

ILLUSTRATED NOTES
OF AN
EXPEDITION THROUGH
MEXICO AND CALIFORNIA,

BY
J. W. AUDUBON.

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EDITOR'S PREFACE

SEVERAL years ago I had an inquiry from an Arizona customer for a copy of the original edition of this work—a folio—but after a year's searching and advertising, the only copy I could find was held by a London dealer at \$175—a price too high for me. Since then I have several times renewed the search, but to no purpose.

When it is considered that the work was published in 1852, and that many books a hundred years older can readily be had, such scarcity is phenomenal, and ranks this very interesting and valuable work very high among our rarities.

I can only account for it by the fact that probably only a small edition was printed (it was "Part I" of an intended series, but "Part II" never appeared) and that in paper covers, so it was easily injured or destroyed. It was issued in two styles—with plain, and with colored plates (I have never seen one with them plain) and the illustrations were done by Nagel & Weingärtner, the noted New York lithographers, who also made the plates for Audubon's *Quadrupeds*. Their workmanship was of the best, as witness the beautiful plates in that work.

For a long time I despaired of finding a copy of the work—but lately, in the garret of an old-time dwelling, whose former occupants were personal friends of Mr. Audubon, and probably had it from himself, I found one, tucked carelessly under the rafters.

Needless to say, it had not been improved by the treatment, but was perfect save for its cover, so I put it into the hands of a skilled "restorer." and now reproduce it.

The story itself is a very interesting one, of the hazardous journey across Mexico, of robbers, and the more to be feared cholera

by which the expedition was attacked; but the four illustrations are particularly valuable. They are:

- I. THE FOURTH OF JULY CAMP
- II. THE NIGHT WATCH.
- III. THE MEXICAN VILLAGE OF JESUS MARIA.
- IV. THE CAÑON OF JESUS MARIA.

Nothing can exceed the beauty of these drawings, unless it be their coloring.—is particularly fine in III and IV, where the mountainous landscape lends itself, with its rich tints, to form a most charming *ensemble*. The artists to whom I have shown my copy are very appreciative of the beautiful scenes and the masterly rendering of them.

This work, interesting alike from its authorship, subject and illustrations, ought to be found in every library of any size and in the home of every admirer of the Audubons—and I had proposed to republish it, in size precisely the same as the original a folio of 18x13 inches,—but the great cost proved prohibitory and I have therefore issued it in the present form, with the plates reduced, reproduced by photography, and colored by hand. It gives me much pleasure to thus furnish my customers with the only reproduction ever made of a very rare work, hitherto unattainable (no copy has been sold at auction in twenty years, and it is unknown to many collectors.)

It should be emphasized that the four plates cannot be found in *any other work* (in the only edition ever published, of the complete “expedition,” they appear merely as insignificant, outline pencil sketches, *uncolored*), hence I am fully warranted in claiming for this, as for so many others of my similar publications, *excessive rarity* of the original, and, I may add, an exceedingly low price.

PREFACE

TO write a tale, however simple, and to tell one, are quite different things. In one case, every word and sentence ought to be weighed and criticised, and to be written by one possessed of knowledge of the World of Literature and of language—in the other, the speaker, while relating his adventures, regards his listeners closely, imparts his enthusiasm to them, and can vary his pauses as his emphasis, so as to convey to his hearers all his meaning; his animation is enjoyed, and he is sympathised with by his friends, and the incidents and accidents of a journey recapitulated verbally, make an impression; but the same story written and read in the closet, is often from want of the excitement of conversation, dull and uninteresting.

My diffidence as to the interest of the letter press, in connection with many other circumstances, has delayed my first number eighteen months, but having made all my sketches with the camera lucida, I trust with confidence to *them*, on account of their truthfulness, for the success of my “Illustrated Notes of an Over-Land Expedition through Mexico and California.” As I make no pretence, but try to tell a plain story of what I have done and seen, that may be interesting or instructive, I rely on the reader’s generosity and lenity in criticising.

Many, many miles of wearying monotonous travel, were for weeks at a time endured by us, with not an incident worth noting; and consequently the letter press of each number will vary greatly in quantity; but I will endeavour to produce the plates, which Mr. Gildemeister and Messrs. Nagel and Weingaertner give me every hope of accomplishing, in a superior style.

It is intended to continue the publication of these “Illustrated Notes” monthly, should the first number meet with the approbation of the writer’s friends and the public, and to finish the work in ten numbers.

J. W. AUDUBON

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ILLUSTRATED NOTES
OF AN
EXPEDITION THROUGH MEXICO AND CALIFORNIA
IN 1849 AND 1850

TWO YEARS since, when California was not as familiar to us as now, and our knowledge of its resources was indefinite, imagination led us to suppose, that to reach the Sacramento was to insure wealth; and I was led away by the same wild feeling that sent thousands of my countrymen straggling across the lone prairies, or beating to windward against the eternal westerly seas around Cape Horn on their way to the newly discovered placers.

The excitement everywhere visible, to the quiet lookers on, if there were any in New-York at that time, must have seemed most absurd; and yet, after our Company was full, in one day I could have received fifteen thousand dollars from individuals wishing to join our party; one gentleman, a civil engineer, offering a thousand, to be allowed to accompany us, and note the position of all interesting objects and the towns we passed through. In every purchase I made, I met dozens in quest of the same article. The gun, pistol, and bowie-knife trade flourished to an excess; and if our country had been on the point of being attacked by England, France, and all the north of Europe combined, we could not have made, apparently, more rapid preparation for war, "even to the knife."

At times, in all the bustle of outfitting our party, a regretful feeling at giving up my profession, as artist and naturalist, at which I had been studying and working, for seventeen years, would steal over me at the prospect of the dangerous, long, and untried pilgrimage we were undertaking; but I recollected my father's advice given some three years before, whilst in Texas,—“Push on to

the West, even to California: you will find new animals at every change in the formation of country, and new birds from Central America will delight you." Can it be, that I, too, from long association with him, having been the companion of all his expeditions but one, since I was of age, had within me some little lurking spark of the noble desire for knowledge and love of nature, that for forty years had sent him wandering through her wildest scenes?

Appointed second in command, I thought that, as only commissary to the Company, I should have half, at least of my time during the journey, to collect specimens of new birds and animals, and make sketches of the country we passed through; so I provided myself with drawing materials and the requisites for preserving birds and rare plants. Circumstances, most melancholy and disastrous, frustrated all my happy dreams. My arsenic is broadcast on the barren, clayey soil of Mexico; the paper for plants was, early in our trip, used for gun-wadding, and though clung to and cherished to the last, my canvasses and paints were left on the deserts of the Gila, perhaps for the benefit of some red-skinned artist.

On the 8th of Feb., 1849, "Colonel Webb's California Company" left the Battery.

I had parted from all most dear to me in this world; how, let you who are husbands and fathers, and have parents, and a happy home, conceive. A day of hurry was got through; and three o'clock found me followed by a few dear friends, on board the steamer Transport for Amboy. I was surrounded by the Company and their anxious friends. Fathers of sixty took my hands in both of theirs, and in scarcely audible voices begged me to take care of only sons. Brothers told me the faults of their younger brothers, and begged me to give counsel and advice; men I had never seen gave hearty grips of rough hands, that told of honest hearts, and said, "My brother's with you! treat him right, and if he is my

brother he'll die for you or with you;" and the last words of ministers, as they gave their parting advice and blessing, were drowned by the bell of the steamer. Its tolling went to my heart like a funeral knell. I was too much excited to answer the hurrahs of the hundreds who came down to see us off; and in silence I waved my cap to those we were leaving, for the red eyes of fathers, wives, brothers, and even timid sweethearts, had, added to my own grief, killed the boisterous man within me, and mentally I prayed God for courage and ability to perform my engagements faithfully.

The tide was low, so we had to make our course to Amboy through the outer bay, and I turned to look over Sandy Hook on the broad Atlantic, with sadness at thought of the long absence I anticipated, and that the Pacific had to be seen before I should again return to my own much loved coast.

To travel, now that railroads take away space and incident, gives us nothing to write about, as we fly through the civilized parts of our country; and our journey to Pittsburg was like all others. We had one of the hundreds of monotonous trips down the Ohio, yearly made, and our greatest interest was the immense number of geese, ducks, and game of all kinds that we saw as we approached its mouth.

As we turned into the broad Mississippi, spread over all the lower banks, the desolation of its swamps, and the decaying, lonely, worn appearance of the clay bluffs we passed, picturesque as they are, added to the eternal current of this mighty stream, as it swept soil and noble forest from its banks, and seemed to glory in destruction, was a melancholy sight, and brought up old associations of happy days long ago enjoyed, and recollections of friends dead since I had witnessed this same scene of ever-varying yet unchanging nature.

New-Orleans, strange as a new country to those who have never been there, with its long line of masts and up-river steam-

boats, all with their bows toward the Levee; its quaint, halfbred negroes, with baskets of all sorts of things to sell in them, the curious manner of the markets, where all the smaller vegetables for sale are done up in picayune bunches; where the English, French, and Spanish are spoken, one language as often recurring as the others; its broad Levee of white cockles, a foot thick, putting all other pavements, for comfort, to the blush, covered with millions' worth of produce; and the noise and bustle of business done here, excite the looker-on till he wishes he was one of the actors in this scene of turmoil. Even Sunday, on the Levee is never kept, the departure of steamers, challenging each other to the race, with whistles blown by steam of two hundred pounds pressure to the inch, which echo through the town, and the drums of the French military, disturbing the quiet of the day.

Sunday is selected at Orleans for the departure of vessels to all parts of the world, in preference to any other day; and at 10 o'clock, all our arrangements previously made, we let go our head lines, swung our bow down stream, and the *Globe* bore our Company toward the Balize, on our way to Brassos. Sunset saw us anchored at the mouth of the river; the weather not looking as favourable as our captain wished, we remained all night, and went out at daylight next morning; the cross seas on the bar breaking over our bows at almost every wave; and I felt that if a gale from the southeast should come up, our trip to California would soon end. A ship at sea is always the same, and gives the same scenes; the first few dashes of spray that wet the unsuspecting, cause a laugh; but the swinging movement given to a vessel by the "ground-swell," is followed by the pale face of every owner of a weak stomach, and description would be only repetition; so, after I had seen the vessel on her course, "West and by South," I went to my berth—the flimsy steamboat laboured and strained as ships do in a gale, and I could not have been persuaded but that it was blowing very hard, had I not been able to look out from my berth

on the sea, in the light of a full moon; the trade-wind of the Gulf just fanned a ripple on the old swell, giving millions of sparkling lights, in petty imitation of those spangling the heavens. Three such nights, and four days of hot sun, and we were running over the bar at Brassos; not a landmark more than ten feet high was in sight, and miles and miles of breakers, combing and dashing on the glaring beach, broken here and there by the dark, weather-stained wrecks of the unfortunate vessels which had found their doom on this desolate shore, ended our view whichever way we looked, and we rejoiced as we rounded the low sandy point that protects the inner bay. Brassos, like Galveston in 1837, is nothing, if you take away what belongs to Government. A long flat, extending towards the Rio Grande, probably a mile wide, is kept from the sea's overflow by a range of low sand-hills, if drifts 10 to 15 feet high deserve the name. The inner bay, however, looking towards Point Isabel, is a beautiful sheet of water, terminated by the Government buildings looming in the distance.

A few cases of cholera had occurred, but Major Chapman, United States Army, with the kindness so generally shown by our officers to their countrymen, sent us off as soon as practicable in the Government Steamer *Mentoria*, and though I saw him only for a few moments, I shall never forget his attention to our wants, nor the good judgment he displayed in the arrangements he made to aid us. As at New-Orleans I could not, without great extra premium, insure our money over the bar at the mouth of the Rio Grande, I, with Biddle Boggs, and James Clements, having landed the horses brought with us, went overland to Brownsville, opposite Matamoros, thirty-two miles—long ones. We rode along the beach with buoyant spirits, grateful that we had crossed the Gulf in safety and smooth water; and the glorious sea-breeze of that climate, coming in at 10 o'clock, we went merrily on, watching the little sand-pipers and turnstones as they followed each receding surf, to pick up all the unfortunates of the marine tribes

which had lingered too long and too near the beach. There is something in the eternal coming in of a surf that brings a thoughtful, if not philosophising, mood to the contemplator of one of nature's most solemn features; and the feeling, that soon we must all cease to enjoy thus the delights in which we have been permitted to revel, to make way for others who come behind us, at such times is almost palpable; all nature lives on its weaker neighbour, the larger beast eats all it can capture, and parasites in turn, inside and out, eat him—but to our ride. The sun was now nearly vertical, and as from time to time we passed through narrow lanes of chaparral, where the breeze was shut out and the dust followed as we rode, the heat was most oppressive, and we opened out from the circuitous course of the Rio Grande which we had followed for some miles, here almost level with its banks and perfectly a miniature of the Mississippi except in the vegetation near it, to the broad Texan prairies, extending a weary journey to the West;—West, that eternity of distance, that association of vastness, incomprehensible, but felt; and to our boisterous, happy conversation, silence by universal consent, succeeded. Each of us, variously apart in education and feelings, was wrapped in similar thoughts of the time when we had been on the prairies of Texas before, long since, and far from the present scene; but like the sailor who is once familiarized with the sea, so with the man of the prairie an hour restores him mechanically to his old thoughts and associations; even music, not sung nor thought of for years, returns, and he is startled to feel, though silent, passing through his mind the airs forgotten of time long past, called forth by similarity of situation and circumstance. Our pleasure was complete as we looked on the waving broom-sedge in all its green luxuriance, and breathed the clear air, after the dust we had passed through, till the distant elevations, which on the prairie had loomed up to almost mountains, were discernible, and when reached, strongly, though in miniature, resembled the clay-washed hills of the upper Missouri,

so beautifully illustrated by the Prince de Neuwied, as "Chateaux blancs."

But all this was passed, and as sunset came, we again wound our way through clumps of chaparal and musquit (a dwarf acacia,) and our horses trod the soft turf of the beautiful musquit grass, in a great portion of this part of Texas very abundant, and particularly valuable, as its nourishment does not leave it in the same degree as in other grasses, when it dies.

As the night came on, we felt a little anxious about our money in this strange country, but soon the bark of a dog, that invariable attendant on man's habitation, from the palace of the lord to the wigwam of the savage, was heard, and welcome was the sound to us, for, as we came near the town, so many roads crossed each other that we feared we might have to sleep out; that would have been a matter of small importance, but just from sea and seasickness, and having taken a ride of thirty miles, the going without supper would have gone very near our hearts; at nine o'clock, however, we reached Brownsville, where the rolling of bowling-alleys and cannoning of billiard balls, was all that seemed to enliven the village at that hour, and finding no hotel that looked as if I ought to stop at it, I went to deposit my money with Major Brice, United States Army, who was as cordial as he could be, and treated us most kindly, notwithstanding all the annoyance various California companies had given him.

March 8th.—Almost calm this clear morning, but still a soft breeze, so gentle as just to wave the white cover of the table at which I sat, sometimes getting under, and almost raising its swelling folds high enough to have lain its edge on the table in quiet, but that would have taken from it its graceful occupation; a distant hammer drove sluggishly from time to time a nail, in all the dreamy laziness of spring, and the proud cock was heard to boast his self-importance in the same shrill, clear crow I have heard,

from farms of my neighbours, to this lonely place; even the mocking-birds sang just as they did in my happiest childhood days in Louisiana; can it be wondered, then, that my heart was sad at the recollection of all the blessings I had forsaken? My mind went back to home, and a foreboding of evil seemed to come over me.

Brownsville is one of those little places, like thousands of others in our Southern States, where high pay for little work, and great profits in trade give an undue share of leisure without refinement, and consequently drinking-houses and billiards, with their accompaniments, abound. It is on the highest bank of the river, and commands the view across the plain between it and Matamoros, which makes so fine a show, with its American appearance, that I was startled from my old belief of the low standard of all and every thing Mexican. Alas for Mexican reputation, that all the showy houses I saw were built by Mr. McGown, who had resided there for years. The delusion dispelled, I once more resumed my old opinion, founded on past observation, that no good buildings, (or what *we* should call such) exist in *Northern* Mexico, except the houses of the missions, and they in many instances have adobe walls and flat roofs.

Brownsville, with its two "ferry flats" swinging on hawsers in the old-fashioned way, stretched from bank to bank of the *great* "Rio Grande del Norte," only forty miles by land from its mouth, has a thriving, "running" business. We were advised not to go to Matamoros, as the cholera was there, and after a day of rest, and enjoyment of the kindness shown us by the officers and Dr. Jarvis, we left in high spirits on the steamer *Corvette*, Capt. O'Daniel, whom we found kind and attentive; and toiled up, at low water, this muddy creek, with "over the bars" only eighteen or twenty inches of water, and notwithstanding the cleverness of our pilot, we were aground, light draught as our boat was, certainly not less than half-a-dozen times a day.

The soil on both banks is a rich sandy loam, but the rain is so uncertain in its favours, that many crops of corn, (if small patches planted by the Mexicans could be so designated,) are lost because no rain comes to fill the ears; thus it seldom matures.

The Ranches are miserable "Jacals," (a sort of open work shed, covered with skins or rushes, plastered with mud, here so full of marl and lime that it makes a hard and lasting mortar,) precisely alike, varying only in picturesqueness of tree and shrub, or rather, shrub alone, for there are no trees here, though the musquit and willow sometimes arrive at the height of twenty or twenty-five feet, and, back from the river, hackberry is almost a tolerably sized forest tree.

The banks are bordered by thickets of reeds of remarkably rank growth, and a dwarf willow, corresponding with the cotton woods and cane on the Mississippi and Missouri.

The water is warm, and so full of lime and chalk as to create rather than allay thirst, and what but necessity could ever have attracted settlers here I cannot tell; I do not remember that I saw even one good view on the whole river, from Brownsville to Rio Grande City, and the most pleasing sight to us, tired of a hot boat and tedious trip, was our own bright flag, at Camp Ringgold; one moment floating in a southeasterly puff, then gently falling, clinging for a moment to its rough, unfinished staff, and again, five minutes after, blowing furiously out from the northwest. Our flag was hoisted in greeting, and we came to under Major Lamotte's tent, and waited to know if his orders from Major Chapman would allow the *Corvette* to go further on our course; but they were positive and against it, as our boat was so large as to make her return doubtful, and she was too much needed for the use of other companies on their westward way, and for Government purposes, to run such risk for our convenience only; so we were landed nearly two miles above, opposite Rio Grande City, on a sand-bar. It

was two o'clock, the sun pouring down upon us, with the thermometer at 98 in the shade; nevertheless, with all our winter-blood in us, we had to unload our heavy luggage; casks of Government tents, and camp equipage, &c., which we were obliged to roll sixty or seventy yards, through mud and sand, and hard work it was. This labour was most trying to us all; good men went at it with a will, strong or weak, and I did not know whether to laugh or sneer at the dandies of our company, who feigned fatigue or inability; but "many hands make light work," and soon all that belonged to us was ashore, and I gave a sort of melancholy glance at the *Corvette*, as she swung round and "left us alone in our glory." We gave three cheers to Captain O'Daniel, who had been most polite to us. So strictly did we observe all the rules of a military camp, that our straight line of tents could not be varied, whether a wet or a dry soil happened on the spot marked for each tent; but all the bustle of our first encampment passed, and in the cool of the evening I stretched myself on my blankets, hat, coat, and boots off, to look down our camp at the happy groups before each tent, enjoying the soft summer breeze. I opened out my treasures of natural history, collected on our trip up;—a thrush, a jay, and a cardinal, all new to our fauna, were already side by side, and I listened to the notes of a dozen other birds that I did not know, promising to myself, when I should have time from other duties, a treat such as none but a naturalist can enjoy; but that time never came. Night, soft, calm, lulled by the mellow notes of the chuck-wills-widow, and the drone of myriads of insects, alone disturbed the solitude of a river-side in a strange land, and I returned to my tent after the guard was set, lay down on my blankets, breathed my short prayer for health to myself and continuance of blessings on my family, nor waked, nor even dreamed that quiet night.

Morning found our camp enveloped in one of those fogs, that, near the ground, shut up all space. Still if you looked up, the blue of the sky was to be seen overhead, and our tents were wet, as if a

heavy rain had fallen in the night. Not long, however, did we enjoy this cool shade, and the sun came out, even more oppressive than yesterday. Notwithstanding, Colonel Webb went over to Camargo to report himself and company to the Alcalde, and returned at night with Mr. Nimons, who was introduced to me, and it was arranged that Colonel Webb should leave with him for China in a few days to purchase our mules. I bid good-night to the Colonel's tent, but was called at eleven o'clock to see John Booth Lambert, who was very sick and debilitated. Dr. Trask began to fear his disease might be cholera, but it was not like in every respect what he had seen at the north. At three in the morning he seemed much more comfortable, free from pain, and composed; alas, the composure of cholera! telling of death and sorrow; but to me at that time "ignorance was bliss," and I slept soundly till five, when I was again called to him. Mustard plasters, rubbing, that would have almost killed a well man, a table-spoonful of brandy every half-hour, with camphor, &c., were administered, but all that we knew or did was without avail, and at one o'clock that day he died. Poor fellow, he was kind to his companions, cheerful at his work, and regretted by all who had associated with him. For the last five or six hours of his illness, the majority of the company seemed to keep aloof from him, and all the tents, on that side the camp, near the fatal spot, were deserted, except Simson's and Harrison's, and those I ordered to the other side. When Hinckley, Liscomb, and Walsh came back from Rio Grande City with his coffin, where they had made it, his brother, completely overcome with grief, could not remain near to see his changed form, and Hinckley, Howard Bakewell, Nicholas Walsh, and myself lifted him to his coffin. So great was the reluctance of many to come near, and assist at a time like this, that it brought to my mind the old stories of the plague in Italy in stronger light than they had ever before presented themselves; but now I had no time to think of self or prudence, for a few minutes afterwards, as the sun neared the west, and the extreme heat abated, fifty of

us followed his corpse to the grave. Feeling that his friends would be gratified to know that he slept in an American graveyard, where his body would not be robbed, as it would have been on the Mexican side, of even the simple shroud we could procure in this wild place, we removed his remains across the river. Sadly we walked back to our dreary camp, with a feeling that his might not be the only case of this terrible disease. I struck his tent, levelled the ditches made to keep out the wet, and nothing but the withered boughs that had been put to shade it, remained to mark where it had been. I moved the remainder of his mess into a new tent, the guard was set, and I went to bed on that night of the 15th of March, 1849, more anxious than I had been for years, to start and dream until eleven, when I was called to look at Hamilton Boden, who had just been sick at his stomach, and complained of great weakness. We had talked over poor Lambert's case, and as men will always endeavour to account for every "contretemps," and, with or without reason, assign a cause for all that happens for good or for ill, we said that Lambert was never a strong man, and had overworked himself in the heat we had endured; but when Boden, one of the most athletic, regular men we had, was so violently taken, we felt at once what the disease was that was amongst us. Still from his strength of constitution and powerful frame, we hoped that he could withstand the attack, but when morning came, his broad forehead was marked with the blue and purple streaks of blood that stood under the skin and down both sides of the nose, stagnating in the delicate veins round the mouth and large arteries of the neck, and told the sad tale that all was past of this life with him. "What part hurts you, Ham.," was my question, as I looked at the distress marked on his fine head; "my wife and my children hurt me, Mr. John," sent a thrill to my heart; I too had wife and children, and his noble soul, so magnified itself in my sight, in that trying moment to him that I said what I could to console him, and turned away with a sick heart and dim eyes, to attend to Edward Whittlesey and Liscomb, both just taken.

I gave what directions I could, and went to Col. Webb's tent to tell him, we must leave this place. I met with a repulse at first, but as I repeated the proposition, he consented and gave me the command of the company, and as had been previously agreed on, made all preparations necessary for his departure for China to purchase our mules. I called the company to order, and in few words told them our position, and prayed one and all, in this time of trial, to stand to their duty to their fellow companions, and that as I was now in command, I would do all I could to move them at once to a new, and if possible, more healthy ground. Providence here interfered, and sent the steamer *Tom McKenny* up, on her way to Roma. I went on board, and the agreement for our passages was not difficult to make; the boat was obliged to go up, and we would have paid any thing the Captain might have asked, to get away from where we were. I set to work to pack and get ready every requisite for the men who were to go on the boat; retaining only, a force sufficient to attend the sick and dying, and guard our property. We waited anxiously for the steamer to come up; and in a few minutes had the gratification to hear her last bell, and see her push off from Rio Grande City for our miserable camp. When the order to go on board and take all the luggage, and provisions for a few days, was given, many started with only their small saddlebags on their arms, in terror, or feeling completely apathetic from the effects of the air on their systems. Scarcely half the men were willing to work a sufficient time to take provisions enough to feed on for even one day. David Hudson showed himself one of the most energetic; Simson, Hinckly, Stevens, Walsh, Clement, Bachman, Bakewell, and probably twenty others, were indefatigable in transporting what was necessary on board the boat; but I was then too hurried myself, both in directing and working, to notice any except the most arduous in their duties. I took Langdon Haven on board, pale, sallow, the blue of his veins making his complexion almost grim, the large blood vessels of his neck and breast, swollen and black, telling how

rapidly the disease was taking all vitality from his system. I begged Dr. Trask to do all he could for him, and came on shore certainly never expecting to see him again.

I paused to wipe the sweat from my streaming face, (the thermometer was 99° in the shade,) and stayed for a moment looking at the little crowd of good men who had assembled on the stern of the boat to bid me farewell. In silence they took off their hats; not a sound, but the escapement of the steam, was heard. As the boat turned a point and went out of sight, I sank down on the bank, to compose myself for a minute or two; and sorrow and regret for the probable fate of so fine a body of men, for I was unable to do any thing to protect or aid them, bore so heavily on my heart, that it almost sank within me. My strength was well nigh exhausted with nearly forty-eight hours' watching, and I was in a state of nervous excitement such as I had never before experienced but it was no time to give way: I had to attend three dying men, and to think of what was best to be done for the rest of us.

Now was the time to see the energy and determination of the true friends I had with me; Robert Simson, Howard Bakewell, W. H. Harrison, Robert Benson, Lefferts Benson, Follen, John Stevens, James Clement, Nicholas Walsh, Talman, and the two Bradys, before Liscomb's and Boden's death, were most indefatigable; but as the two last sank the efforts of the Bradys, their friends, relaxed.

We had all been at work, to aid those leaving, and, except myself, those who remained were trying to get cool after the violent exertion we had undergone. I went round to the sick to see what might still be done to aid and assist; but they all lay in the last stupor of cholera. Poor young Liscomb, worn out, and almost heartbroken, sat leaning against his tent, fast asleep, looking nearly as ill as his dying father by his side; I woke him up and sent him to mine.

Edward Whittlesey was next, looking as if months of illness had been endured, as if years had passed over him in the last five or six hours: his dog, a Newfoundland, was walking round him, licking his hands and feet, and smelling his mouth for his breath—but it was gone, and solicitude and affection so marked, were more painful to look on, under such circumstances than any who have never seen the sorrow of a faithful dog would believe: noble fellow, was my first expression,—poor fellow, my next.

Hamilton Boden was before me, no answer came from him, and I even doubted if he still breathed as I walked slowly away to my tent.

In cholera, when no pulse is perceptible, still the victim lives,—all and every exertion had been made by us, and had failed; we had not saved a single case; and like sailors in a ship, with masts gone and wallowing in the troughs of a gale-tossed ocean, we sat still to await our doom; one of us only at a time, walking before the tents of our dying companions to note the hour of their last breath.

I sent John Stevens to Dr. Campbell, United States Army, Camp Ringgold, requesting him to tell the Dr., if he did not know who I was, that we were Americans, and demanded his assistance; it came, and promptly, but alas it was just what we had been doing:—calomel as soon as possible, mustard externally, great friction, and afterwards, opium, with slight stimulants of camphor and brandy. John Stevens had just returned, when Howard Bakewell, who had been his quarter of an hour watching the sick, came into my tent, (where I was lying on my blankets,) exclaiming, “My God, boys, I’ve got it.—Oh, what a cramp in my stomach, rub me, rub away.”

Simson and Harrison took him in hand, and never for friend, did friends work harder than they; I read and re-read Dr. Campbell’s prescription and directions, which we followed implicitly, but as in all former cases, to no purpose. One short *half hour*

found him in the stupor that in cholera renders all insensible to pain or sorrow. He had told me to tell his mother, that he died in the Christian faith she had taught him, and his friends, that he died at his duty, like a man.

It was about four o'clock, P. M.—two of our small company were dead, and two had become senseless in a few short hours; and I told the noble fellows who, forgetting self, still worked and struggled for our company's good, that I would stay no longer in this valley of death, and property had now no value to me. We were almost paralyzed at the awful rapidity with which this dreadful disease had carried off our friends, so we made every preparation to leave the low banks of the Mexican side, and seek for health on the bluffs of Texas, opposite to where we were encamped.

What I had undergone the past fifty hours, and the terrible state of my cousin Howard Bakewell, was more than I could bear up against; and now that the excitement of nursing was over, and sorrow only remained, exhaustion came over me. Simson, Clement, and John Stevens went with me across the river to the town, whilst Harrison, the Bensons, with those still on duty, packed what was most valuable, to bring, with them, and hired men to guard our camp that night.

I lay in the house of Mr. Phelps, kindly lent to us, listening for and awaiting the arrival of the sick, who were being brought over by those still strong and well. Soon I started from my bed to give place to my cousin; but lay down on my blankets in the corner of the room to wait again for the return of Simson and his party, who, unrelaxing in their exertions, had gone back to our camp, and were bringing over poor Liscomb, Boden, and Whittlesey.

All this done, and Dr. Campbell sent for to see if any thing he could prescribe would be of service to those in this torpid state, we left for the hotel of the village; Clement carrying the large

saddlebags containing our money, which we placed in the hands of the bar-keeper, telling him at the time what was in them, and he promised to sleep on them for us, and we in return, to pay him well for his care of them. I went up stairs, and, to my sorrow, found Nicholas Walsh and A. T. Shipman violently attacked by this dreadful cholera. I sent at once to Mr. Phelps's house for Dr. Campbell, where those in collapse were lying, and he passed most of the night with us. The heavy trade-wind that was blowing, sighed through the windows of the long room we were in; the groans of poor young Liscomb, who, half dreaming, saw nothing but the horrors of his father's untimely death; the retchings and sickness of Walsh and Shipman, our anxiety, and perhaps nervousness, chased sleep from us. Many an hour of anxious watch have I had, but no such night I ever passed before. Morning came, just like any other morning in a tropical climate,—not a cloud, no air stirring, and oppressive beyond belief.

I went to attend the funerals of the unfortunate of our party; I had just ended my duties, when Clement came to me to tell me my saddlebags were gone, and that White, the bar-keeper, said he had delivered them to one of our men. I scarcely cared for what he said, I had at that time no thought for money, I was so depressed and ill; but White's statement being untrue, we at once sent for the landlord of the hotel and demanded our money. He coldly replied, "Gentlemen, I never saw your money; when money is left in this house in *my* charge, I am responsible for it, I know nothing of what you say you've lost." So we at once took up the man to whom we had entrusted it, sent for the magistrate of the town, took the evidence for and against him, and committed him for trial.

As there was no jail or place of security in which to confine him, we deliberately chained him to a musquit stump in Clay Davis' yard, and stood guard over him night and day,—we threatened, and offered bribes alternately, but all to no purpose, the first forty eight hours.

To-day, 18th, poor Harrison died of cholera, after about twelve hours' illness; so I lost his assistance which had been most valuable, and also that of Simson, who was well nigh crazy at the death of his friend, and whose system was completely under the influence of cholera, he having now been in the air of it for nearly two weeks; but with his strong constitution, and still stronger mind, after only twelve or fourteen hours' illness, the next day he was up again at my side, and I had his valuable services, given, as he does every thing, with his whole soul.

On the 19th, Mr. Upshur, a gentleman acting for Clay Davis, as attorney and agent at Rio Grande city, who had shown the greatest sympathy and kindness towards us in our troubles and exerted himself to the utmost, called me to him, said he had something of importance to tell me, and led the way to his room, closed the door and locked it. He asked me if I could swear to my money if I saw it. I told him I could not; but described it as well as I could remember. He then showed me three or four thousand dollars in gold coin of different nations, and repeated his question, could I swear that what I saw was mine? I could not, though I fully believed it was. He looked in my face so closely, that for an instant I thought he doubted who and what I was; but I met his bright, clear, sparkling eye, with one as honest, and slowly he drew a small piece of brown post-office paper from his pocket and asked, "Is that your hand writing?" No, was my answer, but it is that of Mr. Hewes of New Orleans, it is his calculation of five hundred dollars in sovereigns and half eagles, which Layton and Hewes placed in my charge; and now I can swear to my money, if that paper was found with what you show me. He told me he had always been satisfied it *was* mine; as he knew there was not such an amount as I had lost, in the settlement; but that he made it a rule to be careful. He counted it twice, took my receipt, and as we went to Camp Ringgold to leave it with Lieutenant Caldwell

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the quartermaster, who was always most kind, Mr. Upshur told me the manner of the recovery of what was regained:

Don Francisco, a Mexican, (Clay Davis' father-in-law,) as the cholera had taken off the sheriff of Starr county, was sheriff for the time, having been appointed until next election.

The Mexican "siesta," from 12 M. till three or five, as it may be, makes the natives semi-nocturnal. Whether Don Francisco was taking a midnight walk to see what might be the fate of the "Californians," or watching what others might be doing in reference to our unfortunate party, we could never get him to acknowledge; though we suspected that he had seen White, and a man named Hughes, leave the tavern; and had followed them, after they divided the money, until they separated; after which he could only watch one, but never lost sight of him until he had buried his share of the stolen money; which portion Don Francisco probably removed as soon as the rascal had departed. Or, perhaps, he might with the wonderful power of trailing that the Indians and Mexicans possess, on the fact of our loss being known to him, have followed the track of the thieves; and on discovering this amount of money, thinking it was all that had been stolen, have given up any further search until the paths and trails in every direction had been so run over by the people of the village, that it was impossible to follow any one of them. Don Francisco generously refused all compensation for what he had recovered for me, saying we had suffered enough without having to pay more; and I offered him a high price for his further exertions, which he gave most diligently.

Fortune here favoured us—White, the thief we had chained to the aforesaid musquit stump, luckily took the cholera. He suffered greatly in his exposed situation, for he was not treated in the most kindly manner; to his appeals to us to let him go, his declarations that he was innocent, and that he would die there,

we made no answer, feeling that if he was to die, it would be a just retribution for his rascality.

As his strength went, and consequently his false courage, we took advantage of it, and had him informed by a third party that he was to be hung that night, if he did not confess where the money was.

Towards evening White called Mr. Upshur to him and began his confession, conditionally. He was to be allowed to escape, so as to avoid the vengeance of Hughes, and others, his friends, who he now told us were accomplices. All this we promised, as it was our only hope of regaining more of our lost money. A horse was bought with a proviso, to return it if not wanted; I put a few dollars in my pocket for White's first few days' expenses, in case we let him go, and waited the sinking of the tardy sun, as it seemed never to get a degree lower; but at last a tropical dusk came rapidly, even to our anxious minds, and in a few minutes we quitted the house, and by a circuitous route came to the road leading to the graveyard, where our friends were sleeping that long sleep all must take.

We proceeded along this lonely road, closely guarding the scoundrel, till at a fork in it, he stopped, and saying "here is about the place," went directly to a large cactus, and removing some brush and briars, began scratching in a small hole for the money; but only a second, when he exclaimed, "My God, it's gone;"—never shall I forget his tone of despair. He, accustomed to the summary way of judging, sentencing, and executing delinquents in Texas, feared from our anger and disappointment, all he might have anticipated from the vengeance of those amongst whom he lived, and thought that our next step would be to hang him. What a scene for a painter who could have given its extraordinary excitement—on one side, pale as death from recent illness and fear, with the still paler light of the half moon giving luster to his large eyes and deepest shadow to his open mouth, kneeled this miserable wretch; he swore by his God, by his Saviour, and all that men hold

sacred, that there was the spot where Hughes had put the money, and prayed to be let go,—alas for him; facing his livid, sneaking, yet bold head, stood a little group, just his contrast. I cannot say enough in praise of Simson, Upshur, and Horde, Simson faced relapse into the dreadful disease from which he had just recovered, and Upshur and Horde, the hatred of the “blacklegs,” by whom they were surrounded, without, (where the law is not enforced,) man’s only restraint, one single conscience among them all. Manly and noble in every expression, yet soft and even kind in tone, Simson questioned White as to the whole theft. We all believed his answers now, notwithstanding he had been swearing to lies every half-hour for the two previous days— but we took him back to his place of confinement; and I stood guard over him, whilst Upshur, with Simson and Horde, arranged for the recapture of Hughes, who was now over the river at Garcia’s ranche. Horde at once promised to bring him back, if I would give him two men he could depend on, and John Stevens and Lefferts Benson volunteered.

I knew from what I had heard of Horde, that if Hughes was found, he would have to come, dead or alive; and notwithstanding my anxiety for the two of our party who went with him, I was proud of their cool courage—for when a man goes into a strange country, not knowing even its language, or the manners of the people in it, where his only dependence is on himself, it is no craven that will be one of three, to face ten or twelve blacklegs, all armed, and bring away one of their associates.

I had no time, however, to dwell on the dangers they were to encounter, for Upshur took me into his room, told me to stick as many pistols in my belt and pockets, as I could, and come with him. We were too hurried for any explanation, and I did not know the duty I was called upon to perform, for silence was enjoined, until I found myself in a musquit thicket, commanding three paths that met about ten steps from where I, half-squatting

half-sitting, received orders to shoot the first man I saw, if he did not stand at my challenge as to who he was, and what he was doing there. Upshur hurried back to watch the ferry from the Mexican side, and have an eye, with Simson, to a "fandango," that he thought was got up that night for a purpose. If any of you wish to know the full length of an hour, try my situation yourselves, with all the fears I had for my three friends over the river, listening for the reports of their pistols, which I anticipated every minute, and trying the lock of my own;—but like all hours, whether of anxiety or pleasure, it went its own pace, and at its end I was relieved from my watch in the chaparal, where Upshur had placed me to see if Hughes might not come again to the neighbourhood for some other portion of the stolen treasure.

On reaching Upshur's rooms, to my great relief our party had just returned from Garcia's ranche, with Hughes their prisoner, and no fighting had been done.

Hughes, after some violent protestations, in the language of Rio Grande City, was ironed and chained to our favourite musquit stump, and White, now almost exhausted with excitement, and the cholera, which had rapidly increased on him, lay on a bed in Upshur's room. All night Hughes's friends, walked patrol around the house we were in; we could hear their tread as they passed—we were only five well men, and Horde kindly came to sleep in an adjoining room. We had no hope of such a blessing, and as our watches changed, we lay down on our blankets, with our pistols for pillows, more for rest than in the hope of sleeping. Morning deprived me of some of those I had counted most upon for assistance, and the steamboat *Tom McKinney*, which had taken up our party, brought back eighteen or twenty of them on their return to New Orleans. Some did not even come to bid me good-bye; the Bensons, Talman, Follen, and two or three others did, like men they; said they saw the company was at an end, and that there was no use remaining.

Desolate and jaded, and even more depressed than usual, I watched the steamer on her homeward course, till she took the mail from Camp Ringgold, which contained my letters; and returned to my guard, with the few good friends I had round me. I regretted the return from Roma of those going home, and yet I had great consolation, in their good report of the health of the party. Langdon Haven was recovering, and out of fifty-two more or less ill, only two had died; although twenty others were too reduced and weak to go on. I am convinced that if these fifty-two cases had occurred on the ground where the disease first appeared amongst us, at least half of them would have proved fatal. Can it be that a sudden and rapid change of air and situation does more to cure this terrible disease than all the power of medicine? I turned to the friends I had with me, heart and hand; Robert Simson, John Stevens, James Clements, Nicholas Walsh, (now convalescent, though not able to walk,) William Mitchell, James Emslie, and William Mix; Messrs. Horde, Upshur, and Simson taking the most vigorous measures for the recovery of our stolen money.

Hughes we guarded for several days longer, but the same false oath, was his only answer to all our questions "that he had not got it." So that, as it was absolutely necessary I should join the company, or what was left of it, at Mier, we determined to leave the next day. I walked down to Camp Ringgold, to see if possibly I might not have a letter from home, by a steamer just arrived; on the road I met Lieut. Browning, on his way to join our company; I introduced myself, appointed to meet him in an hour, at the hotel, at Davis' ranche, and went on to Major Lamotte's tent for my letters; he was engaged when I arrived, and declining a chair offered, for I was too weak and tired to sit, I stretched myself on the rushes he had for the floor of his outer tent, and commenced a conversation with Capt. McCown; of course the subject was our troubles, he did not know me, and began by, "I expected nothing but some serious accident under such a command. The Audubons are well known in their profession as naturalists and

painters, but,—” here I interrupted him, by laughingly telling him, he was too hard on me at first sight, and probably he would think differently when he knew more of me. He looked astonished, and a very little confused, but his frank southern manner and bold soldierly apology followed each other so rapidly, that a laugh was mutually enjoyed—and he was ever after, and still is, my kind friend.

On my return to Davis’ ranche, I saw poor Dr. Kearney, who had undertaken the medical charge of the party; I heard of the lives he had saved on the river as he came up, and hoped to have his aid for our still suffering company. I wished him to go on at once to them, but the fatigue he endured on his trip up had been too much for him, and he was unable to ride so far. The day after, he was no more; those who knew him, even the short time he was with them, had the highest regard for him; and to us, who wanted his services, his death was the greatest loss we had sustained. He was buried at Camp Ringgold, and had been attended by Dr. Campbell, and nursed by John K. Rodgers, his cousin, one of my friends, who was so debilitated that I lost his companionship, on our long long pilgrimage; he being obliged to return to the north to regain his health.

Having done all that we could for the recovery of the stolen money, we left for Mier, via Roma, at the hottest hour of the day, three o’clock, hoping to reach that place by dark; but after two hours’ ride, we stopped for shade and rest. The heat, owing to our debility and weakness, was unsupportable, and we stretched ourselves, exhausted, under the musquit bushes, the best shade we could find in this country, till dusk, and then went on. About eleven we arrived at Roma; silence was all around us, not even a dog barked. Here, too, the cholera had done its work, and it was some time before we found a place to sleep in. As Mr.—— opened his door, at which we had knocked for fifteen or twenty minutes, he exclaimed, “My God, gentlemen, what are you doing

in this God-forsaken country? Go home while you can." Lieutenant Browning asked, if it was as bad a country as he described, and he was so disturbed on our account, why he still remained, "Gentlemen," he said, "I would not stay a day, if I could get money enough to pay my way home with." We laughed, but thanked him for his advice, and going into his store, regaled ourselves with a glass of corn whiskey, and stretched our weary bodies on his counter and floor, with our saddles for pillows and blankets for beds, slept soundly till morning.

To tell what was in this store, would occupy weeks, and about, (judging from its confused appearance,) as long a time to put the stock in order; its row of whiskey barrels, covered by planks, made a counter for muslins and laces; back on the shelves were boxes of raisins, drums of figs, half kegs of tobacco, and an etc. innumerable, a list of which might be ended like the Yankee advertisement with—"wire mousetraps and other sweetmeats." The yard, like all the other jacals and corrals of this part of Texas and Mexico, was fenced in with musquit posts, set perpendicularly in a ditch, and lashed at their tops to horizontal poles with raw hides cut into thongs; in this enclosure we put our horses; they had corn, but neither hay nor "fodder." Next morning, as a portion of our party were crossing the river in a little ferry flat, Lieutenant Browning, General Porter, Simson, and myself, took a view of the surrounding country.

Roma, named after General Roman, of Texan celebrity, is situated on a high sandstone bluff of a light-yellowish colour, perhaps an hundred feet above the river which washes its base; but is without trees, its barren aspect only relieved by an interminable chaparal of musquit, cacti of three species, an occasional aloe, the maguay, and large patches of a shrub-like plant, with at this season a delicate blue flower which I strongly suspect is wormwood or artemesia, that for miles gave softness of colour to the brilliant

green of the musquit, and other small leaved "growth" of this country.

The plants of the southern part of Texas and Northern Mexico as a rule are all small leaved, most delicate and beautiful; but the absence of the broad leaved magnolias, poplar, and wild hydrangias of Louisiana and Arkansas, is scarcely compensated for by the cactus, or banana; and worst of all, every tree, shrub and plant is thorny to a degree that that none who have not been in a thicket of "tear-blanket" and "cat's-claw" can imagine.

The sun just above the horizon, sent the long shadows of the undulating country, mingling in the beautiful mists and haze of morning; a soft breeze waved the feathery-looking tops of the dwarf forest below us; the eye wandered over miles of paradise to look at, but in truth a barren desert, for at this season nothing grows, naturally, that is food for man or horse, neither fruit nor grass. The spots uncovered by vegetation, all wet with dew, look like newly ploughed fields, deluding the weary stranger into the belief that the distance he sees, will be a change from the desolation through which he is riding his jaded horse or mule.

Having crossed the river in the ferry-flat, worked by Mexicans, we toiled through a few hundred yards of deep sand; passed the remainder of another unfortunate California party, who had one to bury that morning, and two others very ill. We felt for them, but they too had disagreed amongst themselves—some were gone on towards Mazatlan, and others, home. On reaching the second bank of the river, the road is over a plain, sparsely covered with musquit bushes for two or three miles, and as the sun began to pour down its heat upon us, I rode along, moodily enough; so weak, that I was but just able to continue my ride, so depressed in spirits, that at times I was almost in despair. At three o'clock that afternoon we reached our camp on the Alamo river.

I was surprised to see a carriage as we rode up, but the next

minute saw Col. Webb in it, with one foot on the front seat, and Dr. Trask bandaging and bathing it; I soon learned that he had received a most severe sprain, and the black and blue, swollen appearance of his ankle, convinced me of the great pain he was in.

The men crowded anxiously round me for news, asking how much of the stolen money I had recovered, what I had done, and intended to do, and how those with me had behaved under the circumstances; and I saw many go a second time to grasp the hands of Simson, Clements, Stevens, and Walsh, who had previously scarcely known them.

Lieutenant Browning, and General Porter, of Michigan, who had come out with the intention of joining our party, said they would defer their decision until we had fully matured our plans, and rode back to Roma.

* * * * *

Col. Webb was taken very ill shortly afterwards, and as night wore on we feared he would scarcely see the morning, but his attack took the form of bilious cholera, and next day changed to bilious fever. Again the cholera broke out in our camp, and I was a sufferer, but not to die of it, even at the second trial, and after about twelve hours I lay in the luxury of convalescence; in that half-dreamy slumber, free from earthly thoughts and all the troubles of this life—in flowing, swelling, imaginative bliss, everything went as I could wish it and all care was forgotten—Poor me! to get well so soon, and for what? To wake again to see young Combs who was attacked that night.

Mr. Upshur had sent for me and a small force, to aid in a guard he wanted, over a man he thought had a portion of our money.—As was my custom, when any extra duty was to be performed, I called for volunteers, (a lesson learned from Jack Hays in Texas.) Combs was one amongst the most forward to prove his devotion to the company. I refused to let him go, solely because of his de-

bility. He left me, not angry, I don't believe his kind heart felt that, deeply mortified—and I found it was a task, tired and ill as I was, to convince him it was not his spirit, but his strength that I doubted; that night at one o'clock, he was taken ill; how glad he was I had not let him go on that long ride; but alas, he had a longer journey before him. At ten next morning that fatal stupor came over him, with which, in every case we had, the cholera always ended. I did not know who to feel for most, J. J. Bloomfield his untiring friend, or the dying man;—for the last few hours of Combs' life, Bloomfield was all that a brother could have been, and after his death until I called him to aid us to dig the grave, he seemed to have no manhood left, it went with his last exertion for his friend. Of the entire company that started with us for California (at one time numbering ninety-eight,) Hudson, Bloomfield, Bachman, and Damon, were all who were well enough, or who had energy left to help at the last rites of their companion; thus disease and death overshadowed all who had not quitted the company and the country.

After two hours' hard work we had the grave as deep as we thought necessary, and returned to camp. Silence, befitting the place of death, reigned all around; not a breath of air rustled even a leaf; there was no low murmuring conversation, such as accompanies funerals at home. Only eleven followed poor Combs to his grave,—“Not a drum was heard, nor a funeral note,” came most forcibly to my mind as we wrapped him in his blankets, (no wood for a coffin was to be had in that country,) and slowly we bore him on; the burning heat of the day was gone, the sun was sinking in dull red haze in a sky without a cloud, and all nature seemed at rest;

“They laid the corpse of the ‘good’ and brave,
On the sweet fresh earth of the new dug grave,
On the gentle hill where the wild weeds wave,
And flowers and grass were flourishing.”

As I finished the funeral service, and looked round on the thin, haggard, neglected in dress, and long-bearded group, I never

saw a more forlorn set; no dry eye was amongst us, and none, but felt his position one of solemnity and dependence on an Almighty power, to a degree which had never been before experienced. We returned to our desolate camp to look on others still in danger, and needing our kindest attention and consolation, even if we could not give relief. All idea of business for the time was driven from our minds, those not nursing the sick were possessed by an apathy they could not throw off, and when all our duties had been performed, we went to our tents to think—who was to be the next!

March 23d.—Again came morning, with its fiery sun, burning and drying still more the parched desert we were on; breakfast was tasted, but not eaten; the men wished to know what I intended to do, and I begged them to wait for an answer till my return from Rio Grande city, where I had to go. Col. Webb, very ill, left the camp for Mier, and was accompanied by his son, Dr. Perry, and four or five others. At Rio Grande city I received from Mr. Upshur four thousand dollars more of the stolen money—I still had some hopes of regaining the balance, but it never was found. The dull monotony of this place was most tedious, nearly as bad to think of as to endure. My greatest pleasure was in the society of the officers of the camp who were most kind, particularly Capt. McCown, Dr. Campbell, Lieutenant Caldwell, Capt. Deas, and Lieutenants Hazzard and Hayne.

At Armstrong's Hotel our saddles and blankets made a lounge for us in our jaded state and I had just taken mine for bed and pillow, stretching my weak and bony legs to find a soft position, when Clements came to tell me I was wanted at Judge Stakes' room; and I, with Lieutenant Browning, went over. At a circular table in the center, covered with books and papers, lighted by a single candle, sat Clay Davis; his fine half-Roman half-Grecian head resting on his small hand, turned enough towards us to give a full view of all its beauty, both profile and full face; his long black hair, with

just a wave in it, gave wildness, and his mustache, added to the sneer on his lip, as he questioned a Mexican thief, made his figure one of the most striking I have ever seen. Opposite, also handsome, was Judge Stakes—just as light in complexion and hair as Clay Davis was dark; Simson, with his Van Dyk head a little down, but his searching eye raised and full on the culprit as he gave his answers, stood behind, and one step in advance stood Don Francisco, his arms folded over his broad chest, putting question after question to the thief. A little farther off stood three other thieves, stripped to the waist, with their muscular arms tied behind them, waiting “*adjudication.*” Denials and confessions, threats, and occasionally their execution, produced piece after piece of the stolen property. Questions in Spanish and oaths in English, lasted for some hours, till all hope of recovering more was given up.

Again I left for Mier, to see what I could do for the men waiting my return, and to know the result of their consultations in reference to going on or not. I met the party about half way between Davis’ and Roma; all were well, but many so weary and debilitated, that they had made up their minds to return home. I, however, went on to Mier, with Lieutenant Browning and W. J. Cree, to receive Col. Webb’s orders, and hear from him his ideas as to the best course to be pursued; received them, and left at two o’clock that night on our return to Davis’ ranche, accompanied by Wm. Mitchell and Watson Webb. At eleven the next day, reaching camp at Rio Grande city, I called the men together, read their agreement to them, and urged, all I could, the obligations they were under to go on and fulfil their contract; but almost the universal refusal of the company met my appeal—only twenty-one were willing to go on, and of those, one half were men without occupation at home, and some few said, they did not care a —— for the company, but only wanted to get to California.

Can it be wondered, that I doubted such men? So I left the room we were in, begging that they would reconsider their deter-

mination, and that I would come again in half an hour to know the result; but the same answer was given, "We won't go on under the present arrangement."

I then told them that I could not take them on with the money that I had recovered, unless they agreed to carry out their original contract, saying: "I have done all I could to forward the interests of the company, but a visitation of Providence seems to be against us, and I am not going on under any new arrangement: I am not old enough to preach to you, but should you go home, let contentment and gratitude, for what you may have, be gained by the hardships and sorrows you have endured, and may God bless those who go on, and those who return." So ended our first difficulty and "Col. Webb's California Company."

Fortune, like the wind, always fickle, now favoured us; and no steamer came to take the men back. Gradually their health returned, and with it their good spirits. Lieutenant Browning and Robert Simson were doing all they could by argument and persuasion to induce them to go on. Often I questioned these two friends, as to what was my true course; but they gave the same answer always, "We do not know your position at home." Lieutenant Caldwell of Camp Ringgold urged me not to go back,— "that it was military education never to give up, so long as the first intention might still be accomplished." Capt. McCown, the reverse in his advice, said, "You are deserted by these men,— you have no power to compel them to obedience,—you can now go back honourably, and you don't know what you will have to endure in a march through Mexico."

Slowly I walked back from Camp Ringgold to Rio Grande city, stopping from time to time, to listen, as I fancied I could hear the escapement from some steamboat coming up.

On the high bluff bank at Davis' ranche is an ebony tree surrounded by a circular wall of "adobes" of the marly soil of this

country, smooth and glazed, and so built that the outer half was one step, answering for a seat, and the inner circle, built higher, formed the back. Dusk, so short of duration, far south, had long since gone, and the delightful sea breeze and returning health I enjoyed, almost gave more pleasure than enough to counterbalance the sorrow and mortification I felt at the breaking up of our company.

Musing gloomily I sat, when I heard a song from one of our party; in a few minutes another was sung, and good spirits were enjoyed by all, at the thoughts of home; the chorus was, "Oh carry me back, oh carry me back to old Virginia's shore." Leaving my seat I went slowly over to Armstrong's hotel.

On the counter of the bar-room lay Lieutenant Browning; two or three persons sat near his feet, their legs dangling down the sides of the counter, their backs towards the bar; while on our saddles and blankets, piled in one corner of the room, and on benches and stools around, lounged or reclined our little band. Gen. Porter was in the centre listening; I looked for a second, as I entered, to read his expression, but his half-smile was so like a sneer, yet so far from it; in short, so positively meant something but seemed so completely indefinite, that it was hopeless for me to try to read it; and as the chorus ended, I took a seat on a saddle, offered by one of the party, and looking up, quietly said, "How strange it is, that the thoughts of home should so change your spirits. Who would have supposed that fifty such men would have turned back at the first difficulty? What will you say on your return to your friends, when they ask why you came back? Forget your happy homes for a time, and go on like men;" but the answer was still, "We won't go on under the old arrangement." Lieutenant Browning here proposed to go on under Mr. Audubon. Simson seconded the motion, and it was carried. I then asked, if I went on could I depend on them to carry out the contract to the stockholders? and, with three

cheers, they determined to adhere to their agreement, and proceed under my command.

Next day we moved back on to the prairies, five miles from the river, entirely out of the cholera, and began to feed up the weak, and make all our arrangements for a start.

Clark, one of Hughes' accomplices, had threatened the life of a little blackleg named Steves; of course a threat, under such circumstances, warranted the death of Clark, and one evening, as he stood at the bar of Armstrong's hotel, with his glass in his hand, Steves shot him through the back with twelve buck shot, cutting his suspenders where they crossed, in two—he fell and never after either moved or spoke; on him were found many pieces, in imitation of eagles and half-eagles. Steves gave himself up, swore he had killed Clark in self-defence, and was acquitted; no jury ever gave a more equitable decision. Whilst on this topic, I may as well say what I have since heard of the fate of the original thieves, Hughes and White:—Hughes, after we left, was set at liberty by Upshur and Horde, as, having no aid but what Judge Graham could give, they could no longer stand guard against eight or ten of Hughes' friends.

On my departure, I had offered a reward of half what might be recovered of the balance of the lost money, and Hughes was not half way to Camargo, after his release, (only five miles on the Mexican side,) before he found that he was watched by Andy Walker and Wiley Marshall, two Texan Rangers, who, having no fear when what they conceive their duty is to be done, hold a little Court of Oyer and Terminer of their own, and do not keep up the long suspense of courts generally.

On reaching Camargo, Hughes never left his room, for he knew his life was threatened, and he waited for a dark and rainy night to make his escape, hoping the darkness would hide him, and the rain wash out the trail of his horse; but he was so closely

watched that only a few hours after his departure, he was captured and tied to a musquit tree far off in the chaparal, where no cry for help could be heard, and no compassion was to be expected from those who now determined to compel him to disgorge his ill-gotten wealth.

Often have I pictured to myself the dim camp-fire fanned by the heavy, sighing, south-east trade-winds, that moaning sweep over this wild desolate country—the stern looks of the Rangers, and the bull-dog obstinacy of Hughes, as he swore again and again he had no money of mine, and if he had, that he would die before he'd give it up.—What must have been his feelings as he watched the consultations of the fierce soldiers around him, who now, resolved on his death or the money, only waited the time to consummate their designs?

All threats failed with them, as they had done with us, in our attempts to get back our money—Hughes' skull is now an ornament (?) to the bar at Armstrong's hotel, the scene of the robbery. As for White, his notoriety excluded him from that neighborhood. So he left Brownsville, where he had gone as a refugee, for San Antonio de Bexar. Hughes' continued assertions that he had not the money, gave the idea that White must have gone off with it after all, and he was followed, overtaken near San Antonio, and shot as he attempted to make his escape. So ended the lives of all those we knew to be engaged in the robbery; who were the others, and their fate, I have never heard.

For those of our party too ill to proceed on the journey I did what I could, as far as circumstances would allow; some were mean enough to leave after all danger was over—the rest of us, who were well, aided and assisted in our hurried preparations for a start, and had the satisfaction of seeing the daily improvement of our sick. Col. Webb was all this time too ill to move, or be moved, so I went up to him to tell him what had taken place. He could not go on; I told him so; and that his only course was to return.

I was younger, and my constitution so good, that after all my sorrows and vexations, in high spirits I crossed the river at Davis' ranche, and encamped at Garcias', to give us time to bring up all our provisions from Camp Ringgold, where we had packed them. The next day we moved to Camargo,—here we met a poor fellow returning, the last of seventeen who had started for Mazatlan, not able to walk more than a few yards at a time; he was still in good spirits; we jokingly asked if he had seen the elephant, and his answer was as gay as if in perfect health, "Oh yes, a dozen times; he lives round here," to this we assented.

Once, on one of our packing days at Camp Ringgold, whilst our men were eating their lunch, not knowing the rule of the camp that shooting was not allowed within its lines, I commenced, with my revolver, firing at a drift log, as it floated down the river; made some good shots in pretty regular time, and was quietly reloading, when the sergeant came down, with two privates, to know who had fired, and what at; he knew me as leader of the party, and I told him that I had not known the regulations of the fort, or they would not have been infringed, and to beg pardon of the officer of the guard, and say it should not happen again; he started with my message, but stopped, and said, if I would be pleased to go to Major La Motte's tent, it would be in order, and save him any trouble. I ran up, a few steps in advance, and entering the tent met Capt. McCown, evidently awaiting my arrival: his roguish eyes contrasting queerly with his compressed mouth, convinced me at once that he was at the bottom of it; so, gallantly as I could, doffing my hat to Major La Motte, I begged pardon for my fault, committed in ignorance, received an invitation to take a glass of cherry-bounce, saw the chuckle of the stiff-necked sergeant as he squared away, and consoled myself with the cherry, thinking, if all my arrests were to be as pleasant, 12 o'clock was just about the time.

Half an hour afterwards, when I returned to "the boys" at work, many questions were insinuated as to what had happened to

the "Commandante," but my case was rather envied by the poor fellows, drinking muddy Rio Grande water, when they heard my sentence.

During the night, a Mexican, in an attempt to steal a mule, took one of our wildest, and by accident got the lariat some way so entangled round his legs, that the beast cast and dragged him some distance to the San Juan river, and took to the water for the other shore. Lieutenant Browning and Nicholas Walsh however had given chase, as they were on guard, and overtook the fellow just in time to save him from drowning. They released the thief, who no doubt, but for them, would have paid with his life for his crime. Nick was for "executing justice" on the rascal, but Lieutenant Browning thought he was bruised enough, and let him off with a warning.

Guardau is a ranche situated on an old bed of the Rio Grande, south from it at present a few miles, on the Mexican side, about half way from Camargo to Mier; here we stopped to repair damages to the miserable rotten wagons which had been bought at Cincinnati, arranging our guard, and fixing for our long uncertain tramp. Mr. Mallory (now with me) and myself here counted our money; we talked of one hundred days as the time requisite for such a journey, and the result of our calculations gave sixty-six dollars and four cents for each man. We conceived the journey three thousand miles.

How the responsibility of taking forty-eight men through so wild and strange a country weighed upon me I cannot express, but my low spirits were of no long duration, and on we moved for Mier, some twenty miles distant; luckily our wagons broke down again, so we concluded to leave them, and consequently lost another week at Mier, in their disposal, and selling other goods we were now unable to pack with us.

Here, two more of the company returned: Ulysses Double-

day, so weak and reduced, that when I left him in charge of his friends, Bachman and Emslie, and gave him all the money I could spare, to carry him back to the United States, I certainly thought their only duty would have been to bury him on the morrow; but it was otherwise ordained, and home he came safely and well, and his friends, Bachman and Emslie, were true to me, even to California. Mier might truly be said to be composed of only one square, and all the rest mere suburbs, the houses are "adobe," built just as they are in every Mexican town I have seen. To the south-west, marley hills, high, parched, and arid, covered at times with sparse chaparal of dwarf musquit, gave a most unpleasing foreground to the grand view we had of the mountains of Ceralvo; all the blue of Italy was again before me—all but the blue of the Mediterranean; and as the sun went down behind them, even those over whom scenery had had previously no effect, seemed to feel the beauty and sublimity of this grand and isolated range.

Our first "start" with pack mules would have made a Mexican "arriero"* laugh no doubt; but far different was our feeling on the subject, and most forcibly we recalled to mind the caricature of the overland train through Missouri, of "D——n a mule, any how;" we saw it verified; but our tempers were so out, that we could not laugh, and each mess, leading the most gentle mule they had, tied the nose of the next with a "scope," of only two feet six, to the tail of the unfortunate animal, and so on to the number of six or eight. At times, as the last mule of one of these strings, in a fit of obstinacy would hang back, I expected to see the tail of the leader part at every moment, or come out roots and all; but if ships' hawsers had always been as strong in proportion as mules' tails, many a vessel would have ridden out the gale that, parting her cables, drove her ashore.

At dusk, our party was miles apart, some on ahead, and I with the rear guard, followed on, wondering if the advance would ever

*A Mexican packer of mules.

camp; and among other troubles I missed Henry Mallory, he had been seen ahead and behind, but just at this time no one near me knew where he was, so I turned my mare back, and rode a mile or two towards Mier, calling him by name at the top of my voice, and had the relief of an answer from him, a hundred yards from the road; I went out to him, found that he was in a sort of doze, both hands clasped on the pommel of his saddle, and his horse quietly grazing on the meagre grass of this country. It was just twelve, and the bright moon made night almost as light as day. My salutation (for my temper makes me sometimes forget myself) was not over mild, and as I told him if he could not ride fourteen hours without going to sleep, he had better go home now, was answered about in the same spirit; and but that fifteen minutes after, when we reached camp, the cholera made itself manifest in him, and called for all my care and attention, we might not have been as good friends as we are now; but I gave him a good dose of calomel for the future, and a glass of brandy for the present! that sent him to sleep.

Next morning we went on our way, over a flat country to Ceralvo, beautiful for its old mission, and curious in its irrigating canals, bridges, and old church; still it has the apathetic lassitude of every thing Mexican, and we rode on to the Robbers' ranche. On the road we looked over vast undulating wastes of hard unprofitable soil, and right or left, the fantastic shapes of the palmettos, here by thousands, gave the appearance of horsemen of gigantic size, riding through equally tall grass,—and all the desolateness of a country destitute of everything but thorns, may be realized in this short ride.

Robbers' ranche, once a fine hacienda, but burned by the Americans in the last war, for the rascality of its owners, is on a beautiful plain, (if cleared of the brush, which has grown up in its now neglected fields, and between the irrigating ditches which everywhere mark its former high state of cultivation); and as the thoughtful man rides along the cattle trails that skirt the densest

thickets, a question as to the efficacy of absolute or liberal governments, would be difficult to settle, even to an American: for where nature once smiled under the untiring industry of man, now man's indolence is seen in the weeds and thickets which everywhere cover the country. Here we were near losing Lieutenant Browning, but Simson's kindness, and Dr. Trask's indefatigable exertions saved him.

A week passed, as we waited the arrival of Bachman, Emslie, and Carrol, left behind with Doubleday, and so anxious were we the last two or three days, that I sent a guard to meet them, which returned with them the day after. From this place to Papogias, the country is arid in the extreme, and though in many places rolling, no change of soil for the better, and no end to the interminable chaparal and musquit, the great characteristic of this country, meets the eye of the jaded traveller to cheer him on. At Ramos we met some French traders, who had resided many years in Mexico, and the few words I addressed them in their own language, gained their frank, short opinion of the country we were in: "C'est vrai c'est un pays vilain mais il y a beaucoup de l'argent ici, et nous ne resterons pas toujours." With this last speech the "capitaine" carefully unlocked a pistol-case and showed me his revolvers and a pair of "Durangers," all of which I admired, for it is strange how soon, when shut off from higher pleasures, all such trifles please the fancy; true, in Mexico pistols are more prized by the inhabitants than the fine watches of French or Roskell by our city beaux; but I have found through life that as pleasures diminish in number, so each one left to us is the more enjoyed.

A large train of mules, with some thousands of dollars' worth for their "cargoes," were camped on the other side of us. The Mexican traders who owned it were as grand as our French party was nonchalant. The Mexican grandee is seldom seen doing anything; he will be found to have, on his bridle, saddle, &c., and blanket, a little fortune, if we include the doubloons he always

carries with him, to bet with at monte, like a gentleman, not caring to lose or win.

Ramos, Mazin, and Aguafrio, all present a dilapidation, that ill accords with what the country was, when under full irrigation—but with the influence of the church, ceased all energy; and fear of the Indians has been the cause of the desertion of many fine ranches so that the remains of past opulence almost everywhere sadden the heart of the lover of neatness and prosperity, as he rides through this country.

Late at night we camped at Walnut Springs, five miles from Monterey, and for a week rested in the shade of its Spanish walnuts, and enjoyed its delightful waters, here bursting out in a fountain of six to eight feet wide, and about one foot deep, clear but not cool, though pleasant to drink.

Monterey is at the base of a range of mountains surrounding it except to the north. Its entrance, over neat and in some instances picturesque bridges, is at least romantic, if not grand, and the beautiful little torrent which bounds the city, gives in every manner the blessing of an abundance of water, and irrigates a beautiful valley even for miles beyond Molino del Rey.

Here I had quite a scene with the Alcalde; our camp was infested with pigs, which came from every direction, morning and evening, just about the times we fed our horses and mules; of course we did not wish to see them robbed of their just rights, after the hardships we had forced them to endure. Stones and hatchets were abundant, some pistols the boys did not think would go, went off accidentally; and as we could find no owners for some fat hogs that were killed and eaten, I went to the Alcalde to pay for them. My interpreter, a little Italian boy, thinking his ideas better than my directions simply to ask the value of what we had taken, so that I could leave the amount for the rightful owners when they came to make their complaints; told his Honour that if he was not

satisfied with what we intended to give him, we would come in and take the town. The Alcalde was rather indignant at this suggestion, and I saw that my little vagabond had been telling his own story and not mine; a threat to him with a few superfluities (in the good old Saxon,) ending in the word thrashing, if he did not repeat word for word what I said, had the desired effect. I then asked the Alcalde what had been told him by the boy; heard it, and explained all, upon which he bowed me out with the politeness of the true Mexican gentleman.

The adroitness of the thieves here, is almost equal to that of those at Naples. In two instances pistols were taken from the holsters, whilst the owners held the bridles of their horses; and we lost two mules, tied out not more than fifty yards from our camp. All this tended to excite revenge among the company, and had we not been in completely good discipline, no doubt outbreaks of temper would have brought us into trouble, as they did several companies on the road to Mazatlan. At Molino del Jesus Maria, we purchased a quantity of oats and barley, standing, and vigorously began to cut and carry off, till the major domo, fearing his field might not yield anything for the next comers, opened the irrigating sluices, and compelled us to retire, vowing to get the worth of our money from the next we came to.

Rinconada is a beautifully located farm, well watered, with a long avenue of pollard aspen-like leaved poplars or cotton woods, the boles not more than ten or fifteen feet high, so that all the flawy gusts that come like little hurricanes, for a few seconds, from the hills which surround it in every direction, are not likely to blow them down; here we saw the first magua plants, from the juice of which pulke is made, and afterwards muscale distilled. Muscale, to taste, is more like creosote and water, slightly sweetened, than anything I can compare it to, and I suppose about as wholesome.

The peons who work the haciendas of this country are com-

pletely Indian in their character, appearance, and habits; at times astonishing us with their strength and activity, and again their laziness could not be surpassed. The women, patient things, like the squaws of wild Indians, do all the household labour, carry water, wood, &c., and are rewarded by their unfaithful husbands allowing them to do as they please. From this beautiful little amphitheatre among the hills we wound along the parched arroyos and valleys, and here I could not but be struck with the wise provisions of nature for the protection of its creations. Almost all the trees of this country have tap roots, or if fibrous they run so deep in search of moisture, in this dry climate, they are often longer than the tree is high, as in all the arroyos where the earth was washed from the roots of the trees and plants, I saw nearly the same thing and had the best opportunity of coming to this conclusion.

We proceeded up a deep ravine, crossing and re-crossing, and following its bed alternately, until we began the ascent of the famed pass of Rinconada, intended to be defended by Santa Anna, but abandoned when our army approached. How any force of artillery could have deserted such a position I cannot conceive, for the unfinished fort commands the road for at least two miles.

From the fort, the view was most grand, but we had become tired of mountains, with their long gorges, all dust and suffocation, parched and burnt as they were, and we longed for wood and shade. Here the first indication of the climate of altitude was perceptible, and high on the tables of rocks above us started pines and cedars, in the full luxuriance of latitude thirty-five or forty; they enjoyed the occasional showers that we longed for and saw passing, while almost smothered with dust we toiled on, our hair and whiskers white with it, and we looking like a troop of grey veterans, instead of a company of young fellows, commencing the world by an overland trip to California. When we did reach water, its use seemed to make mortar of the dust on us, it was so full of lime, it left on

our burnt and cracked skins what masons might almost call a "skim coat."

Saltillo, we came to on Sunday, and in all the summer heat of that latitude, its white houses shone and glistened in the sun.

We approached over a broad plain, dotted with ranches for some miles, and entering the town through lanes of adobe walls, which fenced innumerable corrals, and led us into the principal street, we commenced the ascent of the hill side, on which the town stands.

Saltillo is Mexican in all its characters, its flat-roofed, one-story houses, have a fortified look as if neighbour durst not trust neighbour. The public square is a fine one; the church, the most highly ornamented I ever saw in America, and very beautiful; the workmen who carved the marble for it, had been sent from Spain, and the marble brought from the Rocky Mountains—so the story goes.

Six miles over a barren and desolate rolling prairie changed our scene, and we had a grand view of all the beauties of Buena Vista; high picturesque mountains bounded the landscape on every side; and valleys, all luxuriant in the vegetation of an irrigated soil aided by the climate of the tropics, gave more richness than is often seen in contrast, even as great as valley and mountain give in the view from Stirling Castle; but not half so grand as that unsurpassed landscape, when the sun sinking behind Ben Lomond in its misty haze, leaves the gazer in twilight and meditation. Buena Vista had its battle, ever to be remembered by all Americans—few of us but have some friend or acquaintance sleeping there, and its desolation harmonizes well with the idea of what a battle-field should be.

A few days' rest, and our first grand muster took place; camped on Taylor's ground, where the ditches made for the tents

of his men in some cases answered for ours; we drank of the same waters, and inspired with military zeal, we had a muster and review, and killed what the Harlem boys called a bureau, "burro," (jackass); but being a very little one, as Marryatt would say, I had only to pay five dollars for it.

Saltillo had many good things about it, was clean, and well regulated, its buildings were better than any we had seen except at Monterey, and yet I always went back to camp with pleasure. That camp will never be forgotten by two of us, George Weed, and myself. Some days of rest had been enjoyed, and the time for starting on our journey was fixed for the morrow,—how it was, I cannot tell, but I had become so wakeful, that, as every guard was relieved, I heard the roll called, and the tramp of its return when, after two hours of duty, it was dismissed in front of my tent. This night the guard was slow in coming out, and better it had never come at all; as it came to order in front of where I lay, its drowsy grumblings awakened me, and I raised up to see who the malcontents were. Montrose Graham was guard over my tent that watch, his last watch: as Simson called his guard to order, and faced me, Weed let his rifle fall; the cock was down on the nipple, contrary to a positive order; in falling, the head of the hammer struck the ground first, with the whole weight of the gun on it, and as if the trigger had been pulled, off it went. The astonishment and anxiety produced by a shot at night, in a strange country, for a few seconds created a breathless silence, even with the bravest; but simultaneously it was broken by two exclamations, just opposite—one, "My God, Mr. Audubon's killed!" the other from me, "Who's hurt?" a groan from poor Graham, told us how it was. Some one said, "It's not much—only a pistol ball," but he answered, "only pistol or not, it dropped me like a hot potato." How the hurry here and there for lights and water, the Doctor, and the anxiety of friends under such circumstances arouse a camp. All loved Graham, he was the handsomest man of ninety-

eight of us, just twenty-two, and captain of his tent; the Hailstorm mess, so called by Lieutenant Browning, and his favourite guard, from its go-ahead principles.

The ball had passed just through the ankle, and went by me so close that I fancied I could hear its whirring sound some hours after. We had a consultation of Drs. Perry and Trask, and both said he could not go on for many weeks. I could not wait, I had neither time nor money, so at once I decided to leave his cousin Molenaar with him, (a more practical physician than most doctors of his age), and as much money as I could spare, to enable them to come on after us, or return home, as might seem most judicious. Peter McKusker too, used all his arguments and persuasions to induce me to let him remain behind also; but I could not see that he would be of any use, and he was too valuable to us to part with him unnecessarily.

Frank Carrol, as good a man as I ever wish to be connected with on such an expedition, found accommodations for poor Graham, and we left our two friends at Saltillo. How we parted from them, you who have been compelled to leave friends in a strange country may judge. We returned to camp with all possible speed, and at five moved on. At nine that night we camped, tired and depressed, on one of the hundreds of irrigated fields that exist all up this valley.

Our road was over long hills and parched valleys for several days; and on the last day of such travel, I enjoyed one of the most extraordinary views I have almost ever seen; our road wound up the bed of a marly dry creek for half a mile or so, when climbing a hill, very steep but not more than three hundred feet high, we reached a broad plain of miles in length, and five or six wide; on every side was a chain of most sterile volcanic mountains, that looked as if the valleys and chasms that might be supposed to exist in ordinary cases, between such heights, had been filled half way up their

sides with sand and earth, and gave a palpable sensation of altitude that I never felt before, for our position was obtained at a single effort. We had not even an anticipation of this curious formation; our first ascent showed it all at a glance, and it was for one view, most extraordinary; it looked as if an immense lake, that threatened to cover even the mountains themselves, when half way up their sides, had suddenly been changed to earth. Crossing this plain, and rounding one of the desolate peaks in question, we came to the hacienda of the wealthy Don Emanuel Hivarez. Five hundred peons work this place. This is another of those rich spots in this desert, where irrigation gives so much value to the land. The water used on this estate is brought in an aqueduct, made of adobes, for several miles, and must have been built at great cost; it is apparently a very old settlement, and the dust and dirt about the jacals are filled with vermin and fleas.

Parras, for a town of one-story houses of ashy-clay adobe, has a pleasing appearance, a little dilapidated, true, but still that dilapidation fulfils the idea of tropical indolence, all accords, and the dishabille and ennui, as seen in the shady yards, filled with oranges, figs, &c., says, "rest and enjoy yourself" in plain English. It is celebrated for its wines and brandy, made principally by foreigners, and in considerable quantities. But in this country nothing edible grows without irrigation, even the celebrated magua plant, so beautifully luxuriant, is finest along the edges of the ditches leading water to the fields of vines, corn and wheat, and in the grounds, (if lime and sand, forming the principal part of the soil, can be called grounds,) of some of the more wealthy; long hedges of the cabbage rose ornament the avenues of cotton-wood that almost invariably in this country take the place of Lombardy poplars in France, so that in riding along them, one might almost fancy himself again in a country where it rains sometimes, and be almost tempted to believe that after all, there is something worth living for in this burnt up region.

Parras, like all other Mexican towns I have seen, contains a few Americans and French, living in the usual style, some with a Mexican wife, others a housekeeper; but all in indolence, never missing the noonday siesta, and whose large profits in trade, and economical way of living make life easy. The cholera at this place gave us a last farewell, and I was the unfortunate. For several hours I was so ill, that I feared our proposed departure on the morrow would have to be deferred; but fortunately at ten next day I was jolted along in our ambulance for a few miles, until feeling strong enough to quit the wearying sick wagon, and take to my favourite horse, Old Monterey; his wild look with his shying and snorting, added to his springy stride, gave such pleasure, that notwithstanding my debility, I enjoyed the remainder of the ride on the road to El Poso, which we reached at dusk, and camped on a gravelly hill for the night.

Here we had a curious retribution on one of the party for taking revenge. He passed under our picket rope between two mules tied to it. What could any one expect, but to be kicked, or kicked at, by a mule under such circumstances, and so was he; when turning in a passion, he stooped, picked up a small stone, threw it furiously at the poor offending brute, and struck it on the neck bone, so as to bruise the spinal cord to such a degree that it caused instant death. We had thought that a mule could not be killed, from what we had seen of their endurance and toughness; but this event astonished the whole camp. Afterwards during the journey, any outbreak of passion against horse or mule was sure to be saluted with "hit him in the neck." To day was Sunday, and we would gladly have availed ourselves of the rule we had made, not to travel on that day, if we could help it; but El Poso has no inducements to rest at it, as its gravelly hills and dry ravines give no food for the traveller's jaded beast. The rancheros here gave us a specimen of their prowess in casting cattle, and on their swift ponies followed them as they were turned out of the corral, and

running on them would seize their tails, take "a turn" with it round the "cabeza" (the standing pommel) of the saddle, and giving a sudden turn to their horse with the powerful Mexican bit, so wrench the poor beast as to send him to the ground with such force, that the animal sometimes does not attempt to rise again for nearly a minute, and I wondered the cattle were not killed or maimed.

A barren desert extended for miles on both sides our road until we came to a low swampy tract, looking as if a sunken river was seeking its way under the sands we rode over, giving extraordinary luxuriance to the rank weeds, not grass, which here grew as high as our saddle skirts. Passing this swamp we entered a wild and dismal thicket of chaparal.

After a long day without water, when your horse fags under you, and the same dreary waste extends before you, as far as the light will let you see, it is a light heart that does not brood moodily on its position, and the silence of your companions, as they struggle on by your side, does not add to your own comfort. Dusk was soon followed by night, not dark, it is never dark on the prairies, if not cloudy, but desolate and lonely, and we rode on till ten, wishing for that great blessing, water, at every turn we made, when at last we came to a deserted ranche, the roof gone, the corral neglected, so that ruin seemed to reign, and Apache and Comanche might here roam to steal and drive off all the stray cattle they could find. We halted, and six or eight went to hunt for the "water-hole" that had supplied the owners of this mass of poles, mud and grass, once the house of a man well to do in the world in Mexico; the water was soon found and our camping-ground decided on, a guard set, waiting the half hour to pass that their relief took to eat their suppers in, and tent after tent went up as each mess finished their meal; so too, I went to my blankets till my watch was called.

There's a something curious in the sensations of a man, who went to sleep long after night fall, in a place he never saw before, and which in its uncertain light looks at the time as if it was all a thicket; when as the morning gives its cheerful light, he is surprised to see how comfortably he was camped. Next morning, a beautiful lagoon, in holes of a hundred yards long, refreshed us as we bathed in its cool waters, and we had a picturesque view as we wound our way along its bushy banks, and watched the languid flight of the great blue heron, while changing his stand a few hundred feet at a time, when we approached. Lieutenant Browning here bought a wild mule for a few dollars, and a broken down one he had, from two Mexicans who were hunting cattle, and as we packed him, he was christened "El Diablo," and to the last, over desert and plain, through mud and mire, over rocky mountain and sandy hill, he ever merited the name, and was vicious to the last. Again we went over more swamp-like country, and crossed a dry bed of a river one or two hundred yards wide, with its white sands glaring painfully in our faces. A golden willow grew so luxuriantly on both sides the road, and so closely together, that it reminded me of some of the rich bottomlands of the lower Ohio. The soil was very sandy, but moist, and the shade and coolness we enjoyed as we rode along contrasted with the sun we had been broiled in, was most refreshing.

Alamitos is a small village of scoundrels, the most consummate we had yet met with in Mexico. In bargaining for water, which here is only to be had from wells, the vagabonds who had it for sale for the trains, wished to go shares with the rascally guide we had; but as we understood what was going on, one of our men told the interpreter to stop talking, and let us make our own arrangements for it. Both the Mexicans pretended they could not understand us, till I, unbuttoning the holster of my revolver, asked tapping it gently, with an interjection or two, produced by the heat of the weather, if they understood that! when strange to say

our bargain was concluded immediately. Here we had the first attempt at "a stampede" made upon us. As all may not know how such a feat is performed by the Mexicans or Indians, I will give my small experience of it, though if I had "Kendall" at hand, I could give you a more definite idea.

Those intending to run off the "caballada" of a travelling or trading party, get a strong and vigorous horse, cover him with the skin of an ox, newly off, the fleshy side out, tie all the bells they have round his neck, and fastening an enormous bunch of brush to his tail, set fire to it, and start him with yells and shouts, through the camp of those to be stampeded. Horses and mules, keen of smell and sight, receive warning of danger by both faculties, and in their fright will break almost any moderately strong fastening; and running, without caring which way they go, being accustomed to follow a "bell-mare," rush on after the light of the tail and the sound of the bells, even more furiously than firemen run over you in New York.

The horses and mules once started, it is matter of no importance what direction they take, as the vagabonds ride so beautifully, that they soon turn the herd to any course they like, and make their escape with certainty, for those robbed have nothing to follow on, in pursuit, and even if a few animals were left with them, the speed of the thieves can never be equalled, for as the horse they ride gives out another is lassoed and mounted, and the jaded one turned into the drove to keep up if he can; if not, and the stampede is by Indians, the poor brute is hamstringed, so as to render him perfectly useless, or killed if they are not too closely pursued. The terror in a large camp when a stampede is accomplished, is generally such, in consequence of the uncertainty of the course the mules might take on the first fright, for they are just as likely to run over men, tents and everything else, as in any other direction, that a charge by an enemy immediately following, would annihilate the whole party; but in almost all cases the object of stampedes is only

theft. In this instance our vigilant guard was all that saved us from one, and we were then in a part of the country where we could not, even if we had had the means, which we had not, have purchased mules or horses enough to have even packed our provisions.

Mapami was twenty leagues off, the road was long and dusty, but varying in undulations and formation of soil, so that the day's journey was well enough. From time to time, we enjoyed a pleasant shade of half a mile through a growth of larger musquits than usual, and again traversed long lines of flat country bare of all vegetation high enough to interrupt the view we had of almost the entire horizon. Towards dusk we came to a watering place, a well and large troughs; we paid six cents apiece for our mules and horses to drink, and at sunset took our way again toward Mapami, where we arrived at two o'clock that night, tired and fagged, without grass or food for our poor animals, and without supper for ourselves.

I placed Bachman and Hudson at the only egress from the square in which we camped, and went to unpacking my own mules, previously neglected while I was aiding and assisting in the arrangements for our safety. Half an hour thus spent, I went to relieve the poor fellows on guard. Bachman, not strong, but of a spirit that kept up his weak body, sat bolt upright on a packsaddle, with his gun locked in his arms, looking so stiff that I could scarcely restrain a laugh, as I gazed at him for a moment; but when I attempted to take his gun from him, his exclamation "No you don't!" was the finishing stroke to the scene.

Bloomfield and myself succeeded in keeping awake until four, when I called Mr. Mallory and his guard, and abandoned myself to such luxury of sleep and rest as no feather bed or hair mattress ever gave to the city man.

Mapami is situated in an immense amphitheatre of mountains to the east, and hills to the west, ten miles off; is a mining

town, and has several smelting furnaces for lead and copper. Charcoal is used for fuel, and about one ounce of silver is procured from every cargo (three hundred pounds) of ore, which alone almost pays for smelting the copper and lead, so abundant in some of these mines.

The furnaces are not high but picturesque, ending in curious mitre-shaped peaks, harmonizing well with the rugged rocks which surround this dirty little town; full of hogs, fleas, and all the other delights of this so-called paradise, where half-civilized squaws are the ladies, barbarians the men, and filth, indolence and superstition the characteristics of all.

We staid that day to rest and feed our mules; it was a feast day, and a fandango was got up for our benefit; but at nine o'clock as usual, all were within the lines of our camp; our guard set an hour before, and we made up for the past day and night of fatigue.

Leading to Lacadina, the road is almost level for twenty miles, when entering a beautiful gorge with luxuriant grass, it winds up a gradual ascent for two or three miles, and to the westward as we reached the highest point of this little pass, was a grand view, in the middle of which stood the hacienda of the major-domo. A long front of white wall, ending in a tower at each end and with the usual archway in the centre, over which was mounted a small brass piece, made the whole show of this establishment; and though formidable to the Apaches, here abundant, to us was only picturesque. To-day we lost two of our best horses, with cholera; the poor brutes, suffering so much in the manner men do, that it was painful to have so forcibly our own troubles brought back to our minds. Pantilla was eleven leagues off, but no food was to be had at that deserted ranche, and we intended to water there, take a short rest, and go on to Lasaca, supposed to be seven leagues farther. To accomplish this we started at eight that night; at ten the moon rose to light us on our winding way, and truly picturesque was our

appearance; some in blanket-coats, some in Mexican serapes, and others in such bundles, that mere masses seemed to sit their horses. Our guns and arms sparkling in the moonlight seemed to give additional life and romance to the whole scene; but by two or three o'clock, many were overpowered by sleep, and from time to time some unfortunate would get waked up by a musquit bush, stretching across the road just the right height, taking him in the face, and some interjections would follow, with sundry kicks in the sides of the poor horse, and a rattling of curb chains, that sounded as if the rider might possibly be a very little put out.

At daylight, we halted for a short time, while the dew was on the grass, to let our mules and horses graze, and again went on over hill and valley, leaving behind us the small patch of musquit grass on which we had grazed our horses (the same species that is the boast of Texas,) for a parched barren country, all beautiful in soil and landscape, but no water! On one long slope we saw the first antelopes, and I was at one time within two hundred yards of them but did not shoot, and never came so near again. Many black-tailed hares were seen and killed, so various in pelage that the closet naturalists would have made twenty species of them. As we reached the highest point of the road, where it passes between two moderately high hills, the plain of Lasaca came in view, beautiful to look at, and added to its broad landscape, a centre of attraction, a clump of cottonwoods, letting the sparkle of the white-washed walls of an hacienda just be seen through them. New animation filled us all for half an hour, when we dismounted, after being twenty hours in the saddle without water, except a little in the few gourds we carried for the purpose, and with no food but a scrap or two from our last night's supper. A beef was bought, soon killed, and almost as speedily cooked and eaten; and those of the first watch went to sleep, to be able to stand their guard at eight o'clock.

These long journeys we find very injurious to our animals, as

the backs of our packmules are ruined by the continued heat and pressure of the saddles, and our horses much more impoverished and jaded by one long journey than by two short ones, even though we always, after such a ride, gave them a day's rest, which we did now. Except the occasional occurrence of the green luxuriance of irrigation, looking day after day on the same desolate scene of burnt up lands, desolate only for want of rain, the journey through this country becomes wearisome beyond belief. This broad plain once grazed six thousand head of horses, and was only one ranche, owned by one individual; but when the Spanish government was given up for *none*, which is the case now, the Indians soon saw it, and every one that belonged to any neighbouring tribe, was supplied with a stolen horse—so cowardly are the Mexican peons, when not led by higher minds.

The country from Lasaca towards Cerro Gordo is flat, the first few leagues, crossing every mile or so, a beautiful little brook, which was, however, gradually absorbed by the thirsty soil, a water hole and dry bed of sand alternating, until at last the water entirely disappeared.

The Cara-cara Eagle, heretofore very abundant, was perceptibly more scarce, and I saw only one nest on a few scrubby musquits, forming as it were one stunted tree. When the Mexicans adopted this poor semi-falcon as their emblem, they little knew how true a representative they had chosen. Lazy of flight, seldom or never sailing far over the plain or mountain; a few reptiles it captures, but gives way to even the smallest bird of prey in this country, the little sparrow-hawk; and mingling with both species of turkey-buzzard, *C. Aura*, and *C. Iota*, regales and gorges itself in company with these foul birds on carrion.

The greatest trouble we now had was that the backs of many of our mules, became covered with horrible fistulous sores, and the flies getting in filled them with maggots which hung so tenaciously

CANON. JESUS MARIA



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to the insides, and were so far in, that but for the large quantity of calomel we applied, and which we found most efficacious, the poor brutes would have had holes eaten in their shoulders down to the bone. No Christian at home would have thought of using such miserable animals for a year at least; but as we were without a dollar to spare, even for the purchase of our food, we had to pack daily, beasts that we cheerfully would have left in the first good grass, could we have carried our provisions in any other way.

Cerro Gordo is a den of vagabonds, situated on a beautiful little creek. It appears to be supported by a miserable garrison of about one hundred and fifty poor wretches, that we could have made prisoners in ten minutes' fighting. Here we had what may be called really excellent water for the first time since leaving the Mississippi; it was delightful. The men rushed to it, many drank two pint cups full, with scarcely a breath between, and walked off with a third to sip at, giving place to others equally thirsty. We were joined at this place by a travelling Mexican circus company, who begged for our protection as far as Bia. There were five, one woman and four men. The lady rode as we used in my boyish life to say of the backwoods Louisiana belles, leg of a side. The clown carried in the bosom of his shirt two little naked Chihuahua dogs, eight or nine inches long, (called from their bluish looking skin, they have no hair on them, "cast iron dogs,") and another a size larger on the pommel of his saddle. One of the party followed the poor pack mules, which were loaded down with enormous trunks and other moveables, containing such invaluable no doubt, that it was not to be wondered they feared a robbery from the Apaches. Their whole fortune was probably contained in the luggage we saw; such instances not unfrequently occur with trading parties in this country; often Americans, who well armed, have followed this rambling life for many years, and know all the habits and tricks of the Indians of this part of the world so well, that if attacked, a good defence or safe retreat, can almost always be

secured by them. If unmolested on these excursions from the towns of Mexico, to the various ranches and haciendas they visit, the profits are very great; but to return to our travelling companions who lived in such dread of the Apaches. What a treat it would be to see these savages dress out in such treasures. The last grandee, in all his absurd pompousness, was nevertheless, not without dignity, and he sat beautifully, a small but blooded-looking grey horse, so Arabian in his appearance that to see him, and think of Vernet's marvellous pictures, convinced me of his origin. As our hero rode on, one of the long dragoon swords sent from England to this country by thousands, dangled from his left; and under his right leg, at the bend of the knee, with the butt of it in a sling from the "cabeza" of his saddle, hung a Mexican musket, made about the year 1700, which no doubt would do execution when it did go off, for most likely it will burst when he does fire it; it would be curious to know when that will take place, as he carries the flint, owing to the looseness of the screw which should confine it, in his pocket, and I feel assured as long as he rides that fine pony of his, he will, if not surprised, judging from other instances which I saw of his class of Mexicans, never allow himself to be within shot of an enemy.

When they quitted the company at Bia, the queen came to thank us for our protection, and gave a most courteous invitation to her show and fandango, the termination to every Mexican entertainment, either battle, wedding, or christening; but I could not go, though several of the party did, and pronounced the señoritas pretty tolerably good-looking.

Bia, on another of the beautiful creeks that all through this part of Mexico, occur from time to time, and are more enchanting from contrast and variety, contains a motley mass, doubtful of character and cast, for as I have previously said, all the Mexicans I have seen bear the Indian complexion and hair so marked that we have no right to think them any thing but half-breeds, speaking

Spanish, mutilated and so murdered into "patois," that Lieutenant Browning, who spoke Spanish well, was some weeks in learning to understand their jargon.

From Cerro Gordo, the eighteen miles to Rio Florida was so tedious that had it been called twenty-five, the measurement would have seemed more correct; but we were repaid for our labour when we arrived. Here was shade, and we washed the dust from our throats and bathed, a luxury so delightful that we could scarcely quit the clear stream to attend to our camp duties.

The old mission was one of the most commodious I have ever seen, built of nearly white marble, between lime and sand-stone, to look at, but more durable than either, so that the florid finish of the pillars next the church was still very perfect. When the priests of this country had the broad plain of this valley irrigated and tilled by the convert Indians, it must have been luxuriant indeed; but still it is inland, and in such a situation indolence is always supreme; so fell Rio Florida.

Half-way between Bia and Parral, at a ranche and mission on one of the bends of the Rio Florida, is a most magnificent specimen of meteoric iron, almost pure in quality. It is at its highest point four feet, widening in breadth to three where it enters the ground, and where worn by the rubbing of hands of the passers by, it is situated at a corner, is quite ten* colours attracted our attention, as here a space of red, completely bare, was side by side with the parched and dead grass that had flourished in the rainy season in its bed of lime.

To-day we had a most curious instance of Mexican cowardice: over the broad plain, a few scattered musquit bushes only here and there dotting its uneven surface; our eyes, now in training, could distinguish every object, even the trail of some wolf that had cros-

*Probably this should read (it is situated at a corner), its bright colors attracted, &c. But I give it as in the original. [ED.]

sed our path, or the squatted hare or partridge, while the deer, or a human form, loomed up quite large over the dancing haze of heat which ever ended our view. Our line of march was just regulated, after our departure from town, when two or three of the party called my attention to a musquit bush a hundred yards or so from the road. Something we saw, but could not say what, and I rode out to it, where crouching and trembling was a Mexican; he was on his way to town to get medicines for his sick wife, when he saw us coming towards him, and, as is customary in that country, where every man you see is considered an enemy till proved the contrary, he had tried to hide himself from our view. The word "Amigos," however, had its usual effect, and his explanation was short, but his strides long, till he rounded a little hillock which he thought would screen him from a shot, when he took to his heels at a gait which would have done credit to the Long Island race course.

A long, steep, zigzag descent, rocky to painfulness to our poor mules, many of them without shoes, brought us into Parral, wild and picturesque in situation; the balconies, so to speak, of its silver-mines, high on the sides of the mountains which surround the town, convey the idea of fortifications, and give a look of respectability to the whole, that we had not seen since leaving Parras, or perhaps even Saltillo. We skirted the town, and eventually encamped on the banks of the river or creek that runs through its centre; our line of tents was soon in its place, guard set, and the comforts of a halt were added to by a little shower, but it did not prevent the visits of at least hundreds of idlers, who came to see what we looked like; among them several Americans.

Next morning, having found a good camping-ground farther out of town, we had nearly all packed, and waited only on a few before giving the order to "go ahead." Lieutenant Browning stood talking to some two or three strangers, Americans and Mexicans, with his bridle over his arm, when turning to mount,

he missed one of his holster pistols; he drew his revolver and bid all to leave the neighbourhood; and the fear that characterised the retreat of these miserable creatures as they skulked away, holding their hats to shield their heads, was a subject of joke to us for many days, for on long trips like this, as at sea, trifles go for double their real value.

Where we now camped, a mile from town, is comparatively a paradise; two rows of cottonwoods give shade, and all the birds of the neighbourhood are in them and the adjoining beautiful garden; a dashing brook passes by us, giving its little roar and noisy bustle to enliven or calm, and we are in real enjoyment of rest from fatigue and dust; we bathe and swim, and with a pleasure that none know but those who have been for weeks without such a luxury, where drouth and heat form the characteristics of the greater part of the country.

At Parral we found some few Americans, and as is always the case when away from home, some friends among them. Mr. Hicks and Mr. Miller were the most prominent, and to them we owe many thanks for their kindness and attention to us all, both sick and well. The quaint narrow streets, the one-story buildings, the squares, which are characteristic of all Mexican towns of any importance, with the churches, Alcalde's office, prisons, &c., were more picturesque than usual. Hinckly, Feller, and Liscomb being ill, our departure was delayed, as we could not think of deserting our companions far from home and friends, and unable from want of health to help themselves. William Feller died here. He was taken by his cousin to town, for better rest and more comfort, but we saw him gradually sinking, unable to save him and scarcely to alleviate his sufferings.

The trail that led towards the mountains, was at times beside beautiful streams, and then over dry parched hills, and we had all the usual troubles of packing and managing our mules after a few

days' rest; for they would trot on, in little races with each other, striving for the track, manifesting their contrary dispositions, and proving all that is said of their obstinacy true. We had made twenty miles at dusk, when we were overtaken by a violent storm; we rode on for a mile or so, in thunder, lightning and rain, to a grass flat, with good grazing for our animals, the first we had had on the whole march, and camped in a thicket of musquit and scrub oaks. Our long practice in pitching our tents, &c. gave such facility to us in our camp routine, that in a few minutes every tent was up, a ditch dug round each to turn off the water, brush and grass gathered to put under our blankets, to keep off the worst of the wet, and though it rained too fast to have a fire to cook with, we had some Parral cheese and hard bread, not bad, I assure you, after fourteen hours' march; and as we washed it down with a tin cup full of good strong Parras brandy, and water, we mooted the question, as to whether brandy was an essential or not? Drenched and cold, with the yellow light of our guard lanthorn shining on our blue faces, we unanimously carried the point in the affirmative, and I have little doubt, could the stockholders have looked on the scene from their comfortable fire-sides, as the guard, wet and cold as myself, turned out at eight o'clock, they too would have sanctioned the vote. At ten, myself and guard turned in, and Henry C. Mallory and his twelve men out, they being the relief.

Thieves are so abundant hereabout that sentinels must be close enough to see each other's faces even on so dark a night as this was.

Late we started this morning; our blankets and tents had to be dried to save weight to our mules, and the men were many of them stiff and cold, as they had been too tired after the day's work and the guard at night to undress, and had gone to sleep all standing; but when we did start, we wound along a glen that led to our first view of the spurs of the eastern chain of the Rocky

Mountains, and uncontrolled exclamations of delight broke forth from all.

Passing through patches of most beautiful scarlet lilies, that sometimes covered spaces of an acre without interruption, gorgeous and splendid in contrast with an equally abundant blue flowering plant resembling the larkspur, we now came to the most abrupt ascent we had met with, and had we not been told that Lasarca was the highest point of Central Mexico, we should have thought ourselves at least a thousand feet higher than at any previous time on our trip; but still up we went, through scrub, post, and live oak filled with mistletoe, and most beautiful laurels, with stems and branches bright cinnamon orange, looking as gay in proportion to other laurels, as the sycamore does with its new coat on, on contrast with the old bark.

At last we reached the top of the ridge, and came to a jutting point that gave a view of the most magnificent mountain-pass I have ever seen, and the beauties of a little torrent that dashed on to the *west* as fast as I could have wished to go, led me to believe we were on the descent to the great western plains. I gazed in admiration at the picturesque cliffs, volcanic basaltic and sandstone, all discoloured with the iron that was here prominent on the surface, and the broad valley, widening in the distance, gave anticipations of the rich country we were told we should pass through, before reaching Jesus Maria. Down we went, it seemed forever; a most luxuriant forest grew taller as we descended; laurel, pine, oak, a wild cherry, a cedar new to me, a most beautiful species, two feet six inches in diameter, with balls and leaves like those of the arbor vitæ, and bark as furrowed and marked as that of our ash; our common cedar, and many splendid walnut trees closely allied to the black walnut, ornamented the sides of the beautiful gorge we were descending. For one or two miles we had been obliged to dismount and drive or lead our horses, so steep was the declivity, but now we again rode merrily on for an hour or two,

when Maybury was taken with something so nearly resembling the cholera that he could not ride; Simson, Mallory, Pennypacker and Dr. Trask remained behind with him, and we went on ten miles to the edge of a beautiful rolling prairie, when we camped under some post and narrow-leaved swamp oaks. It rained most violently this afternoon, as usual, and as it had done every evening since we left Parral, but our friends from the rear came up to our tents in time to avoid being drenched by it.

We passed next day Huajatita, and camped only two miles beyond; we had abundance of corn at two dollars and a half per cargo, and a calf six months old for five dollars.

I was so enchanted with the wild beauty of this country, that I could have stayed for weeks and months to enjoy it; it was all new, the hills and mountains were differently shaped from any I had ever seen, the plants were new, the trees and rocks all strange, and when we forded the beautiful creeks we had to cross, as our horses stopped to drink, curious fish came to look at their noses rippling the surface of the slowly-gliding pools in each little river.

Our road soon was again up hill, and was most dangerous, so most of us walked up the dividing ridge, which we crossed to save following the circuitous course of the brook we had followed for the last two days; and yet, with all our care, as we ascended, some of our mules missed their steps, that is put the wrong foot foremost, for the narrow passes are so worn by the trains of pack mules which travel here, that, to insure a good footing, each mule which follows this, as well as many other similar trails, must step as his predecessors had, and put each foot in the same worn hole in the rock or hard clay that other mules had trod in for probably fifty years previously; two of our train missing this necessary precaution, rolled over and over sideways some four or five times, and how they ever recovered their feet on the steep sides of these hills, was always a mystery to us; any horse would have gone to the bottom before he could have regained his footing.

The daily showers which now poured their torrents on us as regularly as three o'clock came each afternoon, and the little creeks we crossed, almost hourly, as we wound our way along beautiful glades, after our long parching journey and the disagreeable water (from pond and slough) we had been drinking, were most delightful to us, and we all agreed that, if never before, we now knew the blessing of rain!

After a few days' riding through beautiful valleys and mountain torrents, where new plants and strange notes of birds were enjoyed, we reached a broad plain, that, as far as the eye could see, stretched before us; oh how we all dreaded again the tedious drudgery of travelling over plains! and sickness, too, came to call all our thoughts back to our past troubles and sorrows. Poor young Liscomb was attacked with dysentery, so violent that had we not left the cholera (out-travelled it) some five hundred miles, we should have expected to lose him; two of his mess, Franklin Carrol and John Tone, took him between them, on Tone's mare, the easiest animal in the company, and, by riding on a mile or two and giving him a short rest, and so continuing to proceed we reached after several days, Jesus Maria; not however as rapidly as I have written of his safe arrival, so I'll go back.

Gradually the plain we crossed narrowed, and as we neared a ridge of mountains which bounded one side of the valley of Santa Cruz, a beautiful grassy meadow sent a hundred little tributaries to make the irrigating creek that had once given luxuriance to the grand but dilapidated Mission, which in the distance loomed up, if not as perfect as in its most thriving time, in all the solemnity of decay. Poor Liscomb, when we reached the town, dismounted in the shade of its walls, and lay exhausted, so distressed in his weakness, that my heart was sad for him, and yet I had to be a soldier for the time, and march him on.

All the towns in this district of country had the remains of the

strong walls, that fifty years ago gave safety when the gates were shut from all incursions of the Indians, and though the architecture was plain, its extreme simplicity was pleasing, and I only wondered so rich a valley, with so much already done for its improvement, should be given up; but it ceased to prosper when the Spanish reign on the American continent terminated.

Far in advance of we who remained in the shade of the walls of Santa Cruz, (to rest young Liscomb), now in sight, and now hid by some gentle hill, our company wound its way along the banks, crossing and recrossing this little tributary to the "Conchos," called by natives, of course, "Rio Grande," as every other creek twenty yards wide is called in Mexico.

As the evening cooled, we proceeded along the margin of this beautiful little stream; following the trail of our party, and as we neared the Conchos, high sand-stone bluffs, so picturesque in the light and shade given by the clouds which contained our usual three o'clock showerbath, that I scarcely cared for the ducking I anticipated. On reaching camp, we found Langdon Haven had killed three glossy ibises at a shot; they are most abundant here, also white egrets and green herons, and I was delighted to see the buff-necked cormorant of California; many other birds, strange and new, I saw and heard daily; and the notes of those familiar as my mother's voice, the chat and cat-bird, mocking-bird, and white-crowned sparrow made me quite at home in this strange country, even though they were blended with a variety of songs I did not know.

Our path was most precipitous, alternately descending and ascending to and from the river; and the green hills all smooth and velvety as we reached their tops, but for the want of house or fence in view gave every appearance of the highest cultivation.

Never, in any country, have I seen more beautiful lands; we rode through groves miles in length, of water, post, and willow

oaks, (the latter with minikin acorns still sticking in their cups, as good to eat almost as nuts), besides many pines and cedars.

Antelopes were seen from time to time, but only one or two a day; the black-tailed hare was also observed, but scarce, compared with the numbers we saw after leaving Parras; and new birds tempted me to stop at every thicket.

Leaving this place we rode along a sandy bottom, where in the rainy season a torrent is formed by the waters of the hundreds of gullies that all lead into it. It was just before sunrise, and the heavy dew of this country gave such freshness and beauty to all vegetation, that nature seemed more luxuriant than ever; a splendid stramonium, three times the size of our common jimson weed, sweetwilliams of various species, and most luxuriant nettles six feet high, with their delicate blue flowers almost hiding the rich green of their stinging leaves, extended for, at times, miles along the sand bars. Again we came to a prairie, which was unvarying and flat, we found quantities of mushrooms growing, and for a few days our mess feasted, but a camp soon watches "the commandante's" mess-pan, and we found most true, that "the more the merrier, the fewer the better cheer," and had to content ourselves with the few over-looked by those in advance, and ate them raw. Leaving this plain and valley, as we went up the hills and mountains now beginning to spur off from the Cordilleras, along the water courses, we crossed large beds of slate, and wound through deep cuts and fantastic lumps of conglomerate of boulders, pebbles, and sandstone, and some most beautiful marble, black and white in strata, almost as regular as if laid by hand.

The band-tailed pigeon, Steller's jay, a new woodpecker, which I saw a dozen times but could not get; and, most prized of all, my horse trod on a beautiful jumping mouse, *Depodomys Phillipsii*, a young one, but this assured me of its habitat, and one of "the boys" gave me two young Mexican marmots.

Concepcion, about the twentieth town of the same name we have passed, is beautifully situated on the east bank of a little creek about two feet deep and twenty or thirty yards wide; it is a dirty little place with dilapidation its mistress. Its inhabitants were just like all the other Mexicans I have seen, some a little whiter than others, but all Indians; their food was of the simplest kind, but good. Beef, fresh or jerked; very fine beans, seventy-five cents the alamo; corn, three dollars a fanega; cattle, nine dollars for three year olds, in good condition; sheep, one dollar and a half; while hogs, strange to say, if fat, are sold expressly for the lard at fifty dollars each as a common price.

The natives are in eternal dread of the Apaches, and if we were to believe half the stories we hear of their prowess in war, we should beat a retreat at once, but not a hostile Indian have we seen so far, and the black-looking fellows we meet are all of the "Taromary" tribe, which our guide, as he shrugged up his shoulders, said, were "no bravo, no vale nada." As we wound along one of the shady groves that we daily pass through, we met a Mexican on foot with a small pack on his back, dressed in the usual style with broad cotton pantaloons split to the hip bones, and tucked up like a clout to save them from the mud of the trail; he was bare-legged, almost running along, and evidently in great fear, as in one hand he carried his knife, and with the other held his rosary and told his beads.

Many of the people of this country took advantage of our party as an escort, and ran along on foot a few hundred yards behind or in advance, as our stoppages enabled them to take their position, and at night they stretched themselves to sleep almost within the lines of our guard.

Two delightful days we passed as we wound along the meanderings of the "Rio Verde," sometimes smooth and glassy, and sometimes a dashing little torrent, until we reached "El Rancho

Arisachi;" from time to time before we came to this old deserted Mexican rancho we saw little groups of Parimari Indians at work, weeding half-grown Indian corn, wherever a bend in the river offered opportunity for irrigation. When at the rancho itself, having had no fresh meat for several days, we asked for the chief, but he was not to be found, and we then tried to buy cattle, which were tolerably abundant, but could find no owners for any of those we pointed out, so I told one of our best shots to pick out the fattest yearling he could and we would pay for it if the owner came forward, and if not, we would take what we could not well do without; but the beast was no sooner brought to the ground by the unerring aim of Van Horn, than at once an owner claimed the prize, and said he must have three dollars, or we were "no Amigos" but "muy malos." I gave his price to him, but found I had only began my compensation according to his ideas, but I satisfied his desires by giving a few percussion caps and a little powder; he had no gun, but no doubt will try to get one from the next party which comes this way; when will that be? All the entrails and head were gathered up and carried off so readily by the tribe, that, by the time we had the four quarters packed on our meat mules, two of our tired animals too weak to be packed regularly, no vestige was to be seen of the dead animal, or where it had been slaughtered, but the undigested mass emptied from its paunch.

Here we had to leave this beautiful stream for a mountain-pass; no complaint can be made that it was not a grand one; the first precipice we ascended cost Watkinson his horse. As we left him behind, we hoped the poor bruised brute, notwithstanding the fall he had sustained, would find his way back to the valley, and be treasured and cared for, not eaten, as among Indians is almost invariably the fate of broken-down horses or mules.

The chasms and granite boulders, giants of their kind, and the deep fissures in the rocks we rode through and over, made the ascent of half a mile nearly half a day's work; and most unusual

here, we found no table-land at the top, but commenced at once a descent to the banks of another little stream that ran east. How picturesque our train is, as it winds up these long mountain trails, in sight for a while, then concealed and again visible; the motley figures of the party enlivening the scene and their shouts of encouragement or reprobation, as they toil up the mountain gorges, reverberating from the surrounding rocks.

We were compelled to leave one mule in this pass, and shifting his pack to two or three others, released him to fatten—or feed buzzards—we scarcely cared which, so hard becomes the heart, when necessity drives one on. Soon after, we made the last ascent, most abrupt and trying of all, but when we reached the summit a magnificent plain, such as I have never seen surpassed, was before us, so broad that the eye could not see to its western termination. Our minds were however immediately diverted from all thought of the beautiful scene by a chase after two elks, undertaken by Jack Black, mounted on a *mule*; and judging from the ride he took, some two miles, I really believe he thought he could run his charger fast enough to get a shot. These two elks were the first we had seen on our route.

Next morning we passed a fortified ranche, with one or two isolated towers within a mile or so of it, like the old Scotch moss-towers, flanking the main building. Towards sunset, up-hills that severely tried the wind of our poor jaded horses and mules, and down-hills, that threatened their necks, were alternately passed, and we camped in another beautiful spot just the contrast of our last night's resting place; so high were the woods and rocks above us on every side. We were in a little glen not more than a quarter of a mile long and a hundred yards wide. At twelve next morning we reached Tomochi, on a little river of the same name. The corral of the old mission, with the adobe sheds built against its walls on every side, and the "jacals" that made a little cluster round it, were occupied by about six hundred individuals of a

splendid race of Indians; and eight or ten girls and women whom I saw bathing, were so beautiful, that, gentleman as I profess to be, I could not turn my head and look the other way; poor Actæon, cruel Diana! I thought, as I impatiently gave old Monterey the spur and dashed on to overtake my party.

The Tomochi runs through miles of sandstone worn into cliffs and fissures, some most picturesque, and by their eccentric forms exciting our admiration at every turn. The beautiful eddies and deep holes in this clear river gave us hopes of fish; but we saw none, except a few very little trout and "suckers." In seven miles we crossed and re-crossed this stream twenty-two times, and at four o'clock camped on its banks in "a bottom" of pines and sparse grass. I saw a Steller's jay and a new fox squirrel; a magnificent black hawk flew over us, but out of shot.

At the foot of some long hills we came to a plain a few miles in width, where we looked in vain for wood enough to make our fires, but finding none, rode on. Our customary shower was later than usual this day, but when it did come it was with a vengeance; neither poncho nor blanket was of any avail in keeping off the rain, driven by the hurricane which accompanied it, and its conclusion was a hail-storm of such force and violence that it drove our mules at full gallop, packs and all, over the plain, seeking for shelter. In vain we tried to guide or check them; it was a regular stampede, but in half an hour, the sun again was seen through the mists and dark clouds of the west, and we came to a halt in one of the magnificent lonely valleys of the Cordilleras.

That half the world should starve for want of land, even poor land, and that more than France, England, and all the densely populated part of Europe could cultivate, here in this beautiful country, feeds perhaps only a deer to every thousand acres, is to be lamented.

Fourth of July! daylight, calm, misty, and silent, stole on our

morning watch and seemed a time for thanksgiving, such as *the day* called forth. The sun threw its red light over all we saw to the west, but was hidden by the eastern range of mountains we had passed, till, mastering at an effort as it seemed, the highest ridge which shut out its warmth from us, it burst forth in all its splendour.

Down at the bottom of my saddle-bags rolled in a pocket-handkerchief was a flag given me by Hamilton Boden, and by the time the haze was gone, it floated in the morning breeze, from the top of the highest tree near our camp; nature was all in a smile, the delicate clouds of morning, sent their shadows to add brilliancy to the light on hill and dale and distant mountain, and birds sang all around us; some of us slept or basked in indolence, some started off with rifle or shot gun, for large or small game, and others who had suffered most from our last night's shower looked to their goods; wet saddle-bags were emptied, blankets spread to receive their contents, guns and pistols loitered over, as their owners cleaned and reloaded them; all was indolence; and a luxury of rest reigned so completely over our whole camp, that I, for the first time, unpacked my lead pencils and paper, and made the sketch I now give you of our "Fourth of July camp." Nature's creatures could not but say, thank God we are allowed to live, and to enjoy all these beauties, wonders and mercies.

Wild cattle were abundant in large herds on the hill sides, in sight, and noon saw our camp in possession of a fine two-year-old heifer, shot by Rhoades; steaks broiled and fried, ribs roasted, and brains stewed in the skull, just sprinkled with salt and a pinch of black pepper, are delicacies, under such circumstances, unequalled by the cuisine of even the palace. A few minutes after this dainty meal, Lieutenant Browning, Simson, Henry Mallory, and myself, were invited by mess No. 1 (Haven, Sloat, Hinckley and Valentine,) to their tent, and saw there a lump of sugar, a *very* small lump of citric acid, (not stolen, from the medicine chest,) and a



Edwin S. Redkey

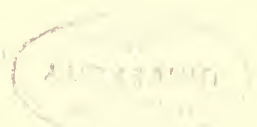
Painted by Edwin S. Redkey, 1850. Original in the collection of the University of California, Berkeley. Digitized by the University of California, Berkeley.

From the book "The Indians of California" by M. L. Hays, 1860.

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bottle of brandy. No little party of eight, ever toasted more heartily, "The day we celebrate;" more solemnly "The immortal Washington;" or became more poetic than we, as we looked out on the luxuriant and picturesque hills before us.

When evening came, No. 4 sang some beautiful choruses from operas, kindred tastes brought the men together; as night lent its solemn quiet, and when, as the moon glided its ordained course, "Old Hundred" was sung, the situation was so wild, and man's soul so prepared for worship, that the most solemn feelings of reverence and adoration were felt on this lone prairie, as we gave thanks for the blessings this day had given to half the world.

The duty of our camp, like that of a ship at sea, is done by all in turn; watches of two hours instead of four being the only change, so we each stood guard two hours earlier every succeeding watch; my guard to-night was from two till four. After calling the relief of the guard on duty and the roll of the one dismissed, all is quiet—not a sound disturbs the silent scene; the mules and horses staked out a few feet from our line, are at rest; crossing from guard to guard through the camp by your sleeping companions as they lie on their blankets, the pale moon with its marked shadows, gives almost the semblance of death, and looking up at the grand solemnity of these incomparably glorious skies, without a cloud to interrupt their vastness, if man has a soul, then it wakes within him, and in the rapture of his feelings of romance and astonishment at the effect produced on him, he laments the want of Bryant's poetic truth to describe them; the fatigues of his journey are almost forgotten, as the morning star, from behind the rugged outline of our horizon unexpectedly, like a meteor, rises to become more delicate and attractive as it ascends, till day-light fairly breaking, the cry of "rouse out, muster, four o'clock," breaks the trance one is inclined to fall into, and the bustle of camp, and labour of another long day of travel begins.

After some hours' pleasant ride along the valley, rich in grass, shade trees and beautiful springs, we commenced the steep ascent of rock, with the trail cut in it, much in the manner of the road across "The Isthmus;" most of us had to walk, though some few had strong and sure-footed mules. We lost another mule to-day, but succeeded in getting it on to the table at the top of the gorge we had ascended, the almost invariable end of a steep hill in this country. It was a beautiful grove of pines, and short but green grass was abundant and a most welcome sight; a log house looked so like home, that a dozen of the boys rode off to see "a white woman," even if she was a squatter's wife, but their disappointment was as great as their joy had been; it was the house of a Mexican who had lived in Texas for some years, and had learned a little comfort.

The woods to-day were most luxuriant as we wound along the gorge that commenced again our ascent to some still higher mountains.

Our common robin was abundant, and a large green parrot, with a red head, attracted our attention in every higher than ordinary clump of pines, but its uncouth squalling was distracting. Does any body know a bird of beautiful and splendid plumage, whose voice is sweet, except the cardinal and other grosbeaks?

The raven is from time to time heard, and seen in pairs, but not one for the hundred that we saw at Buena Vista, and in the low country of Mexico.

A second ascent here commenced, and we followed one of the most extraordinary gorges we had seen, crossing and winding along the banks of a beautiful little stream, till between giant precipices, we had almost a sensation that they might tumble in to fill the gap and crush us; one particularly fine cliff, we judged nine hundred feet above us, and topped off with high towers of nearly white sandstone, its sharp lines broken by a straggling scraggy pine or

cedar from its fissures, was so solemnly grand, that we left it with regret, for the deep shade of a hemlock grove, as fine as grows in the "timber counties" of our own state. On our ride up, we passed white and black ash, wild cherry, two species of pines, and a most beautiful oak, with a heavy leaf, glazed on the top so as to look as rich as the magnolia grandiflora of Louisiana, and but for its trunk and the skeleton of its leaf, it would have puzzled me to ascertain even its genus. Raspberries were abundant, but the fruit was only about half ripe; two species of strawberries, one broad round leaf and our common "tree strawberry" of the prairies of Illinois were abundant. I saw to-day the first water ousel I ever saw alive in America. I could not tell his species, but I was enchanted with the beauty of his movements, as he jerked his wren-shaped body about with all the sprightly activity of that genus, with his whirring flight from stone to stone, and as he suddenly plunged, in the most unnatural manner, into the foaming little torrent, and spreading his wings half open the pinions lowest as he headed up stream he kept at the bottom, and went feeding about in the crevices of the rocks, if not as rapidly, as much at ease as birds usually are in the air. I stayed so long to admire and observe, that poor old Monterey, my horse, had a sharp canter of twenty minutes to overtake the train, which I reached just as it came to a camping ground covered with dwarf huckleberries and a species of plantain, which our mules ate freely, but our horses daintily, so that in the morning we found them scattered farther than usual, and did not make our start for at least an hour after the ordinary time.

Custom brings any one to the enjoyment of what he has, and unprepared as we were when we started on this trip for the rough life we lead, I believe not one murmurs, and the joyous voices of our company ring through the tall pines we are camped in. It is five o'clock, I am writing a few yards apart from the rest, and the quaint remarks and jokes often amuse, and as often distract me. No. 12, a queer mess, contains Rhoades, who has crossed the plains

from Fort Independence to Santa Fé eleven times; Barrat, a wagoner of the Mexican war, and, nobody else being able to live with those two, but a philosopher, Dr. Trask our main stay and truly a good man, but most eccentric in his ways, is their captain. "Scena," misty morning, fire more of smoke than warmth, tent wet, blankets too cold and clammy to lie in, besides the roll had been called an hour since, and it was a sort of disgrace to go back to bed again after muster. Trask: impatiently, "Is them plates clean," Rhoades nonchalant, "To be sure they is, didn't we eat off'em last night." I could not see the Doctor's expression, and I doubt if it would have given any pleasure if I could, but I remembered the old story of a company who crossed many years before us, which said a frying-pan was always clean, as long as any one of the mess could recollect what had been cooked last in it, and presumed the Doctor consoled himself with the same idea.

Mess No. Eleven, contained three, and they were all originals, Pennypecker, from Pennsylvania, six feet two, well shaped and handsome, active, willing and deep in all that a man learns as wagon-master on a two years' campaign in Mexico, and withal so good natured, that as he afterwards told me, he joined the company in order to take care of me; the circumstances of our meeting were accidental.

At the time I was giving money to all the invalids of our unfortunate party, who, unable to proceed on the journey, were about returning; S——d amongst them, came to me, for money to take him back to Orleans. Pennypecker was by when S——d came in, and he heard my answer to the request, "S——d, I have nothing for you, you have brought on your illness by your own dissipations and rascalities, and I cannot give you any thing, you must get home on you own means."—Many months after, in the Tulares valley, as Pennypecker and I rode side by side half a mile behind the company, he related all this to me, winding up with his thoughts at the time he joined us, "when I saw you on States' cot, looking as

if you hadn't any blood in you, I said, poor little devil, you'll catch—before you get through Mexico, but when I heard you giving fits to S——d, I thought I'd go along just to take care of you;" and truly he was one of my most useful and kindest friends, throughout the whole journey.

Mitchell was from Illinois, with a temper as violent as his heart, when once gained was true.

The third and last of this mess, also was a good man; but, as an old Delaware Indian I had with me in Texas, used to say of any one he could not understand; "Mighty good man, ugh, know too much."

Numbers ten, nine and eight, each had good men in them, but many of them were from neighbouring states and did not seem to harmonize exactly with the rest of the company. Number seven, was remarkable in its sterling qualities. John Stevens probably the bravest and firmest of our whole company, in his duties was the only man of us all who never give way to violent outbreaks of temper, and no one ever heard an oath from him; George Van Buren, and Wm. Amslie were of the same stamp, the whole mess was a choice one. Number six, were all from Connecticut, and had their own captain and ideas, and but for a positive determination on my part to be captain of the company or my own master, the company would have been broken up by these Connecticut men. But the circumstances of our greatest trouble happened some days after this, and will be told in their turn.

Number five contained two invalids, if any thing was to be done except cooking, and after many months travelling when we were on an allowance these two used after sometimes almost fighting about it, to have one to divide and the other to choose which plate or side of the frying pan he would have, much to the amusement of the whole party.

Number four was a mess of philosophers, it was to them a matter of equal indifference, whether we had made five or twenty-

five miles a day, whether we had muddy or clear, salt or fresh water to drink, and I believe, had our journey lasted till this day, the same nonchalant character would have been kept up that was then manifested.

Number three was a large mess, and composed of men from Harlem and Manhattanville, except Franklin Carrol, of Baltimore, as fine a fellow as ever undertook such a trip; the rest were christened by Lieutenant Browning "The Hail storm mess," from their go-ahead principles, and contained undoubtedly the wag of the company; his practical jokes never seemed to end, even his horse and mules were from time to time his victims, when after any such exploit, his descriptions of the manner in which he had outwitted his mules, were irresistible. On one occasion, when he and two friends were accidentally separated from the company, having no watch, it was agreed to relieve each other during the guards of the night, by the position of the "dipper" as it went round the north star; the first watch was passed, and our friend and his companion, both still awake, arranged that the latter should stand the first guard and be called two hours after, and so lay down for his rest, but he had scarce given the first snore, when he was awakened in the most furious manner, and with superlative gravity, asked if he intended to lay there snoring like a pig all night; after many regrets that he slept so soundly, up he got, and the wag taking his place in the blankets forgot the trick, slept four hours instead of two, till next morning, and after telling his exploit to the company, was forgiven by his victim for his ingenuity.

Number two, David Hudson was the Captain, the very simple solidity of his name bore the impress of his character, and no man received more justly the respect of the company and his companions, my friends, Robert Layton, Frederick Hews, Henry Bachman and John Bloomfield, all were attached to him and in turn he knew the value of those with him, and many is the time when in our hard travelling, with little or no food and broken down mules, that I

have wished every mess was like that.—One was called the “fancy mess.” At first their tent looked as if a party were on a pic-nic excursion, instead of a journey of thirty-eight hundred miles; Havens would have “every thing just so,” Sloat would take care of the inward man, and Hinckly had no objections to the modes of either, and as for Charley Valentine, everybody said he was the best natured fellow in the camp; the only fault I found with them was, that it took them a few minutes longer than the rest of us at breakfast and supper, and that sometimes was an annoyance, especially to those on guard who had not satisfied nature’s urgent calls and waited for relief.

(Here the original ends)

