

Before going to bed, we had made arrangements to send for horses to take us to the mission of Santa Clara, some three miles distant. None were to be obtained here, as the head of the family was now away, and had taken with him all those that were kept about the premises; the rest, we were told, were "muy lejos" (afar off).

The name of the family is Peralto, which is connected with the early settlement of California, and one of the most respectable in the country.

We arose about eight o'clock, and consequently missed our chocolate, which is given at an early hour, and could get no breakfast until eleven o'clock. Our horses had not arrived, and whilst we were waiting for them, Señor Don Miguel Felesfore de Pedrorena arrived from Yerba Buena, who at once made our acquaintance. He very kindly offered us his services to arrange matters, and to assist us on our way to Santa Clara, where he was then going. To this gentleman I feel myself much indebted. We found him a lively, intelligent companion, and well acquainted with the country and people. He is supercargo of several vessels on the coast, and extensively engaged in the peculiar manner of trading, of which I will have occasion to speak presently.

While horses were sought for us, we spent the time in looking around the premises. The house was a long one-story adobe building, with a thickly thatched roof, forming, by its projection, a piazza in front, supported by columns. There were many enclosures about the house, that gave it the appearance of a farm-yard and slaughter-house combined. Bones, hoofs, horns, and pieces of hide, were lying in every direction, and the ground was indented with the feet of cattle. Ducks, dogs, and fowls, were picking at the bones and offal. There were one or two ox-carts, of clumsy proportions, a bee-hive, and a ley-vat, formed of hide and suspended to four stakes, in the shape of a large bag, hung near by. At a short distance from the house was the vegetable-garden, where every thing grew in profusion, although without care. The only trouble in gardening was to put the seed into the ground, and await the result. This estancia is situated between two copses of wood, that grow on the banks of the brook that winds past it, and nearly join in the rear. In front is a plain, extending fifteen or twenty miles to the foot of the Sierra, which forms a pleasing and bold contrast to the flat surface, on which nothing is seen but here and there a small group of cattle, and immense flocks of wild geese; or some shrub, which, owing to the refraction, appears almost detached from the surface, and with dimensions so much enlarged as to appear like a great tree. The plain at this time was of a dark hue, somewha