

Cura towards its source, the mountains of Mariara are seen advancing into the plain in the form of a vast amphitheatre, composed of perpendicular rocks, crowned by peaks with rugged summits. The central point of the amphitheatre bears the strange name of the Devil's Nook (Rincon del Diablo). The range stretching to the east is called El Chaparro; that to the west, Las Viruelas. These ruin-like rocks command the plain; they are composed of a coarse-grained granite, nearly porphyritic, the yellowish white feldspar crystals of which are more than an inch and a half long. Mica is rare in them, and is of a fine silvery lustre. Nothing can be more picturesque and solemn than the aspect of this group of mountains, half covered with vegetation. The Peak of Calavera, which unites the Rincon del Diablo to the Chaparro, is visible from afar. In it the granite is separated by perpendicular fissures into prismatic masses. It would seem as if the primitive rock were crowned with columns of basalt. In the rainy season, a considerable sheet of water rushes down like a cascade from these cliffs. The mountains connected on the east with the Rincon del Diablo, are much less lofty, and contain, like the promontory of La Cabrera, and the little detached hills in the plain, gneiss and mica-slate, including garnets.

In these lower mountains, two or three miles north-east of Mariara, we find the ravine of hot waters called Quebrada de Aguas Calientes. This ravine, running N.W. 75° , contains several small basins. Of these the two uppermost, which have no communication with each other, are only eight inches in diameter; the three lower, from two to three feet. Their depth varies from three to fifteen inches. The temperature of these different funnels (pozos) is from 56° to 59° ; and what is remarkable, the lower funnels are hotter than the upper, though the difference of the level is only seven or eight inches. The hot waters, collected together, form a little rivulet, called the Rio de Aguas Calientes, which, thirty feet lower, has a temperature of only 48° . In seasons of great drought, the time at which we visited the ravine, the whole body of the thermal waters forms a section of only twenty-six square inches. This is considerably augmented in the rainy season; the rivulet is then transformed into a torrent, and its heat diminishes;