

hut, and on the rivulet there was ice one-fourth of an inch thick. Mr. Brackenridge gathered seeds here of a curious species of Cactus, which grows plentifully all over the mountains in dense tufts; from the quantities of down or fine hair upon it, it has the appearance at a distance of a white sheep, so much so that a group of them was sometimes mistaken for a flock.

Although Casa Cancha was a wretched hovel, and had every thing in it to disgust, yet the situation was one of great beauty. In the stream that flowed near it, were fish of from six to eight inches in length, but none of these were taken, as the party was not provided with fishing-tackle.

When the time came for their departure, they were glad to bid adieu to the place, and to begin their ascent to the top of the ridge. They rode two leagues to the source of the stream, which is near the summit of the ridge. At a short distance from their path was the line of perpetual snow. They found the ground hard frozen as the snow was approached, and almost bare of vegetation, only a few stunted spears of grass occurring here and there; even this appeared to be wanting in the bare spots above the snow line. The snow was but a thin covering, its surface was hardened, and its lower margin formed a perfectly unbroken horizontal line, along the face of the mountain. This was not apparently the case on the other ridges, for the snow lay there in hollows, and sometimes descended, as before remarked, below the path.

In the alpine lakes was a species of *Myriophyllum*, the same as was met with at Culnai, three thousand feet below. Dr. Pickering found an ammonite here.

They descended rapidly on the western declivity; the scenery was beautiful, and they had enough employment in collecting specimens. Two large parties were met, on the route, the one of loaded mules, the other of several genteel travellers, among whom were females, accompanied by several servants well armed. In the afternoon they reached a solitary hut, at a place called Chicrine, situated at the foot of La Vinda, and kept by an old woman with one eye; she proved very much the reverse of their hostess at Casa Cancha, being very cleanly; here they passed the night comfortably.

A Frenchman, who was now passing for a native, and was on his way to Pasco, with his servant, joined them at Chicrine. Being invited to partake of supper, he accepted, and did ample justice to the meal; but when he had finished, contrary to the usual politeness of his countrymen, he told them he had never eaten a worse meal in his life.