mile distant, got near enough to be perceived by some of the people, then dropped, and, twenty-four hours afterwards, expired in agonies. No one near him had the least idea of preventing the baneful effects of the poison by excision or bandage, or by severing the lacteals ; and when told of these resources, the people evidently mixed much incredulity with their thankfulness for the information. Happily there is a bird in the open parts of the country, about the size of a Bustard, which seizes the snake with impunity, mounts aloft, suffers his prey to drop, and plunging, retakes before it reaches the ground, again mounts, and repeats the process until its victim is deprived of life.

The mode of burning the grass in this Province, in order to prepare the land for culture, must doubtless destroy or drive away a vast number of troublesome insects and pernicious reptiles. It is said that the latter do not return to the spot so long as it retains the smell of fire, or ashes remain upon the land. But, notwithstanding such a desirable effect, this burning is here carried much too far; fire is put to the woods and coppices, as well as to the grass, and that often without a thought of the increasing scarcity of timber and fuel. This system, however, is an old and established one, therefore it must be the best; and such impressions will retain their influence, until the wants of society imperiously demand a change.

Having been eight hours on horseback, and ridden thirty miles toward the West by North, upon a road which had diminished our elevation seven hundred feet, evening advanced. I was aware that we were approaching the home of our guide, but had yet to learn his rank in society. Instead of following the hard and anxious life of a Tropeiro from necessity, it now appeared, long before we reached the house, that we were travelling over his own estate. He saw every thing with a master's eye, and remarked upon every circumstance with a master's strictness. This estate measured a square league, and was completely his own. He possessed another of the same extent, only half of which was paid for, and on a third, near to Barbacena, he had settled a son, upon his marriage with a young woman of inferior birth.

His own house was singularly situated upon the slope of a hill, having in front a stockade, enclosing nearly half an acre of ground; behind it was a cow yard, with sheds, calf pens, and other offices, to a considerable extent, beyond, was a well stocked garden; the whole skirted by a large enclosed field, and watered by a fine perennial stream.

The owner was affectionately welcomed by an active domestic-like woman, surrounded by a fine healthy young family. Joy was diffused through the house, and seemed to throb in every bosom as strongly as in more polished circles. Yet here it was naturally, perhaps rudely expressed, while there every one must speak, and act, and even feel in form. God of the families of men, shed but thy blessings on my abode, and I care not whether it be a cabin in Brazilian deserts, or a palace in the world's chief city !

Soon after our arrival, the best flock of sheep which I had seen in this part of the world was driven into the upper yard, to secure them, as the people said, from wild dogs, which abound in the country, lurking by day in the woods or coppices, and prowling at night for prey. The sheep were of the horned kind, light, lank, and meagre; their wool short, hollow, and fuzzy, grown with a deficiency of yolk, whose nutricious qualities, in warm climates, are converted into a watery corrosive perspiration; the best of the fleece might be considered as a good English Downright, and is sold in the neighbourhood at the rate of two hundred and forty Reis, about one shilling per pound, for manufacturing into cloth; the inferior sort is generally used in the house for stuffing beds, or for coarse home-spun clothing, but if sold to the neighbouring farmers, for the same purposes, the price is invariably one hundred and sixty Reis per pound. The shepherds, like several which we had seen in the course of the day, were not those of Virgil and Theocritus, nor were the scenes Arcadian. Though in Europe we frequently notice black sheep under the care of white men, we feel no sense of incongruity in the case; but to behold flocks of white sheep, managed and protected by black shepherds, opposed all my ideas of nature and nature's laws. Nothing ever more forcibly told me that the world I was now in was different and far from the land of my fathers.

Returning from a short ramble, in the cool of the evening, I found the family at vespers. The service here was extremely different from the noisy clamour which was so disgustingly exhibited at the corners of the streets in Rio; it was calm, serious, and devout—an act of homage to the Family's Protector and the Traveller's Guide, and as such doubtless rose with acceptance to heaven. The doors of the Oratory remained open, and the Crucifix exposed, until supper was just about to be served in the same room. The master then approached the sacred insignia, with great seriousness, made a profound bow to the image, and closed the doors. There was something in the action so expressive of modest veneration, that I could not but admire it at the moment, and still think that his mind must be very ill formed who can behold a fellow-creature worship his God in sincerity, be it what it may, and can sneer at his conduct. I have no faith whatever in images, no attachment to dogmas and to forms, yet I loved my Guide the better because he evinced the sincerity of his faith, though differing from my own almost as widely as possible. He was a sincere but not an obtrusive Religionist, and more than once, in the stillness of night, was I awaked by the low murmurs of the people whom, as he thought and yet thinks, he had called unobserved to prayers. I believe him to be a less violent but more conscientious Sebastianista than some others whom I intimately knew. They form a sect among the Portuguese Catholics, who as devoutly expect the return of the Royal St. Sebastian, as the Jews expect their Messiah, or the Christians the re-appearance of their Lord.

Desert as the country around us appeared, and mean as the fastidious would have thought the habitation of my host, Joze Coreio Pinto proved that there was no want of comfort there. At supper the table was abundantly spread with solid provisions, and furnished with several luxuries, which had acquired there superior value from the difficulty of procuring and transporting them so far. Besides a good display of silver plate and British earthenware, we had Rosca from the City, bottled London Porter, and good Port Wine, served in cut glass decanters. Through the whole journey my guide had behaved toward me in

the most attentive and handsome manner, and now crowned his conduct with cheerful hospitality.

The Strangers who had joined us intended to start for St. John D' El Rey, at an hour so early as to reach that town before the sun again became hot, and I declared my purpose of accompanying them. The plan, however, gave rise to some debate, brought forward some slight degree of apparent mystery, and was finally over-ruled. Upon this I wished my friends a pleasant journey, and retired to rest. My room, like the other apartments of the house, was formed by walls of watling, roughly overspread with clay, of course unplastered and unwhitened. It was open to the roof, and had no window; the tiles are so formed and so laid on as to admit light between the chinks, and for the same purpose a small space is left unclosed along the top of the outer wall. My bedstead was one of the plainest sort, without tester or curtains, the bed a large bag, filled with the husks of milho. Such are the rooms, and such the accommodations in the rural parts of Minas Geraes; no traveller should expect better, and if he should find more splendour he will seldom increase his comforts. On the bed, one of the softest of its kind, I laid myself down satisfied and thankful, and enjoyed luxurious repose, for I heard not the noise made by a wild dog, which entered the adjoining yard and killed a sheep, before the people were sufficiently roused to prevent his depredations.

In the morning, which to me seemed very cold, the Thermometer stood at 55°. A number of cows had been brought into the yard to suckle their calves; milk for breakfast was ordered to be taken from the best of them. In doing this a little contrivance was exercised, to impose upon the mother; the calf was allowed to suck for a little time, and then taken off, and tethered by a cord round its neck to the fore leg of the cow, so that it could just reach but not draw the teat, while she was purloined of the milk. Of this I made a hearty breakfast, but suffered from it severely; the heat to which I had been exposed the preceding day had produced a superabundance of bile, which, combining ill with the milk, converted it to curd, and produced great pain, attended fortunately with sickness.

My guide and friend having extracted from me a promise that I would not attempt, in St. John D' El Rey, to go to an Estalagem, but ride directly to the house of a gentleman, to whom, according to his own account, he was under engagement to deliver me, and who, he added, must, ere that time, expect me, I set out early in the forenoon, with three servants of the people who had left us that morning. We proceeded Westward over a broad expanse of uninteresting country, where the eye surveys few traces of animated life, and is cheered by no rising steeples, no seats of opulence, no waving crops, no useful hedge-rows, no ornamental planting, and few natural coppices; all is one wearisome waste. The hills we saw yesterday have the same outline to-day, with their apparent dimensions somewhat enlarged, and a bluer and deeper tint, but still grey in distance.

Passing some Farm-houses and a Church prettily situated in a bottom, we attempted in vain to procure some liquid or fruit to allay a burning thirst. The uneasy sensation was occasioned chiefly by the dry and harsh state of the wind, which continuing to blow from the N. E. and being no longer softened by the influence of the ocean or the forest, but sweeping over vast tracts of woodless and parched land, like the Harmattan of Guinea, dried up every particle of moisture from the skin, and absolutely excoriated the lips and the fauces. The season had been an uncommonly dry one, and to this the people attributed the cause of our suffering, assuring me that they had never before experienced the effect in so high a degree, and that it would cease on the first appearance of rain. Probably in my own case, the distressing sensation might be increased by the low temperature of the atmosphere, which was such as I had not been accustomed to for several years before, and entirely checked the process of perspiration.

After meeting on the summit of one of the Morros, with an agreeable French Gentleman, Mr. Montalban, we rode on together as far as Esteva, an extensive establishment, where by the good offices of my late guide and the friends who had preceded me and made themselves a sort of Avant-Couriers, I was admitted to all reasonable

accommodations. I found, indeed, no luxuries, but comforts in abunbance, and quite free from that formality and suspicion which abound in the neighbourhood of Rio, and are too prevalent in some other parts of Brazil. The master of the house was from home, having gone toward the heads of the Rio Doce, to seek in the forest a more retired situation. Here he possessed half a square league of land, and not only thought the farm too small, but complained, although the Province contains only five persons to a square mile, that the country was becoming too populous. He belongs, it seems, to a numerous class of people in Brazil, who are ever dissatisfied with a settled life; they love to wander, and would never cease. This spirit showed itself at the early settlement of the country, and has been cherished by a restless and never ending search after Gold. In going Eastward, however, and toward the coast, he had shown more judgment than the greater part of this migrating tribe, who usually proceed in a contrary direction.

Close by the house is a considerable stream, which, in rainy periods, must become an impetuous torrent. Here it runs South, but taking a long sweep round to the West, passes through St. John D' El Rey. In its bed we found some quartzose sand-stone reduced to rounded masses, and a quantity of the spar in detached nodules. On the brink was a space of peaty earth, cut by the stream, and chipped by the heat into cubes. Among other natural phenomena it was observed that, as we passed Westward over these Downs, the coating of clay became thinner; and that the South side of the hills is better clothed with verdure than the Northern one, owing probably to the rays of the sun falling less directly upon the soil, and therefore scorching it in a lower degree. Iron-stone was occasionally seen, and twice in one day the compass appeared to lose its polarity, without my being able to account for the circumstance. About two o'clock in the afternoon something like a water-spout was seen in the air, formed, however, only of vapour, instead of that solid and black aqueous pillar which is sometimes observed at sea, and there was no mass of cloud above it. At night, on one occasion, we perceived, in the absence of the moon, a thin red aura,

attended with a slight flashing, so transparent that the stars were seen through it with almost undiminished lustre. I was inclined to persuade myself that it might be the Aurora Australis, but that our latitude was too low to warrant the expectation of such a phenomenon; it existed only about the zenith, without any particular brightness being discernible on the Southern verge of the horizon; and luminous appearances in the atmosphere are very common in the warmer regions. The heat of the day, under the influence of a sun almost directly over our heads, had been very oppressive, although the thermometer never rose above 65°. in the shade.

Among the Birds which we noticed, were the Bustard, the Plover, Partridge, and Owl, a bird like the Wheatear, and several species unknown to any of our party. Some of these, in different degrees, bore some resemblance to the Stock-Dove, and it was remarked that few of them, or any other species, had been seen on the wing. During the heat of the day they hide themselves among the long grass, but in the cool hours of the morning appear upon the road, and the spots of ground destitute of herbage, in great variety and abundance. It is reported that when the Milho is ripe, they arrive in such vast flocks as to destroy, sometimes the whole of the crop. Along some of the bottoms, and in sheltered situations, we found occasionally coppices composed of brush-wood and stunted timber, which are here called Tiras do Mato; they contained the Orange, Laurels, Myrtles, and several other species of trees and shrubs common upon the coast, but the Cajú alone was seen scattered singly over wide open spaces, to endure, though not to flourish under, the climate of the Downs. We had travelled to-day twenty miles in a direction West North West, or West and by North; had been eight hours on horseback, and descended three hundred feet.

Approaching so near to St. John, it was natural to inquire respecting those Gentlemen to whom I had been favoured with letters of introduction. I requested also some account of the Estalagems or Inns of the place, and was assured, that with letters so addressed, it was impossible for me to make my abode at one of them; that it was not the custom of

the place, and would not be permitted. My hostess also told me that she was sister to one of the Gentlemen whose name I had mentioned, and knew that I was expected at the house of Senhor Auriliano Baptista d' Araujo Magelhaens. Connecting what I now heard with the uniform declaration of my Guide, that he was under engagement to deliver me at a particular house, and with the mystery which appeared about my late fellow travellers, when they refused to admit of my company to the Villa, I began to suspect that though the whole might proceed from the most hospitable and kind intentions on the part of my friends, it would lead to some restraint upon that freedom which I love to possess in every place; and therefore determined when my promise was fulfilled, by riding directly to the house pointed out to me, to remove as soon as possible to a hotel, or to private lodgings. Accordingly having given orders to the people who attended me to be ready to proceed at two o'clock in the morning, I committed myself to rest in a well furnished bed room.

The morning air was unpleasantly cold as we proceeded over some rough ground, by the light of a feeble moon, then in her last quarter, round whose disk was a singularly bright and broad Halo. Again I suffered extremely from thirst, and earnestly wished for the return of day-light, to show us some means of relief, having tried in vain to obtain it by carrying in my mouth a pebble, by chewing pieces of paper and of cloth. As the dawn advanced it appeared that we were travelling on a narrow dry ridge between the heads of steep ravines, down several of which on either hand the people went to seek a draught of water, but none was to be found. At length we dimly saw through the twilight a herd of cattle feeding, and hastened to reach them, but were again disappointed, not a drop of milk could be obtained from any one of them. While the sun rose in all its scorching splendour, after dispersing a dense fog, my torment increased beyond description, and was aggravated by the persuasion that we should find nothing to allay it before we reached the town. The cattle too, became so greatly oppressed that I was obliged to change the animal I rode two or three times, and the

people were widely scattered. One of them approaching, when just ready to faint I entreated him to take me by the shortest route possible to a house which then came in sight. There we procured a Cuya of water, and to this moment I remember the unspeakable gratefulness of the draught.

Returning to the road the suburbs of St. John soon began to appear. Here we proposed to wait till the rest of the party joined us. In dismounting I happened to cast my eye upon the spot where my right foot would have alighted, and there beheld a snake of the most venomous kind; had my foot touched it, I probably should there, or not far from thence, have ended my journey. In attempting to kill the reptile, we roused another, and the Negro as well as myself were glad to set our feet upon a spot uncovered by herbage.

The man proposed conducting me about a quarter of a mile further, to the Church of Bom Fim, which stands upon the extreme brow of a hill overlooking the town. "Now Sir," he said, with evident self complacency, "I have obeyed my orders, hither I have conducted you that you might have the best possible view of the place at once."

At that time the Church was surrounded with no walls or buildings, but with a great number of Dobés, arranged in the manner of new made bricks near our kilns. These also are bricks of a much larger description, prepared for building, by baking them in the sun, and I believe were intended for enlarging the Church. As this, without any arrangement of my own, had become the appointed rendezvous of the baggage mules, which were far behind, and as it was out of all etiquette that I could enter the town with a long beard and dusty boots, I sent to it for some milk, and laying myself down upon the steps of the Church there fell fast asleep. It was then six o'clock, and I continued in sound repose until nearly nine. In the meantime the baggage had arrived, a complete dressing room had been prepared for me among the bricks, all hands had been set to work to clean the mules and their equipage. My favourite Stallion, which had been distressed that morning, and changed for a mule, now appeared equipped with his English saddle

and bridle, and quite clean and fresh, for it seemed out of order also that I should enter the town mounted on any inferior animal. Upon the whole it was manifestly intended by the servants that we should make a grand entrée; but as this did not suite my taste, I employed the dressing room in shaving and changing my linen, dismissed three of the men singly, with the fourth descended into the town, and quickly reached the house of my friend.

I had ridden that day fifteen miles, in a course about West by North, decreased our elevation seven hundred feet, and completed two hundred and sixty-five miles from Rio de Janeiro.

CHAPTER XIV.

MINAS GERAES.

VILLA OF ST. JOHN D' EL REY.

A. D. 1818.

VIEW OF THE TOWN.—DESCRIPTION OF IT.— CHURCHES.—GOVERNMENT-HOUSE.—JAIL.— MISERICORDIA.—CHARACTER OF THE GOVERNOR. — PEOPLE AND OCCUPATIONS. — MINING AND MINES. — SMELTING-HOUSE.— ESTIMATED VALUE OF GOLD.—INTRINSIC VALUE. — BULLION MARKET.—PROVINCIAL NOTES OF MINAS GERAES.—COMMERCE.—MEANS OF LIVING. — CLOTHING.— CUSTOMS.—MANNERS AND CHARACTER. — MILITARY. — COUNTRY-HOUSES AND GARDENS. — FARMS.—MARKETS. — CLIMATE. — PAPAS OR GOITRE. — REMEDIES. — MEDICAL MEN.—GEOGRAPHICAL REMARKS.

ABOUT two hundred feet below the Church of Bom Fim lay the Villa of St. John D' El Rey. The first epithet by which it is distinguished denotes that it is a town of the second order, inferior only to a city, and furnished with all the offices suitable to such a rank. From the spot where we halted are distinctly seen many of the streets, the course of a broad shallow river running through the place, the two bridges by which the stream is crossed, all the public buildings, and most of the private houses; among the latter that of my friend Auriliano was conspicuous, being distinguished, like several others, by glazed windows and other marks of superiority. The intermixture of numerous churches with the houses, of red tiles unblackened by smoke, of roofs undeformed by chimneys, of walls rendered clean and bright by plaster and white-washing, of the grey pavement in the streets, the yellow sands of the river, and the green shrubbery of the gardens, formed a curious and interesting picture. As a whole the town is compact, its form nearly

circular, and its situation and size are much like those of Halifax, in Yorkshire. The surrounding scenery is roughly mountainous, and exhibits a strange mixture of roundly formed hills and broken rocks, of barrenness and verdure, of poverty of soil and richness of vegetation, of gardens in a desert, and of comfort amidst desolation. After gazing with wonder and delight upon a landscape so singular, I reflected—is this the town of which, for ten years past, I have heard so much! Where can its well known extensive business be transacted? Where the goods it receives be consumed? Where are the residences of its merchants, their warehouses and shops? Where the habitations of their customers and servants? Where the culture which yields them supplies, and furnishes a surplus for export?

Having enjoyed for a time this fine bird's eye view of the place, having dressed myself and dismissed the servants, I mounted, proceeded down the hill, and rode to the house of my friend, where I was cordially and courteously received. He was evidently surprised, and seemed disappointed at my early appearance, being ready to set off with some other friends to Estiva, where they understood I should that day dine. Sincerely glad that such ceremony had been prevented, though grateful for the intended civility, I willingly availed myself of other marks of kindness, and was soon completely domesticated in his house.

When entering the town I noticed that the figures over the last door in the street were 887, and concluded that this was the exact number of thresholds in the place, for it is the custom of the Brazilians to enumerate the entrances, and not the houses themselves. The general appearance of St. John is that of all Portuguese towns of the same class; the houses are low, whitewashed, and furnished with latticed windows; the streets are narrow, crooked, far from uniform, and very slippery, being paved with large smooth blue stones, with a channel in the middle. The site of the buildings is so irregular that they overtop and overlook each other, the conspicuous points being selected for public offices and the best private houses. Most of these have painted window-shutters, if not also glazed windows, and communicate a gaiety and