

of the highest forest trees hopelessly out of shot; the ear is pierced by the strange, wild screeches of a little band of macaws which fly past you like the rapped-up ghosts of the birds on some gaudy old brocade. There is no warbling, no song, only harsh noises—abrupt calls which those who haunt the forest soon learn to translate by two or three familiar words in Portuguese or English. Now and then a set of cries more varied and dissonant than usual tell us that a troop of monkeys are passing across from tree to tree among the higher branches; and lower sounds, to which one's attention is called by the guide, indicate to his practiced ear the neighborhood of a sloth or some other of the few mammals which inhabit the forests of Brazil. And the insects are now all awake, and add their various notes to swell the general din. A butterfly of the gorgeous genus *Morpho* comes fluttering along the path like a loosely folded sheet of intensely blue tinsel, flashing brilliant reflections in the sun; great dark-blue shining bees fly past with a loud hum; tree-bugs of a splendid metallic lustre, and in the most extraordinary harlequin coloring of scarlet and blue and yellow, cluster round a branch so thickly as to weigh it down, and make their presence perceptible yards off by their peculiar and sometimes not unpleasant odor. But how weak it is to say that that exquisite little being, whirring and fluttering in the air over that branch of *Bignonia* bells, and sucking the nectar from them with its long curved bill, has a head of ruby, and a throat of emerald, and wings of sapphire—as if any triumph of the jeweler's art could ever vie in brilliancy with that sparkling epitome of life and light!

It was broad day when we passed into the dense forest through which the greater part of the way now lay. The path, which had been cut through the vegetation, was just wide enough for us to ride in Indian file and with some care to prevent our horses from bruising our legs against the tree-trunks, and we could not leave the path for a single foot on either side,