

up slowly to the door, the salutation of Ave Maria is given, and until somebody comes out and asks you to alight, it is not customary even to get off your horse: the formal answer of the owner is, "sin pecado concebida"—that is, conceived without sin. Having entered the house, some general conversation is kept up for a few minutes, till permission is asked to pass the night there. This is granted as a matter of course. The stranger then takes his meals with the family, and a room is assigned him, where with the horse-cloths belonging to his recado (or saddle of the Pampas) he makes his bed. It is curious how similar circumstances produce such similar results in manners. At the Cape of Good Hope the same hospitality, and very nearly the same points of etiquette, are universally observed. The difference, however, between the character of the Spaniard and that of the Dutch boor is shown, by the former never asking his guest a single question beyond the strictest rule of politeness, while the honest Dutchman demands where he has been, where he is going, what is his business, and even how many brothers, sisters, or children he may happen to have.

Shortly after our arrival at Don Juan's, one of the large herds of cattle was driven in toward the house, and three beasts were picked out to be slaughtered for the supply of the establishment. These half-wild cattle are very active; and knowing full well the fatal lazo, they led the horses a long and laborious chase. After witnessing the rude wealth displayed in the number of cattle, men, and horses, Don Juan's miserable house was quite curious. The floor consisted of hardened mud, and the windows were without glass; the sitting-room boasted only of a few of the roughest chairs and stools, with a couple of tables. The supper, although several strangers were present, consisted of two huge piles, one of roast beef, the other of boiled, with some pieces of pumpkin; besides this latter there was no other vegetable, and not even a morsel of bread. For drinking, a large earthenware jug of water served the whole party. Yet this man was the owner of several square miles of land, of which