

he turned to the steward and said, "You now have broken the laws, so you must take my place in the stocks." Such actions as these delighted the Gauchos, who all possess high notions of their own equality and dignity.

General Rosas is also a perfect horseman—an accomplishment of no small consequence in a country where an assembled army elected its general by the following trial: A troop of unbroken horses being driven into a corral, were let out through a gateway, above which was a cross-bar: it was agreed whoever should drop from the bar on one of these wild animals, as it rushed out, and should be able, without saddle or bridle, not only to ride it, but also to bring it back to the door of the corral, should be their general. The person who succeeded was accordingly elected; and doubtless made a fit general for such an army. This extraordinary feat has also been performed by Rosas.

By these means, and by conforming to the dress and habits of the Gauchos, he has obtained an unbounded popularity in the country, and in consequence a despotic power. I was assured by an English merchant that a man who had murdered another, when arrested and questioned concerning his motive, answered, "He spoke disrespectfully of General Rosas, so I killed him." At the end of a week the murderer was at liberty. This doubtless was the act of the general's party, and not of the general himself.

In conversation he is enthusiastic, sensible, and very grave. His gravity is carried to a high pitch: I heard one of his mad buffoons (for he keeps two, like the barons of old) relate the following anecdote: "I wanted very much to hear a certain piece of music, so I went to the general two or three times to ask him; he said to me, 'Go about your business, for I am engaged.' I went a second time; he said, 'If you come again I will punish you.' A third time I asked, and he laughed. I rushed out of the tent, but it was too late; he ordered two soldiers to catch and stake me. I begged by all the saints in heaven he would let me off; but it would not do—when the general laughs he spares neither mad man nor