

we dismounted, tied our horses, and began to search for inhabitants. All the houses were unfinished: to the doors of some there were no steps, and no floors to the rooms of others; the adobes were bare, and destitute of plaster or whitewash; and what was more disheartening, *no inhabitants made their appearance.* At last a slave was *seen crawling* from a wretched hole, whom we followed to the only place which yet remained unsearched, a distant corner of the premises, where we found the family, consisting of a mother and daughter. The latter was a nice-looking girl, to whom our note was handed, and who read it aloud to her mother, who did not recognise the name of Don Miguel. Whether this arose from design or ignorance, I know not; but the note produced no apparent effect: however, after a few compliments, and a little persuasion, through our servant, (who spoke Spanish well,) the mother was somewhat softened, and we procured a tumbler of milk and a tortilla; but we could not induce her to allow us to take from the fifty horses that were then in the coural, the few we required. Her constant answer was, that her husband was not at home, and she could not do it. We strayed about the kitchen, which was the only apartment fit for occupation, and warmed ourselves over the small fire that *had been lighted, for the air was becoming chilly and damp.* This apartment was lighted from the door and a small window; it was furnished with numerous stew-holes and ovens, which appeared very convenient for cooking; and above them were placed shelves, on which the pans of milk were resting. In the centre was a large mortar, and beyond it, at the far end, quite in the dark, the rude grist-mill of the country. To the long shaft of the mill a small donkey was harnessed. This place apparently answered also as a stable. The whole had quite a primitive look, and showed, at least, some comfort and forethought. During our examinations, in came the husband, very unexpectedly to his wife and daughter, as well as to ourselves. He had the face of a ruffian. After many suspicious looks and questions, he gave his consent, though very unwillingly, to supply us with horses. Lest it should be supposed that this man was the owner of the estancia, I must here say that Señor Sanchez was not at home; although I am not prepared to vouch, from what I heard afterwards, that our treatment at his hands would have been any better. We were told that it was but a short two hours' ride to Yerba Buena, and we hoped to reach it before dark. We therefore made haste to secure fresh horses, and soon took our departure. The horses were but sorry-looking animals, and I must own that the thanks for them were very difficult to utter.

We had scarcely gone beyond the "a dios" of our ill-looking friend, when the steed of Captain Hudson came to a stand, and no persua-