

But it was too late. The last objects that met my view were the ghastly legs of the Commandant, as he strode through the circle in front of my Art-exhibition. I saw no more. A soldier is but a mortal man. Rushing to the nearest cariole, —it was the Commandant's,—I leaped into it, and, lashing the horse furiously towards the town, never pulled rein until I got up to my long-deserted quarters in the Citadel. There I barricaded myself into my own room, directing my servant to proceed to the target for my scattered

property. I had still a month's leave of absence before me, availing myself of which, I started next morning for New York, subsequently obtained an extension of leave, sailed for England, and there negotiating an exchange from a regiment whose facings no longer suited my taste for colors, I soon found myself gazetted into a less objectionable one lying at Corfu.

I have never seen Tankerville's famous picture of my triumphal entry into Quebec.

I.—NOVEMBER.

THE dead leaves their rich mosaics,
Of olive and gold and brown,
Had laid on the rain-wet pavements,
Through all the embowered town.

They were washed by the Autumn tempest,
They were trod by hurrying feet,
And the maids came out with their besoms
And swept them into the street,

To be crushed and lost forever
'Neath the wheels, in the black mire lost,—
The Summer's precious darlings,
She nurtured at such cost!

O words that have fallen from me!
O golden thoughts and true!
Must I see in the leaves a symbol
Of the fate which awaiteth you?

II.—APRIL.

AGAIN has come the Spring-time,
With the crocus's golden bloom,
With the smell of the fresh-turned earth-mould,
And the violet's perfume.

O gardener! tell me the secret
Of thy flowers so rare and sweet!—
—"I have only enriched my garden
With the black mire from the street."

THE GAUCHO.

WHAT is a Gaucho?

That is precisely what I am going to tell you.

Take my hand, if you please. Shod with the shoes of swiftness, we have annihilated space and time. We are standing in the centre of a boundless plain. Look north and south and east and west: for five hundred miles beyond the limit of your vision, the scarcely undulating level stretches on either hand. Miles, leagues, away from us, the green of the torrid grass is melting into a misty dun; still further miles, and the misty dun has faded to a shadowy blue; more miles, it rounds at last away into the sky. A hundred miles behind us lies the nearest village; two hundred in another direction will bring you to the nearest town. The swiftest horse may gallop for a day and night unswervingly, and still not reach a dwelling-place of man. We are placed in the midst of a vast, unpeopled circle, whose radii measure a thousand miles.

But see! a cloud arises in the South. Swiftly it rolls towards us; behind it there is tumult and alarm. The ground trembles at its approach; the air is shaken by the bellowing that it covers. Quick! let us stand aside! for, as the haze is lifted, we can see the hurrying forms of a thousand cattle, speeding with lowered horns and fiery eyes across the plain. Fortunately, they do not observe our presence; were it otherwise, we should be trampled or gored to death in the twinkling of an eye. Onward they rush; at last the hindmost animals have passed; and see, behind them all there scours a man!

He glances at us, as he rushes by, and determines to give us a specimen of his only art. Shaking his long, wild locks, as he rises in the stirrup and presses his horse to its maddest gallop, he snatches from his saddle-bow the loop of a coil of rope, whirls it in his right hand for an in-

stant, then hurls it, singing through the air, a distance of fifty paces. A jerk and a strain,—a bellow and a convulsive leap,—his lasso is fast around the horns of a bull in the galloping herd. The horseman flashes a murderous knife from his belt, winds himself up to the plunging beast, severs at one swoop the tendon of its hind leg, and buries the point of his weapon in the victim's spinal marrow. It falls dead. The man, my friend, is a Gaucho; and we are standing on the Pampas of the Argentine Republic.

Let us examine this dexterous wielder of the knife and cord. *He, Juan de Dios!* Come hither, O Centaur of the boundless cattle-plains! We will not ask you to dismount,—for that you never do, we know, except to eat and sleep, or when your horse falls dead, or tumbles into a *bizcachero*; but we want to have a look at your savage self, and the appurtenances thereunto belonging.

And first, you say, the meaning of his name. The title, Gaucho, is applied to the descendants of the early Spanish colonists, whose homes are on the Pampa, instead of in the town,—to the rich *estanciero*, or owner of square leagues of cattle, in common with the savage herdsman whom he employs,—to Generals and Dictators, as well as to the most ragged Pampa-Cossack in their pay. Our language is incapable of expressing the idea conveyed by this term; and the Western qualification "backwoodsman" is perhaps the nearest approach to a synonyme that we can attain.

The head of our swarthy friend is covered with a species of Neapolitan cap, (let me confess, in a parenthesis, that my ideas of such head-coverings are derived from the costume of graceful Signor Brignoli in "Masaniello,") which was once, in all probability, of scarlet hue, but now almost rivals in color the jet-black locks which it confines. His face—well, we will pass that over, and, on our return to civil-