We all reassembled at the Puebla in good time and condition for dinner, which passed pleasantly, and then taking leave of our handsome, hospitable hostess, who expressed much regret at the absence of Don Guadalupe, her husband, we mounted fresh horses and turned our backs on the little village of Sinoma, all highly pleased with the visit. Embarking again at the head of the creek, with a strong favoring tide, we reached our floating domicile at dark. Fatigue of the day made heavy eyelids, and supper was barely despatched, before sleep shrouded us in the land of dreams.

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Weighing at sunrise the next day, with light winds, and charming weather, we bore away to the Carquinez Straits. This passage lies on the eastern face of San Pablo; it may be a mile and a half wide, and we found a broad ship channel, ranging from twelve to five fathoms soundings, all the way to the head of the straits, where we anchored the Julia, in twenty-five feet water, within a bound of the bank. Our position was at the site of an embryo city, called Benecia. The selection was made by Doctor Semple, and the land owned by Vallejo, in compliment to whose wife the place was named. In point of natural advantages, I know of no more eligible situation: the country rises in gentle sweeping undulations for some miles, terminating quite around by a lofty amphitheatre of hills; the climate is equable and salubrious, with a rich and fertile soil, and plenty of timber, and it is said coal of a superior quality exists in the vicinity. At the time of our visit a mania was raging in California about lands, and lots, and although nothing had been attempted in Benecia, except a very pretty plan on paper, and three miserable little board sheds,

with a flat boat to ferry travellers across the straits; yet from being the highest navigable point, where large vessels can conveniently discharge or load from the main rivers of the San Francisco, that pour into the shoal Bay of Sossun, we predicted that eventually Yerbabuena might play a relative Sandy Hook to a New York; *then*, nothing was known of the El Dorado fifty miles above: had we been aware of it we might have taken the little city off the Doctor's hands; for now, with its manifest advantages, and enormous influx of emigration flowing towards California, there can be no bounds placed upon its progress.

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We made a hunting trio during the day, crossed to the opposite shore, but not being acquainted with the haunts of game, and being a little timid about the prospect of meeting a grizzly, we did not venture into the interior; and after a long and arduous tramp over the steep spurs of heights that entrenched boldly upon the straits, we saw no opportunity for firing our rifles, being only repaid by a treat of delicious melons found at an isolated rancho.

At nine the following morning we bid adieu to Benecia, with the credit of having been the largest vessel, and only one of war, that had ever floated so far on the broad bosom of San Francisco. With this plume in our castors we were obliged to be content, as the Admiral could not spare time to explore further. With an ebb tide, and prevalent west wind, we tacked boldly from side to side; before noon had cleared the straits, and entering a narrow channel that borders on the Tulares Valley, we ran between Mares Island and the main, and again came to anchor. Here we carried all day, in hopes of filling the Julia with elk; but although the low banks and extensive fields of reeds are famed as the resort of immense bands, yet, for a wonder, there was not a four-legged animal to be seen. Fowling-pieces, however, came into requisition, and we filled our bags with mallard, curlew, and plover; these tit bits came in seasonably, for the antelope, which by the way proved most excellent, was literally on his last leg. When the ebb tide again made, at night, we lifted the anchor once more, homeward bound, and the next afternoon were again comfortably kicking heels under the mess mahogany of the frigate.

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CHAPTER XIX.

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On the 26th of July, 1847, the Columbus, seventy-four, bearing the pennant of Commodore Biddle, sailed from San Francisco for the United States, leaving the flag of the Commander-in-Chief, flying on board the razeed Independence. By this time most of the ships composing the squadron had either rendezvoused in Monterey or Yerbabuena. Central and Upper California had become perfectly tranquil, with the exception of some trifling difficulties which had arisen in San Diego, between the New York Volunteers and the natives. But these were speedily settled; and a sufficient force being now ready for service, the preparations, which had already been too long delayed, were actively begun for the purpose of attacking the Mexican coast. The crews of the different vessels were constantly exercised in companies and battalions for service on land: they were taught to march and counter-march, in line, platoons, and column; to throw themselves into squares; were thoroughly instructed in the manual drill; and although they occasionally knocked their broad-brimmed tarpaulins off at "Shoulder arms," yet upon the whole they did extremely well for sailors, and on the weekly field-days on shore, went through the evolutions in a very creditable manner.

Early in September we returned to Monterey. The bright green verdure that clothed the hill sides, the beautiful mantle of green and flowers of spring, had long since paled beneath the blaze of summer. No rain had fallen; the clear rills that murmured in every gully were absorbed by the parched earth. The broad lagoons near the beach were rapidly receding, and mud had been converted into dust. And although vandals were making the axe resound in murderous blows upon the picturesque bolls of fine trees that decked the slopes, there was still sufficient delight for the eye to rest upon in the lovely undulating landscape encircling the shores of the bay.

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Monterey was rapidly increasing, and houses of a more substantial build than the paper-like structures of Yerbabuena, were rising in the streets. The fort on the hill was nearly completed, mounting a numerous battery of long twenty-fours; and in the rear were stone magazines, barracks, and quarters; so that the natives, if they entertained doubts before, were now convinced that their invaders had resolved to remain. A salutary system of police had also been established in the town—the Reverend Alcalde was a terror to evil doers. Woe betide the pockets of those who slaughtered cattle at their door-steps, or the rollicking gentry vaulting at full speed through the streets, or drunken Indians, or quiet persons in back rooms, amusing themselves at *monté*—for down came that ivory-headed cane—"Alcalde de Monterey"—like a talisman; and with a pleasant smile he would sweep the white and yellow dross into his capacious pockets. Others were mulcted in damages, or made to quarry stone for the school-house; but, whether native or foreigner, the rod fell impartially on their pockets, and all, more or less, contributed towards the new Californian college. These measures were not relished at first by the natives, but in the end they discerned the wisdom of a prompt and just administration of the laws, and became devoted admirers of the indefatigable Alcalde.

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About this time a more serious event occurred. Two Indians were charged with the murder of a foreigner; a woman, who was their accomplice, betrayed them; they were tried by jury, selected equally from natives and strangers; the crime was clearly and indubitably proved—the offenders were condemned to be hung. The punishment was unknown in California, and a large concourse

of persons assembled around the gallows, which was erected within sight of the town. Attended by two priests, the criminals, who seemed perfectly indifferent to their fate—in fact many thought rather pleased at being the observed of all observers—were placed beneath the beam, and the cords finally adjusted by the pious fathers. At the signal, down came the platform, and with it the murderers; but, by some unaccountable fatality, both knots slipped, and with the exception of being a little "choky" in the face, they sustained no injury. In a moment one of the priests mounted a horse, and galloped to the Governor's, urging a reprieve on the plea of a special dispensation of Providence—that the criminals had been hung once, and were consequently entitled to pardon. The philanthropic padre might better have saved his ride and breath, for Colonel Mason informed him, that in case these villains were not executed, Providence might interfere with the ropes for ever after, and moreover the sentence was to hang them until dead. Meanwhile the sheriff on the ground had replaced the halters with unslippable hitches, as he observed that they would receive "particular fits;" and soon after they were properly worked off, and swung, dangling, lifeless figures, within their timber frame. This event generated a feeling of bitter hostility on the part of the Catholic clergy towards the local government, although generally conceded by the Catholics themselves to be entirely uncalled for and unreasonable.

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On Saturday evenings, crowds of these degraded Indians, of both sexes, after laboring during the week, and feeding on locusts or grasshoppers, were accustomed to congregate on the outskirts of the town, where, with gaming and arguadiente, they were enabled to remain torpid all the following day. Their favorite amusement was a game called *escondido*—hide and seek—played with little sticks; and their skill was exerted by trying to discover in whose hands they were: seating themselves on the ground, around a huge blazing fire, separate parties were ranged on opposite sides; then beginning a low, wild chaunt, moving their bodies to and fro, groping with their hands within the serapas before them, until the perspiration starts in streams down their naked sides, after a strange succession of deep, harsh, guttural grunts and aspirations, they suddenly terminate their exertions by giving a sharp yell, and pointing to one of the opposite party, who, if rightly detected, pays forfeit. When one set of players becomes exhausted, others supply their places, and thus they keep it up the live-long night.

Among the Californians an agreeable pastime, much in vogue, is the *merendar*—Angliee, pie-nie. They are usually given, on the patron saint's day of some favorite señora or señorita, by their admirers. A secluded, pleasant spot is selected a few miles away from the presidio, where provisions, wine and music are collected beforehand; then each cavalier, with arm thrown affectionately around his sweetheart, on the saddle before him, seeks the rendezvous. Guitars and choral accompaniments soon are heard, and the *merenda* begins, and is kept up with the greatest possible fun and spirit: dancing, frolicking, drinking and love-making. There are two or three singular dances of the country: one, called the *Son*, where a gentleman commences, by going through a solo part, to quick, rattling music, then waving a handkerchief to a damsel, who either pays the same compliment to another favored swain, or merely goes through a few steps, without relieving the first comer, who, in turn, is obliged to continue the performance until a lady takes pity for him. It not unfrequently happens, that when a particularly graceful girl is on the floor, making her little feet rapidly pat the ground, like castanets, to the inspiring music, that some enthusiastic *novio* will place his sombrero on her head, which can never be reclaimed without a handsome present in exchange. But, Heaven help us! the pranks and mischief indulged in on the return home; the tricks and tumbles, laughter and merriment; even the horses appear to enter into the play, and when a cluster of gay lads and lassies have jostled one another from the saddles, the waggish, animals, fully appreciating the joke, stop of their own accord. The last affair of this kind I attended, was given by the best-hearted little fellow in the territory; and I am prepared to prove it—Señor Verde—he was an universal favorite, as well with old as young; for he was at different times taking a short *pasear* on every horse, laughing with the madres, and kissing the shy doncellas—*valgame dios*—but I had work in getting him into Monterey that night, for my caballo carried weight—besides a big overgrown dame and myself, Verde hung on to the tail.

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We were many weeks in Monterey, and I passed a large portion of leisure time either hunting with Juaquinito, or chatting and smoking during the afternoons with our excellent friends, the army men, at the Fort. But at last we began to tire of foggy mornings, damp nights, tough beef, lounging under the Consul's piazza, sweltering dust, catching fleas, playing monté, and fandangos at Carmelo. The time was drawing near for our departure. The ships were provisioned and ready for service. Jack had become quite a soldier, and we consoled ourselves with the prospective excitement of a descent upon the Mexican coast.

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CHAPTER XX.

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We sailed from Monterey on the 16th of October—rounded Point Piños, and, bidding a final adieu to Upper California, bore away to the southward. On the 25th, we found ourselves near Cape San Lucas, where, for three blessed days, we lay becalmed, all hands existing, as it were, in a warm bath of their own providing. The morning of the fourth, there came a breeze, and with it, under a cloud of canvas, one of our frigates, with the intelligence that she had bombarded Guaymas, and blown up the fortifications. No resistance had been made, and a corvette was left to guard a deserted town. It was certainly a severe instance of patriotism, where the Mexicans left their homes and property, choosing a precarious existence among the sterile mountains, rather than

cry *peccavi!* to the Yankee banner.

Anchoring at San José, we learned that trouble was brewing on the Peninsula, and that some hundreds of men in arms were assembled at Todos Santos, a place on the seaside of Lower California, fifty miles distant. Nothing, certainly, was more preposterous than the forgetful policy of our Government, in expecting to hold two thousand miles of coast with a handful of men. The principal points on the Peninsula had already been occupied transiently by our forces; but notwithstanding proclamations had been issued, declaring the "Californias unalterably" annexed to the United States, and that very many of the natives had warmly espoused our protection; yet the very moment the ships or force were withdrawn from a place, the disaffected patriots—and they were patriots—immediately sprang up, issued *pronunciamentos*, threatened foreign residents, and their own countrymen, who had befriended the invaders. As a consequence, the whole lower portion of the territory and the Peninsula were kept in a constant state of excitement and inquietude. Nor could we have reasonably expected aught else, without a respectable force to overawe them.

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The second evening after our arrival, a small mounted party, of thirty muskets, from the flag ship, was ordered into the interior, to disperse the insurrectionists at Todos Santos. They had not been absent half a dozen hours, when a report was circulated, that a body of the enemy were lying in ambush on the route, to attack them. A great commotion ensued, and I was selected to proceed to the Mission and inquire into the truth of the rumor. Attended by our marine postmaster Richie, we procured horses on the beach, and after sliding over loose stones, winding around precipices, until quite dizzy at the narrow bridle paths, running full as much risk in losing our eyes by thorns of aloe or cactus, as our necks, in the darkness, by the precarious foothold of the beasts, we reached San José at midnight, and presented ourselves before the alcaldes. We found these worthies and their wives deeply immersed in *monté* and *cigarillos*. They were ignorant, as alcaldes universally are, of any treasonable rumors; but, on citing an old Indian woman and her son, who were the divining magicians of the place, we learned that, in truth, a number of evil-minded persons had been in town, tampering with those more peaceably disposed, in hopes of raising a sufficient force to cut our little band to pieces. Upon concluding our inquisitorial proceedings, we returned to the ship. The next morning, news was brought from La Paz, a post some distance up the Gulf, and recently occupied by a company of the New York regiment under Lt. Col. Burton, that the disaffection had extended in every direction, and the Mexicans were resolved to make a last struggle for lost ground on the Peninsula. The same night we received more *violente extraordinarios*—break-neck expresses—stating that the little town near us was about to be invaded by the insurgents. There was so much truth in this, that a number of officers from the ships took to the road, "accoutred as they were," and a very flimsy toilet some of them appeared in, on their five mile flight to the watering beach. Boats were armed, and companies detailed for service; but another violent extraordinary arrived, and for the time we remained passive. The next evening, a detachment of five-and-twenty marines left the ship for shore. We were a long time disembarking, as the surf was breaking ten feet high upon the open beach. Skirting along thickets around the town, we marched up a valley, through a deep sandy road, for more than two leagues, before reaching our destination. It was a little hamlet, called *cerrillos*, of miserable ranchos, lying upon the side of a hill, where we had hopes of meeting a party of *guerrillas*. Our arrangements were quickly made—men posted—pieces cocked—the houses summoned successively—but, alas! for our anticipations of a skirmish, the birds had flown some hours before, leaving but a few old people and children in the place. I was sadly disappointed, for I had an extremely perilous path to explore in getting to my station—no more nor less than charging, full leap, through a large corral of sheep and cattle—with half a dozen fixed bayonets close at my heels—the bullocks jumping right and left, in great affright, and I expecting every instant some rampant bull ahead to toss me into the air, or a sharp bayonet to stick me in the rear; nor did I feel relieved, until the muzzle of my carbine struck the door of the rancho, and I found breath to cry, halt! to the party. After a deal of praying and screeching, from the shrill throats of women and children, the door fell, and, by the glare of a flickering torch, an old lady tremblingly approached, with a baby in each arm, crying, *Somas pobres, señor, ave purissima! no hay mas que esos! tome ad un niño, por el amor de Dios?*—we are poor, but take a baby, for the love of God. We generously declined the good woman's kindness, and succeeded in allaying her alarm, by the assurance that we were in search of men, and not infants. Truly, it has a tendency to jar one's nerves, this storming a person's house with armed men in the dead of the night.

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We had a dreadfully fatiguing march back, and had there not been many rivulets to quench thirst, some of us would have been thoroughly exhausted. Entering the town at eight o'clock, we learned with surprise, that the friends whom we went in search of had been making night hideous in the village itself, and only decamped towards daylight on our approach.

A few days succeeding our arrival, the ships were busily employed watering. In the southern arm of the bay is a small cove, partially sheltered from heavy surf by a jutting reef of rocks, where, during the rainy season, is the mouth of a mountain-torrent; then, the stream was not visible, but on digging a little way below the sandy bed, pure delightful water bubbled up, filtered through miles of coarse gravel. The large boats anchored a few yards from the strand, and the men amused themselves by swimming the casks off when filled. Nearly the whole population of the Mission assembled there at daylight, offering fruit, vegetables, and other articles for traffic. Lots of girls and women were there, all far better dressed, and more comely than those we had been gazing upon so long in Upper California. I devoted my time to an old lady and two daughters, who had pitched a tent near by, and opened a shop for the sale of milk and eggs. Of the two damsels

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my adoration was the younger—Eugenia—a charming little brunette, who shared my dinner, and, by way of a frolic, cunningly squeezed lime-juice in my mouth when asleep. This style of existence quite enchanted us; and what with sucking oranges, dozing in the welcome shade, and bathing half the time in the water,—we fancied it somewhat resembled the pleasant life in the South Sea Islands.

One of the roads, from the watering ravine to San José, had much the appearance of an alley through a flower-garden: the foliage blazing in bloom, with a plentiful display of blossoming aloes and cactus, shooting up into the air like Grecian columns; many of the latter twenty inches in diameter. The town stands in a pretty valley, with red, sterile mountains toppling around it. One broad street courses between two rows of cane and mud-built dwellings, thatched with straw, having shady verandahs in front, constructed of frameworks of canes and leaves, answering very well to screen the burning rays of the sun, which sheds light and heat, with the force of a compound blow-pipe. At the upper end of the avenue, standing on a slight, though abrupt, elevation from the valley behind, was the *cuartel*, a small building, which at a later period was the scene of a gallant stand and siege, where a mere handful of our sailors and marines bravely repulsed twenty times their number of Mexicans.

Within sight of the village is a shallow, rapid brook, which serves to irrigate many well-tilled plantations about the suburbs. The people were kind, and particularly hospitable, always welcoming us with the utmost cordiality. We usually dined at the house of an old Chinaman, who was a miracle of a cook, and dished us up beneath the shade—plover, curlew, wild ducks, and olives without stint—with which, and chatting, smoking, lounging from house to house, and *siesta*, we got through the hours pleasantly. On one afternoon, having somewhat soiled my outer man, in leaping into a puddle instead of over it, my newly-discovered sweetheart washed my trowsers and shirt, whilst I dozed away on a low cot frame, upon which was tightly drawn a tanned sheet of leather—and a capital, cool, comfortable apparatus it is in warm weather. We generally returned to the ships by night, as the unsettled state of the neighboring country rendered it impossible to remain; so, after rewarding pretty Eugenia with my handkerchief for her trouble, I turned my steps for the last time on San José.

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The expedition that started for Todos Santos on our arrival, and for which serious uneasiness was beginning to be entertained, got safely back on the seventh day. They found a dull, barren region to traverse, and were not repaid by a sight of the guerrillas, who had all decamped for a rallying point near La Paz.

In consequence of the earnest solicitations made by the simple inhabitants of San José, for a small force to protect them from their brethren in arms, who were not so favorably disposed towards the North Americans, it was deemed advisable to comply with the request, and a detachment of twenty marines, a nine-pounder carronade, with four officers, under command of Lieut. Charles Heywood, U.S.N., were detailed for the service, and the next day occupied the town.

CHAPTER XXI.

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Mazatlan lies in latitude 23° 12' N. verging on the tropic, flanked by a broad belt, ten leagues wide, of the *Tierra Caliente*, with the lofty mountains that support the elevated terraces and grand plateau of the interior plainly visible in the background. The town is built upon a triangular space formed by three hills at the angles, the apex a bluff promontory, extending seaward, and beyond two small islets, barely divided from the frowning helmet of Creston. These salient points form together a bold, rocky partition, which with another parallel barrier to the eastward, breaks off the ocean swell, sufficiently to admit of a secure anchorage from all but southerly winds. This is called the New Port. Right and left of the town are curving sandy beaches; the one abreast the New Port, protected by a sand-bar, that incloses a safe haven for small vessels; then further, a wide *estero*, or inlet, runs inland, following the bend of the coast for sixty miles to the southward; while one channel branches away to the west, encircles Mazatlan, and passing some miles in a line with the sea, is only prevented from again meeting the ocean by a narrow strip of marsh and sand. To the right of the town commences a small patch of sand called *Olas Altas*, whereon some of the best buildings are situated; beyond is an abrupt dome-like elevation; and then farther still, is a narrow indentation, formerly used as the Puerto Viejo; when the beach continues in a gentle curve, as far as the eye can reach, up the gulf, to the northward.

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In the year 1830, Mazatlan was a miserable Indian fishing village; but owing to its advantageous position in affording a better harbor, and fresh water, than existed for large vessels north of Acapulco—its facilities for communication with the rich mining districts of Zacatécas, Durango and Culiacan, besides the market opened in the populous provinces bordering upon the Pacific, it soon increased in magnitude to a fine thriving little city of ten thousand inhabitants, and became the most important commercial point on the continent north of the equator.

Sailing from the Bay of San José, in company with the frigate Congress, and corvette Cyane, we crossed the Californian Gulf, and made the land on the afternoon of November 11th. The sea breeze set in late, and the sun was down upon arriving at the Venados Islands. The ships were together, and having each a position assigned, the Independence passed ahead, and standing boldly in, anchored abreast the *Olas Altas* beach, within half musket-shot of the shore. The

Congress came to anchor in the old port, commanding the old road and garita, while the Cyane brought her guns to bear upon the eastern face of the town, from the new anchorage.

All remained quiet during the night on shore; the boats of the squadron were gotten in the water; batteries in fighting order; guns cast loose and trained; besides whole hail-storms of round shot, shells, grape, and divers other sorts of deadly pyrotechny, piled in stacks and racks, around the decks, all ready at a moment's warning to knock the town to dust. At sunrise a flag of truce was sent to summon the authorities. The Commandante Telles, in consequence of fatigue caused by galloping about the place, and brandy, did not appear, but delegated his officials to inform the American cartel, that he could not reconcile with it his honor to receive our officers, and to inform El Señor Commadore that he saw no necessity for surrendering Mazatlan, but the same time he should retire to his camp at the Palos Prietos, beyond the environs, where he would await the ruthless invaders.

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Four hours were given for deliberation; we were told subsequently, that they anticipated four weeks, with the privilege of breaking off negotiations at the end of that period. Before the time had expired, the companies for landing were ready in the boats, and the artillery awaiting the stroke of the bell to begin the ball; but presently there came alongside a dapper little personage, with intelligence that the Mexican troops had entirely deserted the town, and no resistance would be offered by the inhabitants. After all the trouble we were a little disappointed, and even Uncle Ben Bunker, our worthy gunner, was quite exasperated, being obliged to stow away his fire-works, and secure the guns, for a more remote occasion.

The flotilla of twenty-nine boats had assembled around the flag ship, and, headed by the Commadore, we pulled between Creston and the Main, and made for the mole. Not a bayonet was visible. A concourse of persons lined the beach, who merely gratified their curiosity by scowling upon us, as the boats came to land and emptied their loads. In ten minutes our flag was flying over the town, and twenty-one guns saluted it from the Independence. Field-pieces were then disembarked, placed in position, the men wheeled into column, the band struck up, and away we marched through Mazatlan. The house-tops were crowded with veiled faces; but upon so slight an acquaintance we found difficulty in putting in even a wink, except at rare intervals. We reached the Cuartel, a large square building for barracks and citadel, situated on a slight eminence in rear of the town, and commanding the main roads to the interior. The sailors and marines were soon quartered, guns planted, and all preparations made to resist an attack. Three hundred were detailed for garrison, and the remainder sent on board. From appearances, the Mexicans had departed with great precipitation, leaving many of their accoutrements, some hundred stand of rifles and muskets, saddles, and a few pieces of artillery. Their whole force was about eight hundred, more than half regulars, and had they chosen to stand their ground, we should have suffered severely, although not perhaps repulsed. Telles and his troops were posted a league up the road, near the forest of Palos Prietos, and it was stated that his intention was to assault us; but we experienced no alarm on that score, feeling assured that, after relinquishing all their advantages in position, they could have no further wish to retake them.

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The first few days we were occupied making reconnoissances in the neighborhood. Two positions were selected for fortifications: the one, a steep hill, overlooking the estero; and the other, a lower eminence, entirely guarding the main and only approach for cavalry by land to the port. This was the Garita. Between these two points, in former times, a line had been marked out, faced by a broad and deep ditch, intended to connect the western branch of the inlet with the sea, thus cutting the town entirely off from the main land; but the excavation had only been completed as far as the Garita road, leaving, however, but a narrow causeway open.

Heavy ordnance, long twenty-four pounders, with carriages and wheels, mortars, and lighter guns, were brought ashore from the ships; and as they were drawn through the streets, by the stout arms and shouts of hundreds of sailors, the inhabitants fairly looked astounded. In a short time these heavy monsters were staring, with their dark cavernous mouths, from the esplanade of the Cuartel. Picks, shovels and barrows went briskly to work; ditches, walls and parapets were commenced, and went on unceasingly for many months.

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Previous to our coming, a great number of the more respectable residents had retired to their estates, or the towns in the vicinity; but upon finding that the North Americans were not such outrageous invaders as they had been led to believe, gradually these families returned to their homes in Mazatlan. Meanwhile, a military and civil Governor and Lieutenant Governor^[3] had been appointed, and an *ayuntamiento* called from among the citizens, with commissioners on our side, to arrange preliminaries for the municipal administration of the town. This proved to be a matter of very difficult adjustment. The *junta* were averse to removing the *alcobala*—a tax levied upon provisions and produce entering the gates—at all times a burdensome and unequal extortion, falling upon the poor: this was at last yielded, and it, of course, became a very popular measure, although with little real benefit; for the producers themselves were compelled to suffer severely from the rapacity of their own troops outside. The President of the Council was Señor Créspe, a very respectable, honest person; and could he have been induced to fill the post, saving a few illiberal ideas and fears of compromising himself with his former friends outside, all would have gone on smoothly; but he refused to serve, and Señores Pelaiz and Leon were appointed to preside over the civil tribunals. This caused dissatisfaction, as neither had a surplus of moral character to boast of; but as the commodity was scarce, the judgeships would have remained vacant a long while, before more suitable selections could have been found among the Mexicans. Nevertheless, the policy pursued by us became popular with all classes, and there were but few exceptions to the general wish, that our flag might float over them forever. What tended in a

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great measure to revive confidence among the wealthier inhabitants, was our manner of conducting business at the custom house. The scale of duties, as exhibited by the Secretary of the Treasury, was modified to suit this market, and, in the absence of all bribery and corruption, it restored a certain harmony of association among the merchants, which, necessarily, was interrupted by the Mexican policy of holding out inducements for every trader to undersell his neighbor; when all were constantly intriguing with the government *empleados* to get their cargoes through the customs, at a lower mark than usual. This system was done away with, trade was thrown upon an assured basis, and it consequently encouraged a more friendly intercourse. As a single instance of the rapacity and extortion practiced by the Mazatlanese authorities displaced by us, there were five-and-twenty officials employed within the custom house; and of a yearly revenue averaging nearly a million of dollars, not a rial ever went to the general government. In the first place, the Mexican tariff was frequently so heavy as to amount to prohibition, and to save time and the risk of smuggling, it was only necessary to throw a third or fourth of the duties into the commandante's or collector's hands, who, in turn, made a smaller distribution to the cormorants beneath them. Telles had it in his power to have laid by half a million of money, but it all went like water through his fingers, and he fled as poor as he began.

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There were no restrictions placed upon the liberties or pleasures of the people. They had justice by their own laws. We preserved order. Patrols and police parties perambulated the town night and day. After *oracion* had tolled, no person was permitted to enter or leave the Garita until sunrise, without the risk of a bullet in his body! for sentinels were doubled at night, and mounted pickets guarded the great ditch towards the *estero*. No arms were permitted to be carried by citizens, and both gentlemen and *paisanos* were obliged to leave them, upon entering the town, at the Garita.

There was but one church in Mazatlan, for the people are not piously inclined, and one Padre was all we ever saw; and him the girls called Father Windmill. The only good public edifice is the *Duana*. The houses generally are of one story, built of bricks, or adobies, and plastered over; but all the wealthy residents have fine, cool and spacious dwellings, with flat roofs, which command pleasant views of the sea and environs. The streets are wide, having trottoirs, tolerably well paved and lighted. There are two small plazas, many very handsome shops, cafés and *sociedades*. Altogether, we found ourselves in a modern little city, and much nearer civilisation than in the mushroom settlements of California.

The climate is very warm in the morning, though tempered by cooling breezes from the ocean towards afternoon. After the summer rains have passed, much sickness prevails, owing to the malaria that is generated from the wet, marshy plains and lagoons around the town. Congestive fevers and agues are then quite common, and the wealthier orders retire to the high lands of the interior.

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FOOTNOTE:

[3] The last named appointment was ably filled by Lieut. Halleck, of U. S. Engineers, who, from his military and scientific knowledge, was of the greatest assistance to the expedition.

CHAPTER XXII.

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The Mexicans remained encamped but three days at Palos Prietos, when, leaving strong posts of cavalry to blockade the roads, and intercept communication with the town, they retired to the Presidio of Mazatlan—a place eight leagues beyond—where they went into quarters. As yet they had committed no hostile acts, except making a bonfire of a number of their own launches, and small craft, that had been carried for safety up the Estero, to prevent them falling into Yankee hands. We could see the gay pennons of their lances constantly with the spy-glasses; and by this time having acquired a slight idea of the topography of the immediate suburbs, we began to extend our scouts further beyond the lines.

The skirmishing commenced on the 18th. With fifty men, we left the Cuartel at midnight; pursued a path parallel with the beach, and after resting some hours in ditches, and nearly devoured by musquitos, at break of day found ourselves a league from the garrison. Soon after, we discovered a body of forty horsemen moving along the road in direction of the town. We were obliged to break cover, and run smartly to a hedge that fringed the road, in hopes of intercepting their retreat, and were of necessity soon exposed to view. The lancers wheeled to reconnoiter, and then came on at a trot. We blazed away with the muskets, when they increased their speed, until on reaching a thicket, they halted and returned the fire from their escopetas. This continued some time, the balls knocking the dust up in little puffs, but too far distant to do any damage, when hearing the sharp pinging song of a bullet, I turned my head and beheld a verdant reefer, with a cutlass strapped around his waist, one hand in his pocket, and the other scratching his cheek. "Hillo!" quoth I; "what's the matter?"—"Nothing but these musquitos," he replied, and continued attentively regarding the flashes from the bushes. While this little fusilade was going on, we espied two officers, who had probably ventured too far in advance of their troop, and were entirely cut off from the main body; we hailed them to surrender, but, without heeding the summons, they behaved quite coolly; moved slowly towards where a dozen muskets were gazing at them, and where they were obliged to pass an angle of the road, when having availed

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themselves of the last chance of even a leaf of shelter, with one arm clasping the horses' necks, they half swung from the saddles, and made a desperate rush to pass us. A hail-storm of balls and buck-shot rained around them; the horses plunged, evidently hit, and the hindmost rider fell from his seat, still clinging to the saddle, but the speed of the animals soon bore them to their companions and shelter. We afterwards learned that they had lost one killed and five wounded. Pursuit was useless, our heels being less nimble than horses, so we formed and returned to the barracks.

The night following this adventure we were out again, about three hours past midnight, with a single attendant, I became separated from my party, and after getting bewildered among swamps and thickets, just as day was breaking we reached the beach. All right now, we thought, and trudging stoutly over the sand, we suddenly came full upon a Mexican picket. We dropped as if shot. It was early dawn, and we were not discovered. They were sitting on their horses, behind a little hillock, with the butts of their long lances resting on the ground; and for my part I already, in imagination, felt one, half through me; they were anxiously peering about, and we were certain that the first movement on our side would be attended with inevitable capture, with melancholy thoughts of perspective dinners on frijoles and paper cigars. So we remained quietly lying on the sand, until presently one exclaimed, with much emphasis, *compadre, no hay Yankis! corramos*—there are no Yankees, let us be off. A moment later, there was heard a sharp rattle of musketry, soon followed by a volley; uttering loud curses, they gave spur, covered us with dust as they galloped by, and disappeared in the woods. Regaining our feet once more, we plunged waist deep through a lagoon, crossed fields and fences, and reaching the main road, devoted all our energies to our legs. A mile of this healthful exercise exhausted our powers, and we paused for breath; but the troubles apparently were not ended. A party of horsemen came dashing along the road in our wake; running was out of the question, there was no more run left in us, so with a cocked carbine and pistol we stood the result. Our fears were groundless, however; and, upon seeing ladies in the troop, we took courage, and advanced to meet them. It was a Spanish family, returning from Rosario, who falling accidentally between the firing of the skirmishing parties, were nearly frightened out of their wits; indeed, one of the ladies had fainted, and been left at a rancho by the roadside, until a litter could be sent from town. They were not more rejoiced at having us for an escort than we were to avail ourselves of their protection, and we all jogged bravely into Mazatlan. Our fellows returned soon after, having made a few prizes of arms, saddles, and camp equipage, but did no bodily harm to the enemy, who, as before, had fled.

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On the night of the 19th, a plan was matured for surprising a body of infantry under command of a Swiss, the former captain of the port, named Carlos Horn; our spies reported his position in the small hamlet of Urias, about seven miles up estero. A hundred men, with a small field-piece, took the main road, while half this number were to embark in boats, pass beyond the Mexican post, land, and march down to meet the shore party.

We left the ships at midnight, and with muffled oars pulled silently up the river. On passing the hamlet, we saw the gleam of camp fires, and the cry of their sentinels arose, shrill and clear in the still night, *alerto! alerto!* The oars dipped noiselessly in the water, and, continuing up the estuary, we soon came to the spot indicated by our guides. Scarcely had the men formed on the beach, when we heard, first a few dropping shots, and then volley upon volley, from our friends to the left. After groping about some time to find the road, the guide discovered that he had mistaken the landing, and we accordingly reëmbarked. By this time, the firing from the shore party had ceased, and all was again quiet. Beneath the deep shade of overhanging foliage that fringed the banks of the estero, the boats were carefully pushed down the stream, until a narrow opening in the bushes gave a clear view of the broad level *marisma*, and we found ourselves directly in front of the village itself, with fires and lights flashing in all directions. Without attracting attention, the boats were cautiously drawn within the thickets, the sailors forming, and lying down upon the sand. We were close to the Mexicans—their sentinels not twenty yards distant, and every word they uttered distinctly audible. Presently a body of horsemen came clattering over the hard beach. *Quien es!* sang out the guard. *Carlos!* said the watchword, and then began an angry altercation: "Why did you fly from those cursed Yankees, when you knew they were approaching?" *Porque mi Coronel, los Americanos rompieron el fuego contra la avanzda—y habia balazos aqui, y alla, y que podia hacer yo?* rejoined the speaker—They fired upon our advance, and the bullets were flying so thick, that, what could I do? "Where are they now?" said the Colonel. "Oh! they have retreated to Mazatlan again." *Loco!*—you're a fool—said the Colonel, with much disgust; "they're only awaiting daylight, to be upon us—is all quiet at the water?" *Si Señor,* not a soul has passed. "Then let the men fall in, and go through their exercise." It was about three o'clock; their men formed in ranks; horses were led out, and the troopers mounted; officers began drilling their companies, encouraging them to stand firm, and the Yankees would certainly be cut to pieces. Nothing was heard or seen, for an hour, but the heavy thud! thud! of the ramrods in loading, and glancing of sabres and small arms. During all their proceedings we remained motionless. By-and-bye the first grey streaks of dawn came slowly over the eastern hills—still we did not stir—the men, however, were becoming a little nervous, from resting so long in one position; and occasionally, the clink of a bayonet or noise of accoutrements striking together were audible; and just as the day was bursting forth, like a flash, as it does only in the tropics, a Mexican soldier, on duty nearly at our elbows—and who, by the way, disturbed our repose during the night by a bad cough, and talking to himself—discovered us, and sung out, *Aqui está hombres!*—these were the last words he spoke—the signal was given along our ranks, "rise!—take aim—fire low." As the smoke rolled upward, we saw a number of saddles emptied, and the *marisma* strewn with dead and wounded; although taken completely by surprise, the Mexicans were not as yet intimidated, and, shouting *viva Mexico!* they immediately gave us a

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heavy fire from carbines and escopetas; but our sailors had kneeled to load, and the leaden shower passed over. The firing lasted for some minutes, when the word was given to charge! Away we splashed over the *marisma*—their horsemen broke and fled, dragging off dead and wounded—the infantry did not make up their minds until the bayonets were nearly upon them, when they, too, dropped their muskets and plunged into the chapparal. Meanwhile the shore party was approaching, and had commenced a fusilade upon the advance post of the Mexicans, and very much to our relief, after putting them to flight, the cheers of our friends greeted us, for the field-piece was pitching shot far beyond the enemy, and a few stand of grape had already fallen about our heels. Sending small bodies into the thickets, we drove the discomfited troops to the hills, and then finding their cavalry had rallied up the road, pursued them a mile, exchanged a few shots, when, the field-piece coming up, they finally made good their retreat.

Returning to the hamlet, we collected a few articles of camp equipage—mules, horses, and arms; then digging a pit in the sand, we laid the corpses of the slain within, covered them decently over, and erecting a rude cross, put on our hats and retired. There was a vile old virago standing in the door of a rude rancho, who, during the whole skirmish, never for a moment ceased to curse *los demonios Yankees*; and although the walls of the house were thickly spattered with bullets, she escaped unhurt; not so her comely daughter, who was grazed on the cheek. Our own force suffered pretty severely: one killed and twenty-two wounded, of whom two afterwards died. The Mexicans we learned had lost nine killed and eighteen badly wounded. These little affairs are capital sport during the flurry and excitement of action, amid the cheering and firing, noise and confusion; but when the fun is over, and the surgeons are busied with bandages and blood—pallid faces, splintered bones, streaming gun-shot wounds around—and, perhaps, a pair of lifeless legs dangling outside the carts near by—the scene presents a more gloomy aspect.

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Placing the disabled in boats we began our march towards the port. Through the kindness of Mr. Canova, who filled the office of First Lieutenant to our company, I transformed myself into a dragoon, my friend having stumbled upon a black charger, ready equipped, which he placed at my disposal: moreover, I was somewhat bruised from the blow of a spent escopeta ball, that during the *melée* had struck me under the arm, knocking me over into the water, as if—as was strongly surmised by my friends—a jackass had kicked me. However, this was scandal, industriously circulated by the Lieutenant-Governor, who was himself sorely disappointed in not getting hit, after untiring exertions amid the thickest of the skirmish. Nevertheless, I lost a cutlass by the operation, and thought it no robbery to draw a long toledo-like weapon from the belt of a dead Mexican, which, with the image of his patron saint, and a bundle of cigarillos, amply repaid me for my bruises.

Some months later, in a conversation with the officer who commanded at Urias, he informed us that he had been aware of our coming from the merchants in town, and had requested reinforcements from Telles, which, however, was not attended to; and a body of eighty cavalry, who had been detailed to charge the shore party, fled without discharging a carbine. He spared no abuse on the cowardice of his officers, but very highly praised the conduct of the soldiers.

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We reached Mazatlan at noon. The day after, Telles marched to Urias, with his whole force and artillery; but, hearing a report that the Americans were coming to attack him with *bombas*, retreated the same day to Castillo, where he again encamped.

CHAPTER XXIII.

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A month had elapsed since the occupation of Mazatlan, and we had all been busily employed upon the fortifications, and in acquiring a little knowledge of our new duties on shore: we dropped the sailor and assumed the soldier; forgot all about rigging and ships; talked of roll-calls, reveillés, parades, countersigns, drills, sections, ditches, and parapets; the officers of the day, too, appeared in red silk sashes round the waist, with swords at their sides—sat in guard-rooms—sung out, "Sergeant, let that man pass," or, "Corporal, let the fatigue parties fall in"—quite like generals of division. I had only been a week in barracks, at the Cuartel, and getting initiated in the mysteries of soldiership, when, the fever making sad havoc among our ranks, I was ordered to relieve the company stationed at the Garita, where the illness had been unusually severe. The position was a conical eminence, within three hundred yards of the sea beach, nearly surrounded by lagoons, and entirely commanding the main road to the port. The hill was originally owned by a gentleman, who, after building a decent little balconied dwelling thereon, for a summer retreat, eventually had the satisfaction of removing his family thence, in carts, to the more wholesome air of the town. In consequence of its unhealthy situation, caused by miasma that arose from the stagnant pools below, it was not considered a desirable post, notwithstanding its pretty location; and I may as well add, that out of one hundred and seven officers and men who had been stationed there, I was the sole individual that was not taken ill with fever during the six months of our stay. Previous to my occupation, an energetic brother officer had already raised a breast-high stone wall, and three guns had been planted in battery. It was a place of much importance, and an equal degree of annoyance; for we were obliged, with a small force of thirty men, to be extremely vigilant, and were kept chattering, from morn until night, in examining hundreds who were passing to and from the port. The house was filled with fleas, too, whose attacks were far more troublesome than the Mexicans; however, after a hard war of six weeks, constantly deluging the floors with salt water, they migrated in a body, and we were never again molested.

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Workmen came, re-plastered and washed the walls, repaired windows and doors, restored cook-house and stable, so that in the end we found ourselves more pleasantly quartered than in any other position in town, and had no wish to leave. At the same time large working parties were detailed daily from the main barracks, who were employed digging a deep, wide ditch, throwing up an embankment, and raising a heavy stone wall immediately around what the peasantry designated our *casa blanca*—white house.

During this period the military force outside committed robberies unceasingly. A few miles beyond our lines the roads were strongly guarded during the day, but at night were left open—the lancers and cavalry retiring beyond our reach. Our force was too small to occupy the roads permanently, without imprudently weakening the garrison of the town; consequently, those thieving gentry, under the name of *alcobala*, levied tribute in the most impartial manner, upon all their poor countrymen alike. We had frequently gone out in small ambuscading parties in hopes of picking off a few of the ladróns, but without any success. Scarcely a single individual out of hundreds who passed the Garita but had some bitter curses to lavish upon the *lanceros*; even the poor women occasionally were muled in their petticoats, until at last they all became exasperated, and many volunteered to conduct us to the retreats of their tormentors. The services of one brave paisano were called into requisition, who had been robbed of his hogs, which being valuable property among the peasantry, and his revenge being warm, we thought he could be trusted, and indeed a staunch and valuable ally he ever afterwards proved. The expedition was under command of Captain Luigi, and with fifty-five men we left the Cuartel, without beat of drum, at nine in the evening. Leaving the main road at the Marisma, we entered a pathway, closely sheltered by trees and foliage, and after two hours rapid marching, halted at a cluster of ranchos by the roadside. Here we could only learn that the Mexican cavalry had passed by at sunset; but during an examination of one of the huts, we laid violent hands upon a rude squint-eyed youth, who though half naked, and apparently stupid, had a bag of dollars tied up in the tail of his shirt; him we interrogated with a bayonet at his throat, and there were sufficient symptoms of intelligence in him left to assure us that if he himself were not attached to the party we sought, he knew the bivouac. With a *riata* around his neck, and carefully guarded, we again advanced. Four miles beyond, we reached the encampment; it was situated in a flat little meadow, a few feet lower than the road, and girdled nearly around by the gully of a water-course that hemmed it in on all sides. Our march had been so silent as not to create alarm, and strange to say there was not a sentinel awake. Embers of the watch-fires gave sufficient light to distinguish the sleeping figures of the troops, with horses picketed near. We divided our forces into two parties, one commanding the pathway to the meadow, whilst the other poured in a deadly fire, and immediately charged across the ravine. Taken completely by surprise, they jumped up in great consternation, and in their flight received the bullets from our remaining muskets; before we could reload they were flying, like so many ghosts, across the field, leaving everything behind. On gaining the bivouac, we found it quite a picturesque little glade, shaded by lofty forest-trees, and beneath, were a number of bough-built huts, verging on the rivulet that crossed the road. We counted eight dead bodies: one poor youth was breathing his last. By the fitful light of a torch I tore open a bale of linen at hand, passed some thick folds over the welling blood of his wounds, placed a drop of brandy to his lips, and left him to die. They were sixty in number, and we captured all they had—carbines, lances, ammunition, horses, saddles, and clothing, besides their private correspondence.

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There was one incident connected with this *escaramuza*, which was a source of deep regret to us. The wife and daughter of the commanding officer had, very imprudently, been on a visit to the encampment. When the attack commenced, they were sleeping in a hut, and immediately fled; but the child, a little girl of ten years, had been grazed by a ball in the foot, and told her mother the pebbles hurt her feet; the kind but unfortunate woman ran back, in the thickest of the fire, for the child's shoes, and, upon returning, received a mortal wound in the throat. She was found by her friends, and died the following day—

"O! femme c'est a tort qu'on vous nomme timide,
A la voix de vos cœurs vous etes intrepide."

Loading our men with such articles as could be conveniently transported, we burned or destroyed a large quantity of arms, munitions and merchandize, and then began our march towards the port. Such a motley throng as we presented! Some were laden, from the muzzles of their muskets down to their heels, with every possible variety of trumpery—bridles, sabres, flags, serapas, and even women's clothing; others, mounted on several saddles, one a-top the other, with bundles of lances and fluttering pennons secured to their horses. Our trusty guide, in lieu of the purloined swine, had heaped bale upon bale on his horse and individual person, until he appeared, in the midst of his plunder, as if seated on a camel: our gallant captain had contented himself with a key bugle, and a capacious uniform frock-coat, some sizes too large for him: I did better—for, coming upon the dead body of an officer, I removed a silver-bound saddle from his head, which, with silver-mounted bridle, handsome sabre, and a few other articles, I appropriated to myself. Indeed, I have never since wondered at the rage one feels for abstracting an enemies' goods and chattels on similar occasions—such an itching, too, beyond mere curiosity, to search people's pockets, that, in a few more guerrilla excursions, I felt confident of becoming as good a freebooter as ever drew a sword. Three months after this affair, I became great friends with a Mexican officer to whom some of these equipments belonged. He assured me there had been six golden ounces concealed in the saddle, which I readily believed; for the leather-man, who renovated it in the port, remained oblivious six weeks after completing his task. Love-letters, miniature, and commission, I returned to my friend; but the handsome sabre—on the blade of

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which is engraved, *No me saques sin ras' á, no me embañes sin honor*—Draw me not without cause, nor sheathe without honor—and saddle, I have retained, trusting that El Teniente Lira will acquit me of any other motive than that of possessing some trifling souvenir of our first meeting at Sigueras.

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We reached Mazatlan at daylight, and after arresting two members of the municipal junta, who were occupying a seat in the council, and who, while expressing much sympathy for the Yankees, had written detailed accounts of the distribution and strength of the garrison, I retired to my cool cot at the Garita, and indulged in sleep.

Donning habiliments again towards evening, I mounted my horse, and in riding to the plaza, had the happiness to make the acquaintance of the fair wife of Telles, who was *en route* for the Presidio. Agreeably to request, I accompanied herself and suite beyond the Garita, when she informed me that her liege lord was highly indebted for allowing his weekly supply of cogniac to pass—because good liquids were rarely met with at head-quarters—but that I would be doing him a service by retaining a large amount of dunning billets, that passed through my hands to his address. Promising to comply with the Colonel's wishes, I bid his lady adieu; but I am sorry to add, that politeness to the graceful señora was the innocent cause of my losing a beautiful horse; for it was quite dark on reaching the port, and instead of going where I originally intended, I paused a moment at the bowling alley, where, meeting some officers of a British frigate, I gave the bridle to a *lepero* to hold, and passed into the building; but scarcely had we crossed the threshold, when, startled by the report of fire-arms, we all rushed out, and found the poor animal raining blood from a bullet in the throat. The villain of a *lepero* had shot him with a pistol from the holsters. A group of kind-hearted young reefers did their best to staunch the blood, and one little fellow even tied his trowsers around the wound; but all was unavailing, and in ten minutes my spirited blooded bay was dead. Oh! Mr. Smithers! you keep, a good ten-pin alley, sing a good song, and your wife prepares good chocolate; you are, together, good fellows; but you should never, O! Smithers! transform your establishment into a knacker's yard. And you, my cruel *lepero*! had I ever got a sight of you along that weapon you handled so well—ah! I well nigh wept for sorrow that night, and did not recover my spirits for a fortnight.

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The *escaramuza* at Sigueros was the means of keeping the roads free for a few days; but in a fortnight the Mexicans had again taken position, and though falling back some distance, were yet enabled to cut off all communication with Mazatlan. The paisanos, as usual, complained sadly, and asked protection. Accordingly, an expedition was planned, under the guidance of a diminutive ranchero, who, after tracing paths and diagrams on paper without end, in hopes his individual services could be dispensed with, at last determined, with many misgivings, to lead the way to his habitation, where a troop of lancers were wont to enjoy themselves upon his bounty.

Early in the evening a battalion of an hundred marines left the garrison, but had barely been gone an hour, when a lot of frightened old women rushed to the Cuartel, and swore that a large body of troops were landing from the estero, for the purpose of sacking the town. Rub-a-dub, rolled the drums—the walls were manned—and rockets went fizzing and bursting in the air, for assistance from the ships. Meanwhile, I was despatched, with a small party, to inquire into the truth of the rumor. After making a thorough examination along the river, and scaring the last breath out of a poor fisherman, dying with fever, we were convinced the report was merely a ruse, a sort of counter-irritant, attempted by the town's people to alarm the troops outside, and call back our men. The marines had marched by the beach; and at midnight, with thirty muskets, I took the main route, and lay in ambush at the cross of the Culiacan and Presidio roads, for the purpose of intercepting the enemy's retreat, in case they fled towards headquarters at San Sebastian. For nine hours we were nearly flayed alive by muskitoes, and only recompensed for the torture by detaining some hundreds of people and their beasts. It was quite diverting to observe a simple pedestrian, stepping jauntily along, whistling blithely away—as the natives always do when travelling alone by night—when a look-out, perched high upon an overhanging branch, would utter a sharp *hist!* the traveller would falter, and perhaps thinking his fears had misled him, again pass on, and while faintly resuming his chirrup, another energetic summons would quite startle him, and ten to one but down he would fall, crossing his breast, and ejaculating a pious *ave purisima!* A tap on the shoulder would direct them in the thickets, where, squatting on the ground, they never thought of moving until permission was granted. Just at daylight, a stout brown *muchacha* came tripping by, and unconscious of our close proximity, seated herself on a rock, and unfolding a little bundle, began to comb her locks and attire in a gala dress, either for the Sunday mass, or to create a sensation upon entering the port. After carefully arranging the *camiseta*, and whilst in the act of throwing, as a woman only can do, her *basquina*,—a worsted petticoat—over the shoulders, one of my ungallant scamps hit her a smart rap with a pebble. Giving one terrified scream, and uttering a prayer to the Virgin, she dashed up the road; but, encumbered by loose drapery, soon measured her length, in the most ludicrous plight, upon the sand. We assisted her to rise, and perceiving our lurking-place, she laughed heartily, after indulging the gay sailor fellow who threw the stone with a specimen of the sinews in her stout arms. The women were, almost invariably, the vehicles for transmitting information concerning our designs in town, to their friends outside; among our multiform duties at the Garita was that of opening all correspondence and perusing the contents. It was surprising how shrewd and accurate were many of their surmises, and the tender regard they still evinced for their forlorn lovers—at least on paper; and such imploring billets, too, from the banished *caballeros*, for their faithless *amantes* to join their fortunes in the camp, to rid themselves of the hateful Yankees. Yet with all their coquetry they still did their best to shield their former friends from danger, and so cunningly, too, as to be difficult of detection. On a certain night, while

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visiting the sentinels at the road, a negress came from the town, and in reply to the hail, as was customary with the natives, replied, *norte Americano!* On being told no one could pass before sunrise, she retraced her steps, and in attempting to steal past by another path, came near being shot, notwithstanding her cries of *norte Americano!* Upon making a third effort some hours later, my suspicions were aroused, and as we were desirous of preventing all egress at the time, to my shame be it said, I ordered her searched. Nothing was discovered, and to repay her for the indignity she had experienced, I gave her a kindly and paternal pat on the wool—there was the object of our search! a little crumpled bit of paper, on which was scrawled, *a la carrera, entre dos luces, los gringos!*—be off: the Yankees will be upon you at daylight! But neither threats nor entreaties could induce the black courier to betray the writer.

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Finding no signs of the Mexicans, we marched back to Mazatlan at noon. The marines shortly followed, having surprised the *lanceros*, and taken a number of horses, arms and prisoners. But a damp was thrown over the affair, by their bringing in the body of our little rancho friend, Madariaga, who was accidentally killed during the fray. Poor fellow! he was intelligent, and we drank out of the same cup. The day after, while riding through the town, I saw tapers burning in a house, and upon entering, there was stretched the corpse—still in his bloody vestments—a bullet had entered behind one ear, and passed out at the other. A crucifix reposed upon the breast, whilst a common flat-iron lay on the stomach. Near by, his sister was gazing mournfully at the blue, pinched face, while close behind her stood an inhuman virago, anathematizing him from all the saints in the calendar, for having been a *traidor y espia de los compatriotas*—spy upon his countrymen. The Mexicans asserted that he had been deliberately assassinated, and rejoiced that he had received a worthy recompense for his traitorous conduct.

CHAPTER XXIV.

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Towards the close of the year we had become quite domesticated in the town, and habituated to our new duties: the dullness that ensued upon the occupation had changed into animation, business, and bustle; the port was thickening with merchant-ships and coasters, and duties were rapidly rolling into the Yankee treasury; the merchants themselves had entered into arrangements with the Mexican officials outside, and the staple export of the province—logwood—came in on the backs of hundreds of mules daily, to fill the homeward-bound vessels for Europe. The laborious task of the garrison still went on, much to the disgust of Jack, who swore ditching and hod carrying was no part of a sailor's duty. The fever still continued, in a milder form; but few new cases ensued, although those who convalesced almost invariably relapsed, and were never entirely cured until going again upon salt water. The townspeople began to look less gloomily upon their invaders, and the men were not averse to finger Uncle Sam's cash; and the women, bless their sweet, forgiving souls, sought the main plaza in the afternoons, arrayed in tastefully flowing robes, and graceful *ribosas*, whilst their surprisingly diminutive feet beat time to the music from our bands. Nor were they chary of flashing glances, or murmured salutations; and in the calm nights, when pianos and harps were disturbing the still air, it was not regarded as a novelty to behold a few blue-jackets, spinning around in dance and waltz at the fandangos, or, as the more tonnish were termed, *bayles*.

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The native society of Mazatlan cannot certainly boast of a very elevated tone of morality. Indeed I have good authority for asserting that there were not fifty legitimately married couples in the town—rather a small proportion for ten thousand inhabitants: perhaps the marriage formula is considered a bore, and since even the rite within pale of the church is not so religiously respected as elsewhere, it appears unreasonable that they should place any legal check upon their domestic felicity. Still this system of *relacione*, as so generally practised in Mazatlan, appeared to work well, and we never heard of lawsuits for children. Occasionally, it is true, a jealous master would thrust a *cuchillo* into the tender bosom of his spouse; but what of that—it was *costumbre del pais*; however, these were the exceptions.

Among the lower orders, the women were invariably gifted with amiable dispositions, natural in manner, never peevish or petulant, requiring but little, and never happier than when moving night after night in the slow measure of their national dances. Even the men were not bad-tempered, though beyond comparison the laziest and most ignorant set of vagabonds the world produces. They were a quiet people also, never so far forgetting their natal sloth, as to go through the exertion of making a noise. Even their knife encounters were conducted with a certain show of dignity and decorum. For example, at the *esquina* of some street is a group of *leperos*—gentlemen throughout the Republic of Mexico, enjoying the same moral attributes as Neapolitan Lazzaroni;—their property at all times on their backs, and residences precarious; they are playing monté on a coarse blanket or *serapa* laid upon the ground; one accuses another of cheating, and at the same time twits him with the most deadly insult a Spaniard can offer, possibly because it is so near the truth: *tu eres cornudo*; true or false, his antagonist calls on all the saints to bear witness to his innocence, springs to his feet, twists a *serapa* around the left arm, and, before one can say Jack Robinson, their keen blades are playing in quick, rapid passes, seldom giving over until deep and sometimes fatal stabs are interchanged; but if not seriously hurt they drink a cup of *aguadiente* together, light *cigarillos*, and continue the game until another quarrel arises. These little passages of arms were of hourly occurrence, and the severest regulations were not sufficient to repress the evil, although there never was a solitary instance, during our stay, where a quarrel had arisen between the townspeople and the garrison. I chanced

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to be an eye-witness to one of these street skirmishes one evening, near the *Sociedad*. A fellow received a perpendicular cut, which severed nearly half the scalp, and the entire ear, leaving the mass hanging down the neck, like a flap to a pocket-book; it was properly dressed by a skilful surgeon, and the man was about again in six days. Indeed the climate was most efficacious for wounds, and remarkable and most extraordinary cures were said to be effected; two of a serious nature came under our observation. The first, a sailor-sergeant, who, while returning from his rounds, and walking up the Carita hill, not replying to the sentinel's hail from above, in a sufficiently loud tone of voice, received a musket-ball in his right breast, which wounded the lung, and passed out of the back, below the shoulder-blade: the case was aggravated by a severe and lengthened attack of fever, but the man eventually recovered, and was entirely restored to health and strength. The second instance was a young Mexican officer, named Soriano, who was shot by a rifle-bullet at Urias, transversely through the breast, beneath the ribs. After suffering some months, under a quack, he was brought to Mazatlan, where he was successfully treated by one of our surgeons, with every prospect of speedy recovery.

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Of late, we had had no guerrillas worth mentioning, and were amusing ourselves by drilling a troop of sailors into dragoons; and truly it was a matter of as much satisfaction as mirth, to see how well the seamen accomplished their task; of course, it was great sport for them, but naturally fearless, and all well mounted, they soon were taught to dash recklessly at anything, from a stone wall to the fire from a battery, and in due course of time, became, for a sudden burst, quite equal to any Mexican emergency that chose to stand the brunt of a charge. We never had the opportunity of testing their cavalryship, but I think they would have made a creditable report of themselves. They were commanded by Captain Luigi, and at intervals I had the satisfaction of accompanying his troop on short excursions into the interior. One night we took a flying gallop down to Urias. On the way thither, over the level marismas, the Captain's charger plunged into a hole and the whole left file vaulted, or trampled, over him, but, as usual, he escaped with the loss of a little parchment from the visage, while the horse had a broken shoulder. On nearing the vicinity of our former *escaramuza*, I passed ahead with four men, and found the prize we sought, in a Mexican soldier, who proved to be the orderly-sergeant of General Urrea, the Governor of Durango. Our prisoner was quite taciturn at first, but on the assurance that he would certainly be hung the following morning, and after profuse libations of *muscal*—a country liquor—he opened his mouth and confidence, informing us that he had left an escort at the Presidio, and when taken was awaiting some effects belonging to his master, from the port, to be carried to Durango. At daylight, the articles were seized; but, owing to the fact that some innocent persons were drawn into the transaction, the Governor good-naturedly signed passports for the whole party, including the soldier; although his master, the General, bore no enviable reputation, for the cruelties he had perpetrated upon American prisoners on the other side of the continent.

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CHAPTER XXV.

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The new year dawned upon us, and January and February passed rapidly away. The popularity of the Mexican Commandante, Telles, was waning fast. A number of his own officers had pronounced against him—but this, with a few effective followers, was speedily put down, and the leader shot. However, a strong force from Culiacan was raised by the powerful family of Vegas, the legitimate Governor of Sonora—and from whom Telles had wrested the command of Mazatlan—in conjunction with a body of three hundred troops, under one Romero, from the opposite extreme of the province Tepic, and resolved to gain the ascendancy by destroying our blockaders. Upon the approach of these bodies, Telles' troops refused to fight against their countrymen, and nothing was left for their old captain but to succumb to circumstances; these ups and downs, however, being not uncommon in Mexico, the chagrin attending the disgrace is not taken seriously to heart. After a week's intrigue and negotiations, finding his enemies implacable, he resigned his authority, was then betrayed, arrested, sent to Guadalajara under a guard, where he shortly afterwards expired. His case excited much sympathy, for he bore the reputation of being brave and generous, lavishing all he received upon the treacherous friends about him, who flattered and cheated, until adversity stalked in, when away flew the gay birds who had made him their prey. One of these gentry did me the honor to present himself late one night at the Carita, claiming parole as a deserter from the Mexicans. He had been chief of the staff and cavalry, bore the name of *compadre*,—adviser and rascal-in-general to Telles—but having had the sagacity to cram his filthy pockets with fifty thousand wheels of fortune, of course had no further wish to remain. He pointed out all the weak positions, avenues of attack, and general information concerning the force of the outsiders—more, I was convinced, to vent his spite on those whom he had already betrayed, than from regard to us. On parting, the gallant major favored me with a note of introduction to one of his lady-loves, coming from the interior, and remarked, with a pecuniary sigh, that when commanding my little post he never made less than a thousand pesos a month. It was upon the Mexican system—where the strong steal from the weak: but here was my captain of battalion, Mr. Mitch and myself—with all the trouble of guarding, examining, quarrelling, and at times beating, hundreds of paisanos daily, and devil the *centavo* could we ever extort; on the contrary, our exchequer was at a deplorably low ebb, so much so that we were scandalously accused of playing *monté* for *quartillos*—fippennybits;—and we discussed the alternative of taking to the road, robbing a *conducta* of mules laden with money, or remaining in the port until peace should be declared, inciting a pronunciamiento, and declaring ourselves

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commandantes of the province.

The united force of the Mexicans who had assembled in Rosario, amounted to one thousand, three hundred of which were cavalry, and seven pieces of artillery. They talked bravely of driving the Yankees on board the ships, and were constantly drilling and exercising their troops and guns. Vegas' proclamations were clear and business-like; he established an internal *duana*, or custom house; declared a specified and moderate scale of duties—having the sense to perceive that soldiers must be fed, and although rich himself, he had no inclination for playing commissary at his own expense—and besought the merchants of the port to send their merchandize to the interior. All these warlike preparations caused us neither alarm nor trepidation. Our works were near completion, and we had twenty-six guns mounted, besides the additional security of some small hulks, moored at a ford of the estero, mounting a battery of Paixhans. The garrison had been slightly increased, and, altogether, we felt confident of holding the port against any odds. The merchants, however, were as yet shy of trusting their valuable property within reach of Mexican rapacity, and consequently, the troops were beginning to find themselves somewhat embarrassed. The commanders quarrelled, and Végas himself, being heartily disgusted, forthwith fell back, with troops and artillery, towards Culiacan, leaving a fourth part of his force, under charge of Romero—a miscreant, who had the reputation of assassinating his own colonel, at the storming of Chapultepec, for a beltfull of doubloons. Being thus left without the means of doing us any injury, they pursued the same annoying process as their brethren before them, by robbing their own countrymen, under the odious alcobala.

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During all this time we never for a moment ceased keeping up a rigid discipline, and exercising the utmost vigilance; the severest punishment was impartially meted to all offenders; and our knowledge of the topography of the country, for some miles round, being quite equal to the Mexicans', they had good reason to keep beyond our limits. At rare intervals, indiscreet persons would try to run the gauntlet into town, and one dark night, three troopers, not seeing our guard, attempted to steal in by the beach: one was astounded, on not halting at the hail, at receiving a bullet through the shoulder, and they then turned bridles, leaving us a brass-bound hat and lance, as keepsakes. Indeed, once we came nigh peppering our own patrol; fortunately, but one ball only flew over Captain Luigi's head. It may have been a peculiarity of some of our sailor sentinels, that, at night, they immersed themselves breast deep in little pits, resting their muskets upon mounds of sand in front, at a dead aim upon whoever advanced along the roads. I do not know if this kind of tactics be tolerated by Regulation; but Jack, in his ignorance of minute detail, had to place reliance on his eyes.

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Once, after hearing the report of a musket, I inquired of the sentry the cause. "Sir," said he, "the chap wouldn't stop, so I hailed him in the very best Spanish, and then fired; there he lies kickin', up the road, sir!" It turned out to be an innocent stray jackass, a bad linguist, who could only converse in his mother tongue. However, these little incidents convinced our neighbors that security did not throw us off our guard.

We still worked hard at the Garita—deepening the ditch—filling up embrasures, and raising the walls. It was fatiguing labor, for the heavy stone had to be wheeled from the base of the hill. Already strong frames of timber had been erected at angles in the walls, where three twelve-pounder short guns moved on quadrants, overlooking the parapet, and sweeping the hill in every part, while, near the centre of the little fortress, a beautiful long brass nine traversed on a circle, that could throw the iron messengers two miles over the plains below. The sides of the building facing the lagoons were planked up, enclosing spacious piazzas, and sheltering the men from nightly malaria borne along by the land winds. The men were obliged to keep their quarters perfectly clean, and they slept comfortably in hammocks suspended from beams above. Everything went on regularly—they had long since given up bad habits of drunkenness—and out of the entire company, but two drew their allowance of spirits. Four old dames came with the early dawn, bringing coffee and chocolate, which they exchanged for surplus rations and the privilege of washing Jack's clothes. Liberty was occasionally granted to visit the port, and every day two or more were gunning around the lagoons, keeping the post supplied with quantities of delicious wild ducks and curlew, and, when the moon was full, numbers of terrapins. We had strict inspection, morning and evening. At nightfall, sentries were doubled on the hill and roads—the guard set—guns primed—matches lighted—and everything ready at a moment's notice. I am thus minute in describing these unimportant details about the Garita, for it was my first, and most probably, will be my last attempt at soldiership. Besides being a great source of pride and pleasure, it was the spot where I have passed many happy hours. Indeed, it was the only decent or habitable post pertaining to the garrison; and I deem it not amiss to state, that, had a twentieth portion of the quarter million of dollars collected by us through the customs, been judiciously expended in restoring the old Cuartel, and providing a few necessary comforts the sailors required, it would in a measure have repaid them for toils and hardships on ship and shore, where they were necessarily obliged to undergo many expenses, in a service apart from the line of their duty. And furthermore, a due regard to their personal comfort might have been the means of reducing the medical estimates, and at the same time, of saving many a poor fellow, whose bones now moulder beneath the sod. But notwithstanding these drawbacks, it was gratifying to the officers who commanded them, to know, that, even amid the novelty of their position, they reflected credit on their country, and left an excellent impression behind them, among the Mexicans themselves.

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Many of the officers who had been detailed for service at the Garita, were eventually obliged, on the score of health, to leave for more healthy posts; and in the end, Mr. Mitch and myself were

the only ones left. Our quarters were immediately over the men, in a large square apartment, the ceiling taking the angle of the roof; two balconied windows faced the sea; another overlooked the port and estero, while a large, roomy piazza commanded a wide and extensive view of the surrounding plains, dotted by fields and ranches, with a high wall of mountains in the back ground. When in the town the heat was almost insupportable; in our *casa blanca* it was never in the least degree oppressive. We always slept under a blanket, in white canvas cots, swinging from the rafters, curtained off by bunting. Bathing was our chief delight, and the green waves well nigh broke at the base of the hill, where we played in the foaming surf for hours each day. We had breakfast brought from the French hotel in the town, which incident happened about eleven o'clock, on a table screened off in the piazza. Coffee we sipped, with a spoonful of cogniac, before the morning's bath, to drive away the malaria. So we drank light bordeaux with the meal, and when nice fruit passed the Garita, made a selection, in lieu of the abolished alcobala.

Ah, dear Mitch, those were pleasant days! And do you ever recall our pleasant little suppers by night—our cosy confabs—our sage reflections—quiet moralizings and speculations upon the reverses of fortune, after an interview with Don Manuel—and our schemes for reform. Ah, my boy, those bright days have vanished. Then came the afternoon's *pasear*, with a troop of officers, or the good hospitable merchants of the port—showy horses, jingling trappings, coursing and capering along the sea-road;—to the plaza again in time for music, with a bow, or smile, as the case might be, to some gracefully-robed, tiny-footed doña; then a few prancing *vuelitas* to show off, around the square, when we gave spur for dinner.

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Just without the range of our guns was a ranchito, owning for its mistress a jolly dame, named Madre Maria; it was not for her that we occasionally extended our evening's ride, but for a half-uttered *adios! Capitan!* from the pearly teeth of little Juanita. I believe there never was so much dirt and beauty combined. She was the sweetest mite imaginable, and of a style to have destroyed Murillo's slumbers. Then pretty Juana suffered from *calenturas*—fever and ague,—and I at times carried a little phial of quinine, and felt Juana's pulse and temples, but the jolly patrona would shake her head roguishly, and exclaim, jestingly,—*No es posible, Señor Chato, sin matrimonio*—you can't make love without marriage. *Ah! pico largo*, I would reply, *con razon, pero llama vd el padre Molino*—certainly, so send for Father Windmill. We had a private code of signals with Maria, to hang a "banner on the outward walls," in shape of a white petticoat, whenever the Mexican troops came within hail. She mortally detested them, for they made too free with her hen-roost, and muscal bottles; and on her weekly pilgrimages to the port, seated on a quiet mule, with pretty Juana behind, attired in her holiday dress, and Jesusita, the youngest and most diminutive piece of womanhood, tripping along the road beside them, they would pay us a visit at the *casa blanca*, with some little present, of eggs or fruit; and the brave old lady would invariably beseech us for a loaded carbine *para fusilar los ladrones*—to shoot the scamps. Once I saw the signal with the spyglass, and attended by a friend rode out to the rancho; but it was a false alarm, caused by an old white horse standing lazily behind the pickets. We found the group of Maria and daughters washing in the lagoon, nearly all in dishabille: Juanita with naught but a flimsy *chemisetta*, not a ceinture around the little waist, revealing the most adorable just-milieu form—between the bud and the rose—with rich masses of dark hair covering her shoulders, and rivalling in beauty the splendor of her eyes. I drove the old lady into the pond, for which indecorous behavior she launched a calibash of wet clothes at my head, then snatching up little Jesusa, just four years old, I bore her to the beach for a dip in the surf. "How rich you are," said the little creature, as I commenced disrobing. "Why?"—"Because you wear stockings." And this, indeed, is one of the distinctive marks of wealth among the lower orders throughout Mexico.

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It not unfrequently happened, that reports were circulated, without much foundation, that the troops outside were about to attack the post, and as a consequence the timid farmers living in the environs became alarmed, and would send their families to seek shelter within the fort. At times we would be gratified with fifty or sixty women and children visitors, huddled together quite contented and merry about the piazzas. They had learned to place full reliance upon their invaders, and whatever course we adopted was looked upon as the only correct and proper mode of acting. While testing the range of our guns one morning, a carronade was accidentally discharged, and a stand of grape-shot struck the lagoon below, dashing a shower of spray over a group of old crones washing on the banks. I immediately ran down to see if they were wounded, but I found them quite cool, and even surprised that I should have surmised such a thing. "Why?" said I. *Porque, Capitan, usted es capaz para qualquiera cosa*—because you Yankees have sense for everything.

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On Sundays our receptions were more select; then the élite of Mazatlan extended their promenades around the works of the garrison, and would be induced to ascend the hill, and sip dulces or *italia* at our quarters in the *casa blanca*. The gentlemen would glance over the newspapers detailing revolutions or pronunciamientos in the interior, when casting up their eyes, with a simultaneous puff of cigar smoke, would exclaim—*Ay! pobre Mexico!* and one had the sense to observe, that the war was death to Mexicans, but life to Mexico. But of one fact no logic could convince them—that our worthy collector of the Duana returned all he received to the government—so wonderful a dispensation, that an honest *administrador* could be found in any position was entirely beyond their comprehension. The ladies were generally very curious and inquisitive, and after affording all the information we possessed, relating to domestic economy and dress, once a pair of lovely señoras, after mature reflection, apparently having made up their minds, favored me in this strain: "Without doubt, you North Americans are very good people, and you don't beat your wives; but then you don't know how to lavish money on ladies like our own countrymen!" But I interposed—"We feel obliged to pay our debts, and then pleasure afterwards."

"Bah que importa," said they; "all we know is, that where you Yankees give a dollar, our people shower gold."

CHAPTER XXVI.

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Soon after the occupation of Mazatlan, I made the acquaintance of a young Mexican girl, of a respectable family in Guadalajara, who had eloped with her lover, an officer stationed in this province. She was better educated, far more intelligent than the generality of her countrywomen, and with all the graceful, winning ways, peculiar to Creoles. She was living with an old relative, in a cottage near the skirts of the town, and I frequently sought her society, listened to the low, sweet *cançioncitas* of her native land, or, seated beneath the shade of a spreading tree in the inner *patio*, she would recite by the hour old legendary redondillas and ballads of Mexico, while her servant played with the sweeping masses of her jet-black hair: she was very proud of it, and often told me, that when she became poor, it would serve her for a *mantilla*. She had soft feminine features, pale complexion, lighted by large, languid, dark eyes. She was a tall and slender girl, but with the smallest feet I ever beheld. This was Dolores. Her mind appeared to partake of the mournful signification of her name, and, even during her gayest moments, she was always tinged with sadness. Poor Lola! she was thinking of her lover, who had left with the troops on our coming.

Returning one morning from a fatiguing night skirmish, the servant Tomasa met me on the road, and placed a note in my hand from her mistress. It was simply a desire to see me. Without going to the quarters, I turned my horse's head towards the town, and soon dismounted at the house. The old aunt received me with some agitation, and I could see the shadow of Dolores reflected from an inner room. *Que hay Señor? Nada, una escaramuza, no mas! Y muertos? Quien sabe! puede ser un oficial de ustedes.*—What's the news? Nothing but a skirmish. Any killed? Yes, perhaps one of your officers. At this reply, Dolores entered the chamber, and with a quick low voice, asked, "and the color of his horse, señor? white!" She burst into tears, and sank to the floor. I afterwards learned that it was her lover, who, however, had only been slightly wounded. He had been in the habit of entering the port disguised as an *arriero*, and was expected on the morning alluded to. Had I known what he was capable of doing at a later day, he might have lost the number of his mess, instead of receiving a buckshot in the leg.

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From this period, poor Dolores became more and more triste and depressed. She never was seen again in the plaza—the music had lost its charm—her books were thrown aside, and she would hardly mingle in conversation. Some weeks went by, and duty claiming all my time, I had not called for many days. Late one night, Tomasa came running to the Garita, and with breathless haste, told me that her mistress was very ill, and wished to see me. A few minutes' gallop took me to the door. The old lady was weeping, and poor Lola was lying upon a low couch, with blood slowly frothing from her lips—but I thought there was a gleam of pleasure in her eyes. She had burst a bloodvessel—at least I imagined so at the time, and I instantly despatched a boy on my horse for a surgeon. In the sequel I discovered the cause Tomasa informed me, she had heard the Señora scream, and upon entering the room, found her lying insensible on the ground, deluged in blood, and on coming to, she had begged her to say nothing, but send for me. The fact was, that her lover had again stolen into town, and whether from idle jealousy, or natural brutality of disposition, had the dastardly cruelty to beat the poor unresisting girl, with the hilt of a pistol, until she fell lifeless from heavy blows showered upon her breast and shoulders. This was fully shown by the post-mortem examination. The miscreant fled, and many an hour of sound sleep he cost me, in hopes of getting a glimpse of him along the tube of a rifle.

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At the time, there was a chance of recovery; and daily, after the hemorrhage ceased, I sat by her bed-side, and tried to encourage her with anticipations of returning health. *No! no! me voy á morir*—It is all useless, I am going to die!—counting with her thin fingers—"in three weeks! *Ay de mi!* for one last sight of my native land." Sometimes I would read to her a Spanish translation of Sue's *Mysteries of Paris*, and she never tired of saying of *Fleur de Marie*, *Pobrecita! que dolor!*—Poor thing! what sufferings! She was gradually sinking, but still her spirits rose, and her big black eyes became more and more luminous. It was sorrowful, indeed, to see a young girl, so beautiful and bright, just bidding adieu to life.

She had the best medical attendance, but another hemorrhage ensued, and the lamp of life was fading fast. At last, Tomasa came for me: *Dios de mi alma! la Señora se está muriendo*—My mistress is dying. I found the sick chamber filled with women, and a priest, while a number of tapers threw a strong light upon the nearly breathless sufferer. The padre soon accomplished his drawling work—a crucifix was pressed to her pallid lips—the bed and floor sprinkled with holy water—a hasty *avé* was muttered, and they then withdrew. Fortunately, a sister had arrived a few days previously, and it was a great consolation to the dying girl. I drew near, and seated myself at the couch. She placed her limp little hand in mine—told her sister to sever a tress from her hair when she was dead—and drawing a ring from her finger, smiled faintly, saying, *acuerdese de mi amistad*—remember me kindly. An hour passed, and I was forced to leave—indeed, while every breath came fluttering to the lips, weaker and weaker—I could not bear to see the last—I whispered *adios*, kissed her pale forehead, and went away.

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She expired just at midnight. During the whole period of her illness, she never once murmured a

reproach against her lover, but left him a blessing when she died. If such beautiful devotion has not heaped coals of fire on his head, he is less than man.

The night following her decease, I was seated on a tombstone in the little cemetery near the port, when my eye was attracted by a flickering torch, and advancing, I met the corpse. We made five in all. The grave was open, and we lowered her gently down. All was still, save the convulsive sobs of Mañuela, and the rolling earth falling upon the coffin—the dew sparkled by the reflection of the blazing torch—the work was done—light extinguished, and mourners gone. Alas! poor Dolores! I have preserved your tress and ring, and time has not yet erased the remembrance of your love and sufferings from a stranger's breast.

CHAPTER XXVII.

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We could not boast of an opera, or any grand theatrical displays in Mazatlan; but yet our sailor-troops, as sailors always do when unemployed, had contrived a Thespian corps, and weekly representations were given, by stout tars in whiskers and petticoats—and once a grand tableau in commemoration of Stockton's victories at La Mesa. There was a pretty theatre in town, where a little ranting was done, and there was the usual Sunday resort in the cock-pit, where a deal of dollars changed hands, but the greatest spectacle of any was in the arena, where we were favored by brilliant feats of horsemanship, by Mr. Bill Foley, of Circo Olimpico notoriety, in conjunction with his "ingin-rubber boy." He was a useful, amusing vagabond, who had passed more than half his life in Mexico, and went by the savage title of *El tigre del norté*. The Tiger, upon the claims of national relationship, applied for the office of collector to the port, but not being successful, he deigned to accept the high position of forage master to the troop, but whether owing to his prompt method of settling accounts, or the sphere not being sufficiently enlarged for his abilities, he threw up the commission in disgust, declaring his countrymen were the "ungratefulest people in the world," and again devoted his talents to dress, love, monté, and the arena. The last accounts of Bill, he was starrng it away like a planet in the interior of Chili. May bright dollars attend thee, Bill, in whatsoever portion of the globe thy destiny directs thee.

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Added to these public *divertimientos*, there were the *sociedades*, where the necessary aliment of Mexican existence was in constant operation. This was monté—our usual resort was that of the gran sociedad, conducted by Don Manuel Carbia;—he was a diminutive old Spaniard, very shrewd and intelligent, and among his numerous occupations was that of a proprietor of launches, keeper of an almacén of ship chandlery on the Mole, divers pulperias, billiard-tables, restaurateur, and pawnbroker in general. Señor Carbo, as our beloved Colonel Jacobus called him, was never seen without a cigar between his teeth; it acted as a kind of safety valve to his vital organs, and it was strongly surmised that if he ever discontinued, for an interval of five minutes, he would inevitably choke to death. Seated behind the long green baize-covered table, with his implements of cards and dollars around him, the very chink of the coin lighted up his dark visage, like to a fresh cigar. He merely played for amusement—so he said—and although he amused himself considerably at our expense, yet we had no grounds for just complaint; he played, *bueno como caballero*—fair and above board,—and if we lost our cash, it was in striving to win his. Once if my memory serves me aright, when mounted on the *caballo*—the picture of a horse on Spanish cards—I kicked Don Manuel so severely, that his teeth chattered like a pair of castanets—but this did not often occur.

There was another odd character, who kept a *casa de bebida*, near the Cuartel, where the officers sometimes touched in passing. No one knew what nation claimed him as a subject—he was a fat mottled-visaged Boniface, whom the Mexicans—as they always nick-name every one—had christened the "Golden Toad." The toad played melodiously on the flute, supposed to be a mild restorative to soothe the sorrows consequent upon the unfortunate state of his domestic relations.

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The carnival was not carried on with much spirit, nor was Lent regarded with the same pious severity as in other Catholic countries. The Mazatlanese are not a pious people; there were, to be sure, a few processions, and fire-works, accompanied by a wooden piece of artillery, discharging salvos of sugar-plums, with nightly fandangos, but this was all.

Our intercourse and diversions were not restricted to native society, for we also enjoyed a pleasant association with foreign residents. The circle of our own countrymen was limited—the Consul, good Doctor Bevans—who gave us a grand feast on leaving,—and the Anglo-American house of Mott & Talbot. From all of these gentlemen we experienced the utmost civility; but to Mr. Mott and his amiable lady we stand indebted for many and repeated acts of kindness and hospitality, that never can be too gratefully remembered.

Not only in Mazatlan but all over the world, the great firm of "Mynheer and Company" chase the dollars with as keen a scent as the Yankees; and there is not a nook, however remote, where these thriving Germans are not filling their sacks, but still their thirst for gold does not prevent the pleasures of "faderland" from being re-enacted in their far-away homes. There was one jolly Belgian there—a large, handsome, jovial blade, ever on the vivo for fun or punch,—his house, like himself, was lofty and capacious, with a cellar over the way, where one might wish to live until it became dry. And the Hern Hutter, too. Will eye of thine, my pleasant friends, ever glance at this tribute to your virtues? Let us recall those delightful evenings. Old Jack's oysters, and, mein gott!

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that delicious arrack—when shall we ever taste the like again?—with the piano tinkling, and the rich sonorous voice of portly Hausen chanting the solemn *avé purissima* until the very paving-stones rattled, and the lovely lips of his pretty wife were held in a painful state of wide-mouthed laughter. Where art thou, O! Hern Hutter! dost remember Piny and Luigi, even until the matins were tolling, when we mounted our steeds—your own the famous piebald charger—and never checked rein, until tumbling in the sparkling surf upon the sands?

Besides these warm-hearted fellows, there was another to whom my heart still yearns, and no time can ever banish the love I bear him. He was the beau-ideal of a John Bull—burly, surly, brave, obstinate, and strong in his likings or dislikings. We met at first, neither in a pleasant mood; I was the aggrieved person, for he permitted me to mistake him for a Mexican, and talk bad Spanish half an hour, when he coolly broke ground in Anglo-Saxon. But time removed first impressions, and in his little cottage by the shore, at his generous board, and in fact in very many ways he loaded me with favors and hospitalities, which I shall always recur to as among my brightest recollections of the past. And truly it is not in great cities, or teeming ports, where merchants are seen to social advantage; it is in out-of-the-way spots—far, far away—when least expected, that the traveller finds warm hearts and firm friends—and none more so than in Mazatlan.

I was a daily guest of Don Guillermo's, at the cottage. Dinner over, and a rubber at whist, I usually strolled about the town—peeped in at the fandangos—perhaps a shy at monté—thence to arrack—music, jolly Hausen, and so home to my quarters. Though a sort of *vaut-rien* existence, still it was one quite in consonance with my tastes, and since I am not at all competent for a clerkship, if any of my former friends can employ me as a smuggler, or in any other nautical and honest pursuit, I shall be most happy to comply with their terms.

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For a short period, these my amusements were unpleasantly interrupted, and came within an ace of being finally closed in eternity. Sitting one night, in a moralizing mood, by my friend, Mr. Mitch, during a pause in conversation, we were startled by the long rolling sound of the drums, beating the alarm from the Cuartel. The sentries shouted from the walls, for the men to get under arms, and snatching up hat and pistols, we rushed out. The night was quite dark, with thick fog; besides, I was nearly blinded from a lighted room; and mistaking the stairs by a few inches, I walked off the piazza—a height of fourteen feet—falling, most fortunately, between three men coming out from below, with fixed bayonets, and escaped being impaled, by a slight wound in the wrist. I was picked up insensible, and my companion thought even burnt brandy would prove unavailing. However, on coming to, and being duly jerked about the legs and arms, no bones being fractured, I was found whole, with the exception of some severe contusions in legs, back and head. After all the row, the *generale* was only beaten by way of precaution. For some days I was confined to my cot, without being able to move, consoled, however, by lots of agreeable visitors—bottles of liniment—good cigars—alleviated by the sympathies of an admirable young nurse. There I was, reposing "in ordinary," swinging backwards and forwards. From one window I could see green plains and lagoons stretching away to the distant hills; and from the balconies, long strings of mules, with their cargoes, and could hear the shrill whistles and cries of the arrieros, urging the perverse brutes in either direction. The borders, too, of the lagoons were dotted with groups of women and children washing; and whenever I took a too long glance through the telescope, at some brown half nude figure, I was sure to attract the attention of my black-eyed nurse, who cunningly would place her finger before the lens. I always chose the mornings to study or write, when the clear, cool sea-breeze was beginning to fan the polished surface of the water, as the swell rolled rippling on in gentle undulations towards the beach—while swarms of pelicans sailed sluggishly along, until sighting their prey, when, with a dart like a flash, they parted the waves in concentric circles around, and rested contentedly on the water, packing away the little fishes in their capacious pouches. Then, if our little house-keeper was docile, and not mimicking the Colonel, for she detested the sight of a book, I would draw the table to my cot, and enjoy an hour's tranquillity. But when, later in the day, the breeze began to roughen the sea into light caps of foam, causing the waves to break heavily upon the shore, then the windows began to struggle and slam, books and papers to whirl across the room, until I was glad to put by everything, and say, *amigita canta*—sing, my little friend. She would purse up her roguish lips in mimic affectation, and then, in a lively strain, begin some provincial ditty—

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"En la Esquina de casa,
Un oficial mi habló."

Yet there are no alleviations that can recompense a person of active habits for being laid up, even in lavender. In a few days I was able to sit a horse, and soon after, perfectly restored.

Thieving and pilfering were practised among the lower orders, in an almost equal degree to knife combats. Leperos are thieves and liars by profession, and their coarse serapas serves to conceal all their peccadillos. The Spectator tells us, that in the days of Charles II, a rascal of any eminence could not be found under forty. In Mazatlan they were more precocious. Eating, sleeping and drinking, they could easily dispense with, for a handful of beans and the open air was an economical mode of life, and cost little or nothing; but a few rials were absolutely indispensable to game with on feast days; and as the Leperos, as a body, are not fond of work, they exercised their ingenuity in appropriating property of others. I had escaped their depredations so long, that I fancied there was nothing worth filching in my possession, or innocently supposed there was some kind of freemasonry established between us. However, I was soon undeceived. One morning, according to custom, Miss Rita made her usual call, attended

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by some gay friends, and all attired in their prettiest robes and ribosas:—"Would I read an anonymous billet in verse?" *Si Señorita*. "You are appointed *Teniente de la tripa*,"—a ball given annually by the butchers. "Then, would I meet her at the grand fandango in the marisma?" Of course. "*Pues hasta la noche amigo mio!*" and away they tripped down the hill in high glee. In the evening after dinner at the cottage, in company with Señor Molinero, we strolled to the fields. A large marqu e had been erected in the middle of the open space, and around were smaller affairs, with numerous booths, sparkling with lights, music and merriment. It was not a very select affair, and I took the precaution to loosen my sword in its sheath. Presently we entered into the spirit of the frolic, and were soon hand in hand with leperos and their sweethearts—sipping from every cup—whirling away in waltzes—dancing to the quick *jarabie*, and making ourselves particularly ridiculous when, presto! some expert thief snatched my sword blade from the scabbard. Search was instantly made, but the successful lepero made good his prize, and escaped. The girls sympathized with me, and poor Rita cried, and, regardless of being vice-queen of the ball, insisted upon leaving—so bounding up before me on horseback, I landed her at her little cottage. The night was not half spent, so turning rein, I indulged my friend Señor Carbia with a hasty visit—not at all to his satisfaction, for the fickle goddess smiled upon me; but as a slight check to this good fortune, another watchful person had stolen a valuable pistol from my holsters while the horse was standing in the patio, with a man to guard him. At the time I would certainly have presented the ladron with my winnings for the pleasure of giving him the contents from the remaining weapon; but eventually I became more of a philosopher—was robbed at all times unmercifully, and looked upon it as a destiny. One of our good commissaries was also a sufferer. Being lodged in a small dwelling by himself, every few days he was regularly cleaned out of his wardrobe, and frequently obliged to fly trowserless to a neighbor's for a change of raiment. I once had the happiness to detect a youth in a petty act of larceny. Him I had carefully conveyed to the Garita, when the sailors made what they call a "spread eagle" of him, over the long gun. It was a summary process, and I sincerely believe, had a tendency to repress his rising predilections for the future.

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CHAPTER XXVIII.

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In the month of March the first positive information relating to rumors of peace reached Mazatlan. It was agreeable news to a few former *empleados* of the customs and courts, all idle and disaffected vagabonds, but the majority of peaceably-disposed citizens and foreign residents were averse to our departure; they had so long been oppressed by Mexican misrule, intrigue, and extortion, that the law, order, and tolerant state of things existing under our sway, presented a too pleasing contrast not to sigh for a continuance of it.

One of the brothers, Vaso vil Vaso—gentlemen who stood deservedly high in public estimation—had been appointed Governor of the Province, and in defence of the conduct of his fellow-citizens who had remained, and accepted office in Mazatlan, he published a pamphlet in Guadalajara, giving a narrative of former grievances, with a truthful account of our proceedings; also speaking in high terms of commendation of the legality and justice that had characterised our policy since the occupation of the port.

The Mexican force outside evinced no disposition to molest us, and ere this we had discovered that it was time thrown away to pursue them: there was no fighting to be had, petty skirmishing was all that had been accomplished; want and desertion were rapidly thinning their ranks; the commanders were at swords' points, and their only resources were derived from the miserable pittance extorted by the Alcobala—in fact, they were fast devouring one another. At this juncture, Vegas having withdrawn his guns and disbanded the troops in Culiacan, was threatened by Romero with an attack, in case the artillery was not sent back. For this piece of mutiny Romero was dismissed the army, and the military command of the province devolved on a respectable officer named Don Juan Pablo Anaya, who made his headquarters at the Presidio, with, however, but a mere handful of soldiers.

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On the last day of March the official notification of the armistice was promulgated in the port. A few days previous, late in the afternoon, some arrieros informed me that a number of Mexican soldiers were collecting a little revenue, a short distance up the road, and then I perceived a signal flying from the rancho of Madre Maria. This was a heinous offence, to come within long range of our guns; so sending a small party by the beach, I rode out myself. We arrived a minute too late—the dust from their horses was just subsiding. The patrona was in a towering passion, said there had been a brace of officers, and four dragoons, making merry in the house; knocking the necks off poultry and bottles, and demanding toll from the paisanos. Juanita added, that one of the gentlemen had desired his *memorias* left at the Garita! a piece of politeness I was quite unprepared for. Returning to town, I forthwith went in quest of the Governor. He was afloat, nor was the Captain of the Cuartel to be found. What to do I knew not; it would have been a great breach of decorum not to repay the courtesies of my afternoon visitors, so I concluded to consult with a *compadre*. Towards midnight I met Captain Luigi, who being in want of exercise, agreed to take the relief-patrol, and accompany me; the officers on duty, Mr. Baldwin and Earl, made up the party. Ten was our number, and the horses half wild with spirits. We had an inkling of the whereabouts of our *amigos*, as there was to be a grand *fi sta* on the morrow, some leagues up the Culiacan road, at the village of Venadillo; and as there was to be dancing and frolicking, it did not seem improbable that the Mexican advance-guard should bivouac in the neighborhood. There

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was a round white moon to light us, and away we leaped at a slapping pace towards the hamlet. A league this side we fell in with a couple of paisanos, one of whom not replying to our questions, with any due regard to truth, concerning the locale of the troops, was speedily forced to mount behind one of the patrol. In three bounds, he allowed himself to tumble to the ground, but having his intellect sharpened by a sound kick from the horse in the head, he then thought it advisable to cling on like wax; moreover, his fears induced him to tell a straight story, and we soon came in sight of the village. The entire place was filled with mules and jackasses, their loads of fruit, vegetables, and drinkables lying beside them, awaiting the great jollification of the succeeding day. In front of a large house, were seated on the ground some fifty or sixty curious persons, who, to save time, were attentively playing monté, on their serapas, lighted by paper lanterns. Dismounting a few rods in the rear, and leaving the horses in charge of two men, we silently approached the assembly, and taking position, I stepped up, and tapped a swarthy fellow on the shoulder; he turned around, and upon recognizing me, exclaimed with much astonishment, *Aquí están los gringos*—Holy Moses, here's the Yankees! The whole audience began leaping to their feet, but merely pointing to the levelled weapons behind, we besought them to resume their seats, and not utter a syllable, or a carbine might accidentally explode, and drive a bullet through some one's head. Thereupon they again took up the cards; when clapping a pistol to an intelligent person's ear, we gave him five seconds to point out the stopping place of the Commandante. "Here," said he, jerking his thumb over his shoulder, "here, in the big rancho." *Y los soldados? Mas por alla en la arboléda! Quantos? Habra cosa de cincuenta dragones!*—Where are the troops? Up yonder in the grove!—about fifty. This was no joke, we thought, to be within musket-shot of five times our number; but since no alarm had yet been made, we resolved to seize the *Administrador*. We walked to the door, and struck a few heavy blows. "*Quien es?*" said a gruff voice. Another blow from the hilt of a sabre. *Soldados! fuégo!*—fire!—was the reply. Aha! so you have a guard, Señor, and we instantly placed a thick wall between our persons, that the balls might circulate through the door, and meet with no resistance or obstruction on the outside; but no report or explosion following the command, we detected the ruse, and assured the individual within, that if he did not make himself visible; we would return the compliment in earnest. This threat unbolted the door, and in a moment I slapped El Señor Valverde—that was his cognomen—on the shoulder; and after apologising for disturbing his slumbers, at so unreasonable an hour, through anxiety to return his visit in the earliest possible time, desired him to equip in all haste for a little excursion to the port. He could not forbear laughing, notwithstanding his fright. We gave him leisure to drink half a bottle of brandy, and put on a clean shirt; when he gave up his papers, and assured us, with a gratified smile, that he had that very day sent all the cash to headquarters. And now we said, "Amigo, where's your horse?" "Ah," he replied, "there is one here, but let me send to the corral for another." The next instant, we found him whispering to a small boy cruising around our legs; but pointing a naked sabre to El Señor's throat, we gave both him and the juvenile to understand, that whispering was not allowable in polite society, and he would oblige us by mounting the *cavallo* that stood ready at the door, without further ceremony. While this was going on, our friends, Baldwig and Earl, were inspecting the outbuildings, and came upon the captain of the troop in a very ambiguous position. He jumped up in his shirt, and flew away like the wind. There was now no time to be lost: collecting a lot of handsome arms and equipments, our horses were brought up, we leaped into the saddle, tossed two dollars to the patrona, who swore some one had stolen a sheet; said adios! to the monté men, who gave us shouts of viva! and appeared quite as well pleased as ourselves.

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"Then ho! ho! hurry; hopp, hopp, hopp.
Rode off the troop, with never a stop,
Until all gasped together."

We came bounding back the twelve miles within the hour, and after giving Mr. Valverde a supper, were safely housed and asleep before daylight. But now it came the prisoner's turn to laugh at us. I had hardly opened my eyes the next morning, when an orderly came from the Governor! What's to pay now? thought I, and off I rode to the Cuartel. On the way I met Captain Luigi, with a most serio-quizzico expression of visage, just from an interview. After being announced, in I walked. "Good morning, sir." "So, sir"—a pause—"you had the presumption to detach a force from the garrison last night, and go many miles into the interior?—I arrest you, sir—consider yourself arrested, sir—you and Mr. Luigi both, sir." "But, Governor," I ventured to remark, "let me explain; I thought you would be pleased, and a—" "No explanation, sir—pleased indeed!—when you knew the armistice had been signed!" However, in the end, the Governor, who was a good amiable gentleman, consented to believe that no disrespect was intended, and received our apologies. Whereupon we wrote a letter that brought tears to his eyes; he asked us to dinner, and so the affair terminated. Mr. Valverde had all his arms and chattels restored—very much to the chagrin of Mr. Baldwig, who had already apportioned a saddle unto his own keeping—got a good breakfast, and was escorted beyond our lines with *muchos cumplimientos*. The red-headed wretch never passed me afterwards without a face full of sardonic winks and grins. But from that moment, we resolved never to be again patriotic on our own responsibility; and our only consolation was in knowing that we had made the last prisoner during the war.

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Some days after, one of our men deserted. He was intercepted by the Mexicans, and since the armistice had been declared, a message was sent to the Governor, expressing a willingness to give him up. I attended the flag of truce, as interpreter. Not finding the escort at the place designated, we were requested by a Mexican officer to proceed along the Presidio road. Passing Urias, we galloped on, league after league, until within a mile of headquarters, where we were politely received by a guard and an officer, sent to conduct us to the General. The old town of

Mazatlan, or Presidio, is situated on a broad plain, with a rapid, shallow, limpid stream, coursing beside it. In times past, it was a place of some importance; and the ruins of large *almacens*, a dilapidated church, spacious dwellings, barracks and plazas, still keep up the belief. Yet, as the port was found to possess such manifest advantages for all commercial purposes, the old town was nearly depopulated for the new, and the residents were even induced to leave their pure stream of water, for the brackish element nearer the sea. The road is excellent, and adapted for artillery, but every road presents capital spots for ambushades, and it would have required much caution to have approached and surprised the Presidio, as we had originally intended. As we forded the stream, and entered the town, the whole population turned out to behold *los Yankees*—dogs barked—mothers held up their children—and dirty troops tried to stare us out of countenance. We were conducted to a range of buildings facing the plaza, and presented to the commander-in-chief, General Anaya. He had a pleasant European visage—tall, well-made, dignified and gentleman-like in his bearing and address—numbering, may be, some sixty years. We stated the business which brought us to his notice, and after some few inquiries from his officers, he informed us, that the officer who had apprised the Governor was unauthorized to do so; that the deserter had already escaped—which was, indeed, the politest possible, and at the same time sensible way of telling us that we could not have him. He then cooled us off with a cup of claret and cigars; hoped all national difficulties were about to cease; regarded the United States as the mother of Republics; boasted that he had been present, and wounded at the battle of New Orleans, as aid to Jackson; and finally, turned us over to the kind offices of his staff. Our horses, meanwhile, had been well cared for, and three hours after noon we were escorted outside the lines, and reached the port at night.

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The next day I was ordered to proceed again to the Presidio, with a flag of truce, to communicate an official copy of our armistice, and request a conference, to arrange certain articles pertaining thereto. As we did not get there until late in the afternoon, the escort and myself were billeted for the night upon the Commissary General, Don Isidro Beruben, who did the honors of his house with great liberality and attention, to say nothing of the sweet smiles of his charming little daughter Chonita. We slept soundly and rose early, walked around the town, saw the graves of eight long bronze cannon, about three hundred troops exercised, and were introduced to scores of officers. They were all delighted at the armistice, and on tiptoe to get leave once more to visit the port, which they somehow regarded as a little Paris. They overwhelmed me with interrogatories about their friends and sweethearts: where were the Manuélas, Madelinas, Antonias, Josephas—*pobrecitas!* how they must have suffered! and were they all true to their old lovers? Of course they were—and I vouched for the truth of the statement.

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As the General had not a reply prepared, we remained to a breakfast given by our host. There were some thirty officers at table—a number of generals, and all, I believe, colonels: the Mexican army is well manned in the higher grades. The breakfast passed off well, with no absurd toast-making, and an hour after its termination, Don Pablo requested many *memorias* to the American Commodore and governor, adding that he would be pleased to meet our commissioners, as soon as he was able to mount his horse, being at the time somewhat troubled with a complaint of the *barrica*. Then entrusted with a despatch, I had the honor of making my *congé*—*Adios señores! Adios amigo! hasta luego!* and so we parted.

There were one or two articles of the armistice that had been signed in Mexico, which could not have been intended to meet the exigencies of ports on the Pacific, and at the conference which ensued, the Mexicans, in return for relinquishing the *alcobala*, demanded the privilege of collecting duties levied upon the coasting trade—it seemed a bagatelle that we might easily have conceded, for it was absolutely necessary that some means should be granted for their support. The commissioners, however, were not able to arrange the matter, and both parties separated in dudgeon. Anaya retired to the Presidio, the *alcobala* continued, and the merchants were extremely disappointed at the rupture; for having a large amount of goods destined for Durango and the adjoining provinces, which had already passed our customs, they were unwilling to risk the transit before some positive arrangement had been established between the two parties.

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These official misunderstandings, however, did not prevent constant visits of the Mexican officers and their families to the port—a few of them were pleasant, conversible, intelligent gentlemen, but generally speaking, they were dirty, ill-bred persons, without moral principle, and the greatest liars in existence, and they invariably taxed one another with being cowards. On entering Mazatlan, they were obliged to register their names and report the time of departure. We were occasionally amused when they assured us they found great difficulty in the search for their *amantes*, and had not been received with the same ardor of affection that so long an absence would have justified.

CHAPTER XXIX.

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During the period of our occupation of Mazatlan, the remaining ships of the squadron had not been idle along the neighboring shores of the gulf. The Port of Guaymas, on the Main, had been closely guarded by a sloop of war; and notwithstanding the immense superiority of force, under the Mexican General, Campuzano—of five hundred regular troops—he had been at all times beaten, whenever attempting any demonstrations upon the town—on one occasion with the loss of twenty killed and forty wounded;—affairs which sufficiently damped their ardor, and warned

them to keep beyond the reach of their invaders.

The Peninsula, also, had been the theatre of more serious struggles; and as the events attending their history were in themselves characterised by the utmost gallantry, reflecting the highest degree of praise upon the actors, who bore their plumes most bravely; and as they were, in fact, the only affairs of importance, which may be considered as shedding a ray of glory upon our arms, during the naval operations on the Mexican coast, I may be excused for relating them more in detail.

It may be recollected, that prior to the departure of the squadron from Lower California, through urgent solicitations made by the respectable inhabitants, a small detachment of marines, under command of Lieut. Charles Heywood, U.S.N., had been deputed to occupy the little town of San José.

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As I have before mentioned, the settlement is situated in a narrow valley, about a league at its greatest width on the gulf, and is rapidly wedged in, as it falls back into the interior, by converging walls of lofty barren mountains. It is fertilized by a swift little stream of pure water, which, in pleasing contrast to the parched arid hills around, brightens the landscape with many green patches of cultivated fields, fruits, and foliage. In the bosom of this little vale, upon a slight eminence, two miles from the bay, reposes the Mission—a village of some five hundred inhabitants—having a broad avenue running entirely through it, in a parallel line with the stream. At the upper end was a square adobie building, protected in the rear, by an abrupt descent to the base of the plain, and the front facing and looking down upon the whole length of the main street. This was designated as the Cuartel. On the right, and opposite angle, stood another commodious dwelling, behind which a high wall enclosed a small court-yard: it was owned by an American, Mr. Mott, of Mazatlan, and occupied by his agent, Mr. Eugene Gillespie—who as an amateur in the trying events that ensued, well won the guerdon of a brave and loyal gentleman.

Immediately upon landing, on the 9th November, 1847, these two buildings were taken possession of, and the American flag was displayed. The Cuartel was found to be in a very dilapidated condition, and to prevent the walls and roof from falling, crossbeams and pillars were used to prop the decayed timbers, while numbers of useless windows and doorways were closed up with masonry, leaving the main entrance and another portal in the rear, where a platform was laid for more convenient traversings of a cannon.

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The low parapet which invariably surmounts the flat roofs or *azoteas* of Spanish houses, was raised sufficiently to afford a breast-high protection, and the walls were pierced at the commanding points, with loop-holes for musketry: this, with a trench between the two buildings, constituted the defences.

The garrison numbered twenty-five, including the Commander and his four subordinates. This force, however, was swelled, in a numerical sense, by about twenty friendly natives, who, in seeking protection under the pledges conveyed in our proclamations, had timidly volunteered their services, in case of assault. Still, they were of but little effective aid, and, with their families, only served to reduce the provisions and uselessly waste the limited supply of ammunition with which the garrison had been furnished. The gun, too, was an unwieldy nine-pounder ship's carronade, mounted upon a clumsy slide, without wheels for easy transportation, or any of the conveniences necessary for manœuvring on land. It was planted in front of the Cuartel, to sweep the avenue with its fire. The force was divided between the two positions, and with but forty rounds of ball cartridges in the cartouche boxes, the little band calmly held their ground.

The Californian partisans who had enrolled themselves for guerrilla warfare on the Peninsula, were composed of mongrel bodies of deserters and disbanded soldiers from the Main, together with divers Yachi Indians, and other disaffected vagabonds, who, having nothing to lose, and anxious for plunder, either from their own countrymen or their enemies, were indifferent by what means it was to be obtained.

This force amounted in the aggregate to more than six hundred mounted men, tolerably well equipped with weapons, and commanded by Pineda, Mexia, Moreno, Angulo, and Mejares. The last-named individual had been former Captain of the port of Mazatlan. He was a man of activity and desperate courage, for which last quality, at a later day, he paid the penalty with his life.

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The passions of these guerrillas had been violently inflamed by the persuasions and advice administered by a shrewd Mexican priest, named Gabriel Gonzales, who, fearing probably a loss of clerical influence among the native population, and inheriting, with all his race, a natural antipathy to the march of the Anglo-Saxon, consequent upon the secession of the territory, made unceasing efforts by every means in his power to have a strong blow struck for its salvation. He partially succeeded.

The original scheme of the Mexican leaders was, in the first instance, to have made a concentrated attack upon the town of La Paz, at the time in possession of a company of the New York regiment, under Lt. Colonel Burton; but perceiving the weakness of the force to contend against, in the small garrison of San José, and deeming it an easy prey, they divided their force, and with the moiety resolved upon its destruction.

Hardly had the squadron disappeared below the horizon from San José, before reports came flying thick and fast, that a serious attack was contemplated. These rumors only infused renewed energy in the preparations for defence and resistance, nor was the garrison kept long in suspense.

On the morning of the 19th, ten days after the sailing of the ships of war, a small cavalcade, bearing a banner of truce, entered the village, and by a blast of trumpets demanded a parley. Possibly, to give additional weight to the summons, clouds of dust were beheld rolling down the valley, and strong squadrons of cavalry scouring the roads and underwood, in advance of their main body. The effect was not realized. The flag of truce was met by an equal number from the Cuartel, and a missive received, demanding, under the high appeal of *Dios Patria y Libertad*, an immediate surrender, under penalty of the horrors of annihilation by a greatly superior force. The reply was prompt and decisive: the American commander regretting his inability to comply with the summons, and declaring his intention to defend his flag against all odds.

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Negotiations being thus courteously terminated, the guerrillas, nearly two hundred strong, skirted the suburbs, and took up a position on the right of the American quarters, behind the church, on an elevation, three hundred and fifty yards distant, laterally commanding the town; it was called La Lomita.

During the afternoon the Mexican eagle and tricolor was unfurled, and with cheers and pealing bugles, they opened a fire from a six-pounder and musketry, continuing the work until dark. The shot, however, did but little damage to the soft adobie walls, save fracturing cornices or boring fresh apertures for loop holes; nor was it judged prudent to return their salutes but rarely, inasmuch as the carronade of the Cuartel could not, without much difficulty, be brought to bear upon the enemies' hill, and the limited supply of ammunition rendered it advisable to await closer quarters with the small arms.

As night closed around the valley, there was a cessation of firing; the garrison remaining under arms momentarily anticipating a more vigorous attack; nor were they disappointed. By ten o'clock the besiegers had cautiously crept within close proximity to the occupied buildings, and with a field piece in the main street, began a simultaneous assault from all directions, front and rear. Showers of bullets flew into every hole and aperture of the Cuartel, whilst determined efforts were made to gain a lodgment in the opposite house: but they were severally repulsed with loss, and not an ounce of lead was thrown away, or powder idly burned without a definite object. Three of the garrison only, were wounded.

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A hot but ineffective fire was kept up by the assailants during the night, but at daylight the force was withdrawn again to the camp at La Lomita. All the following day the garrison were encircled by the guerrillas, who maintained a brisk fire of musketry from behind the walls and parapets of adjoining dwellings. The disparity of numbers was too great to risk the chances of dislodging them at the point of the bayonet.

With the night the garrison were still under arms at their posts. The plan of the guerrillas was to have stormed the front of the Cuartel with forty picked men, under cover of three field pieces, receive the discharge from the nine-pounder, rush in, and capture it, whilst other bodies, provided with bars and ladders, were to scale the *azoteas*, and then pour in a destructive fire on the occupants below. In the end, these matured calculations were defeated: nevertheless, the positions were well chosen, and the Mexicans in readiness for the assault. Just before midnight the garrison sentinels challenged: the hail was immediately answered by trumpets sounding a charge, and a heavy fire from guns and small arms; at the same instant, Mejares, the commandant of artillery, with four of his followers, in leading the forlorn hope, were riddled by rifle balls from the besieged, whilst another in striving to bear away the body of his comrade, fell mortally wounded on the same bloody heap. Deprived of the animating example of their leader, the storming parties faltered, thus disconcerting the entire movement, and they returned to their encampment without attempting further demonstrations that night. Eight newly made graves was the sole glory reaped in this abortive struggle.

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Meanwhile a series of vigorous attacks had already been commenced upon the command at La Paz, but was repulsed by a stouter resistance than was anticipated; equally unprepared for the gallant conduct of the little band at San José, and depressed by the loss of their leader, the guerrilla chiefs ordered their partisans to again unite in the north, for a combined movement upon La Paz—as had been originally intended.

This course of action was considerably hastened, on the morning of the 21st, by the appearance of two large vessels in the offing; eventually proving to be the whale ships "Magnolia" and "Edward," of New Bedford—Captains Simmons and Barker—who learning from a launch, near Cape San Lucas, the state of affairs in San José, without a thought to their own interests, resolved to do the utmost for the garrison. Standing boldly into the bay, dropping anchor, discharging a cannon, and taking in sails together, they succeeded completely in deceiving the guerrillas, who were posted in strength on the beach to oppose a landing; and who, under the belief that the ships were either men-of-war or transports, fell back to their camp, and shortly after retreated up the valley; not, however, without giving a parting volley to the Cuartel, which was courteously returned by Mr. Gillespie, who knocked a trooper from his saddle by a rifle-bullet.

On being informed of the straightened situation of their countrymen, these bold captains, with their brave crews, armed themselves with muskets, lances, spades, and harpoons from their ships, and sixty in number at once landed, and marched to the Cuartel. The provisions and ammunition of the garrison had been nearly exhausted, and these resolute whale-men instantly brought on shore a quantity of bread—all the powder they possessed, and even parted with hand and deep sea leads to mould into bullets! Not contented with this, they formed into companies—were drilled—and evinced an enthusiasm to do good battle for those they had so generously and

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disinterestedly succored. Not only were these gallant deeds undertaken without solicitation, but they nobly gave food and raiment to many of the timid peasantry received on board their ships. If any more admirable patriotism can be shown than this, let it be inscribed in grateful remembrance, with the names of Simmons and Barker!

A few days later a government transport and corvette arrived: the garrison was supplied with two more carronade guns, and an abundance of ammunition and provisions. The quarters were considerably strengthened, and an adobie bastion, with four embrasures raised in front of the Cuartel. The force was also increased by ten marines, and sixteen men whose terms of service had not quite expired; many of whom were invalids, and were thus merely a make-weight upon those they had been detailed to assist.

For a month all remained quiet in the vicinity—the guerrillas had fallen back upon La Paz. Reports, however, gave every indication that another and more serious attack was contemplated upon San José; but, notwithstanding this state of affairs, and the events which had transpired, the commander of the corvette saw no further cause for alarm, and being homeward-bound, sailed for the United States. The bold whalers had also long since departed—although not until their services had been no more required—and at length the bay was once more deserted.

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No longer deterred by the men-of-war, the guerrillas, having been baffled in their demonstrations upon La Paz, again resolved to attempt the reduction of San José, with such an overwhelming force as to place the result beyond a doubt. Accordingly, breaking up their camp, with three hundred cavalry, they entered the lower valley on the 15th of January. For a week they were posted within a league of the village, whilst detached portions were employed driving off cattle and horses, destroying the crops, and intercepting all communication with the interior. On the 21st, a small schooner anchored in the bay, having some articles for the garrison. The following morning, the sea road appearing free from the enemy, two officers and five men, well armed and mounted, started to communicate with the vessel. On gaining the beach, they were surrounded by an ambuscade of one hundred and fifty guerrillas, and taken prisoners. Shortly afterwards, they were carried up the valley: with pain and anxiety, their friends saw them from the Cuartel, without the means of affording them relief. Emboldened by this success, which was indeed a bitter loss to the little garrison, the guerrillas contracted their lines, and each day found them nearer the town. Again the besieged and the native residents, with their families, were obliged to keep closely within their quarters. Step by step the enemy after gaining the main avenue, pierced the buildings on either hand, and cutting trenches across the transverse lanes, they succeeded in forcing a passage, entirely concealed from view, until they gained complete possession of the town. And in an adobie house, within fifty yards of the American battery, the walls, already three feet in thickness, were increased by planting stakes inside, which were filled up with hard timber and sand; and such was its strength, that twelve-pound shot, fired at forty yards, made no perceptible impression: from the azotea of this entrenchment the Mexican flag floated in defiance.

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Besides these annoyances, almost every dwelling in the street was loopholed, occupied and protected by heavy angular barricades of pickets and earth, making safe points for the use of musketry, while the church and surrounding eminences were strongly guarded.

During these operations the garrison had not been merely spectators. They made a number of sorties, with the loss of but one man killed, and succeeded in saving a small quantity of rice. But by the 10th of February, the guerrillas had entire possession of the town, and from front, sides and rear of the Cuartel, they were enabled to throw a raking fire. From that time forth, the fusillade was incessant; the least exposure of person being made the target for a simultaneous discharge of fifty bullets; and from long practice they were found well skilled in handling their weapons—pouring the lead in at every aperture.

On the afternoon of the 11th, the garrison had to lament the death of the second in command, Passed Midshipman Tenant McLenahan. While engaged at his duties on the azotea, amid a shower of deadly missiles, he was struck down by a bullet in the throat, and fell with one hand clasping the flagstaff that upheld the colors he had so intrepidly defended. He was a young officer of undaunted resolution, courageous and energetic. He expired two hours after being wounded, and was buried in rear of the Cuartel, while the sharp whistling of bullets and reports of cannon echoed over his untimely grave—a fitting requiem for the noble spirit that had taken its flight.[4]

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The commander and a single officer were now all that remained. The whole garrison numbered but sixty, including sick, wounded, and twenty of the enrolled natives; the buildings were crowded to excess with women and children; they were to be fed; provisions were becoming scarce; bread was entirely gone, and naught remained, save a few days' salt meat on half an allowance. In addition to the want of these necessities, the assailants had cut off the access to the stream in rear of the Cuartel, or at least so enveloped the outlets and approaches to the pools—by screens of sand and barricades of pickets—as to make it a matter of almost certain death to seek water, either by day or night. There was no other course to pursue than the arduous task of digging a well within the walls. This, by the most untiring exertions, was finally accomplished, by boring thirty feet through the solid rock.

In such an emergency, surrounded by nearly ten times their numbers, less undaunted spirits might reasonably have succumbed to the perils of a siege that was hourly becoming more straitened. But the beleaguered little garrison, though a small band, were true to themselves. There were neither murmurs nor thoughts of surrender—they still vigilantly guarded the

defences—with but limited rest or food—while the bullets and shot of the besiegers flew in by the loop-holes, or plunged through the walls. Yet there was no flinching—ever on the alert—for hours and hours they watched the enemy, and wo betide the adventurous guerrilla, who, becoming rash from fancied security, exposed an inch of flesh! the leaden messenger from some deadly carbine gave sad warning to his comrades.

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It was evidently the intention of the guerrillas to starve the garrison into submission, who had already sustained a close siege of more than four weeks, resisted many determined assaults, and made a number of successful sorties. Yet their position had become eminently critical, and without speedy relief, their well-defended flag would have to be hauled down. It did not hang upon the simple results devolving upon capture. They felt no greater uneasiness on that score than commonly falls to the lot of the vanquished in civilized warfare. But the innocent inhabitants, who had sought refuge under the inducements held forth by our proclamations, and who trustingly relied upon American arms to shield them from the inevitable fate to which they were to be devoted by those whose vindictive hate and malice they had provoked—and whose *gritos*—cries—resounded from every housetop, singling out by name, with bitter taunts and revilings, those most obnoxious, and the doom in store for their apostacy—were the causes that still nerved the hearts of their defenders.

Joyfully, on the evening of the 14th of February, the garrison beheld a ship of war sail into the bay, and though apprehensive that the opposition would be too great to admit of a landing, yet at daylight the following morning an hundred of the crew disembarked, and soon after, the musketry from the Mexicans opened upon them. The odds were four to one; but steadily the seamen rushed on, pouring in their fire, and fighting their way, pace by pace, until met by a party from the Cuartel, when the guerrillas retreated, with a loss of fifteen killed and thirty-five wounded. Thus was the little band relieved, their wants attended to, and the sick and wounded cared for. The enemy, baffled in their enterprise, and deterred by the presence of the corvette, deserted the valley for the interior.

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A month later, Captain Steele, of the New York volunteers, with thirty mounted men, left La Paz, and after a flying march of sixty miles, reached San Antonio, when, dashing into the plaza, they put the garrison to flight; rescued the party captured at San José, and returned to their post, with the loss of but one man killed—having performed the entire distance of one hundred and thirty miles within thirty hours! Such gallant little forays need no comment. The prisoners had been treated with extreme kindness, and although moved from place to place, never experienced the slightest insult or injury.

Early in April, Lt. Col. Burton's command being reinforced by another company from the upper territory, with one hundred and fifty of the volunteers, moved towards the interior; while seventy-five seamen and marines left San José to form a junction at San Antonio. Before the bodies united, Lt. Col. Burton, with his troops, came up with the guerrillas, three hundred and fifty strong, at Todos Santos, and after a severe action, totally defeated them, taking many prisoners and their leaders. By the close of the month, the town of San José was occupied by Captain Naglee, of the volunteers, and the naval force was withdrawn.

Thus ended the war on the peninsula of California.

FOOTNOTE:

[4] On an eminence overlooking the bay, a small white railing and tablet mark the spot where the remains of poor McLenahan were subsequently buried, with the honors of war.

CHAPTER XXX.

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Early in the month of May, the Ohio, 74, arrived at Mazatlan. On the 8th, I was ordered to prepare for a journey to the city of Mexico—my preparations were made in five minutes; merely a saddle, sabre, spurs, pistols, undress jacket, riding trowsers and serapa. The same night I rode to the Presidio, where General Anaya politely furnished me with a special passport, and afforded every facility to expedite the journey through his immediate command. Returning to the port at daylight, a letter of credit awaited me, which, with a dispatch enclosed in oiled silk and concealed in the lining of my jacket, completed my arrangements. A ship of war had been ordered to land me at San Blas, a port some one hundred and thirty miles down the coast, and considered the nearest practicable route to Mexico. I was to be accompanied by a Mexican officer, a dark pop-eyed little man, of a quiet and gentlemanly demeanor, who was bound on a mission to his own government, and took passage with us in the frigate.

Attended by light flyaway airs and calms, we were nearly three days in accomplishing the short distance of the voyage, and it was not until nightfall of the 13th, that the good ship lay becalmed a few miles from the shore. With my fellow traveller, I was tossed into a boat, and after a smart pull of two hours, we were safely landed up a narrow estero, on the banks of which was placed the little town of San Blas, apparently overstocked with musquitos. A letter to a Chinaman, named Passio, made him yell for his servants; before midnight had struck, after embracing a number of officers from two of our ships at anchor there, we went pacing away through the thick foliage, answering to the echo the loud shouts of the friends left behind—it was thus began my

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rough notes and jolts on a Mexican saddle. We were accompanied by a guide, and a pack-mule for my companion's portmanteau. My wardrobe did not require one—consisting of two shirts and a tooth-brush.

The horse I bestrode was not very beautiful to behold, certainly—being what is technically termed in animal structure—a singed cat; but nevertheless he rattled along bravely, without a jolt, plunge, or stumble, and we got on famously together. We contrived to while away miles and hours, coursing along the *marismas* of the sea, with a clear bright moon to light us; or winding through magnificent forests of sycamore and pine, beneath dense thickets, arched with vines, cactus and acacia;—grouped here and there with palmettos, or cocoanuts, crackling in the breeze—and looking for all the world like long-legged trowserless turbaned Turks. The scene was quite exhilarating, and even my comrade allowed his huge moustache to be parted; but whether owing to the pure air, and excitement of the ride, or the yet purer brandy from his *alforgas*, his hitherto taciturn tongue was let loose, and we became bosom friends on the spot. He had put sufficient in his mouth to steel away his brains, and not a little to my surprise—though I expressed none—he shortly proposed to me a capital plan of cheating the government: that by keeping together—he being empowered to take horses for nothing—we might charge the full amount, and halve the proceeds. I readily assented, sealed the bargain by a squeeze that nearly wrenched him from the saddle, and resolved to cut his fascinating society at the first convenient opportunity. This gentleman bore the reputation of being one out of a few honest officers in the Mexican army. However, it is but justice to state that these little sins of commission are not regarded in so serious a light as with us; although I could not help speculating on the beautiful moral attributes possessed by the remainder of the army. They have a very trite saying, which hits their case precisely: *Primero jo, pues mi padre*—me first, then daddy.

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At about three o'clock we had left the grounds bordering upon the ocean, for the first step to the temperate terrace. Alighting at a large rancho, we unceremoniously aroused some sleeping figures—had a mess of scrambled eggs—thence to horse again. We soon gained the highland, by bridle-paths skirting along crests of hills and ravines, until daylight found us ambling from one to the other, in an everlasting up-and-down route, both tiresome and monotonous. Eight leagues of this work brought us to the more elevated region of the plateau—a more open country, with now and then a rancho—cultivated fields—broader roads, and all the signs of approaching a large town; then in a moment the view opened upon a broad, lovely plain, framed in by three noble swells of sierras, and before us lay long lines of buildings and gardens, with a thin stream winding down the slopes, like a white thread—and this was Tepic. Leaving my *compañero* at a meson, I swung myself from the saddle, after a twenty-eight leagues ride, within the spacious *patio* of an American gentleman's house, to whom I was regularly endorsed—Mr. Bissell. He received me in the kindest manner possible—washed, shaved and breakfasted me, and put all in train for a renewed start by night. We called on the Commandante Aristi, who declared the inexpressible pleasure he experienced at the sight of me, signed my passport, and bowed us most politely out of the house, even to the furthest door-step. This state visit over, I took a sound nap, and was aroused in season for a bath. We rode to the green suburbs of the town, where were nice thatched sheds stretching half way over a rapid stream. After a refreshing swim, and a sip of lemonade filled with caraway seeds, we returned to dine on delightful brook trout, and pleasant vinous accompaniments. The horses were again equipped, and making a tour of the city, we stopped at the cotton mills belonging to the wealthy English house of Barron, Forbes & Co. The *Fabrica* stands at the base of a steep hillete—composed of large white buildings, encircled by high walls on three sides, and the fourth facing an impetuous torrent, from which a strong body of water is diverted to drive the machinery. The banks were handsomely walled up, and laid out in parterres, prettily planted with shrubbery, all bearing the impress of great care and beauty. Further down the stream was an extensive garden, with broad alleys, arbors and spacious tanks, teeming with fruits, flowers and exotics of the rarest kinds.

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The senior owner of the manufactory, Mr. Forbes, did the honor to play cicerone, and take me over the works. There were about five thousand spindles in operation; then working day and night. The machinery was a beautiful specimen of American ingenuity; nearly all the overseers, and the intelligent superintendent, Mr. Whiting, boasted of the same origin. None but coarser fabrics, suitable for the Mexican market, were milled; but the profits were enormous, having netted the previous year a fraction less than two hundred thousand dollars. The operatives were all natives; and although, I was told, without the wish or energy to rise, still they did very well in the work required.

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I never saw out of Europe or the United States, or Continental America, or in even the British Colonies, such extensive improvements keeping so close a wake to the rushing march of the age; all, however, begun and matured by the indomitable skill and enterprise of the intelligent owners.

I left Tepic two hours before midnight, and made all sail under a heavy press of spurs and stirrups. I said adios to the *Capitan*, who assured me his frame was deplorably jolted, and that he felt unable to proceed. The fact was, the Don carried too much weight for anything beyond a quarter stretch. I was recompensed for the loss of his society by the attendance of two dark *mozos* as guides, and three spare horses; but with the beasts I must confess having been decidedly duped: I booked them to Guadalajara, but they were neither swift nor well gaited. My attendants expressed great regret, as a matter of course, which did not prevent the avalanche of blessings with which they were indulged. At sunrise we dismounted a minute, for coffee, at a small village, with an unpronounceable jaw-cracking Indian name. It was a very pretty spot, shrubby and treesy, with a noisy rivulet washing the door-steps of an old ruined chapel. A

barefooted damsel was quite attentive to my pencilling occupations, and with an inquisitive frown and nod, as much as to inquire—"What on earth is he about?"—handed me a little glazed pot of wheat-coffee; but being a courier of the grand route, and having no time to satisfy the muchachita's curiosity, I swallowed the beverage, threw her a peseta, and while she was hunting for the change, we were in the saddle and off. At ten of the clock we halted at the hamlet of Ocultilti, in front of a little mud-built *fonda*, where, for a Mexican miracle, was laid a tolerably clean cloth upon a table. The road thus far had been hilly and rugged, and the last five miles a tedious clamber over a mountain-pass. My horses had given out, and I felt a strong inclination to shoot the lying guides for imposing on me; but the patrona of the inn sent every boy in the place scampering in search of fresh horses, while she busied herself at the fire getting a breakfast of everlasting *frijoles*. In reply to my anxiety for more beasts, she continually repeated—*Quien sabe! hay muchos! si Señor!*—in this part of Mexico the oft-repeated exclamation—Who knows! there are thousands! Presently appeared two ragged, filthy Indians. They approached each other, tipped their broad sombreros, at an angle like to the rings of Saturn. *Como está vd? Muy bueno! Me allegro, y la familia? Para servir vd!* They kept up this strain of compliment for ten minutes, neither letting go hands nor hats—until my patience becoming exhausted at such fatiguing politeness—I let the lash of my whip fall lovingly around their legs. "I say, my fine fellows, are there any horses to be had?" *Quién sabe! Señor, hay muchos!* they both replied in a breath; but nothing more satisfactory could I learn. The boys never came back! the mistress became less civil after getting paid for her breakfasts; and after vainly waiting an hour, I felt convinced there was not a four-legged brute in the hamlet, or that the two-legged ones were too lazy to find them. Selecting the best of our spavined jades, we stumped slowly on, and a league beyond came to a post-house; here a good-natured dame, in the absence of her helpmate, mounted a mule, and soon drove up a cavallada. Transferring the saddles to better beasts, and followed by a diminutive elf, to bring them back, we continued our journey. The roads became smoother, and less broken; the country presented a more smiling aspect: green fields of grain, and cultivated plantations of the argave, covered the sides of hills and valleys. Pursuing a course through a well-watered district, without any evidences visible of volcanic origin, our road was suddenly closed by a very curious lava formation—an elevation not in the highest parts more than eighty feet—springing strangely and abruptly from the table land of the vale. There were acres upon acres of black volcanic masses thrown up into the most fantastic shapes; there were churches and altars, castles and coaches, figures of men and monkeys—with clusters of straight, slender cactus, in full flower, shooting far above all—rearing their white and red torch-like heads, as if to light up the black congregation below; which from a distance struck me as bearing a miniature resemblance to the Giant's Causeway. We passed this barrier, over a deep cut of slippery aqueous lava, when we again debouched into the *vega*, took a lave in a cool, clear torrent, and then came on at a great pace to the town of Aguacatlan.

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From a hasty glance it appeared a nice place, and we drew up at a spacious meson, facing a pretty plaza, lined by magnificent rows of elms, with a handsome church in front. All looked gay withal: troops of vagabonds and girls were passing and repassing the portals. In a lofty hall of the *Fonda*, I had an excellent supper, washed down by a flask of capital bordeaux, which, the maestro informed me, had lain an unsaleable drug on his hands for eleven years. Passing from the sala to a shop in the building, I found a crowd of idlers, absorbing cigarillos and hearkening to the harangue of a stout fellow, shrouded in a seedy serapa: he was striving to awaken their patriotism by violently declaiming against the policy, of the Mexican government, for tolerating an idea of peace, and lavishing a fair share of abuse upon the Yankees. *Christo! Señores!* said he, "why didn't General *Skote* attack Piñon, where all was prepared for him, instead of creeping around the valley to Churubusco? Answer me that! *Porque Señores los Yankis son cobardes! todos! toditos!*"—Because every mother's son of the Americans were cowards. Upon the conclusion of this speech, he honored me with a close inspection, and apparently not being satisfied, touched his castor by way of formal introduction. "Capitan," he suggested, "you belong to the cavalry." I nodded. "Ay, he knew that by my *divisas*—shoulder-straps—but he mistook me at first for one of the San Patricios. Where was I bound?" I shrugged my shoulders. "Did I know Mazatlan?" I had been there. This last admission quite won his confidence; so, grasping me by the elbow, he drew me aside, and informed me that he was on a mission to that port for the purchase of arms to put in the hands of flaming red-hot patriots in Guadalajara; and that any intelligence to further his designs would be highly acceptable. I, of course, gave him all necessary information, and at the same time dropt a line by the post, which was the means of giving him an opportunity to inspect vacant apartments in the *carcel*, for some weeks after his arrival. Having no more time to waste, I left the good people to pump my *mozos*, whilst I took a short nap.

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Before midnight, nerved by a cup of strong coffee, we mounted, and six leagues of rapid riding carried us to the post-house of Istlan. There was just light enough by the moon to reveal all the quiet beauty of the little town. The square was deserted; not a dog bayed; the noble trees with drooping branches reposed motionless in the air; not a sound was heard but the uneasy plashing of the sparkling fountain in the centre; and there was not a vestige of life, save a solitary twinkling taper that shone through the open door of the post-house. Our shouts echoed back from the tall walls of the church on the opposite side of the plaza, and soon brought a gruff personage to the street. It was the *administrador* himself. He inquired, what *demonios* dared to raise such a din, when his venerable sire, Don Pancho, was stretched upon the bier, and masses to be said for his soul as soon as day dawned? I have ever remarked, that the safest mode of treating perverse, obstinate persons, who are resolved to quarrel, is to approach close to them, in a moral sense, and—like to dealing with a fierce ram by patting him on the tail—they have no space to rear and pitch into one. It is time enough to bid defiance when this system fails. Bowing to the saddle-bow,

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hat in hand, I thus began: "Pardon me, my good friend! had we known of your bereavement, be assured we should have torn our teeth out, rather than have disturbed your grief: we are bound *extraordinario!* If there be no horses, at least oblige us with a cup of water to wash down a measure of this oily *licor* from the grand Meson of Aguacatlan, and oblige us by touching it first to your own lips!" I saw by the moon's silver beams athwart his rubicund visage, that he relented; whereupon, paying him some sorrowful compliments upon the demise of his aged parent, I quite conquered his anger. Leaving me in charge of the defunct old gentleman, I puffed a cigarillo, while he went to get beasts for the guides, and his own mule for my use, as he assured me, *bueno y muy vivo*—lively as a cricket. In a few minutes we were again upon the road. Skirting along the banks of a small river for a couple of leagues, we then crossed to the opposite side, where hills arose in endless succession, soaring to the clouds in the distance, and where we were destined to pass. It was the *Plan de Barrancas*. I had for the past hour been venting maledictions on the administrador and his *vivo* mule, for I never saw any but monks and muleteers who properly understand their peculiar management. To one, like myself, ignorant of the habits of these quadrupeds—never mind how expert a horseman he may be—if they ever be urged out of their usual amble on a level space, their gallop is such a jerking short pace, that the inexperienced rider will be kept alternately shifting his position from withers to rump, at every stride. But commend me to a good mule; over a broken country, where their delicate little hoofs find a secure foothold over shelving rocks, or upon the brink of a yawning precipice, where you drop the bridle, close your eyes and offer up an orison for your blessed mule to bear you safely. And with what sagacity they feel their way, and how often an imprudent rider will find cause to bless his stars that the wilful little beast takes the bit in the mouth, and obstinately pursues his own path! However, as I said before, they are not pleasant animals when the danger is passed; then they become at times unreasonably perverse, and persuasions, punchings, or spurings, only serve to exhaust strength and temper, without any avail.

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Our speed became necessarily slow, the country more and more barren, and the paths stony and uneven; still we passed from height to height, gradually ascending, until we came to the base of the great *Barrancas*. Here, much to my surprise, commenced a well-constructed military road, very broad, and coped in by a wall of loose stones, winding around the eastern brow of the *sierra*. In some places near the summit, I am confident, a dollar could be thrown four thousand feet before striking the base of the gorge that splits the great chain, asunder. The view was bird-eyish, and rather good—with the bright green dells below, in pretty contrast to the red basaltic rocks above—but limited by peaks of the surrounding heights. The road itself is a far more substantial work than the traveller is prepared to meet with in this part of Mexico, where everything relative to easy locomotion appears to have been left as nature and the mules will it. Still, but little reputation is lost in the way of consistency; for the moment the mountain is passed, the route again becomes little better than a sheep path. Although crossing this fine road caused me some astonishment; yet a little before, I was thrown into a stupor of amazement, to behold lying in the pathway a long iron thirty-two pounder gun, of the heaviest ship's calibre and weight! My *mozos* informed me, that this was the only one out of six that did not reach Guadalajara from San Blas—a distance of more than three hundred miles! They were intended for service in battery, during the revolt of 1825. Each was under the guidance of one hundred and fifty Indians with animals, and it occupied many months in accomplishing the transit; but notwithstanding these ample means, I'll venture to affirm that no one in his natural senses, after making the journey, could be induced to believe that anything greater than a mule-pack—to say nothing of an enormous piece of ordnance—could be transported over such numbers of streams, ravines, paths and mountains! The thing seems nearly impossible.

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We toiled over the *Barrancas*—threaded the valleys below, when taking another ascent, we attained a level, barren uncultivated region, and shortly drew bridles at the great Meson of *Muchatilta*. From an outside view of the spacious inn—its fanciful frescos, and highly brilliant exterior—we reasonably inferred that something even more delectable might be found within. Yet although the patrona was neither ill-looking nor ill-natured, she *siento 'd muchissimo*, and still declared there was naught more palatable than *frijoles*. However, our appetites were keen, and we made a good deal go a little way, for we had ridden nineteen leagues since midnight. Bidding adieu to my *vivo* mule, by patting his sleek neck—not the least the worse for his work, while the horses were well nigh done up,—I gave him a loaf of bread, in gratitude for bearing me safely. With a fresh relay of horses, and the sun on the meridian, we left the brightly-painted meson, and continued our journey. Ever since mounting up to the *tierra templada*, near Tepic, the climate had been delightful—neither uncomfortably warm during the day, nor too cool to travel with a serapa at night. By urging our cattle we made ten leagues, and reached the town of Madalena at twilight, where a stubborn old administrador refused to give me a change of horses. The fact was I deceived myself, in supposing the journey could be made as quickly by taking a cavallada from one city to another, as by the government post; and through ignorance of the formalities, I had omitted to take out a license. It is a very simple process, and consists in merely paying exorbitantly, at about the rate of a third of a dollar per league for the privilege of demanding beasts from agents on the roads—that is supposing they are to be had, and generally they are not; but if there chance to be found any beasts in the corral, they are such horrid brutes, as not to be worth, even to a cunning cabman, the rial you are to pay per league. These are the animals pertaining to the Republic. After a mournful inspection of their raw hides and protruding ribs, the administrador may possibly hint that if the traveller requires a good horse there are two or three belonging to a neighbor that might be procured by paying over and over the legal charge. This system of corruption is the chief cause of the heavy expense of travelling in Mexico: honesty in its lightest sense is unknown, and the principle throughout nearly all classes is one of fraud and

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extortion. Indeed if the rage for foreign travel ever leads our rising generations to extend their tours to these lands, their respectable governors will deserve much sympathy on cashing the bills, and perhaps be induced to believe that their progeny have fallen among the Philistines.

Finding nothing was to be gained from the Madelena proprietor of horse-flesh, I betook myself to the Alcalde; my special passport making it imperative on all military and civil authorities to afford me succor, sustenance, and all sorts of *ausilios*—that is if they deemed advisable;—but I depended more upon the yellow onças in my trowsers-pocket, which gave a zest to their exertions, and did not render them lukewarm in complying with the orders conveyed in the passport. The townspeople were under arms, and a guard of some thirty paisanos were assembled outside the courtroom. They received me with a "present arms," and one adept in soldiery let his musket fall to the stone floor, exploding the piece, and driving a mass of paper wads, and a quantity of slugs, over the gateway; whereupon they all put by their weapons, and whacked the unfortunate victim over the head with sabres. My terror subsiding, I presented myself to the Alcalde, whom I found—*mirabile dictu*—quite a civil, intelligent young man. He informed me that a strong body of highwaymen had occupied a hill within a league of the town, and every evening succeeded in carrying off what they required, by breaking into houses, maltreating the residents, and robbing every man, woman, and child on the road. He strongly urged me to defer my journey until troops which were expected, could arrive, and in this he was seconded by a number of travellers, who were also awaiting safe convoy. The advice, though well intended, was far from changing my purpose to proceed, and after receipting for the value of the horses in case of capture, I prepared for a start. There being no regular soldiers in the place, no money could induce the timid paisanos to act as escort; and then I began to discover the true value of my guides. They had been under the ban of my displeasure for cheating me with their beasts; but they had determined faces, and in reply to my question if they intended to fight, both exclaimed, *Hasta muerto! Señor*—until death!—this restored them to favor. Entrusting each with a sum of money, I drew the loads from their carbines, carefully recharged them with balls and buck-shot, looked to my own pistols, and mounted. Moving quietly through the back streets of the town, we struck the main road, where we encountered a poor Padre who had been robbed of seventeen dollars, relieved of his mule, and stripped of all his raiment, save gown and cravat. *Santa Maria!* said my *mozos*—"no respect for the church!" The good priest gave us his blessing, and the exact position of the villains. *Adios, mi padre!* It was eleven at night, the moon was rising, and we kept the horses nearly as possible in the shade of the roadside foliage—going very leisurely—until on the slope of a hill to the right, we saw a number of fires casting a lurid blaze around, and figures moving before them. Approaching nearer, a din of shouts, chaunts, and laughter, saluted our ears, for the rogues were evidently making merry over their potations. The road sounded hollow over the hard clay, and on descending a narrow canal-like passage, that just left our heads visible above, we unslung carbines, and with cocked weapons, I gave the word—*Vamos*—let us fly. The noise of horses' hoofs thundering over the hard ground instantly attracted attention; we were greeted by loud yells of *Quien es? halta! halta!*—and plainly saw a score or more running to intercept us, with the barrels of their arms glancing in the moonlight; but deuce the syllable did we utter, but driving the spur yet deeper into our steeds, we went flying along, single file; in thirty seconds we were shielded by a high wall of rocks, and in a short time had lost sight and sound of our pursuers. I think they were quite unprepared for travellers at so late an hour, or our flight could easily have been barred. Yet it is anything else than a joke, to be encircled by a legion of these scamps—stripped stark naked—certainly beaten and robbed—or perhaps shot. Besides there are so many nice secluded spots, where, like Fra Diavolo, "on a rock reclining," behind a jutting ledge, or precipice, these rascals could insinuate the dark barrel of a carbine in one's ear, and cry *Entregarse, o no la Vida!*—surrender, or your life!—Not pleasant, surely, and I was delighted to escape scot free—clothed in my breeks.

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At full gallop we rode into the town of Tequilla: considerably fatigued, for I had not slept in forty hours, excepting perhaps now and then a brief cat-nap in the saddle—of a second or two duration—wherein one may dream of years of adventure. However, I determined to hold on twelve leagues beyond, to Guadalajara. It was daylight, and I found Tequilla quite a large place: with picturesque church, clusters of fine trees, all snugly posed in a bowl-like valley—fertile and well watered, with extensive plantations of the *argave* extending far as the eye could compass, over the neighboring country.

Whilst a relay of horses were being sent for, the landlord of the meson accompanied me to a running brook, where I cooled my jolted frame—swallowed a bowl of coffee, lit a cigar, and learned that we were the first travellers who had passed in five days, and that a detachment of cavalry was hourly looked for, to dislodge the rogues near Madelena. Feeling now indifferent about the matter, we got into the saddle, and once more gave spur towards our destination. The road was tolerable, the horses were better, and the country became more populous. Once the grateful steam of fried fish involuntarily caused me to halt for a hasty breakfast; but it was only for a moment—when on we rushed, up hill and down slope, splashing over water-courses—passing huge, ungainly carts, with hewn timber wheels, creaking and groaning to market, while vehicles also of a more modern build lumbered slowly along, with six or eight mules ahead. Then I doffed my sombrero to a gay young officer in advance of a well-appointed troop of cavalry, and, with horses white with foam, we dismounted at the outer garita of Guadalajara. It was a small village and military post, seven leagues from the city, having a great stone arch and gateway commanding the road. Another relay, and an hour's gallop brought the spires and towers of the goodly town in sight—standing in the midst of an immense plain, and watered by a branch of the Rio Grande. Passing through a town, with a noble church and convent, we crossed the river by a substantial stone bridge, where stood statues of Santa Anna and other patriots, with their noses

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knocked off, and faces otherwise scarified. After being detained for inspection at a guardhouse, we entered the city proper, through long lines of paved streets, until we pulled up in front of the palace, at the house of Don Domingo Llamas, to whom I had letters.

CHAPTER XXXI.

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Guadalajara is a beautiful city, of an hundred thousand people, laid out in broad, regular streets, with solid and imposing houses, painted outside gaily in frescoes—and plazas, fountains, shady alamedas, richly adorned churches, and fine public buildings. It is the capital of the populous province of Jalisco, famed for its wealth, and only second in importance to the city of Mexico itself. The crowds of well-dressed pedestrians that thronged the streets and squares, the well-appointed troops, elegance of the buildings, and smart appearance of equipages and dashing horsemen, all gave the air, even at a rapid glance, of great ease and opulence.

The gentleman to whom I was endorsed, Señor Llamas, had been in early life an *arriero*, but by the force of merit and ability he had urged himself to his level, and became a person of immense wealth, universally respected, and occupying a place of high judicial trust under the state. He possessed more energy, quickness and enthusiasm, than any Mexican I met with, before or since. After arranging in the minutest details everything for my comfort and speed on the road, I went to a very good stopping-place, the *Fonda de Diligencia*. Here I bathed, and slept until the streets became noisy with vehicles and horses passing for the afternoon's drive. Facing my balcony, in an opposite dwelling, there appeared a lady of exceeding beauty, or, as the porter of the hotel told me in reply to my exclamation, *Si Señor! bonita como un peso*—lovely as a dollar. She first appeared at the gilt-railed balcony in the dishabille of the country, that is, with only skirts of the dress—the sleeves and bodice hanging down in front; leaving the person from waist up only slightly concealed by the camiseta, which half reveals and half hides the shoulders and bosom. One must be blind, indeed, not to become something of a connoisseur in female beauty, after residing any length of time in Mexico; for the flimsy veil, which is usually worn in the day by all classes of women, only serves, by the pliant grace of their movements, to render their forms more defined and attractive. But to return to my vis-a-vis. At a second visit to the balcony, the bodice was laced, and superb masses of hair fell like a dark cloud over neck and arms. At a later period the toilette was completed, with a lace mantilla, and her tresses braided in two long plaits. A dear little baby was crowing upon her breast, and the beautiful Señora amused herself by entwining and knotting the braids of her hair under the infant's arms, when she swung the little fellow to and fro, in the most graceful manner conceivable. I never beheld so charming a duet. The bell sounded for dinner—there was a well-set table, and among a number of pleasant conversable persons, I made the acquaintance of a particularly intelligent and amiable priest, who very kindly acted as cicerone in my after rambles. We rose from the table d'hôte as the military band began the night's performance in the plaza. The marble-paved paths and the benches were filled before we got there, and we found some difficulty in getting places; but when my cigar got fairly under way, and eyes widely open, I did and do still take it upon me to affirm, that no town in the universe can boast of so much female beauty. Not only were they in fives, but fifties. My friend, the little Padre, appeared to be very generally beloved. Nearly all paused a moment to say a kind word or greeting, and thus I had a clear chance of observing the pretty throngs that swept by. They were so tastefully attired in full flowing and becoming skirts, with no awkward stays or corsets to cramp the grace of motion—the coquettish *ribosa*, never quiet an instant, but changing its silken folds, and half revealing the glancing neck and arm!—the hair, too; such hair! *ay de mi!* no odious bonnets to conceal God's fair handiwork!—then their arched tiny feet, kissing the marble pavement, with so firm, so light, yet dignified a tread—and then the elders, sailing majestically astern of their lovely convoys—like ships of the line—regarding with wary eyes privateers in disguise of gay young cavaliers, crossing their track. *Hola!* what blockade could intercept those softly audible murmurs! or the light downy touch of dimpled fingers, quick as a swallow's kiss to his mate! or, more than all, withstand the languid, lightning glances flashed from their upper deck of eyes! *Avé purissima!* the waking hours by day, and sleepless ones by night, that Spanish maidens have caused me! "I'm not a lover now," but still, I derived great consolation in admiring these sweet donçellas; and fearing a relapse to former maladies, I shook hands with the Padre, buckled on spurs and sabre, and as the cathedral bell was tolling ten, I was leaving Guadalajara, with its blaze of lights and beauty, behind me.

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Taking the main road for three hours, we crossed the Great Bridge, and turning to the north, struck the route of the Haciendas, which in lieu of smooth travelling and robbers, possessed the advantages of safety, and a more direct communication to the interior. At daylight, we had ridden nineteen leagues, on capital animals, who never once slackened the reins in their mouths. I was not only indebted to Don Domingo for these excellent adjuncts to my journey, but for a few written lines also, to divers persons along the road, which seemed to infuse them with a portion of their master's energy; besides, he had sent his own trusty courier with me as guide. This was an old man of sixty, strong, active, and honest: in youth he had proved himself a brave soldier; in virtue of which he was permitted to carry—besides his carbine—a long lance, and pennon that fluttered in the breeze. He frequently went without sleep, for three days and nights successively, when riding express for his patron. I made old Cypriano my commissary, and he always became frightfully incensed, when called upon to pay more than he deemed the service demanded; but again he would laugh heartily, when urging a beast that had been overcharged, with a lash and a

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kick at every leap—which he called taking a *medios* worth. Indeed Cypriano, from long riding, had become a little callous, in thus visiting the sins of the masters upon the beasts, and believed in the superstition, that hired horses had no souls.

The face of the country was fast losing its abruptness; mountains were verging into hills with table tops, and long sweeping undulations stretching away in the hazy distance. It was very open, fertile, and well-tilled, but neither wooded, nor so profusely watered as the lands seaward of Guadalajara.

Early in the afternoon we entered the little town of Tepantitlan, where a huge wheezing gentleman gave me a brute troubled with his own complaint, but transferring him to the treatment of Doctor Cypriano, we then got on in fine style. The night was far advanced when we reached a round, portly mountain, called Cerro Gordo; where tarrying at a small settlement, the keeper of a rancho surlily resisted opening his gateway, until he heard the talismanic name of Don Domingo—then the door nearly flew off the hinges. A relay was, with some delay and trouble, procured, when again in the saddle. The road was stony and tortuous, so that we had thirteen tedious leagues to crawl and stumble over. Gladly we threw ourselves from the fagged-out beasts, and sought the residence of a good-natured paisano, owning a large rancho, a large wife, and two large daughters. Giving orders to be called in an hour, my spurs were no sooner unclasped than I fell into heavy slumber, on a low bed beneath an image of the virgin. When the time had expired, I was aroused by my faithful guide. One of the girls was seated on the ground, near the fire, with a stone trough and roller before her, busily employed with a batch of unleavened dough, of which, when consistently kneaded, she would catch up a dab, press it between the palms, and as the mass enlarged she began patting and tossing it from hand to hand until it spread into round, thin cakes; they were then laid upon a flat piece of sheet-iron, and browned over the fire; these were *tortillas*: they have a taste like the oaten-cakes in Scotland, and are not particularly palatable to a young practitioner. A chicken had also been grilled on sticks, which, with a mixture they called coffee, served me for breakfast.

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Horses were ready in the corral, and saying adios to the fat family, we galloped, away. A bathe in a roadside brook, and two changes of beasts, and at three in the afternoon we toiled slowly over some dry, chalky hills, and looked down upon Los Pueblos del Rincon. It was a very pretty, verdant spot, almost hidden in foliage, and reposing in an angle of wide and extended plateau. Having a note to the Commandante, I went straight to his quarters: but being a merchant as well as soldier, I was told he could be found at his shop, in the plaza. On going thither he was indulging in siesta, and notwithstanding the urgency of my requests, no one could be found foolhardy enough to disturb his slumbers; nor was I permitted to do so myself. I then trotted across the square, and presented my passports to the Alcalde, who having already been mollified by repose, consented to find some brave individual to awaken the sleeping rajah opposite. "*Señor*," said I, hat in hand, "very sorry to incommode you, but necessity of the case," and so forth. He continued scowling quite ferociously while buttoning his trowsers, and as he pulled over his suspenders, and arranged them to his satisfaction, demanded what was wanted. "Oh, nothing!" said I, "merely an order from General Yañes in Guadalajara," throwing the missive towards him. It acted as a charm: "*Jésu, Señor*, excuse me—those rascals never told me you were waiting!"

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Good animals were soon provided; and amid all Don Manuel Garcia's generosity, he was pleased to sell me a bottle of sour wine from the *tienda*; for which we ran his beasts, with a heavy thunder-storm of wind and rain close upon our heels for a long six leagues. The road had led through a rich, level district, covered with forests of fine timber, and abounding in cultivated fields of grain. Presently clusters of spires and towers sprang from the plain, and coursing through suburbs of walled gardens, convents, and country dwellings—all gratefully reposing beneath the shade of overhanging trees—we entered the city of Leon. It includes, with the environs, a thriving population of near sixty thousand souls; delightfully situated in the heart of one of the most salubrious table-lands of the higher terraces of Mexico. The town, though inferior to Guadalajara in elegance, can still boast of much manufacturing wealth, with fine churches, spacious squares, and great uniformity in the general construction of the houses, while streams of pure water traverse it in every street, and irrigate the extensive suburbs around. Indeed, let a Spaniard alone for choosing a pleasant site, near good water; not that these their descendants have any cleanly predilections that way, for, on the contrary—except for the commonest purposes of drinking—their general filthiness of habit induces the belief that they are universally imbued with a hydrophobial aversion thereto.

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We rode through one of the main avenues of the city, and entered the grand plaza as the great bell of the cathedral was slowly tolling for *oración*, and unconsciously we checked the horses, to behold a vast concourse of many thousands silently kneel—with uncovered heads, and faces turned towards the church—whilst all was hushed to perfect stillness. I never was more deeply impressed with an emotion of awe and solemnity.

Three sides of the large square were lined with *portales*, or arcades; with every archway and open space filled with venders of glass, cigars, cutlery, saddlery, bridlery, and every kind of horse equipment; all, however, destitute of workmanlike finish. The plaza itself was crowded with itinerant traders, screaming in every possible intonation of voice, their different wares. Stalls and booths were also doing a large business in *licores* and fried bits of meat, *frijoles* and *tortillas*, but what carried away the commercial palm by long odds, were the *dulce* women. There were a number of these popular saleswomen, squatted beneath huge umbrellas, full ten feet in diameter—surrounded by crowds of buyers—to whom they were dispensing papers of colored sugars,

candies, and sweetmeats unceasingly. I passed them again the next morning, when they appeared busy as ever; and I was an eye-witness to a little incident, wherein a centavo's worth of sugar was the cause of a fatal stab. A lepero was purchasing a bit of chocolate—it fell in the dirt, when another, probably thinking it a lawful prize, seized it, and took a large bite; whereupon the lawful owner swung a mass of heavy steel spurs attached to his wrist, jingling with some force, on the offender's head. In a second down dropped the spurs, and serapas were wound round the left arms. With low, deep curses and flashing eyes, their knives gleamed in the light; the spectators cleared a ring, and to work they went. I sprang upon a stone pillar, to be out of harm's way, and thus had a clear view of the fray. Their blades were very unequally matched: one was at least eight inches, and the other not half that measurement; but both appeared adepts at the game,—watching each other like wild cats, ready for a spring—moving cautiously to and fro, making feints by the shielded arm, or stamp of the foot, for a minute or two; when, quick as a flash, I saw two rapid passes made by both: blood spirted from an ugly wound in the spur-vender's throat, but at the same moment his short weapon scaled the doom of his antagonist, and he lay stretched upon the ground, as lifeless as the bloody steel that struck him. I glanced at the wounds after the affair had terminated, and found the knife had been plunged twice directly in the region of the heart. There was no effort or attempt made by the beholders to arrest the parties; and the survivor caught up his spurs—a bystander quickly folded a handsome kerchief to his neck—and threading the crowd he was soon out of sight. The corpse was laid upon a liquor-stand, with a delf platter upon the breast.

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My letter was to apparently the mercantile nabob of Leon, Don Miguel Obregon. He had a long range of *tiendas*, with a handsome dwelling filling a large space, facing the square. He received me civilly—had places taken in the diligence, which fortunately left the following morning—and leaving my horse-trappings in his charge, I engaged a jaunty young valet, who looked far more respectable than his new master. He was dressed in blue velvet slashed trowsers, silver buttons thick as peas, embroidered shirt, with a glazed sombrero and silver band. Juan conducted me to a meson, which, like all other native inns in the republic of Mexico, has two large enclosures, or court yards: the inner ones with stalls for beasts, and the other for bipeds—the only difference is, that the accommodations for the latter animals are closer and the apartments more confined, having as a luxury a chair, and solid brick structures raised a little way from the ground, whereon one may sleep, if he can endure the filth and fleas. This is all the furniture they rejoice in. Each lodger has a key to his own quarters, and the main gateway is guarded continually—not, however, sufficiently vigilant as to the society admitted; for the patios are crowded with improper persons, who every few minutes make flying trips around the inn, knocking at the doors; then, droves of beasts coming or going—clattering over the paved yards, mingled with the whistles and shouts of the *arrieros*—are not altogether provocative of repose. At the *Caravansera* where I lodged, there was a hump-backed Ganymede, of the most hideous kind. I have thought since, he would have been a mine of wealth to an enterprising showman; or, in the dark ages, have made an acceptable present to some bold Baron. Although not more than five feet in height, his thin lucifer-match-like legs, being split up to the hump, gave him the stride of a giant! and what with keen, glittering, beady eyes, and the footfall of a cat, he made my flesh creep whenever he came near me.

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Every body is his own cook and housekeeper in Mexican mesons; and old Cypriano having procured me a wool mattrass that fairly danced with *pulgas*, and some long tallow links, which we stuck around the walls—having no fears of a conflagration—I despatched Juan for the best supper to be found. This amounted to red wine, beans and sausages. However, we made merry, and treated some gay damsels outside to the remains of our bottle. Cypriano then extinguished our illumination, and stretching himself on the threshold, covered by his serapa, with a weapon beside him, he left me to repose. It was my first night's rest since leaving San Blas, that is, if the pile of bricks and mortar which upheld my frame could reasonably be supposed to afford it. Yet the fleas, for once, caused me no sensible annoyance, and I regained my feet at sunrise, in readiness for further journeyings. I was pleased, too, at the prospect of quitting the saddle for a coach, although with good beasts I preferred the former: but to be subjected to the misery of a racker—then a pacer—then a trot or gallop—and by way of change, a horrible combination of all, with rapid travelling, is not only enough to jar one's nerves and aid his digestion, but to give a disinclination for a continuance of it.

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Parting with old Cypriano, who gave me some sensible advice about entrusting Juan with too much change, I sought the Diligence Fonda—swallowed a hasty breakfast, and with no heavier baggage than a spare shirt and tooth-brush, took my place.

Contrary to expectation, and agreeably disappointed, I found the coach a thorough modern-built Yankee vehicle—comfortable and strong, with noble teams of five and six horses, that tugged us along quite ten miles the hour. The road was good, and a heavy shower had slaked the dust. The country was again broken into rocky hills and ravines. At two o'clock we reached the richest mining district of Mexico, in the neighborhood of Guanajuato. Within a league of the city proper the route leads through a valley into a deep split gorge, with rugged, arid hills running high up on all sides. Passing a number of mining *haciendas* of great extent, the city, bit by bit, begins to unfold itself. It presents a most extraordinary and picturesque appearance. The houses seem toppling one upon the other—built in zig-zags, up and down sharp corners and defiles—with the spire or towers of some church perched away in mid-heaven, all brightly frescoed—the bases and gorges below being filled in with thick mist—leaving the loftier portions in distinct outline—closely resembling a city suspended in the sky. No scene of the theatre could be painted more singularly novel. It fairly made me giddy, as we came whirling through the outer defiles—turning

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hither and thither—catching a panoramic view of the town, like a glimpse in a prism, or revolutions of a kaleidoscope—when every moment one might expect the whole fabric thrown into a sparkling succession of bright colors—and what with the continual booming of reports from blastings in the distant mines, I felt quite relieved when the diligence dashed down a little pit of a plaza, and drove through a *porte cochere* into the court-yard of our Fonda.

My coach companions were pleasant fellows—there was a padre, two mining agents, a gentlemanly young Mexican officer who had been adjutant to Valencia, at the battle of Churubusco, and beside me sat a gentleman possessing a remarkably handsome face and person, with the loss of his right arm. He was French, Mons. Ribaud; he had been many years in the country—was intimately associated with the leading chiefs and revolutions of Mexico—had fought desperately, bore the marks of honorable wounds, and was a man of much military experience and acknowledged bravery; but latterly, owing to strong personal hostility existing between him and Santa Anna, he had not been employed in battles of the North or valley of Mexico. I found Monsieur Ribaud delightful in conversation, and he related to me many adventures that had befallen him during his long residence in the republic. On alighting from the coach, I attended him to the commandante's, where my passport was properly considered and countersigned, and an aide-de-camp kindly volunteered to be my guide to the mint of the English directory. Here I was presented to the superintendent, Mr. Jones, an American, from Connecticut, who appeared pleased to meet a countryman, and showed me over the establishment.

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The machinery was of the most primitive kind—the stamping process worked by hand, with a lateral wooden beam acting upon a perpendicular screw; at each end of the beam there was attached a small rope, pulled by four men, with an aperture in the floor sufficiently large to admit a man, just within arm's length of the stamp, who was employed placing smooth coins beneath the dies—one would naturally suppose at the imminent risk of having his finger and thumb nipped off at every half revolution of the lever; but practice renders the operative skilful at the manipulation, and the screw descends, makes the impression, which is as regularly displaced by the smooth dollar and ready fingers of the man below. There were two of these apparatus, and they were only able to coin about thirty thousand pieces in twenty-four hours. The contrivance is surely a bad one, very tedious and expensive. The coiners received seven-eighths of a dollar per thousand, and instances of dishonesty were rarely known. The dies were of English manufacture, but the reason why Mexican money presents such a rough and unfinished appearance, is purely owing to their government, who insist upon the impressions being facsimiles of those heretofore coined at their own mints.

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The smelting process, the rolling, nipping, and milling machines, were all much behind the age, and although the silver mines were producing more than ever before known, and more than, at the period of my visit, could by any possibility be coined, yet the directory have taken no measures to introduce the valuable and beautiful labor-saving improvements now in operation in Europe and the United States, where the same work could be accomplished by fewer persons, executed certainly at infinitely less expense, and with far greater facility and despatch.

I saw vast piles of pure metal in the vaults, and uncountable masses of dollars. Before leaving, I was introduced to Mr. Bruff, treasurer to the institution, who, with Mr. Jones, treated me with every attention and civility.

Our *Fonda de la diligencia* was well kept, commodious and respectable; we sat down to the ordinary as a multitude of sweet-sounding bells were ringing and chiming away with their brazen throats for evening vespers, and after partaking of a Frenchified Mexican dinner, I sallied out for a walk. My companion knew the town, but in wandering about the steep angular elevations, I never dared to look up without catching hold of a balcony or leaning against a wall, fearful of becoming dizzy, and tumbling down somewhere.

Entering the *gran sociedad*, we passed through a long suite of bright saloons—nearly suffocated by cigar smoke, or deafened by the incessant clicking of billiard balls—when we came to the monté and loto rooms. Here were grouped around a dozen different tables hundreds of players, from the plumed hats and shining lace of officers, to the mean dirty serapas of soldiers and leperos; all, however, earnestly intent marking with grains of corn the numbers on the cards, as they were yelled forth by the loto man, who was seated on a raised platform at one end of the hall, watching the little ivory spheres as they dropped one by one out of a cylindrical box revolving before him. Further on were the monteros at work—with heaps of gold and silver piled around—with eager faces, compressed lips, and glittering eyes absorbed in the intense interest of the game—not a word or gesture save the dull monotonous voice of the dealers, like to the tolling of a bell—*Juégó señores! se va!* with eyes that never winked and lids rigid as sheet-iron. The cards were pulled slowly and carefully one from the other, until the game was decided, when took place the rattling chink of coins, with maybe the deep uttered *carajo!* of some unlucky wight who has lost a last stake; yet even he pursues the easy dignity of his race, rolls and lights a cigarrillo, draws his cloak around him, raises his sombrero gracefully, and with a polite *Hasta mañana señores!* disappears from the table.

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While moving about the apartments, my comrade pointed out two young men in the Mexican uniform of captains, who were deserters from the American army; one had been a lieutenant, named Sullivan; both bore the marks of dissipation in unmistakable lines around their faces.

We again touched our hats, an invariable sign of courtesy, religiously practised by all civilized beings on entering or leaving a public assemblage, and walked into the street. We took a sort of corkscrew promenade for a little space, when, by some strange flight of footsteps, we found

ourselves on the pavement of a triangular platform. Like to the frame of a convex mirror, encasing a sheet of blue moonlit sky—lay before, and as it were, trembling and tottering above us—one of the many remarkable and scenic views of Guanajuato. Full in front against the vaulted sky stood a double towered church, with dome, spires and windows glistening like a transparency, then circling around were bright, gay-colored dwellings, with lights dancing from casement to casement, while each separate cornice, balcony and window, threw back to the silver moon a thousand sparkling reflections—all admirably contrasted with the sombre shadows of the deep gorge below. The scene was truly beautiful, and when within a few feet of our position, the full soft tones of a piano came thrilling through the still night, and a female voice rose high and sweetly, "ah!" cried my friend, "there's a deal to live for yet;" and we retraced our windings to the inn.

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We were aroused at the first cock-crow, to take our seats in the diligence; and rattling out of the city by the road we came, mounted a steep eminence, when, gaining a flat sandy region, we soon lost sight of Guanajuato. During the forenoon we passed through a number of fine populous towns. At Irapuato, M. Ribaud and his friend left us. In Salamanca, where we stopped to bait and change horses, a number of beggars surrounded the coach, and in one I at once detected the pure Milesian brogue and visage. He was whining and limping about, with a tattered bat and stick, imploring alms in the most ludicrous attempts at the Castilian tongue. "Why, Pat, you're a deserter," said I, from the top of the vehicle. "Who siz that?" quoth he, evidently startled. Forgetting his infirmities, clapping on his sombrero, and clenching the stick in readiness for a fight, or flight, as he peered among the crowd; and stepping up to a miserable leper, whose face had been painfully stereotyped into a broad grin, he poked him sharply in the ribs, and roared out, "Ye lie, ye baste! I was sick in the hospital, and the General tuk me aff in his own carridge." Here, Pat, I'm your man! "Ah' is it there ye are, Liftinint? you're a pacock ov a boy! will ye give us a rial?" No! but if you chance to be caught by the Yankees, you'll get a rial's worth of "hearty-chokes and caper-sauce," I replied, going through a little pantomime with heels and neck, for his especial benefit. "No, be jasus! thim Harney blaggards will niver choke me while the Dons is so ginerous." This was the last I saw or heard from Pat.

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We rolled rapidly along all day, in great trepidation concerning robbers, since the same diligence had been plundered for the eight successive days previous. There were four inside, besides my boy and myself. Early in the morning, a small, fierce-looking Yucatanese was savagely bent upon slaying whoever should cross our path, and, by the way, this Don Pancho was a perfect specimen of an ambulating armory—having no less than two brace of holster pistols, a revolver, sword, *cuchillo*, and his coat pockets filled with enough ammunition to have resisted a siege. The two last and critical posts were at hand, and together we mounted the box, with weapons in readiness. Whilst changing horses for the last time, the stout *cochero*—and a very expert whip he was—evinced some curiosity to know whether we intended shooting *los compadres*—this is polite slang for highwaymen—in case of attack. Being satisfied on that point, he declared he would not draw a rein until we again got inside. The warlike Yucatanese seconded him, protesting, in his cowardice, that he was solely actuated by fears of compromising the good driver; he accordingly entered the vehicle, hinting that his plan would be, on the first onslaught, to ensconce himself under the body of the coach, and rapidly discharge a broadside at the enemy—a mode of tactics I by no means subscribed to. It convinced me, however, that there was collusion between robbers and *cochero*, to make the most out of their prey, and I unequivocally assured the stout driver, that if he did not lash the beasts upon the first signs of danger, he should go halves with his *compadres* from the contents of my pistols; moreover, I still persisted in retaining a position on top, in which I was ably seconded by a delicate young French artiste, who volunteered to do his *possible*, if he could be supplied with arms: thereupon we made a forcible seizure from the stock of the brave Don Pancho. There were but two other passengers, who, not having a dollar in their purses, or a stealable garment on their persons, expressed utter indifference as to the course of events, lit cigars, and crouched beneath the seats.

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At last the long thong of hide was jerked from the leaders' heads, and away they plunged like demons. We sped on for a league or more, over a smooth broad road, lined with dense foliage of cactus and vines; keeping a wary look-out, and occasionally cautioning the driver, at the risk of his brains, to give his horses the rein, at the first appearance of our expected visitors. Indeed I was on the point of congratulating myself upon escaping their clutches altogether, when, as we whirled quickly towards a slight declivity, the progress of the vehicle was necessarily impeded by a few roods of rocky, uneven road; and at the same moment—*Voilà!* said my companion, *Voilà! les voleurs!* Like magic sprang up on either side, behind and ahead, a dozen villainous-looking scoundrels; whilst to the right, upon a gentle knoll, were as many more mounted, holding the animals of their brethren, and calmly regarding the sport before them. I instantly levelled a pistol at a gentleman with a raised carbine in one hand, and sombrero coolly doffed in the other, who was courteously observing to the *cochero*, *Como estamos, Don Pepe?*—how are we?—he was directly ahead of the leaders, and as my finger sought the trigger, Don Pepe knocked the barrel up with his whip, and shouted,—“we are good people!” Becoming conscious of the folly of contending against such odds, I sank back to await my fate. I noticed one swarthy old villain on horseback, who appeared chief of the gang, and was withal rather uneasy, urging his *hijos*—children—*Presto! de prisa! hombre!*—hurry! make haste!—and with good reason too, for hardly had the villains opened the coach-doors, and commenced rifling the gallant Pancho, whilst two more had clambered up the wheels, to have an overhaul of the French painter and myself, when a voice cried out—*Los dragones! los dragones!*—and the clash of sabres greeted our ears: *Los dragones! los dragones!* cried we all. Away hopped the agile *compadres* from the horses' heads, down jumped others from boot and wheels, off they scampered right and left, and in a few

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seconds they were seen galloping off in direction of the adjacent hills. The old bandit who directed their movements was delayed a moment behind the bushes in tightening his saddle girth. My fingers itched to have a crack at him; but although, *De los enemigos los menos*—of enemies the fewer the better—be a sage maxim, yet upon reflecting that we might have been favored by the whole retreating troop with a volley from their carbines—and that a coach full of passengers was not a small target—I very sensibly left the weapon beneath the cushions. All this transpired so rapidly that when the green jackets of the troopers became visible a long way up the road, we were entirely relieved of our besiegers. My companion counted twenty-six, but they got absolutely nothing for their trouble; much to my regret, however, for I was in hopes the Yucatanese would have been handsomely plucked, instead of only having his coat well nigh rent in tatters!

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The dragoons were an escort sent to guard a member of the Mexican deputies, who was expected by the coach. They answered our purpose quite as well. Nothing further occurred, except arresting a couple of suspicious individuals on the road, and attended by the cavalry, we soon arrived at the Garita of Querétaro. Here the brave Don Pancho had recovered his wits, and wished to play collector for our escort, crying out *Afloja la bolsa, Señor*,—milk the purse;—but dispensing with his services, I gave the sergeant the only ounce I had; much better pleased to give it voluntarily, even to be devoted to monté, than to have it squeezed out by the ladrons.

CHAPTER XXXII.

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I arrived in Querétaro on the 20th of May—seven and a-half days from San Blas. It is an antiquated city, built when rich mines were yielding their treasures in the vicinity, and as a consequence, there is no lack of handsome private edifices, and numbers of splendid churches. It stands nearly seven thousand feet above the sea, and enjoys a most delightful temperature. A noble aqueduct of two miles in length, with arches ninety feet high—spanning a plain of meadowland—joins a tunnel from the opposite hills, and leads an abundance of excellent water, from ten miles beyond, to the city. It is a solid and enduring structure, built by the munificence of an old Spaniard, the Marquis de Villadil, previous to the Revolution. Of late years Querétaro had lost a large portion of its population; the mines have become nearly exhausted, and it is without manufactures, or inland trade. After the occupation by the American troops of the city of Mexico, it became the headquarters of the Government, and seat of the General Congress; and again all the world had flocked thither, and not a tenantless house or spare nook was to be found. Crowds were thronging the wide, well-paved streets, and mounted troops and foot-soldiers, with ear-aching music of cornets, trumpets and drums, were moving in all directions about the city as we entered.

I had letters to an Hanoverian gentleman—Mr. George Best—who very hospitably lodged me at his dwelling. From him I learned that the treaty had already passed the Chamber of Deputies, and only awaited the action of the Senate to become a law, and that the United States Commissioners had been apprised of it by the Minister of Foreign Relations, sent express, the day of my arrival. I determined to continue my journey, and made all preparations for leaving on the morrow.

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During the night there arose a terrible crashing thunder-storm, and a large church near us was struck by the *rayo*, shattering the great clock, and "temple and tower came to the ground," with much jingle and confusion. I slept in happy ignorance of the whole affair.

I was unavoidably detained until late in the afternoon. With post-horses, and a single guide, we toiled over an elevated sierra at the back of the city, and taking the bridle route, rode like Jehus all night; only interrupted by changing animals, every seven or eight leagues. Once the post-boy's nag gave up the ghost, which was the cause of an hour's detention to procure another; and again, at a break-neck pace I rode full tilt into a sleeping drove of swine, when my horse floundered on his face, and I was shot like a battering ram into a puddle of mire. With these trifling mishaps, we gave rein and spur, trusting to the beasts' guidance in the dark night—over bad roads, hills, and streams—until day dawned, when tarrying for a bath and bowl of coffee, we again hurried onward. At noon we struck the main route, and I was gratified to learn the Commissioners had not passed. Without pausing, we arrived within five leagues of Mexico, where, from a slight elevation, my guide exclaimed—*Señor! mire vd la escolta!* Some distance below us wound a large cavalcade, with four-in-hand coaches, and trains, attended by squadrons of cavalry, magnificently mounted on dark bay horses, with sabres and housings flashing in the sun. I knew it at a glance to be the American escort. Saluting the officer leading the advance, and stating my mission from the Pacific, I was immediately presented to the Ministers, and, much to my own relief, delivered the despatches. There were a large number of officers in the escort; some old friends, too, with whom I had parted in as many different portions of the globe. Retracing my steps in company to the village I had just previously left, the cavalcade halted, and I was instructed to proceed, and report myself to the General-in-Chief in Mexico.

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Once more I galloped away, while the splendid squadrons of dragoons moved slowly along by the opposite road. In two hours' quick riding, we turned short round a bluff promontory, and entered the great valley; then for the first time I saw—far, far beyond—arise, in Alpine grandeur, the snowy peaks of Popocatepetl and Iztacchuatl, and nearer, the clustering towers that sprang up

from the famed city of the Aztecs.

Our course traversed luxuriantly fertile plains, over one of the broad causewayed roads radiating from the city—beautifully shaded by noble trees, with canals of running water on either side—until at last we passed the unguarded garitas, and entered what Cortez called *la mas hermosa cosa en el mundo*—the prettiest thing in the world—Mexico!

Trotting through a long, straight street, that appeared interminable, I stopped at a sign of *Bains Français*, where, alighting and getting quit of the horses, I plunged into a warm bath: then being shampooed with spirits—much to the horror of an attendant, who at first imagined it was my intention to apply the whole bottle inwardly—and feeling much refreshed, I ventured out on a voyage of discovery. The streets were filled with soldiers, and I had no difficulty in finding the quarters of the Commander-in-Chief, not, however, until becoming sufficiently wearied, wandering about the city in quest of acquaintances, of whose address I had been advised. But they were all abroad, and the rain coming on with darkness, I succeeded in making my way to the residence of General Butler. He was alone, and after an hour's conversation, he politely sent an orderly with me to hunt up my friends. We stopped at a coach-stand, but the instant the soldier requested a vehicle, the whole worshipful company of coachmen seized their reins and drove off like magic. The reason of this ballet appeared to be, as the orderly hinted, that they were "done" so frequently by the volunteers! Nevertheless, coming suddenly upon one fellow, who, by dint of a dollar beforehand, opened his door and agreed to enter our service for the time being, we drove to the clubs, cafés, sociedades, and other places of public resort, until near midnight, without finding those we were in search of, when my friend, the orderly, suggested a visit to the grand ball in the Grand Sociedad. In a few minutes I had gained admission, and making a run through the mazes of a contra danza, came plump upon the friends I sought. Though tired as possible after a fifty-six leagues ride, I could not resist the fascination of a whirl, and catching a trim little damsel around the waist, off we stamped and pirouetted through the large saloon. Accompanying an old friend to his quarters, I soon fell into heavy sleep, and never awoke until the sun was blazing in mid-day.

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My visit to Mexico lasted five days. On the whole, I was not highly impressed with the city. Like all other Spanish-American built towns, the streets are laid out with great regularity and, excepting near the suburbs, are well paved; the houses are of two stories—solid and imposing—without any attempt at architectural beauty—the shops particularly mean and insignificant for so large a town, and not remarkable for either novelty or cleanliness. The city does not cover a large space proportionate to its inhabitants, but it is seldom you meet with streets so densely crowded. In some quarters, towards evening, when leperos, vagabonds and population generally, left their dens for the open air, the main avenues were so closely packed as to make it a matter of the utmost difficulty to pass—far more people than are seen in the lazzaroni haunts at the same hour in Naples, or the great thoroughfares of London.

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The Cathedral in the Plaza is a fine building, standing on the site of the ancient Aztec Teocallis, but not comparable to the meanest of its kind in Europe. The outside was very much pock-marked with musket balls. I was more pleased with the Palace than any other brick-and-mortar structure that came under my observation. It occupies the eastern face of the Square—is of two stories, and painted a light-pink tinge—with immense gateways opening into the Plaza, where were two brass guns, gleaming like gold. Apart from its historical associations, and having been the scene of many bloody struggles in the oft-repeated internal revolutions of the Republic, it has little to recommend it. The council and state chambers face the Square; they are decorated with handsome furniture and crimson hangings to correspond; lighted by noble windows, from floor to the lofty ceilings, with heavy stone balconies outside. In the adjoining building is the National Museum, where, in a court-yard, surrounded by quantities of feathers, belts, cloaks, and other Indian ornaments, was the famous sacrificial stone, that once graced the ancient Temple of the Aztec monarchs. It is a horizontal convex wheel of granite, curiously carved in hieroglyphics on the perimeter, and having a hole and gutter on top, that received the victim's head and carried off the blood. In the *patio* of the same edifice, was a huge, ungainly colossal statue in bronze, of Philip of Spain—not worthy a second glance.

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Undoubtedly I saw Mexico at disadvantage; and indeed I took more pleasure in leaning over the stone balustrades of the Palace, regarding the different regiments going through their evolutions—particularly the Seventh Infantry—who impressed me so deeply with their soldierly bearing, and national pride for the hard battles they had fought and gallantly won, as to leave no room for admiration of the curiosities to be seen of a conquered city. Indeed Mexico was almost entirely Americanized. The great fondas and sociedades were all under the dominion of Yankees—with Yankee ice, Yankee drinks, signs, manners, habits, and customs, as if the city had been from time immemorial Yankeeified all over, instead of being only occupied a short twelvemonth by the troops. I usually dined in one of these large establishments, and excepting the hall of the eating saloon—from patios to attics—on every angle of the broad flights of stairs, crowded one beside the other, were gaming-tables of every kind and description. Such a condensed essence of worldly hell, in all its glaring, disgusting frightfulness, never existed. And there never were lack of players either—no! not one but was closely surrounded by officers and soldiers—blacklegs and villains of all sorts—betting uncommonly high, too—many of the banks having sixty and eighty thousand dollars in gold alone on the tables—and once I saw a common soldier stake and win two hundred ounces at a single bet. Other saloons were filled with Mexican girls, with music and dancing, attended by every species of vice, all going on unceasingly, day and night together. My friends called these pandemoniums the hells of Montezuma. Whether such scenes will be of

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future benefit to the thousands of young men whom the war had called to Mexico will be a matter for future speculation.

One afternoon, accompanied by a navy friend, we rode to Chapultepec. I had already visited the battle-grounds of the valley, but the last presented claims of greater interest. The Indian definition of the height is Grasshopper Hill. It rises very strangely from the heart of the great plain, within half a league of the city—on all sides steep and precipitous, to the elevation of about two hundred feet—and with Molino del Rey, forms a long parallelogram, completely walled around. The former position is nearest the city, the King's windmill occupying the opposite space, with a noble grove of giant cypresses between the two points.

The road runs parallel with the arches of the aqueduct, and terminates at the base of Chapultepec. A gateway opens upon a broad causeway, leading with but one angle to the esplanade of the castle. It had been occupied of late years as a military college; and, though strongly manned by artillery and infantry, was still not susceptible of using cannon to advantage, when the assailing parties had approached the base of the hill. The walls and defences were of no great strength, and not capable of resisting round shot.

I had the pleasure of being made known to the Colonel commanding the fortress, who went with me over the works, and courteously explained the nature of the different battles in the neighborhood. The flat roof of the castle commands a fine and extensive view of the valley, city, and sierras. There were many marks of the bloody business still visible—shot holes, broken balconies, fractured butments, shattered casements, and a precipice near the western angle, from which, when the castle had been stormed and taken, numbers of the Mexican garrison had thrown themselves, and were crushed to death.

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The grand aqueduct draws its aliment at the foot of the hill, from a large, square tank of spring water—so pure, so very pure, that in looking down its almost unfathomable depths, one is apt to mistake the calm, clear fluid for the very air he breathes. It was near this spot where is shown a noble cypress "that circles in the grain five hundred rings of years," beneath whose "giant hole" "the slight she slips of loyal blood" were wont to gambol before the Aztec Sybarite, Montezuma; where "Malinche's shade" is still seen to flit amid the grove, seeking her gallant lover, Cortez; and where, at a less remote period, Yankee linemen strewed the ground with Mexican corpses, until the spreading trees were covered to the knees with blood-stained clay.

While gazing down the crystal reservoir, we resolved, in emulation of the Indian monarch, to test its virtues, and, in a moment, we were plunging and splashing in the icy water. It was, apart from the associations connected with brown Indian divinities, the very seventh Heaven of a bath; but whether we sullied the pellucid clearness of the aqueduct's tribute, or detracted from the cooling fragrance of the celestial mint-juleps drained in town, we never had leisure to enquire; and indeed without caring a drop about the matter, we mounted our tall steeds, broke branches from the legendary tree, and passing through the kingly forest and meadow beyond, entered the deserted walls of Molino del Rey.

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As I have heretofore observed, this building fills the south side of the square—a sort of irregular barrack of two stories, and some eight hundred feet in length. Directly fronting this structure, at the distance of a few hundred yards, standing upon a very slight swell of the plain, is what was termed the *Casa mata*—a small redoubt—ditched and flanked by trenches, standing angularly in the direction of the windmill. It was the spot where our troops suffered severely, where many undaunted soldiers fell, under a murderous fire of artillery and musketry; and where, after being repulsed, the Mexicans left their entrenchments, and put the wounded and dying to death in cold blood. This was the reason why so small a number of prisoners were taken at the storming of Chapultepec!

Leaving Molino del Rey, we made a short tour of the environs, and returned again by the main Paseo! It was the hour when most frequented. There were but few ladies, and they not of the handsomest. Lots of queer antique coaches went rumbling along, and vastly neat cabs and stylish barouches whirling past them—while showy, spirited Mexican barbs, covered with gold and silver trappings were capering and prancing, five hundred steps to the minute—then an American General and staff would sweep by, elegantly mounted on high-mettled chargers, the small horses of the natives appearing like pigmies in comparison—and again along the grassy roadside paths were little children astride large sheep, completely caparisoned with saddles, housings, and bridles, trotting away quite gaily with their innocent young burthens. We took a glance at all this, and giving spur, rode into the city.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

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The day previous to my departure from Mexico, I called at the Bureau of Postes for a license, and made a report of what I considered collusion betwixt the Ladrons and Cochero, near Querétaro. The office was conducted by Mexicans; and the Administrador, quite a gentleman,—who excused his servants at some length, by stating that the causes which prevented them from disobeying the orders of the highwaymen were fears of subsequent punishment, in case of escape at the time. Moreover, in the present unsettled state of the country, crime had never been so prevalent, in consequence of the few troops at the disposal of the authorities, for the purpose of keeping the

roads open, from the hordes of deserters who mostly composed these lawless bands; and even in the immediate vicinity of Mexico itself, highway robberies and murder were of daily occurrence. I was not convinced, although silenced, by the plausible courtesies of the Administrador.

Early on the morning of the 26th of May, I shook hands with my kind army friends, newly capped pistols, and vaulted into the saddle. *Estámos listos*—all right—said the post guide, as he succeeded in tightening the circingles, by kicking the beasts under the belly—*Vámanos*. Pulperias and tiendas were being opened; lepéros taking their morning's dram of *pulqae*; closely veiled faces and sombre gowns were moving to mass; patrols of horse and foot, returning drowsily to barracks; markets thronged; jackasses trumpeting their morning's note of thanksgiving, and the great city awaking again into hum and bustle; while, as the sun was climbing over the white-robed volcanoes that looked down upon the beautiful valley, we passed the long lines of streets and garita, gained the main road, when our pace quickened, and on we hurried along the branching shade of the avenues. Pell mell we went through droves of mules, at times driving a group of perverse donkeys right and left with the impetus of a catapult—maybe, one or more over, in a smoke from their own cargoes of charcoal, wood, or vegetables;—and long before the arrieros could right the little brutes on their legs, with *arrés* and blows—in readiness to treat us with curses—we had swept by in our heedless flight, unmindful of all; my guide scrupulously consoling himself by asserting that a government *extraordinario* had the the privilege to knock over everybody that intercepted the path. In an hour we had left canals, streams, bridges, causeways, and fertile fields of the lovely *vega*, and turning to the right the bluff hill closed upon the scene—and this was my latest glimpse of Mexico.

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Soon leaving the main road, we branched off by narrow bridle paths, and cross cuts of the post route: four relays, and as many fresh guides, carried me to a place called Tepetitlan. Here the horse purveyor was a woman, who declared, with an ireful voice and gesture, as I drew up before her tenement, "that the blessed virgin might send her to purgatory if she had a horse with a hoof to stand on—that I might report her to the Alcalde or the devil, or both, or go there myself, just as I pleased." *Que mi importa?*—what do I care? And the director had no right to send three expresses in one week, when she had nothing but the old grey and the mare! *Ave Maria! pues!*—so help yourself! Cracking my whip a little savagely, I crossed the verdant slope of a hill, and dismounted at the gate of a walled garden, having, a dilapidated and venerable habitation within. I was decoyed thither by a brace of buxom damsels—mother and daughter—who, perceiving my distress, despatched an old cripple in search of beasts.

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The little town had much to recommend it; the houses were very quaint and antiquated, strewn, as they might be, upon the sides of a grassy slope—with a crumbling stone bridge and rapid brawling river coursing at the base. Midway between was a large old church, ivy-grown from the ruined towers and belfry to the decayed buttresses and lintels of the doorway; all around the front were broad flights of stone steps, leading from the declivities of the hill, down to a level amphitheatre-like space, which was filled with glorious old trees, creeping vines, bright green grasses, ranges of marble benches beneath the shade, and in the midst, a thread of a rill, plashing about the ruins of what once had been the bowl of a large fountain.

Besides the picturesque charms of the village, I was recompensed for two hours delay, by the frolicsome Señoras, at whose estate I had tarried. They very obligingly prepared me a nice little repast of frijoles—fried eggs and tortillas—assisted me to drink a flask of bordeaux, and entertained me the while with a narrative of how the horrible Yankees had entered their great city—for they were cockneys, these ladies, and merely rustivating at their retreat—and their dreadful fears, and the horror they would undergo in case the invasion extended to Tepetitlan. My guide, who had been industriously eating a bowl of beans, using an original spoon like to a diminutive scoop—made in a jiffy from his tortillas—and swallowing beans and spoon at every mouthful, thereby putting himself to the trouble of reconstructing another at each succeeding bite—he, I say, informed my good hostesses that I was one of those *demonios Yankees*. *Ay! dios!* said the elder; *es posible que vd es gringo?*—can it be true that you are a green-horn? *Si amiga*, I responded. Then their curiosity was interested to know my destination, religious impressions, and so forth—if I was a *herege*? And being assured that I was a Christian catholic, could make the cross, and name more saints than they could, their good humor returned, and we made the old trees merry with laughter, chatting away the hours, seated upon the velvet sward. Still there appeared no indication of horses, and when beginning to despair, an individual saluted us, and I noticed him privately telegraphing my guide as to the probable amount the *gringo* could be cheated! when turning to me, with a resolute air, he exclaimed, *Tengo caballos hasta Tida a ocha pesos cada uno!* This was a triple extortion, but, very much to his astonishment, I immediately closed the bargain: upon which, he darted a disappointed look upon his coadjutor, in not having been signalized to charge more, and then drew forth his beasts from behind the garden wall. I had to be cheated, and there was no necessity of losing one's temper. I kissed the ladies—I say it with modest pride—and pursued my route.

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I came on smoothly and peaceably the remainder of the day and during the night, until towards daybreak, when, to keep my eyes open, I took a refreshing dip in the little river Tula. On attempting to mount again, accidentally placing a hand on the horse's rump, he very unceremoniously struck me with both heels on the thigh. I was hurled some yards, and fell senseless. My guide dragged me again to the stream, and I suppose his novel mode of treatment had the happy effect of restoring me to animation; for I partly recovered consciousness with my head beneath the water, in what I thought the last struggles of strangulation. It was meant, however; in kindness; and fortunately having a flask of strong muscal in the *alforgas*, he bathed

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me, inside and out, to my great relief, although I was obliged to lay on a serapa by the road side, in sharp pain, for two hours. Then exchanging my vicious brute with the guide, he assisted me into the saddle again, and we walked quietly into the town of San Juan del Rio—not, however, without passing a body of sixteen deserters from our own army, in full uniform—who seemed to wish to be more sociable than I judged civil—and I was right glad to hear the last of their reiterated *adios*.

At San Juan, a large *donceur* procured magnificent horses for myself and a small urchin, who was sent as post-boy; after being again chafed with spirits, I mounted, and with a swollen, painful leg, left the town. The animal I bestrode moved with a spirited though easy gait, and nothing transpired for some miles. For easier travelling we had taken the main road, which traversed a level, well-cultivated country, hedged on either side with close plantations of the cactus and argave. It was about nine o'clock, when my little companion called attention to three horsemen, who, most unaccountably, had started up within an hundred yards of our rear: *Hay mala gente*—they are bad fellows—he softly exclaimed. They were well mounted, and like most other Mexicans on the road, had the lower portions of the face bound around with colored handkerchiefs, and notwithstanding the extreme mildness, not to say warmth of the morning, were closely wrapped in serapas. I must confess seeing naught remarkable in all this; for the country was open; apparently well travelled; shortly before, we had passed a large drove of pack mules, and a *hacienda* was visible in the distance. Still I did not neglect the hint of my sharp young guide, and bade him make sail ahead. He needed no second bidding—gave a terrified look back, and struck spurs to his beast. Waiting a little while, I, too, increased my speed, but had not made a dozen bounds, when a loud voice called me to halt! What for? said I, without pausing. *Su passaporta*, was shouted. Pulling a heavy rifle-pistol from the holster, and bringing my horse to a stand, I replied, "Here's my passport!"

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They instantly checked their animals, within twenty yards, threw off serapas, and whilst the individual nearest me was rapidly unrolling a cloth from the lock of his short carbine, believing hostilities to have commenced, I took deliberate aim, and fired. He was sitting diagonally towards me, and the ball, of nearly an ounce in weight, struck him high up the chest; and I venture to assert, upon the well-known virtues of Mons. Devisme's weapons, on the boulevard Poissonnerie, that it went through and through him, I saw his carbine fall to the ground, and heard him exclaim, with both hands pressing the breast, *Madre de Dios!* I myself was of the opinion, that the sooner he said his prayers the better, and although I felt a twinge of regret at what had taken place, it was speedily dissipated; for at the same moment there were three or four reports—two of them from persons on foot, inside the hedge; but not hearing even the whistling of the bullets, I judged their aim had been somewhat inaccurate. Giving my horse the rein and spur, I went flying along the road. One of the mounted gentlemen alone followed in pursuit, and finding I had the heels of him, I held my nag well in, until I had disengaged the remaining weapon, when, halting suddenly, I cried, *Venga mi compadre, para el cambio*—come and take your revenge. The instant of perceiving the movement, he fired a pistol at random, shouted *puñetero!*—wheeled rapidly into the thickets, and was out of sight. He was at too great a distance to make sure of him, or I certainly should have saved the *garotte* a wrench. The old adage preserved him: *El diablo siempre cuida por los suyos*—the devil regards his darlings. Once more giving my willing beast the bit, I never ceased running for five leagues; as for my leg, I had forgotten all about it. Overtaking the little guide, we slackened our pace. But the trouble was not ended, for presently the diligence came in sight, and as we approached, what was my surprise and dismay, to observe an individual on the box deliberately level a blunderbuss at my head, and never remove his aim until the coach was lost to view! *Bueno!* thought I; this is diverting—first to shoot a thief, and then be mistaken for one!

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Dismounting at a small pulperia, near an extensive *hacienda*, I bathed my lame limb in muscal, and reloaded the pistol; during which last operation, the patron of the grog-shop, who looked something villanous in the visage, interrogated the boy, who afterwards informed me that the wounded rogue on the black horse was one Señor Felipe, an intimate friend of the pulperia man, and greatly respected by the community at large. I was not again molested, and experienced no further interruption. Three posts carried us to Querétaro late in the afternoon. Meeting Mons. Ribaud in the streets, I related the adventure, and he strongly advised me not to make it known, as there was no calculating the number of Don Felipe's associates, or the annoyance one might suffer from the sharp thrust of a knife, unexpectedly dealt by noon or midnight. Subsequently I was introduced to an English gentleman, who had been robbed the day previous in the diligence—who stated, that, as there chanced to be a German mechanic in the coach, the *compadres* mistook him for a Yankee, and very promptly blew his brains out—which little incident made me feel highly gratified that a like interesting episode had not been enacted with mine own.

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I reported my arrival to the American Commissioners, and took quarters with the officers attached to the escort. They entered the city on the 25th, as the vote upon the Treaty was being taken in the Mexican Senate: very possibly it may have hastened it. The division stood but four in opposition—much excitement prevailed in Querétaro, as the measure was decidedly unpopular among all classes of military men; there being no less than twenty-seven hundred officers of the army, besides immense swarms of *empleados* and every species of Government people, awaiting the action of Congress. It was universally conceded by liberal-minded persons, that the old army should be completely disbanded, and regenerated on a smaller scale; but still they kept up the cry of War! War! without the slightest means in men, money, or material, to carry it on; merely as a watchword to frown down reform, without the merest hope or wish to do any more fighting or running—idle words and wind, and thus the *gritos* of *Viva la guerra! Abajo la paz!* were yelled in

every street and plaza.

The battalion of traitors, under the banner of San Patricio, who amounted to some hundreds, had very judiciously been withdrawn from the city before the coming of the American troops. Strong guards of Mexican cavalry were posted throughout the town to prevent any disturbance, since the entrance of the escort had been strenuously opposed by the Ministry, but with the exception of a few stones thrown at the Commissioners' empty coaches, on driving to the stables, and a corporal's guard of our Riflemen charging and clearing a street—for some real or fancied insult—no collision took place.

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Our soldiers were quartered in a large, commodious church on the skirts of the city, and strong guards daily detailed for duty at the residences of their officers. They were a splendid body of cavalry, and deservedly elicited a deal of admiration from natives and foreigners. We were lodged in two spacious houses facing the principal street—the Ministers with their numerous attachés in one, and the officers adjoining. Each edifice was big enough for a regiment. Our receiving and sleeping saloon was all in one, and a fine lofty hall it was, with capital balconies in front.

We passed the time very pleasantly. There were nice baths in the vicinity, where we laved before breakfast. We devoted the mornings to walking, or lounging over the wide balconies, where, from dawn till dark, an audience of near a thousand leperos and vagabonds, were thickly seated on the opposite sides of the street, regarding with marked attention our minutest proceedings. Within a few minutes walk was a circular promenade, closely planted with undergrowth and towering foliage, where in the afternoons all the world assembled to behold their enemies, *Los gringos*.

One morning I had the pleasure of accompanying the commanding officer of the escort and his officers on an official visit to the military Governor of the town. He entered the saloon, very like Harlequin, after we all were seated. He was a little man; and as the doors swung open, in he bounded with open arms, and bowing most gracefully to his visitors. He was not in uniform; and his only military insignia were a number of ribbons and decorations on the breast of his coat. He had received a ball through the cheek at the battle of Buena Vista, which was carefully concealed beneath a luxuriant growth of whiskers. The conversation was not very general, and remaining but a brief sitting, we made our salaams; upon which I could not resist complimenting the Major at his excessive grace whilst outbowing the General, and he assured me that he had even injured the King of Naples' spine, who attempted to surpass him in the business!

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From here we repaired, to attend one of our Commissioners on another official visit, to the Mexican President and Ministers. The reception-room was rather a mean apartment, hung with crimson curtains, and at the upper end was a chair of state, with others ranged around. The President, Peña y Peña, pleased me more than his advisers, having a mild, benignant expression, and evidently appeared worn down with care and anxiety. Anaya was a tall, bony person, with high cheek-bones—denoting his Indian origin—and a stolid striped face. Rosa, the Secretary of War, was short in stature, of swarthy complexion, with full, dark, intelligent eyes. But of all the public characters, who held office under the Mexican government, whom I had the opportunity of seeing, there was none who struck me so forcibly as one of the deputies—Señor Cauto.

At the conclusion of the Presentation, a number of polite speeches were interchanged, all of which impressed me as being very gracefully done, though destitute of a particle of sincerity, as these empty-headed formalities usually are. But indeed I felt for the pitiable position of those poor Mexicans, who were having bitter pills crammed down their throats, though gilded by so many sweet, courteous compliments; and I was glad when the audience terminated, and we had turned our backs on the miserable, cowed-looking sentinel at the gate.

The officers of the escort received many civilities from the Mexicans, and extended others in return. The Governor had obligingly furnished a full colonel, who was an excellent cicerone about the city, who ordered dinners, assisted in eating them, and made himself generally useful: he bore a surprising resemblance to the portraits of Don Quixote. On one occasion we had a call from a colonel of cavalry: a large, fine-looking fellow, flashing resplendent in gold, from the glittering plates of his fur shako, to the richly-chased scabbard of his sabre, and rowels of his bright spurs;—he must have been worth a fortune as he stood! It was his wish that all the American officers would honor him at a breakfast preparing for the occasion. The invitation was cheerfully accepted, as much, possibly, in compliment to the dashing colonel, as to the fact that our own board was not so well supplied as was altogether palatable and proper.

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It was quite a grand affair—was the breakfast—laid out in the billiard-saloon of a fonda, having the bar and cooking convenient, as it were, in the same apartment; there were some twenty Mexican officers at table, besides ourselves; to say nothing of as many more casual observers, who aided vociferously in drinking all the toasts in succession, and afterwards carefully secreted the glasses—which were limited—in readiness for another toast. The first course consisted simply of a wine-glass of pure cogniac—intended for an appetizer no doubt—but it was probably subversive of the desired effect, for I noticed, immediately afterwards, a number with watery eyes, and great difficulty of articulation. This was followed by a pilaus of rice and chickens, beefsteaks, soups, frijoles, fruit, and viands in the most indiscriminate confusion. Bordeaux and sherry circulated freely, and we had speeches, toasts, and sentiments: we drank the memory of every general, living or dead, of both armies, beginning with Washington and Hidalgo, and gave, I should imagine, upon a rough calculation, as many as eighty or ninety cheers for Santa Anna, and "Skote!" I had the happiness of translating—rather freely I must confess—these different effusions, and also the sense of a long harangue delivered by an advocate, who came late, and for that reason got comfortably *boracho* at once.

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Our gallant host, in a few disjointed observations, assured us that he was not only brave himself, and loved bravery in others, but that his horse was brave, and had been wounded in divers battles. *Yo soy valiente!* said the fierce colonel, pounding the orders on his capacious breast, and forthwith proclaimed to the audience his intention to pay for everything that anybody could possibly eat or drink for a fortnight to come, and seizing me by the arms, he impressively remarked that I was the most intimate friend he ever had except his wife, and requested me to throw his huge shako up to the ceiling—solely for *amistad*, and good fellowship of the thing—which I instantly did, and made the bearskin and golden plates ring against the rafters. Thereupon he called for more wine, and desired all who loved him to break a few glasses, commencing himself with a couple of decanters. At this stage of the action the landlord interfered, and very sensibly cut off the supplies of liquor, which reduced the party, who were "merry in the halls," to consistent behavior; when, embracing one another frequently, horses were ordered for a turn in the Alameda. They treated us with the greatest kindness and hospitality, only the manner of doing it was different from our own. All were decorated; and one handsome young officer of the Lancers had four emblems of defeated battles.

The Pasco was thronged by all the élite of Querétaro: richly-caparisoned barbs were jingling musically with multitudes of little steel or silver drops attached to the housings; pacing, and fretting, and foaming, full of fire and spirit, but curbed and trained to short steps. Then came the well-appointed carriages of the President or Governor, drawn by sleek fat mules, and close behind cumbrous masses of timber—hewn wheels and axles lashed together with hides—all hitched by ropes to half a dozen, or more, dirty beasts; the vehicles themselves filled with rare specimens of fat old women, decked off in gay haberdashery, each holding an armful of children, all bent upon a good sight of the North Americans. And there were youthful faces too—bright glances from brighter eyes—emulating those aged matrons in curiosity, peering from behind waving fans, within long lines of carriages drawn up at the sides of the promenade. Nor had the *Gringos* aught to fear from the investigation, for there were handsome young dragoons and riflemen, attended by their orderlies, mounted on noble chargers with arched necks and shining coats, moving with a high, proud bearing, as if regarding with great contempt the capering graces of their little brethren beside them.

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After a number of turns around the park—the last at a thundering gallop, with a stride that made the natives shudder—we dashed out of the gates. On our way through the city, one of our Mexican friends espied me, and in true Californian style, shook his bridle, gave spur, and came leaping like a flash towards us. I was not a novice at the sport, and touching one of the finest horses in the army with my heel, the gallant sorrel sprang forward to greet him. We met in full career, my charger stood like the great pyramid, but the shock rolled my antagonist into the street. I should in courtesy have got down from the saddle to his assistance, but reflecting that without a ladder I never should be able to get on my high steed again, I accordingly remained quiet. However, my friend quickly remounted, and made an earnest attempt to laugh; but as there chanced to be hundreds of spectators, I hardly thought the mirth reached his heart: he may have been somewhat allegro from the good cheer at breakfast, or have eaten something indigestible, yet under either dispensation, it will caution him not to run another joust at a Kentucky-bred charger, or he may, as in this instance, get tilted from the saddle. Being a sailor, I gained a great reputation for this feat, and gave an entertainment on the strength of it.

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Some days elapsed after the Treaty had finally been acted upon in the Mexican Senate, before the ratifications were exchanged. Mexican diplomacy is proverbial, and they chose the most tortuous track to gain the goal. The delay was in some degree attributable, so said the Government, to the absence of the official seal, and certain time required to make proper copies and translations; but it was with equal reason surmised, that it arose from causes relative to a division of the first instalment of the indemnity, as a new ministry was to be elected, and the old cared not to assume the odium of signing the Peace, without being fortified with the assurances of their successors that they should receive the reward of their services. But here subterfuge was unavailing—the armistice expired on the 2d of June, and time was flying. At length, after refusing permission for the American cavalry and artillery to take up their line of march by land to the Northern frontier, on the night of the 30th of May, the final signatures were affixed to the Treaty, and an hour later, Herrera was chosen President of the Republic.

Soon after midnight, with a copy of this document in my jacket, and a promise, from the Secretary of War, of an escort for ten leagues, I once more began my journey towards the Pacific Ocean.

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CHAPTER XXXIV.

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It was quite dark on taking my place in the diligence, but getting comfortably seated, I heard one of the passengers inquire if there was to be an escort; so putting my head out of the window, I asked my man Juan if he had any idea where the troops were concealed? *No Señor, no hay!*—not a soul to be seen. *Bueno!* I consoled myself by being sure of meeting them at the garita—and then we came to the gate, but never a sabre visible! Malditos were of no avail. Señor Rosa, in a multiplicity of *negocios* had forgotten me! Truly, I was scared out of sleep the first few posts, but at last my eyelids gained the day—I sailed away in the land of dreams, and never awoke until

reaching Salamanca—much refreshed and decidedly happy not to have been rifled by ladróns.

It was four o'clock and raining heavily as we drove into the cellar, as it were, of the sky-built city of Guanajuato. The water was bounding and leaping down the naked sides of the hills, converting every narrow gully into a boiling torrent, until cascades and rivulets all poured into the deep valley beneath, and went roaring and foaming away, increasing in bulk and impetuosity at every gorge, to feed some rapid river in the plains beyond. I was intently occupied speculating upon the chances whether the diligence would be swept along with other floating matter, or ultimately stranded on dry land; for not long before, one of these same vehicles had been caught in a freshet—carried some distance, drowning three insides. But fortunately, we steered clear of these dangers by flood and coach—with saturated garments—and were soon safely housed in the comfortable fonda.

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Much to my chagrin, the rain prevented a visit to the great mines of La Luz. They are said to be the largest in the world, and well worthy of a sight, employing no less than fifteen thousand workmen, including their families. The owner died in Querétero the day previous to my departure, bequeathing a fortune of twenty millions of dollars to his heirs.

I left Guanajuato before daylight—the heavens were dropping tears, although not sufficiently lacrymose to keep the gorges surcharged, and thus we again escaped coach-wreck. We reached Leon to a late breakfast—there I exchanged the youthful valet Juan for my horse equipments, and having but a single companion in the person of an Englishman bound to Zacatecas, we continued the route: the cocheros swore there were none other than virtuous people in that vicinity and we had no fears of being molested: the road became rocky and uneven—occasionally no beaten track at all—and had not the coach and our bones been constructed of the toughest materials, I imagine neither could have reached Lagos—but we got there at three o'clock, with no more serious mishap than being jolted asleep and awake, at least four or five times in as many minutes.

Our stopping place was a decent little fonda, administered by an old Spaniard. While standing in the gateway I observed two persons, and, from something indescribable in their appearance, immediately accosted them in Anglo-Saxon: they were North Americans, and had resided many years in Mexico: they treated me kindly, and extended every assistance in their power. I visited one and saw as pretty a wife and family as any batchelor might envy. The town itself is extremely pretty—a remarkably handsome church faces the Plaza—the houses elegantly adorned externally in fanciful frescoes, with designs of flowers, wreaths, gardens, and mythological figures, while a branch of the Rio Grande rushes swiftly through the heart of the town, fringed with a profusion of verdant foliage. During my visit the river coursed in two separate channels, divided by a narrow strip of pebbly sand, whereon were hundreds of little nude boys and girls, and women nearly so, bathing and washing in the pools along the shores.

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Returning from the walk, we had hardly entered the inn, which looked into the Plaza, when some fifty ragamuffins, armed with many varieties of weapons, but principally broken muskets and naked sabres, passed by; they had music, too, an undeniable drum, which never for a moment ceased being thumped and pounded, during all the proceedings that afterwards transpired. There was to be a Mexican Pronunciamento! The band marched straight to the Cuartel near the upper end of the square by the church, where, after much shouting, expostulation, bluster, and reading of proclamations, they induced about five and twenty meagre soldiers, who composed the garrison, to declare in favor of the rebellion; then a number of bottles of strong waters circulated briskly, the mob mingled with the fraternised soldiery, possessed themselves of their muskets, broke up into groups, and filled the air with cries of "*Abajo los Yankees! Viva Paredes! Viva la Guerra! Viva El Padre Jarauta!*"

The Pronunciamento was completed.

My friends prepared me for this ebullition by stating it to be part of a combined movement, fomented by Paredes, who was at Aguas Calientes, seven leagues beyond, awaiting the action of Guadalajara and the western provinces.

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It had been my intention to take the route to Mazatlan by way of Zacatecas and Durango, but I was earnestly urged not to attempt it in the present unsettled state of that district, and as the advice was based on sensible grounds—not without a deal of regret—I at once ordered horses for Guadalajara. Whilst dinner was preparing I took a stroll with the innkeeper, around the Plaza to get a glimpse, if possible, of the sanctified assassin Padre Jarauta. I had heard much of the villain's atrocities, both from the papers and individuals. The young adjutant whom I met in Guanajuato related of him, that he boasted of having killed fifty-three Americans with his own cuchillo, and though styling himself priest was nothing but a student who had taken to arms "con amore." To say the least of this good padre, he possessed unparalleled courage and audacity, had done immense mischief to small corps and trains of our army, and he was, in fact, the boldest, bloodiest Guerrilla chief in all Mexico.

I was gratified for my exertions, and passed twice beside him; he was striking in expression, perhaps thirty years old, with fine fierce dark eyes, and little beard: he was about the middle height, dressed in a round jacket and cloak, with a short straight sword on his hip. He appeared absorbed with great events, regarding the sky and other celestial bodies, never deigning to honor me with a glance.

One of my countrymen dined with me, and we had an excellent repast, but it was most unseasonably interrupted by the entrance of the host, who after a short consultation with my

friend, informed me that the good Padre Jarauta had learned the arrival of an American officer, and had expressed a determination to make an *ejemplo* of him in the square! I reposed full faith in his pious regard, and did not doubt for an instant that he would be at all loth in executing his virtuous designs—and as for my passport and papers, they might possibly have given additional zest to his holy orders, and been considered just long enough to cock half a dozen carbines, and —*fuego!* However, there was no time to deliberate, and but one course to avoid the dilemma —*Gracias a Dios*—the horses were fortunately in the Corral of the meson, and in a very few seconds the guide had clasped on my spurs, and I jumped into the saddle. With warmest thanks to my friends, and a trifle, more solid, to the true Biscayno for his good offices, in the darkness, the animals were led down a stone flight of steps, through some outbuildings, where, gaining a back street, we made the dust whirl in clouds around us, as we gave lash and steel to the beasts.

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At early dawn we halted at a place called Encarnacion for change of horses, and losing no time, mounted and struck a bypath to shorten the distance. At sunrise we observed a group of travellers ahead, and pushed on to overtake them. Perceiving, however, a wish to avoid us, and warlike demonstrations begun by two individuals unslinging carbines in the rear, I sent the guide in advance to relieve their anxiety; they proved to be the family of the commandant of Lagos, flying bag and baggage to a more safe retreat; there were two ladies in the party, and we remained in company for some miles: they had lost a valise in their flight, and, on parting, I was under the belief that they regarded me as the lucky finder thereof.

Further on we passed a remarkable elevation called *La Mesa*, a table hill of a perfect oval, rising like the palisades of Hudson River; some three hundred feet, with a dead flat surface, and but one gateway-like aperture leading to the summit—making altogether a most regular and inaccessible natural fortress. My guide assured me, there was a deep, clear lake on top, and many acres of good soil.

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The sun was getting high up, when we drew bridles at a fork of the road, beneath a wide-spreading tree, and in fact the only one to be seen. Here, squatted on a stone, was a jolly old gentleman, with a great earthen jar of pulque, and platter filled with the same sour fermentation, on the grass before him; the guide, as in honor bound, swallowed a centavo's worth, but I was contented with a little diluted museal, which is far more palatable, and has much the taste of Scotch whiskey. Both preparations are made from the same species of plant—the American Argave—and to see the immense extent of land under cultivation—the great droves of beasts carrying the juice to market, one might readily believe enough was made to keep the whole Mexican nation in one continued state of intoxication. The keeper of the small ambulating pulperia informed us that a pronunciamiento had taken place that very morning at San Juan de Lagos, and that large bands of armed men had entered the town at daylight. Padre Jarauta had destroyed my appetite the night previous, and this news equally perplexed me—for there was but one route directly through the town, and I had no inclination to run a muck; so following the advice of my guide José Maria, to lay by a few hours, and learn the state of affairs from some one passing along the road, we descended a small ravine entirely sheltered from view, where the horses were unsaddled, and a temporary screen made with the serapas, to shield us from the noontide sun. Here I stretched myself upon the grass, and before many minutes elapsed had cut buttons and straps from my jacket: the uniform I wore was generally taken for that of a Mexican cavalry officer, but in this instance I was resolved to make assurance doubly sure, and not be mistaken for a gringo: and accordingly hurled buttons and lace far down the gully.

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Two hours past meridian I was awakened by José, who reported having heard firing in the town, and that he had learned from a paisano, in hot haste from Lagos, that Señor Jarauta, after making a forcible razzia of all animals to be found, marched with over a hundred compatriots for Aguas Calientes: whether he put himself to any inconvenience or not in regard to my movements, I did not hear or care, so true is the adage, "sacabo il periculo, adio il santo." All I ever learned of his after history, was that a month later he was made prisoner by the troops of General Bustamente, and immediately shot. Thus being relieved of the good father, I gathered courage to proceed, and mounting, we gave spur for San Juan de Lagos; we had but a league's travel, and I was soon put out of suspense, for on descending a steep hill, which led down to the town, we encountered a number of arrieros, who gave the pleasing intelligence, that the place had declared in favor of the existing government, and the towns people had driven the agents of Paredes outside, and thus we rode to a meson without molestation. I noticed about eighty citizen soldiers drawn up in front of the church, listening to the harangue of a clerical gentleman, attired in a stove-pipe hat and flowing gown.

There was not a *remuda*—change—to be had for love or money in San Juan de Lagos; all the horses having been secured and carried into the country during the pronunciamientos; after a bowl of frijoles and tortillas, we were obliged to remount our wearied beasts, and toil slowly onward.

The same evening we reached the town of San Miguel, when another of these infernal pronunciamientos was brewing, but a polite old gentleman procured me a relay, and away we rattled over a dry undulating champaigne country to Mirondillo, where finding another remuda, and leaving Cerro Gordo on the left, the full moon lighted us safely into Tepetitlan. Here I proposed tarrying, but the meson was so filthy and detestable—so full of fleas and uncomfortable, that wearied as I was, after vainly trying to sleep on a table, I ordered fresh horses, and departed at midnight. In two hours, becoming too sleepy to keep the saddle, notwithstanding José made his *macarte* fast to my steed's neck and towed us some distance, we fell in with an encampment of arrieros and their mules, who, after a strict sance, very kindly allowed us to bivouac near their

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fires.

In no other part of the world do I believe there can be found such a worthy, brave, hardworking, and industrious class of persons as the arrieros of Mexico; they are proverbial for honesty, and there is scarcely an instance known where they have proved unfaithful; trusted for weeks and months with the most valuable cargoes, from silks to gold, in a country, too, where crime in its worst forms is rife, and where detection is vain, they still appear a distinct race from their thievish countrymen, and preserve an integrity seldom met with.

At the first blush of morn, the encampment was astir. Calling and whistling to the mules, the sagacious brutes came regularly to the spot where their pack was deposited, were in turn loaded, and sent on after the bell mules in advance. Meanwhile, the drivers prepared a hasty breakfast, which was hastily eaten—the cigarillo lighted, and off they trotted after their beasts. A good day's journey is six leagues—resting during the heat of the day.

I stood gazing at them until they disappeared in the dim light of morning; then, by the embers of their fires, my guide boiled a small measure of coffee in a broken earthen pot found near by, when we put foot in stirrup, and came on in the opposite direction. We rode rapidly to Puente Calderon, a small village at the foot of an abrupt elevation, with a noisy torrent dashing its turbid waters against the stone arches of the bridge. It was the spot where was fought one of the bloodiest revolutionary battles between the republican and royalist forces. Dismounting at a rude dwelling fronting the shelving, rocky street, with *Meson de la Patria* chalked over the entrance, we entered the patio, where was standing a huge, ungainly vehicle—a kind of family van, drawn by nine stout mules—while beneath the portals of the inn-yard were half a dozen juveniles and a couple of staid, portly parents. *Para servir ustedes*, quoth I, *Pasé vd bien*, murmured the party; *Vamonos almorzar!* and accordingly I sat down on a saddle and partook of their hospitality. The family were destined to Guadalajara from a two months sojourn on their plantations, and were as ignorant of what was going on in the world as a fish under water. Indeed, in this particular, they were not singular examples; and the ignorance of the peasantry was almost incredible. I frequently met individuals in the Western provinces, who, though they had heard of the war, had not the slightest conception with whom—*unos gringos*—some foreigners, they would say—and as for the simple information regarding short distances from place to place, or the nature of the road, and such trifling matters, it defied the most acute cross-examinations.

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The conversation at our breakfast ran upon the war, and revolutions of the country. "And where are you from, Señor?" asked the old lady, as she chucked a hot tortilla towards me. "From Mexico, and the peace is declared!" *Valgame Dios!*—is it possible! exclaimed they all in a breath; "and will those horrible Yankees ever leave the city?" *Si! si!* "But, Señor, we are wondering who you are?" Oh! I'm one of those demonios Yankees! *Jésu Maria! dispense mi amigo!* screamed the Señora. The old gentleman offered his apologies, and we all laughed heartily; but still I remarked the younger shoots of the family observing me with furtive glances, as if I might have been a wild animal lately uncaged. My hunger was soon appeased, and fresh horses carried us to Puente Grande. The river was much swollen and flowing over its rocky bed with turgid violence. Before crossing, I turned up the stream, selected a clean grassy bank, threw off my clothes, and plunged in. It afforded me great relief, in its icy coldness, for my leg was still painful with the hoof-prints of the vicious brute near San Juan del Rio. My ablutions seemed to create much surprise and amusement to a group of brown damsels washing on a green islet near by, who, on swimming towards them, changed their tune and retreated to the willowy thickets. My guide, José Maria, was vastly horrified and shocked, not so much at the conduct of the girls, as my own regardlessness of life and health, in having the temerity to lave in cold water. *Se hace daño*—be the death of you—he continually repeated, and related many direful incidents where persons had contracted diseases thereby, and had lived but a very few minutes after coming out; perceiving that I was not affected to that extent, he at last discovered me to be a *gringo*, who could endure anything. We again mounted—changed horses in the town—were exempted from paying the rial toll at the bridge, on account of being an *extraordinario del Gobierno*—ate a melon—purchased a new whip with a lash like the thongs of a knout, and thence proceeded towards Guadalajara. Half way, we overtook two ladies with servants, mounted on fast mules, and we accompanied them to the city. As we rode through the suburban town of San Juan—where is the residence of the Bishop of Jalisco, with many fine houses and beautiful gardens, the rain began to fall, and by the time we reached the long Paseo, it was descending in cataracts, with thunder and lightning resounding and flashing around us. I halted for shelter under the close-leaved protection of the trees that fringed the promenade; but no arguments could induce my lady companions to do the same, and they were drenched with a torrent of waters, while standing in the middle of the road, fearing a shock of the *rayo*, beneath the foliage.

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I was the first to bring confirmed intelligence of the peace, to Guadalajara. The news of its passage through the Mexican Congress had already been received, and had caused some demonstrations in one of the regiments, instigated by agents of Paredes: more was anticipated upon the confirmation of the treaty, but nothing of importance occurred. There existed, as in Querétaro, a violent party among the military, opposed to the new government under Herrera. All moderate and reflecting *ciudadanos* were for peace: it was the policy of the State of Jalisco, though as patriotic as any. It was the wealthiest district of the whole Republic, and had much to lose and naught to gain, should the waves of invasion have rolled towards the Pacific. They had drawn a sage moral from the misfortunes of the neighboring provinces: they had beheld the largest and best appointed army Mexico ever put in the field, vanquished at Buena Vista; they had seen a compact body of six thousand troops cleave their way through six times that force into

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the garitas of the capital, and they felt convinced that even half that veteran band of North Americans could sweep over the grand plateau, and as easily conquer the fair city of Guadalajara.

At the time of my arrival, the state government felt assured of support, and besides having means at hand to prevent any insurrection, had dispatched a battalion of three hundred soldiers, with two pieces of artillery, to oppose Paredes. Nevertheless, preparations had been made to guard against any attempt nearer home, and on passing through a private apartment of an official residence, I observed a number of persons busily employed making ball-cartridges, but, as usual, they were too greatly disproportioned with powder, and as a consequence the Mexicans generally overshoot the mark.

CHAPTER XXXV.

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I was duly installed in my former lodgings at the French fonda, and in the afternoon, being a holiday, went to the Plaza de Toros. The arena was spacious, but without the wooden screens within the circle to protect the tauridors and bandilleros, as is seen in the bull-rings of old Spain. The amphitheatre was well arranged, and capable of containing many thousands, with a separate enclosure, at a more elevated stand, filled with troops, with fixed bayonets, and commanding a good sweep around the audience. The exhibition was more of a cow-combat than an old-fashioned bull-fight; they are miserable, disgusting scenes at best, and the stranger ever takes sides with the tortured beasts against their brutal tormentors. Here the horns were sawed partly off, or blunted with leaden beads; in other respects the affair was conducted as elsewhere. As the military governor, Yañes, appeared beneath his crimson canopy, the music ceased; the gayly-dressed bands of picadores, bandilleros, tauridors, on foot and horse, headed by the Matador, with long toledo in his hands, bowed reverently before the General and Judges; then crossing themselves, a pause ensued; the dulce men, and cigar venders, old beldames with chairs, and boys with *sombra*—shade tickets—held their peace. The arena was cleared of all but the mounted prickers and scarfmen; a bugle sounded, low, heavy panels within the barricade of the circus swung back, and in rushed the bulls. It is always to me the finest sight, when the fierce beast—before becoming blinded with rage—lightly stirs the ground bark with his fore foot, moves his head slowly from side to side—the eyes flaming in a sparkle of lambent jet—when with breath short and quick, with a wary glance around, he selects—poor fool—some light, fluttering object, instead of the arms that wave it, gives one deep angry bellow, and dashes forward. Then begin the leaping antics of his active enemies: they tease him to insanity, fire-work him, until the sulphurous flames blister his tough hide; hood him, prick him, stab him—he is killed; and the two white steeds, decorated with streaming red ribbons, bound in, and the slaughtered beast, with glassy eyes and lolling tongue, is dragged out. Sometimes, though rarely, the animal is terrified by his novel position, and no coaxing will make him show fight; then boys and vagabonds generally are permitted to leap the barricades, and chase the scared brute about the circus, with shouts and hisses, when he is driven out to feed the dogs. Then there are cheering *gritos* for particularly dextrous picadors, who, with long poles, and a short spike at the end, afoot, withstand the lunge of the bull, until the hide in the terrible exertion is nearly entirely loosened from the frame; or when the daring Matador, with a single vigorous plunge, drives the long blade to the very hilt, through a bloody sheath, into the tired beast. Again at *longo intervallo*, a few coins are flung into the circle, to reward the favored gladiators. All this, with plenty of dust, oceans of orchata, and a fair show of lovely faces, made up the bull fight.

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Later in the evening I attended the kind Padre to the *Comedia*. The theatre was small, prettily painted, gilded, carved, and particularly well-stocked with fleas. The audience was highly respectable, and the female portion still preserved my appreciation of their beauty on the former visit—there was less youth, but an equal degree of matronly comeliness. Unlike the saffron-hued damsels generally seen throughout Mexico, these doñas had rounded forms, rosy complexions, and such soft, languid eyes, and hair so smoothly banded or braided, that I often felt tempted to pass my hand over the satin tresses of a lovely woman seated before me.

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The play was a most horrible tragedy—all about Moors, Guzmans and Granada. The actors magnificently dressed, heaving unnecessarily long respirations at every word—in fact a gasping species of elocution. The prompter, too, within his covered trap behind the foot-lights, wheezed like one far gone in the asthma, with a voice louder than the performers.

The audience puffed paper cigars—men, women and children—until the smoke became so dense, that nothing was perceptible on the stage, save alone the shining armor that encased the legs of a Moor.

The curtain fell at midnight; and after an hour passed in a brilliant café, sipping ices and punch, I returned to mine inn.

It was with unfeigned regret I parted with the gentlemen who had been civil to me at Guadalajara—particularly Señor Llamas and the excellent Padre—may they abide *muchos años*—in health and prosperity in their beautiful city.

On the 7th of June, escorted by my former antique guide, Cypriano, who quite reminded me of a knight of the dark ages, with lance and pennon, we got in the saddle, at nine by the evening clock, and pursued our path through the silent lanes and suburbs of the city. Without the moon to

light our footsteps, we were four weary hours at a snail's pace in reaching the Porton, or Garita, when, after much parleying from house-tops and gratings, the lazy, sleepy sentinels were persuaded to let down the chains, that barred the gateway, and we passed out upon the main road. The officer on guard informed us that the troops had, some weeks before, surprised and captured a number of the Ladrons, near Tequilla, and sixteen had already been executed, with a choice reserve of nine more that were to be shot on the morrow; all of which impressed me as extremely wise and judicious measures.

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We went jogging along, having no change of beasts, for I had bought a stout spotted roadster, called by the natives *pinto*—painted—but by me Circo, because of his resemblance to those variegated quadrupeds commonly exhibited in the Olympic sports of North America. Towards daylight I took a nap beside a rivulet, and with the sun arose, and had a delicious dip in the pure water—all the reasoning powers of my ancient mozo to the contrary. And here I feel, in gratitude, called upon to say a feeble word in praise of Mexican guides. They, indeed, should be classed with *arrieros*! Their attentions are unceasing. I found them honest, obliging, good-tempered, and possessing a certain share of local and traditionary intelligence. They appeared to exist without sleep, too; for whenever I laid down, I pointed to sun or stars, as a celestial clock, to mark the hours and true to the dial—was always awakened at the proper time, finding all ready for mounting, even to the spurs attached to my feet. *Ha dormido vd bien? quiere vd tantito de pan? una capita de licor, pues!* says your guide, producing the morsel of bread or wine from the pouches of the saddle; but if neither be required, he will roll, and light you a cigarillo, and if he sees you enjoying its soothing flavor, he throws up his hand and exclaims, '*Ay! mi alma! está bueno!*' I've hit your fancy now;' and continues the route with renewed good humor, apparently amply happy that he has effected something to please you. Such a one was old Cypriano; besides having a fund of marvellous legends—upon every stone cross or mountain pass in Mexico—that very much relieved the occasional monotony and fatigue of the journey.

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The ride was dreadfully oppressive with heat and dust, besides fear of robbers, which, after a by-no-means hearty breakfast on a water-melon I had no stomach for. An hour past noon we drew up near the environs of Tequilla, and remained sleeping by the side of the stream, until the declining sun warned us to be off. The horses and myself had been washed and fed, and with a cooler atmosphere, we toiled over bad roads, hilly, rocky and dusty, when soon after nightfall the twinkling lights of Madelena were visible, and we trotted into the Meson. The neighborhood had become quiet since my departure; the compadres dispersed, and the paisanos had thrown aside the weapons they dared not use. It was too late for a call upon the Alcalde, and my venerable guide ordered supper. The patron of the inn was not an obliging person—not anxious to add to the comforts of his guests. He had a pair of daughters flitting about the yard in loose undress, who busied themselves for an hour in the attempt to boil eggs to my liking; but after the fifteenth trial, some as hard as brickbats, and others hardly warmed, the effort was relinquished, and I contented myself with the national dish of frijoles, which is ever an excellent preparation, and invariably well cooked. Meanwhile, the surly patron kept a lynx-eyed supervision upon the erratic damsels; and they never came near the bench, laid for our supper, without he would snatch the dish from their fair hands, and, with a rough push, cry "*Basta! basta! muchacha! anda!* Be off with you." Old Cypriano lost patience at last; and seizing his lance, swore by the Holy Virgin if he did not know how to treat a cavallero, who spent his cash like a king, he'd teach him—he would! These threats had the desired effect; and calling off his handmaidens, he sent them to the *cocina*, sat down before the door, and left us in peace. I remained at the Meson until daylight, reclining on a large rough-built settee in the patio, with no other covering than a comfortable serapa between my body and a canopy of stars: certainly preferable to the close, damp holes within the building, where fleas and vermin parade in battalions on the look-out for wayworn travellers. Moreover, nothing can exceed the delicious atmosphere of the nights, in the *Tierra templada* of Mexico, soft, yet invigorating—clear, calm and refreshing. I speak, of course, of the dry season—with the rains one must seek a more modern habitation.

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My venerable soldier had the *pinto*, grinding his last mouthful of grain beside me, ready for a start. I arose, as the sailors say, wide awake as a black fish, and swung into the saddle. *Vayase con Dios*—go to heaven, or the other place, just as the intonation implies—said the grum inn keeper. *Hasta nunca*—hope never to see your ugly phiz again—retorted Cypriano, as he gripingly counted out the rials for our entertainment; I threw something more weighty to the *muchachas*, who repaid me with kindly wishes.

With the fresh air of morning we left Madelena, and kept for some miles along the borders of a broad, shallow lake, of the same name, until the road diverged to the right, when we were obliged to forsake the good ground, and level country, for tedious labor, over mule paths and rugged mountains.

At Muchatilti we passed some ninety soldiers, horse and foot, barefoot, conveying a pack of rascally-looking thieves, and a small field piece. They were attended by twice this number of women and children, who at times relieved their liege lords of muskets or equipments, with the weight of camp utensils on their heads. On questioning a sergeant belonging to the detachment, he told me they generally marched four leagues a day, and in many places were obliged to throw the gun from its carriage, and transport each part separately for leagues at a time. This person also assured me, that he had served at the battle of Buena Vista, and with his company of infantry had marched twenty-eight leagues in forty-eight hours, with but a pint of parched Indian corn, and a quart of water per man! So far as marching, and powers of enduring privation go, I presume the Mexicans can do as much, if not more, than other nations. They are not deficient in

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courage either, when well officered and led—some of their bloody internal struggles attest it—but with us they proved sadly deficient in both.

I have but little knowledge of what constitutes the proper field for extended military operations; but from a few indifferent ideas picked up in other countries, as well as in this trip through Mexico, I think I may hazard the belief that in the line of march from Guadalajara towards the Pacific, there are seldom met with positions adapted to the operations of large bodies of troops, and save in the vicinity of large towns, an army of any magnitude would find difficulty in procuring subsistence; for the country is thinly populated, and but little land under cultivation, and though I should judge not totally impassible for artillery, it certainly seems an impracticable route for a numerous train, or heavy guns.

Making no longer stay at the brightly-stained inn of Muchatilti than was requisite to swallow a cup of coffee, and thrash a filthy Indian for being caught *flagrante delictu*—stealing a bit of silver from my bridle—we traversed the table-land beyond, and began zigzagging through defiles of mountains on the approach to the Plan de Barrancas. The sky became overcast—thunder was growling angrily in the distance, when we overtook a drove of mules, the arrieros urging them at speed down a valley to escape the fury of the impending storm. Descending to the base of a gorge, we crossed the rocky bed of a rippling brook, and removing the saddles from our horses, led them above, and secured them to a tree, whilst we ascended still higher, and sought refuge under the lee of a great shelving crag that had once formed part of the stupendous wall, five thousand feet above us. Rain began to fall in large heavy drops, lightning to glare, and thunder came nearer. The air was perfectly still; and the sharp whistles and cries of the drivers echoed and re-echoed from side to side of the chasm, as they hurried their beasts across the stream. By-and-by a strong gust of wind went rushing overhead, the thunder came crashing yet closer, the dark slate-colored clouds poured down in torrents, and lightning forked, flashing and vivid, made the narrow valley tremulous with noise and fire. The rain descended in unbroken sheets, and in an inconceivably short space of time, the bubbling brook had become a boiling torrent, swelling and leaping from rock to rock, until, at last, joining in the uproar of rain, wind, flame and thunder, the rocks themselves were loosened, and came rumbling and crashing down the steep gorges, and were swept away in the whirlpool of foaming waters. He who has never beheld a quickly-raised storm amid wild mountain passes, and the amazing power of the elements, can have but a vague idea of Nature when clothed in all her angry grandeur and sublimity.

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The *nubarrada* was soon over, but the whole face of the valley was changed: trees and undergrowth had been torn up by the roots or washed down—deep fissures had been cut wherever the red clayey soil gave play to the impetuous currents—masses of basaltic granite had been dislodged, thrown from their foundations, hurled some distance below, and either served to block up some open channel, or enlarge others; and the point where the path crossed the stream had been burrowed out into a deep, raging pool, which would in future be impassible.

One of the poor mules belonging to the drove, with his cargo of sugar, had been caught and carried away in the contending water; the arrieros cursed like infidels, and wickedly declared they had long before wished a like fate might befall him for his stupidity.

As the thunder went muttering to the adjacent mountains, and the flood was still deluging our devoted heads, I yelled into the ear of Cypriano, who all the while kept his cigarillo alight, that it was *una cosa rica*—a fine display—*tiene ud rason*—"there's sense in that," said the old man, "but wouldn't you rather have a dry serapa and calconcillos?" So forthwith he wrung the moisture from my garments, and we prepared the horses for service. Leading them by a dangerous foothold down the course of the stream, we came to an enlarged basin, and halted on a smooth belt of rocks. Here the sun shown again warm and cheerily—we dried our reeking raiment, and I amused myself the while under a light cascade of turbid water.

At midday we had toiled slowly up the steep sides of the Barrancas, and four hours later, left the last link of the Sierra, and drew bridles at Istlan. Having no further need of the post administrador, or the services of his *vivo* mule, I sought the public meson. Here were seated under the portals a select group of politicians, listening to, and commenting upon an article in an old newspaper, read with much emphasis by a dirty jacketless person, with a head so large, and buried so deeply between his shoulders, as to bear a close resemblance to a turtle. *Señor*, said he, as I dismounted, rising with a graceful gesture, "the good patron of the inn is away; the caballero who addresses you is the well known *licenciado* Don Augustin Jarano—*criado de vd*: What can be done for you? that is a noble animal you bestride; he is tired! beat out—dead! You will profit by an exchange—my friend, here," winking to one of his auditors, "has an angel of a beast—*tienes sobre pasos*—has a gait like a lady—paces! and has refused two ounces—*eh! no! quarante douros*—forty hard dollars!" *Buéno*, I replied, much to the horror of my guide, who began to think the sharp advocate was going to become the owner of the pinto. After a world of tugging and struggling a miserable spavined nag was pulled from a corral to the patio, and secured to a post. Waiting until the praises of this *muy bueno cavallo*—this fine steed—had been fully sounded, I made them a prompt offer of six rials for him as he stood!—when, finding the gringo was not to be so easily jockeyed, they declared he was not worth half the money, and we became warm friends at once. I tarried an hour, discussing the right of church taxation; when Cypriano, having had a fowl grilled, a bowl of frijoles, bread, and country wine, snugly stowed in the *alforgas*, I informed my acute acquaintances that I was bound to Guadalajara, bid them adios, and after skirting the pretty town, turned to the opposite direction. It is always advisable in Mexico while travelling, to avoid if possible public places, and keep the destination secret; for the *compadres*—highwaymen—are often in collusion with people about mesons and derive

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information of the guests from those sources.

Striking a path on the banks of a pretty stream, we shortly found a secluded nook, beneath a scrub olive-tree, where the beasts were bathed, fed, and picketed in the rich grasses, when we did much the same, and took a comfortable siesta beside them.

Towards evening resuming the journey, a few leagues carried us to Aguacatlan; to preserve the strength of our animals for a thirty leagues travel on the morrow, I concluded to remain until daylight. The spacious fonda was filled with guests, and I made the acquaintance of an agreeable young Irishman, from Tepic. In an adjoining room there was a large family of señoritas, convoyed by a venerable matron and servants. They were very chatty and amiable while sitting in the patio in front of their domicile; so much so, in fact, that the señora became suspicious, and, as my Milesian companion remarked, "*corral'd* the donçellas too early in the evening." The duenna had no compassion for bachelors, and we saw no more of their fluttering white dresses and ribosas; though we could hear them frolicking and shouting in great glee, which was very provoking, as windows there were none, and Spanish bolts and portals being famous for strength and solidity, we were obliged to relinquish any further hope of their charming society.

It was getting late, old Cypriano was sitting at my door, enveloped in a serapa, giving no signs of life, save the occasional reluming of the cigarillo, like a dim glow-worm, betwixt his teeth. The honest fellow needed rest, and saying *Buénos noches* I threw myself upon the brick bedstead, with saddle for pillow, and was soon asleep. [Pg 298]

Before sunset on the following afternoon, my gallant little beast galloped bravely into Tepic, and I was again made quite at home with Mr. Bissell. A vessel was awaiting me at San Blas, but the passage being a tedious one to Mazatlan by sea, I concluded to pursue the land route along the coast to the latter port, on the following night, and accordingly called on General Aristi, who endorsed my passport, and I then took a post license. I was sorry to discharge my faithful old guide, Cypriano, but a liberal donation, and present of the *pinto* served to lessen our mutual grief. He still hung about the court-yard, jealous of the attentions shown me by others, and buckling on my spurs, affectionately pressed my legs at parting.

I rode about Tepic, with a young Englishman, who was handsome enough to drive all the women in town distracted. The city has not the air of stir and bustle, like other places of note in the interior, nor is it so well built; it has charms, however, in quietude, in verdant fields, the fertility of its lovely plain, its swift streams, long lines of gardens, all looking as if calmly cradled in the arms of the giant sierras that encircle it.

The rainy season was approaching, and whilst we were bathing in the little rush and mat-built cabins by the river, the first shower fell—there were numbers of ladies and children beneath the leafy frames, which only served for shelter a moment, and at last, in desperation, groups of them sallied out for a run to the town; the effort was ineffectual, the gusts of wind and rain drove them back, with light dresses completely saturated, and clinging to round pretty limbs only more exposed in efforts to conceal them. Our gallant offers of assistance were all in vain, they only screamed and laughed the louder the nearer we advanced; thus on the wet grass they reclined, and remained in the heavy rains until servants returned with shawls and wrappers, when, with many a light laugh and flashing glance, they ran across the plain. [Pg 299]

Although prepared to leave Tepic at midnight, the rain was violent and darkness too black to begin the journey. Towards daylight, with guide and postboy, and closely buttoned *armas*, of skin leggings, with faces turned from the tempest, we made the attempt. We had not proceeded much beyond the city, when the roads became so exceedingly slippery over a clayey soil, and our progress so tedious and dangerous, that we dismounted at a rancho, and were compelled to remain until near noon. By this time the heaviest clouds had apparently squeezed themselves dry, and under light droppings we again pushed on and commenced descending very gradually from the grand plateau towards the Tierra Caliente below. This I did not accomplish without having my steed to fall with me, but luckily escaped injury, the saddle bearing the brunt of the shock, and a broken stirrup saving my leg and foot from a like mishap. We reached the low lands within eight leagues of San Blas, and found a disagreeable contrast in the dry heat, from the salubrious atmosphere above.

Changing horses and rapid riding brought us to the main trunk of the Rio Grande, when embarking with our saddles and geer, in broad canoes, we were ferried to the opposite bank at Santiago. The river is wide, rapid and muddy. Small houses of rushes extended from the banks, and hundreds of people were washing or bathing within them.

The town appeared to have been visited with a heavy shower of water-melons; I had never before seen such quantities. In front of every house there were pyramids five feet high, like racks of shot in an ordnance yard; every man, woman and child had their heads immersed to the ears in huge fragments; even cattle, swine and dogs were at work, and the river, too, was covered with seeds and rinds. It was not surprising, that under such a novel dispensation, there was delay in procuring horses; to pass my time I supplied myself with a huge green monster of its species, engaged a little shed of rushes, and cooled my limbs in the tepid waters, which last feat did not in the least shock the modesty of an ancient *planchadora*—washerwoman—who carried on her occupation quite unconcernedly beside me. [Pg 300]

Under lash and spur away we went in great good humor, but had not gone a league, when I waxed exceeding wroth on discovering that some watchful thief had stolen three ounces from my

hat while bathing—it was too late to return, and we consigned him to his just deserts. The roads were perfectly level, dry and sandy; at times we scented the ocean air, borne along by the regular sea breeze, and the atmosphere was filled with knats and mosquitoes, that by no means enlivened the journey. The vegetation had changed, and we passed for leagues through groves of tapering palm trees, broad-leafed bananas, rank vines and vegetation. Forging the Rio San Pedro, we traversed the little towns of Rosa Morada and Buena Vista, thence over the Rio Caña to Acaponeta. The river was a clear, shallow stream, and had not yet been swollen or turbid by the freshets near its source above. We had ridden all night, and sending my mozo to the town, with the post boy who had suffered severely from the sting of an *alacran*, a venomous scorpion, I remained to bathe and put on my other shirt.

During the entire trip to and from Mexico, I found that by eating sparingly of light food, smoking less, and laving constantly, I could endure almost any amount of fatigue, with but an hour or two of sleep in the twenty-four; a few paper cigarillos was all the extraneous stimulant I indulged in while on the road.

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Acaponeta is a hot little town, half built of mud, with a spacious rural-like square, shaded by fine trees, and boasting of a quaint old church. It is but a few leagues from the ocean, surrounded by a sandy soil, which however, under the sun's fierce rays, over all the Tierra Caliente, produces quantities of tropical plants: the cassava for meal, bananas and guavas, with melons and many kinds of fruit. The inhabitants of these secluded districts, living in little worlds of their own, free from care or war, regardless of the political revolutions so continually agitating the mother country, seem to enjoy the *dolce far niente* in its truest sense. They are too poor to excite the rapacity of the government; their land yields almost spontaneously all means of subsistence; they live in mud cabins or bamboo huts, through whose light lattice-work of reeds or trellis, the sea breeze cools them during the languid siesta; then at the fiesta or fandango, the women, in white muslin camizettas and gaily striped basquinas, with gilt baubles, perhaps, thrust through their black locks, attended by the men, whose only wealth consists of horse, saddle, spurs and serapa—dance, game and drink until the fiesta is ended, with no fears of interruption save what lies in the sharp steel of their mercurial cuchillos—ignorant and unenvious of all around them.

I found my guide in the Plaza, and walked into a white building on a corner, purporting to be a *Fonda y Billar*. It was Sunday morning, besides some notable feast day; a little old spider-legged uneven billiard table was thronged by rakish blades, with little miniature nine pins stuck in the centre of the cloth, which were being rapidly knocked down by the players; a pulperia was close at hand, and the chink of *copitas*, filled with aguadiente or muscal, was keeping a musical accompaniment to the click of the billiard balls. The patron was an active, portly person, and from his clean, natty attire and huge beard, with a certain sea roll to his gait, I correctly surmised that he had "sailed the broad ocean," or that he might have been a retired pirate. He received me very hospitably, ordered a lithe black-eyed little girl of ten years not to go to the Iglesia until *El Capitan* had made a breakfast, and pointing to a bedstead in the sala, upon which was tightly stretched a side of dressed leather, desired me to repose until he could procure horses.

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From my position I had a clear view around the Plaza—crowds of gaily-dressed paisanos were moving from house to house, or thronging the bough-built booths and little shops, all strewed beneath the lofty trees, sipping dulces, making purchases, eating fruit, smoking or gaming. Presently the large bell began tolling for high mass; like magic, at the first stroke of the iron tongue, traffic ceased, the monté was discontinued, the dealer putting by money and cards; half eaten fruit was thrown upon the ground, children ceased squalling, caracolling steeds were reined sharply back by riders crossing the square, the noise of balls and glasses in the Billar and Tienda was silenced, hats were reverently doffed, cigarillos dropped, and the hum and murmur of many voices had passed away. Then, as the little chimes with noisy throats were bursting forth in clanging peals, the whole concourse of persons that filled the plaza went moving with uncovered heads, sombreros in hand, toward the church, and now the organ rose in solemn strains, embers were swinging, multitudes of tapers were twinkling within the nave, like stars in the firmament, while hundreds were kneeling in piety and awe before the shrines they worshipped. In no portion of the world can there be found more true respect for religion or real reverence, than in some parts of Mexico, and the truthfulness and simplicity with which they conduct the beautiful ceremonials of the catholic church, is not a flattering commentary upon the indifferent professions of more enlightened countries.

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In witnessing this impressive scene, I sighed to become a convert, and indeed I felt convinced that if I had had the persuasive lips exerted for my conversion, that pertained to the penserosa face and Murillo eyes of my host's graceful little daughter, I should have thrown away the sword for the cross on the spot. She was standing with half raised eyes, and an impatient expression, wondering very naturally, no doubt, why the gringo did not swallow the eggs and milk she had prepared by her sire's commands—*Quiere usted mas Señor?*—want anything else—she murmured, with a pretty, petulant frown; "No! no! *amigita! mil gracias*, forgive me for detaining you from the mass;" her face brightened joyously, and readjusting her little flowing ribosa, she tripped away to her devotions.

Horses were soon at the door, and passing beside the now-deserted booths and shade, we once more became exposed to the burning glare of the tropical sun. During the afternoon, light showers of rain chased us along the road—a great relief from breathing the light sandy dust of the parched soil; but as night came on, and our track led through interminable forests of sycamores, closely woven with thousands of creeping vines and parasitical plants, the very light and air were shut out, and what with myriads of stinging insects, heat and dust, I thought of

never surviving. Two tours past midnight we emerged from these sultry groves, and reached the village of Esquinapa, where, changing steeds, I was attended by an old post boy, named Tomas; and from the moment I unceremoniously disturbed his slumbers until we parted, he never ceased singing and rhyming. He would have made a character for Cervantes. Awaking with a couplet on his tongue, he followed it up by a trite Spanish proverb, hit off scores of doggerel, like an improvisatore, on my name, and, indeed, with his joyous, hearty old laughter, that acted like an epidemic in every scar and wrinkle of his fine bronzed face—with generous bonhommie and good humor, he kept me full of merriment the nine leagues we travelled; and I have only to regret, for my own satisfaction, not having noted some of his poetical sallies.

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We gained the Rio Rosario before dawn, and halted between two channels, on a dry pebbly spot, where, throwing myself from the saddle, I plunged into the running water, and then, with a little mound of sand for a pillow, took the first half-hours sleep since leaving Tepic. At sunrise, old Tomas aroused me with a verse and song, and fording the remaining fork of the river, we entered Rosario. It is a place of some importance, with a number of substantial public buildings—internal custom house, a tobacco monopoly, and barracks for a military commandancia; in fact less provincial, more modernized with cafés, shops, sociedades, and well-constructed houses than any town of the Tierra Caliente, save Mazatlan. While awaiting a relay, I was regaled by the gentlemanly administrador of the Duana with a cup of delicious chocolate, and in turn favored him with late news from the capital.

Departing from Rosario, which is nearly thirty leagues from the Port, I came on at a flying gallop to the old Presidio; then tarrying for breakfast with General Anaya, I again continued with all speed to Urias, where my horse's heels, and my own anxiety, outstripped the broken wind of the guide's, and I never drew rein before reaching the Marismas of Mazatlan. The tide was very high, and I was almost forced to swim; but encouraged by a cavalcade of gentlemen on the opposite shore, I straggled through, and was greeted by hosts of acquaintances, who, by mere accident and fun, had proposed to meet me on the road. I feel assured that I never shall be so handsomely escorted again; and what added to the éclat of my arrival was, that upon entering the crowded plaza a polite commissary ordered the band to play "Hail Columbia!" and I was nothing loth to hide my blushes, travel-stained garments, and jaded horse, from the admiring populace, and seek refuge within the residence of the Governor.

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Thus terminated my rough notes and jolts in a Mexican saddle, after a journey of near twenty-five hundred miles, mostly on horseback; and the last one hundred and twelve leagues from Tepic performed in fifty-three hours, which was said to be the quickest trip on record. I was happy that the journey was finished; and although I experienced no subsequent fatigue, and my frame was much stronger, yet it is an undertaking that I should not be anxious to attempt again.

When a gentleman travels in Mexico, he goes provided with beds and baggage on pack mules, and half a dozen attendants at least, armed to the teeth, and ready to do battle when occasion requires. In my case it was different: at all times hurried, with at best but indifferent beasts—riding night and day together—never meeting a person on the roads without a mutual fumbling in the holsters for pistols, not knowing whether in raising the hand to the *sombrero*, it is intended to salute or shoot you, as friend or foe; yet, the provinces of the Republic that I traversed were out of the beaten track of tourists, with portfolios and poodles—a country where one is *per force* obliged to rough it a little; and where in the first essay, as in my case, the novelty and excitement attending fresh scenes, varied scenery, strange forms, manners and habits, more than balanced the fatigue, insecurity and annoyances of the journey.

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CHAPTER XXXVI.

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My arrival happened on the 13th of June. The garrison had been very much strengthened, and a block-house was under construction near the estero, with the expectation of holding the town during the rainy season and bad weather, in the absence of force afloat. The news of the peace changed these plans, and preparations were commenced for evacuating the town.

My little post at the Garita had been relieved of its old garrison, and fallen into strange hands, so I took quarters with my good friend Don Guillermo and Señor Molinero, where we lounged all day in the cool patios, under the awnings, smoking away like Turks. Muzatlan was extremely gay, owing to the yearly festival that takes place on the Olas Atlas—a curving beach between two bluff promontories facing the ocean. I am ignorant if there be in the calendar a patron saint devoted to gamblers, or I should certainly believe that this jubilee was expressly dedicated to him.

There were a great number of bough and cane-built booths raised on the sandy promenade, all prettily draped with muslin and other light fabrics, each having a tasteful display of liquors and fruits, with little saloons screened off, and facing the sea, for either eating or gaming: further on were stout upright poles, firmly planted in the ground, supporting circularly swinging coaches or wooden horses, some revolving perpendicularly, while others described the horizontal circuit: beyond were meaner *barracas* for the lower orders—gaming, mountebanks, juggling, eating, and maybe a little fighting.

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Towards nightfall the population assembled on the Olas Altas, and the scene became very gay and animated—the monté tables were thronged—dollars and ounces of gold chinking incessantly

—loto banks playing for prizes of dulces or licores—Indians with figured boards and dice, making more noise than their *confrères* in the trade, betting coppers or fried fish. The cars and horses were filled with delighted paisanos, who were enjoying the pleasures of city life. At the fandangos, too! were girls in their gayest dresses, dancing to the enlivening music of harps and guitars, bursting forth at intervals with some shrill chaunt or ballad, to relieve their nimble feet, perhaps, from exertions attending the *jarabie* or *jota*. It is altogether quite an attractive spot; and when one is tired of the monté, bowling at Smithers', or dancing at the fandangos, there is the sparkling surf at your feet, where the energies may be revived for a cosy supper with some fascinating little Mexicanas who are never known to decline a cup of chocolate and sweetmeats.

The influx of so many strangers from the surrounding country was not particularly advantageous to the morals of the Mazatlanese community: petty thieving and pilfering were all the rage. One evening some expert practitioner contrived to entice a valuable pair of pistols, clothing, and other articles from my table in the centre of a large apartment, by introducing a pole and hook through the iron grille of the window; and the same night my friend Molinero was robbed of his bed-clothes, while sleeping, by the same enterprising method. Indeed I incline to the belief that one may have the gold from his molars picked out, if the mouth chances to be opened, in a crowd of these cunning leperos. My consolation was, in being aware that they had filched all worth stealing, and in being indifferent to future depredations.

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The first night of my arrival I met our former little housekeeper at the Olas Altas, surrounded by a group of merry friends: "*Ah! dios!*" she exclaimed, "but they told me you were never to return—what *diablitos* those Yankees for telling such fibs. You have been gone just five *Domingos*"—they count by Sundays,—"*and that loco gringo amigo* of yours nearly ruined your horse, and came near breaking his own neck in the plaza—*gracias a Dios!*" Her breath being by this time exhausted, we made up a little purse, or *vaca*, and fortune befriending it at the monté, we sent her home, with enough silver to keep her Cuartel going for a twelvemonth. Early the next morning she was at my bedside, saying, *Digame de sus viajes*—tell me your adventures. To be relieved of her inquisitiveness, and get more sleep, I threw around her pretty throat a silver image and chain of our lady of Guadalupe which saved me any more exercises in the Spanish idiom until breakfast. And, by the way, ignorant people may indulge the idea that the Castilian tongue may easily be acquired "without a master," but, so far as my individual experience goes, no study is comparable to its acquisition with a tutoress, who, with the charms of bright eyes, rosy lips, and clear natal enunciation, renders the task not only facile, but pleasurable. I would advise any person who wishes to become proficient in this beautiful language to pay his homage to some artless, unaffected señorita, who, although she may not be ultra-enthusiastic, will still seem pleased, and interested at all your blunders, correct you with a tap of her fan; and if you be devoted, though stupid, will forgive all but flirtation with her *cuñada*—confidant;—guide your bungling feet in the dance, walk with you in the plaza, receive your little devotions of laces, gloves and flowers, and sing her sweetest low cancioncitas for your especial admiration.

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The regret of the townspeople was universal at our approaching departure; and even the few who were at first opposed to the North Americans had become the warmest in our favor. The sailors had all embarked, and the marines remained to perform the concluding honors. On the 17th of June, in the afternoon, General Negrete, escorted by a number of officers and a small squadron of cavalry, entered the Plaza. Drums rolled, the soldiers presented arms, the American flag came down, the Mexican Eagle flew up over the Quartel, and amid the thundering of artillery from ships and shore, bowing of officers, and waving of chapeaus, the ceremony ended. Arraya remained at the Presidio, having delegated his authority to the second in command.

I mounted my horse for the last time, rode through the deserted garita, and around the town. Many a kind adios was said, and although mine were laughed in return, I felt quite sad, for I had made happy acquaintances and friends, amid a class of people of all others, the wide world over, whose society and manners I have ever fancied, besides being relieved of the detestable monotony of shipboard; and I regard the half-year passed there as among the most contented of my existence, and shall ever refer with many a yearning to those pleasant days in Mazatlan. However, repinings are unavailing when a man's course in life is clearly defined, and he has no alternative but the almshouse on a dead lee-shore, and carrying a press of canvas to weather it; or else I might have taken the law in mine own hands, and settled down comfortably in Mexico.

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"Ay de mi! un año felice
Parece un soplo ligero,
Pero sin dicha, un instante.
Es un siglo de tormento."

Farewell Mazatlan! adieu, ye black-eyed girls, who so detested the Yankees, and shed such pearly tears at their departure! Adieu to fandangos, bayles, and tiny feet! Good-bye, ye jovial, hospitable traders, and your ruby wine! Alas!—in one sad sigh!—Farewell!

CHAPTER XXXVII.

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The squadron sailed, and I was ordered to embark in a fine old store-ship, to cross the Sea of Cortez. The lumbering craft went urging her lazy length through the water, her sails now and

then giving a gentle flapping, as if to convince herself they were not asleep, but napping, unlike the indolent sailors beneath their shade. "Blessed be he who first invented sleep, for it covereth a man all over like a mantle." When eyelids have fallen with very grief or weariness, how we may retire within a shell, to live a new peaceful existence, shut out from all the toils and cares of everyday life.

We arrived in the broad bay of La Paz. Circling hills and mountains arose red, parched and arid, enclosing on three sides a vast sheet of water—like an inland gulf—thirty miles in length and fifteen wide.

Vegetation appears to have forgotten this portion of the Peninsula entirely, at least to deck it in that delightful greenish hue that attracts the gaze when beheld from a distance—creeping up narrow valleys, or reposing, like an emerald carpet, on the sloping plains. Here Nature looks as if baked in an oven, until she had been thoroughly done too! A mile from the anchorage, at the head of the bay, another large lake extends beyond, and near by is the little town of La Paz—the ancient Santa Cruz of Cortez. The place has nothing to recommend it, except the fig-groves and vineyards of a Portuguese, named Manuel, and a tank of fresh water, where one may have a morning dip, before the vines are irrigated. There were a score or more señoritas, who danced with us all night, and washed our clothes all day, and very well they performed both accomplishments, being withal intelligent, and, to a certain degree educated; also two or three billiard-tables; a monté bank, of course; millions of cat-fish; plenty of fleas, dust, and heat; and about an hundred of Yankee Volunteers—charming fellows they were, as was remarked, "for a small tea-party without spoons." I think this is a correct summary of all the diversions and societies of La Paz, in the which we soon became contented and domesticated.

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No civilized beings excepting those unkillable gentry, yclept salamanders, could by any chance endure the noontide heat on shore; no one ever had energy to consult the mercury, but we presumed it was very high—say three or four hundred. We never left the ship until after the land wind came from the lofty heights to apprise us, perhaps, that we might risk a visit, without becoming sublimed in perspiration. Then the vine-clad arbors of the Portuguese were our favorite resort, where we killed time, devouring figs and grapes, or puffing cigarillos; the evenings came cool and temperate, with never a cloud in the heavens; the lassitude and languor of the sultry day gave place to more invigorating influences, and we sauntered from casa to casa, wherever lights were twinkling. The doñcellas were seated on low stools beneath the leafy awnings, whilst careful *amas*—house-keepers—were plying the needle or tambour work within.

"Kiss your hands, señoritas." "Shall we dance this evening?" *Con mucho gusto!* cry they all in a breath. Aye! the Graces doubt them! who ever knew a lithe young creole to turn her pretty toes away from whirling waltz or contra-danza. "Where shall we dance?" At Lola's, or Mariana's, or Ampara's—it matters not. "But the music?" Pshaw, you *gringo!* as if those well-fingered old harps and guitars were not ready tuned for the occasion, and the old night owls of musicians ever watchful, playing around the girls, like pilot fishes about the sharks. *Vamos pues!* The well-known faces are shortly assembled in a neighbor's dwelling; the listless, indolent air of morning has gone—at the first tinkle of the harp, eyes are sparkling with rapture, and feet patting the floor, like prisoned birds, only awaiting the harmonising crash of the little orchestra to be in motion. *Contra-danza!* shrieks the old leader. Two lines are formed—swinging gracefully to and fro, figures are changing, hands clasping and thrilling, arms are twining and winding, until the different bands are wound into beautiful and panting groups, when the music pauses a moment—hands fall, and to be convinced that our angelic partners have not wings, each seizes his fair companion around the waist, and away we spin in the waltz.

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In return for the nightly *tertulias* on shore, we gave them a little ball on board the frigate—the quarter-deck was gaily dressed and bedizened with parti-colored bunting, flags, chandeliers of bayonets and other nautical ornaments; but in the absence of any marketable matter, the supper-table below presented more variegated hues than the ball room itself; being all lights, glass, fancifully carved melons and dulces. However, they had capital music by the German Confederation, led by Peter the Greek—dancing until midnight—the old ladies were allowed to puff cigarillos on the quarter-deck, and all went away apparently highly delighted.

When becoming a little ennuied with these light pleasures, we made boating expeditions, and afterwards returned to them with renewed zest. Once on the glorious anniversary of Yankee Independence, we made the lease of a jolly boat. It was a capacious, portly and staunch receptacle of marine locomotion, generally used for big market baskets, beef, vegetables, and at times to transport drunken sailors. Our party was select and companionable; the General, Luigi, Canova, Speckles, Magarrabin, Earl and myself—a tambourine and fiddle, with each a nigger accompaniment, both combining with music a taste for cooking. We had fishing lines and fowling pieces, which last were voted bores and forthwith ordered to be discharged, and kept so during the cruise; then there was plenty of malt and sherry, a huge jug of punch after the ancient Romans, a comfortable chowder kettle and bag of biscuits. We were up betimes, and as the first ruffle of the sea breeze disturbed the quiet surface of the bay, we pushed off from the ship.

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Here let me apostrophise! I hate ships, I hate boats, I hate everything that floats! even more than I detest poor people; but at times they are all endurable, and marine misanthropic as I am, once in a great while I become reconciled; but should I ever have a son, and should ships exist and not merge into balloons, and he wish to become notorious for filial piety by reading the book his sire wrote—and be thus imbued with that parent's ideas and prejudices—I beseech him never to trust his precious toes with only half an inch of plank betwixt them and the briny deep. But providing

he should be so fortunate as to fall into a roomy bowl of a boat, like to our jolly, then after selecting the smoothest, shallowest of water, the gentlest of breezes, and flimsiest of sails, that will fly out of their bindings at the first puff of wind—armed with a broad sombrero, summerly jacket and trowsers, let him recline pleasantly on the seats, with a leg and arm thrown over the side, trailing in the rippling current—if there be the slightest suspicion of a shark, don't do it—then I say, let him lounge and doze as we did, as our richly freighted argosie calmly turned the native element from her prow, and proceeded majestically up the inner bay.

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We had a ten miles voyage, pausing occasionally to cast out the lines, temptingly baited by choice bits of meat, whereby were hooked great numbers of horned fishes of the feline species, commonly called cats, which served to divert our leisure moments until the cooks pronounced the market glutted, and we accordingly drew in the hooks, and again steered lazily towards our destination. It may have been an hour past meridian when the keel grated softly on the strand. We had chosen a little jutting sandy point, where the wind made a cat's paw of us, and came fawning and eddying around in the coolest manner imaginable. Days are ever the same in La Paz—there had not been a sprinkle of rain for a century, so we had naught to fear but the clear bright glare of the sun, which poured down light and heat on the arid mountains and glassy sheet of water, from which, like a polished mirror of silver, it was reflected back again.

On the little promontory there chanced to be a stunted olive, and it was but a minute's labor to cut away the lower branches, clothe the umbrella-shaped top with a boat's sail, spread mats and awnings beneath, build a temporary fire-place near by, and then repose happily in the shade, with cigars in full blast, and supervise the interesting process of cleaning fish, by the sailors, whilst the negro minstrels charmed us with falsetto ballads, or highly-complicated jigs.

We had narratives of adventure, accounts of previous fourths of July, and anecdotes of distinguished naval heroes, which last, I am sorry to say, as a general rule, are not complimentary—a pint of ale and a bite of luncheon. Then after multitudes of speculations upon the merits of the embryo chowder, and many direful threats and disrespectful allusions to the shins and pedigree of our sable cooks, in case the mess should prove a failure—gradually one by one we fell off into siesta.

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San Antonio, or that great fisherman, Sam Jones himself, only knows how long we remained in this happy state of insensibility, or how long the fishes, potatoes and *chillis* had been bubbling in the cauldron, or how often the jolly's crew had applied their lips to the punch jug—if I might be allowed to conjecture, possibly very often; nevertheless, we were all startled by a doleful yell from Mr. Speckles, who at the same time expressed his opinion in emphatic language, that the larger portion of the infernal regions "had broke loose." Appearances certainly favored the conviction, for within a few yards there came tearing along the beach a drove of bullocks, scattering the sand in clouds, besides having a very unpleasant expression about their horns. We immediately vacated the front seats, and rolled away into the interior of the branch-built castle, leaving no impediment in the path of our enraged visitors. We emerged again as they went by, and in the words of the Archbishop of Granada to Gil Blas, wished them "all manner of prosperity and a little more taste." The cause of this stampede was soon explained by the advent of a youthful *vacuero*, who stopped to observe us. The General very dextrously hitched a boat hook on to the waistband of his leather breeks, whilst some one else with equal skill, applied a like implement to the bit ringbolt of his bridle, and thus, as it were, brought him up all standing: *Señor* quoth we, "you behold the *rightful conquistadores* of California, the enormity of your crime, in driving wild beasts through a cavalier's house and furniture, renders you liable to fine and imprisonment, therefore we desire you to dismount," whereupon, making vigorous resistance, we assisted him to alight by the aid of the boat hook.

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Now, being supplied with a horse, we instantly made up a purse for a *carrera*—sweepstakes for all runners. But two competitors entered—Canova and Earl. The rest of the party held the bets and bottles, and constituted themselves judges. Mr. Earl took the nag, and Canova to his heels. The course was stepped fifty yards, the day being warm. They got away cleverly together, although the first twenty yards the former tried to jockey by crowding his antagonist into the water! At the turning-stone the cavallo was ahead, and if he could have been turned at that precise moment, the game would have been up; but every one knows how difficult it is for one unaccustomed to the business to pull a horse short up at his speed, and, consequently, the animal went still farther ahead, and when suddenly checked, pitched the rider to the ears several times before he could be made to gather fresh way on the other tack. At this period of the action, Canova was making long strides, and came in winner, after a hotly-contested race of two minutes. Rewarding the *vacuero* with a ship's biscuit, we graciously permitted him to depart on his steed.

The chowder was done to a charm—smelled and tasted nicely—neither over done nor underdone, nor too much *chilli*, nor too dry, nor too cold; and not being afflicted with indigestion, we did full justice to the feast, and attacked the big pot unceasingly, whose capacious interior did not shrink from the encounter. Still there is an end to all things, and there was, after a great while, to our appetites; so we sighed deeply, and drained the cups to the memory of '76, and other republican sentiments of patriotic tendency.

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As the shades of evening began to fall, we walked into the water and had a delicious bath. The old jolly was then gotten ready, and as the last rays of the setting sun flashed behind the western hills, we pushed from the strand, and gave three cheers in commemoration of our marine pic-nic. The light land wind wafted our bark slowly down the bay—the large lug sail swelled sluggishly

over the gunwale, sound asleep. The crew were doubled up on the thwarts, sound asleep also; and our own coterie, while listening to a narrative by Magarrabin, one by one dropt into slumber, and there was no one awake save the helmsman. I was comfortably esconced on the low grating, and on awaking the "pale night stars in millions bespangled heaven's pavilions." The breeze had freshened, and the water was seething and hissing under the cut-water. "Hillo! coxswain, where are we? near the ship, eh?" "Sir," said Fagan solemnly, "we have not budged an inch these two hours—it's strong flood." True enough we had been sailing in an aquatic treadmill, going through all the motions, without getting ahead. Pending these reflections Luigi came forward, and peering through the gloom to have a glimpse at the surrounding scenery—for he was near-sighted—accidentally lost his foothold, and popped overboard. I caught him by the toe of his boot, and assisted by the brawny arms of a stout Dutchlander, who, reaching down, seized our friend Luigi by the head, and letting go his heels, he righted, and was hauled on board.

The oars were now called to account, and without any further episode, sometime during the night we crept sedately up the frigate's side, descended to our several dormitories, and sank peacefully to rest. This was the way we passed the glorious anniversary, thousands of leagues away from our homes and country.

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A few days afterwards, in one of the frigate's large cutters we departed on an excursion of longer duration, for the Pearl Fisheries. We sailed late in the afternoon for the Island of San José. It stands like a sentinel at the mouth of the great bay, almost forty miles from the usual anchorage of La Paz. With a fresh and fair wind, just as day was dawning, we rounded an elbow-shaped reef, and let run the little anchor, near the shore. At sunrise a portion of the crew were landed on the beach, and under the shady lee of a rocky bluff, tents were pitched, and all the necessary arrangements for an encampment promptly made.

From the first discovery of the peninsula, in the sixteenth century, by Hernando de Grijalva, the shores of the gulf have been famous for their valuable pearls. Many of the inlets and bays were then resorted to, and continued to yield large quantities for more than two hundred years; but from the beginning of the present century the trade has gradually fallen off, and at the breaking out of the war with the United States, there were but two small craft employed in the fisheries. Still there is no doubt that the pearl oyster abounds in immense quantities, and were the ground properly explored, the labor would be attended with profit; but the natural indolence of the natives throws a wet blanket upon everything like industry or enterprise, and as a consequence these submarine mines hide their beautiful treasures from view.

In the harbor we visited there were a number of squalid Indians, farmed out by some more sagacious *armador*, or patron, who provided them with jerked beef and paper cigars, in exchange for rare shells or pearls.

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The season is chosen during the prevalence of calms and light winds, so that the water be not disturbed during the operations; for they

"Dare not dive
For pearls, but when the sea's at rest."

We had three *buzos*, or divers of great celebrity, but in the end we were not so highly impressed with their skill.

The manner of conducting the performance is a very simple one. The boat is slowly urged over the calm water—perfectly clear and transparent it is, owing to the white sandy bottom. The *buzos* stand in succession on the prow, each provided with a short sharp stick to dislodge the shells, whilst another with shaded eyes close to the surface, peers down into the pure blue depths, and marks the object of their search, or warns them of the appearance of the *tintero*—a ravenous species of shark. *Mira!* says the look-out man, pointing with his stick. Splash! down plunges the swarthy figure. You see him squirming and groping on the bottom, reflected in the mirage-like fluid, when presently he shoots to the surface, in one hand holding the prize, which is tossed into the boat. *Hay mas!*—there's more!—he exclaims, takes a long respiration, and again sinks—this time reversing his heels, after getting under water. Two or three feats of the kind, and he gives place to a fresh *buzo*. The depth ranged from twenty to thirty-five feet, and they remained below about a minute.

One would naturally suppose that the oldest oysters, like heads of families, out of the sea would adorn themselves with the costliest jewels, but the system is quite the reverse. The venerable shells are contented with little, valueless seeds, and the princely peas of pearls are distributed among the juveniles. This is invariably the case, and the rarest gems are always found in the smallest and youngest oysters; nor are they worn, as with mortals, in the ears, for we ever discovered them, after much scrutiny, carefully secreted in their beards!

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After shelling and fishing until the sea breeze agitated the inlet, and put an end to the morning's sport, we disembarked, and did full justice to the excellent fare of one Señor Eloi, who had kindly attended the party in capacity of major domo, keeping a watchful eye, moreover, on vicious persons inclined to filch an over allowance of grapes, or unconsciously to swallow an entire bottle of porter, which, by the way, is an unpardonable crime on aquatic recreations like the present.

Towards evening, refreshed by *siesta* and bath, we shouldered rifles for the chase. I returned very soon, satisfied with stumping along the beach, where were strewn hundreds of thousands of polypii, or squids, with large black eyes like human beings, their putrefying jelly-like carcasses

filling the air with a horrible stench; after a sweltering tramp over the dry, parched ravines and hills of the island, which were thickly covered with scrub cactus, having thorns nearly as long as bayonets, and very much sharper, as I found to the damage of my legs and trousers. I saw nothing within range of a bullet, and was altogether tolerably disgusted, and glad to get once more within shelter of the tents. My companions were more fortunate—they started numbers of deer—were far more fatigued from their tramp, and returned quite as empty handed.

Game is said to be very abundant on the Peninsula, but I can hardly believe the nature of the country admits of it. We had venison occasionally, of indifferent quality, flavored with the flowers and shoots of the aloes, upon which the deer can only find nourishment. On the opposite shores of the Gulf, in the Tierra Caliente, between San Blas and Mazatlan, I occasionally saw a few deer, stray coveys of quails, chichilacas, wild ducks and turkeys; but even on the upper terraces of the interior, I met with only a large species of hares; and I am confident the whole country can bear no comparison to the worst regions for game in Upper California.

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My friend, Don Guillermo, in Mazatlan, who was a great hunter, told me a curious fact relating to the Coyote, who, on spying a wild turkey on the lofty branch of a tree—after a wary approach—fixes his eye upon the bird, and commences a revolving promenade, never for an instant removing his fascinating gaze from the devoted prey. The poor turkey, anxious to observe the perambulations of his friend below, follows him with eye and neck, until becoming too dizzy to maintain the perch, when down he falls into the cunning wolf's clutches!

We made a hearty supper, and then sat down to an old fashioned rubber of whist—the bets were glasses of toddy. "Steward," shouts Monsieur Borodino, who had won a stake, and nearly drank half of it, "Steward, it's too strong!" *Si Señor*, said the attentive domestic, and forthwith gave it a dash from a dark-colored liquid, which was not water. "Ah! Eloi," murmurs, *sotto voce*, another young gentleman in delicate health, "Have my flask filled, eh? Want it for stimulant, in case we should fall short!" This caused a *pronunciamento*, and being somewhat fatigued with our day's work, we made a smoke to drive away mosquitoes, rolled ourselves up in blankets, and sought repose on the yielding sand.

The following morning we were early astir—diving, fishing, and hunting. Being unsuccessful, however, after breakfast it was decided to leave our haven in San José, and try the fortune elsewhere.

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At noon the tents were again metamorphosed into sails, and away we steered, in an easterly direction, across the broad strait which opens into the bay. The first hours of the voyage were fair and tranquil, but with the declining sun the wind arose from the gulf and began blowing with great violence. The straining canvas was reefed down, and curtailed of its fair proportions, and by the assistance of the *buzos'* eyes we were piloted into a narrow, alcove-like nook, of the Island of San Antonio. Then the dimity was all furled, and with the ashen sails we strove might and main to get beneath the high cliffs of the little port. *Dios!* how furiously the gusts came sweeping down the steep gorge, brushing the stout oars like feathers alongside the boat; then a renewed struggle, only to be blown from the course, and the water torn into foam, and dashed over us. We began to despair of getting on shore, although the strand was nearly within arm's length, for the gale blew with such unremitting violence as to defy our efforts. However, thanks to San Antonio, there came a transient lull, and the pilots were enabled to fasten a strong cable to the rocks. It was somewhere in this bay where the great Cortes became tossed about in his crazy bark—perchance it may have been the haven we had sought—and in gratitude for our escape, we voted a candle to the Virgin.

We found ourselves shut up in a slender canal, walled by precipitous masses of granitic rocks, hundreds of feet above us, and the channel terminated by fifty yards of smooth, pebbly beach. The fires were soon blazing merrily, and after a hasty supper, we stretched ourselves on the clean sand, and in sleep, forgot our escape from boatwreck.

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The morning came bright and cheerful, with not enough wind to roughen the quiet surface of the little haven. We were amused paddling among caverns and grottos of the cliffs for an hour, and then once more stepping on board the cutter, we soon lost sight of our harbor of refuge.

Coasting along the island we passed a number of these narrow indentations, protected like spaces between one's fingers. At one of them we threw out a grapnell, and the divers collected upwards of an hundred pearl oysters within the hour; beyond we selected a cool retreat, beneath overhanging ledges of rock, where we proposed dining. Our position was exceedingly novel and curious. The finger-like promontory lifted its crest perpendicularly from the bay; the base of the cliff was composed of a thick and variegated strata of black pudding-stone, worn into lateral curves and arches, upon which rested the great body of the cliff, which appeared formed of red sand-stone, having one side scooped and scolloped into profiles upon profiles—hideous caricatures and contortions, letters and numerals, while on the face, looking towards the inlet, and immediately over our dining-hall, was cut a well-defined gallery, leading from turret to turret, the whole closed by a most artificial-looking tower and battlement! We had to gaze a long while, before convinced that the elements themselves had been the sole architects.

The same evening we sailed over to the mainland, took another night bivouac on the sandy shore, arose with the sun, beat through the Harbor of Pichilingue, and in the afternoon reached our floating home in the frigate.

Long before the arrival of the squadron in La Paz, the natives of Lower California had been awaiting with the extremest solicitude the negotiations prior to the final ratification of peace. The treaty arrived—their anxiety and doubts were soon over. They learned with amazement, that notwithstanding the positive assurances held out by the United States Government, that "the flag of the United States would for ever wave, and be unalterably planted over the Californias," and that under no possible contingency could the U. S. ever give up or abandon the possession of the Californias, as conveyed through the official proclamations of the Naval Commanders on the coast, they had been duped, with these texts for their support—to defend our citizens and to fight under our colors, at the loss of standing, property, and life itself, and afterwards were to be taught a commentary upon the good faith of our Government. In the Treaty of Peace, Lower California was not alluded to, nor even protection of the Peninsula glanced at. Thus they reaped the fruits of their too easy credulity, and were about to pay the penalty in again becoming shuffled off to Mexican authority, and suffer the endless private and political persecutions attending their apostasy from the parent stock.

It was assuredly a hard case—for our Government had been solely to blame. Instead of leaving the Peninsula in a state of neutrality, as it was, in effect, so far removed from the mother country as to be thought unworthy of notice, we busied ourselves fomenting disturbances and planting military posts until the major part of the respectable inhabitants of the territory became compromised, by espousing our quarrel.

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All were eager to leave for the upper territory, but an entire emigration was out of the question. Many of the poorer classes, with numerous families, could not forsake their land, or little property, without any certain means for future subsistence; but those who could leave were quickly preparing to avail themselves of the opportunities afforded by our ships of war and transports for a new and distant home.

We remained nearly a month at La Paz. The only incidents worth noticing had been the trivial affair of a volunteer on shore very coolly shooting his wife to death; and a piece of Sam Patchism of one of the ship's boys, who, while climbing up the fore royal-mast head, and within grasp of the truck, became exhausted and fell, pitching heels over head through the air, tossing from brace to brace, until he finally struck the awning, bounded up, and fell again motionless—the stout canvas of the main deck awning having saved him. I was an eye witness to this performance; the next day he was again on his feet, mischievous as ever; but a plunge of near two hundred feet, without serious injury, would not be generally credited.

One morning, the boatswains whistled, the cables rattled, ship unmoored, sails spread; and as we slowly took the direction of the sea, and left the "Ohio" astern, down came, for the third time, our red pennant and up went the blue. We had bid adieu to Commodores, squadrons, and signals, and were henceforth to cruize in a little fleet of our own.

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We were bound on a flying visit to Mazatlan, and, after a tedious passage, on the fifth day, Cresten reared his castor above the sea, and the white town and red mountains of the interior became again visible. The hills and plains were looking fresh and green from recent rains, but the town was nearly deserted, and not a vestige of life or bustle was to be seen.

Negrete with his officials were no sooner warm in their nests, when one Palacios collected a number of discontented followers, entered the city, occupied the Cuartel, and summarily ejected Anaya's friends. They declared a more liberal policy than the government party, abolished the alcobola, reduced duties, and agitated a measure of forming Cinaloa as part of a Republic, in conjunction with the States of Jalisco and Sonora. These fragile schemes did not meet the sanction of the reflecting portion of the community, and the foreign merchants were particularly disgusted, fearing, as usual during these pronunciamientos, some forcible extortion from the Palacios, upon refusing to advance money.

Anaya himself, with a small force, and means insufficient to put down the opposing faction, occupied the Presidio. Our old friends welcomed us kindly, and many believed we had returned to re-occupy the town; and even though the different consuls and foreign residents tried their utmost to detain us, it was unavailing, and the day succeeding our arrival the canvas overshadowed the frigate, and we said adieu, for the last time, to Mazatlan.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

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For twenty days after sailing from the Mexican coast, the steady trade-wind drove the frigate merrily over the blue water, until one evening we found ourselves, with wings furled and anchors down, within shelter of the reefs and hills of the Bay of Hilo.

Near us nestled an enchanting little village, with straw huts and cottages, half hidden beneath a perfect forest of flowers, banana, bread fruit, and coffee trees, with here and there thick clusters of cocoanuts shooting high in the air, like petals from the brilliant parterres at their feet, waving rattling leaves and trunks in a very indolent and graceful style peculiarly their own. Then the deep, velvety verdure around gradually rose in green slopes, and receded far away in the

distance, until the scene was closed by the "twin giants of the Pacific," Mauna Kea and Mauna Loa. Nearer, along the fertile shores were white rills leaping into the sea, groups of natives upon the beach, and the little bay alive with slender and reed-like canoes, skimming like a breath over the water, the broad paddles flashing in the sun, tempting tropical fruits, reposing dewily in leafy baskets, the natives themselves gesticulating and chattering with amazing volubility, which added to the bright, fresh, novel, and glorious scenery of the island, made a pleasing contrast to the parched Sierras and Tierra Caliente of Mexico.

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The day subsequent to our arrival chanced to be Sunday, and, soon after breakfast, we pulled on shore. There was no reason for disappointment in a closer view of the village. The richest and densest tropical foliage shaded, and almost impeded the pathways. Native huts, with bleached thatching, and pretty cottages of the missionaries, were peeping from amid the groves. Streams of pure water were murmuring in every direction, and the cool trade-wind was blowing breezily through the branches of the trees. Altogether, the effect was quite exhilarating.

Large numbers of copper-hued natives, dressed in their gayest colors, were waiting to receive us, and, stepping on shore, I resigned myself with great docility to the guidance of a stout person, who, tapping an embroidered crown on the sleeve of his coat, with a short baton, informed me, with an expressive nod, that he was *kaiko*—king's man—in other words, a guardian of the peace.

A few minutes' walk brought us to an immense thatched building, which was the native church. On entering, we were politely shown places, and I was fortunate in getting a seat immediately fronting the preacher, and facing the congregation. There were, at the lowest, a thousand present, ranged on plain wooden benches, all over the vast earth floor of the meeting-house, and crowds more were pouring in from the different doorways: ancient matrons, in dazzling calico frocks, cut very high in the neck, and very low at the heels, unconfined by belt or bodice, wearing coal-scuttle bonnets—sometimes two—toppling very much in front—giving a general idea of having been put on wrong end foremost: young damsels attired in gaily-colored shawls and ribbons, their nether limbs encased in a superabundance of hose, and strong brogan shoes: venerable, gentlemanly *kanakas*, in tightly-fitting trousers, unconscionably short-waisted coats, with swallow-tails: others again saved from appearing in *puris naturalibus* by the aid of a *tappa*, or flimsy shirt, about the loins. But they were a sober, orderly congregation, and with the exception of a little restlessness amid the juveniles, all listened with marked attention to the discourse of their pastor.

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The Reverend Mr. Cohen preached to them, and seemed to adapt the sermon to their comprehension; occasionally, however, interrupted by some elderly person, when any obscure passage was not rendered sufficiently clear, whereupon an explanation always followed, in the most urbane, kindly manner.

The dialect is exquisitely soft and vowelly; and then the frequent repetition of many words, from the want of copiousness, renders it susceptible of being delivered with the most inconceivable rapidity. We had singing at intervals during service by some fifty youths from the Reverend Mr. Lyman's school. I judged it rather discordant, and although the voices were not harsh, nor unmusical, there was yet neither taste nor harmony in their efforts. After church, we visited the comfortable, pleasant residences of the missionaries—they were surrounded by well-cultivated gardens of taro, vegetables, and fruits. The inmates we found pious, sensible, and excellent persons, who had devoted many years among their heathen neighbors in philanthropic diffusions of the Gospel.

We had but a day or two to ramble about the village before an expedition was planned to visit the volcano of Kilauea. We were indebted to the good offices of Mr. Pitman for making all preparations for the journey. Each was provided with a *kanaka* as a sort of body-servant to take charge of extra luggage and wardrobe, stowed in two huge calabashes, with the half of other shells laid over the round orifices on top, which effectually shielded their contents from the weather: they were then slung by a net work of bark braid to each end of a short pole, like a pair of scales, over the swarthy shoulders of our valets. There were full half-a-dozen more fitted with the like contrivances filled with edibles. All were sent off at daylight, while we remained to a delightful breakfast of fresh water fatted mullets, new eggs, and butter. Horses were then brought forward, and attended by a guide, we moved in direction of the south end of the island. In an hour we had lost sight of the ocean, left the pretty, "dim o'er arching groves" of Hilo, and struck a narrow pathway over smooth undulating masses of vitreous lava, just as it lay cooled from the lips of some remote boiling crater, whose overlapping iron waves had flowed from the regions above, whilst the rankest ferns and vegetation blocked the route, creeping and extending as far as the eye could span up the gradual slopes of the mountains. It was certainly a dull, uninteresting landscape. We pushed our way through these green fibrous barriers, with nothing to diversify the monotony, save the course through a dismal forest of ragged trees, laced and covered with impenetrable thickets of vines and parasitical plants, only relieved by the pale green of the candle nut and mighty leaves of an occasional banana tree; meeting, perhaps, at every dreary league with a filthy, ill-constructed native hut, filled with yet filthier occupants. From nearly every habitation we had a volunteer or two in our train, so that, in the afternoon, when we reached what is called the half-way house, there were enough followers for an Indian army.

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Our halting place was a well-built thatched dwelling, planted on a little mound of lava, and fenced in by a living hedge of *ti*, whose bare stems rose four feet from the ground, and then branched out in spreading leaves, like plumes. Inside the building was a raised platform, running

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the entire length of the room, resembling the pleasant structures used as beds by soldiers in guard-rooms. Clean mats and pillows were strewn upon it, and the remaining space of the apartment was plentifully provided with tables, chairs, and crockery; the whole being especially *tabooed*, and guarded by a native chief for the accommodation of tourists. It was situated in the midst of a little hamlet of huts, and on leaving the precincts of our domicile, to take a general survey of the country, we found ourselves stormed, as it were, by troops of tawny kanakas, and loosely-attired *wyheenees*—young ladies,—who had called to have a chat with the *hourimanawars*. They were quite sociable, squatted beside us on lava ridges, laughed and chatted, took the cigars from our teeth, blew a whiff themselves, passed them around the circle, returning them again to the original puffers, which being interspersed with pokes and pinches, they made themselves very friendly and at home. Our staid chaplain, too, became well-nigh captivated, before they were made to comprehend that he was a *mikonaree*! then these dusky nymphs became mute as mice, and very demure in his presence.

The rain came on presently, and we sought shelter, took a nap, and at sunset sat down to dinner. Apart from sundry palatable dishes prepared by our own major-domo, there was a *luau* turkey, after the Sandwich mode of cooking, which, as I witnessed, I shall here take the liberty of describing the process.

It was a large gobbler, who, upon being knocked down by a billet of wood, was stripped of his plumes, cleaned, dressed, and stuffed with a green, cabbage-looking vegetable, called *luau*; then carefully swathed like a mummy in damp banana leaves, he was laid on a native oven of red-hot stones, all covered thickly over with more leaves, until there was not a chink or cranny for the escape of heat or steam. How long he remained undergoing this operation I do not exactly remember, but on sitting down to table, he was ushered in, on a huge platter, in his green winding-sheets, and after removing the outer coatings, he presented a whitish, parboiled appearance, half-drowned in a pulpy mass of *luau*; and fell to pieces at the first touch: he was steamed to death. I experimented on him, and truthfully declare he had not a taste of the turkey flavor, and we thought it the worst possible use he could have been put to; albeit the vegetable was delicious, and made amends for the tasteless gobbler.

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Early the next morning we arose, breakfasted and mounted; the route was over the same swelling hillocks and mounds of lava, the view bounded far and near by the same dense growth of ferns, and a dull, unbroken solitude reigned around—uninterrupted by chirping of birds, or even the wheetling of lizards or crickets. Slowly we ambled along—the weather was lowering and gloomy; there was not a trickling rill of water, nothing but dull sky above, and lava, always lava below!

My horse, too, was a monster of his species—never shall I forget that brute; had he been provided with a cocoanut column on each leg, by way of stilts, he could not have come down harder—ugh! at every other step on coming to some narrow crevice of the rocks, he would raise his fore hoofs, and let himself fall, at it were, with a jar that made my jaws rattle like cracking walnuts with my teeth; it makes me shudder even at this late day to think of it. I tried to coax him into a gallop with lash, spur and pen-knife, that he might break his neck, and gratify my revenge! but no! it was his maiden visit to the crater, and so far as a letter of future recommendation, he was resolved never to go again.

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We journeyed on during seven tedious hours—the great dome-like mountain of Mauna Loa appearing even to recede as we approached—its smooth, oval base and sides sloping so easily from the frosted summit as to induce the belief of the practicability of a coach and horses going up, without let or hindrance. Almost imperceptibly we had attained an elevation of four thousand feet, when we came upon a broad plain, extending nearly twenty miles to the base and flanks of Mauna Loa. Shortly after, a few light wreaths of steam were blown from the rocky crevices around, and in a moment we stood on the brink of Kilauea!

"For certain on the brink
I found me of the lamentable vale
The dread abyss that joins a thundrous sound."

We were on the rim of a mighty, depressed circus, walled about without a break, by precipitous masses of brown and reddish basaltic rocks, and looking down hundreds of feet, aye, more than a thousand! we beheld with a bird's-eye glance, a vast frozen black lake, once a huge sea of fire—now a congealed surface of lava, where you may place Paris, reserve a nook for New York, and not be pushed for space either!

After infinite toil and peril, we clambered down the steep face of the wall by a broken pathway, and with some misgivings, planted our feet on the crunched, crowded and broken slabs of lava, with the ashes *crickling* beneath the tread, very like crisp snow, and all closely resembling a frozen estuary, where the tide had fallen and left the ice very much shattered and uneven. Yet there was no danger—walk miles and miles in every direction—take care you don't step into those unfathomable cracks and splits, for the longest and strongest arm ever moulded could not save you from this the pit of Pluto!

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Three miles from the point of descent, near the opposite shore of the gulf, is still another large and deep crater, which probably plays the safety-valve to the whole island. It is generally in a state of great bubble and contention, but now was quiet, and only favored us occasionally with a few uneasy sputterings, as if the vestal devil below wished to have it understood, that he had not entirely gone out or shut up the shop, but was more busily occupied poking the fires of Hecla or

Stromboli.

My companions were hunting over the broken slabs of vitreous lava for bits of specimens, of a sort of glassy fibre, called Pele's hair, after the heathenish superintendent of the realms: I was seated on a frowning black ledge, near unto what resembled a long range of four story granite warehouses, the day following a conflagration—resting my wearied limbs and determining mentally in which direction I should run to escape, in case the black, frothy cauldron should happen to boil over, or how I should feel boiling in it; when my reverie was disturbed by a Caliban of the calibashes, the color of a burnt brick, who was capering around in a pair of primitive pattens, formed of rushes bound to his feet, as if the lava was warmer and sharper than agreeable: pointing with his chin to the mouth of the breathing crater, *aramai*, said he,—come here—beckoning me to approach nearer, to make an impression with a dollar in the molten mass, at the risk of my coins and singed fingers. "*Aramai* yourself, with that kettle of cold water," quoth I, quaffing a sip to his infernal majesty's health and spirits. "I didn't come all the way here to see simmering lava, and get my nose and toes scorched for the trouble; believe me, fiery Pluto! those pleasurable sensations I've enjoyed many a time and oft, years ago; but could you give us a downright good ague with an earthquake, by way of a novelty, I should consider my education completed, and make no further call upon your generosity." Notwithstanding my invocation, the mountain remained firm and apathetic, and becoming heartily disgusted, I forthwith turned my back on Kilauea.

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Our guide on this volcanic excursion rejoiced in the epithet of Barnes, and I beg leave to endorse him for any other tourist. Mr. B., in our ignorance, assured us that gentlemen ever indulged in strong waters before descending, after inspecting the crater, "sweetening the very edge of doom," as it were, and also upon mounting upward; suggesting that the guide was treated in like manner, and as an invariable rule, all ullages were confided to his care. Mr. B. also gratified us with many remarkable narratives concerning the native population.

We had a dreadfully fatiguing ascent to the upper regions, somewhat alleviated by the kind services of the calibash men, who butted us up the most difficult steeps with their heads, when, after gasping an hour from exhaustion, our appetites returned with renewed vigor, and we made another meal on *luau* turkeys. We were, moreover, comfortably housed, and fortunately, for towards nightfall, the wind arose from the great Mauna Loa and drove the light chilling rain in loud gusts and meanings over the plain. During the night we heard the muttering throes of the volcano, and at intervals in the darkness, a bright sheet of fire would leap up from the black abyss, so intensely vivid as to paint a brilliant *flame-bow* in the thick mist that crept along the crater's sides. There was a perfume of sulphur and nitre, that seemed to spring from the very floor of our habitation, but far too fagged out to heed it, we were soon wrapt in forgetfulness, or what was better, good warm cloaks and serapas.

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The day broke cold and stormy, so we huddled on flannel shirts, and paid a hasty visit to some enormous sulphur banks that were steaming actively near the verge of the crater. Beautifully colored crystals were profusely found on the fissures of wide steam cracks and yawning chasms; then there were fearful dark holes, like chimneys, as indeed they were, evolving strong puffs of sulphur, that kept flurrying and eddying around, and when a whiff chanced to take one in the nose or mouth, it quite gave a choking taste of Uncle Nicholas's abode.

We regarded the whole affair as a special providence intended for the Hawaiians, who are all, more or less—men, women and children—afflicted with the itch, and if they could only be induced to give the steam a fair trial, there could be no skepticism upon the beneficial results that would ensue.

This was all there was to be seen or wondered at—returning to the straw hut, we ate more *luau* turkeys—sent *kanakas* and calibashes ahead, and then got on the beasts once more on our return route. We shortly bid adieu to the drizzling rain hanging above Kilauea, for a clearer atmosphere. The same night we had more turkeys and more sleep at the half-way house, and the following evening reached Hilo.

CHAPTER XL.

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During the fortnight of our stay in the bay of Hilo, we had opportunities of observing a fair sample of island life. It is a place less visited than others of the Hawaiian group, and as a consequence, the natives have lost nothing from a less constant association with more civilized nations.

They still preserve, in a certain degree, old habits and heathenish customs, though very much modified by the benevolent efforts of their missionary pastors; yet there are many deeply rooted and immoral practices, which the good teachers find a Herculean labor to eradicate. Nevertheless, it must strike a stranger with surprise to find all those demi-barbarians have been taught to read and write—exceedingly well too—indeed the clean, well-defined caligraphy of the Hilo nymphs will compare with that of the most fashionable style of the art in young ladies' seminaries at home—they pay a strict outward observance to the Sabbath, have a general knowledge of the Scriptures, and many of the youth, a tolerable share of education.

The huts in the vicinity of towns and settlements are more comfortable and habitable than in the days of Cook and Vancouver, partaking somewhat in build, to the steep angular Dutch roof, but constructed of poles and thatch, without windows, and with only a single entrance. Great quantities of clean, well-made mats are piled about the floors, which are couches for eating or sleeping; the bedstead is not used, and since a deal of rain falls upon the windward side of the island, the health of the population is seriously affected by the dampness of the ground.

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The natives are amiable, good-natured, indolent beings, and approach nearer to the *toujours gai* than any people in existence. But let no one, judging from their simplicity of manners, be so verdant as to suppose he can win their hearts or produce with glass beads, jack-knives, or any other species of baubles! Per-adventure he will discover they have as correct an appreciation of silver, and can drive as sharp a bargain, as ever the Jew out of Jerusalem. Still they were obliging, and would attend us all day in our tramps and excursions, apparently well satisfied with a trifling present of stumps of cigars.

One great detriment to health is removed, in the article of spirits. Like all the Indian races, they are extravagantly fond of it but in Hawaii there is not a drop to be had, and in the other islands of the cluster, a heavy penalty is rigidly inflicted for disposing of it to a native.

Among their favorite dishes is that of raw fish, and as a great rarity a *luau* dog! Under the most solemn pledges of secrecy, I was permitted to witness the exhuming of one of these animals, with the privilege of making a meal, in case he was found to be palatable. These solecisms on modern cookery and viands are severely frowned upon by the missionaries; and with much caution, we were taken to a small hut, back of the village, and when a venerable kanaka had been placed on guard in a cane brake, to prevent surprise from *Kaikos*, we entered the tenement. A huge calabash was placed on the ground, filled with the national preparation of *poe-poe*. It was a white mixture, made of smashed and fermented taro, of the consistency of a stiff paste, and it is not considered the mode to eat it with aught else but fingers—one, two, three, or the whole hand, according to its liquidity. The Hawaiians heat the Neapolitan lazzaroni in dextrous use of their digits and digestions! whereas the latter beggars can only suck down several continuous leagues of macaroni without a bite, and be satisfied, the native will make a cone of hand and fingers, and with the whirling velocity of a water-spout, he takes up enough of the plaster of Paris like liquid to make a thorough cast of mouth and jaws, with the energy to repeat the impression every minute! Where it all goes to is a mystery. It has been suggested that they are hollow, like bamboos, down to their heels; but it is a mooted point. I tasted this *poe-poe*, by way of an appetizer—found it not unlike sour starch, and felt no further inclination to make a hearty meal. By this time stones and leaves were taken from a sunken oven in the corner of the hut, and lo! the barker was exposed to view! The warning of *Cave Canem*, which I had seen in former years at Pompeii, never struck me forcibly until now! I had heard, too, a metaphor about "the hair of a dog being good for a bite," but the moment I beheld the entire animal, with his white jaws and tongue lolling out, I felt no inclination for even a bite—lost my appetite, and came quickly away, with the intention of turning informer, and sending the *Kaikos* in among the party.

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The manner of fattening these interesting and delicate animals is not dissimilar to the process of cramming turkeys with walnuts. They are a peculiar kind—short-legged and domestic. The feeder takes a mouthful of *poe-poe* and raw fish; after masticating it to a proper consistency and shape, he seizes his victim by the throat, chokes the jaws wide open, then drops the contents of his own mouth into that of the brute. We were told that it is only necessary to use this violence with puppies, on becoming older and docile they take to the food more kindly.

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Among other novel sights, I saw with calm pleasure the native boys climb cocoanut-trees, by tying the big toes together by a wythe of bark, then aided by hands and knees they run up the tall, waving columns. Down come bounding the nuts; a small dusky imp at your elbow whisks off the husks with his teeth! cracks a hole in the skull—up! up! gurgles! gurgles!—and down your throat glides the cooling and delicious draught. Pine-apples, too!—large, perfumed, luscious fellows!—thirty for sixpence, and considered exorbitantly dear at that price! Then there is the spreading bread-fruit, with the greenest of dark green leaves; but my juvenile impressions of the fruit I discovered were entirely erroneous; for instead of being like bakers' loaves, or even French rolls, they were different as possible; the fruit being enveloped in a coarse, thick rind, tinged with yellow, with white meat, about twice the bulk of pippins; and when properly roasted has the taste of an insipid potato.

I have been perfectly sheltered, too, in a pelting, pitiless shower, by an extempore umbrella, constructed of two big banana leaves; and sipped water from native cups, made in a trice from a goblet-shaped leaf snatched at the road side; and on a certain occasion, when wearied by a long walk, I threw myself beneath the heavy shade of a fan-leaved pandanus, and submitted to the *loammi-loammi*. It is a more delicate operation than the Turkish mode of shampooing, and when the operators are laughing native girls the sensations are far pleasanter.

They commence a running succession of pinches from heels to shoulders, accompanied by kneadings, and pokings with the tips of their fingers; then selecting a clear space, they begin a diapason of light thumps and blows, interspersed by a gentle trip-hammer movement with outer edges of the hands; now slow, now fast, faster—like flashes of light—until the cadence dies languidly away, in soft, melodious tappings, leaving the patient in a quiet frame of mind, and the body very much refreshed.

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The high chiefs, who are all immensely corpulent, and said to be rather given to overfeeding themselves, use the *loammi-loammi* to make them comfortable after repletion, so that they may

go on again, without personal inconvenience—always keeping a number of expert practitioners in their trains.

All classes at Hilo evince an enthusiastic admiration for flowers, and the maidens particularly are never without natural wreaths, or necklaces of woodbine and jessamine, prettily woven for the occasion. There is a yellow bud of the candle-nut, which is not so pleasant to eye or nose, though more generally worn. But in all the tastes and diversions of the natives, there was not one that charmed us so much, and in which the natives indulged with such wild delight, as bathing in the river Wailuku.

Along the whole eastern face of the island of Hawaii there are numberless rills and streams that come bounding from the lofty sides of the giant mountains, in cataracts and cascades, until at last they jump from the green-clad shores into the salt foam of the ocean. One of the largest of them is the Wailuku. No farther than a league from the harbor inland is a miniature Niagara, of more than a hundred feet, which dashes a mass of broken water into a bowl-like basin, flashing upon, either side brilliant rainbows, from which the fall takes its name. Retracing our steps towards the village, the banks of the little river become less abrupt, and within a few hundred yards of the bay the water is diverted into a multitude of channels—here, a torrent boiling over scattered rocks, with a clear, sleeping pool beyond—there, the white cataract plunging swiftly through narrow straits, and leaping gaily down below, like a liquid portcullis to some massive gateway—again, whirling eddies playing around rocky islets, until at last by one sparkling effort the waters re-unite, and go roaring and struggling down a steep chasm into the noisy surf of the bay.

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It is here the young of both sexes pass most of their time. Troops of boys and girls, and even little ones scarcely able to walk, are seen in all directions, perched on broad shelving crags and grassy mounds, or, still higher up, clinging from the steep sides and peeping out from amid the foliage. On every side they come leaping joyously into the rushing waters! There on a bluff—thirty, forty—ay! seventy feet high—a score of native maidens are following each other in quick succession into the limpid pools beneath. The moment before their flight through the air they are poised upon the rocky pedestals, like the Medicean Venus. One buoyant bound—the right arm is thrown aloft, knees brought up, and at the instant of striking the water the head falls back, feet dashed straight out—when they enter the pools with the velocity and clearness of a javelin, shooting far away, just beneath the surface, like a salmon.

Others, again, are diving in foaming torrents—plashing and skirling—laughing, always laughing—plunging—swimming, half-revealing their pretty forms before sinking again beneath the stream. Others, still more daring and expert, go whirling through narrow passages, thrown from side to side in the white waters—now completely hidden in the cataracts—anon rising up in a recumbent attitude, when away they are hurled over a cataract of twenty feet, emerging far below, with long tresses streaming behind, and with graceful limbs cleaving the river, like naught else in nature more charming than themselves.

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It is a sight to make a lover forget his mistress, or a parson his prayers. I know it would have been my case, had I been so fortunate as to be either! Here I passed all my leisure hours, never tired of beholding the beautiful panorama of life and water moving before me; and there were others, on these occasions, who were wont to mingle bravely in the sport—portly post-captains—husbandly lieutenants—mad-cap reefers, of course—staid chaplains, too!—but all declared it was pleasant, exceeding pleasant! although mingled with a few indifferent remarks as to what the good missionaries might think of it.

Many of the *wyheenees* have pretty faces, expressive black eyes, and long, jet-black hair; then there are others, who make good imitations of Blenheim spaniels in the visage; but nearly all have rounded, voluptuous forms, perfectly natural and beautiful when young, with small hands and feet: but such larks they are for fun and laughter! with a certain air of sly demureness that renders them quite bewitching.

In the cool of the afternoons, a number of us in company with half a dozen of these attractive naiads, would amuse ourselves sliding over a gentle water-fall that poured into a secluded basin stretching calmly away below: hand in hand—and very soft, pretty hands they were!—or, forming a long link, one after another, in a sitting posture, we threw ourselves upon the mercy of the lively foam above, and like lightning dashed over the brink of the falls, and were drawn with magical celerity for a great depth beneath the surface; until our ears tingled and senses reeled with the rushing noise, when we would again be swept swiftly by a counter-current up to the air of heaven, and carefully stranded on a sand bank near by, wondering very much how we got there, and always greeted by the gay laughter of the water nymphs around us. Nor is it the safest sport imaginable, for in some of these submarine excursions an inexperienced person is sometimes given to beat his head or body against rocks, or be carried to the wrong eddies and floated among dangerous straits, to the great detriment of his breath and digestion. However, no one need entertain the slightest fears when attended by the natives. They may, when saving you in the last gasp of drowning, hold you up in the combing breakers, and ask, "how much? tree monee?" with a prospective glance at a reward. But when diverting yourself with these nut-brown naiads, they guide you in safety through perilous labyrinths, and shield you from all harm. On one occasion, a laughing, good-humored damsel, whom we christened the Three-decker, in compliment to a double row of ports tattooed around her waist, was seated beside me on a flat ledge, and opened the conversation by asking, "Watee namee you?" "Bill," said I. "Liee namee Harree," she archly replied, and shoved me into the torrent for laughing at her curiosity. But on gaining my lost position, she broached another theme, which was so appallingly ludicrous, that,

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losing all command of soul and body, I rolled off the rocks, and had it not been for the stout arms of a nimble *wyheenee*, who gallantly came to the rescue, I should in all probability, as the Three-decker jocosely remarked, have been *muckee moi*—defunct; for the water had so nearly filled me up, that there was not the faintest vestige of a laugh left in my body. I rewarded her with a plug of tobacco, which is occasionally used as a currency.

We experienced much rain during our sojourn, and when prepared to leave, were detained some days by the wind. The harbor is protected by a sweeping sunken reef, that forms a *cul de sac* of the port, with an entrance like the neck of a bottle. On the 28th of August, by the assistance of our pilot, Mr. Kit Baker, who played corkscrew on the occasion, we were safely drawn out—shook the wet canvas from the yards, and away we coasted along the island.

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It was a beautiful sight, indeed! The smooth, green freshness of the slopes—the distant village, with its groves and fields of coffee and sugar—native huts and plantations fast coming and going, as we went sailing by—white cascades—and intensity of verdure everywhere—spread like a glowing mantle from the mighty shoulders of Mauna Kea and Mauna Loa—made me doubt if, in all our future "Polynesian researches," we should behold any scenery so surpassingly lovely as Owyhee, with sweet little Hilo, and its foaming Wailuku.

CHAPTER XLI.

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Before dusk the green shores had faded from our sight, although the snow-capped head of Mauna Kea arose as plainly and proudly as if we were within a mile of his feet.

Sometime during the night we entered the Paipolo Passage, and the next morning were becalmed, in a triangular sea, between the islands of Maui, Molokai and Lanai. We were bound to the former; towards meridian the breeze again filled the sails, and in a few hours we were at anchor in the Roads of Lahaina, securely sheltered by the high hills of the island.

The general appearance of this group is not unlike clusters of the Grecian Archipelago: the same reddish hues to the heights, the same basking verdure in the valleys, with perhaps a far grander outline and boldness of scenery. In Maui there is no comparison to the universal greenness and fertility of the east side of Hawaii. The lofty mountains, attaining an altitude of ten thousand feet, arrest the trade clouds in their westward flight, and the contents are condensed on the opposite side of the island. Yet, although the background shows for a great extent barren and sterile, there is still much to relieve the eye in the deep green reposing between the sharp split gorges, where vegetation creeps in thick profusion to the topmost peaks. And then the town itself—larger than Hilo—built along the sea-shore, radiant with noble groves of cocoanut, and bread-fruit, and pretty houses half buried in shrubbery. There is also a great red-roofed New England meeting-house—a two-storied square stone edifice, which is the King's country palace, having a double range of verandas in front, and a little lake of black mud in the rear, not in the best possible state of order or cleanliness, but more conspicuous than all, placed a league up the hills, is the large white buildings of the the native High School of Lahainaluna.

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Maui is becoming a great resort for whale-ships to recruit from their long cruising; it has been the means of infusing energy and industry into the native population in the cultivation of the rich soil, and thus for miles around the town the lands are planted with Irish and sweet potatoes, taro, yams, and many kinds of excellent vegetables and grains, which grow all seasons, whenever sown. The markets were well supplied besides with meats and fruits; and nothing can exceed the clean, tasteful manner in which the lighter produce of the island is put up in native baskets. With the fresh leaf of the cocoanut they are woven or braided in a trice—oval, round or square,—with a pliable green handle all ready for transportation. The cocoanut is to these simple islanders what prayers are to the Turks—meat, drink, and pantaloons; or rather, as I have been told by others professing a deeper knowledge of the Mahomedan lingo than myself, when listening to the Muezzins shouting their signals from minarets of mosques. However, here is better authority:—

"The Indian's nut alone,
Is clothing, meat and trencher drink and can,
Boat, cable, sail, and needle—all in one."

They catch fish, too, with nets, and lash their huts together by braid of the husk. Their couches are mats of the leaves. The milk makes a delicious beverage, and is kept cool, no matter how burning the sun, in the lofty husky reservoirs. The tree itself never ceases bearing while there is a drop of sap in the body, and I have counted more than a hundred of these nutty tanks on a single shaft. If I remember aright, when a boy I was extravagantly fond of a penny's worth of the fruit fished out of glass jars. I never touch it now, for experience has taught me to confine myself to the milk alone. Indeed, I know of no thin potation more truly refreshing before breakfast, than a cooling draught of cocoanut *wai*. The nut must be neither in its infancy, nor yet matured, but just on the verge of manhood; then commend me to it, and they will be rosy lips to draw one from its mouth.

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We found everything more advanced than at Hilo—the bread-fruit particularly—but not only in the vegetable kingdom—for civilization was far ahead, also; or at least so far as creature comforts extend—aided by a good hotel, dinners, and pleasant rides in the vicinity.

The lanes and avenues were so clouded with fine red dust, that walking any distance was out of the question. Foreigners have many cool, matted-straw-built dwellings on the sea beach, and there are numbers of pleasant cottages near the suburbs; but prettier than all, is one secluded country house, a little way from Lahaina, closely embowered in foliage, with a trickling rivulet at the door-way, that would make a retreat for a princess.

The Governor of Maui was James Young, a half-breed, or *happa houri*, and descended from the English seaman mentioned by Vancouver. He had visited England, and spoke the language perfectly, although with the tone and expression of a common sailor. In person he was large—with a pleasant face—much lighter than the natives generally, and from his conversation he appeared to be a man of excellent practical sense. His residence was within the fort—a large square enclosure—constructed of rough red coral rocks, banked up fifteen feet with earth, and mounting an oddly assorted battery of some thirty pieces of artillery, of all sorts of carriages and calibre—long, short, and mediums; they command the usual anchorage, and no doubt do very well to prevent any acts of violence from merchant ships; but it is a question, if at the second discharge of shot they do not tumble to pieces. There were a company of Hawaiian troops to man this fortress, who were well uniformed, and looked as well as Kanakas, or any other savages who have been accustomed half their lives to go naked can look, when their natural ease of motion is cramped by European clothing.

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Governor Young very sagaciously removed all restrictions from the pleasures of our crew, who had liberty on shore—leaving it a matter of supererogation to bribe the Kaikos, whose integrity is never above suspicion. However, there was no liquor to be bought, but Jack got very comfortably drunk on Cologne water: completely exhausting the large stocks of a long-tailed Chinaman, in whose possession it had for a lengthened period lain an unsaleable drug. Even after it had been all sold, so great was the demand, that an old salt threatened to take the Chinese by the heels and snap him like a coach-whip, in case he did not produce another bottle of "tooloone" water, without more palaver.

One evening, during our visit at Lahaina, I was entertained by a hospitable countryman, at his cool, airy residence, which stood on a little raised embankment of the sea beach. A group of native maidens also favored us with their fascinating society, and without further invitation seated themselves at table, and seizing a pack of cards, soon became deeply engaged in the game. It was like most other games: those who held certain cards, certainly won; but although it was to me incomprehensible, I observed that they cheated in the most expert manner, at the same time slapping the bits of pasteboard on the table with the energy of inveterate whisters; occasionally muttering, when losing or winning, such exclamations as *ka! ka!—maitai!*—meaning "Oh! I'm ruined!" "Disgusting!" or "I'm in luck!" and the like.

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Becoming ennuied with these proceedings, after much entreaty and a glass of wine, they consented to give me an idea of surf-swimming.

The moon was high and full, throwing a white, bright light athwart the rippling water, like a quivering sea of silver coins. A Kanaka attendant speedily produced slabs of light cotton wood, about a foot longer than the person, and two feet and a half wide. Each provided with one of these boards, they swam, or paddled out to the farthest roller. It may be as well to remark here, that there is no reef, as at Hilo, within whose coral walls shipping can anchor; only a ledge near the shore, that serves to break the force of the waves upon the beach. Boats, however, land without inconvenience, through the agency of a small canal cut from the ledge to the heart of the town, in shape of a letter L.

The girls are at the outermost roller, when awaiting the moment before it breaks, they come flying in on the very crest of the wave, at the speed of a race-horse, the great art being to preserve so nice a poise on the back-bone, as it were, of the breaker, as not to be left behind, nor yet, as I found at the cost of several abrasions, launched too far ahead, and thus have the whole crash of the roller pitching you over and over in a series of hydropathic revolutions by no means safe or pleasant: but to understand the thing properly, it is excessively exciting sport. One of the girls, daughter of a chief, possessed the knack in great perfection, and while dashing in with astonishing velocity—at least the rate of twenty miles the hour—she would spring buoyantly upon the board, and then maintain a *pose* on one leg, either kneeling or standing, with an *à plomb*-like security of balance, that would have ruined the reputation of Ducrow!

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During the day every little idle imp and loungee about the town devote the time sporting in the surf; I have watched them for hours, a dozen of them perhaps in a group: their black heads set in a liquid frame of sparkling foam, half lost to view, as the wave subsides, then taken up by another, and borne on the unbroken ridge of a green roller, crossing and recrossing each other's tracks, shouting and laughing, until the moment before striking the coral strand, the boards are turned aside, and off they paddle again for another ride.

I was not successful at the first lesson, although carefully instructed by my amiable companions in boards; and after an hour's practice, finding I had swallowed as much salt water as I could conveniently, we returned to the house.

Never having witnessed a legitimate native dance, all our persuasive eloquence was exerted to induce the young ladies to delight us with a *hexar*, but they proved obdurate; and one assured me, with great indignity, that she was *mikonaree all ovar*; at the same time making a graceful manipulation with her hands, from head to foot, to add strength to her assertion. Thus finding myself associated with so pious and virtuous a coterie, who, however, did not deem it

incompatible with their morality to sit down, with renewed zest, to cards, I desisted from further efforts, and betook myself to a cigar.

In this, as with all my later experience and intercourse with island beauties, I became convinced that I should never fall in love with them out of the water. There is their native element for grace and witchery, whilst cleaving the yielding fluid with rounded limbs and streaming tresses, when one's nice sense of perfume is not offended by rank odors of cocoanut oils, and other villanous cosmetics, which in themselves are enough to transform a Hebe into a Hecate.

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CHAPTER XLII.

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The large native seminary at Lahainaluna, upon which the Missions place great hopes of future usefulness, was under the superintendence of Messrs. Andrews and Alexander, gentlemen attached to the Presbyterian board, who impressed us very forcibly with their intelligence, by the liberal views they entertained in relation to their charge, and fitness for the office.

It is intended as the high school for the sons of chiefs of the group, and such other youth whose aptness for instruction make them worthy of being educated. The buildings belonging to the institution are capable of accommodating more than one hundred pupils. Six hours are devoted to study and recitation: they cook their own food, and a portion of time intended for relaxation is occupied in practical utility—chiefly agricultural pursuits, or as the mission report of the young ladies' school under Miss Ogden, at the east end of Maui, states, "the time from four to five they devote to exercise with the hoe."

About eighty of the pupils visited the frigate, by special invitation—they appeared between the ages of twelve and twenty—attired in curiously devised European garments, but clean in their apparel, orderly and well-behaved, although awkward and uncouth in movements. I was not struck with many intelligent faces, and their instructors gave no very flattering ideas of their aptitude for the acquisition of learning. Not more than one in twenty could be termed a bright boy; they experience the greatest difficulty in gaining a knowledge of the English language, and it is a question if it would not be advisable, even at this late day, to do away entirely with the native dialect, pen up the children, and substitute some other idiom having fewer words to express vice, and more, the higher attributes of morality and virtue.

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Physically speaking, the students were well formed, robust, and active, but all more or less tinged with scurfy, cutaneous disorders, transmitted to them through their progenitors as an indelible mark of esteem by the first discoverers of the islands. Our visitors remained on board an hour, and everything was done to make it a happy one: they climbed the rigging, went all through the ship, fired cannons shotted, and were loud in their admiration of the band. Upon leaving, they seemed highly delighted, kindly greeted us with the usual expression of good-will—*aloha!*—and very generally offered to shake hands, but we pleasantly declined, I trust without wounding their feelings, for we were ungloved, and a long way from the sulphur banks of Kilauea.

Institutions for female scholars are numerous in the group, but there is not one on the same scale of magnitude as that of Lahainaluna, nor are the girls themselves worthy of the benevolence and solicitude extended to them by their excellent teachers. A school at Hilo, under the direction of a missionary lady, highly distinguished for ability and perseverance, had lately been relinquished on account of the abandoned character of the pupils.

These instances must indeed dampen the ardor of the most sanguine philanthropists, who have been so many years striving to emancipate these Indian races from the depths of vice and ignorance. The whites themselves, to their shame, be it said, are far from lessening the evil, and I heard Mr. Cohen feelingly and truthfully remark, in connection with the difficulties encountered in their labors, that the missionaries' voices were but a breath in stemming the torrent of bad examples, caused by hundreds of loud voices from every merchant vessel and ship-of-war touching at the group. Assuredly much has been accomplished in the outer crust of civilization, by an association for so long a period with the whites, but notwithstanding the almost unparalleled efforts of the missions, they have gained little in true morality, though everything, perhaps, in decency, contrasted with the native state in former times.

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The Hawaiians are naturally indolent, voluptuous and deceitful, more imbecile than vicious, destitute of morality, preserving of late years, the form, not from principle, but fear of exposure, and subsequent punishment. Infanticide, always prevalent in the Polynesian tribes, is here more alarmingly frequent than even during their darkest days of sacrifice and idolatry, caused, no doubt, in a great degree, by unnecessarily severe laws against illegitimacy. There are no government hospitals, and the disease brought by Cook is sweeping still, with the deadly strides of a pestilence. These causes serve to check and diminish the population to an extent hitherto unprecedented, and not unless their very existence as a nation becomes obliterated, does there appear to be any reasonable prospect of reform.^[5] And now, it can be asked, if, with all these evils entailed upon them by strangers, does it not seem problematical, if in their days of superstition and ignorance they were not morally better? Happier they certainly were! Then, their very indolence, induced by an equable and delicious climate, where Nature so bountifully scatters her fruits in their path, produced an enervating languor, where neither cares nor sorrows surrounded them! Now, their natural sense and experience teach, that they cannot cope

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with the skill or energy of the foreigner, and hopelessly and inevitably they must look forward to the rapid future, when their lands will be in strange hands, and the few remnants of their race the slaves or puppets of their white masters. Although sad the picture, the results bear no comparison to the world at large, in the benefits accruing to civilization by acquiring a foothold on these islands, which, from their position and resources, are shortly destined to become of vast importance to commercial enterprise in the Pacific.

The Board of Presbyterian Missions, first in the grand work of redemption, have done all that philanthropy could suggest, in earnest and unceasing efforts towards reclaiming the race from barbarism—in a spirit of the greatest liberality, expending nearly a million of dollars, distributed through a period of thirty years—wherein, if naught else had been adduced than the beneficial results resting upon the simple fact, that out of a population of about a hundred thousand, which compose the Hawaiian cluster, more than half have been taught to read and write, instructed in the rudiments of education, and generally conversant with the Scriptures—this is of itself sufficient to claim the lasting gratitude of all who have the progress of civilization at heart. But what is still more surprising, this has been begun and completed within the space of but thirty years—a point of time inconceivably brief in the history of a nation, even in the age of rapid advancement in which we live.

The groundwork of Christianity has also been firmly planted, and so long as the Hawaiians do exist, it will go on slowly but steadily to increase. Yet the reports from the Board, detailing such immense numbers of conversions made so miraculously of late years, under missionary auspices, should be received *cum grano salis*. Surely they cannot be intended purposely to mislead—but still it has the semblance of a sort of paid-up imaginary capital, to swell and exaggerate the amount of their labors. On all sides it was universally believed, that there are not five hundred true converts in the group, instead of over thirty thousand, as these reports would make out! Then why these incorrect statements? And again, a retired missionary quoting the Honorable J. P. Judd, another gentleman formerly attached to the Board and now at the head of the Hawaiian government, says: "The moral condition of the Islands may compare favorably with that of any other country."^[6] Such glaring mendacity is beneath the contempt of any visitor to the group blessed with eyes; and as a slight proof of the estimate, at this late day, in which this morality is held, the missionaries, themselves, who have young families, never permit them to acquire the native dialect, and most carefully guard them from any intercourse with the natives, fearing probably the contaminating influences of an association, so deplorably exhibited in the children of the English Mission in one of the groups of Southern Polynesia.

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Furthermore, the violent ravings of the retired missionary I have already quoted, against what he terms "papacy, prelacy, papists, abomination of the Church of Rome," and the like balderdash, are enough to induce the belief, that were it not for the great conservative Law and Order party, which now rules the world—wherein the virtues of hemp are duly set forth—these deluded enthusiasts, so blinded by their fanatical zeal, would be cutting one another's throats, with the same malignant ferocity as in the bitter wars of the Huguenots.

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The missionaries fully deserve all the love and influence they possess with the native population, for the toil and labor of very many weary years, passed away from homes and kindred; and so long as they sedulously abstain from secular affairs, and resolutely confine themselves to the field of their good work, the very piety and blameless purity of their lives will shield them from the smallest reproach. But human passions are ever the same. This very influence induces them to take part in the political contentions of the government; and whatever may be said to the contrary, it is evidently by their direct means, or connivance, that almost every public measure emanates. Nor is this the most innocent charge laid at their doors. Behold the illiberality and want of true Christian charity, evinced not only here, but with equal hostility by English missionaries in the Society Islands, in unremitting persecutions and expulsion of the Catholics. Whether directly urged by the Protestants, or at their instigation through the native chiefs, matters not—they were driven like dogs from these inhospitable shores, and never dared to return until backed by the cannon of their King.

It may well be doubted, if the Catholics had been the first to have raised the banner of the Cross on the Islands of Polynesia, whether they would quietly have submitted to any foreign innovations upon their creed or forms. History gives no instances where an acquisition has been relinquished without a deadly struggle; but in these days of enlightenment, when the field is so ample, why not throw wide open the gate to all laborers in the cause of philanthropy, where no harm can arise, and great good may follow?

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The Catholics lead as pure and irreproachable lives as their Protestant brethren—without perhaps the comforts—and are rapidly making proselytes; their religion teaching forgiveness and absolution, being more in accordance with the backsliding sins of the natives, who meet with no appeal from the more austere puritanism of the Protestants.

FOOTNOTES:

^[5] Vide Report to the Hawaiian Legislature of 1848, by R. C. Wyllie, Minister of Foreign Relations.

^[6] Bingham, page 609.

After a delightful visit spent at Lahaina, late one afternoon, we bade adieu to Maui, and steering between Lanai and Molokai, by daylight the following morning we had passed Diamond Point, and let run our anchor at a great depth of water, a mile or more outside the Oahu reef, the frigate's draught being too large to allow her to enter within the smooth and well-protected arms of the port.

We were in Honolulu—the Ismir of Polynesia—a little thriving city of nearly eight thousand people, and its situation one of the prettiest in the world. It lies spread about at the base of the beautiful valley of Nuaana, upon a very gentle slope down to the verge of the harbor. On either hand the shores are fringed with cocoanuts, and all around, up hill and vale, save the burnt sides of the Devil's Punch-bowl and Point Diamond, is laid the deepest, densest verdure, as if it had been actually poured down from the heights above, in liquid floods of foliage, until there was not a spot on the leafy waves where another green branch could find a lurking place!

Honolulu is a town of strangers, with shops, stores, and warehouses; handsome dwellings with verandas and piazzas; pleasantly shaded cottages of elegant modern build, with grass and flowers; and nice little straw huts, in clusters by themselves, for bachelors, all very cool; then the unpaved streets are filled with dust, and natives wander about, in bright-colored, loosely-fitting garments, looking forlorn, diseased, and miserable, living, no one cares how or where; sleeping in the most loathsome abodes of wretchedness, and vilest dens of vice; in all save absolute want or destitution, far below, in the moral scale, the worst hovels of iniquity in the great cities of the Old World! But we have no time to waste upon morals. Presently a low four-wheeled vehicle rattles along—there are many of them—drawn by Kanaka cab-horses; very kind and humanizing it is too, for the beasts are tame, never kick, not given to prove restive, or run away, at least with the coach! I often speculated mentally if the fair women when taking an airing ever blushed for their cattle; and when I saw a pious missionary lady trotting gaily by, I wondered if she had ever seen or read a "High-heeled Shoe for a Limping Sinner"—most probably not. And then within those charming cottages I spoke of, there are lovely women from far, far over the seas—oh, beautiful was one!—who make music and dancing, and most agreeable society, and hand around delicious tea fresh from the Celestials, and piquant lemonade—eschewing vinous compounds—while the sweet perfume of the lime-trees is present to eye and sense, and all pleasantly commingled with innocent sips of scandal.

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Again the quays are crowded with more miserable natives, with sprigs of coral, shells, calibashes, or island ornaments in their hands, looking wistfully, and silently towards you; for they never use importunities, they are too indolent by half. And there is a market shed near by, where a fat woman will swallow a full gallon of *poe-poe*, to show how the thing is done, provided it be paid for! And then, as a relief from these diseased beings, there is the white reef seaward, vainly chafing and lashing the coral barrier; and the calm harbor, clustering with fine ships, chiefly of the oleaginous order, while whale-boats, and graceful Koawood canoes—with light frameworks of sticks, and outriggers to bear them upright—are dancing over the blue wavelets.

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There are agreeable rides in every direction diverging from the city. The most fashionable is up the Nuana Valley. The road is broad and straight, lined on either side by well-tilled plantations of fruits, and patches of vegetables, with elegant country-houses, placed back from the causeway, half visible through the rich and sombre foliage.

Five minutes' gallop takes you, by an easy ascent, away from the heat and dust of town. The atmosphere is purer and cooler, the blue sea, shipping, reef, town, groves and fields, are lying in miniature at your feet! Go on—pass the King's villa—up, up, for six or seven miles, and suddenly the trade wind sweeps with heavy gusts, around a sharp turn of the craggy verdant peaks, and you stand on a lofty terrace, and gaze through a great balconied window, cut like an embrasure, and formed by piles of rocks at the sides and base, while below is a frightful precipice, and beyond a glorious undulating landscape is breathing in verdure and beauty, dotted here and there by native hamlets, whose bleached white thatching is glistening in the sun, with herds of cattle upon the hill sides, chequered by bright patches under cultivation; while further still, the island is girdled about by high waves, breaking upon the rock-bound coast with the full force of the trades.

This is the *Pali*, concerning which, among other heathenish legends, which have neither romance nor chivalric merit to recommend them, it is said that a certain island king once hurled from thence a number of his rebellious subjects.

Returning, we can take a glance at scores of poor squalid wretches, with closely-shaven heads, living in filthy kennels that a decent dog would despise; but they have been guilty of breaking one of the commandments, and to reform their morals are herded together, and made to labor upon the public roads!

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Saturday is the Saturnalia of the Kanakas! They revel on horseback; the streets, roads and plains are filled with them. It is surprising where they all spring from; for although they are an ambulating population, without local attachments, and go in schooner-loads from island to island of the group, particularly upon the advent of a large ship of war, and no doubt are packed very closely in their hovels in and around Honolulu, yet it still is a matter for wonderment where all come from. Hundreds of both sexes throng the pathways; and those more fortunate, who can hire horses, are riding, and racing, leaping, and kicking up all the noise and dust possible. The women

bestride their steeds like men, with petticoats tucked snugly around them, and sometimes wearing for head gear as many as three bonnets of different colors, one within the other, like nests of pill boxes. The young princes of the blood, too, attended by the copper-colored nobility of the kingdom, ride with headlong speed, and are not remarkable for taking less than three-fourths of the highway, to the great peril and inconvenience of more soberly-mounted passengers. On one pleasant evening an aristocratic sprig rode rudely against an Anglo-Saxon demoiselle, in whose train I had the pleasure of being, and without pausing to apologise for his brutality, continued on, causing me to indulge in certain pious aspirations for my Mexican whip that I might inflict a few mild exhortations, in spite of his long line of Kanaka ancestry.

Neither men nor women sit the horse gracefully or firmly, and it is a matter of hourly occurrence to see them take an aerial toss from the saddle. A certain kind of equestrian intoxication—possibly caused by brandy—appears to possess them, and they gallop and prance about as long as the beasts have a leg to stand on.

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It is customary for strangers visiting Honolulu, in the absence of requisite hotel accommodation, to hire a small tenement expressly appropriated for that purpose; many of them are pleasant little domiciles, built of straw, and kept by their proprietors tolerably clean, free from fleas, and habitable. They are in clusters by themselves, and surrounded by adobie walls, enclosing a few trees, and shrubbery, and generally take their designation from the last ship of war whose officers may have occupied them.

The Alsatia we affected was named in compliment to an English flag-ship—Collingwood *row!* Our hamlet was tabooed, and none others than those especially licensed, were permitted to darken those sanctuaries.

We arose early for a bathe on the coral flats or shoals of the reef, then took gallop before breakfast; and when the trade began its diurnal breeze, and the streets were impassible from dust, we reclined within our thatched castles, enjoying the cooling gusts blowing down the Nuana, or were seated with segars beneath the shelving eaves, regarding the natives grouped near the doorways! They were mostly girls—poor, miserable shameless objects, with diseased, unhealthy complexions, lounging all day in the glaring sun, or clustered, two and three together, sucking *poe-poe*, smoking pipes, and chatting their soft idiom, low and laughingly; but they had not the grace, nor coy witchery of the charming rustics of Hilo: they were city ladies—in Honolulu, where there is more population, more want, and far more vice!

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Before the sun sinks for the day, there is but little wind, and walking or riding is then a pleasureable excitement. There is a circle of agreeable society, too; not alone with foreign merchants and consuls, but with a higher order of diplomatic agents, who, although severed from their homes by thousands of leagues of water, still surround themselves with all the elegancies and enjoyments of social existence which they have known in their native lands. Indeed Oahu, though without the salubrious, agreeable climate of Maui, is still a place of much interest; and from its delightful position, and fine scenery, well worthy of all the commendation that voyagers bestow upon it.

CHAPTER XLIV.

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King Kammehamma, or Kamme, as he is familiarly called, is the third of his race: his ancestors were fierce, ungovernable gentlemen, who, in the good old times, clubbed and killed—perhaps ate, too—nobody knows—a great number of their enemies; but without tracing the historic truth of these remote events, it is only necessary to state, that his present majesty has been invested with the purple, and is, to all formal appearances, the chief potentate of the islands.

The government is a complicated piece of political machinery, with a constitution, and masses of subtle laws, equal in magnitude to the huge proportions of a Chinese dictionary. There is a Legislative Assembly of Kanakas, Ministers of State, War, Finance, Solicitors-general, an army, a navy, and a court! This is not half, but it makes one dizzy to think of it all at once: however, on due reflection, it is not quite so complicated an affair after all! The government is simplified by two bosom friends of the King—Mr. Robert Crichton Wyllie, Minister of foreign relations; and Mr. G. P. Judd, Minister of finance. The former is a very clever Scotch gentleman, somewhat inflated with the royal trust reposed in him, and has, moreover, the *cathoethes scribendi* to a most melancholy and voluminous extent; yet he is an agreeable person, and gives good dinners, and I have not the heart to say a syllable to his disparagement, although I have not had the felicity of testing his cuisine!

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But Mr. Judd is the Magnus Apollo of the Island. Kamme, or the Lonely One—as the word signifies—is his puppet, and most particularly lonely he keeps him! The King is Punch, and Judd is Judy, and the Lonely One is jumped about and thumped, and the wires are pulled unremittingly. Judd is his prime counsellor, his parliament, father confessor and ghostly adviser—his temperance lecturer, purse-bearer, and factotum generally. There was a rumor, too, in courtly circles, that an order of nobility was to be established, and then we shall have, probably, Baron Judd, Peer of the Realm and Regent of the Kingdom. One would naturally suppose that a staunch democrat from the Model Republic could not bear the tainted air of a monarchical court in his republican nostrils, But it is wonderful how soon we learn to estimate patriotism at so much per

annum, and with what suppleness we can kneel before a throne, if there be dollars hidden beneath the dais. What boots it whether the chair be filled with African or white? We want dollars!

The king was universally liked by the foreigners; for he has, indeed, for a modernized savage, much bonhomie; is a good-hearted, well-meaning person; rather given to conviviality, like all his race, and when permitted to throw off the restraints of the court, he "allows his more austere faculties to become pleasingly relaxed by a little gentle and innocent indulgence." However, these backslidings are of rare occurrence, and when under the argus eyes of his financial adviser, he is never seen to exceed the limits of propriety—eschews ten-pins and tobacco.—sips malt, and devotes his leisure to billiards.

We were to be presented at court! It occupied a number of days to arrange certain punctilio, and finally, without any decided misunderstanding, an hour was fixed for a royal audience. [Pg 370]

One day, precisely as the clock tolled twelve, we sallied out into the dusty streets—chapeau'd, sworded, belted, and laced up to the chin. The weather was warm, too. A few minutes walk, guided by our obliging cicerone, Mr. Wyllie, carried us to the Palace.

It is a large, square-built villa, spaciouly piazzaed and windowed, surrounded by pretty plantations of shrubbery and fruit-trees. At the gateway a guard of Kanaka infantry presented arms, the royal standard was unfurled from the flag-staff and floated to the breeze. Passing up a broad, gravelled alley, we ascended a flight of steps to the piazza, and were again saluted by a double line of officers, who were supposed to be the black rods in waiting. Entering the villa, we found ourselves in a wide hall traversing the centre of the building, with saloons to the right and left. The King not having arrived, we had leisure to inspect the reception room. It was a spacious apartment, with windows on three sides, having green Venetian blinds opening to the piazzas, and two doors leading to the hall. It was handsomely carpeted, and the furniture consisted of a few plain mahogany chairs, with another of state, surmounted by a crown. A round table stood in the centre, supporting alabaster ornaments, volumes of Wilkes' Exploring Expedition, and a richly-bound Bible in the native dialect, presented by that estimable philanthropist, Elizabeth Fry. The walls were hung with portraits of the Lonely One's family—dingy chiefs and their ladies, smiling intensely, with round saucer eyes and thick lips—a painting of Blucher—two of the Kings of Prussia—and facing the throne, in a gorgeously gilt and carved frame, the King of the French; which two last, by a singular coincidence, had lately been presented in great state and procession by the respective consuls, on the very days their several majesties had been dethroned! [Pg 371]

Time was only allowed us to take a rapid glance around the saloon, when the approach of majesty was announced, and we hurried back to the hall.

From the opposite side of the terrace appeared the regal cortège—brilliant in embroidery, gold lace, nodding plumes, and swords at their sides: on they came, two abreast—foremost, the King with the Minister of Finance—then a brace of Chamberlains, followed by the High Chiefs and officers of state, and the procession closed by the two young princes, Alexander and Lot.

In a few moments, his excellency the Minister of Foreign Relations imparted the august intelligence of all being prepared for our reception. Forming in line—the Admiral leading, under pilotage of Mr. Wyllie—we entered the saloon, and approached the throne. The King was standing, and the courtiers ranged on either side. Our Admiral backed his topsails and let go an anchor on the Lonely One's port beam: we were then telegraphed by name—shot ahead—hove to abreast His Majesty—exchanged signals—filled away and took position by order of sailing on the starboard bow!

His excellency the Minister of Finance—who, by the way, was not an ill-looking nobleman—in full court costume, and a field-marshal's chapeau tucked under his arm—announced to the Admiral that His Majesty would deign to lend a willing ear to any observations upon religion, war, politics, or any other topics most agreeable. Whereupon, the Admiral having a few remarks all ready prepared in his pocket, proceeded to dilate on the happiness he felt in being thus honored—spoke of the extraordinary beauty of the Islands—touched upon usefulness of missionaries, and ended by expressing solicitude for His Majesty's welfare and dynasty. [Pg 372]

This speech, was immediately translated by the courtly Judd, who, with admirable foresight, had provided himself beforehand with a copy. Thereupon he handed the King a reply, who began in much the same strain as the Admiral, and concluded by hinting that he hoped his dynasty *would* last a long time!

The business being now happily arranged, His Majesty and the Admiral became seated, and the rest of us were permitted to mingle freely with the Kanaka court.

Kammehamma, and all his native attendants, had handsome, agreeable faces, and were extremely well made. The Premier, John Young, a half-breed, would be recognized for an elegant person in any part of the world. Two were of just and colossal proportions—one, the High Chief Parkee, the greatest Chamberlain probably in the world—for he weighs nearly four hundred pounds: I forget the precise number of chairs he crashes annually, but it is something enormous, and he is the terror of all housekeepers.

The King, Premier and Judd, had broad red ribbons thrown baldric fashion over breast and shoulders, of such extreme breadth as to give the idea of the wearers having burst their jugular arteries.

Whilst intently occupied regarding this brilliant throng, I happened to attract the attention of an intelligent copper youth, some twenty years old, who spoke English perfectly well, and who in fact patronised me with great politeness and suavity of demeanor; and well he might, for he was Prince of the blood royal, and could afford it. There chanced to be a fine engraving of Queen Victoria and infant family, in the hall. "This," said His Highness, pointing with marked emphasis to the little Prince of Wales, "this is the heir to the British throne!" Ah! thought I, forgive me, but you occupy the same elevated position in the Hawaiian dynasty! My conjecture was well founded.

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By some means the succession of late had been changed. And, by the way, it is a wise institution they have, of continuing the descent from the female branch. The war-club, feathers, and other regalia, were to have fallen upon the brows of one Prince Moses; but Moses was suspected of being too pointed in his attentions to the Queen consort herself—scandal perhaps—although there could be no question about the sad havoc he committed in the hearts of the youthful *wyheenees* of the Royal Academy! Ah! wicked Moses! His excellency the Financial Minister, fearing future inroads upon the peace of families, had the gay Lothario banished to a remote and desolate district of the Island, and the succession transferred to a brother—the youth who evinced so much complaisance towards me.

We remained a full hour, and then made our adieus, "the interview having passed," according to the Court Journal, "much to the satisfaction of all parties."

For my own part I was excessively diverted with the rarse-show, and thought it highly ridiculous. What greater folly can exist than aping the forms and etiquette of an European court? If, as is contended, the natives are not sufficiently advanced in civilization for free government, it is by no means imperative to set up a tinsel puppet, to dazzle the eyes of a few half-naked savages; for surely no intelligent person can be so blind an owl as not to detect and despise the cheat. These vain-glorious ceremonies and pretensions are also, in a certain degree, the cause of embroiling the Hawaiian Government with other nations, whose consuls or diplomatic agents complain of bad treatment; but in all the bullying or advice volunteered, incident upon their indiscretions, there has been none so sensible, and so plainly given, as the letter of an English Admiral to the King, consequent upon outrages committed upon a British subject in 1846. Outcries are raised, too, in these cases, by individuals who have renounced their own country and sworn allegiance to a new native master, about the oppression of American citizens.

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One may forgive the absurdity attending these proceedings in a Scotchman, but it is inexcusable in a Yankee. Still many measures emanating from these sagacious councillors are characterised by a careful regard to the interests of the native population. But then there are other laws, which have not the ground of expediency to uphold them, wherein strangers are incapacitated from becoming owners of landed property without swearing fealty to the Hawaiian King! As a consequence, the greater portion of tillable ground is held by the chief, who has neither the sense nor energy to direct the steps for a proper development of the soil. The lower order are the occupants, who themselves are not eligible to a free tenure, and at least one-half, or two-thirds the benefits of their labor is taken in some way by the proprietors. Thus, without an incentive to greater efforts the country languishes under the same species of feudal tyranny and extortion, as in the days of their cannibal forefathers! The islands are rich and fertile; sugar, coffee, and tobacco flourish luxuriantly; and under any other system than the present, there could be no bounds placed upon the advantages and wealth that would follow. Yet, although this policy, which destroys the energies and resources of the group, is in the greatest degree narrow-minded and illiberal, still it is the only course that will sustain the wise statesman who framed it; for their Excellencies are much too shrewd not to perceive, with prophetic vision, that the very moment the lands are thrown open to foreign enterprise and competition, a preponderating influence will be acquired by the wealth and intelligence of foreigners themselves, the lands will slip like water through the hands of the chiefs; and not only will the Lonely One be called upon to throw off the Imperial tappa, but the royal ministers, also, will be required to resign the purse-strings and portfolios, and betake themselves to the retirements of simple citizenship.

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It is blameable, too, to pamper these semi-tutored island potentates with such highly-seasoned dainties, when in a few years, or may be months, they may be obliged to descend to native life, and without the interest attached to martyrs or Eastern princes we read of, be made a laughing-stock to their former subjects. As things remain, the entire institution of puppet-king, complex government, and scheming advisers, is at best but an indifferent piece of charlatanism and deception.

Nevertheless we were distressed at the thoughts of leaving these lovely islands, for we had become deeply imbued with the rage for realizing rapid fortunes, in the culture of sugar and coffee. Indeed, some of our party were so thoroughly bitten, as to enter into negotiations with prime ministers, and other great people, wherein special royal ordinances were to grant certain titles, with many advantageous exemptions; and we spoke seriously of importing machinery, Malays, Chinese, and of other operations; until at last we began to fancy ourselves doomed to pass the remainder of our lives among the kanakas.

CHAPTER XLV.

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We were forty days at the Sandwich Islands, and on the 21st of September weighed anchor, and

sailed away from the fertile vales of Oahu. Passing along the western shores of the group, we steered to the southward, until the trade winds carried us within a few hundred miles of the equator; where meeting, between the parallels of seven and ten, a strong easterly current, reacting from the north-eastern trades, we were swept three hundred miles to the eastward.

During this period we had light, variable winds, attended by a confused, uneasy sea, and one continual series of rains. The like was never seen; it poured in torrents for seventeen days; the tar of the standing rigging appeared white-washed; sails wet, chafed, and torn; decks sodden and spongy, and the heat below oppressive.

One night, as usual, the windows of heaven were opened, and the rain came down, beyond all ancient similes. I was wet to the bones, and am convinced they too were damp; the heavy canvas was slamming and beating against the masts and tops, with a noise like the report of cannon, whenever the ship gave a quick lurch, giving the idea, of flying out of the bolt ropes; indeed I wished they would, for the yards had been braced every way to woo the fitful breezes, which only for a moment would fill the leaden sails, and then hop around to another quarter. The night was black as Erebus! except when the lightning flashed out in a blinding glare, with a pale, blueish dazzle, like to the flash of a gun, or a burning blue light; illuminating the mazes of rigging, lofty spars, and clusters of the watch, crouching under partial shelter of the hammock-nettings;—then all was dark again. I was standing on the poop, up to my ancles in water, although feeling as if swimming; a little old quarter-master directing the helmsman was at my elbow—I could not see, but I felt him,—he too was at times trying to feel the white feathery dog vane, to know where the wind was! It was old Harry Greenfield! None of your low-crowned, flowing-ribbon'd, wide-trouser'd dandy Jacks, pricked all over with china-ink, like a savage; but a short, stout, wholesome little "tar of all weathers," with a pleasant, rosy, good-humored visage, bronzed and wilted to be sure, and rather mouldy about the head, for he had "served his full time in a man-of-war ship"—nearly half a century—and no doubt had taught many a sucking reefer, and given excellent advice to lots of sapient lieutenants—I know he has to me often; in a word, to complete his portrait, he was the image of Durand's Santa Claus! "Well," said I, "old gentleman, how are you to-night?" "Dry as dust, sir." "What! I thought you wet!" "Fat!" said he, misunderstanding me, "what on—salt junk? You might carry a lump of it from here to Jerusalem, and not get enough fat to grease the pint of a sail-needle." "No! wet I say." "Ah! yes, sir! You're right, my hands and feet are shrunk up like a washerwoman's thumb, but I meant *inside*, sir." "Well, here's the key of the locker, go down and take a glass of grog, but mind you allow for variation." "Aye, aye, sir—no higher nor nor-west." Presently he came splashing back to his old stand. "Mr. Blank, I don't see any shells, tappa, and them sorts of curiosities stowed away in your state-room." "What of that?" "Presents to your friends, sir?" "Oh, no, I heard of a witty lady, who had a nautical lover constantly sending her navy trash, that she had it all packed in the attic to prevent the drawing-rooms being taken for a sailor boarding-house." "Sensible woman, that," chuckled old Harry; "you may buy the same things for half the money in Water-street, besides hubble hubbles made in Hamburgh." The rain came down with renewed violence, if possible, and I became so completely saturated, and water-logged, as to be on the point of requesting a couple of stout top-men to take me by head and heels and wring me comparatively dry, when our confab was interrupted by a sharp squall; but just as as the frigate began to move lively through the water, the wind died quietly away, the topsails flapped against the masts, and all became dark and rainy as before. Could a saint help anathematising such weather? "It's unpleasant business this going to sea," chimed in old Santa Claus, deprecating my wrath against the unfeeling elements; "you ought to try a smoker, I did once." "You did?" said I, incredulously. "Yes, sir, I was paid off from a merchantman in Orleans, and took passage in one of them smokers, bigger than a three-decker."

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"But tell me, my old sea dog, why don't you leave the broad ocean, and settle down quietly on shore?" "Why; sir, I can't afford it!" "No! well, let me hear your ideas of life!" Moving close to my side, while the light from the binnacle flashed upon his pleasant face and dripping garments, he took a reflecting glance at the compass and then began: "D'ye see, sir, I want a country seat—with a nice sail-boat. I'd get up early, and take a good sniffer of brandy, with a dash of peppermint; then I'd go somewhere or another and take breakfast—call for me horse, and ride away eight or ten miles in the country—(he looked like a horseman!)—when I'd get half slewed, and come to town and visit the ladies—." Here he appeared palled. "Go on," I said "Then, sir, I'd take a glass of old Madeira—with an egg in it—every half hour—until bed-time, mind ye—when, with another sniffer"—

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"Eight bells!" sung out the orderly at the cabin doors. The watch was called to take their accustomed drenching, and I went below, without-hearing the conclusion of old Greenfield's yarn.

This weather, caused probably by the Equinox, lasted until the 11th of October, when the winds sprang from the South, blew away the wet clouds, and carried the ship to a longitude of 128° in 5° North latitude, when the breeze gradually veered to the Eastward, and we crossed the Equator. On the morning of the 25th we discovered the easternmost Islands of the Marquesas—passed Hood's Island, and the following day anchored in Nukeheva—the Anna Maria bay of Mr. Gouch—Surveyor of the Daedalus, one of Vancouver's squadron—who, in ignorance of the previous discovery by the Spaniards under Alvaro de Mendaña, had named the group after his commander, Hergest.

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CHAPTER XLVI.

The bay and harbor of Anna Maria is scooped out of the Island in shape of a horse-shoe; hemmed in on three sides by steep mountains, whose sharp, well-defined acclivities spring boldly from the water—dense with foliage—where the brightest verdure closely clasps and kisses the perpendicular faces of the lofty barriers around.

At the head of the harbor, along a white, shelly beach, are multitudes of cocoanuts, hibiscus, and bread-fruit trees, screening within their leafy groves thatched huts and villages of the natives. To the right is a rocky projection, frowning with a heavy battery of cannon; while near by are the pretty villa and grounds of the Governor—barracks—store-houses—buildings and plantations pertaining to the French garrison.

I viewed this scene soon after daylight, as the first rays of morning came glancing in horizontal gleams over the eastern heights, tinging the opposite peaks with the rich, warm glow of sunlight, peering and prying into many a green-clad precipice and grassy dell, step by step, until it fairly illumined the dark alcove-like bay and shores below.

The anchors had hardly struck bottom before the frigate was surrounded by canoes, of a rough, clumsy structure, filled with natives of the most hideous and frightful descriptions. The men were nearly naked. Many had large, frizzled wigs of human hair, thrown down the back of the neck, and confined to the throat by cords or wire—a style of peruke not intended to be used, but merely as a decoration. Others had fresh green leaves entwined around the brows, with concave flaps in front, like visors to caps—their ears perforated with misshapen holes, in which were thrust carved ivory horns, or small bunches of flowers. The hair, from constant bleachings in salt water, dews and tropical suns, had a brown, sandy hue, or the color of tow—brushed straight back, somewhat resembling the head costume of ladies of the court of Louis Quatorze! But what rendered them preëminently hideous, was the tatoing. It, indeed, bordered on the infernal! Not only were their bodies covered with these dark stains, of every pattern, figure and device, but large numbers had angular stripes, two inches broad, beginning at the temple, crossing the eyelid, part of the nose, traversing the mouth and lips, and then going out of sight around the face. I judged it to be a dim idea of the facial angle. Others had the entire upper or lower part of the visage stained like masques in domino. Isosceles triangles were common, leaving the noses clear, and from a distance they appeared the only feature of their faces. There was one demon who claimed a large share of our attention: not a square inch of him, excepting the tongue and eye-balls, was free from this hieroglyphical human "picture printing," and he took immense delight in pointing out many high touches of art, that might from their position have eluded our observation, and dilated with, to us, unintelligible gibberish, upon certain other indescribable arabesques. We thought him intended as a pattern card; an ambulating advertisement, or sign board, sent abroad, as knowing tailors send dandies at home, to give an idea of the higher and more correct delineations of the tatoo: but this individual was altogether so very interesting a specimen of goblin tapestry, that Champollion himself might have studied him with much benefit and gusto.

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They all looked like consummate rascals, and not in the physiognomy of a single individual could we detect the slightest approach to benevolence, or any of the milder virtues. On the contrary, they are famed for cruelty, selfish apathy, and cunning, and are among the worst of the Polynesian tribes. There have been two or three praiseworthy attempts to reform them, by different missionary boards, but they signally failed. The Nukehevas were found too vicious to even suffer, without great privation and danger, their teachers to reside on the islands, and they now remain in the same shocking state of barbarism as before the discovery of the group, in sad contrast, so far as the humanizing influences of Christianity and civilization extend, to the benefits the pioneers of religion have shed upon the other islands of these Indian Archipelagoes.

During the few years the French, in their rage for colonization in the Pacific, have occupied Nukeheva, they have encountered great difficulties in keeping these unruly natives within the bounds of moderation. For a length of time they were continually on the *qui vive* to guard against treachery and attack; of late, the islanders had been quiet, understanding that the French, who held the harbor under what was termed a forcible proprietorship, were shortly to depart; and, indeed, as a preparatory step, some of the government buildings had already been taken down and sent to Tahiti. Still there seems no reason why the Marquesans should have evinced this bitter hostility, for it was conceded that they have been treated with great lenience and forbearance.

As a harbor of refuge, in time of war, Anna Maria is perfectly safe—accessible and defensible; but from the natural indolence of the natives, it is destitute of supplies in sufficient quantities to feed even the few whale-ships touching here during the year.

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The garrison was composed of two hundred and fifty *Infanterie de la Marine*, maintained, no doubt, at considerable expense, and for what present or perspective benefit it would be difficult to surmise. The Governor was M. Fournier, the commander, also, of a fine corvette, the *Galathée*, moored near the shore battery. He was all prepared to give us a warm reception, in case our ship had worn the cross of St. George at her peak, instead of a Yankee gridiron, for they were hourly anticipating a rupture with England, consequent upon the French revolution.

Going on shore, I made the acquaintance of a number of polite officers belonging to the garrison, and had also the pleasure of meeting an old friend, a handsome young Enseigne de Vaisseau.

"Ah!" said he, "would you believe, I've been here amid these beasts of savages eighteen months. *Mon Dieu!* Such a *monotone diablement horrible!* And do you remember all France was talking of Du Petit Thours and this Paradise of Polynesia, and I, like a fool, was dazzled, too! *Sacré! Voila!*"—pointing to a group of copper-tinted and tattooed imps reclining under a banana tree devouring raw fish, and sucking *poee* with their filthy fingers—"and regard me in a flannel jacket, smoking pipes, and reading, for the hundredth time, old *Reuves des deux Mondes!* perpetually sighing for those ravishing scenes we passed together—those dinners in the Bois de Bologne—the races in the alleys by moonlight—evenings at Ranelagh, when I used to dance the *cancan* with poor *Reine Pomarée*, and, behold, I've a lock of her hair," running to an *escrutoire*; "and is it not droll we should meet again five thousand leagues away, and so near the veritable dominions of the great Pomarée herself!" My young friend had cause truly to be disgusted.

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We took a long stroll around the beaches and valleys at the head of the harbor, made a number of visits, then bathed in a shallow, discolored stream of mineral water. The district is not populous, and, during our sojourn, the king and many of the natives had gone to a high heathenish festival in an adjacent valley, on the opposite side of the island. Since the occupation by the French, perfect amity had existed between the different clans of Nukeheva, where each petty chief and people are independent sovereigns in their romantic and secluded valleys: not so much for mutual friendship existing between them, as in hatred to their white visitors. The French seldom wandered to any great distance from their quarters, fearing, possibly, the "anthropopagian tastes of their cannibalistic brethren."

The women were tall and well shaped, with very much brighter complexions than the Hawaiians, and, with exceptions of young girls, were all more or less disfigured by the indigo hues of tattoo; the faces escaping with a few delicate blue lines, or dots, on lips or cheeks. They all seemed complimented, and gave us every assistance in deciphering different designs engraved upon their persons, and one buxom dame, who had a large painting similar to the tail of a peacock spread upon her shoulders, insisted upon doffing her drapery and preceding us, that we might study its beauties with every facility possible!

Many were decorated with bracelets and necklaces of leaves or flowers, and some with anklets of human hair, toe nails, and other valuable relics. All were perfumed with cocoanut oil, and smeared with another equally odoriferous ointment, which dyed arms and faces a deep saffron—neither cosmetic was I able to acquire a taste for, after repeated trials; and, indeed, I may admit, that I have never conquered a disgust, perhaps engendered by too nice a sense of perfume.

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From a number of unmistakable signs and expressions, I presumed the *Franees* were not entirely beloved, even by the women, although the men deigned ludicrous attempts in mode of beard, moustache, shrug of shoulders, and other little grimace, to copy French dress and manner.

After bathing, we reclined on the thwarts of an immense war-canoe that was hauled upon the beach, capable of holding, at least, fifty paddles, and amused ourselves watching a score of young girls swimming in the bay: they swam like fishes, but, as there were no surf or rocks, I had no means of determining what novel or extraordinary feats they were able to perform: they were quite skilful little fisherwomen, and procured for us a cocoanut-shell full of delicious oysters—no bigger than shilling pieces—which served to pass the time until we adjourned to the king's house.

It was rather a modern structure—of roughly-laid stones and boards—built by the French, though falling to decay. There was but a single apartment of tolerable size—floor and walls were strewn with mats, stools, a couple of bedsteads, spyglasses, fowling-pieces covered with rust, spears, nets, calabashes, rolls of *tappa*, war conches, whales' teeth, circular crowns of cocks' feathers, besides an infinite variety of serviceable and useless trumpery, scattered indiscriminately around.

Coiled up on a low, beastly collection of mats and *tappa*, was a repulsive object, half dead with some loathsome disease, and drunk with *arva*—he was the chief's brother, and was expected to die shortly, or be killed on the return of his sovereign—a custom strictly observed with invalids and old, decrepit persons.

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Within a stone's throw of this habitation, was another nearly completed, in native design. The foundation was raised two feet by a platform of large, round, smooth stones. The building itself was in shape of an irregular inverted acute angle, or trapezoid, at the ends, with the legs slightly inclined outwardly, and resting on the foundation. Large upright shafts of polished red wood supported roof and sides, which were nicely formed of frames of white poles, lashed securely and neatly together by braids of parti-colored sennit, and thatched evenly and tastefully over by the spear-shaped leaves of the pandannus, leaving the front of the dwelling open for light and air. It presented a deal of ingenuity and nice mechanism in the design and construction.

The French allow the king sixty dollars a-month, and I should say, from the careless appearance of his household, that he made a bad use of it—besides, he was addicted to *arva*, which my friend assured me was a shade worse for the stomach than prussic acid. I returned to the frigate in the evening, with a party planned to visit the Happar valley, whose beauties we had heard much extolled, on the following day.

Early the next morning I went on shore, but duties of the garrison prevented the officers from leaving until the morning was somewhat advanced—too late to cross the dividing ridges to the adjacent glens, and we accordingly changed the destination, for an excursion up the valley at the head of the harbor.

A pair of native boys preceded us, with baskets. Walking briskly through paths lined with thick, wild undergrowth of tobacco, arrow-root, ginger and guavas, we mounted a number of acclivities, and then striking the bed of a water-course, in two hours reached a comparatively level space, which, my friend informed me, was *la cour de l'ancienne Noblesse*, and the spot where high festivals of the Nukehevans were held. The court was a parallelogram, paved with smooth, round stones, and on three sides surrounded by native-built houses, unoccupied, but very large and commodious, all in good repair, and ready for a perspective feast. At the lower ends of the square coursed a little stream, and the place was dark with shade of lofty cocoanuts, bread-fruit, iron-wood, maple and gigantic hibiscus. All was silent, gloomy and deserted, the imperative decrees of Taboo preserved it sacred from native footsteps, during the intervals between their sacrifices and feasts—even our *cumulees*—boys, made a wide circuit, with bowed heads and averted faces.

Closely scrutinizing this field of heathenish revels, we continued on up the ravine, and in a few minutes familiarly paid our respects to the King's father, by unceremoniously bobbing through his doorway, and slapping him smartly on the back. [Pg 388]

The hut was large, in accordance with the position, rank and wealth of the owner. A trickling rivulet in front filled a scooped-out bowl in the rocks, some yards in diameter, and then flowed over a little natural channel, worn at the side, like the gutter to a fountain. Around and above, the cocoanuts were rustling in the sea-breeze.

We were cordially greeted by the host, who was seated on his hams and heels, with no other apparel than a *maro* wound around the loins, and a necklace of straggling, snow-white hairs hanging on his meagre breast; it was the honored beard of his ancestors, which was, I suppose, retained merely to swear by, as it did not appear either valuable or ornamental. He was a remarkable and venerable Goblin, and he informed us that his existence comprised nine hundred moons. This would have made him somewhere verging on eighty years; but he appeared as aged as Saturn.

He was tatoed all over the body and limbs, face alone exempted. It must have occupied as much time to delineate him as it did Rafael to fresco the galleries of the Vatican! But his hide was so ancient and worm-eaten, that many fine touches were almost illegible. Around his knees were playing two little dusky imps, scarcely a year old! God knows where they came from—may have been a present, as it is all the fashion among the Marquesas. Nevertheless, he regarded them with the most affectionate interest, and watched their every movement, even to sucking his mouldering toes and pulling his grizzly top-knot, with the tenderest solicitude. Presently they crawled in front of the dwelling, and actually toddled into the pool. I instantly started up to fish them out, but the old Goblin only chuckled, and the little elfs kept bobbing about the surface of the water with the buoyancy of corks—like junk bottles in a lea-way—crowing and smiling bravely. I never was more amazed, and taking a dip myself afterwards, found the basin up to my neck. [Pg 389]

Native attendants soon produced clusters of cocoanuts, with the crowns of their heads knocked off, ready for consumption. We made cocoanut-milk punch—every man his own punch-bowl; with a sprinkle of lime-juice, and syrup of powdered sugar-cane—gently agitated within the milky shells—which made as delicious a beverage as ever a regent brewed: it is worth a trip to Polynesia alone to enjoy it. Then exploring the resources of the baskets, we discovered a case of sardines, bread, bananas, and oranges; made luncheon, and fed the children on the crumbs.

Pipes were filled, and a native boy quickly brought forth two sticks, and cutting the hardest to a point, and holding the other firmly fixed against a stone, began to wear a groove with the pointed stick in the softest by a measured movement along the surface. Presently a fine dust was deposited at the lower end; the white wood turned dark; quicker and quicker, stronger and stronger traversed the pointed stick; the dust began to smoke, some dry fibres and leaves were laid across, and in an instant burst into a blaze. The operation lasted three or four minutes, and was skilfully performed. I had plenty of lucifers in my pocket, but not having witnessed the native process of striking fire, and thinking a little wholesome exertion would not injure the young *Cumulee*, I did not produce them.

Throwing ourselves at full length on the mats, we devoted the time to conversation and tobacco. The old Goblin fascinated me, I could not remove my gaze from his lineaments, but by and by I opined that there was a singular odor pervading the habitation; and upon reflection, I experienced something unpleasant upon first entering; but then there are so many villanous compounds surrounding native dwellings, and being moreover deeply engaged brewing punch, eating luncheon, smoking, and surveying the Goblin, I forgot other matters for the time being, until a pause in the conversation induced me to enquire the cause of the annoyance. Ah! said a Frenchman, giving a few agonizing sniffs, and looking around: *Ah! le voici!* Casting my eyes upward, I beheld a long object, enveloped in native cloth and tappa, hanging slantingly across a beam, like a *fantoccino*, just before throwing a summerset on the slack-wire! It was a near relative, lately deceased, who from an elevated and unchristian notion of respect, had been suspended under the paternal roof, until dry enough to be deposited in a raised native tomb of stones and thatch. Dropping the pipe, I gained my feet, and bidding our antique host a hasty farewell, rushed into the open air; where, after swallowing a modicum of eau de vie neat, I swore [Pg 390]

a mental vow never more to visit Nukehevan nobility!

Returning towards the harbor, we tarried to exchange a kind word with the Catholic priest attached to the garrison. It is needless to add that he had made no proselytes among the natives, and when, from idle curiosity or merriment, they attended mass, and were under no apprehensions from *Franee* bayonets, they delighted themselves by mimicking every word and gesture of the good father.

During the jaunt we encountered two or three American or English vagabonds, residing permanently on the island, subsisting on *poee poee* and raw fish, lost to all the tastes and habits of civilized society, making a livelihood by trading with ships touching at the group, or idolized by the islanders for their skill in the distillation of deleterious intoxicating drinks from the dragon-tree, kava, or sugar-cane. They are a class of persons, who, if not naturally unprincipled, are driven by harsh usage to desert from the whalers, and the contrast of the indolent voluptuous life of the islands, with the hardships and disease of shipboard, is more than sufficient to reconcile them to the change.

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The whaling interests of the United States have now attained so vast a magnitude, that it is high time our government should take measures exclusively for their protection in these seas. The enterprise of our hardy fishermen has driven the ships of all other nations almost entirely off the ground of competition. In the Pacific, and its continental seas alone, we have a mighty fleet of more than five hundred whale ships, manned in the aggregate by twenty thousand seamen. The larger portion of these vessels are fitted for the right whale, and seek their prey on the northern coasts of America or Asia, in high southern latitudes, and latterly, with extraordinary success, on the shores of Japan and sea of Okokts. The sperm fishermen cruise near the equator, and not only are frequently surrounded by dangerous navigation, amidst islands or reefs little known, but have also to guard against surprise, and the treachery of savages of the uncounted groups of Polynesia; unavailingly at times, for, in addition to the long catalogue of crimes committed in this ocean, was that of the capture of the ship *Triton*, in December of '47, by the natives of Sydenham Island—one of the King's Mill cluster—a number of whose crew were inhumanly massacred.

It does not necessarily follow that the natives are always to blame—gross outrages sometimes demand prompt vengeance;—but yet a small squadron of double-decked corvettes, of light draught, and ample stowage, constantly cruising, and touching among these groups, would tend in a great degree to shield our whalers from harm, and the natives themselves from the imposition and injustice so commonly practised upon them.

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Again, if there were stringent laws for the internal government of this branch of our marine—were masters not allowed under any circumstances to keep the sea beyond the usual period comprised in a fishing season, before visiting port, and the scurvy considered a capital offense, we should meet with fewer instances of desertions or mutiny, and fewer diseased, vicious vagabonds drifting about these islands at the mercy of the natives.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

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On the 28th of September, the well-used chains and anchors were raised from their beds, and with a light wind we drifted slowly from the lonely bay of Anna Maria. The sun arose the next morning, and a dim blue haze alone pointed to the spot on the ocean where lie the Marquesas.

The fifth day after sailing from Nukeheva, we approached the north-western clusters of the Society group, and passed a number of low coralline islands, appearing like a raft of upright spars adrift upon the sea. One was *Kruzenstein's*—named by *Kotzbue*, in compliment to his old commander.

At sunrise of the following day, we were before Tahiti. The land rises, grand and imposing, to the elevation of seven thousand feet. One core-like ridge runs along the summit, branching off into numberless steep valleys and acclivities, down to the water's edge. The peaks pierce the sky bold and strikingly—thrown up into the most fantastic and grotesque shapes—while more singular than all, cradled between a great gap of the heights, is the *Diadem of Faatoar*, having a dozen pointed elevations circling around a crown, like the serrated teeth of a saw. Nearer towards the bases of these ridges are low points jutting into the ocean, crowded with cocoanut trees—then a narrow belt of lagoon, and the whole girdled by a snow-white wreath of foam, embroidered on the coral reefs.

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The morning was cloudless. To the southward, rising clearly and bright, tinged by the glorious sun, undraped by a single atom of mist or vapor, was the Island of *Aimeo*, equally varied and novel in its strange formations; and when at a later day we sailed around it, while the different phases were brought in clear relief against the heavens—we discovered battlements, embrasures, pyramids—ruined towers with terraces and buttresses—a cathedral with domes and spire—all so fantastically blended in one beautifully verdant picture, as to leave the imagination in doubt as to its reality!

We hove to in sight of the harbor of *Papeete*. The French ships of war, with chequered rows of ports, were lying with drooping flags and not a breath of air, whilst with us the loud trade-wind was tearing crests from the waves, and the frigate trembling under her top-sails.

A gun, and jack at the fore, and shortly there came dancing over the waves, in a whale-boat, an officer, Monsieur le Pilot! Two hours we remained outside, awaiting the breeze to fill the Port—and then wearing round, the ship leaped, replete with life and vigor—every seam of the stout canvas straining—towards an entrance through a coral gateway. The sea was light green on either side of the aperture, barely wide enough to admit us, when, at the turning point, the helm was put down, and the strong wind bore the huge hull through the blue channel into the smooth water within. Sails were brailed up, and at the proper moment down fell the ponderous anchor—splash—with its unfettered cable rumbling to the coral beds of Papeetee! What if there chanced to be a group of mermaids, parting their wet locks, in the emerald villas below? Nothing! Crashing through the snowy groves and shelly mansions, goes the ruthless anchor, alike indifferent to all!

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We were locked in by the reef—no ungainly ledge of black, jagged rocks—no frightful barrier to make tempest-tost mariners shudder—but a smooth parapet of coral, just beneath the surface, with the outer face like a bulwark of adamant, where the swelling billows vainly expend their rage, and then bubble rippling over in a liquid fringe of creamy foam.

Skirting along the semi-circular shores of the harbor, is the town of Papeetee. Lines of houses and cottages half smothered in glossy green foliage—pretty, square-built, veranda'd, straw-colored dwellings and barracks of the French—and midway between reef and shore, a little bouquet of an islet, teeming with cocoanut, banian, bread-fruit and the iron-wood tree, with its filmy, feathery, delicate tissue of leaves and branches—all drooping over a few cane-thatched sheds and a *demi-lune* battery of open-mouthed cannon.

Night came, and the breeze was done. Not a sigh disturbed the tranquil water—the towering ships were mirrored and reflected by the moonlight—red fires were shedding twinkling glooms from fishing canoes, through the moon's silver flame, athwart the sparkling phosphorescent surf—the sharp peaks of Tahiti were hanging high above, with Aimeo dimly visible in the distance! Presently bugles from the ships of war rang out clear and shrill in the calm night—drums rattled—tap—tap—tap—flash—flash—the nine o'clock guns, and as the reverberating echoes from the reports went dying away from valley to valley, there came the clash of cymbals from the shore, and then the full crash of a brass band, pouring forth the most delightful melody from Norma; whilst the low "shaling" roar on the reef beat time in a deep musical base.

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We thought Papeetee by far the loveliest spot that we had seen, not excepting charming little Hilo!

Pomàree's flag and the French tricolor floated side by side. The queen was handsomely pensioned, as were also the chiefs, the French having kindly taken possession of their heritage, under a forcible protectorate. People may prate an ocean of nonsense about the injustice of the thing, but the fact is, France wished colonies in the Pacific—Tahiti was one selected, and the English themselves afforded an excellent pretext to make the acquisition. Suppose, for example—Catholics had been first in the field, and, by their instigation, Protestant or Puseyite missionaries had been kicked into the sea, would John Bull in his lion's mantle have calmly beheld his subjects maltreated for heresy, in striving to preach the Gospel among the heathen? No! not without baring his claws, and making them felt in the tawny hides of every savage in Polynesia! Ay! and, if need be, in white skins, also, though they had been French!

Then what sickly sympathy it is to talk of the wrongs and aggressions, or the rights and laws of European nations as having a bearing upon a handful of barbarians, subjected to the savage sway of tyrannical native masters, when contrasted with the benefits conferred upon the world at large, by their being under the enlightened rule of a civilized government!

The French experienced hard fighting and much difficulty in subduing Tahiti; and, even after all the trouble, loss of blood and money, it seems highly probable that they are dissatisfied with their conquest, and may shortly resign it: at any rate, the expenditure attending the occupation must be very great, and it appears a mistaken policy in retaining so large a garrison. There were thirteen hundred troops, exclusive of ships of war always in port, posted in Tahiti—far more than needed to overawe the natives, and too few to withstand a land attack from a foreign foe. Trade is a mere bagatelle—the French have no commerce—and whale-ships have deserted Papeetee, since most of the produce is consumed by the garrison. The population, as in all Polynesia, are constitutionally opposed to labor—they cannot bend their energies to any steady employment, and, when compelled to work, they pine away like unhappy monkeys—thus the soil, though rich and tillable, is only made to produce a small quantity of arrow root, sugar, and cocoanut oil.

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Fortifications were progressing rapidly, and the harbor is very susceptible of defence. Two heavy batteries, *en cavalier*, which, when completed, were to mount sixteen traversing guns, mostly eighty-pounder shells, will rake the entrance through the reef, at point-blank range; twelve more cannon on Pomàree's little islet of Motunata, cross the fire from the shore battery, and sweep in every direction over the reef-seaward. There are besides, four small block houses, perched on the salient spurs of the mountains in rear of the town, with each a long gun which can be brought to bear on the harbor. All the world bear witness with what skill the French use artillery on land, and it must be an intrepid commander who attempts a demonstration on the island by the harbor of Papeetee.

The Governorship was placed in the hands of M. Lavaud, to whom, with the officers of the garrison, and officers afloat of the fine frigate, *Syrène*, and steamer, *Gassendi*, we were indebted for many acts of courtesy. They were all extremely Republican, under their reversed tricolor.

Since the occupation of the Society and Marquesas groups, Tahiti has been made the See of a bishop. But although the Catholics have prosecuted their labors with laudable and philanthropic zeal, yet, strange as it may be, they have not met with the same success as their fellow missionaries in the Hawaiian Islands. Nor have the Tahitians, together with the inhabitants of many of these southern groups, forgotten the early truths taught them by their kind Protestant teachers, and they still lament the untimely fate of John Williams: a man of the noblest piety, possessed of the undaunted resolution and industry of the Apostles of old, who fell a martyr to his faith and labors, among the very savages he went to reform.

There were two excellent gentlemen, stationed at Papeetee from the London Board of Protestant Missions—Messrs. Howe and Thompson—who, if sound sense, unbiassed by narrow-minded sectarian prejudice, combined with great practical information, and knowledge of the native character, can be of service in their mission, they have indeed the true elements of success. From the opportunities we had of judging in Papeetee and the vicinity, there certainly was exhibited a more modest and correct deportment among the natives than we observed elsewhere; and although morality, strictly speaking, is unknown, there was still less outward licentiousness visible than was a matter of hourly occurrence in the other groups.

Note.—In all the lighter sketches upon Polynesia, I cannot resist paying the faint tribute of my own individual admiration to Mr. Melville. Apart from the innate beauty and charming tone of his narratives, the delineations of Island life and scenery, from, my own personal observation, are most correctly and faithfully drawn.

At Nukeheva and Tahiti I made inquiry about his former associates, and without in the least designing to sully the enchanting romance of his fair Typee love, I may mention having seen a "nut-brown" damsel, named Fayaway, from that valley, who apparently was maid of all work to a French Commissary of the garrison. She was attired in a gaudy yellow robe de chambre, ironing the Crapeau's trowsers! *Credat Judeus!* There was also a diminutive young *oui oui* tumbling about the mats, so it is presumable she had become childish of late; yet the proof is not strong, for it is quite as much in vogue among these southern groups to change names and give away infants, as the fashion in the Sandwich Islands of knocking out a couple of front teeth to evince grief at the decease of near friends or relatives, and the nymph alluded to may not be the original Fayaway after all.

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Mr. Melville's friend, Dr. Johnstone, whom he has immortalized in Omoo, was excessive wroth, and refused to be pacified, resolving shortly to prosecute the English publishers for libel. He politely permitted me to transcribe some items from his dose book, declaring however, that the "embrocation" so relished by the Long Ghost, was a villanous preparation, having the least taste of gin in the world, and made up from laudanum, turpentine, and soap linament! Here is the memorandum:—

"Ship, Lucy Ann, Captain Vinton.	
October 10th, 1842. Melvil Herman. Stocks.	
Embrocation	75
19th. Do.	75

\$1 50"	

I felt no inclination to task it, since I found the Doctor's other prescriptions unexceptionable. The Ghost must have been seriously indisposed; he had a large quantity: was supposed at the period of our visit to be in Sydney, or after gold in California, but, with his ubiquitous propensities, may have been in both places. Captain Bob, of the Calaboosa, was "muckee-moi," so was Father Murphy, all under the sod. Charming Mrs. Bell had taken to hard drink, *before* Mr. Melville's rencontre, and may have been slightly elevated on that occasion. H. M. *ci-devant* Consul, Mr. Wilson, was in the like vinous state, and occupied his leisure in the pursuit of shells at the Navigator Islands. Shorty was still devoting his talents to the culture of potatoes at Aimeo, and strongly suspected of shooting his neighbor's cattle.

CHAPTER XLIX.

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The rain fell in torrents the day succeeding our arrival, and it was not until Sunday that I had courage to set foot on shore: then I went solus, and jumping on the beach, two minutes' walk found me in the Broom Road, a broad lane running nearly the entire circuit of Tahiti, within a stone's throw of the surf-locked lagoons, shaded like a bower by magnificent trees and undergrowth, that hang their drooping, green arms in grateful coolness, to shield the traveller from the heat of tropical suns. Notwithstanding mud from recent rains, the roads and lateral paths were thronged with natives: I was surprised to find them so much superior in physical mould and beauty to those of other islands we had visited. The men were well proportioned, and some with a noble bearing; the women were very tall, scarcely one less than five feet eight; many of the young girls were exquisitely shaped, with small hands and feet. Moreover, they had

borrowed a nicer taste in dress from the French, and their gowns and bonnets were very becomingly worn.

I splashed and trudged about the Broom Road until evening, and then, following the tide of population, entered the well laid out grounds of the gubernatorial mansion. The lawns and alleys were crowded with natives, officers and soldiers, listening to the evening music; this over, I devoted the evening wandering from café to café, and wondering if I were in France or Tahiti. Lights were gleaming from every little auberge and cabaret of the town—the tables within covered with pipes and bottles of red wine—soldiers were drinking and chanting favorite songs of Beranger; and one inebriated sapper, meeting me in the road, placed both hands on my shoulders, and roared out, with but an indifferent appreciation of music:

"J'ai connu Moreau—Victor—Argerau—
Et Murat—Et Massen—a—a—
Vash a fling a flong—tra a long, a long—!"

The streets were filled with groups of gaily-attired native girls, who, with low, musically laughing voices, were chattering their soft, vowelly dialect, unceasingly, interrupted occasionally by some gallant Frenchman, who would perhaps give a stray damsel a chuck under the chin, or a hasty clasp around the waist, and pass on, regardless of their lively sallies. Then overgrown gend'armes would be perceptible in the distance, by their white cotton aquillettes and clashing sabres, when the nymphs would disappear like frightened partridges amid the adjacent groves, and all were hushed in an instant, until the dreadful police had passed by, when they would again emerge and occupy their former ground. Then, too, the light yellowish tinge of plastered houses, so often seen in France—the thatched cane huts of the natives—sentinels pacing the ramparts—near by, a brass field-piece gazing up the road—and beneath the spreading bread fruit, or under the stately trunk of a cocoanut, a soldier in red breeches, resting on the shining barrel of his musket. All this, with the profusion of tropical foliage, the grand scenery of the island, and a thousand other novel scenes, so strangely contrasted with *demi-bar-bare* life, that I became quite bewildered, and was glad to make the acquaintance of an agreeable French officer, who, with a bottle of Bourdeaux, soon brought me to my senses.

I passed the night on shore, in the warehouse of an American merchant, and should probably have slept well, in defiance of mosquitoes, had not a choice coterie of *sous-officers*, in an adjoining cabaret, within-arm's length of my window, made vociferous music, by screaming Republican airs until daylight, very much incited, no doubt, by continual cries of *Encore du vin, mon cher*, and the usual ringing accompaniment of bottles and glasses.

Rising betimes, I donned walking dress, and after breakfast, in company with my friend Larry and an officer of the French Marine, who spoke the Tahitian dialect perfectly well, we left Papeete for an excursion up the Broom Road towards Point Venus.

The rain had quenched the dust, and there was a grateful freshness clinging around the lime and orange groves. The sun had not yet drunk the sparkling diamond-drops of dew trembling upon the guava thickets, nor had the breeze shaken a leaf of the towering cocoanuts, nor vibrated a single sphere of bread-fruit that hung like pendulums from amid the glossy leaves. The air, too, was heavy with perfume of orange and jessamine—and we went larking along the quiet road—kicking up our heels and whooping joyously—pausing a moment to catch a gleaming view of the slender peaks above us—the conspicuous Diadem of Faatoar—the green savannahs sloping up the valleys, or the blue sea and reef as yet undazzled by the rising sun.

We dallied frequently with young cocoanuts, and said *aroha*—love to you—to any lithe *vahinees* we encountered in our path. Once we tarried for repose and beer at a French auberge, and then, without further break to our voyage, we continued on along the curves of the reef-locked shores for some miles, when a lane branched away to the left, and we came to the new country house of Pomàrce at Papoa.

It stands on a narrow coralline embankment, within a bound of the smooth, pebbly beach—surrounded by noble trees, and overhanging clusters of the richest tropical foliage. The building is an oblong oval, one hundred feet by thirty. Through the centre runs a range of square, polished columns of light koa wood, eighteen feet high, supporting a cross-sleeper the whole length of the roof: from this beam, drooping down at an angle of about fifty degrees, were a great number of white, glistening poles, radiating with perfect evenness and regularity to within six feet of the ground, where they were notched and tied securely with braids of variegated sennit to ridge-pieces fitted in posts around the circuit of the building. The roof was thatched with the long, dried, tapering leaves of pandannus, folded on slim wands, and plaited in regular lines, down to the eaves, where, just within, fell a few inches of plain fringed matting nicely stitched to the roof. Inside this curtain, again, were the perpendicular sides of the dwelling, constructed of the same white poles of hibiscus as those upholding the roof, and all lashed by braid to cross sections between the posts—leaving narrow spaces between each pole, and but two arches for doorways on the side opposite the sea.

The house was quite new, and indeed hardly completed, but with the breeze blowing through the open trellis-worked walls, and the great lofty roof hanging lightly above, it presented the most airy, fanciful structure conceivable, and was admirably adapted to the climate and habits of the Islanders.

The floor was carpeted with dried grass and rushes, six inches deep; mats were scattered around,

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groups of swarthy natives were lounging listlessly on the grass, and bands of girls and women engaged weaving mats, scraping cocoanut shells to transparent thinness, playing cards, or sleeping on the laps of others.

The Queen was absent on a visit to the island of Aimeo. She was described as a brave, temperate, fat old lady of about forty years, who has never yet been able to overcome youthful prejudices against European style of living—and although the French have built and furnished her a pleasant residence in Papeete, she is still happy to kick off etiquette, with her shoes, and fly to native pleasures and kindred. She was blessed with a large family, and six were being educated in Aimeo by the English Mission, who with great liberality would voluntarily defray the expenses of their education, as well as of the children of the high chiefs; but the Governor very properly sets aside portions of their pensions for that purpose, which is undoubtedly the best use the money can be put to. As Pomàree detests the French, and cannot be persuaded to assume, except for a moment, European manners and customs, she neither assumes any of their virtues, but leads a rollicking, sportive life, surrounded by gay troupes of frolicsome attendants—spending the remainder of her five thousand dollar stipend in decking her dark-eyed favorites with pretty dresses and trinkets.

Mr. Ellis has written an interesting poem, filled with virtuous indignation in relation to the poor Queen's wrongs, and there is one couplet which is unfortunately too true—

"Who would believe that England would have left
That *trusting* Queen thus suffering and bereft?"

The fact is, the beautiful, princess Aimata that was, is now by her own imprudence low in purse, and having acquired the habit of coquetting too extensively with tradesmen and merchants of Papeete, she finds difficulty in getting trusted before her pension falls due. Still, with all her foibles, she was universally acknowledged to be a woman of strong sense and character, adored by her subjects, and respected by foreigners.

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After idling an hour with a few of the young ladies of the court, who were making preparations for their sovereign's reception, we left the Palace, and keeping along the shelly strand, passed through a sacred grove of iron-wood, whose gauze-like branches waved over the tombs of the ancient kings of Tahiti. There was naught to be seen, save heaps of mouldering coral ruins—thence crossing a point of the reef, which closed upon the beach, we reached one of many indentations of the Island, Matavai bay, and shortly afterwards came upon a native school-house. The building was large and dilapidated—the rush-laid floor was occupied with forms for the scholars, who were seated about in rows. Some of the girls had very pretty, attractive faces, and nearly all of both sexes wore around the brow and hair, chaplets of braid entwined with red and white flowers—orange or jessamine—having tasteful tassels of fresh blossoms hanging down behind the ear. They were not the most quiet school in the world, but applied to their tasks with great spirit and quickness. The teacher was an odd fish in his way—of the dwarf species—scarcely five feet in altitude—but from his peculiar build, he looked to me growing larger and larger every instant. The head was immense—hair white and cropped—the face expressed firmness, benevolence and intelligence. His body and arms were those of a giant, while the lower limbs tapered away to nothing, half shrouded in blue tappa, and over all he wore a flowing, yellow shirt.

The roll was called, and I noticed a few urchins, who were tardy in arriving, whimpering, from which I surmised they were at times indulged with the bamboo. A hymn was sung in good time; and although the girls had soft clear voices, there was little musical taste. In conclusion, an extemporaneous prayer was made—all kneeling—by a venerable native, who was afflicted, like many of his race, with *elephantiasis*. At the word "Amen," the little pupils gave a joyous whoop, and leaped pell-mell through the doorways.

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Returning by the Broom Road, which is never beyond a few yards from the sea, we paid a visit to another hencoop habitation, owing for its lord, Arupeii, brother to the Queen's last husband, and his wife a cousin to Pomàree herself. They were a fine-looking couple, and the chieftainess, with her pretty baby, struck me as particularly handsome.

Dinner was preparing, and we passed the time pleasantly, lounging on mats, and smoking pipes. The first preparation for the feast was made by a plump girl, in an extremely brief petticoat, who ascended a tree above our heads, and picked an armful of broad round leaves, which afterwards were used for a tablecloth. They were carefully lapped one upon the other in rows on the ground, and mats and low stools placed near them. The girl, whom we christened Jack, from a peculiar roll in her gait, assisted by two more attendants, ranged a close platoon of youthful cocoanuts, with mouths open like lids, along the centre of the board; on either side were laid transparent shell goblets—the dark filled with sea-water and the light with fresh. Thus much for the table-service. Now came in on a huge wooden platter a baked pig, his dear little trotters, tail, and even to the extremity of his snout, crisped and browned most invitingly. In a trice Jack twisted a brace of leaves around her fingers, seized the tempting grunter, and hey! presto! no articulator of anatomical celebrity, no, not even the professional carver mentioned by Sir Walter, who dissected becaficos into such multitudes of morsels, could have more cunningly divided the dish, giving each of the company an equal share. Now came a stack of roasted bread-fruit. Jack, with gloves of more fresh leaves on her hands, peeled, halved, tore out the seeds, and tossed them from platter to table, with the dexterity of a juggler at his tricks. Then there came piles of taro, and snow-white yams; heaps of oranges, and golden pineapples, with bunches of bananas in the

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offing.

We were six at table, seated, *à la Turque*, on mats. The servants first handed shells of fresh water; and, by the way, every one knows who invented steam-engines, playing-cards, and pin-making; yet in the absence of positive information, I claim the finger-glass as of Tahitian origin, and wish it to be generally understood. Then falling to, and with a fragment of bread-fruit crushed within the hand, and a delicate bit of crisped pig dipped in salt-water, by way of castors, we munched and sucked our digits alternately, until the heavy edibles were well nigh consumed; when laving again, dessert of fruits were distributed, the goblets once more went round, we rinsed our throats with cocoanut milk, and thus ended the feast. We had a *chasse* of pipes and brandy; but this last was purely an innovation on a native dinner.

Our comely hostess was treated with great deference and respect, none of the attendants presuming to sit in her presence; indeed, we were entertained by distinguished nobles of the true Tahitian nobility, and all was *maitai*. Previous to the repast, we had dispatched a courier on horseback to the Port for wine, and, before dark, he returned, with but the breakage of a single bottle, and somewhat inebriated—so we judged he had broken the vessel after tasting the contents; but the matter was not satisfactorily proven; there was still abundance, and the cups circulated freely.

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The pretty chieftainess smiled, the baby took a sip and crowed like a chicken. Arupeii facing me, cross-legged, laughed outright, and related by signs, and a few words I could comprehend, many reminiscences of war and battles—ships of war and their commanders, with unpronounceable names—all of whom, I assured him, were my intimate friends and near relations.

Later in the evening, we walked to a running stream hard by, and, with the full moon above us, and while

"Hesper, the star with amorous eye,
Shot his fine sparkle from the deep blue sky,"

twinkling over the grotesque heights of Aimeo, the air laden with the odor of orange and jessamine, we waded into the brook, and diverted ourselves by plashing water upon a group of maids of honor who had followed us.

Before we knew it, a heavy black cloud had stolen from the shade of the high mountains, and we had barely time to snatch our garments from the grass and scamper through the grove, before the rain was upon us: it passed as quickly—the wine was exhausted—the chieftainess presented me with a shell goblet, and bidding good night to our noble entertainers we were escorted to the palace of Pomàree, where the chief in waiting had large fine mats laid for couches, curtained by rolls of tappa, and with the moonlight glancing on the foaming reef, visible through the cage-built house, and the water rippling on the sandy shore, we betook ourselves to rest. Our repose was shortly disturbed by a regiment of juveniles who marched before the palace, chaunting, with great vociferation, the Marseilles hymn, giving the word "battalion" in full chorus; then, much to our astonishment, they struck up "Jim along, Josey," and concluded the opera with "Dan Tucker," set to native words. At this stage of the concert, our host, by request, made a few remarks, and the performers vanished.

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Fleas were excessively troublesome, and, during the night, to get rid of the annoyance, we had several dips in the lagoon, which was an easy matter, since the water was nearly at the foot of our couches. Once I was on the point of shifting my bed of mats to the beach, under a clump of cocoanuts, but our host would not hear of it—declaring it was *ita maitai! ita maitai!*—impossible! not good! Indeed I afterwards found the practice was never indulged in by the natives—for should one of these heavy nuts—and they are very large—many containing a full quart of milk, to say nothing of the weight of shell and husk—falling from an elevation of nigh an hundred feet, chance to alight on the cocoanut of the sleeper, it is reasonable to suppose it would damage his ideas or slumber: besides, large rats ascend the trees, and sometimes detach the fruit, while knawing into the tender nut: crabs, too, the sagacious creatures, crawl up the trunks whose branches incline over the rocky shores, cut the stem with their claws, and the concussion attending the fall splits them wide open, or cracks them ready for eating. I never saw them at these pranks, but have the information from reliable authority. As the daylight guns from the Port of Papeete came booming and echoing among the mountains, we sprang to our feet, swallowed a cooling draught of cocoanut milk, enjoyed another bathe in the stream, and then trudged gaily back to town.

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A few days later, we were visited by our hospitable friend, Arupeii! He was shown every attention, and, at the usual hour, placed his heels under the gun-room mahogany. He dispensed with forks, and ate indiscriminately of viands, vegetables, and other dainties; occasionally storing away bits of bread and ham in the flowing bosom of his shirt, for, no doubt, a more convenient season. He never let a bottle pass him, either of port, sherry, or malt, appreciating brandy most, and having a fancy for drinking all from tumblers. With these little solecisms, he got on famously, and, at the termination of the dinner, patted his portly person and shouted *maitai*.

I do not know whether it be considered with the Tahitian aristocracy complimentary to covet a neighbor's goods, but certainly my stout chieftain was the most shameless beggar I ever remembered to have any dealings with. He volunteered to accept hatbands, plugs of tobacco, sealing wax, pistols, newspapers, anything and everything he saw, until, at the end of the third glass of strong waters after dinner, he requested, as a particular favor, the mess candlesticks,

when, losing all patience, I told him his boat was waiting, so he hitched up his trousers, offered to rub noses, and with a present for his handsome wife stowed in the capacious shirt, we shook hands, and away he paddled on shore. This was the last we saw of Arupeii.

The frigate was always, Sundays excepted, surrounded by canoes filled with the natives, and they must have made a golden harvest, to judge from the immense quantities of fruits constantly coming over the gangways—so great was the demand for cocoanuts, that they were rafted off from the shore in strings, like water-casks. The canoes were awkwardly hewn out of rough logs, with ill-arranged, misshapen outriggers; quite unlike the buoyant, swift little water vehicles of the Sandwich Islanders.

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One day, attended by a tidy little reefer, we hired a clumsy, crazy equipage, with a copper and indigo-colored monster in the stern to paddle us about the reef and harbor. It was low water, and as our canoe drew but an inch or two of water outside—she was half-full inside—we were able to skim over the shallowest parts; and, by the by, there is a strange anomaly in the tides of Papeete, which are not in the least influenced by the moon—there are many ways of accounting for it—I only speak of the fact—we ever found a full sea at twelve, and low water at six.

In many places, a few feet below the surface, we glided over what seemed the most exquisite submarine flower-gardens, corals of all colors, and of every imaginable shape—plant, sprig, and branching antlers—of purple, blue, white, and yellow—variegated star and shell fish, and narrow clear blue chasms and fissures of unfathomable depths between; but what was equally beautiful to behold, schools of superbly-colored fishes swimming and darting about in the high blue rollers as raising their snowy crests just before breaking upon the outer wall of the reef, the finny tribes were held in a transparent medium, like that seen through a crystal vase.

A heavy shower interrupted our aquatic researches, and we sought shelter on Pomàree's diminutive island of Motuuata. It hardly covers an acre, but is a most charming retreat beneath the drooping foliage, and I did not wonder at the jolly queen's taste. She never goes there now: the *Franees* were busy with pick and barrow on parapet and bastion; blacksmiths and artizans were hammering away at the forges, and, beneath the trees and sheds, soldiers and sailors were munching long rolls of bread and drinking red wine. Who can wonder that the poor Queen has forsaken her former haunts, when her cane-built villas are polluted by foreign tread, and the weeping groves that sheltered her troops of languishing revellers, the "cushions of whose palms" had clasped the smooth trunks of all—where merriment, games, feast, and wassail went on unceasingly, in all the native abandonment of island life and pleasure; now to have those scenes so changed by red-breeched *Franees*—the shelly shores tossed with stone and mortar into embankments for dreaded cannon, and the grove resounding with stunning sound of hammer and anvil. Alas! poor Pomàree! recall the bright days of your girlhood, and curse the hour when you invited the stranger to your kingdom.

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CHAPTER L.

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Early one morning the Governor and myself left the ship at gunfire, for a pic-nic among the mountains. We met with no more serious adventure in our transit from the frigate to the beach, than the capsizing a barrel of bread, by our stupid Italian valet, belonging to the baker's bumboat, in which we had been kindly offered a passage to the shore. The loaves went floating all about the harbor, and we were some minutes rescuing the manna from Neptune's pocket. Without further mishap we went straight to the domicile of an English gentleman, who had politely planned the party. All was prepared, and we set off as the troops of the garrison were filing into the parade ground for weekly review, and a very creditable and soldierly appearance they presented.

We made quite a respectable battalion ourselves, so far as numerical force went. In advance trotted a vigorous *taata*, with a couple of large, native baskets slung by a pole over his shoulders, loaded with bottles and provender; at his heels, our own unfortunate esquire, Giacomo. The Governor, our English friend and myself, constituted the main body, and the rear guard was composed of three laughter-loving damsels—straight and tall—with an easy grace of motion, like willows. One was housekeeper to our friend, and the most beautiful woman in face and form we had seen in all the islands. Her figure was lithe and clear as an antelope—hands and feet small, with arms that would have made Canova start in his dreams. The face was full of sweetness and expression—eyes soft, full and dark—the mouth and chin large and rounded—with even, white teeth, and long, glossy-black tresses. Her name was Teina, and it, had as pretty a sound as the euphonious *ita ita*, the Tahitians pronounce so melodiously. The other maidens were Teina's companions, who, having no engagements on hand, accompanied us as volunteers, or light troops. We tramped blithely along the Broom Road, whilst the delicious strains from the brass band went sailing up hill and grove.

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Between the radiating mountain-ridges of Tahiti, which diverge from the longitudinal core of the summit, there are many frightful precipices—awful splits in the bosom of the earth—narrow, gloomy and deep, that hang frowningly over the sombre, turbulent torrents of waters that spring from the misty faces of the upper heights. Our route led up one of them. Turning up a broad valley, we followed the course of a rapid stream, crossing and re-crossing where rocks of the adjacent heights became too precipitous to admit a pathway; and to save time and unnecessary

trouble, we were either ferried over on the shoulders of our *taata* convoy, breasting the foaming surge, or once or twice I was mounted on one of the native damsels—Miss Toanni—who kindly offered her services. I blush for my want of gallantry, but trust it was in a measure redeemed by holding her drapery from the water during the several wadings. She wore for head-dress a broad straw hat with fluttering ribbons—a figured gingham sac, plaited and buttoned to the throat, fell loosely over a white under-tunic—and demi-pantaletts reached below the knees, where the costume terminated by open-worked, indigo stockings, that would bear washing—while her fingers were covered with indelible blue rings, of the same material as the hose.

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There is very little tattooing among the Tahitians—a few leggings—blue devices about the neck—rings on fingers or toes, but never a mark on the face. As civilization advances, they acquire a distaste for these heathenish skin-paintings. However, I must not lose sight of Toanni. She had a firm, well-knit frame—wide mouth, fine, brilliant teeth, intended for service—such as cracking flinty ship-biscuits, or wrenching husks from cocoanuts—large, mirthsome, dark eyes, with but one flaw to their beauty, which she enjoyed alike with all the Pacific Islanders—the whites of the eyes were yellow! Such was Toanni.

Occasionally, when resting within the close shade of the valley, if the bright eyes of the girls detected the sunny bulbs of *papao* gleaming through the surrounding foliage, off they sprang for the fruit, or climbed the *vai* for apples, or pretty flowers clustering about the lower branches, which were soon turned into wreaths or necklaces.

Advancing inland, the lateral valleys converged into one deep gorge, closing perpendicularly on either hand; and further on, the stream itself was cut off by a bold, transverse acclivity between the two sides, like a wall of masonry, more than half way up the lofty shafts that framed the gorge. From this shelf, more than a thousand feet above us, there came leaping a thin thread of water—but long before reaching the base of the grassy barrier, it was diffused in showers of spray, and poured its sparkling tribute into the deep chasms of the valley.

Leaving the lower bed of the stream, we began mounting upward by a zig-zag pathway, cut lately by the French on the flat, sheer face of the mountain. It was at this point, where at an immense height above, the Tahitians had poised vast masses of rocks, with levers ready pointed, to hurl death and destruction on the adventurous soldiers who should dare to attack their stronghold. The natives were posted at the head of the pass, upon an acclivity, with no other approach from below than a crumbling goat-path, where the road now leads. They were well provided with arms and ammunition, cartridges charged at both ends, to prevent mistakes, and kindly furnished, it is said, by foreign ships of war in port at the time. Indeed, the French during the last year of the war, were harrassed night and day. Alarm-fires were blazing on every hill, feints were made upon the town, and the neighboring posts, until the troops became worn out, and more than half ill in hospital. Nor were the French so successful in their different engagements as the superior arms and discipline of trained soldiers would imply; for in one affair at Ta-a-a-a, they had fifty slain.

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Thus the Tahitians, believing themselves invincible, after a thirteen month's siege, were at last dislodged through the connivance of a traitor, who guided their enemies up a narrow ravine, when, after surmounting almost inaccessible precipices, by the aid of scaling-ladders and ropes, they succeeded in attaining a foothold on a sharp spur of the peaks above the pass, and then rushing down completely surprised and captured the native camp. To the humanity of the French be it said, every soul was spared. This was the last struggle: tired of subsisting on roots and berries, enveloped in mists and rain, the natives sighing once more for their smiling homes by the sea-side, surrendered in December, 1846.

In the great losses sustained by the French in this warfare, it struck us very forcibly that there must have been great ignorance and inexperience in the knowledge of what we call bush-fighting. The Tahitians do not compare with the North American Indian in either courage, hardihood, or sagacity; and without any disparagement to French valor or gallantry, in our innocence we sincerely believed that two hundred of our back-woods men would have hunted every copper-colored warrior into the ocean.

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After a toilsome struggle we gained the lateral ridge that joined the two acclivities, and entered an artificial aperture, cut through the rocks, which was the portal to the native fortress.

The well-defined diadem of Fatoar rose in clear relief against the blue sky above our heads, and looking around we were in the midst of a multitude of gullies and ravines, with the bed of the same rivulet we had left below rolling rapidly at our feet towards its fearful plunge in a gap of the precipice. A number of wicker-basket osier-built huts for soldiers were perched about the elevations; the vegetation was rich and beautiful, wherever a foot of soil gave nourishment; and there were little gardens, too, with many kinds of vegetables, irrigated by narrow aqueducts, formed by gutters of canes or bamboos, and fed from adjacent springs.

The scenery was quite Swiss, could we change tropical suns, running streams, and unceasing verdure into frosts, glaciers, and avalanches. But yet it was a romantic solitude, despite the remark of the French officer in command, who assured me, with a most expressive gesture, that it was *terriblement mauvais*.

We continued our walk some distance beyond the fort, and coming to a shaded, smooth tier of rocks, where the stream was bubbling noisily along, with little sleeping pools half hidden amid the crags, and opposite a pointed slender peak like a fishing-rod—well nigh punching a hole in the blue expanse of heaven—we spread our rural banquet on the rocky table, plunged the bottles

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in the icy water, and then reclined luxuriously around, with full resolve to do justice to the feast, incited by our long tramp and fast.

"Flow of wine, and flight of cork,
Stroke of knife, and thrust of fork;
But, where'er the board was spread,
Grace, I ween, was never said."

Wings of chickens, slices of ham, roasted bananas, huge loaves of bread, preserved fish, and cups of wine disappeared with marvellous rapidity. We did all rational beings could be expected to perform under the circumstances, but at last were obliged to cry *peccavi!* Not so our lady guests—the war of maids and viands had only begun; my friend, Toanni, thought a trifle of taking five or six of these oily little sardines at a mouthful, pushing them down with half a banana, and violent thrust of bread. She devoured ham and fowls with great apparent relish, wagging her lower jaw, to detach any stray masses of unmasticated matter that chanced to have escaped the ivory hopper, and fallen between her capacious cheeks; every few seconds giving her round fingers a sharp suck, like popping a cork. Truly Toanni's head room was enormous. Once or twice, when thinking her rage entirely appeased, she relapsed again, and performed prodigies with rashers of baked pig. I believe it was Voltaire who designated the illustrious Shakspeare as a "sublime barbarian;" could he have seen these island maidens, he certainly would have awarded the palm to Toanni; and I'll wager a flask of bordeaux—a peculiar weakness of mine—that these Tahitian belles can eat more, laugh longer, talk faster, all at once or separately, than any others of their adorable sex the wide world over. I speak advisedly, and am prepared by documentary evidence to prove it.

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Rescuing a small cruse of cogniac from the *melée*, I reclined upon a rocky bed, with my heels in the water, for a doze, induced by the soothing fumes of a pipe! But, alas! hardly were my eyes closed, before I was startled by the cries of our frolicksome light-hearted companions, who with a lizard-like facility of grasp, were running up the perpendicular surface of the peak, clinging and climbing by fibres and roots, that crept and laced themselves about the crevices of the rocks. Plucking a quantity of bright flowers, the girls bounded into the stream, and then commenced weaving never-ending wreaths and chaplets. This universal fondness for these spontaneous jewels of the earth, with their love for bathing, are the most innocent and beautiful natural tastes possessed by the savages of Polynesia.

We were three hours getting back to Papeete, only pausing for a last cooling swim in the lower stream.

The evening previous to our departure from Tahiti we attended the usual *soirée* of the French Governor. Important despatches had just been received from France, and the saloons were filled at an early hour with officers of the ships and garrison, consuls, and merchants, with a number of foreign ladies, all in *grand tenu*. It was a pleasant gay little court, with *écarté* tables and conversation, vivacious punch handed round at intervals, and maybe a little flirting and love-making, with "music to fill up the pauses," from the regimental orchestras stationed near the verandas, while the lawns and grounds were crowded by laughing groups of natives, talking scandal, perhaps, of the *oui-oui's*.

The next morning, before day had dawned, our frigate was crowded with canvas, and assisted by a flotilla of boats from the French squadron, we were quietly towed outside the coral reef, then taking the trade on the quarter, we went off with a spanking breeze towards Aimeo.

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CHAPTER LI.

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With easterly winds we sailed away to the southward. In a fortnight the sky became dull and gloomy—the rain fell, chill and cold—we tumbled from our warm beds with a shock into the cold air, for we had been a long time beneath the clear skies and warm suns of the tropics, and rather magnified our hardships, in a thermometrical sense.

Still we were bound once more to the realms of civilization, which was in itself consoling—we buttoned our jackets—declared it was fine dumb-bell weather, and exercised those implements constantly. Doctor Faustus, too, lighted his jovial lamp when the night closed around us, and we blew the steam from a tumbler of *italia* punch with much thankfulness and gusto; and those of us who had watches, forthwith bent our steps to the upper regions.

One cold November night, in a hard squall, whilst the topmen were furling the lofty sails, two men were hurled from the main-top-gallant yard, and falling through the lubber's hole of the top, were caught at the junction of the futtock shrouds. One escaped with severe injuries, but his unfortunate companion died in thirty minutes. He was a handsome, active, young fellow, who made my acquaintance during the blockade of Mazatlan, in old Jack's oyster-boat.

In speaking of the accident, the day after, to an old Swedish quarter-gunner, called Borlan—"Vy, sir," said he, pulling aside his huge whiskers and disclosing a broad, jagged seam, the whole length of the face—"Vy, sir, see here! I vonce toombled vrom a brig's mast-head—top-gallant yard and all—lying to in a gale of vind. Vell, sir, I broke mine jaws and leg, but managed to get

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alongside again, and was hauled on board. Vell, sir—vat you dink?—the gott tarn skipper wanted to lick me for not bringing der yard too!"

After making a latitude of 47° South, the East winds departed, and taking a gale from the opposite direction, we flew before it for eleven days at ten miles the hour towards the Chilian coast. Oh! what a "melancholy main" is this wide expanse of the Pacific! There is, may be, in the feeling of being near continents or islands in less illimitable seas, something a little pleasurable; but to be pursuing the same wearisome, liquid track, for weeks and weeks, with nothing to relieve the monotony of sky and water, is desolate, indeed!

In the long night-watches, when strong gusts of hail or rain were whistling by our ears—the top-sails reefed down, though quivering and struggling, like great birds with cramped pinions, to burst from the stout cordage and fly away in flakes of snow—the gallant ship would, like a mettled charger feeling the whip and spur, at times run lightly and swiftly on the back of a mighty wave, almost as silently, too, as if gliding on a lake—when, the instant after, heeling from side to side, she would dash down impetuously amid the tumult of waters, cleaving a wide road before her!

Mutter your last *avé*, Jack! if you leave the strong ship in nights like these! Think of the keensighted albatross that will pick your eyes out next morning, if the keener-scented shark has not already rasped and grated your bones into white splinters within his merciless jaws! Keep close under shelter of the solid bulwarks, Jack! Cling to your life-lines! Feel a rope twice aloft before you swing your full weight upon it! but hold on, Jack! Hold on!

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Think of it, ye rich traders, when your big ships come gallantly into port. Think of the hands that have strained and grasped upon those lofty spars that now so motionless lift their taper heads, like needle-points, to the sky. Think of the cold sleet and chilling rain—but above all, think of poor Jack—take pity on his faults, and extend the helping hand in his distress.

There was my old marine oracle, Harry Greenfield, muffled in his pea-coat, braced firmly against the fife-rail, over the wheel, every now and then slowly twisting his rosy face around the stern, taking a glance through half-closed eyelids at the angry scud flying overhead, or during a rapid succession of heavy lurches, when the high masts appeared to describe three-fourths of a circle against the gloomy sky, he would pleasantly hint to the briny fore-castle-man who grasped the steering spokes, or the old quartermaster at the compass, "Steady, old Tom Scofield! Not so much, boys! Touch her lightly, Charley! don't you see she's flying off?"—and again relapse within the folds of his pea-jacket.

"Well, old gentleman, what are you pondering on?" "Why, Mr. Blank, I'm thinking how pleasant it must be to have a menagerie on board ship in a breeze like this; in case the animals should break loose, the tigers, bears, hyenas, and the elephant, and the monkeys flying around the decks in heaps, yelling, howling, and fighting together! Ah! it must be a fine sight on a dark night, with a lantern up the main rigging. I never sailed with any of them chaps, 'cept once—he was a royal Bengal tiger—ah! I made a good bit of money out of him—he had a difficulty with the cook—." Here the old salt went into a series of chuckles, and I was forced to beg him to proceed. Emptying his mouth of the grateful weed, and wringing the sleet from his weather-beaten beard, he continued: "You remember Jim Hughes, Mr. Blank, the captain of the old ship's foretop." I nodded. "Well, I fell in with Jim one day in Greenock; he was just from Orleans, with a pouch full of cash, for he had been there in the height of the cholera season, and bagged twenty dollars a day for driving the dead cart." Here old Harry chuckled again. "Well, sir, Jim was Scotch, and among his people, and very decent they were; they treated me all the same for being his shipmate. Well, after a time a brig was ready for sea; Jim was taken as second mate, and me as bo'sun. We were bound to Calcutta; off Java Head the first mate kicked the bucket, was tossed overboard, Jim was promoted, for he had larnin', and I stepped into his shoes." Another chuckle. "We staid in Calcutta five months, taking in rice, cotton, indigo, and other products of them countries, when, just before sailing, there came on board the tiger, a present for the King of England! A noble beast he was: a big strong iron front cage was built for him abaft the mainmast, and he never once stopped licking his white tusks, gaping, walking, and lashing his rope of a tail, for weeks and weeks after leaving the river. We all began to take a fancy to him, and I believe he did for us, 'cept the cook, who was a Nubian nigger, and black all the way down his throat. I never see such an intense darkey! His royal tigership never could bear the sight of him, probably because he had been trepanned by some of the nigger race; and whenever 'Lamp Black,' that was his name, came near, his eyes kindled like live coals, and he growled from the bottom of his belly. We often cautioned cookey to be careful, and so he was. Well, we touched at Saint Helena, and right glad old Bengal was, no doubt, for we had got short of chickens—the only delicacies he seemed to relish—and he couldn't be coaxed to touch salt junk. A few days after, the Nubian was handing him his breakfast, with the galley tormentors, a pair of tongs like, through the small trap door on top of the cage, and, like a fool, he just took one little peep, to see how tenderly the tiger could suck the last drop of blood from a chicken's body, when, by one rapid blow of his paw, he sunk his sinewy claws into the darkey's neck, tore the head from the trunk, and in a second was crunching the reeking mass between his grinders. He scoffed bones, wool, and flesh, and there lay the remains of poor 'Lamp Black' quivering on the rod decks. After this little difficulty, he became quite civil and civilized, and never caused us more trouble. By and by, we arrived in London docks, and as they were a good while preparing a birth for him in the Zoological gardens, Jim and me exhibited him from a ha'penny to half-a-crown, to men, women, and children. So you see, sir, we made nigh forty pounds a piece, and had a capital spree, I tell ye." Old Harry nearly choked, and did not thoroughly recover until his throat had been cleared with a glass of grog.

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Thirty-six days from Tahiti, and we arrived in Valparaiso. Remaining in port nearly a month, the anchor was again weighed, and our prow again turned seaward. Passing the Point of Angels, the burnished keel bravely ploughed the open ocean, the blue waves following in snowy crests, and, in a few minutes, shores, town and hills had faded from sight.

CHAPTER LII.

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The 28th of January, 1849, found us on the Peruvian coast, abreast the Island of San Lorenzo, a mountain of sand, where not a blade of grass can vegetate; and rounding Galera Cape, we were shortly moored in the port of Callao.

The bay is a wide, sweeping indentation, with Lorenzo, Fronton, and a narrow spit of land jutting from the main, serving to keep the harbor smooth from prevailing southerly winds. To the north, the spurs of the Andes approach layer upon layer to the brink of the coast, while nearer the land trends away, towards the interior, nearly plain-like—green, fertile, and pleasant to gaze upon—with the clustering towers, and spires of Lima abutting on the distant hills.

There is no difference of opinion about Callao: for it is a filthy, bustling little port, reeking in garlic and drunken mariners, alive with fleas, miserable, dirty soldiers, and their yet more slovenly wives.

The place is thriving, for steam frequents it; and on the curving quay are piled mountains of English coals, enormous heaps of wheat, great stacks of *pisco*, and *italia* jars, where Haserac, the celebrated captain, might have concealed an army of thieves with impunity. Merchandise moves backwards and forwards on railway trucks, and lazy villains in pale yellow jackets, with iron chains and anklets attached to the legs, are at work after a fashion of their own.

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The houses of the port are mean and irregular, built anywhere and any how, either of adobies, boards, and on the outskirts, pleasant cottage residences, built of bullocks' hides and poles. Streets and lanes run hither and thither, and glaring English signs stare you in the face, such as the "Jibboom House," "The Lively Pig," "Jackknife Corner," and "House of Blazes." Along the beach are ranges of wicker, reed, and mat-made sheds for bathing, which are thronged during the season. But the most prominent features of Callao that attract the eye, are the round, flat turrets of the Castle, flanked on either side by long lines of curtains, bastions, embrasures, and batteries. It covers a great space, enclosing within its thick and massive case-mated walls, ranges of barracks—now happily converted into warehouses for the customs—magazines, and a large square, with a fountain in the centre. The fortification, from the nature of its position, is somewhat irregular, constructed partly on a ridge of sand, leading towards the southern arm of the bay, where in former times was the site of old Callao, before its destruction by the memorable earthquake of 1746.

There is a wide, deep moat, like to the bed of a river, encircling the fortress, with narrow channels cut on either side to the sea. This is now dry and partially filled in nearest the town. The redoubts and detached outworks are also in ruins, but yet enough remains to make us reflect, that what the old Spanish engineers left incomplete in this work would hardly be worth attempting in our day.

It was here where the last stand of the Royalists was made in New Spain—where the bloodiest foot-prints were left since the days of the Incas and Pizarro—and it was in this same castle, where the brave Rodil, with a handful of devoted followers, clung to the soil of their royal master with a tenacity and determination amounting to heroism—where horse meat sold for a gold ounce the pound, and a chicken for its weight in the same precious metal: when, hemmed in on all sides, by sea and land—surrounded but not dismayed—they still kept their assailants at bay, until gaunt famine stalked before them, and they were forced to furl the well-worn colors of their King!^[7] A score of Rodils, and another century might have intervened before South American patriots could have wrested the continent from the old Spaniards.

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If tired of contemplating these bloody reminiscences—or bathing under the sheds and awnings, where all resemble, in their saturated black frocks and trowsers, watery nuns; or if your temper is destroyed by the fleas, you can fly to the harbor, where are sturdy merchantmen reeking in guano, smoking steamers, and heavy ships of war—and thick fogs at night—or, what is more diverting, you may watch the motions of swarms of gulls that frequent the Port. Our good surgeon, who professed to be an ornithologist, called them platoon birds. They fly in regular battalions and divisions, in strict military apportionments—led and apparently commanded by their chieftains. The reviews generally began with fishing. At some understood, feathery signal, while sailing over the bay, they wheel like a flash, and strike the water simultaneously like a shower of bullets, and not with the eyes of Argus is it possible to detect the smallest irregularity in movement, nor a stray winged soldier out of the ranks.

However, all these amusements are, at best, dull recreation, and it is a great relief to get quit of Callao. Omnibii encumber the uttermost ends of the earth—so we go to the office, when the smiling administrador behind a railing exclaims, "Ah! Capitan! you want *ascientos*! Ah! you give me one Spanish dollar—ah! *buéno!*" "Any thieves?" we timidly ask. "Ah, *si*, yes; but you give him gold ounce—no kill you, ah!" "Charming fellows, certainly; but suppose we give him an ounce of

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some other metal!" *Ah! cuidado amigo!*—have a care, my friend!

With five horses ahead, crack! crack! goes the thong of the negro Jehu—over the paved street, into the dusty road, where the plunging steeds are brought up floundering, tugging and straining the heavy vehicle axle, through the finely powdered soil—now firmly stalled, we get out per force, curse the roads, and threaten to whip the driver—then we come on harder ground, until imperceptibly there comes a rocky strata—loose stones, remains of adobie walls and ditches—but all equally execrable: then, for a mile or more, fine trees bend their towering arms over the road, and shortly after, we rattle through a huge gateway—have travelled eight miles, and we are in the city of kings—Lima! "See it and die," said the old land pirates of the days of its founder, Pizarro, and their descendants. Whatever it may have been two centuries ago, in these days it requires no very strong effort of will to survive the sight.

The city is compact and populous, the buildings are very low, and quite resemble the old Moriscan towns along the northern shores of Africa, with close overhanging *jalousies* and balconies, finely railed and latticed. The streets are wide and straight, paved with small pebbles—dreadfully torturing to the pedestrian—the side-walks beneath the portals or arcades of the plazas, and in the gateways and patios of dwellings are figured in coarse mosaic, formed by the white knuckle-bones of sheep and pebbles. Handsome shops fringe the fashionable avenues, glittering with costly fabrics and toys; then again packed side by side, in nooks, alcoves, and niches, are small merchants, who from their numbers, one would suppose to be all sellers and no buyers.

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The little river Rimac flows noisily through the city, fed from far away by the silvered pinnacles of snows and ice in the lofty Andes. It is spanned by a substantial and lofty bridge, whose every stone has been loosened by the earthquake. Lima might be made one of the cleanest cities in the world; for through all the main arteries runs a narrow rivulet diverted from the Rimac. Nevertheless, it is excessively filthy, and the *gallianzos*, or vultures, tame, and pampered by a profusion of nastiness and offal, take their morning's meal in the streets and squares, and afterwards hobble to the house-tops, where, with blood-red eyes, and gorged bodies, they calmly endure repletion.

The most striking features upon approaching the city are the vast clusters of domes, towers, and spires, that arise in such thick profusion from the convents and churches, as to favor the belief that every house has something of the kind attached thereto. From the neighboring valley of Almencaes I have counted sixty. In the distance they present a solid, imposing aspect, but on a nearer view, they will generally be found mere paper structures of reeds and plaster. Many of the grand edifices, the cathedral, convents, and parochial churches, are partly of bricks, stone, or the most enormous adobies, up to the belfreys, but above, all are similar to the pasteboard decorations of the theatre; and although it seems reasonable to suppose they would topple down at the first summons of the *tremblor*, yet it is the only style of lofty work that will bear the frequent shocks, totter like a tree, and still stand erect. Externally these buildings are elaborately carved, painted, and imaged, without any consistent order of architecture; and within they are profusely decorated with rich gildings, paintings, and statues; all, however, destitute of taste; and only when brilliantly illuminated, with the myriads of silken parti-colored streamers pendant and fluttering from the lofty aisles, swinging censers, organs pealing, with all the pomp and imposing ceremony of the Catholic church, is the effect worthy of admiration.

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The best position for viewing Lima—Asmodeus-like—is from the high tower of San Domingo, that is, if, after mounting above the bells, you can reconcile the flimsy quaking fabric you stand upon to any extreme ideas of personal safety. The devil on this pair of sticks could not have chosen a more eligible spot for inspecting the arcana of people's dwellings. The city is spread like a map at your feet; composed of long lines of crumbling walls, miles of flat roofs, and little patios, the former loosely tiled, and sprinkled over with dirt, where even dead cats, and tattered rags quietly repose for ages. There is not in the universe to be seen such a large area of mud walls, reed, and rush-built houses, all appearing so unfinished and incomplete. But in a climate where it never rains, where it never blows, where even the thick coatings of dust are hardly absorbed by the *dry rain* of winter fogs, it is not surprising that all these masses of reeds and plaster are preserved for centuries without perceptible decay. Still there can be no scepticism on one point, that if ever there chance to fall a heavy tropical shower, the city of Pizarro will be swept, a heap of mud and sticks, into the ocean.

Allowing the eyes to wander around and beyond the city, the discolored Rimac is seen hurrying from the melting bosom of its Alpine mother down between the distant hills, diffusing its fertilizing freshness over the sloping valley—the margins encircled by verdant fields of cane, like bright patches of emeralds, and the banks fringed by weeping willows, that dip their bending branches to kiss the rapid torrent. On it comes, over the stony bed, dashing its strength in fierce anger against the arches of the sturdy bridge, and then glancing by the flowering meads and slopes of Almencaes, flies rapidly to the placid waves of the Pacific.

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FOOTNOTE:

[7] In February, 1826.

Lima is fast losing its singular originality, although there is still much to be seen, which, in these days of universal journeyings, has the merit of being extremely novel.

There are interminable strings of mules and donkeys constantly passing and repassing to the bubbling fountains of plazas or churches, each with twin reservoirs of water-barrels balanced on the brute's shoulders; others with huge milk jugs, baker's boxes of hides, and the drivers in the midst. Again, matronly dames jog along astride their cattle, commonly nursing infants; then gilded *volantes* and *berlinas* whirl by, occupied by *damas* in full dress, looking as if entombed within crystal shades; then priests in "cope and stole" in processions—white and black gowned ones—tottering bishops in lawn and mitre, and very shaky on their swollen ancles, with beads vibrating like uneasy pendulums; others in stove-pipe hats, sleek, fat, and slovenly—or meek friars—not of eggs and bacon, from their meagre, famished appearance—lank and dirty, with robes of coarse serge and girdles of ropes—all darkening the side walks, with flickering torch and taper flaring in the mid-day sun, and solemn chaunt, as they move unceasingly towards church or convent.

Then, again, stupid, stunted native Indians strut along with bow legs and parrot step; beside them, stout negresses, zambos, and cholos, with brief frocks, and the most gossamer of flesh-colored silk stockings encasing their ebony shins; there are *portales* thronged with shops and stalls—artizans in gold and silver embroidery carrying on their avocations, regardless of noise and bustle. Equestrians, too, are caracoling through streets and squares, clothed in bright ponchos, and their small, spirited steeds decked in shining trappings, with heavy Gothic-shaped spurs, half the weight of the riders.

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It is a curious scene to contemplate all this motley crowd, as the first sweet tone of the great bell of the cathedral—and the sweetest sound from brass and silver ever heard—gives forth its prolonged and melancholy cadence for *oracion*. As if touched by the wand of a magician, the busy hum of life is hushed—mules and donkeys halt of their own accord, and with drooping ears and bended necks, appear absorbed in prayer. The man who is yelling *Fresquita!* with all his might, stops miraculously short at the half-uttered word in the highest note—venders and the disciples of Abraham cease barter—horsemen draw bridle—these gay *berlinas* pause, and their fair inmates with jewelled fingers tell their beads, and rosy lips arrest the dimpling smiles—lovers silence the soft whispers to blushing *amantes*—the whirr of loom and spindle weaving the golden threads is checked—hats and heads are borne low, and every vestige of animation is suspended—all is beautifully impressive. A minute! The *avé* is uttered—the heavy bell sounds twice—thrice—then the deafening and rejoicing peals ring from towers far and near. Crack! falls the cruel lash on the devout donkey's hide—*arré!* shouts the *arrieros*—*quita!* screams the dulce-man—*Tres pesos el menor!* wheedles the Jew—off glide the gilded vehicles—away gallop capering barbs—the artisans resume the mazy windings of the reel or shuttle—the lover and his mistress again become smiling and pathetic—and again goes on the roar and turmoil of a populous town.

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On the right bank of the Rimac are two promenades, neither particularly well shaded, but the Alameda nearest the river is most frequented and pleasant.

During feast days, or after the Sunday bull-fights in the arena near at hand, it is customary for the élite of Lima to appear in full dress, enshrined within the glass panels of their pretty *berlinas*, and take a stand along the drive, beneath the drooping willows. Nor is it considered indecorous, if you have friends or acquaintances among those lovely dames, to doff your castor and touch the tips of their ungloved, rosy fingers, and may be, hear the number of their *palco* at the evening opera—or, where the *tertulia* is given, and what a charming bouquet it was you sent—and other agreeable pleasantries. Have a care, my gringo! button your coat tight, or you may lose your heart!

On these occasions, also, the stone benches on either side the promenade are thronged with *sayas y mantas*—the most bewitching satin envelope that ever woman, be she youthful or aged, was ever wrapped in. There is no resisting the large, brilliant, languishing eye—laughing with all its might—nor the round, white arm, that so pertinaciously keeps the jealous folds of the *manta* over the face. Exhaust the whole Castilian vocabulary of compliments—and it is copious—beseeching and imploring to be vouchsafed one little word! *Ah Señorita! haceme el favor de una palabrita!*—do speak one little word. But no! never a syllable from the silent veil, while the roguish eye twinkles and laughs like a planet! They may know you—but the sharpest dueña that ever cheated or was bribed by a lover could not detect her charge within these closely-fitting dominoes—nor husband the wife, nor mother her daughter—they are alike enshrouded in the same graceful but impenetrable black masque. They are so cunning and coquettish, too! Fancy you discover one. Strive to awaken her jealousy, or pique her vanity by encomiums or scandal upon a sister or cousin—ten to one it comes back to you in protean shapes from the one you least dreamed of. Yet I cannot but think the institution was originally invented by ugly women; and it appears, many of the fairest portions are of the same opinion, being generally quite willing to exhibit their charms of face as nature intended. Except on feast days, or in carnival, the dress is now rarely worn; but in former years no woman appeared in street or mass without the *saya y manta*. In those days, intrigue was so rife that a prudent young bachelor was forced to keep a strict watch upon his morals, or have his heart forcibly abducted by these warm-blooded Liméneans—those were the times to hold wicked husbands in consternation, and set watchful dueñas at defiance! For a wonder, French taste and dress are rapidly reforming all.

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Some distance up the Rimac, near the Alameda, is to be found the pleasantest place for bathing. Water is turned by narrow canals, and pours through a long range of enclosed and covered tanks, nicely cemented and tiled, sufficiently large for swimming. They are not very private places at all hours of the day, but one's delicacy is seldom shocked, for the swimmers are the politest people possible: as an instance, whilst bathing one morning, two youths accidentally intruded on my quarters, but recovering their equanimity, very civilly removed their head-gear and made a polite bow to me, while in the water!

Drives there are none at all pleasurable for any extent around the city; nor are the rides more so. The environs, in all directions, are intersected by heavy and high mud walls, shutting out air and vision, leaving only heat and stifling clouds of dust to repay one's trouble.

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Lima itself should not be too narrowly criticised from the streets; although without, naught is beheld save dingy, adobie walls, dusty cobwebbed lattices and balconies, half decayed, yet once pass the wide and lofty portals, and many of the best houses have noble suites of apartments, furnished with great taste and even splendor; besides, that which gives, in a certain degree, an air of elegance, is the elaborate mazes of glass doors, gaily papered or frescoed walls, and a profusion of gilding. Light is usually thrown from the roof, and the houses are cool and properly ventilated.

After a few *tertulias*, and a pretty ball given by the American Chargé, we had no other opportunities of mingling in Liménean society. There were quite a number of pretty women, with very fair complexions and winning manners, who danced like sylphs, as what Creole does not? Two youthful Señoritas, of some sixteen and seventeen years, were pointed out as little lumps of gold, of "purest ray serene," who were *fiancée* to their uncles, fine old gentlemen of sixty! It was suggestive of a post-chaise and handboxes to any successful aspirant to the ownership of a lovely pair of eyes. However, these out of the way alliances are quite common in Lima, and perhaps the fair ones, at a later era, begin to discover they have hearts of their own not to be sold to the highest bidder, like bills of exchange at the mart! Very few of these deluded damsels, it may be reasonably presumed, when fully aware of their tender wrongs, can exclaim, in the words of the Spanish lady's ballad:

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"I will not falsify my vows for gold nor gain,
Nor yet for all the *fondest swains* that ever lived in Spain."

CHAPTER LIV.

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The public edifices of Lima, which are so closely connected with the History of the Conquest, and the bloody revolutionary struggles of Peru, have no other attributes, either in architectural beauty or position to recommend them.

The Cathedral occupies nearly one side of the grand plaza; the exterior is painfully decorated, without taste or system; within is a solid silver altar, paintings of archbishops, and their earthly remains also, mummified in leather, and reposing in open coffins.

The Viceroy's Palace fills the northern face of the square—a low, irregular collection of buildings—the lower parts, fronting the plaza and streets, occupied by small shopmen, similar to the hosts of tinkers, fringemen, hatters, and cooks beneath the opposite ranges of the *portales*. Opening into the inner courtyard are the public offices and the private residence of the President, General Castilla. He was a soldier of fortune, had risen from the ranks, and passed through many vicissitudes of life before being chosen the supreme governor of Peru; not more surprising probably even to himself, than the extraordinary anomaly, that he has held his position the four years since the election, without a revolution having arisen to disturb his tranquillity. This security he owed, in a measure, to his individual bravery and soldiership displayed in times past, and the belief generally entertained by dissatisfied persons of his upright character, and his indifference to execute summary vengeance on whomsoever should incur his displeasure, by again involving the country in the turmoils of civil discord.

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The General and staff visited our frigate at Callao, and were received with manned yards and the usual artillery. In person he was about the middle stature, with a frank, bronzed face, and agreeable address.

Many curious objects are pointed out within, or in the vicinity of the palace, rich in reminiscences of the Pizarros, and the tragic drama connected with the life and death of the Conqueror—the room wherein he was assassinated, and the balcony from whence he was afterwards hurled by the Almagros.

The main Patio was thronged with troops of eager and expectant cormorants, who, my informant stated, were gentlemen in waiting upon the treasury—officers and *empleados* with large salaries in perspective—but, strange to say, the vaults were invariably empty; or, in case there should be a surplus on hand, it is a description of money composed of so base a metal that it will not pass for one-fifth the nominal value out of Lima.

A national museum has lately been established—a small enterprise thus far,—containing a few Cacique antiquities, Island weapons and ornaments, a coat worn by Salaverry when he was

murdered—bedabbled with mud and blood—and the walls are hung with portraits of the forty-seven Viceroys of Peru, but placed in so bad a light that, with few exceptions, the features and expression of the different rulers were indistinctly visible. They begin with Francisco Pizarro,^[8] and are all miserably executed specimens of painting, without grace or harmony, and it would seem that the artists, in their anxiety to have them of a uniform length, in the absence of correct notions of drawing, have jammed heads and heels close up or down to the frames, leaving the intermediate portions of the person harsh and ungainly.

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The theatre is a mean edifice, and the immense rafters that uphold the flat roof are apt to keep a nervous person in the pit somewhat anxious and uneasy, anticipating a shock of the *tremblor*. It is sufficiently commodious, but badly ventilated, dimly lighted, and without decorations or scenic display. The first representation we attended was mediocrily performed by an Italian troupe—there were three prima donnas—who, apart from being ugly, which, of course, was no fault of theirs, were regardless of taste or execution, and all strove to outshout the other. Indeed, a fifth-rate artiste, coming so far abroad in these climes, deems it imperative to take a tip-top part; besides, I have remarked among opera people, that there is always a cruel *Empressario*, who tyrannically will have something to say in the management of his theatre—very much to the disgust of the performers, and who is, moreover, expected to pay handsomely, even when the troupe cannot half fill the house.

On the occasion referred to there were myriads of fleas, and what with Beatrice di Tenda—a donna in red—we were fain to quit the opera. Subsequently the performances were very creditable, and living in the same house with the Contralto and handsome Barrytone, we became enlisted in their clique, and did battle against the unreasonable manager. One evening, whilst assisting at Linda di Charmouni, between the acts I was sitting behind the scenes, in a temporarily-constructed saloon, condoling with the interesting Contralto, sympathising with her griefs, and admiring her open-worked clocked stockings—for she was costumed as a Swiss peasant—and when nearly wound up to a pitch of desperate frenzy, against the barbarous *Empressario*, the lady's tire woman tripped in. *Signorina*, said she, *la scéna!* The call-keeper's pipe chirped musically. I flew to the front, and getting comfortably ensconced beside a lovely Liménean, with a little mouth like a slit in a rose-leaf, up flew the curtain. The scene was similar to one in Fra Diavolo, where Antonio returns down the mountain-steep after an unsuccessful search for the devil's brother; lots of peasants, flower-girls, and a horde of attendants, had already ascended, together with the Contralto, and Linda herself, who weighed fourteen stone. Tap! tap! led the orchestral baton. Now began the *cavatina*. I was half entranced in melody, cigar-smoke, and the smiles of her with the rose-leaf mouth, Doña Margarita, when, as the sweet notes came trilling forth, in wreaths of exquisite harmony—crash! scream! crash!—the platforms gave way! The prima donna made a demi-volte, threw an involuntary summerset, and vanished head-foremost through Mont Blanc, severely damaging the picturesque village of Chamouni; our friend the Cantatrice, and the little slashed trowsers and silk stockings, were seen plunging and struggling in an Alpine torrent of pasteboard. All was tottering scenery, shrieking supes, clouds of dust, terror, and confusion. Some villain had cut the cords that upheld the mountain-pass. Our Contralto warbler escaped without a blemish, but the unfortunate Prima was pulled out from beneath the treacherous planks in hysterics, and borne off kicking violently in the arms of stout peasants. Of course the play was ended: but there nearly arose a revolution in Lima that night, for it was strongly urged that the murderous *Empressario* had conspired against his troupe, although, poor man, he swore until black in the visage, that he never dreamed of so heinous a crime; and if he might be allowed a conjecture he should say, that it had been a little ballet got up among the *Cantatrici* themselves, to get rid of performing for a week or two! but no one believed him.

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Our hotel was the *Fonda de los Baños*, the best in Lima—faint praise this. It faces the cathedral in the plaza, and is a capital point of view for strangers desirous of seeing the motley panorama of the city from the balconies without mingling in the dust and fleas below. Our host was an old, frowsy-wigged Frenchman, pleasant and conversible, who made out the accounts with a crotchety style of caligraphy—fives and nines hardly to be distinguished apart—although with never an error in your favor in the arithmetical *calcule* at bottom. The lady of the mansion was a fine-looking, although *passée* person, who presided at table d'hôte in *grand tenu*, and served coffee and *italia* for *chasse*, with a little dessert of *monté*, if called for in the evening, at a side-table. Underneath the Fonda were billiard saloons and cafés, with warm baths adjoining. This establishment was cared for by a vivacious gentleman, extremely popular with navy men, named Señor Zuderel. I would advise all homeless wanderers journeying towards Lima to seek lodgings at this Caravanserai. I was pleased myself, and shall ever bear Monsieur and Madame Morin in agreeable recollection, for a correct knowledge of the world, tolerably well-served dinners, expensive wines, and a just appreciation of the *sous entendu*.

It was my intention to have made a hasty visit to Churillos, a small fishing village on the sea coast, where, at certain seasons, all the world resort for bathing and gaming—both amusements carried on day and night without cessation; but finding the time approaching for our departure, after spending eight days at Lima, one afternoon I buried my shoulders within a glaring red poncho—and was warned by Zuderel "not to carry much money, for fear of the ladrones," which I considered purely a supererogatory piece of advice, as any economical person may convince himself after a few days visit only!—*El que bebe de las pilas se queda en Lima*—He who drinks of the fountains will never leave Lima, is a favorite proverb. Inasmuch as I had only sparingly indulged in the delicious waters of the city, save when mingled with Bordeaux and pure blocks of ice brought from the Andes, I cannot be said to have entirely destroyed the truth of the adage; so,

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trotting leisurely through plaza and streets—invoking a blessing from Our Lady—I pursued my ride beyond the gates, steering for Callao. It was thus I departed from the "Paradise of women, the purgatory of men, and hell of jackasses!"

We sailed for Valparaiso.

FOOTNOTE:

[8] This is the same portrait from which the engraving in Prescott's Peru is taken, but the latter bears but a faint resemblance to the original.

CHAPTER LV.

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We found Valparaiso very much improved since our first visit, more so, in fact, than would be generally believed for a Creole town. Streets had been newly paved and extended, whole squares of fine warehouses, and long rows of dwellings completed; all tending, with a rapid increase of population, to make the port most flourishing. As in the Islands and Callao, the discovery of the El Dorado of California had thrown the entire community into a state of feverish excitement, which was augmented by every fresh arrival. Ships touching here, no matter whither bound, or for what intent, were either bought before their anchors were down, or chartered for passengers or freight. Day by day vessels sailed, loaded high up the shrouds with any articles of merchandise that could hastily be thrown on board. The city was drained of wares and goods of every description; merchants, clerks, artisans and mechanics were hurrying, as fast as sails could bear them, to the swamps and sands of the Sacramento. Fortunes were made in a minute, and it only appeared necessary to purchase a ship and cargo at any price, and the day or hour after be offered twice the money for the bargain. One merchant actually paid twenty thousand hard dollars for the information contained in a letter from San Francisco—a more valuable missive was probably never penned. The mania was equally violent throughout all classes of the community—natives, foreigners, men, women, and children.

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We mariners were merely lookers on, having neither cash nor commodities. Some of us talked of deserting, and scratching a little fortune of gold dust with our several digits; others of resigning, and seeking employ in the merchant service; but in the end we bore the good fortune of mankind around us, with philosophical equanimity, and remained contented with our lot.

Notwithstanding this *auri sacra fames*, the same generous hospitality awaited us, at the hands of our countrymen, as of old, and we passed the time delightfully.

The rides around Valparaiso are almost destitute of interest; for many leagues the main roads lead over dry and hilly ground, with no relief from their dullness, except an occasional glimpse from some more elevated ridge, of the broad Pacific or the shining snow-capped Cordilleras far in the interior. There are neither forests nor grasses, nor yet running water. Even in the most secluded valleys, the herbage is pale and withered, and vegetation stunted.

Excellent horses are easily found; and after passing over the paved streets at a slow gait, to escape lynx-eyed *serénos*, ever on the watch to recover a two-dollar fine from strangers for fast riding, you may then, at early morn, before the breeze stirs the fine, choking dust, or in the evening, when the high winds have expended their rage over the Plaiancha and Point of Angels, take a lively gallop with some degree of enjoyment. Our rides were usually along the Santiago road towards the post-house, where a nice breakfast was always procurable, through the kindness of a motherly Yorkshire dame, whose husband was at all times particularly vinous; the breakfast, however, never suffered on that score.

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The Chilians, men and women, ride admirably; but there are none who indulge in this healthful exercise to a greater extent, and who sit the horse more gracefully and securely than our own fair countrywomen residing in Valparaiso; and with all their manifold charms, they are accomplished in the proper understanding of a pic-nic. I am ignorant of the correct etymology of the word, but have heard it expounded as "all ham, and no punch;" be this as it may, these agreeable ladies comprehend the thing thoroughly; they know the most sequestered little glens for leagues around, when and where, and how to go; they have their own spirited steeds, too, like their mistress's riding robes, always ready. The excursion is arranged in five minutes, so, cavaliers, you have only to send for horses and borrow a whip, and if you know of any troupe of more charming doñas, pray don't keep it a secret.

Out of the hot city, with veiled faces—up ravines and down dales—leave the dusty road—clear the hedges, and scamper over the upland downs, until we have lost sight of towns, suburbs, shipping, and harbor; perhaps a pair of bright eyes looks back to the nice matrons who play propriety—pointing with a little gauntleted hand—"There! in that shady glade, this side the Rancho"—winding about the declivities, we reach the base of a sheltered valley—we dismount, tie the animals, and then breaking through interlaced thickets of undergrowth and herbage, a little trickling rill will possibly be found, bubbling deep down the cleft of a ravine, on whose margin is a plot of grass, where we clear away the brushwood, spread saddle-cloths for the ladies, and make ourselves happy.

Some one must go to the neighboring farm-house in search of fruit—not everybody, for there are two country belles there, who keep a guitar, and put on airs of rustic coquetry—besides, it is not complimentary to the lovely ladies we attend, to be gallivanting or straying elsewhere—they demand, by laws of chivalry, our homage, and they well deserve it. By and by, there appears a brown dame, with a huge tray of biscuits, peaches, "and a dish of ripe strawberries, all smothered in cream!" What a perfume! "Hand over the *alforgas*, those pockets attached to saddle housings. Oblige me, sir, by guarding this plethoric napkin of sandwiches! Stop! here's another; don't let anybody take even a bite until the Señora gives the word! What is this; a bottle of Xeres, as I'm a sinner—claret, too! *Ave Maria!* Get water somebody, and let me show you the art, acquired by long practice, of pulling a cork without a screw. There! click! click! crack! Cleverly done, eh? Don't cut your delicate fingers, Señorita! Are we ready?—we are, and almost frantic." The time flits on pleasure's wings—the shadows from the crests of the surrounding heights are darkening the glen—the strawberries and sandwiches are all gone, and the bottles are dying marines.

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"Come, girls," say the Señoras, "we must be in time for dinner. Caballeros you will dine with us?—they never forget that—we shall dance in the evening, but not too late—to-morrow is Sunday." Now hurrah for the *carrera*—race. Be under no apprehensions, my friends, when you see those slight forms, with streaming tresses and dresses, flying by leap and bound over the narrow pathways, rocky descents and water-courses!—have a care to your own horse, never mind your fair companions—their sure-footed steeds would race blindfolded, and, I doubt not, snap their legs short off, rather than injure the gentle beings who so easily guide them! We soon reach the environs of the city, and with horses all in a foam, pace sedately through the streets, towards the terraced residences.

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The society of natives and foreigners is quite distinct in Valparaiso, and general re-unions only take place at the monthly Philharmonic balls. Those we attended were very elegant and select assemblies, with a large proportion of beautiful women: all danced with charming grace, and were most becomingly attired with all the exquisite taste and refinement of French fashions; and with a fine, brilliantly-lighted saloon, excellent orchestra, the white fluttering dresses of the women, gayly contrasting with the gleaming lace and bullion of hosts of officers from foreign ships of war, it made altogether as inspiring and magnificent a display as can be found in any part of the world.

The natives are seen with even more attractions in their social circles. The *tertulia* is ever an impromptu affair, and nothing is more calculated to preserve a happy current of friendly feeling among the youth of both sexes. There is no staid form or ceremony: people meet for pleasure in the dance or love-making—'tis all the same—everything is frank and companionable.

Once get the *entrée* and make friends with the kind Señora—sip scalding *maté*, and never forget her at supper at the balls, or *dulces* for the *niñas*—you have the game in your own hands, and on velvet with the dear young *doncellas*, may whisper all the pretty speeches imaginable to downcast eyes at the piano or guitar, or blushing cheeks in waltz or polka! I do not believe Spanish girls often break their hearts—they ache sometimes, perhaps, but are easily consoled—and I advise all who set up graven images, and who wish to be in good repute with dark-eyed Creole maidens, to send anonymous bouquets unceasingly, and of course divulge the donors' names afterwards—'tis a sure passport to the smiles of fair ladies everywhere, but these dear, little Chilians will positively adore you.

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In a former sketch of Valparaiso, I touched upon the quiet, cool retreats perched on the salient crests of the adjacent hills. One of these terraces, Monte Allegro, is the beauty-spot of Valparaiso. Ah! the agreeable dinners, tea-parties, promenades and dances, given there by the charming residents, from the little balconied house in the rear, to the entire cottage-range in front! Heaven help us! we owe them many a debt of gratitude we may never be able to repay, save in kindly remembrance to all. There was one, too—

"Of all that sets young hearts romancing,
She was our queen—our rose—our star;
And when she danced—O! Heaven! her dancing!"—

Ah! Doña Pepe! I may never forgive the malicious delight you exhibited at the Filharmonica, where the thin lady took a first lesson in the polka—may Terpsichore and all the Graces of the light fantastic toe befriend her!—but yet, although a few months have borne me thousands of leagues away, I still preserve your little flower, and shall ever remember our parting among the brightest of lingering things in Valparaiso.

Aside from the lovely living attractions of this little *cielo*, it has much else to recommend it. In the calm nights you can stand on its lofty esplanade, towering above the heart of the city, and look down upon the world below. The faces of the tops, with the steep sides of the *quebradas*, are twinkling with myriads on myriads of bright lights—long streets and avenues are seen coursing in the opposite direction along the Almendral, dotted and sparkling with cab and lantern hurrying to and fro, until far away, all is blended in one even line of perspective; and perhaps there is seen a procession of flickering torches winding up the Campo Santo, bearing some unconscious clay to a last home; then, when the guns from forts and ships have ceased their everlasting peals among the hills, music from different vessels of war arises in delicious strains, clearly and distinctly, from the port—while their black hulls, illumined sides, spars and rigging, are reposing motionless, with mazy shadows mingling with the starry reflections upon the polished surface of

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the bay from the blue vault above. The whole scene is framed by the crowning heights circling around the city, and the base is girdled by the glittering waters of the ocean.

I was never tired of musing over this bright and varied picture, or inhaling the sweet perfume of the *florapondia* blooming on the terrace. It is a spot to which the innocent children, who now sport there in unconscious gayety, will one day turn from all the toil and strife of future years, and smother many a sigh for the joyful reminiscences of their childhood.

Adieu to thee, Monte Allegro! May the dread earthquake never blanch the cheeks of those who tread thy brow, or rend thy firm feet from their foundation.

CHAPTER LVI.

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Homeward Bound! A loud report from the frigate's bow gun, and before the smoke had vanished, the cornet was fluttering at the mast-head—a signal for sailing. The brave boatswain and his lusty mates blew ear-splitting notes from deck to deck—the roar of hoarse voices resounded deep within the bowels of the ship, "All hands, up anchor for home!" The capstans spun around like tops—the fifers played their merriest jigs—the crew danced with glee—"pall the capstan!" The well-worn sails again fell from the yards, and as the puffs of wind came stealthily over the Point of Angels, the noble frigate turned slowly on her keel, in gladness sprang away, and bade adieu to Valparaiso.

In a few days the batteries of heavy guns were drawn in, their frowning muzzles lashed to the staunch bulwarks, and the windows of the ship closed to the buffetings of the sea. We passed in sight of Juan Fernandez, and, soon after, the wind befriended us, and with broad wings we flew towards Cape Horn. One dark night, another of the unfortunate maintop men was lost overboard: he had been born and bred upon the ocean, and thus singularly met his watery grave.

Rain, snows, and storms came over us, but on the seventeenth day we doubled the tempestuous Cape Horn, where we saw a dozen ships, with gold! gold! painted in perspective, on every seam of their broad topsails. Leaving the Falkland Islands, we steered boldly into the Atlantic, and went on our swift course joyfully.

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The strong favoring gales seemed never to tire in efforts to urge us onward. The very sea-birds gave over chasing us, all save a venerable couple of grey-backed albatross, who with indefatigable energy followed us for three thousand miles. Again we crossed the tropics—the southern cross paled below the horizon—the pole-star, gleaming dimly at first, rose and rose until sparkling high in the heavens. Again we splashed through the haunts of flying-fish and nautilus, until, on the sixty-third day, there came the loud cry of "Land, ho!"

Shortly after, our noble ship—that had borne us in safety fifty-five thousand miles—let fall her anchors, for the last time, within the waters of the Chesapeake.

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