

“ Close by the market-place was the church of the vicar already mentioned, which had a mosque-like dome ornamented with variously coloured dinner and tea plates set in patterns in cement, a very original form of decoration.

“ In the leather market quantities of skins of leather were exposed for sale, and also tanned puma skins used for saddle-cloths, and boa-constrictor skins also tanned, used to make boots and said to be remarkably waterproof.

“ But the great sight of the fair is the cattle market, the situation of which has already been described. The cattle are bred at estates far up the country, where they run wild in the bush and are caught and branded, and drafted for market every two years. The men who look after and drive the cattle are termed ‘ vaqueiros ’ in Portuguese. They are of all shades of colour, from black to white ; they are dressed when at work from head to foot in undyed red brown leather ; they wear leather breeches, high leather boots with huge spurs, a leather coat like a longish jacket, and a leather hat with rounded close-fitting crown and broad brim ; they ride small rough horses, which are worth at Feira St. Anna from £4 to £5, with saddles of the form commonly called Mexican or Spanish. The vaqueiros receive as payment from the owners every tenth head of cattle brought to market. They are, of course, extremely expert riders, and it is marvellous what work they get out of their small horses. The breeders rarely bring the cattle to market on their own account, but sell them to dealers, who take them to Feira St. Anna, and hand them over to other dealers again, who sell them in Bahia or Caxoeira. The cattle are driven by the vaqueiros, who use a short leather thong to strike them with. Bands of from 20 to 50 head of cattle were being driven into the market as we approached. A vaqueiro rides in front of each herd, one on each side, and one or more behind, and they keep up a constant shouting, bringing the animals along at a fair pace.

“ Every now and then, a beast wilder than the rest, or less exhausted by the long journey from the interior, breaks away, and goes off at full gallop over the open market-place or up the street. Off gallop two or three vaqueiros, in full chase, with outstretched arms, spurring their horses to the utmost. They try to drive the beast back into the herd, and often succeed forthwith. But often it gets in amongst another herd, and then it is wonderful to see how rapidly they manage to single it out, get it on the outside of the herd, and start it afresh. Sometimes the animals are very fresh and wild, and make off at full pace, and cannot be headed. The vaqueiros then strain every effort to come up behind them, catch hold of their tails, and spurring their horses forward so as to get up alongside the beasts, give a sudden violent pull, which twists the animal round and throws it sprawling on its side. The cattle, though they fall so heavily that this expedient is resorted to as little as possible at the fair, because it bruises the meat, are often up after a fall and off again in an instant ; but two or three falls knock the breath out of them, and they are then driven back to the herd quietly. Sometimes even this