

spatched our boats on their return to the ship, determining to make the ride of sixty miles the next day. We soon found that the mission horses were lame, and that they had strayed. These, with many other excuses, all showed us the dilemma we were in. Three or more messengers were pretended to be sent to the pueblo and the neighbouring estancias; and after much delay and several feigned disappointments, we were told that six animals might be procured. The exorbitant price of four dollars for each was asked for the use of these. A good horse may be purchased for eight dollars. As I at once saw the game that was in progress, I thought it better to comply with a good grace than perhaps to suffer farther imposition; so six were agreed for at four dollars each, for the next day. I was well aware that the deputy was deeply in the plot, and probably shared a part of the profits.

Being disengaged in the evening, we went early to Padre Mercador's to play chess, for which he has more love than knowledge. He had boasted not a little of his prowess, but after suffering defeat in three successive games, his opinion of his skill was somewhat lessened. He was in fact but a novice in the game. For refreshments we had brandy and wine, with cigars and fruit, of which the hospitable padre and Don Miguel both partook most freely, particularly the former. We remained until nine o'clock, when a message was brought us that supper was ready, and we retired, leaving Padre Mercador to resume the duties of his office. For his kindness and attentions we were greatly indebted to him; I wish I could say that his mode of life and the influence he exerts over his charge, also deserved commendation.

At the head of the supper-table, we found Donna Aliza, with a huge dish of smoking valdivias before her, and a variety of edibles, with an infusion of tea in small cups, which, at the request of Don Miguel, was added to until it became drinkable, but not without many exclamations against its extravagance. The poor husband was in bed, and Captain Hudson, who went to see him, finding that he was suffering from a severe cold he had taken, prescribed bathing his feet, and a strong glass of hot whiskey punch. Don Miguel accordingly prepared the latter, which was cheerfully taken by the patient, who shortly afterwards fell into a sound sleep. In the morning, we found that he was entirely recovered.

Our beds were clean and comfortable, though the apartment had a strong smell of cordovan leather. The only place of deposit for clothing, &c., was, as we had seen in the estancia, in large trunks. The matin-bell aroused us at early dawn, when we heard the full choir