

had lived in the interior with his eldest son, receiving care and attention from the other three; but, wishing to come to Callao, the third son was written to, to provide for his reception. This gave offence to the second son Antanacio, who considered that it was his turn by order of birth to have his father with him. The rest of the narrative is given in the words of the Alcalde, to whom they had come for advice, as they could not agree among themselves about it.

"Dionisio contended that his brother Antanacio could not be with his father because he had a great deal to do, and could not give his father the attention he required. The fourth son, Julian, represented to me that it properly belonged to him to support his father, as he was the youngest and unmarried. I knew not what to resolve, my heart was so affected by the extraordinary picture presented to me. As I contemplated this scene, the old man, Clemento, said, "My dear children, my heart overflows with satisfaction in witnessing your disputes respecting which of you shall take charge of your old father. I would gladly give consent to you all, and therefore propose that I be permitted to break fast with one, dine with another, sleep in the house of the third, and thus keep changing from day to day; but, if you do not consent to this, let his honor, the Judge, determine what shall be done with me."

The young men unanimously rejected this proposition, because they said their father would lead an idle, errant, unquiet life. I then proposed to write on separate pieces of paper the names of the sons, which I did, doubled them and put them into the hat of Clemento, which served as a ballot-box; and, while doing so, a death-like silence prevailed, and there was plainly to be seen, expressed in the countenance of each of the sons, his hope of receiving the desired prize. The old man put his tremulous hand into the hat and drew out the name of Antanacio, the second son. Antanacio, upon hearing his name called out, broke into praises to the Omniscient for according him such a boon. With his hands clasped and eyes directed to heaven, he repeated over and over his thanks, then fell upon his knees before his venerable parent, and bathed his sandaled feet with tears of frantic joy. The other brothers followed his example, and embraced the feet of the good old patriarch, who remained like a statue, oppressed with emotions, to which he knew not how to give vent.

Such a scene as this melted all who witnessed it. The brothers then retired, but soon returned with a fresh demand, which was that I should command that, since Antanacio has been favoured by lot with the charge of the father, they could not be deprived of the pleasure of taking out the old man to walk by turns in