

rainy season was impending, the fair weather was uninterrupted. The way lay for the most part through an agricultural district of corn, wheat, and vineyards. In this strange land, where seasons are reversed, and autumn has changed places with spring, the work of harvest and vintage was just going on. The road was full of picturesque scenes: troops of mules might be met, a hundred at a time, laden with corn-sacks; the queer, primitive carts of the country creaked along, carrying huge wine-jars filled with the fresh new juice of the grape; the road was gay with country people in their holiday dresses; the women, who wore their bright shawls like a kind of mantle, were sometimes on foot and sometimes pillioned behind the men, who were invariably on horseback, and whose brilliant ponchos and fine riding added to the impression of life and color. Rivers and streams were frequent; and as there were no bridges, the scenes at the fords, sometimes crossed on rafts, sometimes on flat boats, worked by ropes, were exciting and picturesque. For rustic interiors along the road side, there were the huts of the working people, rough trellises of tree-trunks interwoven with branches; green as arbors while fresh, a coarse thatch when dry. There was