

over that last killed, and the ground around seemed alive with cranes, crows, &c., acting as scavengers, and disputing for their shares. There is no smell except that of raw beef; the climate is so dry that no putrid matter exists, but the sight is unpleasant enough to those who have not become accustomed to it.

Previous to setting out, we provided our saddles with extra sheepskins; we now took leave of Don Miguel, with many thanks for his attentions, and a hearty shake of the hand. We soon found that our horses began to fag from the effects of our bad riding, and the fatigued and wretched condition they were in; and by the time we arrived at Las Pulgas, we found it necessary to change, and were glad to have a temporary relief from our saddles. Any one who has ever ridden upon a Californian saddle, with but a slender covering to it, will be able to understand our feelings. We were besides but ill provided for the trip, which our nags seemed not slow to discover. We had no well-armed heels, and were, besides, deficient in whips, both indispensable to a rider in California. The consequence was, that they could not be made to move along, without most laborious efforts of bodily strength.

The country we passed through was at this time destitute of both water and grass, and the weather uncomfortably warm. In places we found it picturesque, from the scattered oaks, laurels, &c., though to all appearance entirely unfit for cultivation. Wherever there was any running water, a pond, or vegetation, large flocks of geese and ducks were seen. At four o'clock, we entered the estancia of Señor Sanchez, to whom Don Miguel had given us a note of introduction, desiring that he would aid us if we wanted horses. We had looked forward to this point with hope, in the belief that our troubles in riding such forlorn beasts would terminate, and that our bodies as well as our minds would be set at rest.

The word estancia seems to give one an idea of something more extensive than a small farm: it sounds more noble and wealthy; but whatever had been our opinion before, the reality disappointed us. Señor Sanchez's estancia at a distance was quite a respectable-looking building; the broad shadow cast by its projecting roof gave it a substantial and solid appearance; but a nearer approach dispelled these favourable impressions, and showed its uncouth proportions, as well as the neglect in which the whole was kept. The way to the house, which stands on a knoll, leads through miry places, and over broken-down fences, winding around dilapidated ox-carts, over troughs, old baskets, dead hogs, dogs, and fowls, all huddled together. Rude articles of husbandry occupied the sides of the building. Seeing no one,