

years Intendant of the State. It was under his administration that the receipts amounted annually to four millions of dollars, (from 1812 to 1818,) out of which the whole expences of the army of General Cruz were covered, and all other charges defrayed.

Of the Canons, (mostly old Spaniards,) we saw nothing. Their influence is thought to be upon the wane, and the "Liberals" of the capital declare, that had they not been fettered by the decrees of the Supreme Congress, Jalisco would have given a memorable example to the rest of the Federation, and humbled the pride of the clergy at once. Upon this subject I have already expressed my doubts. It must be admitted, however, that their authority is by no means what it was. Iturbide threw himself into the arms of the high church party, which could not prevent him from being driven from the throne; and amongst the middling classes of society, a disposition to question the authority of the church, even in spiritual affairs, is daily gaining ground. In temporal matters, we have seen that it is rejected altogether. If you ask any young man of the present day in Guadalajara what his religious principles are, he will tell you that he is a "naturalista," that is to say, of no religion at all. Nor is it surprising that such tenets should spread, when the disgraceful mummeries are taken into consideration, by which the friars in particular endeavour to maintain their influence over the minds of the lower orders. At

Zacatecas, we saw, on Christmas eve, a figure of our Saviour paraded through the streets, dressed in a green silk robe, with a pañuelo del sol,* fastened across the shoulders; while the Virgin Mary followed, adorned with a fashionable French hat, put on a little on one side.

These images the poor are taught to worship: the rich, or rather the well-informed, may bow the knee indeed, but they deride in private the superstition with which they are compelled outwardly to conform; and religion itself shares in the feelings, which such disgusting exhibitions are but too well calculated to excite.

On the 7th of January we quitted Guadalajara, and slept at *Atēquizā*, a Hacienda eleven leagues from the town, very prettily situated, near a vast plain of *sembrados de trigo*, (young wheat,) which had been just laid under water, and was of the most delicate green that it is possible to imagine. The Hacienda contains thirteen "sitios," and the lands are mostly "de riego," (irrigated,) but the increase of wheat seldom exceeds thirty to one, and does not average more than twenty-five. We were received with much hospitality by the proprietor, an acquaintance of Mr. Ritchie's; and remained till late in

* A large white handkerchief, worn, in the manner described, by the Rancheros, to protect the back from the sun. The impropriety, or rather impiety, of using it in a religious festival requires no comment.

the evening seated in an open corridor, enjoying a temperature unknown in the central provinces even during the hottest months.

On the following morning, (January 8th,) we left the high road to La Barca, by which our carriage and baggage mules proceeded to Ōcōtlān, and struck across the mountains nearly due West, to the camp of Tlāchīchīlcō, (four leagues from Ātēquizā,) upon the borders of the Lake of Chāpālā. This magnificent lake is laid down in Humboldt's map as little known, and the distance from Guādālājārā is likewise made to appear much greater than it really is. It is therefore easy to reach Tlāchīchīlcō in one day, the distance not exceeding thirty, or at most thirty-five miles. A little above this place, which was a military station during the Civil War, the immense basin of Chāpālā opens upon the view. It is from thirty-six to forty leagues in length, and varies from five to eight leagues in breadth: the surrounding mountains are barren, but bold, and descend at once to the water's edge, while the Island of Mēscālā, nearly opposite Tlachichilco, serves as a point of repose, upon which the eye rests with pleasure in traversing this vast expanse of deep blue water. This island, which is now used as a Presidio, or public prison, was occupied during the years 1811, 1812, and 1813, by the Indians from the surrounding villages, who, headed by their Curas, declared in favour of the Independent cause, and maintained themselves in this strong position against all the efforts of General

Cruz (then commanding in Guādalahara) to dislodge them. They were well provided with canoes, and made frequent incursions from their stronghold into the surrounding country, cutting off isolated detachments of the royal troops, and returning loaded with provisions to the lake, before a force could be assembled to attack them. Nor was their reduction effected until 1814, when a number of gun-boats having been built at Tlachichilco, all communication with the shore was cut off; and after repulsing several assaults, they were compelled by famine to capitulate.

We embarked on board one of these gun-boats, which is still in good preservation at the camp, after breakfasting with the wife of the Commandant (La Señora Rodriguez) upon the Pescado Blanco, for which Chāpālā is celebrated. This fish is found in most parts of the Table-land, but it does not attain so large a size in the lakes about the Capital, as in those of Pāscuārō and Chāpālā, from whence, upon great occasions, it is sent express to Mexico, slightly sprinkled with salt, or preserved in snow. I was glad to be able to furnish Madame Rodriguez in return, with a quantity of the water-fowl, which abound upon the edges of the lake, but are seldom tasted by the natives, as they have no guns that will kill a duck at fifty yards from the shore.

We sent our horses to San Pedro, an Indian village three leagues from Tlāchīchīlcō, and proceeded there ourselves by water, stretching half across the

lake, in order to get a better view of Mēscālā, where we regretted not having time to land. San Pedro is situated upon the steep ridge which separates Chāpālā from the Valley of Ōcōtlān, through which the Rio Grande pursues its course. The view of the lake from the height called La Coronilla, is almost equal to that of the Lake of Geneva from the mountains above Vevay. Its vast extent, its form, the bold outline of the surrounding mountains, and the clear blue of the sky above, render it a very striking scene, and one to which few pencils could do justice.

From San Pedro to the banks of the Rio Grande, at the point where it reissues from the Lake of Chapala, which it enters near La Barca, we calculated the distance to be about five leagues; the two first mountainous, the three last over a level plain, which we crossed at a rapid passo. Even at this pace we could hardly keep our guide (an Indian runner, from San Pedro) in sight. He continued at a very fast trot over every sort of ground, now disappearing in a barranca, and now half seen, in the obscurity of the evening, fifty yards before our horses' heads, until we reached the ferry, to which he had promised to conduct us. Ōcōtlān is situated upon the Southern bank of the river, a broad and rapid stream. We found the passage not unattended with danger; for, as we had but one servant with us, Mrs. Ward, Mr. Martin, and I, were seated in a punt just large enough to contain us, guided by a man with a pole not sufficiently long to reach the bottom in the

deepest parts. We each held a horse by a lasso, while the saddles and bridles were piled up between us; the servant remained upon the bank to force the animals to enter the water, which, as it was dark and cold, they did with great reluctance; and when they got into the middle, not discovering the opposite bank, they began to swim in different directions, and very nearly upset the boat. More than half an hour elapsed before we were all landed; and Mr. Carrington, who had gone on in the morning to superintend the passage of the baggage mules and the coach, told us that it had taken nearly four hours to accomplish it. I had bought at Sōmbrē-rētē sixteen Durango mules, from the Hacienda del Ojo,—beautiful creatures, but perfectly unbroken, and so nimble in all their motions, that if they chose to separate from their companions, we had hardly a horse fast enough to come within lassoing distance of them while in full career. Frightened at the water, these beasts spread on every side; and it was only by collecting some rancheros to assist the servants, that Carrington was enabled at last to force them into the stream, which was done by closing gradually in upon them with loud cries, and lassos whirling in air, until one more courageous than its companions plunged in, and was followed instantly by the rest.

I know few instances in which the utter inutility of English servants for Mexican travelling would have been better exemplified than in the attempt to

break these mules. Not one of them had ever been in harness before, yet they drew our coach the whole way from Sōmbrērētē to the capital. The first few days, the operation of catching them was really tremendous. The mules were driven into a corral, or large inclosure, and two lassos affixed in turn to each, one to the neck, and the other to one of the hind legs. Each of these was held by two men, while, after allowing a little time for the animal to exhaust itself in unavailing efforts, a fifth approached, and with infinite precautions placed a leather bandage (the Tapa ojos) over the eyes, and then proceeded to put on the rest of the harness. During this whole process, the struggles of the mule are fearful; and, even when convinced of the impossibility of escape, I have seen them groan and bellow in an agony of impatience, and try to destroy, with their teeth and fore-feet, whatever came within their reach.

One by one, however, they were led forth and attached, still blindfolded, to the coach, the wheelers and leaders being always steady old mules, while the four new comers occupied the intervening space; the Tapa ojos was then raised, and they went off usually at full speed, until the nature of the road, or the resistance of their more prudent companions, induced them to moderate their pace. We never met with an accident of any consequence in the course of these proceedings, or in the operation of

breaking the mules for the saddle, which was conducted in a similar manner.

The bad riders amongst the servants used to get some terrible tumbles, and they were occasionally carried up and down a barranca in rather awkward places, but no limbs were broken; and as each was laughed at in turn, the most perfect good humour prevailed; while the mules were so far subdued by constant work, that between Valladolid and Mexico they gave us comparatively but little trouble.

We rejoined our party at the Hacienda of Sān Andrēs, three miles from the river, where Mr. Carrington had got a lodging for us, there being no inn at Ocōtlān; and, on the following morning, (Jan. 9,) we proceeded to La Barca, where we arrived at an early hour, the distance being only eight leagues.

La Barca is the head of a "Canton," containing four "departamentos," with 96,178 inhabitants. The town is uninteresting, and only worthy of remark as being the last place visited by us in the State of Jalisco, which is divided there by the Rio Grande from the neighbouring States of Guānjūatō and Vāllādōlīd. Our road lay through the last of these, and we consequently sent our carriage and mules over in the evening of our arrival. During this process, which occupied four hours, I went to shoot in the great Cienega, or marsh, which commences a little to the Westward of La Barca, and extends in a line with the river almost as far as the

Lake of Chăpālă. I found there a prodigious variety of every species of water-fowl,—wild ducks, geese, swans, bitterns, and herons, some of enormous size, with many others, the notes and plumage of which were equally new to me. I tried in vain to get within shot of some of the larger kind, for my progress was interrupted, at almost every step, by deep canals, or impassable swamps. At last, however, by the advice of my Indian guide, I embarked upon a large bundle of rushes, which, though soon water-logged, still supported my weight very tolerably, for a considerable distance, while he accompanied me upon another equally primitive conveyance. By this means I contrived to shoot several ducks and a couple of wild geese; but when I wished to return with my booty, I found the attempt by no means easy. A strong current was setting towards the lake, and every attempt to propel our rush rafts in a contrary direction had the effect of immersing them still more deeply in the water; until at last, wet up to my middle, and with every prospect of sinking still lower from the quantity of water that my rushes had imbibed, I was forced to land, and to take a round of nearly two leagues, in order to avoid the marsh, and to reach La Barca, where I did not arrive until a very late hour.

Jan. 10.—To Chīrīnghūichărő, fourteen leagues. We crossed the river early, and proceeded by Buena Vista (a large Hacienda) and the Pueblo of Tănguătő to Chīrīnghūichărő, having been led to believe

that by avoiding Zămōră (the usual road), we might reach Văllădölid one day sooner. From the time that we approached Tănguătő, we began to remark a sensible improvement in the appearance of the country: there was more variety in the shape of the mountains, more wood, more water, and a richer vegetation. The cottages too, though small, were neat; the people cleanly and civil. A little beyond Tănguătő, we found a very pretty lake, extending, with occasional interruptions, for nearly two leagues; it was full of little islands, covered with acacias, and abounding with wild-fowl of every description, while large herds of cattle occupied the potreros in the vicinity of its banks.

Having loitered with Mrs. Ward behind the rest of the party, which had struck into a different road, we stopped at a small hut to breakfast, where a pretty Indian woman, with a beautiful set of teeth, gave us some tortillas, with eggs, frijoles, chile, and a little meat for ourselves and two servants, for four reals. She was exceedingly communicative, and told us that her house, on setting out in life, had cost her *four* dollars, and her marriage fees *twenty-two*: that her husband had paid this, but was still in debt to the Padre for the baptism of a child, the fees for which he was then endeavouring to raise. We gave her a few reals towards so laudable a purpose, and left her highly pleased with our visit, as we were with her simple manners and conversation.

We found only the remains of a house at Chiring-

huicharo, the Hacienda having been burnt during the Revolution: we, however, fitted up two very tolerable apartments in the corridor with blankets and cloaks, in which, as there was not much wind, we passed the night without discomfort.

Jan. 11.—To Tlāsēsālcă, ten leagues.

This day's experience effectually convinced us of the folly of taking cross-roads with a carriage. It was our intention to sleep at Cípimēō, another Hacienda, put down in our route as a very feasible distance; but after reaching, about two o'clock, the Hacienda of Chāngētīrō, we found our farther progress impeded by a succession of inclosures, through which it was necessary to force our way by opening breaches in the thick stone walls large enough to admit the carriage. Fortunately, Mexicans have a great talent for demolition; and the servants, who all went to work *con amore*, soon opened us a passage; but after continuing the work till six o'clock, during which time we had made our way through six or seven inclosures, we found ourselves at dusk upon the top of a hill immediately above the Pueblo of Tlāsēsālcă (ten leagues from Cípimēō), where we resolved to pass the night. To reach it was no easy task, as the descent consisted entirely of fragments of rock, over which it seemed impossible that a carriage should find its way unbroken. From this dilemma we were extricated by a Vaquero, who offered to show us a winding path, through which he had once conducted the Insurgent artillery during the

Revolution. We gladly embraced the proposal, and arrived safely in the Pueblo, by a very circuitous route, about seven o'clock, where we succeeded in obtaining accommodations for the night.

On the following morning (Jan. 12) we pursued our journey, and reached Cipimeo (ten leagues) at an early hour in the afternoon. The road was very rugged, but the country exceedingly pretty, the vast plains of the Interior being replaced by a pleasing variety of mountain scenery. The weather however was cloudy, and in the pine-forests we all felt the cold severely. The central part of Valladolid is raised above the level of the surrounding country—being situated upon that part of the Sierra Madre where the descent to the Western coast commences, and where a succession of broken and lofty ridges interrupts the uniformity of surface peculiar to the Table-land. The valleys between these ridges abound in water, and are exceedingly fertile; while the mountains that environ them are covered with a fine growth of timber. In one of these valleys the Hacienda of Cipimeo is situated, formerly one of the most valuable in the State of Valladolid, but now only just beginning to recover from the effects of the Civil War. The present proprietor, Don José Maria Torres, was an officer in the Creole army in 1810, and his father was instrumental in saving the lives of twenty Europeans residing in Patzcuaro, against whom Hidalgo had fulminated one of his iniquitous decrees of proscription. These offences

drew upon the family the ill-will of the first Insurgents; and the estate was so continually laid waste, that for some years it was entirely abandoned.

The Hacienda possesses a great extent of woodland,—ground sufficient for sowing 400 fanegas of maize, the whole of which is irrigated—rich and abundant pastures—and a plentiful supply of water. A river passes through the estate, and Cienegas, or marshes, (very valuable for cattle during the dry season,) extend for some leagues around. In front of the house there is a singular volcanic mountain, the crater of which forms an “Alberga,” or natural lake. The water commences about 200 feet from the edge of the crater; it is salt; and no attempt to find a bottom has yet proved successful.

The basin in which it is contained is perfectly circular, and the descent to the water's edge almost precipitous: the distance across must be 200 or 250 feet. From a little above the “Alberga” we had a fine view of the surrounding countries; and Mr. Torres pointed out to us the marsh, in the centre of which the fort of Jáuxillā stood, once the seat of the only independent government of which Mexico could boast.

Jan. 13.—From Cípimēō we proceeded to Tēcāchō, (twelve leagues,) a Hacienda and Venta, which was to be our last stage on the way to Vällädölid.

The road continued to be exceedingly picturesque, being surrounded by hills, some of the most fantastic shapes, while others, though isolated, looked

as if they had been cast in the same mould. In passing the marshes I killed nine ducks, and brought down two wild geese at a double shot, as they rose out of some rushes near the road. We found them most excellent eating, and regretted that it was not possible to add them more frequently to our bill of fare; but, except by a chance shot, it is extremely difficult to obtain so great a prize. In the lakes of the valley of Mexico they are seldom seen, though ducks, snipes, and bitterns, are found there in prodigious numbers. I have frequently shot twenty and thirty snipes in a morning; and a great *tiro de patos* near Mexico is one of the most curious scenes that it is possible to witness. The Indians, by whom it is principally conducted, prepare a battery composed of seventy or eighty musket barrels arranged in two rows, one of which sweeps the water, while the other is a little elevated, so as to take the ducks as they rise upon the wing. The barrels are connected with each other, and fired by a train; but the whole apparatus, as well as the man who has charge of it, are concealed in the rushes, until the moment when, after many hours of cautious labour, one of the dense columns of ducks, which blacken, at times, the surface of the lake, is driven by the distant canoes of his associates sufficiently near to the fatal spot. The double tier of guns is immediately fired, and the water remains strewed with the bodies of the killed, and the wounded, whose escape is cut off by the circle of canoes beyond.

Twelve hundred ducks are often brought in as the result of a single tiro; and during the whole season they form the ordinary food of the lower classes in the Capital, where they are sold for one, or at most two reals each.

In the North I saw no such masses of ducks, but they were replaced by wild geese, swans and cranes, with herons of a prodigious size, in flocks that covered a vast extent of country when they alighted, and filled the air with discordant screams when on the wing. I never could succeed, however, in securing any of the larger birds, as they were so extremely wary that it was difficult to approach them even within rifle shot.

Jan. 14.—We left Tecacho at seven, and reached Valladolid (twelve leagues) at half-past three.

There was nothing on the way to announce that we were either upon a high road, or approaching the Capital of a flourishing State. A few wretched hovels, at one of which we stopped to breakfast, and two or three miserable arrieros, were the only objects that reminded us of the presence of man. The forest scenery, however, was fine, and we saw occasionally some stupendous masses of lava, looking as fresh as if they had been produced by a very recent eruption. The frequent recurrence of these volcanic remains is a singular feature in New Spain; for since the Conquest there has not been a single eruption of any consequence, (excepting that of Jorullo,) and most of the volcanoes now known are

extinct. Yet masses of scoria, and districts covered with lava, are found in every part of the Federation; in the vicinity of the Capital, on the road to Guanajuato, in parts of San Luis, between Sombrerete and Durango, throughout Valladolid, and on the ascent from Veracruz, between Jalapa, Jilotepec, and Las Vigas, as well as in the plains of Tepeyualco; while everywhere their vast extent proves that the convulsions which produced them must have been fearful indeed.

I know few places the approach to which is so tedious as that to Valladolid. For more than two hours you see the city apparently below you, while the road continues to wind amongst the surrounding hills. At length, a rapid descent conducts you to the plain, where a long causeway built across a marsh forms the entrance to the town. The suburbs are poor and insignificant, but the high street is fine, and the Cathedral, standing alone and unconcealed by any subordinate buildings, produces a very imposing effect.

Not having any acquaintances in Valladolid, we took up our quarters at the inn of Nuestra Señora de la Soledad, where we obtained very decent apartments, with tables, chairs, and a number of other luxuries, not at all general as yet in the Mexican Republic.

The State of Michoacan comprises the territory formerly belonging to the Tarascos, a powerful Indian nation, first allies, and afterwards rivals of the