

entertained us with wine and beer of his own making, and showed us the copy-books of his children, who were in pot-hooks and trammels, which he looked upon as a wonderful advancement in the education of the country. Some half-dozen books were all they owned in the pueblo; but to make up for this deficiency, the alcalde told me they were all very happy, and that there were but few quarrels, for those in which stabs were inflicted did not occur oftener than once a fortnight. We took our departure a short time before sunset, amidst the gathering in of the villagers, with their goods and chattels, to a place of safety. There are two Americans settled here, who own mills, but I was not fortunate enough to meet with them; the alcalde, however, gave them good characters. The evening was a beautiful one, and we had a delightful ride back to the mission; and our horses, knowing they were on their return, were quite mettlesome.

The mode of conducting business in this country is peculiar. Vessels, on reaching the coast, employ as a supercargo or travelling agent, some person well known throughout the country, who visits all the pueblos, missions, and estancias, as a traveller, passing from place to place without any apparent object of business. He thus has an opportunity of inspecting the worldly affairs of those to whom he desires to sell; and if he finds them apparently thrifty, he produces his card of patterns, and soon induces a disposition on the part of his host or hostess to buy, being careful to secure in payment as much of their worldly goods as he can, and trusting them for the rest of the indebtedness. A few live cattle delivered by each purchaser at the neighbouring pueblo, become by this means a large herd, which is committed to cattle-tenders on shares, who in due time slaughter them and deliver the hides. A large amount of goods is thus disposed of, to a very considerable profit. Large cargoes, consisting of a variety of articles, of both American and English manufacture, are thus sold. From the state of the country, it has been difficult to obtain payments or returns in money; but the debts have been paid in cattle, and probably will turn out well, when the rains return and allow the animals to be again slaughtered. When hides are given in payment, they are valued at two dollars, and are at all times the common currency of the country. No money is in circulation, unless what is paid out by the foreign merchants; and in lieu of change, an extra quantity of goods is taken, which excess is usually to the disadvantage of the buyer.

On our return to Santa Clara, we had to procure horses for our journey back by land. We had been told by the administrador and his deputy, that there would be no difficulty in the mission providing us with horses and saddles; and under this assurance, we had de-