under the Government key. In front of it, close to the water, is a small tiled shed, raised upon posts over a planked floor, and furnished with a crane, which is the only public wharf, and the place where all merchandise must be landed.

At no great distance is the Jail, a miserable dungeon, enlightened only through an open railing in front, which, at the same time exposes the prisoners, and displays such wretchedness as may, possibly, have more effect on some minds than a sense of moral rectitude.

The Governor's House is at the West end of what has been described as the principal row of buildings, of one story only, like the generality of its neighbours, but distinguished from almost every other habitation in the place by an ascent to it of a few steps, and by its glazed windows. Before it are the ruins of a wooden erection, which was once the Theatre of St. Pedro.

In the same row is what few of my countrymen would hesitate to call the comfortless abode of the Vicar, the chief Clergyman of the Parish. It consists of two stories; the lower open or appropriated to offices, the upper, entered from without by a step-ladder, contains the family apartments. The walls are whitened, the windows much like those of our hay-lofts, with shutters painted red.

The Ferry House, the only place where a boat is allowed to be hired, is commodiously situated near the public quay. For his exclusive privilege, the proprietor pays a rent to the Crown, and is obliged to furnish, and keep in order, a Catraia or Launch, which, when the weather permits, must cross the water every two hours. The fare is about six-pence; and should a man wish to cross at any time but the usual ones, he may command a boat for a double fee though he should be the only passenger.

When the Farmer of this Ferry heard that the Royal Family had arrived in Brazil, he owed to the Crown eight hundred thousand Reis, he therefore mounted a horse, and with the greatest secresy set off without passports for the Capital, where he arrived at the end of three weeks, having travelled nearly eight hundred miles, by an unusual route, for the

sake of avoiding pursuit and detention. He threw himself at the Prince Regent's feet, confessed the debt and his utter inability to discharge it. His Royal Highness was so much pleased with this mark of confidence, as generously to remit the sum and reinstate the man in his post.

The appearance of the Governor in the streets was announced by drums, at the sound of which, the people repaired to the fronts of their houses, to pay their compliments. He was a tall, thin, handsome man, about fifty years of age, wore a General's uniform, and appeared to have seen some service. He entered into conversation with some, noticed others, and seemed pleased with all. We could not expect a visit from a person of such consideration; but he stopped at our door, talked familiarly, inquired how we liked the place, and whether we were accommodated to our satisfaction, and renewed his professions of a readiness to serve us. We were not only gratified by his notice, but felt it an addition to our security and comfort, by giving us some consequence in the eyes of the people, and more especially by raising us above the insolence of the soldiery.

There were here marks of vigour, precaution, and discipline, such as I had not before seen in this part of the country. On the Northern side of the Plata, not a single sentinel made his appearance, and the few soldiers were ill clothed and worse accoutred. But at Rio Grandé, men under arms, properly furnished for their duty, were stationed at the Government house, on the quay, and at all public offices. Their military compliments were duly paid, and as exactly returned by Colonel D'Elbeux and others. He civilly intimated to me that it was customary for every one, not belonging to the service, to take off his hat when he passed a sentinel on duty, because the man was considered, at that time, as a representative of the Sovereign. I am aware, he added, that this deference to the military is ungrateful to Englishmen, yet it is best to comply with the harmless customs of every place which you enter as strangers. This lecture was not lost upon me; I apprehended, indeed, that more was meant than met the ear, and became prepared

to find the police of the place strict and suspicious. So it proved; and the consequent promptness of its measures was extraordinary.

At one time, I lighted upon a friend just at the moment when he had been foully assaulted, in the street, by a drunken sailor, calling himself an Englishman. Some altercation ensued, and after a great deal of abusive and threatening language, we left him quite ashamed of our countryman. In less than a quarter of an hour we learned that he was in prison; and on the following morning, waiting on the Governor to thank him for his interference, we found that the man was really a Swede, and one of the many vagabonds who had deserted from the British subsequent to their attack upon Buenos Ayres. The country was full of such characters, who indulged a rooted hatred of the people whom they had abandoned, and a double portion of rancour towards any by whom they seemed likely to be pointed out, and given up to justice. The Governor expressed his earnest wish that it was in his power to send every one of them out of his district; but he felt himself embarrassed by the gross misbehaviour of these men on the one hand; and, on the other, by the orders of his Court to treat British subjects with lenity.

At a subsequent period, during my stay in Rio Grandé, the Captain of a British vessel went by land to Monte Video, with the hope of obtaining a licence to enter his Cargo at that port. The Mate, having in his absence embezzled a sum of money, absconded with a comrade, when he learned that the Captain had returned. It was concluded that, in such a country, they would never more be heard of. No time, however, was lost in making application to the Governor, who expressed his confident persuasion that the culprits would be apprehended before ten o'clock that night, if they had not gotten beyond the limits of his jurisdiction; before that time, he said, they would be anticipated in every direction to the distance of fifty miles. Intelligence soon arrived, that the officers of justice had certainly outrun the fugitives, and at the end of nine days they were brought back; affording another proof that, under a vigilant and active Police, a desert, though of wide extent, afforded less security to criminals

than a crowded city. The mate was confined, and sent to the Admiral at Rio de Janeiro; there existing in St. Pedro no authority to try a British subject, for a theft committed on board a vessel of his own nation.

Notwithstanding all this vigour, the country is so wide and open, and the population so thin, as to favour the perpetration of the worst of crimes, by the hope of escape. Assassination is common, and, with a fleet horse and a knowledge of his route, a murderer soon passes the frontier; where he remains, until his friends have arranged the affair, which is generally, no difficult matter; then he returns with confidence, and his reception in society exhibits no remembrance of his hands being stained with blood.

A German Physician, established in the town, who spoke our language remarkably well, was occasionally of the English Dinner Parties. It being observed one day, in his presence, that there had been few assassinations during the last month, he replied, that "eleven cases only had come to his knowledge, and that the attempt had not fully succeeded in any of them." The number, I hope, was magnified; yet the remark seems to prove, that several attempts of the kind usually occurred within so limited a period. Probably, indeed, the stabbing which is too common in every part of Brazil, is not always intended to be fatal, yet the wounds are often serious. Determined malice makes a home thrust, or dispatches its victim by poison.

The state of Medicine in Rio Grandé do Sul can hardly be better illustrated than by some detail of the character and fortune of this man. He was born in Hanover, and having for some time practised irregularly in Germany, he travelled to Constantinople, and made a short residence there. Afterwards he went to France, became the surgeon of a Frigate, and in that capacity came out to South America; but left his ship at St. Catharine's, and figured there as French Consul. St. Pedro seeming to open to him a prospect of extensive medical practice, he repaired thither, where he now enjoyed much celebrity in his profession, and had the

undisputed range of thirty miles round. I have seen patients at his house from that distance, who had the reputation of being rich, and appeared to be respectable. This renowned Doctor practised surgery as well as medicine, and his instruments once fell under my observation. They were in the worst possible order, and utterly unfit for the most common operation. Taking up a rusty saw, I inquired whether he would venture to amputate a limb with that instrument? "Why not?" he replied; "it is the best I have, and no other person here can perform such an operation."

Great must be the sufferings of the diseased in this country, as they seldom think of obtaining medical advice until nature is almost exhausted; then they are, many of them, trailed in a clumsy Carro, over a pathless wild, for many a wearisome league, exposed to rain, wind, or sun, perhaps, to each of them alternately. Strange would it be, if death were not often to cut short the journey, or quickly to render it unavailing. Yet the hardships of approach to the Doctor, and his want of skill, are not all, which the patient has to struggle with. By the colonial laws of Portugal, at that time in full agency, the Apothecary was obliged to have upon his counter, two old books of recipes, and to follow them without wavering. His duty was to ascertain the disease; the learned men of Lisbon had, two centuries before, invariably settled the mode of cure. Nor is this barbarous practice, connected with a dignified stupidity, and a senseless jargon, entirely laid aside in every part of Brazil to this day. Not medical science alone, but science in general, is there a foreign plant.

That the people discern the preposterous nature of such regulations, is evident from the eagerness with which they seek for a restoration of health at the hands of every Briton. My landlord, who was asthmatic, supposing that I shared in the common skill of my countrymen, applied to me to cure him. I know nothing of physic, but ventured to give him some trifling preparation, which, I hoped, might sooth his mind as well as his cough. He thought himself better, and spread abroad my fame, so that I was pestered with patients labouring under all kinds of diseases,

some of which might have puzzled Esculapius himself. In cases, where no harm could be done, I sometimes felt myself obliged to prescribe; in others, decisively to refuse. On this, my reputation took a different turn, and I was reported to be a churl, when I was only timid, through a consciousness of ignorance. The different reports, of which I was the subject, followed me farther than might have been expected. On my subsequent return to Rio de Janeiro, one of the ship's crew happened to be ill, and intreated me to use in his favour, the skill, which he had no doubt that I possessed; pressing his suit by the observation, that there was no danger of my being teased by the sick, as I had been in Rio Grandé. Disease and simplicity united to recommend the man to my attention, and I gave him a few grains of Calomel; after which,—I cannot say, in consequence of which,—he soon became better.

From what has been already said, it will be concluded that Military Affairs were respectably managed in St. Pedro. The town is properly a Garrison, and the Governor is Commander-in-chief. He has under his orders two regiments of the line; one belonging to Rio Grandé, the other, and the better appointed, to St. Paul's; also a body of cavalry raised from the farms, and a regiment of militia. Every free man of the country is enrolled in one or the other of these corps, and a considerable force might, on an emergency, be collected in a short time. The yeomanry and militia were deficient in every thing but numbers; they appeared in the field with Lassos or nooses, and could certainly catch their enemies with more skill than they could exhibit in the use of a musket. There were, also, in the place some light and useful pieces of artillery.

The regiment of Rio Grandé was about four hundred strong, that of St. Paul's about three hundred; when brought together, they were stationed in different barracks, and did the duty of the town alternately. A feud of long standing prevailed among them, arising, as it should seem, from national antipathies, when this province was under the Spanish Crown, and fostered by mutual wrongs and revengeful retaliations. One

dark night, during the time of their present meeting, a severe fray took place, and lives were lost on both sides. It became necessary to separate the antagonists, and the Paulistas were sent to encamp on the frontiers.

At this period the Commerce of Rio Grandé was undergoing a considerable change, of the nature and extent of which the inhabitants were not aware. Their imports had before consisted of Woollens from Portugal, of Brazil coarse Cottons, and a variety of Hardware, Earthenware, Salt, Tobacco, Sugar, Rum, and Slaves. Several of these articles were beginning to be superseded by British Manufactures, furnished at a cheaper rate, and better adapted to an increasing taste for show, the consequence of wealth flowing in through different channels. Upon this part of Brazil many towns along the coast mainly depended for a supply of food; while an increase of inhabitants, from the advance of trade, and from the preference which Portuguese Emigrants gave to this part of the country, as better suited to their constitutions than the warmer parts of the colony, increased the consumption and the cost of provisions. The demand for Hides and Tallow had found its chief supply here and at Buenos Ayres, and the admission of British shipping into the latter place had produced a great and immediate effect on these articles. Monte Video, its rival, was in distress, and Spain could no longer supply the wants nor take the produce of the country. Hence the inland trade, beyond the frontiers, the most profitable which St. Pedro enjoyed, was increasing.

The neighbourhood of the town afforded a sphere for the consumption of some of its imports; more of them proceeded up the Lagoa dos Patos to Porto Alegro, and the rivers which fall into it; up the Lake Mirim, and through the Ygaroon to the fine country lying at the back of Monte Video and Maldonado. From these extensive waters the exports are collected, consisting chiefly of Hides, Tallow, Wheat, Onions, Cheese, and charqued or jerked Beef; all these articles are sent to Rio de Janeiro, only that Bahia shares with it the last mentioned. The vessels sailing from Rio Grandé, in 1808, amounted to one hundred and fifty,

half of them to Rio de Janeiro; they were, in general, brigs from one to two hundred tons burden, and completed their voyages in four or five months. The country produce is brought down in yatchs, from twenty to seventy tons burden. A few of the brigs load at Porto Alegro; the greater part at St. Pedro, whence all are obliged to take their clearance. The value of this trade to Brazil is incalculable; notwithstanding the injury which it receives from the Government draining the country of its cash, and furnishing nothing in return.

Before the goods which we brought hither could be disposed of, it was necessary to have a Survey of the vessel, and as the Risk was really British, we were compelled to observe our own forms as nearly as possible, but coming under the Portuguese flag it was held to be proper that the regulations of the port should be maintained. It was determined, in the end, to follow both modes. The survey by British Captains and Merchants was soon accomplished; not so that of the other party. First, the damage was to be reported at the Custom-house; then a messenger must be dispatched to Porto Alegro, two hundred miles, to ask leave to hold the survey. Permission being obtained, and notice given to about ten persons to attend the next day at an appointed hour, the group, made up of every rank of men in office, from the Deputy-judge down to a tide-waiter, accompanied by two merchants of the town, assembled near the Custom-house. All were in full dress; the chief alone wearing his hat, until he deigned to intimate that the rest of the party might be covered. The airs of importance, the formal bustle and compliments, were not a little diverting. The ship's boat had been ordered to attend; but we found that another, more commodious, had been impressed on the government service. At length we began to enter the boat; at first with due attention to precedence, the Captain giving his hand to the principal officer, and afterwards to two or three of inferior rank. In the same orderly way we might have proceeded to the end, had not others hurried in and taken their seats; some unwilling, it may be, to make their superiors wait; some, probably, aware of the ridiculous figure which a man exhibits when standing in expectation of undue and unwonted honours.

The business on board was greatly facilitated by the care which we had taken to cover the table with English cheese and porter; two articles for which the Brazilians have a strong predilection. The good cheer did not, however, seem to operate very kindly, for, on our return, having ventured to ask what their determination might be, I was told, with more than the former stateliness and reserve, that such questions were improper. On a hint given by one of the fiscal train, that certain fees, on such occasions, were always proper and acceptable, the hint was attended to; and, in consequence, leave was formally given, the following day, to dispose of what part of the cargo, and in what way we pleased.

Our cargo was one of the greatest variety which can well be imagined as being on board a small vessel; yet it soon became manifest that most of the goods were brought to a wrong market, or absolutely overstocked it. No one, used to the world, and unversed in the modes of this particular part of it, can conceive how few are the wants which the people appear to have, and how general is their indifference to luxuries. It is true, as stated before, that some taste and demand for the productions of our country were beginning to show themselves; but they had made little progress, and had been met by preceding supplies. Notwithstanding some favourable change with respect to a circulating medium, there was still a great deficiency of Cash, and Bills of exchange were unknown; even retailers bartered for produce, and advanced goods before it was ready for deliverance. The Government, aware of our disappointment, and unable to conjecture how so much money as our duties amounted to could possibly be raised, became alarmed. The people, astonished at the extent of our stock, and confirming each other in the persuasion that it must be disposed of at any rate, foretold our ruin. Their prognostics might have been fulfilled had we not possessed resources unknown to their rulers and to them.

Many of our goods it was necessary to land; by far the greater part we determined to re-export, paying only the transit-duty required in such a case. As to the former portion, every mode of disposing of them,

which our ingenuity could devise was tried; we opened a Store so large and variously furnished as St. Pedro had never seen before; we filled several of the retail-shops, employing their owners to sell on our account; we sent Hawkers through the neighbourhood and to a distance, and accepted articles in barter. All would not do, and we resolved, at length, to try a public auction, to be held in the Custom-house, and under the superintendence of the officers of government. The quantity of goods thus offered to sale would have been thought insignificant in any considerable European town; here it created a great sensation, and occasioned much talk. It was rumoured that there was enough to stock the country for three years, and as the whole must, of necessity, be sold, the attendants at the sale might purchase at their own prices. Such representations were sufficiently mortifying, so were the proceedings at the sale; but it afforded as much of the ludicrous as the gloomy. The second officer of the Customs presided, and he appointed the clerk and the auctioneer. To the latter, a black man, the President, with all becoming gravity, delivered a bit of straw, when the lot was too bulky for him to carry round the room; directing him to present it to the company as representative of a certain Lot of goods, containing so many pieces, or yards, or dozens, or pints, and distinguished by its peculiar number. With this straw, lifted above our heads, he danced about like a Merry-Andrew, loudly vociferating the words of the President, and calling upon the people to buy. Having, by his boisterous and absurd gestures, produced more merriment than serious attention to business, and gotten to the highest bidding, he returned the straw in form, announcing the price of the lot, and the name of the purchaser. Aware of the prevailing opinion, we had provided a person, on whom we could rely, to run up the lots to a certain amount; in consequence the first fell back into our hands, and the second and third followed without awakening suspicion. At length a conviction of the truth excited among the bidders much laughter at their own simplicity, and the superior address of the strangers. No change, however, was produced in their disposition to buy, and not a single lot was disposed of.