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Title: Historic Tales: The Romance of Reality. Vol. 03 (of 15), Spanish American

Author: Charles Morris

Release date: October 9, 2006 [eBook #19503]

Most recently updated: June 26, 2020

Language: English

*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK HISTORIC TALES: THE ROMANCE OF REALITY. VOL. 03 (OF 15), SPANISH AMERICAN ***

Historical Tales - The Romance of Reality - Volume III

by Charles Morris

Edition 1, (October 9, 2006)

Philadelphia and London
J. B. Lippincott Company

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DEPARTURE OF COLUMBUS.

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[pg 007] **THE ISLES OF BEAUTY BEYOND THE SEAS.**

The 12th of October, 1492, ranks very high among the important dates in the history of the world. For on that day men from Europe, then the centre of civilization, first gazed on a rich new land beyond the seas, a great virgin continent, destined to become the seat of flourishing civilizations and to play a leading part in the later history of the world. Little did Columbus and his companions, when they saw before them on that famous morning a beautiful island, rising like a pearl of promise from the sparkling tropical sea, dream of what time held in store for that new-found land, foreordained to become the "New World" of the nations, the hope of the oppressed, and the pioneer dwelling-place of liberty and equality.

[pg 008] But we are here concerned with only what they saw, and this was a green and populous island, so covered with fresh verdure that it seemed to their eyes like a continual orchard. An orchard it was, for many of the trees were laden with new and strange fruits, of rare color and attractive form. Never had they breathed air more pure and fresh, and never had they beheld seas of such crystal clearness or verdure of more emerald hue; and it is not surprising that their eyes sparkled with joy and their souls were filled with wonder and delight as they gazed on this entrancing scene after their long and dreaded journey over a vast and unknown ocean.

Not less strange to the new-comers were the people who flocked in numbers from the woods and ran to the shore, where they stood gazing in simple wonder on the ships, winged marvels which had never met their eyes before. No clothing hid their dusky, copper-colored skins, of a hue unknown to their visitors, and they looked like the unclad tenants of some new paradise. Their astonishment turned into fright when they saw boats leave these strange monsters of the deep, in them men clad in shining steel or raiment of varied color. Their white faces, their curling beards, their splendid clothing, as it appeared to these simple denizens of the forest, and especially the air of dignity of their leader, with his ample cloak of scarlet, added to their amazement, and they viewed the strangers as divine visitors, come to them from the skies.

[pg 009] Not less was their surprise when they saw the wonderful strangers kneel and kiss the soil, and then uplift a great and gleaming banner, of rich colors and designs that seemed magical to their untaught eyes. And deep was their delight when these strange beings distributed among them wonderful gifts,—glass beads, hawk's bells, and other trifles,—which seemed precious gems to their untutored souls. They had nothing to offer in return, except tame parrots, of which they had

many, and balls of cotton-yarn; but the eyes of the Spaniards sparkled with hope when they saw small ornaments of gold, which some of them wore. Happy had it been for all the natives of the New World if this yellow metal had not existed among them, for it was to bring them untold suffering and despair.

Such was the island of San Salvador, as Columbus named this first-seen land; but, leaving it, let us go with him in his voyage through that island-sprinkled sea, and use his eyes in taking in the marvels with which it was sown. Familiar as these islands have become to many of us, to him they were all new, beautiful, and strange, a string of tropic pearls or rare emeralds spread out along those shining waters of the South.

On leaving San Salvador, the Spaniards, their hearts elate with joy and pride in their discovery, hardly knew whither to go. They seemed drawn to the right and the left alike. They found themselves in an archipelago of beautiful islands, green and level, rising on all sides and seemingly numberless. To us they are the great green cluster of the Bahamas, but to Columbus, who fancied that he had reached the shores of Asia, they were that wonderful archipelago spoken of by Marco Polo, in which were seven thousand four hundred and fifty-eight islands, abounding with spices and rich in odoriferous trees and shrubs.

[pg 010] On went the Spanish caravels, sailing over bright and placid waters scarce ruffled by the gentle breeze, and touching at isle after isle, each of which seemed to the voyagers more beautiful than the last. Besting under the shade of warm and verdant groves, while his men sought to fill their water-casks from the purest and coolest springs, the admiral found the scene around him entrancing to his vision, "the country as fresh and green as the month of May in Andalusia; the trees, the fruits, the herbs, the flowers, the very stones, for the most part, as different from those of Spain as night from day."



A TROPICAL RIVER SCENE.

One isle, which he honored with the name of Isabella, after his patron, the Spanish queen, surpassed in charm all he had yet seen. Like them all, it was covered with rich vegetation, its climate delightful, its air soft and balmy, its scenery so lovely that it seemed to him "as if one would never desire to depart. I know not where first to go, nor are my eyes ever weary of gazing on the beautiful verdure."

[pg 011] Fresh water was abundant, and he ordered all the casks of the ships to be filled. He could not say enough in praise of what he saw. "Here are large lakes, and the groves about them are marvellous, and in all the island everything is green, and the herbage as in April in Andalusia. The singing of the birds is such that it seems as if one would never wish to leave this land. There are flocks of parrots which hide the sun, and other birds, large and small, of so many kinds, and so different from ours, that it is wonderful; and besides, there are trees of a thousand species, each having its particular fruit, and all of marvellous flavor, so that I am in the greatest trouble in the world not to know them, for I am very certain that they are each of great value."

As he approached this island, he fancied that the winds bore to his senses the spicy odors said to be wafted from the islands of the East Indian seas. "As I arrived at this cape," he said, "there came off a fragrance so good and soft of the flowers or trees of the land that it was the sweetest thing in the world."

Not only were the islands the homes of birds of brilliant plumage and flowers of gorgeous hue, but the very seas seemed to their new visitors like tropical gardens, for the fish with which they abounded rivalled the birds and flowers in brilliancy of color. The scales of some of them glittered like precious stones, and gleams of gold and silver seemed to come from them as they swam around the ships, while the dolphins taken from the water changed color like the

chameleon.

[pg 012]

The natives who had been taken on board the ships made signs which seemed to indicate that more wonderful islands were yet to be seen, with cities and kings and queens, and abundance of gold and gems; or, at least, the Spaniards understood this from their signs, as they pointed to the south when gold was shown them and they were asked where it could be found. Far to the south was a great island which they named Cuba, and another which they called Bohio. Cuba, as their signs appeared to show, was of vast extent and abounded with gold, pearls, and spices, and Columbus determined to sail for it, hoping there to find the wealth which he and his companions so ardently craved. It cannot be said that the natives wished to deceive them, but no doubt they willingly agreed to all they were asked, with the innocent desire of pleasing their wonderful new friends. Columbus, full of the idea that he was near the shores of India, hoped to reach the city of Quinsai, which Marco Polo had said was one of the most magnificent in the world, and there deliver the letter of his sovereigns to the Grand Khan of the Indies and bring back his reply to Spain. Inspired by this enticing hope, he left the Bahamas and turned the prows of his small fleet towards the isle of Cuba.

[pg 013]

It was on the morning of October 28 that the shores of this noble island first met the eyes of the eager mariners. As the small fleet swept along its coast the admiral was struck with its size and grandeur; its high and airy mountains, like those of Sicily; its long and sweeping plains, and the fertile valleys of its broad rivers; its far-reaching forests and many green headlands, which led them on and on into the remote distance. They anchored at length in a beautiful river, whose waters were transparent and deeply shaded with overhanging trees. Here Columbus had himself rowed up the stream, which seemed to grow more enchanting with every mile, forests of lofty and spreading trees crowding down to its banks, some in fruit, some in flower, some bearing fruits and flowers at once. These woods swarmed with birds of brilliant plumage,—the scarlet flamingo, the rich-hued parrots and woodpeckers, the tiny and sparkling humming-birds, which flitted on rainbow wings from flower to flower, and which no European had ever before seen. Even the insects were beautiful, in their shining coats of mail. Though most of the birds were silent, the charms of song were not wanting, and the excited fancy of Columbus detected among them notes like those of the nightingale. Ever open to the charms of nature, Cuba seemed to him an elysium, "the most beautiful island that eyes ever beheld."

[pg 014]

He was sure there must here be mines of gold, groves of spices, rivers and seas that bore pearls. The houses, though simple in structure, were well built and clean, roofed with palm-leaves and shaded by spreading trees. Led on still by his excited fancy, he hoped soon to find great cities and rich settlements, but none such greeted his gaze. Assured that the capital of the Grand Khan could not be far away, he sent two ambassadors, with presents, to the interior, in a direction pointed out by the people. But after going many miles they found only a village of fifty houses, like those seen on the coast. There was no gold or silver, no spices, none of the things they so ardently sought. The only thing new to their eyes was a fashion seen among the people, who rolled up certain dried and aromatic leaves, and, lighting one end, put the other in their mouths, and exhaled the smoke. This was the first ever seen by white men of that remarkable American plant, called by the natives by a name like tobacco, which has since grown to be a favorite throughout the world, in palace and hovel alike.

[pg 015]

Sailing onward along the Cuban coast, the imagination of Columbus was continually aroused by the magnificence, freshness, and verdant charm of the scenery, which he could not praise too highly. A warm love of nature is frequently displayed in the description of the country which he wrote out for Ferdinand and Isabella, of Spain. Of one place, named by him Puerto Santo, he said: "The amenity of this river, and the clearness of the water, through which the sand at the bottom may be seen; the multitude of palm-trees of various forms, the highest and most beautiful that I have met with, and an infinity of other great and green trees; the birds in rich plumage, and the verdure of the fields, render this country, most Serene Princess, of such marvellous beauty, that it surpasses all others in graces and charm, as the day doth the night in lustre. For which reason I often say to my people, that, much as I endeavor to give a complete account of it to your Majesties, my tongue cannot express the whole truth or my tongue describe it; and I have been so overwhelmed at the sight of so much beauty that I have not known how to relate it."

One more island he was yet to see in this marvellous series of discoveries,—the one called by the natives Bohio or Babeque, now known as Hayti, one of the most beautiful islands in the world in the splendor of its tropical vegetation. Columbus and his men could describe it only by comparison with the most beautiful provinces of the country from which they came, and in consequence he named the island Hispaniola, or "Little Spain."

Here he found the people as innocent and simple in their habits as those of San Salvador, living in huts built of the palm-branches, wearing no clothing, for the air was always warm and balmy, and passing life in a holiday of indolence and enjoyment. To the Spaniards their life seemed like a pleasant dream, their country a veritable Lotus land, where it was "always afternoon." They had no wants nor cares, and spent life in easy idleness and innocent sports. They had their fields, but the food plants grew bountifully with little labor. The rivers and sea yielded abundance of fish, and luscious tropical fruits grew profusely in their forests. Thus favored by nature, they spent much of the day in repose, while in the evenings they danced gayly in their fragrant groves with songs or the rude music of their drums. After the coming of the Spaniards the clear tinkle of the hawk's bells as they danced gave them the deepest delight, and for those musical toys they were ready to barter everything they possessed.

[pg 016] In Hispaniola gold seemed more plentiful than the Spaniards had yet seen, but they were still lured on to distant places, with the illusive hope that this precious metal might there be found in quantities. Yet Columbus felt forced to cease, for a time, the quest of the precious metal, and sail for home with the story of the new world he had found. One of his vessels had deserted him; another had been wrecked: if he should lose the third he would be left without means of return and his great discovery might remain unknown.

Moved by this fear, on the 4th of January, 1493, he spread the sails of the one caravel left to him, and turned its prow towards Europe, to carry thither the news of the greatest maritime discovery the world had ever known. Thus ended in success and triumph the first voyage of Columbus to the "New World."

[pg 017] ALONSO DE OJEDA AND THE CARIB CACIQUE.

Of the three ships with which Columbus made his first voyage, the "Pinta" deserted the others and went off on a voyage of discovery of its own, and the "Santa Maria," the flag-ship of the admiral, ran ashore on the coast of Hispaniola and proved a hopeless wreck. Only the little "Niña" (the "girl," as this word means in English) was left to carry the discoverer home. The "Santa Maria" was carefully taken to pieces, and from her timbers was constructed a small but strong fort, with a deep vault beneath and a ditch surrounding. Friendly Indians aided in this, and not a shred of the stranded vessel was left to the waves. As the "Niña" was too small to carry all his crew back to Spain, Columbus decided to leave a garrison to hold this fort and search for gold until he should return. That the island held plenty of gold he felt sure. So Captain Ardua was left, with a garrison of forty men, and the "Niña" spread her sails to the winds to carry to Spain the wonderful news of the great discovery.

[pg 018] La Navidad, or The Nativity, he named the fort, in remembrance of the day of the wreck, and when he came back in 1493 he hopefully expected to find its garrison awaiting him, with a rich treasure in the precious yellow metal. He reached the spot to find the fort a ruin and the garrison a remembrance only. They had been attacked by the Indians and massacred during the absence of the admiral.

In fact, the mild, gentle, and friendly Indians whom Columbus had met with on his first voyage were not the only people of the islands. There were on some of the West Indies a warlike race called Caribs,—cannibals, the Spaniards said they were,—who gave the invaders no small trouble before they were overcome.

It was a band of these fierce Caribs that had attacked La Navidad and destroyed the fort and its garrison, impelled to this, likely enough, by some of the ruthless acts which the Spaniards were much too ready to commit. The leader of these warriors was a bold cacique named Caonabo, chief of a warlike mountain tribe. It is with this chieftain that we are at present concerned, as he was the hero, or victim rather, of the first romantic story known to us in Indian life.

In addition to the forts built by the Spaniards on the coast of Hispaniola, there was one built far in the interior, called Fort Santo Tomas. This stood in the mountainous region of Cibao, the reputed land of gold of the island. Its site lay within the territory of Caonabo, who ruled over a great district, his capital town or village being on the southern slope of the Cibao Mountains.

[pg 019] The first conflict between the Spaniards and the natives, after the massacre of the garrison of La Navidad, was in the district of the Vega, where a fierce fight took place in the spring of 1495, the natives suffering a severe defeat. The next was at Fort Santo Tomas, which was commanded by Alonso de Ojeda, a young man who had come out with Columbus in his second voyage. He was a man of great courage and unusual daring, one of the chief among those dauntless spirits who had to do with the conquest of the New World.

A man of his spirit was needed to command this isolated fort in the mountains, for the cacique, Caonabo, was not pleased with this invasion of his territory, and soon marched upon the fort with a strong force of his warlike race. Santo Tomas was closely invested and fiercely attacked, Ojeda being reduced to such an extremity that he owed his escape only to a rescuing force sent by Columbus from Fort Isabella, on the coast. Driven off by the superior arms of his foes, Caonabo withdrew sullenly to his stronghold in the mountains. But he was quickly back again, with a larger force than before. He had never met his equal among the Indians, but the fire-spouting tubes of the Spaniards proved too much even for his courage, and he was a second time forced to withdraw.

It was evident, however, that Ojeda was perilously situated, surrounded as he was by warlike enemies, led by so bold and persistent a chief. In the face of this peril he adopted an expedient as daring as any of those shown by Cortez, Pizarro, or any other of the Spanish caballeros of that age of conquest, and one whose ingenuity equalled its daring. It is this striking adventure which it is our purpose to describe.

Choosing from his men a few of the bravest and most trusty, Ojeda set out on horseback over the mountains, following paths never before traversed by the Spaniards, until they came to the Carib town of Maguana, where he found Caonabo surrounded by a throng of armed warriors. The Spaniards had bearded the lion in his den, and were in a position of extreme peril should the cacique prove hostile. But Ojeda was a past-master in craftiness, and by professions of friendship and other arts of duplicity he persuaded the chief to accompany him alone into the edge of the forest.

He now took from his pocket a pair of handcuffs, bright and shining manacles of which the untutored Indian had no conception of the use, but whose brightness attracted him. Ojeda told him they were bracelets, which the King of Spain had graciously sent him as a present, in recognition of his fame as a warrior of skill and courage. The poor Indian probably understood all this very imperfectly, but he was easily brought to view the manacles as *Turey* or a gift from Heaven, and willingly held out his wrists that his guest might adorn them with those strange and splendid bracelets.

In a moment his hands were secured, and before he could recover from his surprise Ojeda, whose small frame concealed much strength, reached from his saddle, seized the astonished chief, and by a great exertion of muscular force lifted him from the ground and swung him up on the horse. The warriors, who beheld this act with sudden suspicion, had no time to use their weapons before the Spaniards had put spur to their horses and dashed off into the forest. Two of them rode on each side of Ojeda, to prevent the captive throwing himself from the horse. Threatened by their swords and with his hands clasped in those fatal bracelets, Caonabo was forced to submit, and was carried by his captors for many miles through the heart of his own country to Fort Isabella, a stronghold which Columbus had built at a site on the sea-coast, fronting a bay in which all his vessels could ride in safety. Here the bold Ojeda, as the culmination of his daring enterprise, delivered his captive to Columbus, and he was locked up in a secure cell.

As the story goes, the brave cacique had a greater admiration for courage than anything else in the world, and instead of hating Ojeda for the crafty way in which he had been captured, he seemed to hold him in high esteem as the bravest of the Spaniards. Whenever Ojeda appeared in his cell he would rise and courteously salute him, while he treated the visits of Columbus with haughty disregard. So far as the captive cacique could make himself understood, the high rank of Columbus was nought to him. He had no proof that he was a man of courage, while the manner in which Ojeda had captured him showed him to be a brave man. To the bold Carib courage was the first of virtues and the only one worthy of respect.

The poor Indian suffered the fate of most of his countrymen who had to do with the Spanish invaders. Put on board ship and sent as a prize of valor to Spain, the unfortunate chief died on the voyage, perhaps from a broken heart, or as a result of the change from his free forest life to the narrow confines of a fifteenth-century ship.

The life of Ojeda after that date was one full of adventure, in which he distinguished himself as much by rashness as by valor. In 1499 he was put in command of an exploring expedition and sent out from Spain, one of his companions being Amerigo Vespucci, he whose first name gained the immemorial honor of being given to the great western continent. In this voyage Ojeda discovered part of the continent of South America, which he called Venezuela, or Little Venice, a name suggested by an Indian village built on piles in the water. Eight years later Ojeda sought to plant a colony in New Andalusia, but the natives there proved too bold and hostile for him, and he failed to subject them to his authority.

Many were his adventures, all of them characterized by a rash daring like that he had shown in the capture of Caonabo. When at length he died, he was buried, in response to his own request, in the doorway of the Franciscan monastery in the city of Santo Domingo, so that all who entered that place of worship should walk over his grave.

THE EARLY DAYS OF A FAMOUS CAVALIER.

The island elysium which Columbus had discovered, and of which he wrote and conversed in the

most glowing terms, seemed like a fairy-land of promise to the people of Spain, and hundreds of adventurers soon crossed the seas, hopeful of winning gold and ready for deeds of peril and daring in that wonderful unknown land. Some of them were men of wealth, who were eager to add to their riches, but the most of them had little beyond their love of adventure and their thirst for gold to carry them across the seas, needy but bold soldiers and cavaliers who were ready for any enterprise, however perilous, that might promise them reward. The stories of many of these men are full of romantic interest, and this is especially the case with one of them, the renowned Hernando Cortez.

[pg 024] We propose here to deal with the interesting early history of this most famous of the New World conquerors. The son of a Spanish captain, of good family, his buoyant spirit and frolicsome humor led him into many wild escapades while still a boy. The mystery and romance of the strange land beyond the sea and the chance to win gold and glory which it offered were fascinating to a spirit like his, and he was prevented from taking part in an expedition when but seventeen years of age only by an unlucky accident. As he was scaling a wall one night, in an adventure like that of Romeo and Juliet, the stones gave way and he was thrown violently to the ground and buried under the ruins. Before he got out of bed from his hurts the fleet had sailed.

Two years longer the ambitious boy remained at home, engaged, perhaps, in similar pranks, but at length another chance offered, and in 1504 he set sail for the land of promise, still a youth of only nineteen years of age. He did not get across the sea without adventure. Quintero, the captain of his ship, bound for Hispaniola and a market, stole away from the rest of the squadron, hoping to reach port and sell his cargo before the others arrived. But fierce gales came to punish him; for many days the vessel was tossed about, the sailors not knowing where they were, and furious at the treachery of their captain. At length, one morning, hope returned to them, in the form of a white dove that lighted on the foremast-top. When the bird had rested it took to flight again, and by following its course the weary mariners finally came to the port they sought. But the captain was paid for his treachery by finding that the other vessels had arrived before him and sold their cargoes.

[pg 025] The young adventurer was full of ambitious hope. When the governor's secretary told him that no doubt he would be given a good estate to settle on, he replied, "But I came to get gold; not to till the soil, like a peasant."

As no gold offered, however, he was glad enough to accept the land, but his fondness for active deeds clung to him, and he took part in the military expeditions sent out to fight with the rebel natives. He had his quarrels, too, and his duels about the love of fair ladies, and received wounds whose scars he carried to the grave. A nobler opening for his valor came in 1511, when an expedition set out for the conquest of Cuba. Cortez enlisted under the leader, Diego Velasquez, whose favor he won by his courage and activity, his cordial and lively disposition, and the good humor and ready wit which made him a favorite with all he met.

After the island had been conquered, Velasquez was made its governor, Cortez still being his close friend. But for some reason this friendship did not last, and when at length a party of discontented men formed a plan to complain of the acts of the governor to the higher authorities in Hispaniola, Cortez took part in the conspiracy, and was chosen, from his fearless spirit, to act as their envoy, it being necessary to perform the perilous exploit of crossing an arm of the sea over fifty miles wide in an open boat.

[pg 026] In some way the plot got wind, and, before he could leave the island, Cortez was arrested by order of the governor and thrown into prison, his limbs being loaded with fetters. Velasquez even intended to hang him, as we are told, but was persuaded by his friends not to go so far. These Spanish governors had the power to do almost anything they pleased, their distance from home enabling them to act the despot at will, and their influence at court saving them from evil consequences.



Cortez did not stay long in his prison cell. In some way he managed to open one of the bolts of his fetters and soon had his limbs free. Then, turning his irons into tools, he used them to force open the window of his cell. As he was on the second floor of the building, it was easy for one so agile as he to reach the ground without injury, and he made his way to a church near by, where he claimed the right of sanctuary.

When Velasquez heard of the escape of his prisoner he was furious. He did not dare attempt to take him from the church by force, since the sacred walls protected all who sought their asylum. But a guard was stationed close by, with orders to seize the fugitive if he should leave the sanctuary. With one so careless as Cortez this was sure to be done. A few days later, as he stood heedlessly sunning himself outside the walls of the building, one of the guards rushed on him from behind, seized his arms, and held him till his comrades came to his aid. This man was one of those who afterwards took part in the conquest of Mexico, during which he was hung for some offence by Cortez, who perhaps took this opportunity for revenge.

[pg 027] Once more the reckless young adventurer found himself a fettered captive, this time being put on board a vessel that was to sail the next morning for Hispaniola, where Velasquez designed he should be tried for his offence. But he proved a very hard prisoner to hold. That night, with much pain and difficulty, he managed to pull his feet out of the irons that held them, and then stole cautiously to the deck, where he found a boat floating by the vessel's side. Slipping down into this, under cover of the darkness, he cut loose and paddled silently away.

When near the shore he met with a rapid current and rough waters, to which he was afraid to trust the boat. Being an expert swimmer, he thought it safest to breast the water himself, and boldly plunged overboard. He found his task a hard, almost a fatal one; the current threatened to sweep him away, but after a long struggle with the waves he succeeded in reaching the shore, in a state of almost complete exhaustion. He now sought the church again, no doubt resolving this time to keep safely within its sacred shelter.

[pg 028] The story goes on to state that the governor, worked upon by friends of the culprit, offered him forgiveness, which the incensed young cavalier was too proud to accept. What followed is amusing. Velasquez was at a distance from the capital, on a military excursion, when one evening he was startled in his tent by the appearance of his enemy, completely armed and threatening in aspect. In dismay, the governor asked him what he wanted. Cortez replied, angrily, that he was tired of being treated like a felon, and that he must have an explanation or he would know the reason why. Velasquez answered as angrily, and a hot altercation followed. But at length their talk became more friendly, and in the end their old amicable relations were resumed and they embraced like a pair of lovers. The amusing part of the story is this: When a messenger arrived to tell the governor that Cortez had left the sanctuary and disappeared, he found the governor and the culprit both fast asleep in the same bed.

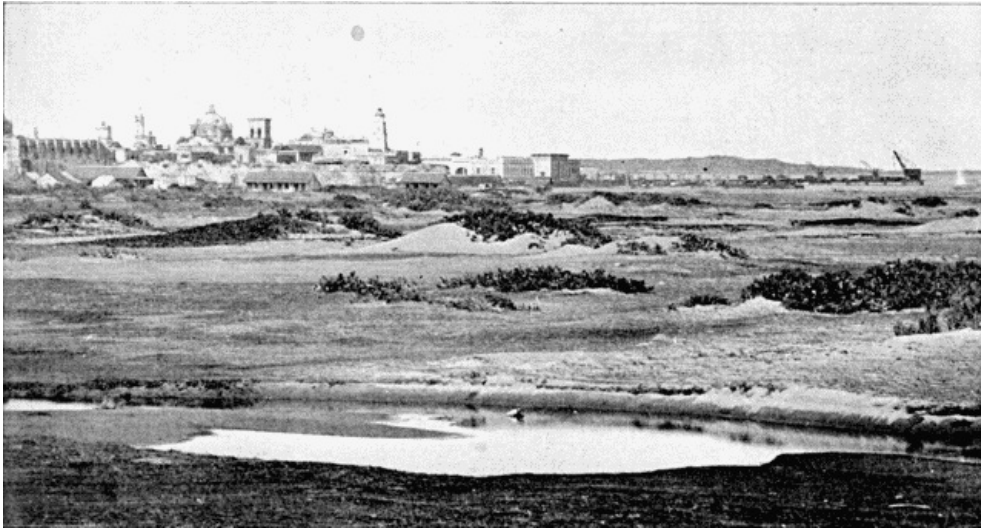
This story seems doubtful, but at any rate they became friends again, and Cortez was given a large estate in Cuba, which he stocked with cattle, and on which he found gold-mines, which were worked by Indian labor. He married a beautiful Spanish girl, and, fast growing rich, spent several years in happy content.

This, with some, would have been the end of a career. It was only the beginning of that of Cortez, before whom still lay a wonderful history and a record of undying fame. All we can tell here is how this came about. It began in expeditions of discovery. Cordova, a Cuban settler, seeking Indians for slaves in the Bahamas, was blown far westward by a storm, and reached an unknown shore, where the natives lived in stone buildings, cultivated the soil, and wore delicate cotton garments and ornaments of gold. In other ways they showed evidence of civilization. The land thus reached is that now known as Yucatan.

[pg 029] Velasquez, on seeing the gold which Cordova brought back, sent out a small fleet under his nephew, Juan de Grijalva, to visit and explore this new land. Grijalva found evidence that a great civilized nation dwelt inland, rich in gold and far superior in civilization to any Indians whom the Spaniards had yet met. He named the country New Spain, and sailed back to Cuba with an account of his important discoveries.

The news filled Velasquez with hope and joy. Here seemed to be the land of gold which the Spaniards had so long sought. Here he might win vast wealth and the glory of adding a new and splendid province to Spain. He at once began to fit out a much larger expedition, and looked around for a man fit to command it. Several of the hidalgos, or gentlemen of Cuba, offered themselves, but none pleased the governor, and at length he settled upon Cortez as the best man for his purpose. By chance, rather than by intention, he had made a splendid choice. Cortez was the one man in the New World, and perhaps the one man at that time in all Spain, fitted by nature for the difficult task which lay before him. Wild and frivolous as he had shown himself in youth, all he needed was a great occasion to prove himself a great man. He was to develop into one of the ablest military leaders in all history, a man who, on a small scale, was to display a genius and achieve a success worthy of Cæsar or Alexander or any of the famous soldiers of the world.

[pg 030] But, from another point of view, Velasquez had made a bad choice. Cortez had disdained his fetters and his prisons, and would soon disdain his control. His hope to win gain and glory by the aid of this young adventurer was likely to prove a mere Will-o'-the-wisp.



LANDING-PLACE OF CORTEZ, VERA CRUZ.

The very appointment seemed to change the whole character of the new admiral. He became a different man. His high spirits now changed to a tireless energy. He spent his money freely in fitting out the fleet, and even mortgaged his estate to raise more, and borrowed all he could. He worked incessantly, and inspired his companions and followers to active and enthusiastic toil. He was so popular in the island that several hundred recruits soon flocked to his banner, and six ships, some of them of large size, were rapidly got ready and stocked with provisions and military stores.

Yet at the last moment it seemed as if all the labor and cost of Cortez would go for naught. Velasquez grew suspicious of him, and decided to rob him of his command and trust the fleet to safer hands. But he was not dealing with a man who could be played with in this fast and loose fashion. The secret was whispered to Cortez, and he decided to sail at once, though he was still short of men, of vessels, and of supplies. That night he took on board all the meat in the town, weighed anchor, and got ready to set sail.

[pg 031] At day-dawn the news came to Velasquez that the fleet was about to depart. In a panic he sprang from his bed, threw on his clothes, mounted his horse, and rode in all haste to the beach. Cortez entered a boat and rowed near enough to the shore to speak with him.

"And is this the way you leave me?" cried the angry governor; "a courteous leave-taking, truly."

"Pardon me," said Cortez; "time presses, and there are some things that should be done before they are even thought of. Has your excellency any commands?"

His excellency would have commanded him to come on shore, if it had been of any use. As it was he had little to say, and with a polite wave of the hand Cortez returned to his ships. Soon only their vanishing hulls were to be seen.

The fleet stopped for supplies at Macaca and at Trinidad. At the last place many men, and several cavaliers who were to prove his ablest officers, joined him. While there, letters came from Velasquez to the governor of Trinidad, ordering him to arrest Cortez, and hold the fleet for a new admiral who was to command it. The governor looked at Cortez and his men and concluded that he had better let them alone. They were too strong for him to deal with.

[pg 032] So once more the bold adventurers escaped from Velasquez and his schemes and sailed in triumph away, this time for Havana. Here, also, the governor of the place had received orders to arrest Cortez, and here, also, he did not dare attempt it. Velasquez also wrote to Cortez, asking him to wait till he could see him. Hernando Cortez was hardly the fool to pay any heed to such a letter as that. The lion was hardly likely to trust himself to the fox. He sent him a very polite and mild answer, saying that he would not lose sight of the interests of his excellency, and that he and the fleet, "God willing, would set sail the next morning."

Finally, on the 18th of February, 1519, the fleet lost sight of Cuba at Cape San Antonio, on the western end of the island. It consisted in all of eleven vessels, most of them small, and had on board six hundred and sixty-three soldiers and sailors. A few of these were armed with cross-bows and only thirteen with muskets, while the horses numbered only sixteen. In addition there were ten heavy guns and four lighter ones, with a good supply of ammunition.

Such was the fleet and such the force with which Hernando Cortez set sail to conquer a powerful and warlike nation. Fortunately the expedition had one of the world's great commanders at its

head, or the enterprise would have ended in failure instead of leading, as it did, to a wonderful success.

[pg 033] **BALBOA AND THE DISCOVERY OF THE PACIFIC.**

It was a splendid road to fortune which Columbus opened to the adventurers of Spain, and hundreds of them soon took that promising path. Among these was one Vasco Nuñez de Balboa, a man poor in gold or land, but rich in courage and ambition, and weary enough of trying to live at home like a gentleman with the means of a peasant. In the year 1501 he crossed the seas to Hispaniola, where, like Cortez, he took up land and began to till the soil for a living. But he had not the skill or good luck of Cortez, and after years of labor he found himself poorer than when he commenced. He began to see that nature had not meant him for a farmer, and that if he wanted a fortune he must seek it in other fields.

[pg 034] Balboa was not alone in this. There were others, with better-filled pockets than he, who were ripe for adventure and eager for gold. A famous one of these was Alonso de Ojeda, one of the companions of Columbus and the hero of the adventure with the Carib chief already described, who in 1509 sailed for South America and founded a settlement named by him San Sebastian. He left orders with Enciso, a lawyer of the town of San Domingo, to fit out two more vessels and follow him with provisions for his new settlement.

Enciso sailed in 1510, his vessels well laden with casks of bread and other food-stuffs. There was more in them, indeed, than Enciso dreamed of, for when far from land there crept out of one of these casks a haggard, woe-begone, half-starved stowaway, who looked as if he had not many ounces of life left in him. It was Vasco Nuñez de Balboa, who had taken this way to join the expedition and escape from his creditors, since they would not have permitted him to go openly. The cask in which he snugly lay had been carried from his farm to the ship among others containing provisions.

Enciso was furious when he saw this unwelcome addition to his crew. He threatened to throw him overboard, and on second thought vowed to leave him to starve on a desert island. The poor fellow fell on his knees and tearfully begged for mercy. Others joined him in entreaties, and Enciso at length softened and spared him his life. He was to pay bitterly for his kindness before many days.

[pg 035] The expedition had its adventures on the seas, ending in a wreck, and when San Sebastian was reached Ojeda was not to be found, and the settlement was a ruin. Enciso was in a quandary what to do, but Balboa had been on that coast before, on his first voyage out from Spain, and knew of an Indian village on the Darien River where they might find food and shelter. He advised Enciso to go thither, and a journey was made overland, among hostile Indians and with little food. The adventurers were half-starved when at length they reached their goal.

Here they founded a new settlement named Santa Maria, no doubt first disposing of the Indians in the usual Spanish fashion,—killing some and making slaves of others. But it was not long before there were bitter quarrels among themselves. Enciso had forbidden them to have any private trade for gold with the natives, a ukase which they strongly resented. The result was that a party rose against him, with Balboa at its head. Enciso was deprived of his authority, but when they tried to elect another in his place it did not prove easy. Diego de Nicuesa, who had made a settlement near there, was sent for by some of the settlers, but when he came, Balboa's party would not receive him, and he, with seventeen companions, was placed in a crazy old barque and left to find their way back to Hispaniola as best they could.

Balboa had by this time shown himself the ablest and boldest man in Darien, and his influence and power grew steadily until the settlers voted him their governor. Enciso was seized and imprisoned, and finally was sent to Spain. With him went one of Balboa's chief supporters, in order to gain for him from the king the royal right to his new office.

[pg 036] Balboa lost no time in showing that he was worthy of the dignity given him. He made many incursions into the surrounding country, and succeeded in collecting much gold, the yellow metal being more plentiful there than in the West India islands. In those expeditions he showed a wise spirit of conciliation and won the friendship of several of the Indian chiefs. In one of their excursions a quarrel arose among the Spaniards about the division of the gold they had obtained. They were almost at sword's-point when a young Indian chief, surprised to find them so hot about what seemed to him a useless substance, upset the gold out of the balance, and turned to Balboa, saying,—

"Why do you quarrel about such stuff as this? If you value it so highly, I could take you to a country where it is so common that it is used for the meanest utensils."

These significant words filled the Spaniards with hope and desire, and they eagerly asked where that rich land lay, and how it might be reached.

"At the distance of six suns [six days' journey] from here," said the cacique, "lies another ocean as great as the one before you. Near its shores is the kingdom I spoke of. But it is very powerful, and if you wish to attack it you will need far more men than you have here."

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This was the first the Spaniards had heard of the great southern ocean or of the rich land of Peru. This must be the ocean, thought Balboa, which Columbus sought for without success, the waters which border the East Indies, and the great and rich nation on its shores must be one of the famous countries of Asia. At once the desire arose in his mind to gaze on that unknown sea.

Balboa felt it necessary to do something striking and do it quickly. He had received letters from Zamudio, the agent he had sent to Spain, which were very discouraging. Enciso had complained to King Ferdinand of the way in which he had been treated, and the king had not only refused to support Balboa with a royal warrant for his actions, but had condemned his course and ordered him to return to Spain. His hopes of fortune and greatness were at an end unless he could win the favor of the king by some great enterprise. Such would be the discovery of that great ocean, and this he determined to attempt.

The Isthmus of Darien, which he would have to cross, is not over sixty miles wide. But many of these are miles of mountain, on which grow forests so dense as to be almost impassable. There, too, where it rains for more than half the year, the valleys are converted into marshes, and are so often overflowed that in many places the natives have to dwell in the trees, while from the high grounds rush swollen rivers, fierce and threatening. To march across an unknown and perilous country like this, led by treacherous Indian guides, was a bold and desperate enterprise, surpassing any which the Spaniards had yet attempted. But Balboa was one of the most daring and intrepid of them all, and to win the favor of his sovereign there was no danger he was not ready to face.

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For the perilous expedition he could muster only one hundred and ninety men. But these were veterans, hardened to the climate of the isthmus, and ready to follow him whatever the peril. They had good reason to trust his courage and readiness in emergencies, for they had found him always brave and alert. A thousand Indians were taken with them, to carry their provisions, and they added to their force a number of the fierce bloodhounds which were dreaded by the natives as much as the fire-arms of the Spaniards.

Thus equipped, the expedition set out on the 1st of September, 1513, sailing along the coast to Coyba, where dwelt a friendly chief. Here half the men were left to guard their vessels and canoes. With the remainder the terrible journey across the rock-ribbed and forest-covered isthmus was begun.

No sooner had the Spaniards left the coast than troubles and perils thickened around them. The country was difficult to traverse, the people were bold and hostile. With their poisoned arrows they proved no feeble antagonists. As the adventurers left the plain and toiled up the mountains, a warlike cacique, with a large body of followers, met them in a narrow pass and boldly disputed the way. A fierce battle ensued, ending in favor of the Spaniards, who cut their way through the savages, leaving hundreds of them dead on the ground.

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Thus, fighting nature and fighting men, they toiled onward and upward, until the six days fixed for their journey had stretched out to twenty-five. But now hope burned fresh in their hearts, for their guides assured them that from the top of the next mountain they could see the ocean they so ardently sought. Up the steep pass they toiled, until near the lofty summit, when Balboa bade them halt and went on alone, that he might be the first to gaze on the wonderful spectacle.

Soon he stood on the mountain-top, and there, to his infinite delight, sparkled and spread before his eyes the mightiest ocean of the earth, stretching away to the north, south, and west as far as human eye could see. Overwhelmed by the stupendous vision, he fell prostrate on the ground, like a worshipper before the object of his adoration. Then, rising to his knees, he thanked God for the great boon vouchsafed to him.

His men, gazing eagerly upward, saw him rise and beckon them, while with his other hand he pointed wildly westward. With springing steps they rushed to his side, and joined in his delight and his thanks to God as the marvellous spectacle met their eyes. Heaps of stones were piled up to show that they had taken possession of this spot for his sovereign, and as they went down the farther slope they carved on many trees the name of King Ferdinand of Castile, as the lord of this new land.

[pg 040]

Let us repeat here the closing lines of Keats's famous sonnet to Homer, in which a great poet has admirably depicted the scene, though, by a strange error, giving the credit to Cortez instead of Balboa:

"Then felt I like some watcher of the skies
When a new planet swims into his ken;

Or like stout Cortez, when with eagle eyes
He stared at the Pacific—and all his men
Looked at each other with a wild surmise—
Silent, upon a peak in Darien."

Twelve men were sent on in advance to seek the easiest and shortest path to the sea, one of them a man destined to become still more famous than Balboa,—Francisco Pizarro, the future conqueror of Peru. Reaching the shore, they found on it two stranded canoes, into which stepped two of the men, Blaze de Atienza and Alousa Martine, calling on their comrades to witness that they were the first to embark on that sea.

For three days the remaining men waited advices from their pioneers, and then followed the guides sent them to the shore, Balboa, armed with his sword and buckler, rushing into the water to his middle, and claiming possession of that vast sea and all its shores in the name of his king, for whom he pledged himself to defend it against all comers.

[pg 041] Such was the discovery of the great South Sea, as Balboa named it, the Pacific Ocean, as Magellan soon after called it. The people of the coast told the Spaniards of a rich and mighty kingdom that lay to the south, and whose people had tame animals to carry their burdens. The form of these they drew on the sand, their long necks convincing Balboa that they were camels, and that the land indicated must be Asia. They really represented the llama of Peru, an animal resembling the camel in form.

After remaining for some time on the coast, gathering all the information he could obtain, Balboa led his travel-worn men back to Darien, resolved to return with a stronger force next year and seek that distant land of gold. But this exploit was left for Pizarro, one of the ablest and bravest of the men who took part in this pioneer expedition.

It was the 18th of January, 1514, when the adventurers reached their starting-point at Santa Maria, when the people heard of his discovery with the utmost joy. Messengers were at once sent to Spain, with an account of the remarkable exploit, which was received with an enthusiasm little less than had been the news of the discovery of the New World. If Columbus had discovered a new land, Balboa had matched it with the discovery of a new ocean, added to which was the story of a land of gold, for whose conquest Balboa asked for a reinforcement of a thousand men.

[pg 042] Unfortunate as Columbus had been, the new discovery was destined to still greater ill-fortune, as we shall soon see. Before his messengers reached Spain a new governor, Pedrarias de Avila, had been appointed and had set sail, with fifteen vessels and fifteen hundred men. Balboa had nearly five hundred men under his command, but he at once submitted to the decision of his king and accepted Pedrarias as his superior. The fifteen hundred new men landed in that pestilential climate, in the unhealthy season, paid bitterly for their imprudence. A violent disease attacked them; scarcity of provisions made it worse; and within a month more than six hundred of them had died, while others hastened away from that noxious spot.

At length news came that the king fully appreciated the splendid discovery of Balboa; letters of high praise were received, and he was appointed *Adelantado*, or admiral of the South Sea, Pedrarias being ordered to support him in all his operations. The rivals now became reconciled, their union being made firmer by Pedrarias giving his daughter in marriage to Balboa.

The adventurer now began active preparations for an exploration of the South Sea, materials for ship-building being conveyed, with the greatest labor, across the isthmus, and two brigantines constructed. There was no lack of volunteers for the expedition, and the vessels were launched and sailed to the Pearl Islands, the inclement weather alone preventing them from going on to the coast of Peru.

[pg 043] Thus there seemed a great career opening before Balboa at the very moment when adverse fate was gathering darkly around him. Pedrarias had grown jealous of his daring exploits and the fame that seemed his coming meed, and, cherishing treacherous designs, by a crafty message induced him to return to Acla, his new capital.

On arriving there, Balboa was at once seized by order of the governor, thrown into prison, and put on trial on a charge of disloyalty to the king and an intention to revolt against his superior. The judge was forced to condemn him to death, and the fatal sentence was at once carried into effect, the great discoverer being beheaded on the public square of Acla. Thus, in blood and treachery, ended the career of one of the ablest of the bold adventurers of Spain.

TEZCUCO.

About a hundred years before the Spanish conquest of the Aztecs, there reigned over the kingdom of Tezcucó, in the valley of Mexico, a monarch whose history is as interesting and romantic as any that can be found in the annals of Europe. His story was preserved by his descendants, and its principal events are as follows:



FLOATING GARDENS ON THE CHENAMPAS.

The city of Tezcucó, the capital of the Acolhuans, stood on the eastern borders of the lake on whose opposite side was Mexico, the Aztec capital. About the year 1418 the Acolhuans were attacked by a kindred race, the Tepanecs, who, after a desperate struggle, captured their city, killed their monarch, and subjugated their kingdom. The heir to the crown, the young Prince Nezahualcoyotl, concealed himself in the foliage of a tree when the triumphant foe broke into the palace, and from his hiding-place saw his father killed before his eyes. This was the opening event in a history as full of deeds of daring and perilous escapes as that of the "Young Chevalier of English history."

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The young prince did not long remain at liberty. Soon after his flight from the city he fell into the hands of his foes, and was brought back and thrown into a dungeon. This led to the first romantic incident in his career. The governor of the fortress prison was an old servant of the royal family of Tezcucó, and aided the little captive to escape in disguise, taking his place in the dungeon. He paid for his loyalty with his life, but he willingly gave it in exchange for the liberty of the heir to the throne.

The royal boy had friends in the Mexican capital. He was, in fact, closely related to the Aztec monarch, and through his good offices he was at length permitted to reside in that city. Afterwards he was allowed to return to Tezcucó, where for eight years he dwelt in privacy, studying under the teachers of his early youth, and unheeded by the party in power. Thus the boy grew to manhood, cherishing in his soul ardent hopes of regaining the throne of his ancestors.

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A change came when the Tepanec conqueror died and his son, Maxtla, succeeded to the throne. The new king was of a suspicious disposition, and when Nezahualcoyotl sought his capital to render him homage on his accession, Maxtla treated with disdain the little gift of flowers which the young prince laid at his feet, and turned his back on him in the presence of his chieftains. Evidently the palace was no place of safety for the Tezcucan prince, and, warned by a friend among the courtiers, he hastened to withdraw from the court and seek a refuge in his native city of Tezcucó. Here the tyrant dared not proceed openly against him. His popular manners had won him many friends, and the ancient subjects of his family looked upon him as a coming leader who might win back for them their lost liberty. The prince had given evidence of the possession of talent and energy, and Maxtla, fearful of his growing popularity, resolved to make away with him by stratagem. He accordingly invited him to an evening's entertainment, where he had assassins ready to murder him. Fortunately, the tutor of the prince suspected the plot, and contrived to replace the youth by a person who strongly resembled him, and who became the victim of the fate intended for him.

Maxtla, baffled in his murderous stratagem, now resolved to kill him openly, and sent a party of soldiers to the city, who were instructed to enter the palace, seize the prince, and slay him on the spot. Again the watchfulness of his old teacher saved him. Warned of his danger, and advised to flee, the prince refused to do so, but boldly awaited the assassins.

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When they reached the palace in which he resided, they found him playing at ball in the courtyard. He received them courteously, showing no suspicion of their errand, and invited them in to take some refreshment after their journey. While they were thus engaged, he strolled carelessly into an adjoining saloon; but the doors being open and the soldiers able to see through both apartments, his movements gave them no concern. It was the custom, however, when any one entered the presence of a great lord, for the servants to throw aromatics into a burning censer. This the prince's attendants did, and such clouds of incense arose as to hide him from the unsuspecting soldiers. Thus obscured, he entered a secret passage which led to a large earthen pipe, formerly employed to bring water to the palace. In this he concealed himself until nightfall, and then made his way into the suburbs, where he found shelter in the house of one of his father's former vassals.

Maxtla, enraged to find that his proposed victim had twice escaped him, grew more determined on his death, and ordered immediate and thorough pursuit, promising to reward whoever should take him, dead or alive, with the hand of a noble lady and an ample domain. Troops of armed men scoured the country in every direction, searching all suspected places, and some of them entered the cottage in which he had taken refuge. Here there was a heap of the maguey fibres used in the manufacture of cloth, and hid beneath this the fugitive escaped capture. But the chase soon grew so hot that he left this place for the wooded hill country between his state and the neighboring one of Tlascala, hoping to find safety in its thickets and caverns.

The royal fugitive now led a wretched life, wandering from place to place, exposed to all the inclemencies of the weather, remaining concealed by day, and stealing out at night in search of food. His pursuers, eager to win the enticing reward, kept up an active search, more than once coming dangerously near to his retreat.

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Very interesting stories are told of his adventures in this period of peril. The high rewards offered did not suffice to wean from him the attachment of the people, and more than once he owed his safety to their loyalty. Some of them submitted to torture, and even to loss of life, rather than betray his place of retreat to his enemies. Even many of the soldiers were his friends, and once, when hotly pursued, he took refuge among a small party of these, who were dancing around a large drum. To conceal him from his enemies they placed him in the drum and continued their dance around it.

At another time the pursuers were so close to him that he just succeeded in turning the crest of a hill when they began to climb it on the other side. Here he fortunately found a girl who was reaping *chia*, a plant whose seeds were used in making palatable drinks. Telling her who he was and of his great danger, he got her to cover him up with a heap of the plants she had cut, and when the pursuers came up and asked if she had seen him, the faithful girl coolly replied that she had, and pointed out a path which she said he had taken.

None of the natives showed any inclination to betray him, despite the richness of the promised rewards.

"Would you not deliver up the prince if he came in your way?" he asked of a peasant who did not recognize him.

"Not I," was the reply.

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"What! not for a fair lady's hand, and a rich domain as dowry?"

The peasant shook his head decisively and laughed in disdain.

But, in spite of the loyalty of the people, the prince was in constant danger, and his situation, in the rough fastnesses of the hills and forests, became very distressing.

"Leave me," he said to the faithful few who kept with him in his wanderings and shared his sufferings. "Leave me to my fate. Why should you throw away your lives for one whom fortune steadily persecutes?"

But they clung to his fortunes still, despite their danger and the fact that most of the great nobles of the land had sought safety and reward by an adhesion to the usurper.

Meanwhile, events were working in favor of the fugitive. Maxtla had shown himself an oppressor, and his ambition and military successes had caused much alarm in the surrounding states, where his tyranny was contrasted with the mild rule of the former monarchs of Tezcuco. The friends of the young prince took advantage of this feeling, and succeeded in forming a coalition against his enemy. A day was fixed for a general rising, and on the date appointed Nezahualcoyotl found himself at the head of an army strong enough to face that of Maxtla and the Tepanecs.

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The two armies soon met and victory rested on the banner of the young prince, the forces of Maxtla being badly beaten. No longer a hunted fugitive, but at the head of a victorious army, he marched in triumph to the capital which he had left with a price on his head, his joyful subjects crowding to the route of march to render homage to their rightful sovereign. The Mexicans, who were angry at the tyrannic conduct of Maxtla, readily allied themselves with the young victor, and a series of bloody battles followed, the usurper being at length defeated under the walls of his own capital. He was dragged from the baths, to which he had fled for concealment, and

sacrificed to the cruel gods of the Aztecs; his royal city was razed to the ground, and its site was reserved as the great slave-market of the surrounding nations.

Thus it was that Nezahualcoyotl came to the throne of his ancestors, where he was to prove himself the greatest monarch of whom we have any record in the American annals. The story of his reign is far too full of detail for the space we can give to it, but is of such interest that we may venture on a concise account of it, as an example of the career of the most illustrious of the ancient American sovereigns.

The first thing the new monarch did was to proclaim a general amnesty. He not only pardoned the rebel nobles, but raised some of them to posts of honor and confidence. This was not only politic but just, since their offences were mainly due to fear of the usurper. Under the circumstances he could safely treat them with magnanimity.

[pg 051] He next remodelled the government of the kingdom, and framed a code of laws which seemed so wise that it was adopted by his allies, the Aztecs and Tlacopans. Councils of war, of finance, and of justice were established, and also a council of state, whose members acted as the immediate advisers of the king, and aided him in the despatch of business. But the most remarkable of these new departments was the "council of music," which was devoted to the encouragement of science and art, and served as a general board of education for the country. Historical compositions and poems were recited before it, and altogether it indicated a degree of civilization which we would scarcely look for in any part of ancient America. Its historians, orators, and poets became celebrated throughout the country, the allied monarchs presided over its deliberations, and among its chief bards was the king himself, who entered into impartial competition with his subjects for the prizes given for the best poems. Many of his odes were long preserved, and may perhaps still rest in the dusty archives of Mexico or Spain.

[pg 052] The far-seeing monarch did not content himself with writing poetry, or encouraging historians,—who wrote subject to the penalty that any one who wilfully lied should be punished with death,—but he sought to develop all the arts. Agriculture was greatly encouraged, the population rapidly increased, new towns and cities sprang up, and the borders of the nation were extended by successful wars. He made his capital the most stately city of the land. Special edifices were built for his nobles, whom he wished to reside at the court. There were more than four hundred of these palatial mansions, but far exceeding them in magnificence was the grand palace he built for himself. This covered a space of three thousand seven hundred feet in length and nearly three thousand feet in width. A wall surrounded it, enclosing an outer court which formed the great market-place of the city, and an inner one surrounded by the council chambers and halls of justice. There were apartments for ambassadors from other states, and a spacious saloon in which the poets and men of science met to study and converse. Here also were kept the public archives.

[pg 053] The royal apartments adjoined this inner court, and rivalled in beauty those of Oriental lands. Alabaster or stucco of rich tints covered some of the walls, while others were hung with tapestries of the gorgeous Indian feather-work. Long arcades and winding pathways bordered with verdure led to gardens where were baths and sparkling fountains shadowed by lofty trees. Fish of various kinds stocked the basins, and in rich aviaries were birds of glowing tropical plumage. Many birds and animals were reproduced in gold and silver with wonderful fidelity to nature. In the inner apartments dwelt the wives and children of the monarch, who were as numerous as those of an Eastern sultan. Such was the famous palace, in which were three hundred apartments, some of them fifty yards square. It is said that two hundred thousand workmen were employed in building it. In this splendid residence dwelt a monarch who in his youthful days had been glad to share with wild animals a shelter in the thickets and caverns of the mountains.

Nezahualcoyotl did not confine his love for magnificence to this palatial residence. Beautiful villas were built in various picturesque localities and adorned with all the requisites of pleasure and comfort. His favorite retreat from the cares of office was built on a rounded hill about six miles from the city. Here were terraced gardens reached by a stairway of five hundred and twenty steps, many of them hewn in the native rock. In the summit garden was a reservoir kept filled with water by an aqueduct carried on masonry buttresses for several miles over hill and valley. In its centre was a large rock, on which were carved in hieroglyphics the principal events of each year of the king's reign.

[pg 054] Lower down were other reservoirs, adorned with statuary, and yielding water to channels that ran through the gardens or to cascades that tumbled riotously over the rocks. Here were marble porticoes and pavilions, and baths cut in the solid rock, which the natives still show to visitors under the title of the "Baths of Montezuma." Near the base of the hill, amid lofty groves of cedar, rose the royal villa, with its light arcades and airy halls, affording a delightful relief to the monarch from the duties of the court. Relics of this villa and garden still remain to attest their former beauty, and indicate that this Indian king lived in a magnificence resembling that of the far-famed court of the caliph Haroun-al-Raschid.

He was like the celebrated caliph of the "Arabian Nights" in another way, for it was his custom to wander about the streets, conversing with the humblest of his people and learning their condition and needs from their own words. Many anecdotes are told of this kind, in which it was his delight to reward merit and relieve distress. Some of these may be read with interest.

On one occasion he met a boy who was gathering sticks in a field for fuel, and asked him why he did not go into the neighboring forest, where he would find plenty of them.

"I dare not do that," said the boy. "It's the king's wood, and he would punish me with death if I took sticks from there."

"What kind of man is your king?"

"He is a very hard man," answered the boy, "for he takes from his people what God has given them."

The boy was right; the forest laws in Tezcuco were as severe as those of Norman England. The king advised the boy not to heed such cruel laws but to help himself in the forest, for there was no one who would betray him. But the lad sturdily refused, and told his tempter that he was a traitor who wished to bring him into trouble.

[pg 055] The next day the boy and his parents were sent for to come to the palace. They obeyed with wonder and dread, and the boy was filled with terror on seeing the king and recognizing him as the man with whom he had talked so freely. But the good-natured monarch bade him not to fear, and thanked him for the lesson he had given his king, praising his respect for the laws and commending his parents for bringing up their son so wisely. He dismissed them with liberal presents, and afterwards gave orders that any one might gather fallen wood in the forest, if they did not interfere with the standing timber.

Another adventure was with a poor woodman and his wife. The man, as he stood in the marketplace with his little store, complained bitterly of his lot, as compared with that of those who lived idly amid luxuries in the palace. The wife bade him be careful, as he might be overheard in his complaints. The king, looking down on the market from a latticed window, and amusing himself with the chatter of the market people, heard the words of the couple, and ordered them to be brought into his presence.

[pg 056] He asked the frightened pair what they had said, and was pleased to find that they answered him truly. Then he bade them reflect that if he had great wealth, he had great demands upon it; that he who had a nation to govern could not lead an idle life; and told them "to be more cautious in future, as walls had ears." He then dismissed them, after giving them a quantity of cloth and a good supply of cacao,—the coin of the country. "Go," he said; "with the little you now have, you will be rich; while, with all my riches, I shall still be poor."

Of all the stories told of this famous monarch, there is only one not to his credit, and of this we may speak in passing, as it bears a remarkable resemblance to that told in the Bible of David and Uriah. He fell in love with a beautiful maiden, who was betrothed to an old lord of his kingdom, and to obtain her hand he bade the old man take command of a warlike expedition against the Tlascalans. Two chiefs were bidden to keep near him and bring him into the thick of the fight, that he might lose his life, which the king said he had forfeited by a great crime. The old man suspected what was meant, and said so in a farewell entertainment to his friends. He was correct in his prophecy; like Uriah, he soon fell in battle, and the royal lover's path was clear.

[pg 057] The king now secretly offered his hand and heart to the maiden, who was by no means inconsolable for the loss of her old lover, and willingly accepted. To prevent any suspicion of what he had done, he had the maiden brought to his villa to witness some ceremony there. Standing on a balcony of the palace, the king pretended to be struck with her beauty, and asked, "Who is the lovely young woman, yonder in the garden?" Some of those present soon learned her name and rank, which was that of a princess of the royal house of Mexico. She was asked to enter the palace and receive the attention due to her station, and the king was not long in publicly declaring his love. The marriage soon after took place, in the presence of his brother monarchs of Mexico and Tlacopan, and with great pomp and ceremony.

Such was the one blot in the history of this famous monarch. Aside from this act of treachery, it is remarkable to find so great and high-minded a monarch in the early annals of the nations of Mexico, and one whose history is so full of romantic adventure.

[pg 058] **THE FAMOUS RETREAT OF CORTEZ AND THE SPANIARDS.**

There is no chapter in all history more crowded with interesting and romantic events than the

story of the conquest of Mexico by the Spaniards under Cortez. And of all these records of desperate daring and wonderful success, the most extraordinary is the tale of the *Noche Triste*, the terrible night-retreat of the Spaniards from the Aztec capital. No one can read this story, and that of the remarkable victory of Otumba which followed it, without feeling that Cortez and his men were warriors worthy of the most warlike age. This oft-told story we shall here again relate.

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In a preceding tale we described how Cortez set out from Cuba on his great expedition, with a few hundred soldiers and a small number of cannon, muskets, and horses. It may briefly be stated here that he sought to conquer a warlike and powerful nation with this insignificant force, less than a modern regiment. We might relate how he landed in Mexico; won, with the terror of his horses and guns and the valor of his men, victory in every battle; gained allies among the foes of the Aztecs; made his way into their capital; seized and held prisoner their emperor, Montezuma, and for a time seemed to be full master of the land. We might go on to tell how at length the Mexicans rose in fury, attacked the Spaniards with the courage of desperation, mortally wounded their own emperor, and at length brought the invaders into such terrible straits that they were forced to fight their way out of the city as their last hope of life.

To understand what followed, it must be stated that the city of Mexico lay, not in the open country, but on an island in the centre of a large lake, and that all the roads leading to it passed over narrow causeways of earth across this lake. Each of these causeways was broken at intervals by wide ditches, with bridges crossing them. But the Aztecs had removed these bridges, and thus added immensely to the difficulty of the night-march which the desperate Spaniards were obliged to make.

It was at midnight on the 1st of July, 1520, that Cortez and his men threw open the gates of the palace fortress in which they had long defended themselves against the furious assaults of thousands of daring foes. The night was dark and cloudy, and a drizzling rain was falling. Not an enemy was to be seen, and as they made their way with as little noise as possible along the great street of Tlacopan, all was hushed in silence. Hope rose in their hearts. The tramp of the horses and the rumble of the guns and baggage-wagons passed unheard, and they reached the head of the causeway without waking a sleeping Aztec warrior.

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Here was the first break in the causeway, and they had brought with them a bridge to lay across it. But here also were some Indian sentinels, who fled in haste on seeing them, rousing the sleeping city with their cries. The priests on the summit of the great temple pyramid were also on the watch, and when the shouts of alarm reached their ears from below, they sounded their shells and beat their huge drum, which was only heard in times of peril or calamity. Instantly the city broke from its slumber, and as the leading Spaniards crossed the bridge a distant sound was heard, which rapidly approached. Soon from every street and lane poured enemies, flinging stones and arrows into the crowded ranks of the Spaniards as they came. On the lake was heard a splashing sound, as of many oars, and the war-cry of a host of combatants broke on the air. A brief interval had sufficed to change the silence into a frightful uproar of sound and the restful peace into the fast growing tumult of furious battle.

The Spaniards pushed steadily along the causeway, fighting only to drive back the assailants who landed from their canoes and rushed in fury upon the marching ranks. The horsemen spurred over them, riding them down; the men on foot cut them down with their swords, or hurled them backward with the butts of their guns; the Indian allies of the Spaniards attacked them fiercely, and the roar of war spread far through the gloom of the night.

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Onward marched the Spaniards, horse and foot; onward creaked and rumbled the artillery and the wagons; and the second canal in the causeway was reached while the rear files were not yet across the first. The Spaniards had made a fatal mistake in bringing with them only one bridge. When the last of the retreating force was across this, a vigorous effort was made to raise it and carry it to the canal in front, but in vain. The weight of men, horses, and cannon had wedged it so firmly in the earth and stones that it could not be moved. Every nerve was strained to lift the heavy mass, until, many of the workmen being killed and all wounded by the torrent of Aztec missiles, they were forced to abandon it.

When the dread tidings that the bridge could not be raised spread through the crowded host, a cry of despair arose that almost drowned the sounds of conflict. All means of retreat were cut off. Before them lay a deep and yawning ditch. Behind them pressed an army of assailants. On each side hundreds of canoes dashed on the causeway, yielding foes who rushed in fury upon their crowded ranks. All hope seemed lost. All discipline was at an end. Every one thought only of saving his own life, without regard to the weak or wounded. The leading files, gathered on the brink of the gulf, were pressed forward by the rear. The horsemen in front dashed into the water and swam across, but some of the horses failed to climb the steep and slippery bank, and rolled back with their mail-clad riders headlong into the lake.

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After them pell mell came the infantry, some seeking to swim, others forced into the water to sink to a muddy death; many of them slain by the arrows and war-clubs of the Aztecs; others, wounded or stunned, dragged into the canoes and carried away to be sacrificed to the terrible war-god of the pagan foe. Along the whole length of the causeway, from ditch to ditch, the contest raged fearfully. The Aztecs, satisfied that they had now got their detested foes in their power, fought like demons, grappling with the Christians and rolling with them down the sloping way together; seeking to take their enemies alive that they might be kept for the bloody sacrifice.

With the horrid shouts of the combatants, the cries of vengeance and groans of agony, the prayers to the saints and the blessed Virgin, mingled the screams of women, of whom there were several, both Spaniard and Indian, in the Christian ranks. One of these, Maria de Estrada, fought as valiantly as any of the warriors, battling staunchly with broadsword and target in the thickest of the fray, and proving herself as valiant a soldier as the best.

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During this terrible contest, Cortez was not at rest. He was everywhere, ordering, fighting, inspiring, seeking to restore the lost discipline to his ranks. Conscious that all was lost unless the fatal ditch could be crossed, and feeling that life must be considered before wealth, he hurried forward everything, heavy guns, ammunition-wagons, baggage-vans, and hurled them into the water along with the spoil of the Spaniards, bales of costly goods, chests of solid ingots, everything that would serve to fill the fatal gap. With these were mingled bodies of men and horses, drowned in that deadly ditch, the whole forming a terrible pathway across which the survivors stumbled and clambered until they reached the other side.

Cortez, riding forward, found a spot in the ditch that was fordable, and here, with the water up to his saddle-girths, he tried to bring order out of confusion, and called his followers to this path to safety. But his voice was lost in the turmoil, and with a few cavaliers who kept with him, he pressed forward to the van, doubly saddened by seeing his favorite page, Juan de Salazar, struck down in death by his side.

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Here he found the valiant Gonzalo de Sandoval, who, with about twenty other cavaliers, had led the van, composed of two hundred Spanish foot-soldiers. They were halted before the third and final breach in the causeway, a ditch as wide and deep as those which had been passed. Fortunately it was not so closely beset by the enemy, who were still engaged with the centre and rear, and the gallant cavaliers plunged without hesitation into the water, followed by the foot, some swimming, some clinging desperately to the manes and tails of the horses, some carried to the bottom by the weight of the fatal gold with which they were heavily laden. On leaving the fortress in which they had so long defended themselves, much of the gold which they had gathered was necessarily abandoned. Cortez told the soldiers to take what they wished of it, but warned them not to overload themselves, saying, "He travels safest in the dark night who travels lightest." Many of those who failed to regard this wise counsel paid for their cupidity with their death.

Those who safely passed this final ditch were at the end of their immediate peril. Soon they were off the causeway and on solid ground, where the roar of the battle came more faintly to their ears. But word came to them that the rear-guard was in imminent danger and would be overwhelmed unless relieved. It seemed an act of desperation to return, but the valiant and warm-hearted cavaliers did not hesitate when this cry for aid was heard. Turning their horses, they galloped back, pushed through the pass, swam the canal again, and rode into the thick of the fight on the opposite section of the causeway.

The night was now passing, and the first gray light of day was visible in the east. By its dim illumination the frightful combat could be seen in all its horrid intensity. Everywhere lay dead bodies of Christian or pagan; the dark masses of the warriors could be seen locked in deadly struggle crowding the blood-stained causeway; while the lake, far and near, was crowded with canoes, filled with armed and ardent Aztec warriors, yelling their triumphant war-cry.

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Cortez and his companions found Alvarado, who led the rear, unhorsed and wounded, yet fighting like a hero. His noble steed, which had borne him safely through many a hard fight, had fallen under him. With a handful of followers he was desperately striving to repel the overwhelming tide of the enemy which was pouring on him along the causeway, a dozen of the Indians falling for every Spaniard slain. The artillery had done good work in the early part of the contest, but the fury of the assault had carried the Aztecs up to and over the guns, and only a hand-to-hand conflict remained. The charge of the returning cavaliers created a temporary check, and a feeble rally was made, but the flood of foes soon came on again and drove them resistlessly back.

Cortez and the cavaliers with him were forced to plunge once more into the canal, not all of them this time escaping. Alvarado stood on the brink for a moment, uncertain what to do, death behind him and deadly peril before. He was a man of great strength and agility, and despair now gave him courage. Setting his long lance firmly on the wreck that strewed the bottom, he sprang vigorously forward and cleared the wide gap at a bound, a feat that filled all who saw it with amazement, the natives exclaiming, as they beheld the seemingly impossible leap, "This is truly the *Tonatiuh*,—the child of the Sun!" This name they had given Alvarado from his fair features and flaxen hair. How great the leap was no one has told us, though the name of "Alvarado's leap" still clings to the spot.

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Thus ended the frightful *noche triste*, or "doleful night." Cortez led the remnant of his men off the causeway, a feeble, wounded, straggling few, faltering from weariness and loss of blood. Fortunately, the Aztecs, attracted by the rich spoil that strewed the ground, did not pursue, or it is doubtful if a man of the Spaniards, in their worn and wounded state, would have survived. How many perished in that night of dread no one knows. A probable estimate is about five hundred Spaniards and four thousand natives, nearly all the rear-guard having fallen. Of forty-six horses, half had been slain. The baggage, the guns, the ammunition, the muskets, and nearly all the treasure were gone. The only arms left the warriors were their swords and a few damaged cross-bows, while their mail was broken, their garments were tattered, their proud crests and banners

gone, their bright arms soiled, and only a miserable and shattered fragment of their proud force was left, these dragging themselves along with pain and difficulty.



AZTEC IDOLS CARVED IN STONE.

Day after day passed as the Spaniards and their allies, the Tlascalans,—inveterate enemies of the Aztecs,—slowly moved away from that blood-stained avenue of death, now little molested by their foes, and gradually recovering from their fatigue. On the seventh morning they reached the mountain height which overlooks the plain of Otumba, a point less than thirty miles from the capital. This plain they were obliged to traverse on their way to Tlascala, their chosen place of retreat.

[pg 067] As they looked down on the broad level below them they saw with shrinking hearts why they had not been as yet molested. A mighty host filled the whole valley from side to side, their arms and standards glistening in the sun, their numbers so great that the stoutest heart among the Spaniards viewed them with dismay, and Cortez, daring and hopeful as he was, felt that his last hour had now surely come.

But this stout leader was not the man to give way to despair. There was nothing to do but to cut their way through this vast array or perish in the attempt. To retreat would have been to invite sure destruction. Fortunately, they had rested for two nights and a day, and men and horses had regained much of their old strength. Without hesitation, Cortez prepared for the onset, giving his force as broad a front as possible, and guarding its flanks with his little body of horse, now twenty in all. Then, with a few words of encouragement, in which he told them of the victories they had won, and with orders to his men to thrust, not strike, with their swords, and to the horsemen on no account to lose their lances, and to strike at the faces of the foe, he gave the word to advance.

[pg 068] At first the natives recoiled from the stern and fierce onset, rolling back till they left a wide lane for the passage of their foes. But they quickly rallied and poured on the little band in their midst, until it seemed lost in the overwhelming mass. A terrible fray followed, the Christians, as one writer says, standing "like an islet against which the breakers, roaring and surging, spend their fury in vain." The struggle was one of man to man, the Tlascalans and Spaniards alike fighting with obstinate courage, while the little band of horsemen charged deep into the enemy's ranks, riding over them and cutting them down with thrust and blow, their onset giving fresh spirit to the infantry.

But that so small a force could cut their way through that enormous multitude of armed and valiant enemies seemed impossible. As the minutes lengthened into hours many of the Tlascalans and some of the Spaniards were slain, and not a man among them had escaped wounds. Cortez received a cut on the head, and his horse was hurt so badly that he was forced to dismount and exchange it for a strong animal from the baggage-train. The fight went on thus for several hours, the sun growing hotter as it rose in the sky, and the Christians, weak from their late wounds, gradually losing strength and spirit. The enemy pressed on in ever fresh numbers, forcing the horse back on the foot, and throwing the latter into some disorder. With every minute now the conflict grew more hopeless, and it seemed as if nothing were left but to sell their lives as dearly as possible.

[pg 069] At this critical juncture a happy chance changed the whole fortune of the day. Cortez, gazing with eagle eye around the field in search of some vision of hope, some promise of safety, saw at no great distance in the midst of the throng a splendidly dressed chief, who was borne in a rich litter and surrounded by a gayly attired body of young warriors. A head-dress of beautiful plumes, set in gold and gems, rose above him, and over this again was a short staff bearing a golden net,

the standard of the Aztecs.

The instant Cortez beheld this person and his emblem his eye lighted with triumph. He knew him for the commander of the foe, and the golden net as its rallying standard. Turning to the cavaliers beside him, he pointed eagerly to the chief, exclaiming, "There is our mark! Follow me!" Then, shouting his war-cry, he spurred his steed into the thick of the foe. Sandoval, Alvarado, and others spurred furiously after him, while the enemy fell back before this sudden and fierce assault.

On swept the cavaliers, rending through the solid ranks, strewing their path with the dead and dying, bearing down all who opposed them. A few minutes of this furious onset carried them to the elevated spot on which were the Aztec chief and his body-guard. Thrusting and cutting with tiger-like strength and ferocity, Cortez rent a way through the group of young nobles and struck a furious blow at the Indian commander, piercing him with his lance and hurling him to the ground. A young cavalier beside him, Juan de Salamanca, sprang from his horse and despatched the fallen chief. Then he tore away the banner and handed it to Cortez.

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All this was the work almost of a moment. Its effect was remarkable. The guard, overwhelmed by the sudden onset, fled in a panic, which was quickly communicated to their comrades. The tidings spread rapidly. The banner of the chief had disappeared. He had been slain. The blindness of panic suddenly infected the whole host, which broke and fled in wild terror and confusion. The Spaniards and Tlascalans were not slow in taking advantage of this new aspect of affairs. Forgetting their wounds and fatigue, they dashed in revengeful fury on the flying foe, cutting them down by hundreds as they fled. Not until they had amply repaid their losses on the bloody causeway did they return to gather up the booty which strewed the field. It was great, for, in accordance with Cortez's instructions, they had struck especially at the chiefs, and many of these were richly ornamented with gold and jewels.

Thus ended the famous battle of Otumba, the most remarkable victory, in view of the great disparity of forces, ever won in the New World. Chance gave the Spaniards victory, but it was a chance made useful only by the genius of a great commander. The following day the fugitive army reached the soil of Tlascala and were safe among their friends. History has not a more heroic story to tell than that of their escape from the Aztec capital, nor a more striking one than that of their subsequent return and conquest.

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PIZARRO AND THE INCA'S GOLDEN RANSOM.

The great expedition to the land of gold, which Vasco Nuñez de Balboa had planned to make, was left by his death to be carried out by one of his companions in the discovery of the South Sea, the renowned Francisco Pizarro. It was an expedition full of romantic adventure, replete with peril and suffering, crowded with bold ventures and daring deeds. But we must pass over all the earlier of these and come at once to the climax of the whole striking enterprise, the story of the seizure of the Inca of Peru in the midst of his army and the tale of his incredible ransom.

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Many and strange were the adventures of Pizarro, from the time when, with one small vessel and about one hundred desperate followers, he sailed from Panama in 1524, and ventured on the great unknown Pacific, to the time when, in 1531, he sailed again with one hundred and eighty men and about thirty horses and landed on the coast of Peru, which he designed to conquer as Cortez had conquered Mexico. A faithless and cruel wretch was this Francisco Pizarro, but he had the military merits of courage, enterprise, daring and persistency, and these qualities carried him through sufferings and adversities that would have discouraged almost any man and brought him to magical success in the end. It was the beacon of gold that lured him on through desperate enterprises and deadly perils and led him to the El Dorado of the Spanish adventurers.

Landing and capturing a point on the coast of Peru, he marched with his handful of bold followers, his horses and guns, eastward into the empire, crossed the vast and difficult mountain wall of the Andes, and reached the city of Caxamalca. Close by this city the Inca, Atahualpa, lay encamped with an army, for a civil war between him and his brother Huascar had just ended in the defeat and imprisonment of the latter.

Desperate was the situation of the small body of Spanish soldiers, when, in the late afternoon of the 15th of November, 1532, they marched into Caxamalca, which they found empty of inhabitants. About one hundred more men, with arms and horses, had joined them, but in a military sense they were but a handful still, and they had every reason to dread the consequences of their rash enterprise.

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All seemed threatening,—the desertion of the city by its people, the presence of the Inca, with a powerful army, within a league's distance, the probable hostility of the Indian emperor. All the Spaniards had to rely on were their arms,—cannon, muskets and swords of steel,—new and terrible weapons in that land, and their war-horses, whose evolutions had elsewhere filled the soul of the Indian with dismay. Yet what were these in the hands of less than three hundred men, in the presence of a strong and victorious army? Filled with anxiety, Pizarro at once despatched a body of horsemen, led by his brother Hernando and the famous cavalier Hernando de Soto, to visit the Inca in his camp.

Great was the astonishment of the Indian soldiers as this strange cavalcade, with clang of arms and blast of trumpet, swept by, man and horse seeming like single beings to their unaccustomed eyes. De Soto, the best mounted of them all, showed his command of his steed in the Inca's presence, by riding furiously over the plain, wheeling in graceful curves, and displaying all the vigor and beauty of skilled horsemanship, finally checking the noble animal in full career when so near the Inca that some of the foam from its lips was thrown on the royal garments. Yet, while many of those near drew back in terror, Atahualpa maintained an unflinching dignity and composure, hiding every show of dread, if any such inspired him.

To the envoys he said, through an interpreter the Spaniards had brought, "Tell your captain that I am keeping a fast, which will end to-morrow morning. I will then visit him with my chieftains. Meanwhile, let him occupy the public buildings on the square, and no other."

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Refreshments were now offered the Spaniards, but these they declined, as they did not wish to dismount. Yet they did not refuse to quaff the sparkling drink offered them in golden vases of great size brought by beautiful maidens. Then they rode slowly back, despondent at what they had seen,—the haughty dignity of the Inca and the strength and discipline of his army.

That night there were gloomy forebodings throughout the camp, which were increased as its occupants saw the watch-fires of the Peruvian army, glittering on the hill-sides, as one said, "as thick as the stars in heaven." Scarcely a man among them except Pizarro retained his courage; but he went round among his men, bidding them to keep up their spirits, and saying that Providence would not desert them if they trusted to their strength and their cause, as Christians against pagans. They were in Heaven's service and God would aid them.

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He then called a council of his officers and unfolded to them a desperate plan he had conceived. This was no less than to lay an ambuscade for the Inca and seize him in the face of his army, holding him as a hostage for the safety of the Christians. Nothing less decisive than this would avail them, he said. It was too late to retreat. At the first sign of such a movement the army of the Inca would be upon them, and they would all be destroyed, either there or in the intricacies of the mountain-passes. Nor could they remain inactive where they were. The Inca was crafty and hostile, and would soon surround them with a net-work of peril, from which they could not escape. To fight him in the open field was hazardous, if not hopeless. The only thing to do was to take him by surprise on his visit the next day, drive back his followers with death and terror, seize the monarch, and hold him prisoner. With the Inca in their hands his followers would not dare attack them, and they would be practically masters of the empire.

No doubt Pizarro in this plan had in mind that which Cortez had pursued in Mexico. He would take care that Atahualpa should not be killed by his own people, as Montezuma had been, and while the monarch remained alive they would have the strongest guarantee of safety. This bold plan suited the daring character of Pizarro's officers. They agreed with him that in boldness lay their only hope of success or even of life, and they left the council with renewed confidence to prepare for the desperate enterprise.

It was noon the next day before the Inca appeared, his litter borne on the shoulders of his chief nobles and surrounded by others, so glittering with ornaments that, to quote from one of the Spaniards, "they blazed like the sun." A large number of workmen in front swept every particle of rubbish from the road. Behind, and through the fields that lined the road, marched a great body of armed men. But when within half a mile of the city the procession halted, and a messenger was sent to the Spaniards to say that the Inca would encamp there for that night and enter the city the following morning.

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These tidings filled Pizarro with dismay. His men had been under arms since daybreak, the cavalry mounted, and the infantry and artillerymen at their posts. He feared the effect on their spirits of a long and trying suspense in such a critical situation, and sent word back to the Inca begging him to come on, as he had everything ready for his entertainment and expected to sup with him that night. This message turned the monarch from his purpose, and he resumed his march, though the bulk of his army was left behind, only a group of unarmed men accompanying him. He evidently had no fear or suspicion of the Spaniards. Little did he know them.

It was near the hour of sunset when the procession reached the city, several thousand Indians marching into the great square, borne high above whom was the Inca, seated in an open litter on a kind of throne made of massive gold, while a collar of emeralds of great size and beauty encircled his neck and his attire was rich and splendid. He looked around him with surprise, as there was not a Spaniard to be seen, and asked, in tones of annoyance, "Where are the strangers?"

At this moment Pizarro's chaplain, a Dominican friar, came forward, with Bible and crucifix in hand, and began to expound to him the Christian doctrines, ending by asking him to acknowledge himself a vassal of the king of Spain. The Inca, when by aid of the interpreter he had gained a glimpse of the priest's meaning, answered him with high indignation, and when the friar handed him the Bible as the authority for his words, he flung it angrily to the earth, exclaiming,—

[pg 077] "Tell your comrades that they shall give me an account of their doings in my land. I will not go from here till they have made me full satisfaction for all the wrongs they have committed."

Picking up the sacred volume, the friar hastened to Pizarro, told him what had been said, and cried out,—

"Do you not see that while we stand here wasting our breath in talking with this dog, full of pride as he is, the fields are filling with Indians? Set on, at once; I absolve you."

Pizarro waved a white scarf in the air, the signal agreed upon. A gun was fired from the fortress. Then, with the Spanish war-cry of "St. Jago and at them!" Pizarro and his followers sprang out into the square. From every avenue of the great building they occupied poured armed men, horse and foot, and rushed in warlike fury upon the Indians. Taken utterly by surprise, the latter were hurled back in confusion. Their ranks rent by the balls from cannon and musketry, hundreds of them trampled under foot by the fierce charges of the cavalry, pierced by lances or cut down by swords, they were driven resistlessly back, falling in multitudes as they wildly sought to escape.

[pg 078] The massacre went on with especial intensity around the Inca, his nobles, none of them armed, struggling with what strength they could in his defence. "Let no one who values his life strike at the Inca!" shouted Pizarro, fearing his valued prize might be slain in the wild tumult. Fiercer still grew the struggle around him. The royal litter swayed back and forth, and, as some of its bearers were slain, it was overturned, the monarch being saved from a fall to the ground by Pizarro and some others, who caught him in their arms. With all haste they bore him into the fortress and put him under close guard.

With the capture of the Inca all resistance was at an end. The unarmed Peruvians fled in terror from the fearful massacre. The soldiers in the fields were seized with panic on hearing the fatal news, and dispersed in all directions, pursued by the Spanish cavalry, who cut them down without mercy. Not till night had fallen did Pizarro's men cease the pursuit and return at the call of the trumpet to the bloody square of Caxamalca. In that frightful massacre not less than two thousand victims, perhaps many more, were slain, the most of them unarmed and helpless. That night Pizarro kept his word, that he would sup with Atahualpa, but it was a supper at which he might well have drunk blood. The banquet was served in one of the halls facing the great square, then thickly paved with the dead, the monarch, stunned by the calamity, sitting beside his captor at the dread meal.

[pg 079] Let us now go forward to a still more spectacular scene in that strange drama, one which proved that the Spaniards had truly at length reached the "land of gold." The Inca was not long a prisoner before he discovered the besetting passion of the Spaniards, their thirst for gold. A party was sent to pillage his pleasure-house, and brought back a rich booty in gold and silver, whose weight and value filled the conquerors with delight.

Thinking that he saw in this a hope of escaping from his captivity, the Inca one day said to Pizarro that if he would agree to set him free, he would cover the floor of the room in which they stood with gold. Pizarro listened with a smile of doubt. As he made no answer, the Inca said, earnestly, that "he would not merely cover the floor, but would fill the room with gold as high as he could reach," and he stood on tiptoe as he put his uplifted hand against the wall. This extraordinary offer filled Pizarro with intense astonishment. That such a thing could be done seemed utterly incredible, despite all they had learned of the riches of Peru. The avaricious conqueror, dazzled by the munificent offer, hastened to accept it, drawing a red line along the wall at the height the Inca had touched. How remarkable the ransom was may be judged from the fact that the room was about seventeen feet wide and twenty-two feet long and the mark on the wall nine feet high. To add to its value, the Inca offered to fill an adjoining but smaller room twice full with silver, and to do all this in the short time of two months. It would seem that he would need Aladdin's wonderful lamp to accomplish so vast and surprising a task.

[pg 080] As soon as the offer was made and accepted, the Inca sent messengers to Cuzco, his capital city, and to the other principal places in his kingdom, with orders to bring all the gold ornaments and utensils from his palaces and from the temples and other public buildings, and transport them in all haste to Caxamalca. While awaiting the golden spoil the monarch was treated with the fullest respect due to his rank, having his own private apartments and the society of his wives, while his nobles were permitted to visit him freely. The only thing the Spaniards took good care of was that he should be kept under close guard.

He took one advantage of his measure of liberty. His brother and rival, Huascar, though a captive, might escape and seize the control of the state, and he learned that the prisoner had sent a private message to Pizarro, offering to pay for his liberty a much larger ransom than that promised by Atahualpa. The Inca was crafty and cruel enough to remove this danger from his path, if we may accept the evidence of his captors. At any rate the royal captive was soon after drowned, declaring with his dying breath that his rival would not long survive him, but that the

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white men would avenge his murder. Atahualpa told Pizarro, with a show of great sorrow and indignation, of his brother's death, and when the Spaniard threatened to hold him responsible for it, the Inca protested that it had been done without his knowledge or consent by Huascar's keepers, who feared that their captive might escape. However it occurred, Pizarro soon afterward learned that the news was true. It may be that he was well satisfied with the fact, as it removed a leading claimant for the throne from his path.

Meanwhile, the ransom began to come in—slowly, for the distances were great, and the treasure had to be transported on foot by carriers. Most of it consisted of massive pieces of gold and silver plate, some of them weighing from fifty to seventy-five pounds. The Spaniards beheld with gleaming eyes the shining heaps of treasure, brought in on the shoulders of Indian porters, and carefully stored away under guard. On some days articles to the value of half a million dollars are said to have been brought in.

Yet the vast weight in gold which was thus brought before them did not satisfy the avaricious impatience of the Spaniards. They made no allowance for distance and difficulty, and began to suspect the Inca of delaying the ransom until he could prepare a rising of his subjects against the strangers. When Atahualpa heard of these suspicions he was filled with surprise and indignation. "Not a man of my subjects would dare raise a finger without my orders," he said to Pizarro. "Is not my life at your disposal? What better security would you have of my good faith?" He ended by advising him to send some of his own men to Cuzco, where they could see for themselves how his orders were being obeyed. He would give them a safe-conduct, and they could superintend the work themselves.

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The three envoys sent were carried the whole distance of more than six hundred miles in litters by relays of carriers, their route laying along the great military road of Peru and through many populous towns. Cuzco they found to be a large and splendid city. The great temple of the Sun was covered with plates of gold, which, by the Inca's orders, were being torn off. There were seven hundred of these plates in all, and a cornice of pure gold ran round the building. But this was so deeply set in the stone that it could not be removed. On their return, these messengers brought with them full two hundred loads of gold, besides great quantities of silver.

Gradually the vast ransom offered by the Inca, far surpassing any paid by any other captive in the world's history, was gathered in. The gold received came in a great variety of shapes, being wrought into goblets, ewers, salvers, vases, and other forms for ornament or use, utensils for temple or palace, tiles and plate used to decorate the public edifices, and curious imitations of plants and animals. The most beautiful and artistic of these was the representation of Indian corn, the ear of gold being sheathed in broad leaves of silver, while the rich tassels were made of the same precious metal. Equally admired was a fountain which sent up a sparkling jet of gold, with birds and animals of the same metal playing in the waters at its base. Some of these objects were so beautifully wrought as to compare favorably with the work of skilled European artists.

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The treasure gathered was measured in the room in its original form, this being the compact, but even in this loose form the gold amounted to a sum equal, in modern money, to over fifteen millions of dollars, with a large value in silver in addition. All this was melted down into ingots and divided among the conquerors, with the exception of the royal fifth, reserved for the King of Spain. The latter included many of the most curious works of art. The share of Pizarro probably amounted to not less than a million dollars, and even the common soldiers received what was wealth to them.

The ransom paid, what was the benefit to the Inca? Was he given his liberty, in accordance with the compact? Yes, the liberty which such men as Francisco Pizarro give to those whom they have injured and have reason to fear. The total ransom offered by Atahualpa had not been brought in, but the impatient Spaniards had divided the spoil without waiting for the whole, and the Inca demanded his freedom. De Soto, who was his chief friend among the Spaniards, told Pizarro of his demand, but could get from him no direct reply. His treacherous mind was brooding deeply over some dark project.

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Soon rumors became current among the soldiers of a design of revolt entertained by the natives. These spread and grew until an immense army was conjured up. The Inca was looked upon as the instigator of the supposed rising, and was charged with it by Pizarro. His denial of it had little effect, and the fortress was put in a state of defence, while many of the soldiers began to demand the life of the Inca. To those demands Pizarro did not turn a deaf ear. Possibly they arose at his own instigation.



DEATH OF ATAHUALPA, FROM A PAINTING IN THE CATHEDRAL AT CALLAO.

Hernando Pizarro, who had shown himself a strong friend of the captive, was absent. De Soto, another of his friends, was sent at the head of an expedition to Huamachuco, a town a hundred miles away, where it was said the natives were in arms. Scarcely had he gone when Pizarro, seeming to yield to the demands of the soldiers, decided to bring Atahualpa to trial on the charges against him.

A court was held, with Pizarro and his fellow-captain Almagro as the judges, an attorney-general being appointed for the crown and counsel for the prisoner. The crimes charged against the Inca were chiefly of a kind with which the Spaniards had nothing to do, among them the assassination of Huascar and the guilt of idolatry. These were simply to bolster up the only real charge, that of exciting an insurrection against the Spaniards. The whole affair was the merest show of a trial, and was hurried through without waiting for the return of De Soto, who could have given useful evidence about the insurrection. The culprit was adjudged guilty, and sentenced to be burnt alive that very night in the great square of Caxamalca!

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It was a sentence that might well have been expected as the termination of such a trial by such men. Pizarro, in fact, did not dare to set his captive at liberty, if he proposed to remain in the country, and the cruel sentence, which was common enough at that day, was carried out except in one particular. As the poor Inca stood bound to the stake, with the fagots of his funeral pile heaped around him, Valverde, the Dominican friar, made a last appeal to him to accept the cross and be baptized, promising him a less painful death if he would consent. The Inca, shrinking from the horror of the flames, consented, and was duly baptized under the name of Juan de Atahualpa. He was then put to death in the Spanish manner, by the *garrote*, or strangulation.

Thus died the Inca of Peru, the victim of Pizarro's treachery. Great was the indignation of De Soto, on his return a day or two later from an expedition in which he had found no rebels, at what had been done. Pizarro tried to exculpate himself and blame others for deceiving him, but these told him to his face that he alone was responsible for the deed. In all probability they told the truth.

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GONZALO PIZARRO AND THE LAND OF CINNAMON.

We have now to relate the most remarkable adventure in the story of the conquest of Peru, and one of the most remarkable in the history of the New World,—the expedition of Gonzalo Pizarro to the upper waters of the Amazon and the pioneer voyage down that mighty river.

Francisco Pizarro was well aided by his brothers in his great work of conquest, three of them—Hernando, Juan, and Gonzalo—accompanying him to Peru, and all of them proving brave, enterprising, and able men. In 1540, eight years after the conquest, Gonzalo was appointed by his brother governor of the territory of Quito, in the north of the empire, with instructions to explore the unknown country lying to the east, where the cinnamon tree was said to grow. Gonzalo lost no time in seeking his province, and made haste in starting on his journey of exploration to the fabled land of spices.

It was early in the year that he set out on this famous expedition, with a force of three hundred and fifty Spaniards and four thousand Indians, one hundred and fifty of the whites being mounted. They were all thoroughly equipped and took with them a large supply of provisions and a great drove of hogs, five thousand in number, as some writers say. Yet with all this food they were to suffer from the extremes of famine.

We can but briefly tell the incidents of this extraordinary journey. At first it was easy enough. But when they left the land of the Incas and began to cross the lofty ranges of the Andes, they found themselves involved in intricate and difficult passes, swept by chilling winds. In this cold wilderness many of the natives found an icy grave, and during their passage a terrible earthquake shook the mountains, the earth in one place being rent asunder. Choking sulphurous vapors issued from the cavity, into whose frightful abyss a village of several hundred houses was precipitated.

After the heights were passed and they descended to the lower levels, tropical heats succeeded the biting cold, and fierce storms of rain, accompanied by violent thunder and lightning, descended almost ceaselessly, drenching the travellers day after day. It was the rainy season of the tropics, and for more than six weeks the deluge continued, while the forlorn wanderers, wet and weary, could scarce drag themselves over the yielding and saturated soil.

For several months this toilsome journey continued, many a mountain stream and dismal morass needing to be crossed. At length they reached the Land of Cinnamon, the *Canelas* of the Spaniards, where were forests of the trees supposed by them to bear the precious bark. Yet had it been the actual cinnamon of the East Indies, it would have been useless to them in that remote and mountain-walled wilderness. Here their journey, as originally laid out, should have ended, but they were lured on by the statements of the wild tribes they met, they being told of a rich and populous land at ten days' journey in advance, in which gold could be found in abundance.

Gold was a magic word to the Spaniards, and they went eagerly onward, over a country of broad savannahs which led to seemingly endless forests, where grew trees of stupendous bulk, some so large that the extended arms of sixteen men could barely reach around them. A thick net-work of vines and creepers hung in bright-colored festoons from tree to tree, beautiful to look at but very difficult to pass. The axe was necessary at every step of the way, while their garments, rotted with the incessant rains, were torn into rags by the bushes and brambles of the woodland. Their provisions had been long since spoiled by the weather, and their drove of swine had vanished, such of the animals as were not consumed having strayed into the woods and hills. They had brought with them nearly a thousand dogs, many of them of the ferocious bloodhound breed, and these they were now glad enough to kill and eat. When these were gone no food was to be had but such herbs and edible roots and small animals as the forest afforded.

At length the disconsolate wanderers emerged on the banks of a broad river, the Napo, one of the great tributaries of the Amazon, issuing from the northern Andes to seek a home in the bosom of that mighty stream. Gladdened by the sight, they followed its banks downward, hoping in this way to find an easier route. Thickets still beset their way, through which it needed all their strength to open a passage, and after going a considerable distance a loud and increasing noise met their ears. For miles they followed it as it gradually rose into a roar, and at length they reached a place where the stream rushed furiously down steep rapids, and at the end poured in a vast volume of foam down a magnificent cataract, twelve hundred feet in depth.

This was the height of the fall as measured by the eyes of the wanderers, a guide not much to be relied on. The stream itself had narrowed until it was at this point not more than twenty feet wide, and the hungry wanderers determined to cross it, with the hope of finding beyond it a country yielding more food. A bridge was constructed by felling great trees across the chasm, the water here running through vertical walls several hundred feet in depth. Over this rude bridge men and horses made their way, only one Spaniard being lost by tumbling down the giddy depth.

The country beyond the stream proved no better than that they had left, and the only signs of inhabitants they met were savage and hostile tribes of Indians, with whom they kept up a steady skirmish. Some of the more friendly told them that the fruitful land they sought was but a few days' journey down the river, and they went wearily on, day by day, as the promised land still fled before their feet. Doubtless they were led by their own desires to misinterpret the words of the Indians.

In the end Gonzalo Pizarro decided on building a vessel large enough to carry the baggage and the men too weak to walk. Timber was superabundant. The shoes of horses that had died or had been killed for food were wrought into nails. Pitch was obtained from gum-yielding trees. In place of oakum the tattered garments of the soldiers were used. It took two months to complete the difficult task, at the end of which time a rude but strong brigantine was ready, the first vessel larger than an Indian canoe that ever floated on the mighty waters of Brazil. It was large enough to carry half the Spaniards that remained alive after their months of terrible travel.

Pizarro gave the command of the vessel to Francisco de Orellana, a man in whose courage and fidelity he put full trust. The company now resumed its march more hopefully, following the course of the Napo for weeks that lengthened into months, the brigantine keeping beside them and transporting the weaker whenever a difficult piece of country was reached. In this journey the last scraps of provisions were consumed, including their few remaining horses, and they were

so pressed by hunger as to eat the leather of their saddles and belts. Little food was yielded by the forest, and such toads, serpents, and other reptiles as they found were greedily devoured.

[pg 091] Still the story of a rich country, inhabited by a populous nation, was told by the wandering Indians, but it was always several days ahead. Pizarro at length decided to stop where he was and feed on the scanty forest spoil, while Orellana went down the stream in his brigantine to where, as the Indians said, the Napo flowed into a greater river. Here the nation they sought was to be found, and Orellana was bidden to get a supply of provisions and bring them back to the half-starved company. Taking fifty of the adventurers in the vessel, he pushed off into the swift channel of the river and shot onward in a speedy voyage which quickly took him and his comrades out of sight.

Days and weeks passed, and no sign of the return of the voyagers appeared. In vain the waiting men strained their eyes down the stream and sent out detachments to look for the vessel farther down. Finally, deeming it useless to wait longer, they resumed their journey down the river, spending two months in advancing five or six hundred miles—those of them who did not die by the way. At length they reached the point they sought, where the Napo plunged into a much larger stream, that mighty river since known as the Amazon, which rolls for thousands of miles eastward through the vast Brazilian forest.

[pg 092] Here they looked in vain for the brigantine and the rich and populous country promised them. They were still in a dense forest region, as unpromising as that they had left. As for Orellana and his companions, it was naturally supposed that they had perished by famine or by the hands of the ferocious natives. But they learned differently at length, when a half-starved and half-naked white man emerged from the forest, whom they recognized as Sanches de Vargas, one of Orellana's companions.

The tale he told them was the following: The brigantine had shot so swiftly down the Napo as to reach in three days the point it had taken them two months to attain. Here, instead of finding supplies with which to return, Orellana could obtain barely enough food for himself and his men. To attempt to ascend against the swift current of the river was impossible. To go back by land was a formidable task, and one that would add nothing to the comfort of those left behind. In this dilemma Orellana came to the daring decision to go on down the Amazon, visiting the populous nations which he was told dwelt on its banks, descending to its mouth, and sailing back to Spain with the tidings and the glory of a famous adventure and noble discovery.

He found his reckless companions quite ready to accept his perilous scheme, with little heed of the fate of the comrades left behind them in the wilderness. De Vargas was the only one who earnestly opposed the desertion as inhuman and dishonorable, and Orellana punished him by abandoning him in the wilderness and sailing away without him.

[pg 093] The story of Orellana's adventure is not the least interesting part of the expedition we have set out to describe; but, as it is a side issue, we must deal with it very briefly. Launched on the mighty and unknown river, in a rudely built barque, it is a marvel that the voyagers escaped shipwreck in the descent of that vast stream, the navigation being too difficult and perilous, as we are told by Condamine, who descended it in 1743, to be undertaken without the aid of a skilful pilot. Yet the daring Spaniards accomplished it safely. Many times their vessel narrowly escaped being dashed to pieces on the rocks or in the rapids of the stream. Still greater was the danger of the voyagers from the warlike forest tribes, who followed them for miles in canoes and fiercely attacked them whenever they landed in search of food.

At length the extraordinary voyage was safely completed, and the brigantine, built on the Napo, several thousand miles in the interior, emerged on the Atlantic. Here Orellana proceeded to the island of Cubagna, from which he made his way, with his companions, to Spain. He had a wonderful story to tell, of nations of Amazons dwelling on the banks of the great river, of an El Dorado said to exist in its vicinity, and other romances, gathered from the uncertain stories of the savages.

[pg 094] He found no difficulty, in that age of marvels and credulity, in gaining belief, and was sent out at the head of five hundred followers to conquer and colonize the realms he had seen. But he died on the outward voyage, and Spain got no profit from his discovery, the lands of the Amazon falling within the territory assigned by the Pope to Portugal.

Orellana had accomplished one of the greatest feats in the annals of travel and discovery, though his glory was won at the cost of the crime of deserting his companions in the depths of the untrodden wilderness. It was with horror and indignation that the deserted soldiers listened to the story of Vargas, and found themselves deprived of their only apparent means of escape from that terrible situation. An effort was made to continue their journey along the banks of the Amazon, but after some days of wearying toil, this was given up as a hopeless task, and despair settled down upon their souls.

Gonzalo Pizarro now showed himself an able leader. He told his despairing followers that it was useless to advance farther, and that they could not stay where they were, their only hope lying in a return to Quito. This was more than a thousand miles away, and over a year had passed since they left it. To return was perilous, but in it lay their only hope.

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Gonzalo did all he could to reanimate their spirits, speaking of the constancy they had shown, and bidding them to show themselves worthy of the name of Castilians. Glory would be theirs when they should reach their native land. He would lead them back by another route, and somewhere on it they would surely reach that fruitful land of which so much had been told them. At any rate, every step would take them nearer home, and nothing else was left them to do.

The soldiers listened to him with renewed hope. He had proved himself so far a true companion, sharing all their perils and privations, taking his lot with the humblest among them, aiding the sick and cheering up the despondent. In this way he had won their fullest confidence and devotion, and in this trying moment he reaped the benefit of his unselfish conduct.

The journey back was more direct and less difficult than that they had already taken. Yet though this route proved an easier one, their distress was greater than ever, from their lack of food beyond such scanty fare as they could pick up in the forest or obtain by force or otherwise from the Indians. Such as sickened and fell by the way were obliged to be left behind, and many a poor wretch was deserted to die alone in the wilderness, if not devoured by the wild beasts that roamed through it.

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The homeward march, like the outward one, took more than a year, and it was in June, 1542, that the survivors trod again the high plains of Quito. They were a very different looking party from the well-equipped and hope-inspired troop of cavaliers and men-at-arms who had left that upland city nearly two and a half years before. Their horses were gone, their bright arms were rusted and broken, their clothing was replaced by the skins of wild beasts, their hair hung long and matted down their shoulders, their faces were blackened by the tropical sun, their bodies were wasted and scarred. A gallant troop they had set out; a body of meagre phantoms they returned. Of the four thousand Indians taken, less than half had survived. Of the Spaniards only eighty came back, and these so worn and broken that many of them never fully recovered from their sufferings. Thus in suffering and woe ended the famous expedition to the Land of Cinnamon.

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CORONADO AND THE SEVEN CITIES OF CIBOLA.

The remarkable success of Cortez and Pizarro in Mexico and Peru went far to convince the Spaniards that in America they had found a veritable land of magic, filled with wonders and supremely rich in gold and gems. Ponce de Leon sought in Florida for the fabled Fountain of Youth. Hernando de Soto, one of the companions of Pizarro, attempted to find a second Peru in the north, and became the discoverer of the Mississippi. From Mexico other adventurers set out, with equal hopes, in search of empire and treasure. Some went south to the conquest of Central America, others north to California and New Mexico. The latter region was the seat of the fancied Seven Cities of Cibola, the search for which it is here proposed to describe.

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In 1538 Francisco Vasquez de Coronado was appointed governor of New Galicia, as the country lying north of Mexico was named, and sent out a certain Fray Marcos, a monk who had been with Pizarro in Peru, on a journey of exploration to the north. With him were some Indian guides and a negro named Estevanico, or Stephen, who had been one of the survivors of the Narvaez expedition to Florida and had travelled for years among the Indians of the north. He was expected to be of great assistance. As the worthy friar went on he was told of rich regions beyond, where the people wore ornaments of gold, and at length he sent the negro in advance to investigate and report. Stephen was to send back by the Indians a cross, the size of which would indicate the importance of what he had learned. Within four days messengers returned with a great cross the height of a man, significant of great and important discoveries.

One of the Indians told the friar that thirty days' journey from the point they had reached was a populous country called Cibola, in which were seven great cities under one lord, peopled by a civilized nation that dwelt in large houses well built of stone and lime, some of them several stories in height. The entrances to the principal houses were richly wrought with turquoise, which was there in great abundance. Farther on they had been told were other provinces, each of them much greater than that of the seven cities.

Two days after Easter, 1539, Fray Marcos set out on the track of his pioneer, eager to reach the land of wonders and riches of which he had been told. Doubtless there rose in his mind dreams of a second Mexico or Peru. The land through which lay his route was strange and picturesque. Here were fertile valleys, watered by streams and walled in by mountains; there were narrow cañons through which ran rapid streams, with rock-walls hundreds of feet high and cut into strange forms of turrets and towers.

[pg 099] As he went on he heard more of the seven cities and the distant kingdoms, and of the abundance of turquoises with which the natives adorned their persons and their doorways. But nothing was seen of Stephen, though shelter and provisions were found which he had left at points along the route. As for the dusky pioneer, Fray Marcos was never to set eyes on him again.

At length the good monk reached a fertile region, irrigated like a garden, where the men wore three or four strings of turquoises around their necks; and the women wore them in their ears and noses. But Cibola lay still beyond, the tales of the natives magnifying its houses till some of them were ten stories in height. Ladders, they said, were used in place of stairways. Reaching at length the Gila River, a stream flowing through deep and rugged valleys, he heard again of the negro, who was crossing the wilderness to the northeast, escorted like a prince by some three hundred natives. Fifteen days journey still lay between Fray Marcos and Cibola, and he went on into the wilderness, escorted, like his pioneer, by a large train of natives, who volunteered their services.

[pg 100] For twelve days the journey continued through a rough mountain region, abundantly supplied with game, consisting of deer, rabbits, and partridges, which was brought in by the Indian hunters. But now there came back startling news, for one of the negro's guides appeared, pallid with fright, telling how Stephen had reached Cibola, where he had been seized, plundered, and imprisoned. Farther on two more Indians were met, covered with blood and wounds, who said that they had escaped from the slaughter of all their comrades by the warlike people of Cibola.

The bold monk had now much trouble in getting his frightened followers to go on with him, but by means of abundant presents he induced two of the chiefs to proceed. He was determined to gain at least a sight of the land of wonders, and with the chiefs and his own followers he cautiously proceeded. At length, from a hill summit, he looked down on a broad plain on which he saw the first of the famous seven cities. To his excited fancy it was greater than the city of Mexico, the houses of stone in many stories and with flat roofs. This was all he could tell from his distant view, in which the mountain hazes seem to have greatly magnified his power of vision.

That was the end of Fray Marcos's journey. He did not dare to approach nearer to that terrible people, and, as he quaintly says, "returned with more fear than victuals;" overtaking his escort, which, moved by still greater fear, had not waited for him. Back to Coronado he went with his story, a disappointing one, since he had seen nothing of either gold, silver, or precious stones, the nearest approach to treasure being the greenish turquoise.

[pg 101] The story of the negro pioneer, as afterwards learned, was one that might have fitted the Orient. He advanced with savage magnificence, bells and feathers adorning his sable arms and legs, while he carried a gourd decorated with bells and with white and red feathers. This he knew to be a symbol of authority among the Indians. Two Spanish greyhounds followed him, and a number of handsome Indian women, whom he had taken up on the way, attended him. He was followed with a large escort of Indians, carrying his provisions and other effects, among them gifts received, or plunder taken, from the natives.

When near Cibola, he, in disobedience of the orders given him, sent messengers to the city bearing his gourd, and saying that he came to treat for peace and to cure the sick. The chief to whom the gourd was presented, on observing the bells, cast it angrily to the ground, exclaiming,

"I know not those people; their bells are not of our fashion; tell them to return at once, or not a man of them will be left alive."

In despite of this hostile message, the vain-glorious negro went on. He and his company were not permitted to enter the city, but were given a house outside of it, and here they were stripped of all their possessions and refused food and drink. The next morning they left the house, where they were quickly surrounded and attacked by a great number of the townspeople, all of them being killed except the two Indians who had brought the news to Fray Marcos.

[pg 102] Why they were treated in this manner is not known. They seem to have been looked on as spies or enemies. But it is interesting that the legend of the killing of a Black Mexican still lingers in a pueblo of the Zuñi Indians, though three centuries and a half have since then elapsed.

The story of the discovery of the Seven Cities, as told by the worthy Fray Marcos, when repeated in the city of Mexico gave rise to high hopes of a new El Dorado; and numbers were ready to join in an expedition to explore and conquer Cibola. The city was then well filled with adventurers eager for fame and fortune, many of them men of good family, cavaliers of rank "floating about like corks on water," and soldiers ready to enlist in any promising service. It is no wonder that in a few weeks a company of over three hundred were enlisted, a large proportion of them mounted. The Indians of the expedition numbered eight hundred, and some small field-pieces were taken along, while sheep and cows were to be driven to supply the army with fresh meat.

Francisco de Coronado was given the command, and so distinguished was the cavalcade that the viceroy would have appointed each of the gentlemen a captain but for fear of making the command top-heavy with officers. It was early in 1540 that the gallant expedition set out, some of the horsemen arrayed in brilliant coats of mail and armed with swords and lances, others wearing helmets of iron or tough bullhide, while the footmen carried cross-bows and muskets,

[pg 103] and the Indians were armed with bows and clubs. Splendid they were—but woe-befallen were they to be on their return, such of them as came back. An accessory party was sent by sea, along the Pacific coast, under Hernando de Alarcon, to aid, as far as it could, in the success of the army. But in spite of all Alarcon's efforts, he failed to get in communication with Coronado and his men.

On the 7th of July, after following the monk's route through the mountain wilderness, the expedition came within two days' march of the first city of Cibola. It was evident from the signal-fires on the hills and other signs of hostility that the Spaniards would have to fight; but for this the cavaliers of that day seem to have been always ready, and the next day Coronado moved forward towards the desired goal.

At length the gallant little army was before Hawaikuh, the city on which Fray Marcos had gazed with such magnifying eyes, but which now was seen to be a village of some two hundred houses. It lay about fifteen miles southwest of the present Zuñi. The natives were ready for war. All the old men, with the women and children, had been sent away, and the Spaniards were received with volleys of arrows.

[pg 104] The houses were built in retreating terraces, each story being smaller than that below it, and from these points of vantage the arrows of the natives came in showers. Evidently the place was only to be taken by assault, and the infantry was posted so as to fire on the warriors, while a number of dismounted horsemen sought to scale the walls by a ladder which they had found. This proved no easy task. Coronado's glittering armor especially made him a shining mark, and he was so tormented with arrows and battered with stones as he sought to ascend that he was wounded and had to be carried from the field. Others were injured and three horses were killed, but in less than an hour the place was carried, the warriors retreating in dismay before the impetuous assault.

Glad enough were the soldiers to occupy the deserted houses. Their food had given out and they were half starved, but in the store-rooms they found "that of which there was greater need than of gold or silver, which was much corn and beans and chickens, better than those of New Spain, and salt, the best and whitest I have seen in all my life." The chickens seem to have been wild turkeys, kept by the natives for their plumage. But of the much-desired gold and silver there was not a trace.

[pg 105] The story of all the adventures of the Spaniards in this country is too extended and not of enough interest to be given here. It must suffice to say that before their eyes the Seven Cities of Cibola faded into phantoms, or rather contracted into villages of terraced houses like that they had captured. Food was to be had, but none of the hoped-for spoil, even the turquoises of which so much had been told proving to be of little value. Expeditions were sent out in different directions, some of them discovering lofty, tower-like hills, with villages on their almost inaccessible summits, the only approach being by narrow steps cut in the rock. Others came upon deep cañons, one of them discovering the wonderful Grand Cañon of the Colorado River. In the country of Tiguex were twelve villages built of adobe, some on the plain and some on the lofty heights. The people here received the Spaniards peaceably and with much show of welcome.

In Tiguex was found an Indian slave, called by the Spaniards El Turco, from his resemblance to the Turks, who said he had come from a rich country in the east, where were numbers of great animals with shaggy manes,—evidently the buffalo or bison, now first heard of. Some time later, being brought into the presence of Coronado, El Turco had a more wonderful story to tell, to the effect that "In his land there was a river in the level country which was two leagues wide, in which were fishes as big as horses, and large numbers of very big canoes with more than twenty rowers on a side, and carrying sails; and their lords sat on the poop under awnings, and on the prow they had a great golden eagle. He said also that the lord of that country took his afternoon nap under a great tree on which were hung a large number of little gold bells, which put him to sleep as they swung in the air. He said also that every one had his ordinary dishes made of wrought plate, and the jugs, plates, and bowls were of gold."

[pg 106] No doubt it was the love of the strangers for the yellow metal that inspired El Turco to these alluring stories, in the hope of getting rid of the unwelcome visitors. At any rate, this was the effect it had. After wintering in the villages of the Tiguas, which the Spaniards had assailed and taken, they set out in the following April in search of Quivira, the land of gold, which El Turco had painted in such enticing colors. Against the advice of El Turco, they loaded the horses with provisions, the imaginative Indian saying that this was useless, as the laden animals could not bring back the gold and silver. Scarcely to his liking, the romancing Indian was taken with them as a guide.

On for many leagues they went until the Pecos River was crossed and the great northern plains were reached, they being now in a flat and treeless country, covered with high grasses and peopled by herds of the great maned animals which El Turco had described. These strange creatures were seen in extraordinary numbers, so abundant that one day, when a herd was put to flight, they fell in such a multitude into a ravine as nearly to fill it up, so that the remainder of the herd crossed on the dead bodies.

Various tribes of Indians were met, the story they told not at all agreeing with that of El Turco, who accordingly was now put in chains. Coronado, not wishing to subject all his companions to

[pg 107] suffering, but eager still to reach the fabled Quivira, at length sent all his followers back except thirty horsemen and six foot-soldiers, with whom he continued his journey to the north, the bisons supplying them with abundance of food.

For six weeks they marched onward, crossing at the end of thirty days a wide stream, which is thought to have been the Arkansas River, and at last reached Quivira, which seems to have lain in the present State of Kansas. A pleasing land it was of hills and dales and fertile meadows, but in place of El Turco's many-storied stone houses, only rude wigwams were to be seen, and the civilized people proved to be naked savages. The only yellow metal seen was a copper plate worn by one of the chiefs and some bells of the same substance. The utmost Coronado could do was to set up a cross and claim this wide region in the name of his master; and his chief satisfaction was in strangling El Turco for his many embellished lies.

We shall not describe the return journey, though it was not lacking in interesting incidents. Finally, having lost many of their horses, being harassed by the Indians, and suffering from want of provisions, the way-worn army reached known soil in the valley of Culiacan. Here all discipline was at an end, and the disorganized army straggled for leagues down the valley, all Coronado's entreaties failing to restore any order to the ranks.

At length the sorely disappointed commander presented himself before the viceroy Mendoza, with scarcely a hundred ragged followers who alone remained with him of the splendid cavalcade with which he had set out.

[pg 108] Thus ends the story of the last of the conquistadores, who had found only villages of barbarians and tribes of half-naked savages, and returned empty-handed from his long chase after the Will-o'-the-wisp of Quivira and its fleeting treasures. Little did he dream that Quivira would yet become the central region of one of the greatest civilized nations of the world, and rich in productions beyond his most avaricious vision.

[pg 109] **THE FAITHFUL MIRANDA AND THE LOVERS OF ARGENTINA.**

The early history of America has few romantic tales of love and devotion, but there is one woven in with the history of the settlement of Buenos Ayres, the modern Argentina, which is told by all the historians of the time, and which exists as the one striking love romance of the Spanish conquest. It has been doubted, it is true, but it will not do to dismiss all the chivalrous tales of the past on the plea that historical critics have questioned them.

It may not be generally known to our readers that the man who explored and took possession of the great rivers of Buenos Ayres for Spain was Sebastian Cabot, he who, many years before, had with his father discovered North America in the service of England. It was in the year 1526 that he sailed up the noble river which he named the Rio de la Plata, a name suggested by the bars of silver which he obtained from the Indians on its banks. Sailing some hundred miles up the Paraguay River, he built at the mouth of the river Zarcaranna a stronghold which he named the Fort of the Holy Ghost. Some three years later Cabot set sail for Spain, leaving Nuno de Lara as commander of this fort, with a garrison of one hundred and twenty men.

[pg 110] These historical details are important, as a necessary setting for the love-romance which followed the founding of this fort. Lara, being left with his handful of men as the only whites in a vast territory peopled with Indians, felt strongly that in his situation prudence was the better part of valor, and strove to cultivate friendly relations with the nearest and most powerful of these tribes, the Timbuez. His success in this brought about, in an unexpected manner, his death and the loss of the fort, with other evils in their train.



COFFEE PLANT IN BLOSSOM.

The tragedy came on in this way: Sebastian Hurtado, one of Lara's principal officers, had brought with him his wife, Lucia Miranda, a Spanish lady of much beauty and purity of soul. During the frequent visits which Mangora, the cacique of the Timbuez, paid to the fort, he saw this lady and became enamoured of her charms, so deeply that he could not conceal the evidence of his love.

Miranda was not long in observing the ardent looks of the Indian chief and in understanding their significance, and the discovery filled her with dread and alarm. Knowing how important it was for the commandant to keep on good terms with this powerful chief, and fearing that she might be sacrificed to this policy, she did her utmost to keep out of his sight, and also to guard against any surprise or violence, not knowing to what extremes the passion of love might lead an Indian.

[pg 111] Mangora, on his part, laid covert plans to get the fair lady out of the fort, and with this in view pressed Hurtado to pay him a visit and bring his wife with him. This the Spaniard was loath to do, for Miranda had told him of her fears, and he suspected the Indian's design. With a policy demanded by the situation, he declined the invitations of the chief, on the plea that a Castilian soldier could not leave his post of duty without permission from his commander, and that honor forbade him to ask that permission except to fight his enemies.

The wily chief was not duped by this reply. He saw that Hurtado suspected his purpose, and the removal of the husband seemed to him a necessary step for its accomplishment. While seeking to devise a plan for this, he learned, to his great satisfaction, that Hurtado and another officer, with fifty soldiers, had left the fort on an expedition to collect provisions, of which a supply was needed.

Here was the opportunity which the treacherous chief awaited. It not only removed the husband, but weakened the garrison, the protectors of the wife in his absence. Late one day the chief placed four thousand armed men in ambush in a marsh near the fort, and then set out for it with thirty others, laden with provisions. Reaching the gates, he sent word to Lara that he had heard of his want of food, and had brought enough to serve him until the return of Hurtado and his men. This show of friendship greatly pleased Lara. He met the chief with warm demonstrations of gratitude, and insisted on entertaining him and his followers.

[pg 112] So far the scheme of the treacherous Indian had been successful. The men in the marsh had their instructions and patiently awaited the fixed signals, while the feast in the fort went on till the night was well advanced. When it broke up the Spaniards were given time to retire; then the food-bearing Indians set fire to the magazines, and the ambushed savages, responding to the signal, broke into the fort and ruthlessly cut down all the Spaniards they met. Those who had gone to bed were killed in their sleep or slain as they sprang up in alarm. The governor was severely wounded, but had strength enough to revenge himself on the faithless Mangora, whom he rushed upon and ran through the body with his sword. In a moment more he was himself slain.

At the close of the attack, of all the Spaniards in the fort only the women and children remained alive—spared, no doubt, by order of the chief. These consisted of the hapless Miranda, the innocent cause of this bloody catastrophe, four other women, and as many children. The weeping captives were bound and brought before Siripa, the brother of Mangora, and his successor as cacique of the tribe.

[pg 113] No sooner had the new chief gazed on the woman whom his brother had loved, her beauty heightened in his eyes by her grief and woe, than a like passion was born in his savage soul, and he at once ordered his men to remove her bonds. He then told her that she must not consider herself a captive, and solicited her favor with the gentleness and address that love can implant in the breast of the savage as well as of the son of civilization. Her husband, he told her, was a

forlorn fugitive in the forests of a hostile country; he was the chief of a powerful nation and could surround her with luxuries and wealth. Could she hesitate to accept his love in preference to that of a man who was lost to her.

These persuasions excited only horror and anguish in the soul of the faithful wife. Her love for her husband was proof against all that Siripa could say, and also against the fear of slavery or death, which might follow her rejection of his suit. In fact, death seemed to her a smaller evil than life as the wife of this savage suitor, and she rejected his offers with scorn and with a bitter contempt which she hoped would excite his rage and induce him to put her to instant death.

Her flashing eyes and excited words, however, had a very different effect from that she intended. They served only to heighten her charms in the eyes of the cacique, and he became more earnest than ever in his persuasions. Taking her to his village, he treated her with every mark of kindness and gentleness, and showed her the utmost respect and civility, doubtless hoping in this way to win her esteem and raise a feeling in her breast corresponding to his own.

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Meanwhile, Hurtado and his men returned with the provisions they had collected, and viewed with consternation the ruins of the fort which they had so lately left. Their position was a desperate one, alone and undefended as they were, in the midst of treacherous tribes; but the fears which troubled the minds of his comrades did not affect that of Hurtado. He learned that his wife was a captive in the hands of the cacique of Timbuez, and love and indignation in his soul suppressed all other feelings. With a temerity that seemed the height of imprudence, he sought alone the village of the chief and demanded the release of his wife.

Siripa heard his request with anger at his presumption and savage joy at having at his mercy the man who stood between him and the object of his affections. Determined to remove this obstacle to his suit, he at once ordered him to be seized, bound to a tree, and pierced with arrows.

This was not unseen by Miranda, and, filled with anguish, she rushed out, cast herself at the Indian's feet and pitifully pleaded with him for her husband's life. The force of beauty in grief prevailed. Hurtado was unbound, but he was still kept in captivity.

Lover as Siripa was, he had all the undisciplined passions of a savage, and the fate of husband and wife alike was at constant risk in his hands. Now, tormented with the fury of jealousy, he seemed bent on sacrificing the husband to his rage. Again, the desire of winning the esteem of Miranda softened his soul, and he permitted the husband and wife to meet.

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As the days of captivity passed the strictness of their detention was relaxed and they were permitted greater freedom of action. As a result they met each other more frequently and under less restraint. But this growing leniency in the cacique had its limits: they might converse, but they were warned against indulging in any of the fond caresses of love. Jealousy still burned in his soul, and if Miranda would not become his, he was resolved that no one else should enjoy the evidence of her affection.

The situation was a painful one. Husband and wife, as Hurtado and Miranda were, they continued lovers as well, and it was not easy to repress the feelings that moved them. Prudence bade them avoid any show of love, and they resolved to obey its dictates; but prudence is weak where love commands, and in one fatal moment Siripa surprised them clasped in each other's arms and indulging in the ardent kisses of love.

Filled with wild jealousy at the sight and carried away by ungovernable fury at their contempt of his authority and their daring disregard of his feelings, he ordered them both to instant execution. Hurtado's old sentence was renewed: he was bound to a tree and his body pierced with arrows. As for Miranda, she was sentenced by the jealous and furious savage to a more painful death, that of the flames. Yet painful as it was, the loyal wife doubtless preferred it to yielding to the passion of the chief, and as a quick means of rejoining in soul life her lover and husband.

Thus ends the most romantic and tragical story of love and faith that the early annals of America have to show, and the fate of the faithful Miranda has become a classic in the love-lore of the America of the south.

[pg 116]

LANTARO, THE BOY HERO OF THE ARAUCANIANS.

The river Biobio, in Southern Chili, was for centuries the boundary between liberty and oppression in South America. South of it lay the land of the Araucanians, that brave and warlike

people who preserved their independence against the whites, the only Indian nation in America of which this can be said. Valorous and daring as were the American Indians, their arms and their arts were those of the savage, and the great multitude of them were unable to stand before the weapons and the discipline of their white invaders. But such was not the case with the valiant Araucanians. From the period of Almagro, the companion of Pizarro and the first invader of Chili, down to our own days these bold Americans fought for and retained their independence, holding the Biobio as their national frontier, and driving army after army from their soil. Not until 1882 did they consent to become citizens of Chili, and then of their own free will, and they still retain their native habits and their pride in their pure blood.

[pg 117] The most heroic and intrepid of the Indian races, they defied the armies of the Incas long before the Spaniards came, and the armies of the Spaniards for centuries afterwards, and though they have now consented to become a part of the Chilian nation, this has not been through conquest, and they are as independent in spirit to-day as in the warlike years of the past. Their hardy and daring character infects the whole of Chili, and has given that little republic, drawn out like a long string between the Andes and the sea, the reputation of being one of the most warlike and unyielding of countries, while to its people has been applied the suggestive title of "the Yankees of the South."

It would need a volume to tell the deeds of the heroes who arose in succession to defend the land of Araucania from the arms of those who so easily overturned the mighty empire of Peru. We shall, therefore, confine ourselves to the exploits of one of the earliest of these, a youthful warrior with a genius for war that might have raised him to the rank of a great commander had not death early cut short his career. The second Spaniard who attempted the conquest of this valiant people was Pedro de Valdivia, the quartermaster of Pizarro, an able soldier, but one of those who fancied that a handful of Spanish cavaliers were a match for the strongest of the Indian tribes. He little knew the spirit of the race with which he would have to deal.

[pg 118] Southward from Peru marched the bold Valdivia with two hundred Spaniards at his back. With them as aids to conquest was brought a considerable force of Peruvians; also priests and women, for he proposed to settle and hold the land as his own after he had conquered it. Six hundred miles southward he went, fighting the hostile natives at every step, and on the 14th of February, 1541, stopped and laid the foundations of a town which he named St. Jago. This still stands as the modern Santiago, a city of three hundred thousand souls.

We do not propose to tell the story of Valdivia's wars with the many tribes of Chili. He was in that land nine years before his conquests brought him to the Biobio and the land of the Araucanians, with whom alone we are concerned. On the coast near the mouth of this river he founded a new town, which he named Concepcion, and made this the basis of an invasion of the land of the Araucanians, whom he proposed to subdue.

As it happened, the Araucanian leader at this time was a man with the body of a giant and the soul of a dwarf. He timidly kept out of the way of the Spaniards until they had overrun most of the country, built towns and forts, and had reason to believe that the whole of Chili was theirs. Valdivia went on founding cities until he had seven in all, and gave himself the proud title of the Marquis of Arauco, fancying that he was lord and master of the Araucanians. He was too hasty; Arauco was not yet his.

[pg 119] A new state of affairs began when the Araucanians, disgusted with the timid policy of their leader, chose a bolder man, named Caupolican, as their toqui, or head chief. A daring and able man, the new toqui soon taught the Spaniards a lesson. He began with an attack on their forts. At one of these, named Arauco, the invaders had eighty Indians employed in bringing them forage for their horses. The wily Caupolican replaced these laborers by eighty of his own warriors, who hid their arms in the bundles of hay they carried. On reaching the fort they were to attack the guards and hold the gates till their ambushed comrades could come to their aid.

This device failed, the garrison attacking and driving back the forage-bearers before Caupolican could reach the place. Foiled in this, he made a fierce assault upon the fort, but the fire of eighty cannons proved too much for Indian means of defence, and the assailants were forced to draw back and convert their assault into a siege. This did not continue long before the Spaniards found themselves in peril of starvation. Vainly they sallied out on their assailants, who were not to be driven off; and finally, hopeless of holding the fort, the beleaguered garrison cut its way by a sudden night attack through the besieging lines and retired to the neighboring fort of Puren. A similar result took place at another fort called Tucapel, its garrison also seeking a refuge at Puren.

[pg 120] When news of these events reached Valdivia, he saw that his conquests were in peril, and at once set out for the seat of war with all his forces, amounting to about two hundred Spaniards and four or five thousand Indians. A small party of cavalry were despatched in advance to reconnoitre the enemy, but they were all killed by the Araucanians and their heads were hung on roadside trees as a warning to their approaching comrades. This gruesome spectacle had much of the effect intended. On seeing it many of the Spaniards were dismayed and clamored to return. But Valdivia insisted on advancing, and on the 3d of December, 1553, the two armies came in sight of each other at Tucapel.

Valdivia soon found that he had no ordinary Indians to deal with. These were not of the kind that

could be dispersed by a squadron of cavalry. A fierce charge was made on his left wing, which was cut to pieces by the daring warriors of Caupolican. The right wing was also vigorously attacked. But the artillery and musketry of the Spaniards were mowing down the ranks of the Araucanians, whose rude war-clubs and spears were ill-fitted to cope with those death-dealing weapons. Driven back, and hundreds of them falling, they returned with heroic courage three times to the assault. But at length the slaughter became too great to bear and the warriors were ready to flee in dismay.

At this critical moment the first great hero of the Araucanians appeared. He was a boy of only sixteen years of age, a mere lad, who some time before had been captured by Valdivia, baptized, and made his page. But young as he was, he loved his country ardently and hated the invaders with a bitter hate, and it was this youthful hero who saved the day for his countrymen and snatched victory out of defeat.

[pg 121] Leaving the Spanish ranks at the moment the Araucanians were shrinking in dismay, he rushed into their ranks, called loudly on them to turn, accused them of cowardice, and bade them to face their foes like men. Seizing a lance, he charged alone on the Spaniards, calling on his countrymen to follow him. Inspired by his example and his cries, the Araucanians charged with such fury that the ranks of the Spaniards and their allies were broken, and they were cut down until the whole force was annihilated. It is said that of the entire expedition only two Indians escaped.

Valdivia, who had retired with his chaplain to pray, on seeing the fortune of war turning against him, was seized by a party of the victors and brought before Caupolican. The dismayed captive begged the chief for his life, promising to leave Chili with all his Spaniards. Seeing Lantaro, his late page, he asked him to intercede with the chief, and this the generous boy did. But the Araucanians had little faith in Spanish promises, and an old warrior who stood near ended the matter by raising his war-club and dashing out the captive's brains. Thus tragically ended the career of one of the least cruel of the Spanish conquerors. He paid the penalty of his disdain of Indian courage.

[pg 122] Lantaro, the boy hero, had the blood of chiefs in his veins, and was endowed by nature with beauty of person, nobleness of character, and intrepidity of soul. His people honored him highly in the festival with which they celebrated their victory, and Caupolican appointed him his special lieutenant, raising him to a rank in the army nearly equal to his own.

There was fighting still to be done. The leader of the Spaniards was dead, but he had left many behind him, and there were still strongholds in the Indian country held by Spanish arms. On hearing of the terrible disaster to their cause, the Spaniards hastily evacuated their forts beyond the Biobio and retired to the towns of Imperial and Valdivia. Here they were besieged by Caupolican, while Lantaro was given the difficult task of defending the border-land about the frontier stream. The youthful general at once fortified himself on the steep mount of Mariguenu, a fort made very strong by nature.

Meanwhile, the two Indians who had escaped from Tucapel brought the news of the disaster to Concepcion, filling the minds of the people with terror. The tidings of an attack on a party of fourteen horsemen, of whom seven were slain, added to the dismay. The fact that they were now dealing with a foe to whom artillery and cavalry had lost their terrors was not reassuring to the invaders of the land. Evidently their position was hazardous; they must fight to win or retreat.

Villagrau, who was chosen to succeed Valdivia, decided to fight. With a small army of Spaniards and a strong body of Indians he crossed the Biobio and marched upon Lantaro and his men, ascending Mount Mariguenu to attack the stronghold on its top.

[pg 123] Boy as Lantaro was, he showed the skill of an old soldier in dealing with his well-armed foe. While the Spaniards were toiling up a narrow pass of the mountain a strong force of Araucanians fell upon them, and for three hours gave them as sharp a fight as they had yet encountered. Then the Indians withdrew to the strong palisade, behind which Lantaro awaited the foe.

Up the side of the steep mountain rode a party of Spanish horsemen, with the purpose of forcing a passage, but near the summit they were met with such a storm of arrows and other missiles that it became necessary to support them with infantry and artillery. Lantaro, vigilant in the defence, endeavored to surround the Spaniards with a body of his warriors, but the success of this stratagem was prevented by the advance of Villagrau to their support. The battle now grew hot, the artillery in particular sweeping down the ranks of the Indians.

At this critical juncture Lantaro showed that he was a born captain. Calling to him one of his officers, named Leucoton, he said, "You see those thunder-tubes. It is from them our trouble comes. There is your work. Do not dare show your face to me until you have made them your own."

[pg 124] Leucoton at once rushed forward with his company and fell in fury upon the battery, driving back the gunners and capturing their cannon. This successful charge was followed by Lantaro with a fierce attack on the Spanish front, which broke their ranks, throwing them into confusion and putting them to flight. The defeat was ruinous, three thousand of the Spaniards and their allies being slain, while Villagrau was saved with difficulty and at the risk of their lives by three of his

men, who picked him up where he lay wounded and carried him off on his horse.

In their flight the Spaniards had to traverse again the defile by which they had ascended. Lantaro had sent men to obstruct it by felled trees, and the few remaining Spaniards had a severe fight before they could escape. The Araucanians pursued them to the Biobio, fatigue preventing their following beyond that stream. The fugitives continued their flight until Concepcion was reached, and here the old men and women were speedily sent north in ships, while the other inhabitants fled from the city in a panic, and started for Santiago by land. All their property was left, and the victors found a rich prize when they entered the city. Lantaro, after destroying the place, returned home, to be greeted with the acclamations of his people.

We must deal more rapidly with the remaining events of the boy hero's career. Some time after this defeat the Spaniards attempted to rebuild Concepcion, but while thus employed they were attacked and defeated by Lantaro, who pursued them through the open gates of their fortress and took possession of the stronghold, the people again fleeing to the woods and the ships in the harbor. Once more burning the city, Lantaro withdrew in triumph.

[pg 125] The "Chilian Hannibal," as Lantaro has been with much justice called, now advanced against Santiago with six hundred picked men, as an aid to Caupolican in his siege of Imperial and Valdivia. Reaching the country of the Indian allies of the Spanish, the youthful general laid it waste. He then fortified himself on the banks of the Rio Claro and sent out spies into the country of the enemy. At the same time a body of Spanish horsemen were sent from the city to reconnoitre the position of their enemies, but they were met and driven back in dismay, being severely handled by the Araucanians. The news of their repulse filled the people of Santiago with consternation.

Villagrau being ill, he despatched his son Pedro against Lantaro, and ordered the roads leading to the city to be fortified. Young Pedro proved no match for his still younger but much shrewder opponent. When the Spaniards attacked him, Lantaro withdrew as if in a panic, the Spaniards following tumultuously into the fortifications. Once inside, the Indians turned on them and cut them down so furiously that none but the horsemen escaped.

Three times Pedro attacked Lantaro, but each time was repulsed. The young Spanish leader then withdrew into a meadow, while Lantaro encamped on a neighboring hill, with the design in mind of turning the waters of a mountain stream on Pedro's camp. Fortunately for the latter, a spy informed him of the purpose to drown him out, and he hastily retired to Santiago.

[pg 126] Villagrau had now got well again, and relieved his son of the task which had proved too much for him. At the head of a strong force, he took a secret route by the sea-shore, with the purpose of surprising the Araucanian camp. At daybreak the cries of his sentinels aroused Lantaro to the impending danger, and he sprang up and hurried to the side of his works to observe the coming enemy. He had hardly reached there when an arrow from the bow of one of the Spanish allies pierced him with a mortal wound, and the gallant boy leader fell dead in the arms of his followers.

A fierce combat followed, the works being stormed and the fight not ending till none of the Araucanians remained alive. The Spaniards then withdrew to Santiago, where for three days they celebrated the death of their foe; while his countrymen, dismayed by his fall, at once abandoned the siege of the invested cities and returned home.

A remarkable career was that of this young captain, begun at sixteen and ending at nineteen. History presents no rival to his precocious military genius, though in the centuries of war for independence in his country many older heroes of equal fame and daring arose for the defence of their native land against the Spanish foe.

[pg 127] **DRAKE, THE SEA-KING, AND THE SPANISH TREASURE-SHIPS.**

At the end of October, 1578, Sir Francis Drake, the Sea-King of Devon, as he was called, and the most daring and persistent of the enemies of the Spanish settlements in America, sailed from Cape Horn, at the southern extremity of the continent, and steered northward into the great Pacific, with the golden realm of Peru for his goal. A year before he had left the harbor of Plymouth, England, with a fleet of five well-armed ships. But these had been lost or left behind until only the "Golden Hind," a ship of one hundred tons burden, was left, the flag-ship of the little squadron. Of the one hundred and sixty men with whom he started only about sixty

remained.

The bold Drake had previously made himself terrible to the Spaniards of Mexico and the West Indies, and had won treasure within sight of the walls of Panama. Now for the first time the foot of a white man trod the barren rocks of Cape Horn and the keel of an English ship cut the Pacific waves. Here were treasure-laden Spanish galleons to take and rich Spanish cities to raid, and the hearts of the adventurers were full of hope of a golden harvest as they sailed north into that unknown sea.

[pg 128] Onward they sailed, nearing the scene of the famous adventures of Pizarro, and about the 1st of December entered a harbor on the coast of Chili. Before them, at no great distance, lay sloping hills on which sheep and cattle were grazing and corn and potatoes growing. They landed to meet the natives, who came to the shore and seemed delighted with the presents which were given them. But soon afterwards Drake and a boatload of his men, who had gone on shore to procure fresh water, were fiercely attacked by ambushed Indians, and every man on board was wounded before they could pull away. Even some of their oars were snatched from them by the Indians, and Drake was wounded by an arrow in the cheek and struck by a stone on the side of his face.



THE HARBOR OF VALPARAISO.

Furious at this unprovoked assault, the crew wished to attack the hostile natives, but Drake refused to do so.

"No doubt the poor fellows take us for Spaniards," he said; "and we cannot blame them for attacking any man from Spain."

[pg 129] Some days later a native fisherman was captured and brought on board the ship. He was in a terrible fright, but was reassured when he learned that his captors were not Spaniards, but belonged to a nation whose people did not love Spain. He was highly pleased with a chopping-knife and a piece of linen cloth that were given him, and was sent ashore, promising to induce his people to sell some provisions to the ship's crew. He kept his word, and a good supply of fowls and eggs and a fat hog were obtained.

With the boat came off an Indian chief, glad to see any white men who hated the Spaniards as deeply as he did himself. He was well received and served to the best the ship could afford. Then he said to his entertainer in Spanish, a language he spoke fairly well,—

"If you are at war with the Spaniards, I will be glad to go with you, and think I can be of much use to you. The city of Valparaiso lies not far south of here, and in its harbor is a large galleon, nearly ready to sail with a rich treasure. We should all like much to have you capture that vessel."

This was good news to Drake. The next day the "Golden Hind" turned its prow down the coast under full sail, with the friendly native on board. When Valparaiso was reached, Drake saw to his delight that his dusky pilot had told the truth. There lay a great galleon, flying a Spanish flag. Not dreaming of an enemy in those waters, the Spaniards were unsuspecting until the "Golden Hind" had been laid alongside and its armed crew were clambering over the bulwarks. The rich prize was captured almost without a blow.

[pg 130] The crew secured, Drake searched for the expected treasure, and to his joy found that she was laden with over one hundred and twenty thousand dollars in gold coin, and with other costly goods, including about two thousand jars of Chili wine. This rich plunder was transferred to the hold of the "Golden Hind," and the Spanish ship left to her disconsolate captain and crew.

After celebrating this victory with a gleeful feast, in which the rich viands obtained were washed

down freely with the captured wine, an armed force was sent ashore to raid the town, whose people fled hurriedly to the fields when they saw the hostile strangers approaching. In the deserted houses and the church a fair supply of gold and silver spoil was found, and what was equally welcome, an abundant addition to their scanty store of provisions. Greatly the richer for her raid, the "Golden Hind" set sail again up the coast, putting the native pilot ashore at the place where he wished to land, and enriching him in a way that drew from him eager protestations of joy and gratitude.

[pg 131] Good and bad fortune attended the adventurers in this voyage up the South American coast. One of the examples of good fortune came at a place called Tarapaza, where a boatload of men, who had gone ashore, came upon a Spaniard lying fast asleep on the bank of a small stream. By his side, to their surprise, were thirteen heavy bars of solid silver. The sleepy treasure-bearer and his silver were speedily secured. Farther inland the party met with another Spaniard and an Indian boy, who were driving some sheep, with bulging bags upon their backs. On opening those they were found also to contain silver bars. It was a joyous party that returned to the "Golden Hind" with the treasure thus unexpectedly obtained, and it began to look almost as if the country grew silver.

The next raid of the adventurers was at a place called Arica, a small seaport town at the output of a beautiful and fertile valley. Here lay two or three Spanish vessels which were quickly captured and searched for goods of value. The town was not taken, for a native whom Drake met here told him of a Spanish galleon, heavily laden with a valuable cargo, which had recently passed up the coast. Here was better hope for spoil than in a small coastwise town, and the "Golden Hind" was speedily under sail again.

"A great galleon is ahead of us," said Drake to his men. "I am told she is richly laden. The first man of you who sets eyes on her will win my hearty thanks and a heavy gold chain into the bargain."

It may well be imagined that the eyes of the sailors were kept wide open in the days that followed. The man to win the golden chain was John Drake, the admiral's brother, who rushed to him one morning, as he came on deck, with the glad tidings,—

"Yonder is the galleon!"

He pointed to the far northern horizon, where the sails of a great ship were just becoming visible through the morning haze. "Make all sail!" was the cry, and the English cruiser glided swiftly forward before the fresh breeze towards the slow-moving Spanish ship.

[pg 132] Not dreaming of such an unlikely thing as an English ship in those waters, as yet never broken except by a Spanish keel, the captain of the galleon took the stranger for a craft of his own nation, and shortened sail as the "Golden Hind" came up, signalling for its officers to come on board. Drake did so, with a strong body of armed sailors, and when the Spanish captain learned his mistake it was too late to resist. The crew of the galleon were put under hatches, and her cargo, which proved to be rich in gold and silver, was quickly transferred to the "Golden Hind." Then captain and crew of the galleon were put ashore, and the captured ship was set adrift, to try her chances without pilot or helmsman in those perilous seas. The next storm probably made her a grave in the breakers.

Great had been the spoil gathered by the English rovers, a rich wealth of treasure being within the coffers of the "Golden Hind," while she was abundantly supplied with provisions. Drake now thought of returning home with the riches he had won for himself and his comrades. But the port of Lima, Pizarro's capital, lay not far up the coast, and here he hoped for a rich addition to his spoil. Though satisfied that a messenger had been sent from Valparaiso to warn the people of the presence of an armed English ship on the coast, he had no doubt of reaching Lima in advance of news brought overland.

[pg 133] On reaching the port of Lima a number of Spanish vessels were found, and, their captains being unsuspecting, were easily taken. But they contained no cargoes worth the capture. Lima lay several miles inland from the port, and the governor, on hearing of these depredations, imagined that the stranger must be a Spanish vessel that had fallen into the hands of pirates and was on a freebooting cruise. While he was making preparations for her capture the messenger from Valparaiso arrived and told him the real character of the unwelcome visitor.

This news spurred the governor to increased exertions. An armed English war-ship on their coast was a foe more to be dreaded than a pirate, and the wealth it had taken at Valparaiso was amply worth recapture. With all haste the governor got together a force of two thousand men, horse and foot, and at their head hurried to the port. There in the offing was the dangerous rover, lying motionless in a calm, and offering a promising chance for capture.

Hastily getting ready two Spanish ships and manning them heavily from his forces, he sent them out, favored by a land-breeze which had not reached Drake's sails. But before they had gone far the "Golden Hind" felt the welcome wind and was soon gliding through the water. With his small force it was hopeless for the English captain to face the strongly armed Spaniards, and his only hope for safety lay in flight.

The pursuit went on hour after hour, the Spaniards at times coming near enough to reach the "Golden Hind" with their shots. As the wind varied in strength, now the chase, now the pursuers, gained in speed. The Spanish ships proved fair sailers and might in the end have overhauled the Englishman but for a precaution the governor had neglected in his haste. Expecting to capture the English ship in a short run, he had not thought of provisioning his vessels, and as the chase went on their small food supply gave out and the soldiers were nearly famished. In the end the governor, who was on board, was reluctantly forced to order a return to port.

Yet he did not give up hope of capturing the English rovers. On reaching Lima he sent out three more ships, this time fully provisioned. But Drake and his men had won too good a start to be overtaken, and the new pursuers never came within sight of him.

Homeward bound with an abundant treasure, the rovers pressed merrily on. To return by the Straits of Magellan seemed too risky a venture with the Spaniards keenly on the alert, and the adventurous Englishman decided to sail north, expecting to be able to find a passage through the seas north of the American continent. The icy and impassable character of these seas was at that early date quite unknown.

Onward through the Spanish waters they went, taking new prizes and adding to their store of treasure as they advanced. The coastwise towns were also visited and booty obtained from them. At length the South American continent was left behind and the "Golden Hind" was off the coast of Central America. About mid April they left the shore and stood out to sea, at last bound definitely for home.

Drake fancied that the Pacific coast stretched due northward to the limit of the continent, where he hoped to find an easy passage back to the Atlantic, but after more than five weeks of a north-westward course, gradually verging to due north, he was surprised to see land again to his right. At first taking it for a large island, he soon learned that he had met the continent again and that America here stretched to the northwest.

He was off the coast of the country now called California, in a new region which English eyes had never seen, though Spaniards had been there before. The land seemed well peopled with Indians, very different in character and degree of civilization from those of Peru. They were simple-minded savages, but very friendly; fortunately so, since, as they lay in harbor, the ship sprang a leak, and it became necessary to take measures to repair the damage.

The ship was anchored in shallow water near the shore, her cargo and provisions were landed and stored, and steps taken to make the necessary repairs. While this was going on the mariners were visited by the savages in large numbers, occasionally with what were thought to be signs of hostility. But their friendliness never ceased, and when at length their visitors, with whom they had established very amicable relations, were ready to depart they manifested the greatest grief, moaning, wringing their hands, and shedding tears.

The harbor of the "Golden Hind" was in or near what is now called the Golden Gate, the entrance to the magnificent bay of San Francisco. On the 23d of July, 1579, the ship weighed anchor and sailed out of the harbor. On the hill-side in the rear was gathered a large body of Indians, some of them fantastically attired in skins and adorned with feathers, others naked but for the painted designs which covered their bodies. They built bonfires in all directions in token of farewell, and Drake and his officers stood on deck, waving their hats to their new-made friends. Slowly the hill with its fires of friendship disappeared from view, and they were on the open ocean again.

From this point the ship sailed northward, skirting the coast. But the farther they went the colder the weather became, until it grew so bleak that it was deemed necessary to give up the hope of reaching home by the northern route. Yet to return by the way they had come would be very dangerous with their small force, as the Spaniards would probably be keenly on the lookout for them. Only one course remained, which was to follow the route taken by Magellan, sixty years before, across the vast Pacific, through the islands of Asia, and around the Cape of Good Hope. Drake had with him the narratives and copies of the charts of the first circumnavigator of the globe, and it struck him that it would be a great and glorious thing to take the "Golden Hind" around the earth, and win him the credit of being the first Englishman to accomplish this wonderful task.

The prow of the "Golden Hind" was thereupon turned to the west. Quick and prosperous was the voyage, the sea being almost free from storms, and after sixty-eight days in which land had not been seen a green shore came in view. It was the last day of September, 1579.

The voyagers had many interesting experiences in the eastern archipelago, but no mishaps except that the ship grounded on a rocky shoal near one of the islands. Fortunately there was no leak, and after throwing overboard eight of their cannon, three tons of cloves they had gathered in their voyage through the isles of spices, and many bags of meal, the "Golden Hind" was got afloat again, none the worse for her dangerous misadventure.

Stocking their vessel once more with spices and sago at the island of Booten, and meeting with a hospitable reception at the large island of Java, they sailed to the south, doubling the stormy Cape of Good Hope without mishap and entering the Atlantic again. Finally, on the 26th of September, 1580, the "Golden Hind" dropped anchor in Plymouth harbor, from which she had

sailed nearly three years before, and with wealth enough to make all on board rich.

[pg 138] Never had England been more full of joy and pride than when the news of the wonderful voyage of the "Golden Hind" round the world was received and its strange adventures told. Queen Elizabeth was glad to make a knight of the bold sea-rover, changing his name from plain Francis Drake to Sir Francis Drake, and the people looked on him as their greatest hero of the sea. In our days acts like his would have been called piracy, for England was not at war with Spain. But Drake was made a hero all the same, and in the war that soon after began he did noble work in the great sea fight with the Spanish Armada.

[pg 139] **SIR WALTER RALEIGH AND THE QUEST FOR EL DORADO.**

Gold was the beacon that lured the Spaniards to America, and dazzling stories were told by them of the riches of the countries they explored, stories illustrated by the marvellous wealth of Peru. It was well known that Cortez had not obtained all the treasures of Montezuma, or Pizarro all those of Atahualpa, and many believed that these treasures had been carried far away by the servants of those unhappy monarchs. Guiana, the northeastern section of South America, was looked upon by the Spanish adventurers as the hiding-place of this fabulous wealth. Others fancied that Guiana was the true El Dorado in itself, a land marvellously rich in gold, silver, and precious stones. Gonzalo Pizarro, in his expedition in 1540, had heard much from the Indians of this land of wealth, and Orellana brought back from his famous descent of the Amazon marvellous stories of the riches in gold, silver, and precious stones of the land of the north.

[pg 140] These stories, once set afloat, grew in wonder and magnitude through pure love of the marvellous or wild expansion of the fanciful tales of the Indians. Far inland, built on a lofty hill, so the fable ran, was a mighty city, whose very street watering-troughs were made of solid gold and silver, while "billets of gold lay about in heaps, as if they were logs of wood marked out to burn."

In this imperial city dwelt in marvellous magnificence a mighty king. The legend went that it was a habit of his to cover his body with turpentine and then roll in gold-dust till he gleamed like a veritable golden image. Then, entering his barge of state, with a retinue of nobles whose dresses glittered with gems, they would sail around a beautiful lake, ending their tour by a bath in the cooling waters.

Where was this city? Who had seen its gold-emblazoned king? Certainly none of those who went in search of it or its monarch. Of the Spanish adventurers who sought for that land of treasure, the most persistent was a bold explorer named Berreo, who landed in New Granada, and set out thence with a large body of followers—seven hundred horsemen, the story goes. His route lay along the river Negro, and then down the broad Orinoco. Boats were built for the descent of this great stream. But the route was difficult and exhausting and the natives usually hostile, and as they went on many of the men and horses died or were slain.

[pg 141] For more than a year these sturdy explorers pushed on, reaching a point from which, if they could believe the natives, the city they sought was not far away, and Guiana and its riches were near at hand. As evidence, the Indians had treasure of their own to show, and gave Berreo "ten images of fine gold, which were so curiously wrought, as he had not seen the like in Italy, Spain, or the Low Countries." But as they went on the gallant seven hundred became reduced to a weary fraction, and these so eager to return home that their leader was forced to give up the quest. He sought the island of Trinidad, near the coast of South America, and there, as governor, he dwelt for years, keeping alive in his soul the dream of some day going again in search of El Dorado.

While Berreo was thus engaged, there dwelt in England a man of romantic and adventurous nature named Walter Raleigh. He became afterwards famous as Sir Walter Raleigh, and for many years devoted himself to the attempt to plant an English colony on the coast of North America. On this project he spent much time and money, but ill-fortune haunted him and all his colonies failed. Then he concluded to cross the ocean himself and restore his wasted wealth by preying on the Spanish treasure-ships, after the fashion of the bold Sir Francis Drake. But Queen Elizabeth put an end to this project by clapping him in prison, on a matter of royal jealousy. While one of the queen's lovers, he had dared to marry another woman.

While Raleigh lay in prison, some of the ships of the fleet he had fitted out came back with a Spanish galleon they had taken, so richly laden with costly goods that the whole court was filled

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with delight. Part of the spoils went to the queen and another part to Raleigh, and when at length he was released from his prison-cell his mind was set on winning more of the American gold. The stories of El Dorado and its marvellous city were then in great vogue, for Berreo had but lately returned from his expedition—with no gold, indeed, but with new tales of marvel he had gathered from the Indians.

It was now the year 1594. Raleigh was but forty-two years of age, in the prime of life and full of activity and energy. His romantic turn of mind led him to a full belief in the stories that floated about, and he grew eager to attempt the brilliant and alluring adventure which Berreo had failed to accomplish. Though the Spaniard had failed, he had opened up what might prove the track to success. Raleigh had sent various expeditions to the New World, but had never crossed the ocean himself. He now decided to seek Guiana and its fairyland of gold.

A small vessel was sent in advance, under command of Raleigh's friend, Jacob Whiddon, to feel the way and explore the mouth of the Orinoco, which was deemed to be the gateway to the golden realm. Whiddon stopped at Trinidad, and found Berreo, then its governor, very kindly and cordial. But, on one pretext or another, the treacherous Spaniard had the English sailors arrested and put in prison, until Whiddon found his crew so small that he was obliged to go back to England without seeing the Orinoco.

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Whiddon's report made Raleigh more eager than ever. He believed that Berreo was getting ready to go back to Guiana himself, and was seeking to rid himself of rivals. He hastened his preparations accordingly, and in February, 1595, set sail from Plymouth with a fleet of five well-supplied vessels, taking with him about one hundred gentlemen adventurers in addition to the crews. A number of small and light boats were also taken for use on the rivers of Guiana. Many of their friends came to see the voyagers off, flags floated on all the vessels in the harbor, and Raleigh and his companions, dressed in their best array, stood on the decks, as, with set sails and flying pennons, the stout ships moved slowly away on their voyage of chance and hope.

Raleigh followed the example of the sea-rovers of his day, committing what would now be called piracy on the high seas. Not long had the fleet left the Canary Islands before a Spanish ship was seen and captured. It was quickly emptied of its cargo,—a welcome one, as it consisted of fire-arms. Very soon after a second ship was captured. This was a Flemish vessel, laden with wines. These were taken also, twenty hogsheads of them. About two months out from Plymouth the hills of Trinidad were sighted, and Raleigh's eyes rested for the first time on the shores of that New World in which he had so long taken a warm interest.

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Governor Berreo tried to treat Raleigh as he had done his agent, forbidding any of the Indians to go on his ships on peril of death. But they went on board, for all that, and were delighted with the kind treatment they received. They told Raleigh that several of their chiefs had been seized and imprisoned in the town of St. Joseph, and begged him to rescue them. No Englishman of that day hesitated when the chance came to deal the Spaniards a blow, and a vigorous attack was soon made on the town, it being captured, the chiefs set free, and the governor himself made a prisoner.



A TROPICAL BUNGALOW AND PALMS.

Raleigh, while holding the Spaniard as a captive on his flag-ship, treated him with every courtesy, and had him to eat at his own table. Here Berreo, who did not suspect the purpose of the English, talked freely about his former expedition and gave his captor a good deal of very useful information. One thing Raleigh learned was that his ships could not be taken up the Orinoco, on account of the sand-banks at its mouth and its dangerous channels. He therefore felt it necessary

to leave the ships at Trinidad and cross to the mainland in the boats he had brought with him.

One hundred men were chosen for the journey, the others being left to guard the fleet. An old galley, a barge, a ship's-boat, and two wherries carried them, and a young Indian pilot, who claimed to be familiar with the coast, was taken along. Trinidad lies at no great distance from the mainland, but stormy weather assailed the voyagers, and they were glad enough to enter one of the mouths of the river and escape the ocean billows. But here new troubles surrounded them, the nature of which Raleigh described later, in his account of the expedition. He wrote:

[pg 145] "If God had not sent us help, we might have wandered a whole year in that labyrinth of rivers, ere we had found any way. I know all the earth does not yield the like confluence of streams and branches, the one crossing the other so many times, and all so fair and large, and so like one another as no man can tell which to take. And if we went by the sun or compass, hoping thereby to go directly one way or the other, yet that way also we were carried in a circle among multitudes of islands. Every island was so bordered with big trees as no man could see any farther than the breadth of the river or length of the branch."

The Indian pilot proved to be useless in this medley of water-ways, and only chance extricated the voyagers from the labyrinth in which they were involved. This chance was the meeting and capturing a canoe with three natives, who became friendly when they found they had nothing to fear from the strange white men. One of them was an old man who knew the river thoroughly, and whom presents and kind words induced to guide them past their difficulties.

Resting that night on a little knoll on the wooded banks of the stream, they were off again early the next morning. The river was still swift and violent, broken here and there with rapids, where they had to land and pull the boats. There were shoals also, which they had much trouble in getting over. And the banks were so crowded with trees and high reeds that they could not land, and were almost stifled from the closeness of the air.

[pg 146] After four hard and weary days of this kind they reached a smoother channel and could proceed more easily. But their work was still far from easy, for the inflowing tidal waters had left them and they had the swift current of the river to breast, while the tropic heat grew more oppressive day by day. It was hard work for the gentlemen rovers in that tropical climate, where the dense forest growth cut off every breath of air and their diminishing bread forced them to be put on short allowance. They began to complain bitterly, and Raleigh had to use all his powers of persuasion to induce them to go on.

Yet the country was in many ways beautiful. Here and there the woods ceased and broad plains spread out, covered with luxuriant herbage, amid which rose at intervals groves of beautiful trees. Graceful deer would come down to the water's edge and gaze fearlessly on the travellers with their big, soft eyes. "On the banks of these rivers," says Raleigh, "were divers sorts of fruits good to eat; flowers, too, and trees of such variety as were sufficient to make two volumes of travels. We refreshed ourselves many times with the fruits of the country, and sometimes with fowls and fish. We saw birds of all colors: some carnation, some crimson, orange, tawny, purple, and so on; and it was unto us a great good passing time to behold them, besides the relief we found by killing some store of them with our fowling-pieces."

[pg 147] The adventurers at length reached an Indian village of which their old guide had told them, and here, after the natives had got over their fright and learned that the strangers meant them no harm, they were very hospitably entertained. Thence they went onward, day after day, seeing many canoes on the river and landing at various villages. One of the canoes contained three Spaniards, who escaped from the effort to capture them, and Raleigh soon learned that the Spaniards had told the natives that the English were robbers and cannibals. To overcome the effect of this story, the greatest care was taken to treat the Indians with kindness and gentleness, and to punish in their presence any of the men who maltreated them. This quickly had its effect, for the news spread that the new-comers were the friends of the red men, and they were rewarded by every attention the natives could bestow on them. Provisions were brought them in profusion,—fish, fowl, and fruit, great roasted haunches of venison, and other viands. Among these were sweet and delicious pineapples of enormous size, "the prince of fruits," as Raleigh called them.

[pg 148] Finally, after they had gone about one hundred and fifty miles up the Orinoco, they reached the point where another great river, the Caroni, empties into it. The country here was more beautiful than they had yet seen, and prosperous Indian villages were numerous on the bordering plains. The natives had heard of the amicable character of the new-comers, and greeted them with great friendliness, doing all they could to show how they trusted and admired them. With one old chief, named Topiawara, Raleigh held many interesting talks and learned from him much about the country and the people. In return he told him about his own country and its great queen, and one day showed him a portrait of Queen Elizabeth, before which the simple natives bowed themselves as if it were the figure of a goddess they saw.

Many days were spent with these people, in hunting, fishing, and exploring, but, ask as they would, they could learn nothing about the land of gold and the marvellous city they had come so far to seek. The old chief told him that Guiana had many fertile plains and valleys and had mines of silver and gold, but the gold-dust king he knew nothing about. Finally, Raleigh decided to go up the Caroni, three parties being sent to explore its vicinity, while he with a fourth rowed up the

stream. He had been told of a mighty cataract, which he was very anxious to see, and this was at length reached, after a long struggle with the strong current of the river.

The cataract proved to be a series of giant cascades, ten or twelve in number, in the words of Raleigh, "every one as high above the other as a church tower, which fell with that fury that the rebound of waters made it seem as if it had been all covered over with a great shower of rain. And in some places we took it at first for a smoke that had risen over some great town.

[pg 149] "I never saw a more beautiful country," he continues, "or more lively prospects; hills so raised, here and there, over the valleys; the river winding into divers branches; the plains adjoining all green grass without bush or stubble; the ground of hard sand, easy to march on, either for horses or foot; the birds, towards evening, singing on every tree with a thousand sweet tunes; cranes and herons of white, crimson, and carnation, perching on the river's side; the air fresh, with a gentle, easterly wind; and every stone we stooped to pick up promising either gold or silver by its complexion."

On the return to the junction of the rivers, the land parties had similar stories to tell, and had pieces of golden ore to show, of which they claimed to have found plentiful indications. This story filled the whole party with dazzling hopes. Here, in the rocks at least, were the riches of which they had heard so much. If El Dorado did not exist, here was the native wealth that might well bring it into existence.

The prospectors had done all that lay in their power, and now felt it necessary to return to their ships, taking with them, at his request, the son of the aged chief, who wished him to see England, and perhaps to return at some time to succeed him, with the aid of the valiant English.

[pg 150] We must briefly close the story of Raleigh and his quest. After various adventures, the party reached Plymouth again in August, 1595, and the narrative of their discoveries was read everywhere with the utmost interest.

But many years passed before the explorer could return again. He became engaged in the wars against Spain, and after the death of the queen was arrested for treason by order of James I. and imprisoned for thirteen years. In 1617, twenty-two years after his first expedition, he returned to the Orinoco, this time with a fleet of thirteen vessels.

His release from prison had been gained by bribery and the promise to open a rich mine of gold in Guiana, but the expedition proved a failure. There was a sharp fight with a party of Spaniards at St. Thomas, in which Raleigh's son was killed. As for the gold mine, it could not be found, and the expedition was forced to return with none of the hoped-for wealth to show.

And now Raleigh's misfortunes culminated. He had been sentenced to death for treason in 1603, but had been reprieved. The king had him arrested again on the old charge, and the king of Spain demanded that he should be punished for the attack on St. Thomas in times of peace. James I. did not like Raleigh, and wished to stand well with Spain, so the famous explorer fell a victim to the royal policy and dislike and was beheaded under the old sentence in October, 1618. Since then El Dorado has lain concealed in the mists of legend and romance, though mines of gold have been worked in the region which Raleigh explored.

[pg 151] **MORGAN, THE FREEBOOTER, AND THE RAID ON PANAMA.**

During the seventeenth century the Spanish Main was beset with a horde of freebooters or buccaneers, as they called themselves, to whose fierce attacks the treasure-ships bound for Spain were constantly exposed, and who did not hesitate to assail the strongholds of the Spaniards in quest of plunder. They differed from pirates only in the fact that their operations were confined to Spain and her colonies, no war giving warrant to their atrocities. Most ferocious and most successful among these worthies was Henry Morgan, a man of Welsh birth, who made his name dreaded by his daring and cruelty throughout the New-World realms of Spain. The most famous among the deeds of this rover of the seas was his capture of the city of Panama, which we shall here describe.

On the 24th of October, 1670, there set sail from the island haunts of the freebooters the greatest fleet which these lawless wretches had ever got together. It consisted of thirty-seven ships, small and large, Morgan's flag-ship, of thirty-two guns, being the largest, and flying the English standard. The men had gathered from all the abiding-places of their fraternity, eager to serve

[pg 152] under so famous a leader as Morgan, and looking for rich spoil under a man whose rule of conduct was, "Where the Spaniards obstinately defend themselves there is something to take, and their best fortified places are those which contain the most treasure."



THE CITY OF PANAMA.

Not until they reached the vicinity of the isthmus did Morgan announce to his followers the plan he had conceived, which was to attack the important and opulent city of Panama, in which he expected to find a vast wealth of gold and silver. It was no trifling adventure. This city lay on the Pacific side of the Isthmus of Panama, and could be reached only by a long and toilsome land journey, the route well defended by nature and doubtless by art, while not a man on board the fleet had ever trod the way thither. To supply themselves with a guide the island of St. Catharine, where the Spaniards confined their criminals, was attacked and taken, and three of the convicts were selected for guides, under promise of liberty and reward.

[pg 153] Panama was at that time one of the largest and wealthiest cities in America. It contained some seven thousand houses, one-third the number being large and handsome dwellings, many of them strongly built of stone and richly furnished. Walls surrounded the city, which was well prepared for defence. It was the emporium for the precious metals of Peru and Mexico, two thousand mules being kept for the transportation of those rich ores. It was also the seat of a great trade in negro slaves, for the supply of Chili and Peru. The merchants of the place lived in great opulence and the churches were magnificently adorned, the chief among them being a handsome cathedral. Beautiful paintings and other costly works of art ornamented the principal dwellings, and everything concurred to add to the importance and beauty of the place.

A century earlier Sir Francis Drake had led his men near enough to Panama to behold the distant sea from the top of a high tree. But he had contented himself with waylaying and plundering a mule-train laden with treasure, and in 1670 it seemed the act of madness for a horde of freebooters to attack the city itself. Yet this was what the daring Morgan designed to do.

The first thing to be done was to capture Fort St. Laurent, a strong place on an almost inaccessible hill, near the banks of the Chagres River. Four ships, with four hundred men, were sent against this fort, which was vigorously defended by its garrison, but was taken at length by the expedient of firing the palisades and buildings of the fort—composed of light wood—by means of burning arrows. The assailants suffered heavily, losing more than half their force, while of the garrison only twenty-four were taken, many of the others having leaped from the walls into the river, preferring death to capture by their ferocious foes. From the prisoners it was learned that the people of Panama were not ignorant of Morgan's purpose, and that the threatened city was defended by more than three thousand men.

[pg 154] As the remainder of the fleet drew near, the freebooters, seeing the English flag flying on the fort, manifested their joy by the depths of their potations, getting so drunk, in fact, that they managed to run four of the ships on the rocks at the mouth of the Chagres, among them the admiral's ship. The crews and cargoes were saved, but the vessels were total wrecks, much to Morgan's chagrin.

At length, on the 18th of January, 1671, the march on Panama actually began, with a force of thirteen hundred picked men, five hundred being left to garrison the fort and one hundred and fifty to seize some Spanish vessels that were in the river. The means of conveyance being limited, and the need of marching light important, a very small supply of provisions was taken, it being expected to find an abundance on the route. But in this the raiders were seriously at fault, the Spaniards fleeing with all their cattle and cutting all the growing grain, so that the buccaneers soon found themselves almost destitute of supplies.

The journey was made in boats up the river as far as practicable, five small vessels carrying the

artillery. At the end of the second day most of the men were forced to abandon the boats and prosecute their journey on foot. On the third day they found themselves in a marshy forest, which they traversed with difficulty and reached the town of Cedro Bueno. Here they had hoped to find food, but the place was deserted and not a scrap of provisions left.

[pg 155] The affair was now growing very serious, all their food having been consumed and they left in imminent danger of starvation. Many of them were reduced to eat the leaves of the trees in their extremity. They found themselves also benumbed with cold as they spent the night unsheltered on the chilly river-bank. During the next day their route followed the stream, the canoes being dragged along, or rowed where the water was of sufficient depth. The Spaniards still carried away all food from the country before them, the only things they found being some large sacks of hides. These, in their extremity, were used as food, the leather being scraped, beaten, and soaked in water, after which it was roasted. Even then it could not be swallowed without the aid of copious draughts of water.

Only the courage and determination of the chiefs induced the men to go on under such severe privations. The fifth day's journey ended as badly as the previous ones, the only food found being a little flour, fruit, and wine, so small in quantity that Morgan had it distributed among the weaker members of his troop, some of whom were so faint as to seem on the point of death. For the rest of the men there was nothing to eat but leaves and the grass of the meadows.

[pg 156] The feebler men were now put on board the boats, the stronger continuing to travel by land, but very slowly, frequent rests being needed on account of their great exhaustion. It seemed, indeed, as if the expedition would have to be abandoned, when, to their delirious joy, they found a great supply of maize, which the Spaniards by some oversight had abandoned in a granary. Many of them, in their starving condition, devoured this grain raw. Others roasted it wrapped in banana leaves. The supply was soon exhausted, but for a time it gave new vigor to the famished men.

On the following day all the food they found was a sack of bread and some cats and dogs, all of which were greedily devoured; and farther on, at the town of Cruces, the head of navigation on the Chagres, a number of vessels of wine were discovered. This they hastily drank, with the result that all the drinkers fell ill and fancied they were poisoned. Their illness, however, was merely the natural effect of hasty drinking in their exhausted state, and soon left them.

At this point a number of the men were sent back with the boats to where the ships had been left, the force that continued the march amounting to eleven hundred. With these the journey proceeded, the principal adventure being an attack by a large body of Indians, who opposed the invaders with much valor, only retreating when their chief was killed.

[pg 157] About noon of the ninth day a steep hill was ascended, from whose summit, to their delight, the buccaneers beheld the distant Pacific. But what gave them much livelier joy was to see, in a valley below them, a great herd of bulls, cows, horses, and asses, under the care of some Spaniards, who took to flight the moment they saw the formidable force of invaders. Only an utter lack of judgment, or the wildness of panic in the Spaniards, could have induced them to leave this prey to their nearly starved foes. It was an oversight which was to prove fatal to them. Then was the time to attack instead of to feed their ruthless enemies.

The freebooters, faint with famine and fatigue, gained new strength at the sight of the welcome herd of food animals. They rushed hastily down and killed a large number of them, devouring the raw flesh with such a fury of hunger that the blood ran in streams from their lips. What could not be eaten was taken away to serve for a future supply. As yet Panama had not been seen, but soon, from a hill-top, they discerned its distant towers. The vision was hailed with the blare of trumpets and shouts of "victory!" and the buccaneers encamped on the spot, resolved to attack the city the next day.

The Spaniards, meanwhile, were not at rest. A troop of fifty horsemen was sent to reconnoitre, and a second detachment occupied the passes, to prevent the escape of the enemy in case of defeat. But the freebooters were not disturbed in their camp, and were allowed a quiet night's rest after their abundant meal of raw flesh.

[pg 158] The next day Morgan led his men against the city, skilfully avoiding the main road, which was defended by batteries, and passing through a thick and pathless wood. Two hours of this flanking march brought them in sight of the Spanish forces, which were very numerous, consisting of four regiments of the line and nearly three thousand other soldiers. They had with them also a great herd of wild bulls under the charge of Indians and negroes, from which much was hoped in the assault.

Morgan and his men were much discouraged by the multitude and military array of their foes, but nothing remained for them but a desperate fight, and, with two hundred of their best marksmen in front, they descended to the broad plain on which the Spaniards awaited them. They had no sooner reached it than the Spanish cavalry charged, while the bulls were driven tumultuously upon them.

This carefully devised assault proved a disastrous failure. The horsemen found themselves in marshy ground, where they were exposed to a hot and well-directed fire, numbers of them falling before they could effect a retreat. The charge of the bulls, on which so much reliance had been

placed, proved an equal failure, and with wild shouts the freebooters advanced, firing rapidly and with an accuracy of aim that soon strewed the ground with the dead.

[pg 159] The Spaniards, driven back by this impetuous charge, now turned the bulls against the rear of their enemy. But many of these had been cattle-raisers and knew well how to act against such a foe, driving them off with shouts and the waving of colored flags and killing numbers of them. In the end, after a battle of two hours' duration, the Spaniards, despite their great superiority of numbers, were utterly defeated, a great many being killed on the field and others in the panic of flight.

But the freebooters had lost heavily, and Panama, a city defended by walls and forts, remained to be taken. Morgan knew that success depended on taking instant advantage of the panic of the enemy, and he advanced without delay against the town. It was strongly defended with artillery, but the impetuous assault of the freebooters carried all before it, and after a three hours' fight the city was in their hands.

The scenes that followed were marked by the most atrocious ferocity and vandalism. The city was given up to indiscriminate pillage, attended by outrages of every kind, and in the end was set on fire by Morgan's orders and burned to the ground, much of its great wealth being utterly consumed through the sheer instinct of destruction.

[pg 160] Fortunately for the people of Panama, the majority of them had sought safety in flight, taking their women and all their portable wealth. In pursuit of those that had fled by water Morgan sent out a well-manned ship, which returned after a two days' cruise with three prizes. It also brought back news that a large galleon, deeply laden with treasure in gold and silver and carrying away the principal women of the town, with their jewels, had escaped. It was poorly manned and defended and for days Morgan made strenuous efforts to discover and capture it, but fortunately this rich prize eluded his grasp.

For three weeks the freebooters occupied the site of the burned city, many of them engaged in searching the ruins for gold and silver, while some, who were discontented with the acts of their leader, conspired to seize the largest ship in the harbor and start on a piratical cruise of their own down the Pacific. This coming to Morgan's ears on the eve of its execution, he defeated it by causing the main-mast of the ship to be cut down, and afterwards by setting fire to all the ships in the harbor.

The return of the freebooters had its items of interest. The booty, consisting of gold, silver, and jewels, was laden on a large number of animals, beside which disconsolately walked six hundred prisoners, men, women, and children, Morgan refusing them their liberty except on payment of a ransom which they could not procure. Some of them succeeded in obtaining the ransom on the march, but the majority were taken to Chagres. From there they were sent in a ship to Porto Bello, a neighboring coast town, Morgan threatening that place with destruction unless a heavy ransom was sent him. The inhabitants sent word back that not a half-penny would be paid, and that he might do what he pleased. What he pleased to do was to carry out his threat of destroying the town.

[pg 161] The final outcome of this frightful raid remains to be told. It demonstrated that Morgan was as faithless to his companions as he was ferocious to his victims. On their way back from Panama he ordered that every man should be searched and every article they had secreted be added to the general store. To induce them to consent he offered himself to be searched first. In the final division, however, of the spoil, which was valued at four hundred and forty-three thousand two hundred pounds weight of silver, he played the part of a traitor, many of the most precious articles disappearing from the store and the bulk of the precious stones especially being added by Morgan to his share.

This and other acts of the leader created such a hostile feeling among the men that a mutiny was imminent, to avoid which Morgan secretly set sail with his own and three other vessels, whose commanders had shared with him in the unequal division of the spoil. The fury of the remaining freebooters, on finding that they had been abandoned, was extreme, and they determined to pursue and attack Morgan and his confederates, but lack of provisions prevented them from carrying this into effect.

Meanwhile, events were taking place not much to the comfort of the freebooting fraternity. An English ship-of-the-line arrived at Jamaica with orders to bring home the governor to answer for the protection he had given "these bloodthirsty and plundering rascals," while the governor who succeeded him issued the severest orders against any future operations of the freebooters.

[pg 162] From this time Morgan withdrew from his career of robbery, content to enjoy the wealth which he had so cruelly and treacherously obtained. He settled in Jamaica, where he was permitted to enjoy in security his ill-gotten wealth. In fact, the British government showed its real sentiment concerning his career by promoting him to high offices and giving him the honor of knighthood. As a result this faithless and cruel pirate bore during the remainder of his life the distinction of being addressed as Sir Henry Morgan.

A DRAMA OF PLUNDER, MURDER, AND REVENGE

A famous story of American history is that which tells of the massacre of the French settlers in Florida by the Spaniards of St. Augustine, and of the signal revenge taken on the murderers by the French chevalier Dominique de Gourgues. There is a parallel tale to tell about Brazil, not so full of the element of romance, yet for all that an interesting story and well worth the telling.

The great Portuguese colony of Brazil, like many of the Spanish colonies, was open to the attacks of buccaneers and of free lances of the seas bearing the flags of various countries of Europe. There was not an important port of the country, except its capital, Rio Janeiro, that escaped attack by hostile fleets, eager for spoil, during the seventeenth century, and early in the eighteenth Rio itself was made the victim of assault. A city of over twelve thousand people, and the gateway to a rich gold-mining country in the rear, its wealth invited a visit from the prize-seekers, though the strength of its population and garrison long kept these away. Its turn for assault came in 1710.

In that year a squadron appeared in the waters outside the harbor on which the people looked with doubt. It flew the French flag, and that standard had not been a welcome visitor in the past. In fact, it was commanded by a daring Frenchman named Duclerc, who was on the seas for spoil. But a look at the strong defences of the harbor entrance, and some exchange of shots, warned him of the perils that would attend an attempt to pass them by force, and he sailed on to a point some forty miles down the coast, where he landed a party of a thousand marines.

His design to attack the city with this small party seemed folly. The governor, Francisco de Castro, had a force of eight thousand Portuguese troops, besides five thousand armed negroes and several hundred Indian bowmen. But he lacked the heart of a soldier, and Duclerc's marines marched like so many buccaneers through the forest for seven days without meeting a foeman. Even when near the city the only enemies in sight were a handful of men led by a friar, who attacked them boldly in defence of his church. After capturing this, the daring French charged into the city in the face of the fire from the forts on the surrounding hills, to which the governor's troops had been withdrawn.

The very boldness of the assault, and the failure of the governor to guard the streets with troops, nearly led to success. Little resistance was made by the few soldiers in the city, and the French traversed the narrow streets until the central square was reached. Here they met their first check from a party of fifty students, who had entered the palace of the governor and fired upon them from the windows. The first French assailants who forced their way in were taken prisoners and tied to the furniture. In the custom-house adjoining was the magazine. Here, as the storekeeper was hastily giving out ammunition, a fellow with a lighted match approached and carelessly set fire to the powder. In a moment the building was blown into the air, and the palace, which the French were still assailing, was set on fire.

The people were now rising, and the several detachments into which the attacking force had divided found themselves fiercely assailed. Duclerc, at the head of the main body, after losing heavily, barricaded himself in a stone warehouse on the quay, round which his foes gathered thickly. While there the bells of the city rang out merrily, a sound which he fancied to be made by his own men, who he thought were thus celebrating their victory. In reality it signified the victory of the Portuguese, who had fallen upon, defeated, and slaughtered one of his detachments. A second detachment, which had entered and begun to plunder the magazine, was set upon by the rabble and completely butchered. Duclerc's defence soon grew hopeless, and he was forced to surrender at discretion. The Portuguese sullied their victory by acts of cruel reprisal, many of the prisoners in their hands being murdered. In all nearly seven hundred of the French were killed and wounded. Six hundred, including the wounded, were taken prisoners, and of these many died through bad treatment in the prisons. Duclerc was murdered some-months after being taken. Soon after the fight the squadron appeared off the port, where its officers, learning of the loss of the assailants, squared their yards and sailed away for France. Thus ended the first act in our tragedy of plunder.

The second act was one of revenge. In France was found a second Dominique de Gourgues to call to a harsh account the murderers of his countrymen. France, indeed, was in a fury throughout when the news came of the inhuman slaughter of its citizens. The man who played the part of De Gourgues was a distinguished and able naval officer named M. de Guay-Trouin. He was moved by a double motive. While hot for revenge, the hope for plunder was an equally inspiring force. And the fame that might come to him with victory added still another motive. The path was made easy for him, for the government gave its approval to his enterprise, and certain wealthy citizens of St. Malo, eager for gain, volunteered the money to fit out the expedition.

It was important to keep the affair secret, and the vessels were fitted out at different ports to

avoid suspicion. Yet the rumor that an unusual number of war-vessels were being got ready was soon afloat and reached Portugal, where its purpose was suspected, and a fleet of merchant and war-vessels was hurried to sea with supplies and reinforcements for Rio. The suspicion reached England, also, and that country, then on the side of Portugal, sent out a fleet to blockade Brest, where the vessels of the expedition then lay, and prevent its sailing. But Admiral Trouin was not the man to be caught in a trap, and he hurried his ships out of port before they were quite ready, leaving the British an empty harbor to seal up. The work of preparation was finished at Rochelle, whence the fleet sailed in June, 1711. It consisted of seven line-of-battle ships, their number of guns varying from seventy-four to fifty-six, six frigates, and four smaller vessels, and had on board five thousand picked men,—a formidable force to send against a colonial city.

The powerful fleet made its way safely over the sea, and reached the vicinity of the northern Brazilian port of Bahia on August 27. Trouin had some thought of beginning his work here, but his water-supply was getting low and he felt obliged to hasten on. On the 11th of September he found himself off the Bay of Rio de Janeiro, with the city and its environing hills in full view.

The Portuguese had got ahead of him, the fleet from Lisbon having arrived, giving warning of the danger and reinforcing the garrison. Three forts and eleven batteries defended the narrow-mouthed harbor, within which lay four ships-of-the-line and as many frigates. Had all this force been directed by a man of ability the French might have found entrance to the bay impossible. But Francisco de Castro, the hopeless governor of the year before, was still at the head of affairs, and no man could have played more thoroughly into the hands of the French.

As it chanced, fortune favored the assailants. A heavy fog descended, under cover of which the fleet ran with little damage past the forts and entered the harbor. When the fog rose the Portuguese were dismayed to see their foes inside. Gaspar da Costa, the admiral of their fleet, was known as an able commander, but he was old and in feeble health, and such a panic now assailed him that he ran his ships in haste ashore and set fire to them, leaving to his foes the undisputed command of the harbor. Admiral Trouin had won the first move in the game.

Governor de Castro proved to be as completely demoralized as Admiral da Costa. He had twice as many troops as the French, but not half the courage and ability of his adversary. Fort Villegagnon, one of the chief defences, was blown up by the mismanagement of its garrison, and during the state of panic of the Portuguese Trouin landed about four thousand men, erecting a battery on an island within easy cannon-shot of the city, and occupying a range of hills to the left which gave him command of that section of the place. The governor with his troops looked on from a distance while the French pillaged the adjoining suburb, destitute of tactics that any one could discover unless he proposed to let the French enter the streets and then attack them from the houses.

It was in this way they had been defeated the year before, but Trouin was too old a soldier to be caught in such a trap. He erected batteries on the surrounding hill-slopes till the town was commanded on three sides, while the governor kept the bulk of his forces at a distance, waiting for no one knew what. Trouin had been permitted, with scarcely a blow in defence, to make himself master of the situation, and he needed only to get his guns in place to be able to batter the town to the dust.

He now sent a demand to the governor to surrender, saying that he had been sent by the king of France to take revenge for the murder of Duclerc and the inhuman slaughter of his men. De Castro answered that his duty to his king would not permit him to surrender, and sought to show that the French had been honorably killed in battle and Duclerc murdered by an assassin beyond his control.

A poor affair of a governor De Castro proved, and the French were permitted to go on with their works almost unmolested, the Portuguese occupying hill forts, the fire from which did little harm to the enemy. Trouin had already begun the bombardment of the city, and on receiving the governor's answer he kept his guns at work all night. At the same time there raged a tropical storm of great violence, accompanied by thunders that drowned the roar of the guns, the frightful combination throwing the people into such a state that they all fled in blind terror, the troops in the town with them. In the morning, when Trouin was ready to launch his storming parties, word was brought him that the city was deserted and lay at his mercy. Some of the richest magazines had been set on fire by the governor's order, but otherwise the rich city was abandoned, with all its wealth, to the French.

Of the relics of Duclerc's force, about five hundred remained alive in the city. These do not seem to have been then in prison, but living at large, and they were already abroad and plundering the abandoned city when the French forces entered. They had met good treatment as well as bad. Some of the people had been kind and hospitable to them, and in the sack of the city that ensued the houses of these charitable citizens were marked and left untouched.

Otherwise the sack was general, houses and warehouses being broken open, and quantities of valuable goods which could not be taken off being thrown into the mud of the streets. Now was the opportunity for the Portuguese to attack. Trouin was aware of the danger, but was unable to control his men, and a sudden assault by the garrison might have proved disastrous to the French. But the opportunity was allowed to pass, the governor, in fact, surrendering all his forts and marching his troops a league from the city, where he lay waiting reinforcements from the

interior while the French plundered at their leisure.

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Trouin was wise enough to know that his position was perilous. He might be overwhelmed by numbers, and it was important to finish his work and get away with little delay. But the plunder of the city was not sufficient for his purpose, and he sent word to the governor that he must ransom it or it would be burned. To make his word good he began by setting fire to the environs.

De Castro, eager to get rid of his foes at any price, offered six hundred thousand *cruzadoes*. This was refused by Trouin, and to stir up the governor to a better offer, the admiral took his messenger through the city and showed him that he was spoiling everything that fire would not burn. Learning, however, that the expected reinforcements might soon arrive, anxiety induced him to march his men to the front of the Portuguese camp, where he began to negotiate for better terms. The only addition De Castro would agree to was to promise the French a supply of cattle for food, fifteen days being allowed to collect the ransom.

Trouin, knowing well that he had no time to waste, accepted the terms, and none too soon, for shortly afterwards a strong body of reinforcements, led by an able general, entered the Portuguese camp. They came too late, the treaty had been made, and the new general felt bound in honor to make it good. So the ransom was paid, and on the 4th of November the triumphant French set sail, their ships deep laden with the rich plunder of the Brazilian capital and the gold of the governor's ransom.

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The return home was not attended with the success of the earlier part of the expedition. Trouin had left Bahia to be visited and plundered on his return, but when he came near it the weather was so stormy that he was obliged to abandon this part of his plan. The storms followed the fleet on its way across the seas, and rose to such a height that two of his ships went to the bottom, carrying down twelve hundred men. One of these was the finest ship of the fleet, and in consequence had been laden with the most valuable booty. Of gold and silver alone it took down with it a weight valued at six hundred thousand livres. A third vessel went ashore and was wrecked at Cayenne. Yet with all these losses, so much wealth was brought home that the speculators in spoil made a profit of ninety-two per cent. on their investment.

The French had won in large measure revenge and plunder, while Trouin had gained his meed of fame. It was now Portugal's time for vengeance, and it was visited principally on the worthless governor to whose cowardice the disaster was due. He had been praised and rewarded for the victory over Duclerc' s expedition—praise and reward which he certainly did not deserve. For very similar conduct he was now deposed and sentenced to degradation and perpetual imprisonment, on the charge of cowardice and lack of judgment. His nephew was banished for life for bad conduct, and a captain who had given up his fort and fled was hung in effigy. There were no others to punish, and Portugal was obliged to hold its hand, France being a foe beyond its reach. Rio had met with a terrible misfortune, from which it took many years to recover, and rarely have the sanguinary deeds of a murderous rabble led to so severe a retribution.

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THE WONDERFUL MARCH OF THE FREEBOOTERS

The March of the Ten Thousand, from Babylon to the Black Sea, is one of the famous events of history. The march of the three hundred, from the Pacific to the Atlantic, which we have here to tell, is scarcely known to history at all, yet it was marked by a courage and command of resources as great as those of the ancient Greeks. We think our readers will agree with us when they read this story, taken from the records of the freebooters on the Spanish Main.

After ravaging the settlements of Spain on the Atlantic coasts, various fleets of these piratical adventurers sought the Pacific waters in 1685, and there for several years made life scarce worth living to the inhabitants of the Spanish coast cities. Time and again these were plundered of their wealth, numbers of their ships were taken, and a veritable reign of terror prevailed. As time went on, however, most of these freebooters withdrew, satisfied with their abundant gains, so that, by the end of 1687, only a few of them remained, and these were eager to return with their ill-gotten wealth to their native land.

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This remnant of the piratical fraternity, less than three hundred in number, had their headquarters on an island in the Bay of Mapalla, on the Central American coast. What vessels they had left were in a wretched condition, utterly unfit to attempt the vast sea voyage by way of the Straits of Magellan, and nothing seemed to remain for them but an attempt to cross the continent by way of Nicaragua and Honduras, fighting their way through a multitude of enemies. To the pen of Ravenneau de Lussan, one of the adventurers, we are indebted for the narrative of the

singular and interesting adventure which follows.

The daring band of French and English freebooters were very ill provided for the dangerous enterprise they had in view. They proposed to cross an unknown country without guides and with a meagre supply of provisions, fighting as they went and conveying their sick and wounded as best they could. They had also a number of prisoners whom they felt it necessary to take with them, since to set them free would be to divulge their weakness to their enemies. Nature and circumstance seemed to combine against them, yet if they ever wished to see their native lands again they must face every danger, trusting that some of them, at least, might escape to enjoy their spoils.

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After questioning their prisoners, they decided to take a route by way of the city of New Segovia, which lies north of the lake of Nicaragua, about one hundred and twenty miles from the Pacific and seventy-five miles from the waters of a river that flows, after a long course, into the Atlantic opposite Cape Gracias-a-Dios. In order to gain further information about the route, sixty men were sent to explore the neighboring country. These advanced till they were near the small city of Chiloteca. Here, worn out by their journey and learning that they were in a thickly settled country, most of the pioneers decided to return. But eighteen of the bolder spirits had the audacity to advance on Chiloteca, a place of perhaps a thousand inhabitants.

Into it they rushed with such ferocious yells and so terrific a fusillade of shots that the frightened inhabitants, taken utterly by surprise, fled in mortal terror, leaving the place to its captors. These quickly seized a number of horses, and made haste to retreat on their backs, hotly pursued by the Spaniards, who soon discovered to what a handful of men they had surrendered their city.

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On receiving the report of their scouts, the freebooters determined on the desperate venture. They had little to convey except their spoil, which, the result of numerous raids, was valued at about one million dollars. It chiefly consisted of gold and jewels, all heavier valuables, even silver, being left in great part behind, as too heavy to carry. The spoil was very unequally owned, since the gambling which had gone on actively among them had greatly varied the distribution of their wealth. To overcome the anger and jealousy which this created among the poorer, those with much to carry shared their portions among their companions, with the understanding that, if they reached the Antilles in safety, half of it should be returned. As for the prisoners, it was decided to take them along, and make use of them for carrying the utensils, provisions, and sick.

On the 1st of January, 1688, these freebooters, two hundred and eighty-five in number, with sixty-eight horses, crossed in boats from their island refuge to the main-land and began their march. Their ships had been first destroyed, their cannon cast into the sea, and their bulkier effects burned. Divided into four companies, with forty men in front as an advance guard, they moved forward into a land of adventure and peril.

It was soon found that the people expected and had prepared for their coming. Trees had been felled across the roads and efforts made to obstruct all the foot-paths. Provisions had been carried away, and the dry herbage of the fields was set on fire as they advanced, almost suffocating them with the heat and smoke. This was done to hinder their march until the Spaniards had completed a strong intrenchment which was being built at a suitable place on the route.

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Ambuscades were also laid for them. On the eighth day of their march they fell into one of these at Tusignala, where three hundred Spaniards lay concealed on the ground and fired into their ranks. Though these were dispersed by a fierce charge, they followed the freebooters closely, annoying them from the shelter of woods and thickets. The next day a still larger ambuscade was laid, which, fortunately for the freebooters, was discovered and dispersed in time, the fleeing Spaniards leaving their horses behind.

Two days later New Segovia was reached. Here the buccaneers expected a severe engagement, and hoped to gain a supply of provisions. In both they were mistaken; the inhabitants had decamped, carrying all food with them. Their prisoners, who had served them as guides to this point, knew nothing of the country beyond, but they succeeded in taking a new prisoner who was familiar with the further route.

The country they were passing through was mountainous and very difficult. Steep acclivities had constantly to be climbed, narrow paths on the borders of deep chasms to be traversed, and rapid slopes to be descended. The nights were bitterly cold, the mornings were darkened by thick fogs, and their whole route was attended with danger, discomfort, and fatigue.

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New Segovia lay in a valley surrounded on all sides by mountains, one of which had to be ascended immediately on leaving the town. The next day's dawn found them on its summit, with a valley far below them, in which, to their joy, they beheld a large number of animals which they took to be oxen. Their joy was dissipated, however, when the scouts they sent out came back with the information that these animals were horses, saddled and bridled, and that a series of formidable intrenchments had been built in the valley, rising like terraces, one above another, and carried to the mountains on each side, so as completely to close the route.

There seemed no way to avoid these defences. On one side of the mountain flowed a river. A small eminence, surrounded by breastworks, commanded the only passage which the freebooters

could follow. The whole country round was thick forest, through whose rock-guarded demesnes not the slightest indication of a path could be seen. Yet to attack those works in front promised quick and utter defeat, and if they wished to avoid destruction they must find some way to outwit their foes. It was decided that the forest presented less dangers and difficulties than the fortified road, and that the only hope of safety lay in a flank movement which would lead them to the rear of the enemy.

During that day active preparations were made for the proposed movement. The three hundred Spaniards who had ambushed them some days before still hung upon their rear. Their horses, sick, and prisoners were therefore left in an enclosed camp, barricaded by their baggage-vehicles and guarded by eighty of their number. As a means of impressing the enemy with their numbers and alertness they kept up camp-fires all night, repeated at intervals the rolls upon the drum, relieved the sentinels with a great noise, and varied these signs of activity with cries and occasional discharges of musketry.

[pg 179] Meanwhile, as soon as the shades of evening descended, the remainder of the freebooters, some two hundred in number, began their march, following the route indicated by a scout they had sent to examine the forest. The difficulties of that night journey through the dense wood proved very great, there being numerous steep rocks to climb and descend, and this needed to be done with as little noise as possible. Daybreak found the adventurers on a mountain elevation, from which they could see the Spanish intrenchments below them on the left. The greatest of their impediments had been surmounted, but there were difficulties still to be overcome.

Fortunately for them a thick mist rose with the morning light, which, while it rendered their downward passage critical, served to conceal them from the enemy below. As they came near the works the heavy tread of a patrol guided them in their course, and the morning prayers of the Spaniards were of still more advantage in indicating their distance and position. The freebooting band had reached the rear of the hostile army, composed of five hundred men, who were so taken by surprise on seeing their ferocious enemy rushing upon them with shouts and volleys, from this unlooked-for quarter, that they fled without an attempt at defence.

[pg 180] The other Spaniards behaved more courageously, but the appearance of the buccaneers within the works they had so toilsomely prepared robbed them of spirit, and after an hour's fight they, too, broke and fled. The trees they had felled to obstruct the road now contributed to their utter defeat, and they were cut down in multitudes, with scarce an attempt at resistance. We can scarcely credit the testimony of the freebooters, however, that their sole losses were one killed and two wounded. The success of the advance party was equalled by that of the guard of armed men left in the camp, who, after some negotiations with the troop of Spaniards in their rear, made a sudden charge upon them and dispersed all who were not cut down.

That the freebooters were as much surprised as gratified by the signal success of their stratagem need scarcely be said. One of the panics which are apt to follow a surprise in war had saved them from threatened annihilation. They learned, however, the disquieting fact that six miles farther on was another strong intrenchment which could not be avoided, the country permitting no choice of roads. In their situation there was nothing to do but to advance and dare the worst, and fortunately for them their remarkable success spread such terror before it that, when they appeared before these new works, the Spaniards made no attack, but remained quietly behind their breastworks while their dreaded foes marched past.

[pg 181] The seventeenth day of their march carried them to the banks of the river towards which their route had been laid. This was the Magdalena, a stream which rises in the mountains near New Segovia and flows through a difficult rock channel, with numerous cascades, three of them amounting to cataracts, finally reaching the Caribbean Sea after a course of several hundred miles.

How they were to descend this mountain torrent was the question which now offered itself to them. It presented a more attractive route of travel than the one so far pursued over the mountains, but was marked by difficulties of a formidable character. These were overcome by the freebooters in an extraordinary manner, one almost or quite without parallel in the annals of travel. The expedient they adopted was certainly of curious interest.

Before them was a large and rapid river, its current impeded by a multitude of rocks and broken by rapids and cascades. They were destitute of ropes or tools suitable for boat-building, and any ordinary kind of boats would have been of no use to them in such a stream. It occurred to them that what they needed to navigate a river of this character was something of the nature of large baskets or tuns, in which they might float enclosed to their waists, while keeping themselves from contact with the rocks by the aid of poles.

[pg 182] They had no models for such floating contrivances, and were obliged to invent them. Near the river was an extensive forest, and this supplied them abundantly with young trees, of light wood. These they cut down, stripped off their bark, collected them by fives, and, lacking ropes, fastened them together with lianas and a tenacious kind of gum which the forest provided. A large number of small, frail, basket-like contrivances were thus made, each large enough to carry two men, with whom they would sink in the water as deep as the waist. Piperies, Lussan called them, but his description does not make it clear just what they were like.

While thus engaged, the freebooters killed part of their horses, and salted their flesh for food, all the work being done with the energy and activity necessary in their critical situation. During it they were not molested by the Spaniards, but no one could tell how soon they might be. When all was ready they restored their prisoners to the liberty of which they had long been deprived, and entered upon one of the most perilous examples of navigation that can well be imagined.

Launched in their piperies, the freebooters found themselves tossed about by the impetuous current, and speedily covered with spray. The lightness of their floating baskets kept them from sinking, but the energetic efforts they were obliged to make to keep from being thrown out or dashed on the rocks soon exhausted them. A short experience taught them the necessity of fastening themselves in the piperies, so that their hands might be free to keep them from being hurled on the rocks. Occasionally their frail crafts were overturned or buried under the waves in the swift rapids, and the inmates were either drowned or escaped by abandoning the treasures which weighed them down.

[pg 183] Whatever else may be said of this method of navigation, it proved a rapid one, the frail barks being hurried on at an impetuous speed. Each of the cataracts was preceded by a basin of still water, and here it became necessary to swim to the shore and descend the rocks to the bottom of the fall. Some who remained behind threw the piperies into the stream to be carried over the liquid precipice, and recovered by swimming out to meet them, or replaced by new ones when lost.

After three days of this singular navigation it was decided, in view of the fact that the piperies were often dashed together to their mutual injury, to separate and keep at a distance from each other, those who went first marking out by small flags where it was necessary to land. During their progress the question of food again became prominent, the salted horsemeat they had brought with them being spoiled by its frequent wetting. Game was plentiful, but their powder was all spoiled, and the only food to be found was the fruit of the banana-tree, which grew abundantly on the banks.

[pg 184] The cupidity of the freebooters was not abated by the danger of their situation. They made the most earnest endeavors to preserve their spoil, and some of the poorer ones even resorted to murder to gain the wealth of their richer comrades. The dispersion of the flotilla favored this, and six conspiring Frenchmen hid behind the rocks and attacked and killed five Englishmen who were known to possess much treasure. Robbing the bodies, they took to the stream again, leaving the bloody corpses on the bank. Those who saw them had no time to think of avenging them.

Gradually the river grew wider and deeper and its course less impetuous. The cascades were all passed, but the stream was obstructed by floating or anchored tree-trunks, by which many of the piperies were overturned and their occupants drowned. To avoid this danger the piperies were now abandoned and the freebooters divided themselves into detachments and began to build large canoes from the forest trees. Four of these, carrying one hundred and thirty men, were soon ready and their builders again took to the stream. Of the fate of the others, who remained behind, no further account is given by the historian of this adventure.

On the 9th of March, sixty days after their departure from the Pacific, the adventurers reached the river's mouth, having completed their remarkable feat of crossing the continent in the face of the most threatening perils from man and nature. But fortune only partly favored them, for many had lost all the wealth which they had gathered in their career of piracy, their very clothes hanging in rags about their limbs. Some, indeed, had been more fortunate or more adroit in their singular navigation, but, as a whole, they were a woe-begone and miserable party when, a few days afterwards, they reached the isle of Perlas. Here were some friendly vessels, on which they embarked, and near the end of April they reached the West Indies, with the little that remained of their plunder.

[pg 185] Such was the end of this remarkable achievement, one which for boldness, intrepidity, and skill in expedients has few to rival it in the annals of history, and which, if performed by men of note, instead of by an obscure band of robbers, would have won for them a high meed of fame.

[pg 186] **THE CRUELTY OF THE SPANIARDS TO THE INDIANS.**

Never were a people more terribly treated than the natives of America under the Spanish adventurers. The often told story that the Indians of Hispaniola were annihilated in one generation after the settlement of that island is sufficient evidence of the frightfully inhuman treatment to which they were subjected. The laws of Spain provided for justice and humanity in

the dealings with the Indians, but the settlers, thousands of miles away, paid no attention to these laws, and the red men were almost everywhere reduced to slavery, or where free and given political rights, were looked upon as far inferior to the whites. In every district Spain placed an official called the "Protector of the Indians," but it does not appear that they were much the better off for their "Protectors." It is our purpose here to say something about the cruel treatment of the natives in South America.



INDIANS OF THE PLATEAU.

The Spanish settlers had three terms which applied to their dealings with the Indians, the *encomiando*, the *mitad*, and the *repartimiento*, each indicating a form of injustice. The conquerors divided the country between them, and the *encomiandos* were rights granted them to hold the Indians for a number of years as workers in their fields or their mines. Under these grants, the natives were converted into beasts of burden, and forced to do the hardest work without the least compensation. They were obliged to labor all day long under the burning tropical sun, to dive into the sea in search of pearls for their masters, or to toil buried from the light of day in the depths of the mines. It is not surprising that these miserable slaves, accustomed to a life of indolence and ease, perished as if exposed to a killing plague.

The *mitad* was a law formed for their protection, but it soon became one of the worst of the abuses. Under it every man from the age of eighteen to fifty was required to render bodily service, the natives of each mining colony of South America being divided into seven sections, each of which had to work six months in the mines. Every mine-owner could demand the number of Indians he needed. In Peru alone fourteen hundred mines were worked, and labor of this kind was in constant demand.

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As to the kind of labor they had to do, we need only say that when any man was called upon to work in the mines he looked upon it as a sentence of death. Before going he gave all his possessions to his relatives, and they went through the funeral service, as if he were already dead. They well knew the usual end of labor in the mines. A mass was said for him at the church, and he had to take an oath of fidelity to the king. Then he was sprinkled with holy water and sent away to his deadly service. Deadly we may well call it, for it is said that scarcely a fifth part of these miners lived through their term of labor.

Lowered from the light of the sun into the deep underground shafts and galleries, and passing from the pure air of heaven to a pestilential atmosphere, excessive labor and bad food soon robbed them of strength and often of life. If they survived this, a species of asthma usually carried them off during the year. We may judge of the results from the calculation that the *mitad* in Peru alone had eight million victims.

The law limited the *mitad* to those living within thirty miles of a mine, but laborers were often brought by force from hundreds of miles away. As for the small wages paid them, the masters took part of it from them in payment for their food, and usually got the remainder by giving credit for clothes or liquor or in other ways. In fact, if by good fortune the Indian had not lost his life at the end of his term of service, he might be brought into debt which he could not pay, and thus held a slave for life.

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The *repartimiento* was another protective law, which also became a means of oppression. Under it the district officials were required to supply all things needed by the Indians, there being, when the law was passed, no peddlers or travelling dealers. This privilege was quickly and shamelessly abused, the natives being sold poor clothing, spoiled grain, sour wine, and other inferior supplies, often at three or four times their value when of good quality. They were even made to buy things at high prices which were of no possible use to them, such as silk stockings for men who went barefoot, and razors for those who had scarcely any beard to shave. One *corregidor* bought a box of spectacles from a trader, and made the natives buy these at his own price, to wear when they went to mass, without regard to the fact that they were utterly useless to them.

The oppression of the natives was not confined to the laity, but the clergy were often as unjust. They forced them to pay not only the tithes, but extravagant prices for every church service, forty reals being charged for a baptism, twenty for a marriage certificate, thirty-two for a burial, etc. Such sums as these, which fairly beggared the poor Indians, enabled the clergy to build costly churches and mission houses and to keep up abundant revenues.

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These general statements very faintly picture the actual state to which the Indians were reduced. This may be better shown by some instances of their sufferings. The Timebos Indians, for example, of the province of Velez, New Grenada, were reduced to such extreme misery by the embezzlement of the funds, that whole families flung themselves from the top of a rock twelve hundred feet high into the river below. One night, in order to escape from the cruelty of the colonists, the whole tribes of the Agatoas and Cocomes killed themselves, preferring death to the horrors of Spanish rule. Many Indians strangled themselves when in peril of being enslaved by the Spaniards, feeling that a quick death was better than a slow one under the torture of incessant toil.

In one instance, when a party of hopeless natives had come together with the intention of killing themselves, an intendant came to them with a rope in his hand, and told them that if they did not give up their purpose he would hang himself with them. This threat filled them with such horror at the prospect of meeting a Spaniard in the spirit world, that they fled from the spot, preferring life with all its terrors to such a companion.

As may well be imagined, the natives did not all yield resistlessly to their tyrants. Thus, in exasperation at the quantity of gold-dust which they were forced to pay as tribute, the people of Aconcalm, in the province of Canas, seized the brutal Spanish collector one day, and gave him melted gold to drink, "to satisfy in this way his insatiable thirst for gold."

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In December, 1767, the descendants of the two tribes which had owned the mining valley of Caravaya descended on the white inhabitants in revenge for a usurpation of their lands which had taken place more than two centuries before. They settled the question of ownership by burning the city and killing all the inhabitants with arrows and clubs. When news of this was received by the viceroy, Don Antonio Amat, he swore on a piece of the true cross to kill all the savages in Peru. He was prevented from carrying out this threat only by the prayers of the actress Mariquita Gallegas, whom he loved, and who convinced him that it was his duty as a Christian to convert them to the religion of Christ rather than to massacre them.

In 1780 there began a memorable insurrection of the persecuted natives. It was especially notable as being led by a direct descendant of the Inca Tupac-Amaru, who had been beheaded by

the Spaniards in 1562. This noble Indian, the last of the Incas, had been well educated by the Jesuits in Cuzco, and became the cacique of Tungasac. His virtues were such as to gain him the respect and esteem of all the Peruvian Indians, who venerated him also as the lineal descendant of their ancient emperors.

One day this cacique, exasperated by the rapacity of the *corregidor* of Tuita, who had laid three *repartimientos* on the Indians in a single year, seized the tyrannical wretch and strangled him with his own hands. Then, taking the name of his ancestor, Tupac-Amaru, he proclaimed himself the chief of all those who were in rebellion against the Spaniards.

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His error seems to have been in not fraternizing with the creoles, or white natives of the country, who hated the Spaniards as bitterly as the Indians themselves. On the contrary he treated these as enemies also, and thus greatly augmented the number of his foes. The Indians, their memories of their ancient freedom aroused by his call, joined his ranks in enthusiastic numbers and won several victories over the whites, the whole of Upper Peru breaking out in insurrection. Lacking fire-arms as they did, they kept up the struggle for a year, the outbreak being brought to an end at last by treachery instead of arms. Betrayed by a cacique to whom the Spaniards promised a colonel's commission,—a promise they did not keep,—the Inca was taken prisoner by his enemies, and conducted to Cuzco, the ancient capital of his ancestors. Here he was tried and condemned to death, and executed with a frightful excess of cruelty that filled with horror all the civilized world, when the terrible tale became known.

Conducted to the place of execution, his wife and children, and his brother-in-law, Bastidas, were brought before him, their tongues cut out, and then put to death by the Spanish method of strangling before his eyes. His little son was left alive to witness his death. This was one in which the most brutal tortures of mediæval times seemed revived. His tongue being torn out, his limbs were tied to four horses, which were driven in different directions with the purpose of tearing him limb from limb. The horses proved unable to do this, and he remained suspended in agony, until one of the more merciful of the Spaniards ended his torture by cutting off his head. During this revolting scene the little son of the victim gave vent to a terrible scream of agony, the memory of which haunted many of the executioners to their death.

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The legs and arms of the victim were sent to the rebellious towns, his body was burned to ashes, his house was razed, his property confiscated, and his family declared infamous forever. One of his brothers was sent to Spain and condemned to the galleys, in which he remained for thirty years. Such were the means taken by the Spaniards to overcome the love of liberty in the natives of Peru.

As for the natives themselves, what few privileges they had retained were taken from them, their meetings and festivals were forbidden, and for any one to assume the name of Inca was declared criminal. These severe measures were thought sufficient to intimidate the Indians, but they only exasperated them, and they took a terrible revenge. Andres, a cousin of Amaru, who had escaped capture, and another chief named Catari, led them in a campaign of revenge in which they fought with the fury of despair. The lives of five hundred Spaniards, it is said, paid the penalty for each of the victims of that dread execution in Cuzco.

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Andres besieged the city of Sorata, in which all the white families of the vicinity had taken refuge with their treasures. The artillery of the fortifications seemed an invulnerable defence against the poorly armed besiegers, but Andres succeeded in making a breach by turning the mountain streams against the walls. Once within, the exasperated Indians took a terrible revenge, a single priest being, as we are told, the sole survivor of the twenty thousand inhabitants. In the end the Spaniards put down the insurrection by treachery and cunning, seized the chiefs, and sent Andres to Ceuta, in Spain, where he remained in prison till 1820.

We shall only say in addition that the Portuguese of Brazil treated the natives of that land with a cruelty little less than that shown by the Spaniards, sending out hunting expeditions to bring in Indians to serve as slaves. Those who opposed them were shot down without mercy, and it is said that, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, peasants infected with the virus of smallpox were sent to the Botocudos, as a convenient means of getting rid of that hostile tribe. As a result of all this, the greater part of the tribes of Brazil completely disappeared. The natives of South America obtained justice and honorable treatment only after the people of that country had won their liberty.

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CUDJOE, THE NEGRO CHIEF, AND THE MAROONS OF JAMAICA.

When the English conquered the island of Jamaica and drove the Spaniards out of it, they failed to conquer its sable inhabitants, negroes who had been slaves to the Spaniards, but who now fought for and maintained their freedom. Such were the Maroons, or mountain-dwelling fugitives of Jamaica, whose story is well worth telling.

First we must say something about the history of this island, and how it came into English hands. It was long held by the Spaniards, being discovered by Columbus in his second voyage, in 1494. In his last voyage he had a dismal experience there. With his vessels battered and ready to sink, after running through a severe wind storm, he put into the harbor of Porto Bueno, in northern Jamaica. He afterwards left this for a small bay, still known after him as Don Christopher's Cove, and here, attacked by the warlike natives, and unable to put to sea, he was kept captive in his shattered hulks for a whole year.

[pg 196] The Indians refused him food, and the tradition goes that he got this at length by a skilful artifice. Knowing that a total eclipse of the moon would soon take place, he sent word to the dusky chief that the lights in the sky were under his control, and if they did not give him supplies he would put out the light of the moon and never let it shine again on their island. The Indians laughed with scorn at this threat, but when they saw the moon gradually losing its light and fading into darkness, they fell into a panic, and begged him to let it shine again, promising to bring him all the food he wanted. At this the admiral feigned to relent, and after retiring for a time to his cabin, came forth and told them that he would consent to bring back the lost moonlight. After that the Indians saw that the crew had abundance of food. The admiral and his crew were finally rescued by an expedition sent from Hispaniola.

Jamaica, like Cuba and Hayti, has the honor of keeping its old Indian name, signifying a land of springs, or of woods and waters. It is a land of mountains also; if it had not been we would have had no story to tell, for these mountains were the haunts and the strongholds of the Maroons. The island was not settled till 1523, twenty years after the detention of Columbus on its shores. Many years after that we find its Spanish settlers oppressing all the English that fell into their hands. This was the case, in fact, all through the West Indies, English seamen being put in the stocks, sent to the galleys, or murdered outright.

[pg 197] It took the sturdy directness of Oliver Cromwell to put an end to these outrages. He sent word to the Spanish minister that there must be a stop put to the practices of the Inquisition and to the restriction of free navigation in the West Indies. The minister replied, that to ask for these two things was "to ask for his master's two eyes," and that no such thing could be allowed. Cromwell's reply was to the point:

"I know of no title that the Spaniards hath but by force, which by the same title may be repelled. And as to the first discovery—to me it seems as little reason that the sailing of a Spanish ship upon the coast of India should entitle the king of Spain to that country as the sailing of an Indian or English ship upon the coast of Spain should entitle either the Indians or the English to the dominion thereof. The Spaniards have contravened the Treaty of 1630. War must needs be justifiable when peace is not allowable."

This reply was certainly one marked by sound logic and good sense. It was the rule of force, not of right, that lay behind all claims to dominion in America, and this rule could be set aside by superior force. So Cromwell sent out a great fleet under command of Admiral Penn,—father of William Penn, the settler of Pennsylvania,—with a land force commanded by General Venables. The first attempt was made upon Hispaniola. Failing here, the fleet sailed to Jamaica, where the Spaniards surrendered on the 11th of May, 1655. They tried to take it back again shortly before Cromwell's death, but did not succeed, and Jamaica has remained an English island from that day to this.

[pg 198] This is about all we need say by way of preface, except to remark that many settlers were sent to Jamaica, and the island soon became well peopled and prosperous, Port Royal, its principal harbor, coming to be the liveliest city in the West Indies. It was known as the wickedest city as well as the richest, and when an earthquake came in 1692, and Port Royal, with the sandy slope on which it was built, slipped into the sea with all its dwellings, warehouses and wealth, and numbers of its people, the disaster was looked upon by many as a judgment from heaven. There is one thing more worth mention, which is that Morgan, the buccaneer, whose deeds of shameful cruelty at Panama we have described, became afterwards deputy governor of Jamaica, as Sir Henry Morgan, which title was given him by King Charles II. It is not easy to know why this was done, unless it be true, as was then said, that Charles shared in the spoils of his bloody deeds of piracy. However that be, Morgan, as governor, turned hotly upon his former associates, and hunted down the buccaneers without mercy, hanging and shooting all he could lay hands on, until he fairly put an end to the trade which had made him rich.

[pg 199] Let us come now to the story of the Maroons, that nest of fugitives who made things hot enough for the English in Jamaica for many years. When Cromwell's soldiers took possession of Jamaica few or none of those warlike Indians, who had given Columbus so much trouble, were left. In their place were about two thousand negro slaves, and these fled to the mountains, as the Indians had done before them. There they remained in freedom, though the English did their best to coax them to come down and enjoy the blessings of slavery again, and though they tried their utmost to drive them down from the cliffs by means of soldiers and guns. In spite of all the whites could do, the negroes, "Maroons," as they were called, long preserved their liberty.

In 1663 the British, finding that they could not master the warlike fugitives by force, offered them a full pardon, with liberty and twenty acres of land apiece, if they would yield. But the negroes, who were masters of the whole mountainous interior, where thousands could live in plenty, chose to stay where they were and not to trust to the slippery faith of the white man. And so it went on until after 1730, when the depredations of the negroes upon the settlements became so annoying that two regiments of British regulars and all the militia of the island were sent into the mountains to put them down. As it proved, the negroes still held their own, not one of them being taken prisoner, and very few of them killed. They were decidedly masters of the situation.

[pg 200] At this time the chief of the Maroons, Cudjoe by name, was a dusky dwarf, sable, ugly, and uncouth, but shrewd and wary, and fully capable of discounting all the wiles of his enemies. No Christian he, but a full Pagan, worshipping, with his followers, the African gods of Obeah, or the deities of the wizards and sorcerers. His lurking-place, in the defiles of the John Crow Mountains, was named Nanny Town, after his wife. Here two mountain streams plunged over a rock nine hundred feet high into a romantic gorge, where their waters met in a seething caldron called "Nanny's Pot." Into this, as the negroes believed, the black witch Nanny could, by her sorcery, cast the white soldiers who pursued them. As for old Cudjoe himself, the English declared that he must be in league with the devil, whom he resembled closely enough to be his brother. And they were not without warrant for this belief, for he held his own against them for nine long years, at the end of which the Maroons were more numerous than at the beginning, since those who were killed were more than made up by fresh accessions of runaway slaves.

It is certain that the British soldiers were no match for Cudjoe the dwarf. Retreating warily before them, he drew them into many an ambush in the wild defiles of the mountains, where they were cut down like sheep, the waters of the "Pot" being often reddened with their blood. From many of the expeditions sent against him only a few weary and wounded survivors returned, and it became difficult to induce the soldiers to venture into that den of death.

[pg 201] At length a British officer succeeded in dragging two mountain howitzers up the cliffs to a position from which Nanny Town, the inaccessible Maroon stronghold, could be shelled. When the shells, hurled from the distant cannon, began to burst among them, the Maroons were at first so filled with terror that some of them threw themselves over the cliffs, but the bulk of them merely scattered and let the howitzers do their work among empty walls.

Cudjoe was astonished at the bursting shells, but he was too old a bird to be frightened. "Dis a new way de buckra man got to fight," he said. "He fire big ball arter you, and den de big ball fire little ones arter you. Dat's berry cunnin', but ole Cudjoe know somethin' better un dat."

Leading his men through the woods with the stealthy tread and noiseless skill of the American Indians, the dwarf and his Maroons suddenly burst upon the unwary soldiers from the rear while they were busy about their guns, delivering a telling volley and then rushing upon them with blade and axe. Few of the whites escaped this ferocious onset, and the shell-delivering howitzers remained in Cudjoe's hands.

[pg 202] Despairing of conquering the forest-born Maroons by the arts of civilized warfare, the British were driven to try a new method. In 1737 they brought from the Mosquito coast a number of Indians, who were fully the equal of the negroes in bush fighting. These were launched upon the track of the Maroons and soon ran them down in their mountain fastnesses. From Nanny Town the seat of war shifted to another quarter of the island, but at length the Maroons, finding their new foes fully their match in their own methods, consented to sign a treaty of peace with the whites, though only on the terms that they should retain their full freedom.

The treaty was made in 1738 at Trelawney Town, the Maroons being represented by Captains Cudjoe, Accompong, Johnny, Cuffee, and Quaco, and a number of their followers, "who have been in a state of war and hostility for several years past against our sovereign lord the king and the inhabitants of this island."

By the terms of the treaty the Maroons were to retain their liberty forever, to be granted a large tract of land in the mountains, and to enjoy full freedom of trade with the whites. On their part they agreed to keep peace with the whites, to return all runaway slaves who should come among them, and to aid the whites in putting down the rebellion and in fighting any foreign invader.

In 1760 their promise to aid the whites against local outbreaks was put to the test when the fierce Koromantyn negroes broke out in rebellion and committed fearful atrocities. A party of Maroons joined the whites and seemed very zealous in their cause, ranging the woods and bringing in a large number of ears, which they said they had cut from the heads of rebels killed by them. It afterwards was found that the ears had been obtained from the negroes who had been slain by the troops and left where they fell.

[pg 203] The Maroons remained unmolested until 1795, not without outbreaks on their part and depredations on the settlements. In the year named two of them were caught stealing pigs, and were sent to the workhouse and given thirty-nine lashes on the bare back. When set free they went home in a fury, and told a pitiful tale of the disgrace they had suffered, being whipped by the black driver of the workhouse in the presence of felon slaves. The story roused the blood of all their fellows, who felt that they had been outraged by this insult to two of their kindred, and a

revolt broke out that spread rapidly throughout the mountains.

The whites were in a quandary. To attempt to put down the rebels by force of arms might lead to the sanguinary results of sixty years before. But it was remembered that in the former war the use of dogs had proved very advantageous, so agents were now sent to Cuba to purchase a pack of bloodhounds. Thus the methods employed by the Spaniards against the Indians two centuries before were once more brought into use. One hundred hounds were bought and with them came forty Cuban huntsmen, mostly mulattoes. As it proved, the very news of the coming of the hounds had the desired effect, the Maroons being apparently much more afraid of these ferocious dogs than of trained soldiers. At any rate, they immediately sued for peace, and, as an old historian tells us, "It is pleasing to observe that not a drop of blood was spilt after the dogs arrived in the island." Peace was made within a week, and in the next year the chief offenders were sent to Halifax, Nova Scotia, and put at work on the fortifications. They were afterwards sent to Liberia.

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From that time forward there was no trouble with the Maroons. Their descendants still dwell in the island as a separate people. In 1865 there was an outbreak among the free blacks, slavery having been abolished thirty years before. The Maroons were called upon to help the troops put down this revolt. They responded cheerfully and rendered useful aid in the brief conflict. When it was over the black warriors were invited to Kingston, the capital, where the whites of that city had their first sight of the redoubtable Maroons. Black and brawny, they had the dignified carriage of men who had always been free and independent, while some of them wore with pride silver medals which their ancestors had been given for former aid to the whites. Once a terror to Jamaica, the Maroons are now among its most trusty inhabitants.

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TOUSSAINT L'OUVERTURE AND THE REVOLUTION IN HAYTI.

The people of Europe have not stood alone in settling and ruling America, for the blacks of Africa, brought to the New World as slaves, have made themselves masters of one of the largest and most fertile islands of the West Indies, that attractive gem of the tropics which, under the name of Hispaniola, was the pioneer among Spanish dominions on American soil.

Hispaniola has had a strange and cruel history. The Spaniards enslaved its original inhabitants and treated them so ruthlessly that they were soon annihilated. Then the island was filled with negro slaves. About 1630 the buccaneers, or hunters of wild bulls, made it their haunt, and as these were mostly French, the western part of the island was ceded to France in 1697. During the century that followed Africans were brought over in multitudes, until there were nearly half a million blacks in Hayti,—the Indian name of the island,—while there were less than forty thousand whites and thirty thousand mulattoes, the latter being neither citizens nor slaves. These facts are given as a necessary introduction to the story we are about to tell.

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It was the white revolution in France that brought about the black revolution in Hayti. In 1789 the States-General met in France and overturned the ancient system of oppression in that land. Liberty for all was the tocsin of its members, and it was proclaimed that not only the whites of France and her colonies, but the blacks also, were entitled to freedom and a voice in the government. The news of this decree created a ferment of passion in Hayti. The white planters of the island, who had long controlled everything, burst into fury, for-swore all allegiance to France, and trampled the national flag under foot in their rage.

But they had others than the French Assembly to deal with. The mulattoes, or free people of color, rose in arms for the rights of which they had been deprived. They were soon put down, but in the following year (1791) a much more terrible outbreak took place, that of the slaves. There followed a reign of terror as sanguinary in type as that of France. The revolt began on the night of August 21, on the plantation of Noé, near Cape Haytien. The long-oppressed and savage blacks mercilessly killed all the whites who fell into their hands. Down from the mountains they poured on every side, their routes marked by blood and devastation. Hills and plains were swept with fire and sword, atrocities of the most horrible kinds were committed, and nearly all the residents on the plantations, more than two thousand in number, were brutally slaughtered, while a thousand sugar and coffee estates were swept by fire.

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In the first revolution the mulattoes aided the whites of the cities to repel the blacks, but later, believing themselves betrayed by the whites, they joined the blacks, and the revolt became a war of extermination. It did not end until the negroes became masters of all the country districts, and gained a control of the mountainous interior of the island which, except for a brief interval, they

have ever since retained.

This success was in great part due to the famous leader of the blacks, the renowned Toussaint L'Ouverture, a man who proved himself one of the greatest and noblest of his race. Born in Hayti, of negro parents, he was descended from an African prince, and, slave though he was in condition, had himself the soul of a prince. He taught himself to read and write, and also something of mathematics and of Latin, and was taken from the fields to become coachman for the overseer of the estate of his master, the Count de Breda.

When the negro revolt began, and the furious blacks were seeking victims on all sides, Toussaint concealed the overseer and his family in the forest, took them food at the risk of his own life, and finally led them to the coast, where they took ship for the United States.

[pg 208] While he was thus engaged, the negroes, led by a gigantic black named Bouckman, and subsequently by three others, were continuing their course of butchery and devastation. Toussaint joined them after the escape of the overseer, and quickly gained an influence over them, largely from his knowledge of medicinal plants and a degree of skill in surgery. This influence enabled him to put himself at their head and to mitigate the ferocity of their actions. His ascendancy was due not only to his knowledge, but also to his valor, and from his courage in opening a breach in the ranks of the enemy he became known as L'Ouverture, or the opener.



SOUTH AMERICAN NATIVE HUT.

Under their new leader the revolted slaves held their own against their enemies, declaring in favor of the king, Louis XVI., and against the revolutionists. On the other hand, the English came to the aid of the whites, and the island was thrown into a state of horrible confusion, increased by the interference of the Spaniards, who held the eastern section of the island.

In 1794, after the Convention in Paris had issued a decree demanding the liberation of the slaves, Toussaint and his followers joined the revolutionary cause, and aided the French general Laveaux to expel the British and Spanish invaders. In this campaign he won a number of victories, and showed such military skill and ability as to prove him a leader of the highest qualities. Beard says of him, "His energy and his prowess made him the idol of his troops.... In his deeds and warlike achievements he equalled the great captains of ancient and modern times."

[pg 209] One example of the risks which he ran in battle occurred in his efforts to put down an insurrection of the mulattoes. In this contest he fell into an ambush in the mountains near Port de Paix, a shower of bullets sweeping his ranks. His private physician fell dead by his side and a plume of feathers in his hat was shot away, but he remained unharmed. The same was the case soon after when, in a narrow pass, his coachman was shot down. The negro leader seemed, like Napoleon, to bear a charmed life.

Declaring himself lieutenant-general of the colony, he wrote to the Directory in Paris, guaranteeing to be responsible for the orderly behavior of the blacks and their good will to France. He sent at the same time his two elder sons to Paris to be educated, making them practically hostages for his honor and good faith.

In 1798 the war, which had lasted for years, came to an end, the British being expelled from the island and the rebellious mulattoes put down. Peace prevailed, and the negro conqueror now devoted himself to the complete pacification of the people. Agriculture was encouraged, the churches were reopened, schools were established, and law and justice were made equal for all. At the same time the army was kept in excellent training and a rigid discipline exacted.

As is usual in such cases, there were abundant applications among the negroes for official positions, and Toussaint was sorely put to it to dispose of these ignorant aspirers after high places without giving offence. He seems, however, to have been well versed in political management, and is said to have disposed of one unlearned applicant for a judicial position with the words, "Ah, yes; you would make an excellent magistrate. Of course you understand Latin.—No?—Why, that is very unfortunate, for you know that Latin is absolutely necessary."

There is another evidence of his wisdom in dealing with his people that is worth repeating. As has been said, when the revolution began Hayti had about half a million of blacks to seventy thousand whites and mulattoes. Toussaint adopted an original method of making the force of this fact evident to his followers. He would fill a glass with black grains of corn and throw upon them a few grains of white. "You are the black grains," he would say; "your enemies are the white." Then he would shake the glass. "Where are the white grains now? You see they have disappeared."

The authorities in France could not but recognize the ability and the moderation of the black leader, and in 1796 he was appointed commander-in-chief in the island, a commission which was confirmed by Bonaparte about December, 1799. All classes and colors regarded him as a general benefactor and a wise and judicious ruler. Order and prosperity were restored, and his government was conducted with moderation and humanity. It looked as though peace and good will might continue in Hayti as long as this able governor lived, but unluckily he had to deal with a man in whom ambition and pride of place overruled all conceptions of justice. This was Napoleon Bonaparte, who had now risen to the supreme power in France.

Bonaparte seems to have been angered by two letters which Toussaint sent him, after having completely pacified the island. These were addressed, "The First of the Blacks to the First of the Whites." The assumed equality seems to have touched the pride of the conqueror, for he disdained to answer the letters of the Haytian ruler. Early in 1800 a republican constitution was drafted under the auspices of Toussaint, which made Hayti virtually independent, though under the guardianship of France. An election was held and the liberator chosen president for life.

When the news of this action reached France in July, 1800, Napoleon was furious. He had just been made First Consul and would brook no equal. "He is a revolted slave, whom we must punish," he exclaimed; "the honor of France is outraged." Resolved to reduce the negroes again to slavery, he sent to Hayti a fleet of sixty ships and an army of about thirty-five thousand men, under General Leclerc, the husband of Pauline Bonaparte. Pauline accompanied him, and also several officers who had been former opponents of Toussaint.

Meanwhile, the Haytien president had not been idle. Having subdued the French portion of the island, he led his army into the Spanish portion, which was also reduced, San Domingo, its capital, being taken on January 2, 1801. When the keys of this city were handed to him by its governor, the negro conqueror said, solemnly, "I accept them in the name of the French Republic." Yet his conquests in the name of France did not soften the heart of the First Consul, who was bent on treating him as a daring rebel. The Peace of Amiens left the hands of Napoleon free in Europe, and the expedition under Leclerc reached the island about the end of 1801.

To oppose the strong army of Napoleon's veterans, men who had been trained to victory under his own eye, Toussaint had a force of blacks little more than half as strong. As he looked at the soldiers disembarking from the ships in the Bay of Samana he exclaimed in dismay, "We are lost! All France is coming to invade our poor island!"

The French made landings at several of the ports of Hayti, driving back their defenders. The city of San Domingo, held by Toussaint's brother, Paul, was taken. Cristophe, a daring negro who was to figure high in the subsequent history of the island, commanded at Cape Haytien, and when Leclerc summoned him to surrender, replied, "Go tell your general that the French shall march here only over ashes, and that the ground shall burn beneath their feet." This was not bombast, for when he found further defence impossible, he set fire to the city and retreated to the mountains, taking with him two thousand white prisoners. Grief and despair filled the soul of Toussaint when, marching to the relief of Cristophe, he saw the roads filled with fugitives and the city in ashes.

But though the French became masters of the ports, the army of the blacks maintained itself in the mountain fastnesses, in which Toussaint defied all the efforts of his foes. After Leclerc had lost heavily, and began to despair of subduing his able opponent by force of arms, he had recourse to strategy. He had brought with him Toussaint's two sons. Napoleon had interviewed these boys before their departure from France, saying to them, "Your father is a great man, and has rendered good service to France. Tell him I say so, and bid him not to believe I have any hostile intention against the island. The troops I send are not designed to fight the natives, but to increase their strength, and the man I have appointed to command is my own brother-in-law."

Leclerc sent these boys to Toussaint, with the demand that he should submit or send his children back as hostages. An affecting interview took place between the boys and their father, and when they repeated to him Napoleon's words, he was at first inclined to yield, but fuller consideration induced him to refuse.

"I cannot accept your terms," he said. "The First Consul offers me peace, but his general no sooner arrives than he begins a fierce war. No; my country demands my first consideration. Take

back my sons."

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In the continuation of the war a French force of twenty thousand men under Rochambeau marched against Toussaint, who was strongly intrenched at Crête à Pierrot. In the contest that followed Toussaint at first outgeneralled Rochambeau and defeated him with severe loss. But the assistance he looked for from his subordinates failed to reach him, and at length he was forced to retreat.

The French, however, despite their superior numbers and the military experience of their leaders, found that they had no mean antagonist in the negro general, and Leclerc again resorted to negotiation, offering the blacks their freedom if they would submit. Toussaint, seeing that he was unable to hold his own against his powerful foe, and convinced that the terms offered would be advantageous to his country, now decided to accept them, saying, "I accept everything which is favorable for the people and for the army; as for myself, I wish to live in retirement."

The negro liberator trusted his enemies too much. The pride of Napoleon had not yet digested the affront of Toussaint's message, "From the First of the Blacks to the First of the Whites," and he sent orders to Leclerc to arrest and send him to France. In June, 1802, a force was sent secretly at night to Toussaint's home, where he was dwelling in peace and quiet. The house was surrounded, two blacks that sought to defend him were killed on the spot, and he was dragged from his bed and taken to the coast. Here he was placed on board a man-of-war, which at once set sail for France.

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Napoleon's treatment of Toussaint was one of the dark deeds in his career. Reaching France, the captive was separated from his wife and children and confined in the dungeon of a dreary frontier castle. Here, one morning in April, 1803, Toussaint L'Ouverture, the negro liberator, was found dead. He had been starved to death, if we may accept the belief of some authors.

The Haytien patriot died in poverty, though he might easily have accumulated vast wealth. In his official position he had maintained a degree of magnificence, and Napoleon believed that he had concealed great riches somewhere in the island. He sent spies to question him, but Toussaint's only reply was, "No, the treasures you seek are not those I have lost." The lost ones were his wife, his children, and his liberty.

Treachery is often an error, and Napoleon was soon to find that he had made a fatal mistake in his treatment of the leader of the blacks. Alarmed at his seizure, and having no one to control them, the negroes flew to arms, and soon the revolt spread over the whole island. Yellow fever came to the aid of the blacks, raging in Leclerc's army until thousands of soldiers and fifteen hundred officers found graves in the land they had invaded. In the end Leclerc himself died, and Pauline was taken back to France. When Napoleon heard the story of the fate of his expedition, he exclaimed in dismay,—

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"Here, then, is all that remains of my fine army; the body of a brother-in-law, of a general, my right arm, a handful of dust! All has perished, all will perish! Fatal conquest! Cursed land! Perfidious colonists! A wretched slave in revolt. These are the causes of so many evils." He might more truly have said, "My own perfidy is the cause of all those evils."

A few words must conclude this tale. General Rochambeau was sent large reinforcements, and with an army of twenty thousand men attempted the reconquest of the island. After a campaign of ferocity on both sides, he found himself blockaded at Cape Haytien, and was saved from surrender to the revengeful blacks only by the British, to whom he yielded the eight thousand men he had left. As he sailed from the island he saw the mountain-tops blazing with the beacon-fires of joy kindled by the blacks. From that day to this the island of Hayti has remained in the hands of the negro race.

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BOLIVAR THE LIBERATOR, AND THE CONQUEST OF NEW GRANADA.

One dark night in the year 1813 a negro murderer crept stealthily into a house in Jamaica, where slept a man in a swinging hammock. Stealing silently to the side of the sleeper, the assassin plunged his knife into his breast, then turned and fled. Fortunately for American independence he had slain the wrong man. The one whom he had been hired to kill was Simon Bolivar, the great leader of the patriots of Spanish America. But on that night Bolivar's secretary occupied his hammock, and the "Liberator" escaped.

Bolivar was then a refugee in the English island, after the failure of his early attempt to win freedom for his native land of Venezuela. He was soon back there again, however, with recruited forces, and for years afterwards the war went on, with variations of failure and success, the Spanish general Morillo treating the people who fell into his hands with revolting cruelty.

[pg 218] It was not until 1819 that Bolivar perceived the true road to success. This was by leaving Venezuela, from which he had sought in vain to dislodge the Spaniards, and carrying the war into the more promising field of New Granada. So confident of victory did he feel in this new plan that he issued the following proclamation to the people of New Granada: "The day of America has come; no human power can stay the course of Nature guided by Providence. Before the sun has again run his annual course altars to Liberty will arise throughout your land."

Bolivar had recently been strengthened by a British legion, recruited in London among the disbanded soldiers of the Napoleonic wars. He had also sent General Santander to the frontier of New Granada, and General Barreiro, the Spanish general, had been driven back. Encouraged by this success, he joined Santander at the foot of the Andes in June, 1819, bringing with him a force of twenty-five hundred men, including his British auxiliaries.

Bolivar in this expedition had as bitter a foe to conquer in nature as in the human enemy. In order to join Santander he was obliged to cross an enormous plain which at that season of the year was covered with water, and to swim some deep rivers, his war materials needing to be transported over these streams. But this was child's play compared with what lay before him. To reach his goal the Andes had to be crossed at some of their most forbidding points, a region over which it seemed next to impossible for men to go, even without military supplies.

[pg 219] When the invading army left the plains for the mountains the soldiers quickly found themselves amid discouraging scenes. In the distance rose the snowy peaks of the eastern range of the Cordillera, and the waters of the plain through which they had waded were here replaced by the rapids and cataracts of mountain streams. The roads in many places followed the edge of steep precipices, and were bordered by gigantic trees, while the clouds above them poured down incessant rains.

Four days of this march used up most of the horses, which were foundered by the difficulties of the way. As a consequence, an entire squadron of Llaneros, men who lived in the saddle, and were at home only on the plain, deserted on finding themselves on foot. To cross the frequent torrents there were only narrow, trembling bridges formed of tree-trunks, or the aerial *taravitas*. These consisted of stout ropes made by twisting several thongs of well-greased hides. The ropes were tied to trees on the two banks of the ravine, while from them was suspended a cradle or hammock of capacity for two persons, which was drawn backward and forward by long lines. Horses and mules were similarly drawn across, suspended by long girths around their bodies.

Where the streams were fordable the current was usually so strong that the infantry had to pass two by two with their arms thrown round each other's shoulders. To lose their footing was to lose their lives. Bolivar frequently passed these torrents back and forward on horseback, carrying the sick and weakly, or the women who accompanied the expedition.

[pg 220] In the lower levels the climate was moist and warm, only a little firewood being needed for their nightly bivouacs. But as they ascended they reached localities where an ice-cold wind blew through the stoutest clothing, while immense heaps of rocks and hills of snow bounded the view on every side and clouds veiled the depths of the abysses. The only sounds to be heard were those of the roaring torrents they had passed and the scream of the condor as it circled the snowy peaks above. Here all vegetation disappeared except the clinging lichens and a tall plant which bore plumes instead of leaves and was covered with yellow flowers, resembling a funeral torch. To add to the terrors of the journey the path was marked by crosses, erected in memory of travellers who had perished by the way.

In this glacial region the provisions brought with them gave out. The cattle on which they had depended as their chief resource could go no farther. Thus, dragging on through perils and privation, at length they reached the summit of the Paya pass, a natural stronghold where a battalion would have been able to hold a regiment in check. An outpost of three hundred men occupied it, but these were easily dispersed by Santander, who led the van.

[pg 221] At this point the men, worn out by the difficulties of the way, began to murmur. Bolivar called a council of war and told its members that there were greater difficulties still to surmount. He asked if they would keep on, or if they preferred to return. They all voted in favor of going onward, and the knowledge of their decision inspired the weary troops with new spirit.

Before the terrible passage was completed one hundred men had died of cold, fifty of them being Englishmen. Not a horse was left, and it was necessary to abandon the spare arms, and even some of those borne by the soldiers. It was little more than the skeleton of an army that at length reached the beautiful valley of Sagamoso, in the heart of the province of Tunja, on the 6th of July, 1819. Resting at this point, Bolivar sent back assistance to the stragglers who still lingered on the road, and despatched parties to collect horses and communicate with the few guerrillas who roamed about that region.

Barreiro, the Spanish commander, held the Tunja province with two thousand infantry and four

hundred horse. There was also a reserve of one thousand troops at Bogota, the capital, and detachments elsewhere, while there was another royalist army at Quito. Bolivar trusted to surprise and to the support of the people to overcome these odds, and he succeeded in the first, for Barreiro was ignorant of his arrival, and supposed the passage of the Cordillera impossible at that season of the year.

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He was soon aware, however, that the patriots had achieved this impossible thing and were in his close vicinity, and with all haste collected his forces and took possession of the heights above the plain of Vargas. By this movement he interposed between the patriots and the town of Tunja, which, as attached to the cause of liberty, Bolivar was anxious to occupy. It was not long, therefore, before the opposing armies met, and a battle took place that lasted five hours. The patriots won, chiefly by the aid of the English infantry, led by Colonel James Rooke, who had the misfortune to lose an arm in the engagement.



BRIDGE ENTERING QUITO.

The victory was by no means a decisive one, and the road to Tunja remained in the hands of the royalists. Instead of again attacking his intrenched foe, Bolivar now employed strategy, retreating during the day, then making a rapid countermarch at night, thus passing Barreiro's forces in the dark over by-roads. On the 5th of August Tunja fell into his hands. He found there an abundance of war material, and by holding it he cut off Barreiro's communication with Bogota.

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The strength of Bolivar's generalship lay in rapid and unexpected movements like this. The Spanish leaders, bound in the shackles of military routine, were astonished and dismayed by the forced marches of their enemies over roads that seemed unfit for the passage of an army. While they were manoeuvring, calculating, hesitating, guarding the customary avenues of approach, Bolivar would surprise them by concentrating a superior force upon a point which they imagined safe from attack, and, by throwing them into confusion, would cut up their forces in detail. As a result, the actions of the patriot commander in the field seemed less impressive than those of less notable generals, but the sum of effects was far superior.

Bolivar's occupation of Tunja took the Spaniards by surprise. Barreiro, finding himself unexpectedly cut off from his centre of supplies, fell back upon Venta Quemada, where he was soon followed by his foe, anxious to deal a decisive blow before the royal forces could concentrate. Boyacá, the site now occupied by the hostile armies, was a wooded and mountainous country and one well suited to Bolivar's characteristic tactics. Placing a large part of his troops in ambush and manoeuvring so as to get his cavalry in the enemy's rear, he advanced to the attack with a narrow front. On this Barreiro made a furious assault, forcing his opponents to recoil. But this retreat was only a stratagem, for, as they fell back, the Spaniards found themselves suddenly attacked in the flank by the ambushed troops, while the cavalry rode furiously upon their rear.

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In a few minutes they were surrounded, and the fierce attack threw them into utter confusion, in which the patriot army cut them down almost without resistance. General Barreiro was taken prisoner on the field of battle, throwing away his sword when he saw that escape was impossible, to save himself the mortification of surrendering it to General Bolivar. Colonel Ximenes, his second in command, was also taken, together with most of the officers and more than sixteen hundred men. All their artillery, ammunition, horses, etc., were captured, and a very small portion of the army escaped. Some of these fled before the battle was decided, but many of them were taken by the peasantry of the surrounding country and brought in as prisoners. The loss of the patriots was incredibly small,—only thirteen killed and fifty-three wounded.

Boyacá—after Maypo, by which Chili gained its freedom—was the great battle of South America. It gave the patriots supremacy in the north, as Maypo had done in the south. New Granada was freed from the Spaniards, and on August 9, two days after the battle, the viceroy, Samana, hastily evacuated Bogota, fleeing in such precipitate haste that in thirty hours he reached Honda,

usually a journey of three days. On the 12th Bolivar triumphantly marched into the capital, and found in its coffers silver coin to the value of half a million dollars, which the viceroy had left behind in his haste.

It must be said further that the English auxiliaries aided greatly in the results of these battles, their conduct giving Bolivar such gratification that he made them all members of the Order of the Liberator.

[pg 225] It is not our purpose to tell the whole story of this implacable war, but simply to relate the dramatic invasion and conquest of New Granada. It must suffice, then, to state that the war dragged on for two years longer, ending finally in 1821 with the victory of Carabobo, in which the Spaniards were totally defeated and lost more than six thousand men. After that they withdrew and a republic was organized, with Bolivar for its president.

Two years later he aided the Peruvians in gaining their independence and was declared their liberator and made supreme dictator of the country. After ruling there absolutely for two years, he resigned and gave the country a republican constitution. The congress of Lima elected him president for life, and a new commonwealth was organized in the northern section of Peru, to which the people gave the name of Bolivia, in honor of the winner of their liberties.

[pg 226] **HIDALGO THE PATRIOT, AND THE GRITO DE DOLORES.**

In the last quarter of the eighteenth century ideas of revolution were widely in the air. The people were rising against the tyranny of the kings. First in this struggle for liberty came the English colonies in America. Then the people of France sprang to arms and overthrew the moss-grown tyranny of feudal times. The armies of Napoleon spread the demand for freedom through Europe. In Spain the people began to fight for their freedom, and soon the thirst for liberty crossed the ocean to America, where the people of the Spanish colonies had long been oppressed by the tyranny of their rulers.

[pg 227] The citizens of Mexico had been deeply infected by the example of the great free republic of the north, and the seed of liberty grew for years in their minds. Chief among its advocates was a farmer's son named Miguel Hidalgo, a true scion of the people and an ardent lover of liberty, who for years longed to make his native Mexico independent of the effete royalty of Spain. He did not conceal his views on this subject, though his deeper projects were confided only to a few trusty friends, chief among whom was Ignacio Allende, a man of wealth and of noble Spanish descent, and a captain of dragoons in the army. These men, with a few intimates, consulted often and matured their plans, confident that the desire for liberty was strong in the country and that the patriot people needed only a leader to break out into insurrection.

Hidalgo's eager desire for liberty, long smouldering, burst into flame in 1810, when the Spanish authorities attempted to arrest in Querétaro some revolutionists who had talked too freely. Warned of their danger, these men fled or concealed themselves. News of this came quickly to Hidalgo and taught him that with his reputation there was but one of two things to do, he must flee or strike. He decided to strike, and in this he was supported by Allende, whose liberty was also in danger.

The decisive step was taken on the 15th of September, 1810. That night Hidalgo was roused from slumber by one of his liberty-loving friends, and told that the hour had come. Calling his brother to his aid and summoning a few of those in the secret, he led the small party of revolutionists to the prison, broke it open, and set free certain men who had been seized for their liberal ideas.

[pg 228] This took place in the early hours of a Sunday. When day broke and the countrymen of the neighboring parish came to early mass the news of the night's event spread among them rapidly and caused great excitement. To a man they took the side of Hidalgo, and before the day grew old he found himself at the head of a small band of ardent revolutionists. They at once set out for San Miguel le Grande, the nearest town, into which marched before nightfall of the day a little party of eighty men, the nucleus of the Mexican revolution. For standard they bore a picture of the Holy Virgin of Guadalupe, taken from a village church. New adherents came to their ranks till they were three hundred strong. Such was the movement known in Mexico as the "Grito de Dolores," their war-cry, the *Grito*, being, "Up with True Religion, and down with False Government."

Never before had an insurrection among the submissive common people been known in Mexico.

When news of it came to the authorities they were stupefied with amazement. That peasants and townspeople, the plain workers of the land, should have opinions of their own about government and the rights of man was to them a thing too monstrous to be endured, but for the time being they were so dumfounded as to be incapable of taking any vigorous action.

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While the authorities digested the amazing news of the outbreak, the movement grew with surprising rapidity. Hidalgo's little band was joined by the regiment of his comrade Allende, and a crowd of field laborers, armed with slings, sticks, and spades, hastened in to swell their ranks. So popular did the movement prove that in a brief period the band of eighty men had grown to a great host, fifty thousand or more in numbers. Poorly armed and undisciplined as they were, their numbers gave them strength. Hidalgo put himself at their head as commander-in-chief, with Allende as his second in command, and active exertions were made to organize an army out of this undigested material.

The next thing we perceive in this promising movement for liberty is the spectacle of Hidalgo and his host of enthusiastic followers marching on the rich and flourishing city of Guanajuato, capital of a mining state, the second largest in Mexico. This city occupies a deep but narrow ravine, its houses crowded on the steep slopes, up which the streets climb like stairways.

The people of the city were terrified when they saw this great body of people marching upon them, with some of the organization of a regular army, though most of them bore only the arms of a mob. The authorities, who were advised of their approach, showed some energy. Resolving not to surrender and making hasty preparations for defence, they intrenched themselves in a strongly built grain warehouse, with the governor at their head.

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Much better armed than the mass of their assailants, and backed up by strong stone walls, the authorities defended themselves vigorously, and for a time the affair looked anything but promising for Hidalgo's improvised army. Success came at last through the courage of a little boy, called Pipita, who, using as a shield a flat tile torn from the pavement, and holding a blazing torch in his hand, crept through a shower of bullets up to the gate of the stronghold and set fire to it. As the flames spread upward, the insurgents broke in upon the frightened defenders, killing some and making prisoners of the others.

The common people of the city, in sympathy with the revolutionists, and inspired with the mob spirit of pillage, now rushed in disorder through the streets, breaking into and robbing shops and houses, until checked in their career of plunder by Hidalgo, who restored order by threatening condign punishment to any plunderers. He proceeded to make the city a stronghold and centre for the collection of arms and money, his forces being increased by the defection from the Spaniards of three squadrons of regular troops, while the whole province declared for the cause of the revolution.

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While this was going on, the governing powers in Mexico had recovered from their stupefaction and begun to take active measures to suppress the dangerous movement. Shortly before a new viceroy had arrived in Mexico, Don Francisco Venegas, a Spanish general who had distinguished himself in the war with Napoleon. Fancying that he had a peaceful life before him in America, he began his work of government by calling a council of prominent persons and asking them to help him raise money from the loyal people for the support of their brethren in Spain who were fighting against Napoleon. Three days later the Grito de Dolores broke out and he saw that his dream of peace was at an end, and that he would need all the funds he could raise to suppress revolution in his new government.

The viceroy, an experienced soldier, at once ordered the troops in garrison at Mexico to Querétaro, strengthening them by rural detachments, and summoning garrisons from the north, west, and east. He issued at the same time a decree under which all Indians were released from taxation, and promised pardon to all rebels who should at once lay down their arms; a reward of ten thousand dollars being offered for the capture or death of the three chief insurgents, Hidalgo, Allende, and Aldama.

The civil authorities were vigorously supported by the clergy in this action against the revolution. Hidalgo and his chief comrades were excommunicated by the bishops, and the local clergy denounced them bitterly from their pulpits. The Inquisition, which had taken action against Hidalgo in 1800 for his dangerous opinions, now cited him to appear before its tribunal and answer these charges. But bishops and inquisitors alike wasted their breath on the valiant insurgents, who maintained that it was not religion but tyranny that they were banded against.

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The revolutionists took possession of Valladolid on the 17th of October, without resistance, the bishop and authorities fleeing at their approach. As the bishop himself was gone, Hidalgo forced the canons he had left behind to remove the sentence of excommunication. The town was made a second stronghold of the revolution and a centre for new recruiting, the army increasing so rapidly that in ten days' time its leader took the bold step of advancing upon Mexico, the capital city.

The approach of the insurgents, who had now grown greatly in numbers, filled the people of the capital with terror. They remembered the sack of Guanajuata, and hastened to conceal their valuables, while many of them fled for safety. As the insurgents drew near they were met by the army of the viceroy, and a fierce battle took place upon an elevation called the Monte de la

Cruces, outside the city. A hot fire of artillery swept the ranks of the insurgents, but, filled with enthusiasm, and greatly outnumbering the royal troops, they swept resistlessly on, bearing down all before them, and sweeping the viceroy's soldiers from the field with heavy loss. Only his good horse saved Trujillo, the commanding general, from death or capture, and bore him in safety to the city.

Mexico, filled with panic and confusion at the news of the disastrous defeat of its defenders, could perhaps have been easily taken, and its capture might possibly have closed the struggle in favor of liberty. It certainly was a moment for that boldness on which success so often depends, but Hidalgo at this critical stage took counsel from prudence instead of daring, and, fearing the arrival of reinforcements to the beaten army, withdrew his forces towards Querétaro—a weak and fatal retrograde movement, as it proved.

[pg 233] The viceroy had another army advancing from the north, under the command of Calleja, a skilful general. Meeting Hidalgo at Aculco on his march towards Querétaro, he attacked him with such vigor that, after a hot combat, the insurgents were utterly worsted, losing all their artillery and many men. In fact, the whole loose-joined army fell to pieces at this severe repulse, and Hidalgo was followed to Valladolid with an insignificant remnant of his mighty host.

Calleja followed up his victory with a pursuit of Allende and a fierce attack on him at Guanajuato, forcing him to abandon the city and retreat to Zacatecas, which had proclaimed independence. Calleja, who had much of the traditional Spanish cruelty, now sullied his triumph by a barbarous retaliation upon the people of the city he had taken, who were most savagely punished for their recent plundering outbreak.

[pg 234] The remainder of this story of revolution is a brief and unfortunate one. Hidalgo gathered another army and led them to Guadalajara, where he organized a government, appointed ministers, and styled himself generalissimo. He despatched a commissioner to the United States, but this personage soon found himself a prisoner. Arms were collected and the army organized as rapidly as possible, but his forces were still in the rough when, disregarding the advice of Allende and others, he resolved to attack Calleja. He advanced on the 16th of January to the Puente de Calderon, where he found himself in face of a well-equipped and disciplined army of ten thousand men, superior in everything but numbers to his undisciplined levies. They fought bravely enough in the battle of the next day, but they were no match for their opponents, and the contest ended in a complete rout, the insurgents scattering in all directions.

Hidalgo hastened towards Zacatecas, meeting on his way Allende, Jiminez, and other leaders who had escaped from the fatal field of Calderon. The cause of liberty seemed at an end. Calleja was vigorously putting down the revolution on all sides. As a last hope the chiefs hastened towards the United States borders with such men and money as they had left, proposing there to recruit and discipline another army. But before reaching the frontier they were overtaken by their pursuers, being captured in a desert region near the Rio Grande.

[pg 235] The captives were now taken under a strong escort to Chihuahua, where they were tried and condemned to death. Allende, Aldama, and Jiminez were shot on the 26th of June, and Hidalgo paid the penalty of his life on the 27th of June, 1811. Thus, in the death of its chiefs, ended the first struggle for independence in Mexico. The heads of the four chiefs were taken to Guanajuato and nailed to the four corners of the stronghold which they had taken by storm in that city. There they remained till the freedom of Mexico was won, when they were given solemn burial beneath the altar of the sovereigns in the cathedral of Mexico. The Alhondiga de Grenaditas, the building to which their heads were attached, is now used as a prison, but its walls still bear the spike which for ten years held Hidalgo's head. Before it there stands a bronze statue of this earliest of the Mexican patriot leaders.

Shall we add a few words descriptive of the later course of the struggle for independence? The death of Hidalgo left many patriots still alive, and one of these, Moreles the muleteer, kept up the war with varying fortunes until 1815, when he, too, was taken and shot.

The man to whom Moreles owed his downfall was Augustin de Yturvide, a royalist leader, who pursued the insurgents with relentless energy. Yet it was to this man that Mexico in the end owed its independence. After the death of Moreles a chief named Guerrero kept up the war for liberty, and against him Yturvide was sent in 1820. As it proved, the royalist had changed his views, and after some fighting with Guerrero he joined hands with him and came out openly as a patriot leader. He had under him a well-disciplined army, and advanced from success to success till the final viceroy found himself forced to acknowledge the independence of Mexico.

The events that followed—how Mexico was organized into an empire, with Yturvide as emperor under the title of Augustin I., and how a new revolution made it a republic and Yturvide was shot as a traitor—belong to that later history of the Spanish American republics in which revolution and counter-revolution continued almost annual events.

PAEZ, THE LLANERO CHIEF, AND THE WAR FOR FREEDOM.

On the 3d of June, 1819, General Morillo, the commander of the Spanish forces in Venezuela, found himself threatened in his camp by a party of one hundred and fifty daring horsemen, who had swum the Orinoco and galloped like centaurs upon his line. Eight hundred of the Spanish cavalry, with two small field-pieces, sallied out to meet their assailants, who slowly retired before their superior numbers. In this way the royalists were drawn on to a place called Las Queseras del Medio, where a battalion of infantry had been placed in ambush near the river. Here, suddenly ceasing their retreat, and dividing up into groups of twenty, the patriot horsemen turned on the Spaniards and assailed them on all sides, driving them back under the fire of the infantry, by whom they were fearfully cut down. Then they recrossed the river with two killed and a few wounded, while the plain was strewn with the bodies of their foes.

This anecdote may serve to introduce to our readers Joseph Antonio Paez, the leader of the band of patriot horsemen, and one of the most daring and striking figures among the liberators of South America. Born of Indian parents of low extraction, and quite illiterate, Paez proved himself so daring as a soldier that he became in time general-in-chief of the armies of Venezuela and the neighboring republics, and was Bolivar's most trusted lieutenant during the war for independence.

Brought up amid the herds of half-wild cattle belonging to his father, who was a landholder in the Venezuelan plains, he became thoroughly skilled in the care of cattle and horses, and an adept at curing their disorders. He was accustomed to mount and subdue the wildest horses, and was noted for strength and agility and for power of enduring fatigue.

A llanero, or native of the elevated plains of Venezuela, he rose naturally to great influence among his fellow-herdsmen, and when the revolution began, in 1810, and he declared in favor of the cause of freedom, his reputation for courage was so great that they were very ready to enlist under him. He chose from among them one hundred and fifty picked horsemen, and this band, under the title of "Guides of the Apure," soon made itself the terror of the Spaniards.

The following story well shows his intrepid character. After the death of his mother young Paez inherited her property in Barinas, and divided it with his sisters who were living in that town. The Spanish forces, which had been driven out of it, occupied it again in 1811, and proclaimed a general amnesty for the inhabitants, inviting all property-holders to return and promising to reinstate them in their fortunes. Paez, hearing of this, rode boldly into Barinas and presented himself before the Spanish commandant, saying that he had come to avail himself of the amnesty and take possession of his property.

He was soon recognized by the inhabitants, who gathered in hundreds to welcome and shake hands with him, and the news quickly spread among the Spanish soldiers that this was the famous Captain Paez, who had done them so much mischief. Seizing their arms, they called loudly on their commander to arrest and shoot the insolent newcomer as a rebel and traitor. But this officer, who was well aware of the valor of Paez, and perceived his great influence over the people of Barinas, deemed it very imprudent to take a step that might lead to a general outbreak, and concluded to let his perilous visitor alone. He therefore appeased his soldiers, and Paez was left unmolested in the house of his sisters.

The governor, however, only bided his time. Spies were set to watch the daring llanero, and after some days they informed their leaders that Paez had gone out unarmed, and that there was a good opportunity to seize his weapons as a preliminary to his arrest. When Paez returned home after his outing, he was told that armed men had visited the house and taken away his sword and pistols.

Incensed by this act of ill-faith, he boldly sought the governor's house and angrily charged him with breaking his word. He had come to Barinas, he said, trusting in the offer of amnesty, and vigorously demanded that his arms should be restored—not for use against the Spaniards, but for his personal security. His tone was so firm and indignant, and his request so reasonable under the circumstances, that the governor repented of his questionable act, and gave orders that the arms should be returned.

On hearing this, the whole garrison of Barinas assailed the governor with reproaches, impetuously demanding that the guerilla chief should be arrested and confined in irons. The versatile governor again gave way, and that night the Paez mansion was entered and he taken from his bed, put in irons, and locked up in prison. It was no more than he might have expected, if he had known as much of the Spanish character then as he was afterwards to learn.

But Paez was not an easy captive to hold. In the prison he found about one hundred and fifty of his fellow rebels, among them his friend Garcia, an officer noted for strength and courage. On Garcia complaining to him of the weight of his irons and the miserable condition of the prisoners, Paez accused him of cowardice, and offered to exchange fetters with him. To keep his word he broke his own chains by main strength and handed them to his astonished friend.

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Paez now spoke to the other prisoners and won their consent to a concerted break for liberty. Freed from his own fetters, he was able to give efficient service to the others, and before morning nearly the whole of them were free. When the jailor opened the door in the morning he was promptly knocked down by Paez and threatened with instant death if he made a sound. Breaking into the guard-room, they seized the arms of the guard, set free those whose irons were not yet broken, and marched from the prison, with Paez at their head, upon the Spanish garrison, two hundred in number. Many of these were killed and the rest put to rout, and Barinas was once more in patriot hands.

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This anecdote will serve to show, better than pages of description, the kind of man that Paez was. When the act became known to the llaneros they proclaimed Paez their general, and were ready to follow him to the death. These cowboys of the Orinoco, if we may give them this title, were, like their leader, of Indian blood. Neither they nor their general knew anything about military art, and felt lost when taken from their native plains, a fact which was shown when they were called upon to follow Bolivar in his mountain expedition against New Granada. Neither persuasion nor force could induce them to leave the plains for the mountains. Bolivar and Paez entreated them in vain, and they declared that rather than go to the hill-country they would desert and return to their native plains, where alone they were willing to fight. This was their only act of insubordination under their favorite leader, who usually had complete control over them. He made himself one with his men, would divide his last cent with them, and was called by them uncle and father. His staff-officers were all llaneros and formed his regular society, they being alike destitute of education and ignorant of tactics, but bold and dashing and ready to follow their leader to the cannon's mouth.

The British Legion, about six hundred strong, was in the last year of the war attached to the llaneros corps, its members being highly esteemed by Paez, who called them "my friends, the English." The soldiers of the legion, however, were bitterly opposed to their commander, Colonel Bossuet, whom they held responsible for the miserable state of their rations and clothes and their want of pay. At the end of one day, which was so scorchingly hot that the soldiers were excused from their usual five o'clock parade, the legion rushed from their quarters at this hour and placed themselves in order of battle, crying that they would rather have a creole to lead them than their colonel.

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Their officers attempted to pacify them, but in vain, and the lieutenant-colonel, against whom they had taken offence, was attacked and mortally wounded with bayonet thrusts. When Colonel Bossuet appeared and sought to speak to them they rushed upon him with their bayonets, and it needed the active efforts of the other officers to save him from their revengeful hands. Tidings of the mutiny were brought to General Paez in his quarters and threw him into a paroxysm of rage. Seizing his sword, he rushed upon the mutineers, killed three of them instantly, and would have continued this bloody work but that his sword broke on the body of a fourth. Flinging down the useless weapon, he seized some of the most rebellious, dragged them from the ranks by main strength, and ordered them to be taken to prison. The others, dismayed by his spirited conduct, hastily dispersed and sought their quarters. The next day three of the most seditious of the soldiers, and a young lieutenant who was accused of aiding in the mutiny,—though probably innocent of it,—were arrested and shot without trial.

Paroxysms of fury were not uncommon with Paez. After the battle of Ortiz, in which his daring charges alone saved the infantry from destruction, he was seized with a fit, and lay on the ground, foaming at the mouth. Colonel English went to his aid, but his men warned him to let their general alone, saying, "He is often so, and will soon be all right. None of us dare touch him when he is in one of these spells."

But Colonel English persisted, sprinkling his face with water and forcing some down his throat. The general soon recovered and thanked him for his aid, saying that he was a little overcome with fatigue, as he had killed thirty-nine of the enemy with his own hand. As he was running the fortieth through the body he felt his illness coming on. By way of reward he presented Colonel English with the lance which had done this bloody work and gave him three fine horses from his own stud.

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These anecdotes of the dashing leader of the llaneros, who, like all Indians, viewed the Spaniards with an abiding hatred, are likely to be of more interest than the details of his services in the years of campaigning. In the field, it may be said, he was an invaluable aid to General Bolivar. In the campaigns against Morillo, the Spanish commander-in-chief, his daring activity and success were striking, and to him was largely due the winning the last great battle of the war, that of Carabobo.

In this battle, fought on the 26th of June, 1821, Bolivar had about sixteen hundred infantry, a thousand or more of them being British, and three thousand of llanero cavalry under Paez. The Spaniards, under La Torre, had fewer men, but occupied a very strong defensive position. This was a plain, interspersed with rocky and wooded hills, and giving abundant space for military movements, while if driven back they could retire to one strong point after another, holding the enemy at disadvantage throughout. In front there was only one defile, and their wings were well protected, the left resting upon a deep morass. A squadron of cavalry protected their right wing, and on a hill opposite the defile—through which ran the road to Valencia—was posted a small battery.

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This position seemed to give the royalists a decisive superiority over their patriot antagonists, and for twenty days they waited an attack, in full confidence of success. Bolivar hesitated to risk an attack, fearing that the destiny of his country might rest upon the result. He proposed an armistice, but this was unanimously rejected by his council of war. Then it was suggested to seek to turn the position of the enemy, but this was also rejected, and it was finally decided to take every risk and assail the enemy in his stronghold, trusting to courage and the fortune of war for success.

While the subject was being discussed by Bolivar and his staff, one of the guides of the army, who was thoroughly familiar with the country they occupied, stood near and overheard the conversation. At its end he drew near Bolivar, and in a whisper told him that he knew a difficult foot-path by which the right wing of the Spaniards might be turned.

This news was highly welcome, and, after a consultation with his informant, Bolivar secretly detached three battalions of his best troops, including the British legion and a strong column of cavalry under General Paez, directing them to follow the guide and preserve as much silence and secrecy as possible.

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The path proved to be narrow and very difficult. They were obliged to traverse it in single file, and it was paved with sharp stones that cut their shoes to pieces and deeply wounded their feet. Many of them tore their shirts and made bandages for their feet to enable them to go on. Fortunately for the success of the movement, it was masked by the forest, and the expedition was able to concentrate in a position on the flank of the enemy without discovery.

When at length the Spaniards found this unwelcome force on their flank they hastily despatched against it the royal battalion of Bengos, driving back the nearest troops and unmasking the British legion. This they fired upon and then charged with the bayonet. The British returned the fire and charged in their turn, and with such dash and vigor that the Spaniards soon gave way. In their retreat Paez marched upon them with a squadron called the Sacred Legion, and few of them got back to their ranks. In return a squadron of the Spaniards charged the British, but with less success, being dispersed by a hot musketry fire.

"While the Spanish right wing was being thus dealt with, a fierce attack had been made upon the front. The unexpected flank and rear attack was so disconcerting that La Torre lost all presence of mind, and on every side his men were driven back and thrown into confusion. In front and on flank they were hotly pressed. The opportunity of retreating to the succession of defensive points in the rear was quite lost sight of in the panic that invaded their ranks, and soon they were in precipitate retreat, their cavalry dispersed without making a charge, their infantry in the utmost disorder, their cannon and baggage-trains deserted and left to the enemy.

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In this state of affairs Paez showed his customary dash and activity. He pursued the Spaniards at the head of the cavalry, cutting them down vigorously, and few of them would have escaped but for the fatigued and weak condition of his horses, which rendered them unable to break the files of the Spanish infantry. In one of their unsuccessful charges General Sedeno, Colonel Plaza, and a black man called, from his courage, El Primero (the first), finding that they could not break the infantry lines, rushed madly into the midst of the bayonets and were killed.

The news of this defeat spread consternation among the Spaniards. Thousands of the royalists in the cities hastened to leave the country, fearing the vengeance of the patriots, the Spanish commanders lost all spirit, and three months later the strong fortress of Carthagena surrendered to the Colombians. Maracaibo was held till 1823, when it surrendered, and in July, 1824, Porto Cabello capitulated and the long contest was at an end.

This final surrender was due in great measure to General Paez, who thus sustained his military service to the end. Though not gaining the renown of Bolivar, and doubtless incapable of heading an army and conducting a campaign, as a cavalry leader he was indispensable, and to him and his gallant llaneros was largely due the winning of liberty.

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THE HANNIBAL OF THE ANDES AND THE FREEDOM OF CHILI.

At the end of 1816 the cause of liberty in Chili was at its lowest ebb. After four years of struggle the patriots had met with a crushing defeat in 1814, and had been scattered to the four winds. Since then the viceroy of Spain had ruled the land with an iron hand, many of the leading citizens being banished to the desolate island of Juan Fernandez, the imaginary scene of Robinson

Crusoe's career, while many others were severely punished and all the people were oppressed.

In this depressed state of Chilian affairs a hero came across the mountains to strike a new blow for liberty. Don José de San Martín had fought valiantly for the independence of Buenos Ayres at the battle of San Lorenzo. Now the Argentine patriots sent him to the aid of their fellow-patriots in Chili and Peru. Such was the state of the conflict in the latter part of 1816, when San Martín, collecting the scattered bands of Chilian troops and adding them to men of his own command, got together a formidable array five thousand strong. The "Liberating Army of the Andes" these were called.

[pg 248] An able organizer was San Martín, and he put his men through a thorough course of discipline. Those he most depended on were the cavalry, a force made up of the *Gauchos*, or cattlemen of the Pampas, whose life was passed in the saddle, and who were genuine centaurs of the plains.

San Martín had the Andes to cross with his army, and this was a task like that which Hannibal and Bonaparte had accomplished in the Alps. He set out himself at the head of his cavalry on the 17th of January, 1817, the infantry and artillery advancing by a different route. The men of the army carried their own food, consisting of dried meat and parched corn, and depots of food were established at intervals along the route, the difficulty of transporting provision-trains being thus avoided. The field-pieces were slung between mules or dragged on sledges made of tough hide, and were hoisted or lowered by derricks, when steep places were reached. Some two thousand cattle were driven along to add to their food supply.

[pg 249] Thus equipped, San Martín's army set out on its difficult passage of the snow-topped Andes. He had previously sent over guerilla bands whose active movements thoroughly deceived the royalist generals as to his intended place of crossing. Onward went the cavalry, spurred to extraordinary exertion by the fact that provisions began to run short. The passes to be traversed, thirteen thousand feet high and white with perpetual snow, formed a frightful route for the horsemen of the plains, yet they pushed on over the rugged mountains, with their yawning precipices, so rapidly as to cover three hundred miles in thirteen days. The infantry advanced with equal fortitude and energy, and early in February the combined forces descended the mountains and struck the royalist army at the foot with such energy that it was soon fleeing in a total rout. So utterly defeated and demoralized were the royalists that Santiago, the capital, was abandoned and was entered by San Martín at the head of his wild gauchos and host of refugees on the 15th of February. His funds at this time consisted of the two doubloons remaining in his pocket, while he had no military chest, no surgeons nor medicines for his wounded, and a very small supply of the indispensable requisites of an army. About all he had to depend on was the patriotism of his men and their enthusiasm over their brilliant crossing of the Andes and their easy victory over their foes.

[pg 250] For the time being Chili was free. The royalists had vanished and the patriots were in full possession. Thirty or more years before, a bold Irishman, bearing the name of O'Higgins, had come to Chili, where he quickly rose in position until he was given the title of Don Ambrosio, and attained successively the ranks of field-marshal of the royal army, baron, marquis, and finally viceroy of Peru. His son, Don Bernardo, was a man of his own type, able in peace and brilliant in war, and he was now made supreme dictator of Chili, an office which San Martín had refused. The banished patriots were brought home from their desert island, the royalists severely punished, and a new army was organized to dislodge the fragment of the Spanish army which still held out in the south.

On the 15th of February, 1818, the anniversary of the decisive victory of the "Liberating Army of the Andes," O'Higgins declared the absolute independence of Chili. A vote of the people was taken in a peculiar manner. Two blank books were opened for signatures in every city, the first for independence, the second for those who preferred the rule of Spain. For fifteen days these remained, and then it was found that the first books were filled with names, while the second had not a single name. This vote O'Higgins declared settled the question of Chilian freedom.

The Spaniards did not think so, for Abascal, the energetic viceroy of Peru, was taking vigorous steps to win Chili back for the crown. Three months before he had received a reinforcement of three thousand five hundred veterans from Spain, and these he sent to southern Chili to join the forces still in arms. United, they formed an army of about six thousand, under General Osorio, the able commander who had subdued Chili in 1814. It was evident that the newly declared independence of Chili was to be severely tried.

[pg 251] In fact, on the first meeting of the armies it seemed overthrown. On the 19th of March San Martín's army, while in camp near Talca, was unexpectedly and violently attacked by the royalist troops, the onslaught being so sudden and furious, and the storm of cannon and musket shot so rapid and heavy, that the patriot troops were stricken with panic, their divisions firing at each other as well as at the enemy. Within fifteen minutes the whole army was in full flight. The leaders bravely sought to stop the demoralized troops, but in vain, O'Higgins, though severely wounded, throwing himself before them without effect. Nothing could check them, and the defeat became in large measure a total rout.

When news of this disaster reached Santiago utter consternation prevailed. Patriots hastily gathered their valuables for flight; carriages of those seeking to leave the country thronged the streets; women wrung their hands in wild despair; the funds of the treasury were got ready to

load on mules; the whole city was in a state of terrible anxiety.

Several days passed before it was known what had become of San Martin. Then news arrived that he was at San Fernando at the head of the right wing, three thousand strong. These had escaped the panic on account of two divisions of Osorio's army mistaking each other for the enemy and firing into their own ranks. In the confusion that ensued the right wing was led unbroken from the field. Also a dashing young cavalry officer named Rodriguez had done good work in checking the flight of the fugitives, and in a brief time had organized a regiment which he named the "Hussars of Death."

[pg 252] Six days after the defeat General O'Higgins made his appearance in Santiago. He was badly wounded, but was at once named dictator of the republic. The next day San Martin, with a few of his officers, entered the city. Wearied and dusty with travel as he was, his cheery cry of "*La patria triunfa*" gave new heart to the people. For several days fragments of the routed army came pouring in, and ten days after the battle Colonel Las Heras arrived with the three thousand of the right wing. The patriot cause seemed far less hopeless than had been the case a week before.

Yet it was evident that liberty could come only from strenuous exertion, and the people of wealth freely subscribed of their money, plate, and jewels for the cause. It was not long before a new army five thousand five hundred strong, freshly clothed and in fair fighting condition, was gathered in a camp near the city. The artillery lost in the flight could not be replaced, but a few field-pieces were secured. San Martin and O'Higgins, with other able officers, were in command, and hope once more began to dawn upon despair.

The enemy was known to be approaching, and the army was moved to a point about nine miles from the capital, occupying a location known as the farm of Espejo, where the coming enemy was awaited. On the afternoon of April 3, Osorio crossed the Maypo, the patriot cavalry harassing his flank and rear as he advanced. On the 5th his army took up a position on the brow of a hill opposite that occupied by the patriot forces.

[pg 253] Passing out from Santiago there is a succession of white hills, known as the Lorna Blanca, on one crest of which, commanding the roads to the fords of the Maypo and to Santiago, the patriot army was encamped. The royalists occupied the crest and slope of an opposite ridge. Below them ran the Maypo with its forests and hills.

As the sun rose on the morning of the 5th San Martin saw with satisfaction the royalist force beginning to occupy the high ground in his front. With hopeful tone, he said, "I take the sun to witness that the day is ours." As he spoke, the golden rays spread like a banner of light from crest to crest. At ten o'clock when the movement of the armies began, he said, with assurance, "A half-hour will decide the fate of Chili."

A few words will serve to describe the positions of the armies. Each was more than five thousand strong, the patriot army somewhat the smaller. It had been greatly reduced by its recent defeat, the memory of which also hung about it like a cloud, while the royalists were filled with enthusiasm from their late victory. The royalist lines were about a mile in length, four squadrons of dragoons flanking their right wing and a body of lancers their left, while a battery occupied a hill on the extreme left. Confronting them were the patriots, the left commanded by General Alverado, the centre by Balcarce, the right by Las Heras, while Quintana headed the reserves.

[pg 254] The battle opened with a brisk fire from the patriot artillery, and in about an hour the infantry forces joined in full action. As the royalists moved down the hill they were swept with the fire of the patriot battery, while shortly afterwards the royal battery on the left was captured by a dashing cavalry charge and the guns were turned against their own line.

The centre of the battle was a farm-house on the Espejo estate, which was charged furiously by both sides, being taken and retaken several times during the day. Yet as the day went on the advantage seemed to be on the side of Osorio, who held the field with the centre and one wing of his army. Defeat seemed the approaching fate of the patriots. It came nearer when the regiment of negroes which had for some time withstood the Burgos regiment—the flower of Osorio's force—gave way and retreated, leaving four hundred of its number stretched upon the field.

The critical moment of the battle was now at hand. The Burgos regiment attempted to follow up its success by forming itself into a square for a decisive charge. In doing so the Spanish lines were broken and thrown into temporary disorder. Colonel O'Brien, a gallant cavalry officer of Irish blood, took quick advantage of this. Joining his troops with Quintana's reserves, he broke in a fierce charge upon the Burgos regiment while in the act of reforming and drove it back in complete confusion.

[pg 255] This defeat of the choice corps of Osorio's army changed the whole aspect of affairs. The patriots, inspired with hope, boldly advanced and pressed their foes at all points. The Burgos troops sought refuge in the farm-house, and were followed by the left, which was similarly broken and dispersed. The centre kept up the action for a time, but with both wings in retreat it also was soon forced back, and the whole royalist army was demoralized.

The patriots did not fail to press their advantage to the utmost. On all sides the royalists were cut down or captured, until nearly half their force were killed and wounded and most of the

remainder taken prisoners. A stand was made by those at the farm house, but they were soon driven out, and about five hundred of them killed and wounded in the court and vineyard adjoining. Of the total army less than three hundred escaped, General Osorio and some other officers among them. These fled to Concepcion, and embarked from there to Peru. Of the patriots more than a thousand had fallen in the hot engagement.

This brilliant and decisive victory, known as the battle of the Maypo, gave San Martin immense renown, and justly so, for it established the independence of Chili. Nor was that all, for it broke the power which Abascal had long sustained in Peru, and opened the way for the freeing of that land from the rule of Spain.

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This feat also was the work of San Martin, who soon after invaded Peru, and, aided by a Chilian fleet, conquered that land from Spain, proclaiming its independence to the people of Cuzco on the 28th of July, 1821. Later on, indeed, its freedom was seriously threatened, and it was not until 1824 that General Bolivar finally won independence for Peru, in the victory of Ayacucho. Yet, famous as Bolivar became as the Liberator of South America, some generous portion of fame should rightly be accorded to San Martin, the Liberator of Chili.

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COLONY, EMPIRE, AND REPUBLIC; REVOLUTION IN BRAZIL.

While the Spanish colonies of South America were battling for their liberties, the great Portuguese colony of Brazil was going through a very different experience. Bolivar and his compatriots were seeking to drive Spain out of America. On the contrary, we have the curious spectacle of Brazil swallowing Portugal, or at least its king and its throne, so that, for a time, the colony became the state, and the state became the dependency. It was a marked instance of the tail wagging the dog. Brazil became the one empire in America, and was destined not to become a republic until many years later. Such are the themes with which we here propose to deal.

To begin this tale we must go back to those stirring times in Europe when Napoleon, the great conqueror, was in the height of his career, and was disposing of countries at his will, much as a chess-player moves the king, queen, and knights upon his board. In 1807 one of his armies, led by Marshal Junot, was marching on Lisbon, with the purpose of punishing Portugal for the crime of being a friend of the English realm.

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John, then the prince regent of Portugal, was a weak-minded, feeble specimen of royalty, who did not keep of one mind two days together. Now he clung to England; now, scared by Napoleon, he claimed to be a friend of France; and thus he shifted back and forward until the French despot sent an army to his kingdom to help him make up his mind. The people were ready to fight for their country, but the prince still wobbled between two opinions, until Junot had crossed the borders and was fast making his way to Lisbon.

Prince John was now in a pitiable state. He shed tears over the fate of his country, but, as for himself, he wanted badly to save his precious person. Across the seas lay the great Portuguese colony of Brazil, in whose vast forest area he might find a safe refuge. The terrible French were close at hand. He must be a captive or a fugitive. In all haste he and his court had their treasures carried on a man-of-war in the Lisbon harbor and prepared for flight. Most of the nobility of the country followed him on shipboard, the total hegira embracing fifteen thousand persons, who took with them valuables worth fifty millions of dollars. On November 29, 1807, the fleet set sail, leaving the harbor just as the advance guard of the French came near enough to gaze on its swelling sails. It was a remarkable spectacle, one rarely seen in the history of the world, that of a monarch fleeing from his country with his nobility and treasures, to transfer his government to a distant colony of the realm.

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Seven weeks later the fugitives landed in Brazil, where they were received with an enthusiastic show of loyalty and devotion. John well repaid the loyal colonists by lifting their country into the condition of a separate nation. Its ports, hitherto reserved for Portuguese ships, were opened to the world's commerce; its system of seclusion and monopoly was brought to a sudden end; manufactures were set free from their fetters; a national bank was established; Brazil was thrown open freely to foreigners; schools and a medical college were opened, and every colonial restriction was swept away at a blow. Brazil was raised from a dependency to a kingdom at a word. John, while bearing the title of prince, was practically king, for his mother, the queen of Portugal, was hopelessly insane, and he ruled in her stead.

He became actual king, as John VI., on the death of his mother in 1816, and as such he soon found trouble growing up around him. The Brazilians had been given so much that they wanted more. The opening of their country to commerce and travel had let in new ideas, and the people began to discover that they were the slaves of an absolute government. This feeling of unrest passed out of sight for a time, and first broke out in rebellion at Pernambuco in 1817. This was put down, but a wider revolt came on in 1820, and spread early in the next year to Rio de Janeiro, the capital, whose people demanded of their ruler a liberal constitution.

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A great crowd assembled in the streets, the frightened monarch taking refuge in his palace in the suburbs, where he lay trembling with fear. Fortunately, his son, Prince Pedro, was a man of more resolute character, and he quieted the people by swearing that his father and himself would accept the constitution they offered. Full of joy, the throng marched with enthusiasm to the palace of the king, who on seeing them approach was not sure whether he was to be garroted or guillotined. Forced to get into his carriage, he quite mistook their meaning, and fell into a paroxysm of terror when the people took out the horses that they might draw him to the city with their own hands. He actually fainted from fright, and when his senses came back, he sat sobbing and snivelling, protesting that he would agree to anything,—anything his dear people wanted.

King John by this time had had quite enough of Brazil and the Brazilians. As soon as he could decide on anything, he determined to take his throne and his crown back to Portugal, whence he had brought them fourteen years before, leaving his son Pedro—young, ardent, and popular—to take care of Brazil in his stead.

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But the people were not satisfied to let him go until he had given his royal warrant to the new constitution, and just before he was ready to depart a crowd gathered round the palace, demanding that he should give his assent to the charter of the people's rights. He had never read it, and likely knew very little what it was about, but he signed what they asked for, all the same, and then made haste on shipboard, leaving Prince Pedro as regent, and as glad to get away from his *loyal* Brazilians as he had once before been to get away from Junot and his Frenchmen.

Brazil again became a colony of Portugal, but it was not long to remain so. The Cortes of Portugal grew anxious to milk the colonial cow, and passed laws to bring Brazil again under despotic control. One of these required the young prince to leave Brazil. They were laying plans to throw the great colony back into its former state.

When news of these acts reached Rio the city broke into a tumult. Pedro was begged not to abandon his loving people, and he agreed—thus defying the Cortes and its orders. This was on January 9, 1822. The Cortes next, to carry out its work for the subjugation of Brazil, sent a squadron to bring back the prince. This forced him to take a decided stand. On May 13 he took the title of "Perpetual Defender and Protector of Brazil;" and on the 7th of September, when word came that the Cortes had taken still more violent action, he drew his sword in the presence of a party of revolutionists, with the exclamation, "Independence or Death." On the 12th of the following month he was solemnly crowned as Pedro I., "Constitutional Emperor of Brazil," and the revolution was consummated. Within less than a year thereafter not a hostile Portuguese soldier remained in Brazil, and it had taken its place definitely among the nations of America.

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This is but half the story of Brazil's struggle for freedom. It seems advisable to tell the other half, which took place in 1889, sixty-seven years after the first revolution. The first made Brazil an independent empire. The second made it a republic, and brought it into line with the republican nations of America. And in connection therewith a peculiar fate attended the establishment of monarchy in Brazil. We have seen how John, the first emperor, "left his country for the country's good." The same was the case with his two successors, Pedro I. and Pedro II.

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Pedro I. took the throne with loud-mouthed declarations of his aspirations for liberty. He was going to be a second Washington. But it was all empty talk, the outpourings of a weak brain, a mere dramatic posing, to which he was given. His ardor for liberty soon cooled, and it was not long before he was treating the people like a despot. The constitution promised was not given until it was fairly forced from him, and then it proved to be a worthless document, made only to be disregarded. A congress was called into being, but the emperor wished to confine its functions to the increase of the taxes, and matters went on from bad to worse until by 1831 the indignation of the people grew intense. The troops were in sympathy with the multitude, and the emperor, finding that he stood alone against the country, finally abdicated the throne in haste in favor of his infant son. He took refuge on a British warship in the harbor, and left the country never to return. The remainder of his short life was spent as king of Portugal.

Dom Pedro II. was a very different man from his father. Studious, liberal, high-minded, he did not, like his father, stand in the way of the congress and its powers. But for all his liberality, Brazil was not satisfied. All around it were republics, and the spirit of republicanism invaded the empire and grew apace. From the people it made its way into the army, and in time it began to look as if no other emperor would be permitted to succeed Dom Pedro on the throne. By this time he was growing old and feeble and there was a general feeling that he ought to be left to end his reign undisturbed, and the republic be founded on his grave. Unfortunately for him, many began to believe that a plot was in the air to make him give up the throne to his daughter, Isabel. She was unpopular, and her husband, the Count d'Eu, was hated, and when the ministry began to send the military away from the capital, as if to carry out such a plot, an outbreak came.

Its leaders were Benjamin Constant, formerly a professor in the military school, and Marshal Deodoro de Fonsaca, one of the leading officers of the army. There was one brigade they could count on,—the second,—and all the forces in Rio were republican in sentiment.

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On the 14th of November, 1889, a rumor spread about that Constant and Deodoro were to be arrested and the disaffected soldiers to be sent away. It was time to strike. Early the next morning Constant rode out to the quarters of the Second Brigade, called it out, and led it to the great square in front of the War Department building. Deodoro took command and sent an officer into the building to demand the surrender of the ministry. They yielded, and telegraphed their resignation to the emperor, who was at Petropolis, twenty-five miles away in the mountains.

The revolution was phenomenally successful. When the other troops in the city heard of the revolt, they marched, cheering, through the streets to join the Second Brigade, while the people, who did not dream of what was afoot, looked on in astonishment. No one thought of resisting, and when Dom Pedro reached the city at three o'clock in the afternoon, it was to find that he was no longer emperor. A provisional government had been organized, the chiefs of the revolution had named themselves ministers, and they had taken possession of the public buildings. A decree was issued that Brazil had ceased to be an empire and had become a federal republic.

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So great a change has rarely been accomplished so easily. A few friends visited the emperor, but there was no one to strike a blow for him. And the feeble old man cared too little for power to wish to be kept on the throne by the shedding of blood. That night word was sent him that he had been deposed and would be compelled to leave the country with his family. During the next night the royal victims of the revolution were sent on shipboard and their voyage to Lisbon began. Thus was the third emperor sent out of Brazil through a bloodless revolution.

Yet the reaction was to come. A federal republic was organized, with a constitution closely like that of the United States. But the men at the head of government had the army at their back and were rather military dictators than presidents, and it was not long before rebellions broke out in some of the states. For three years there was war between the two factions of the people, with frightful destruction of life and property. Then, in September, 1893, the navy rebelled.

The navy had always been officered by aristocrats, and looked with contempt upon the army. At its head was Admiral Mello; his ships lay in the harbor of Rio, and their guns commanded the city. It soon became evident that it was the purpose of Mello and his fellows to re-establish the empire and bring back Dom Pedro to the throne.

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But the rebel admiral found himself in a difficult situation. He hesitated about bombarding the city, which was full of his friends. Peixoto, the president, filled the forts with soldiers, and the naval officers had much trouble to obtain supplies. Mello, finding himself in a dilemma, left the harbor with one of his ironclads and went to Santa Catharina. Saraiva, an able chief of his party, invaded this and the neighboring districts, but he was hotly pursued and his forces defeated, and Mello returned to Rio without having gained any advantage. Here he found his position a very awkward one. The rebels were all afloat. They had nothing to gain by bombarding the city. The best they could do was to try and establish a commercial blockade, so as to force the government to terms, and in doing this Mello found himself running up against the power of the United States.



RIO JANEIRO AND HARBOR.

We have given these incidents not so much for the interest they may have in themselves, but because they lead up to a dramatic finale which seems worth relating. There were warships of several nations in the harbor, the officers of most of which accorded the rights of belligerents to the rebel navy, though it had not a foot of land under its control. Saldana da Gama, then in command of the ships, refused permission to any merchant vessel to go to the wharves to deliver its cargo, threatening to fire on any one that should venture. Thus the fleet of merchantmen was forced to lie out in the bay and await the end of the war, in spite of the fact that yellow fever was making havoc among the crews.

The captains of the American merchant ships applied for protection to the senior American officer present, but he refused to interfere, and the commercial blockade went on. Such was the state of affairs when the United States Admiral Andrew E. Benham appeared in the harbor and took in the situation. He was a man to accept responsibilities.

[pg 267] "Go in," he said to the American captains. "Trust to me to protect you from attack or to revenge you if injured."

This promise put new spirit into the captains. Captain Blackford, of the barque "Amy," and two other captains, gave notice on Sunday, January 29, 1894, that they would take their ships in to the wharves the next morning. When Da Gama heard of this he announced that he would fire on any vessel that dared attempt it.

When Monday morning dawned there was a state of excitement in Rio Janeiro harbor. Da Gama might keep his word, and what would the American admiral do in that event? The commanders of the other war-vessels looked on with interest and anxiety. They soon saw that Benham meant business. The dawn of day showed active movements in the small American squadron. The ships were clearing for action, and the cruiser "Detroit" took a position from which she could command two of Da Gama's vessels, the "Guanabara" and the "Trajano."

[pg 268] When the "Detroit" was in position, the "Amy" began to warp in towards the pier. A musket-shot came in warning from the deck of the "Guanabara." Instantly from the "Detroit" a ball hurtled past the bow of the Brazilian ship. A second followed that struck her side. Seeing that two Brazilian tugs were moving inward as if with intent to ram his vessel, Captain Brownson of the "Detroit" took his ship in between the two Brazilian war-vessels, in a position to rake them and their supporting tugs.

This decisive act ended the affair. Da Gama's guns remained silent, and the "Amy," followed by the other two vessels, made her way unharmed to the wharves. Others followed, and before night all the British and other merchantmen in the harbor were hastening in to discharge their cargoes. Benham had brought to a quick end the "intolerable situation" in Rio Janeiro harbor.

This ended the last hope of the naval revolutionists to bring Peixoto to terms. Some of the ironclads escaped from the harbor and fled to Santa Catharina, where they were captured by the republicans. A few months sufficed to bring the revolt to an end, and republicanism was at length firmly established in Brazil.

[pg 269] **FRANCIA THE DICTATOR, THE LOUIS XI. OF PARAGUAY.**

Among the varied countries of South America the little republic of Paraguay, clipped closely in between Bolivia, Argentina, and Brazil, presents the most singular history, this being due to the remarkable career of the dictator Francia, who ruled over it for a quarter of a century, and to the warlike energy of his successor Lopez. The tyranny of Francia was one of the strangest which history records, no man ever ruling with more absolute authority and more capricious cruelty. For many years Paraguay was completely cut off by him from the rest of the world, much as Japan was until opened to civilization by Commodore Perry. Unlucky was the stranger who then dared set foot on Paraguayan soil. Many years might pass before he could see the outer world again. Such was the fate of Bonpland, the celebrated botanist and companion of Humboldt, who rashly entered this forbidden land and was forced to spend ten years within its locked confines. Such is the country, and such was the singular policy of its dictator, whose strange story we have here to tell.

[pg 270] In May, 1811, Paraguay joined the other countries of South America in the general revolt against Spain. There was here no invasion and no blood-shed; the armies of Spain were kept too busy elsewhere, and the revolution was accomplished in peace. A governing committee was formed,

with Fulgencio Yegros for its chairman and José Gaspar Rodríguez de Francia for its secretary. The first was a man of little ability; the latter was a man whose powers will soon be seen.

The committee decreed the independence of Paraguay. Two years later a new convention was held, which dissolved the committee and elected two consuls, Yegros and Francia, to govern the country. Two chairs were made for them, resembling the curule chairs of Rome, and called Cæsar's and Pompey's chairs. On entering office Francia coolly seated himself in Cæsar's chair, leaving that of Pompey for his associate. This action showed the difference in force of character between the two men.

[pg 271] In fact, Francia quickly took possession of all the powers of government. He was a true Cæsar. He appointed a secretary of state, undertook to reorganize the army and the finances, and deprived the Spaniards in the country of all civil rights. This was done to gain the support of the Indian population, who hated the Spaniards bitterly. He soon went farther. Yegros was in his way and he got rid of him, making the simple-minded and ignorant members of the congress believe that only a sovereign magistrate could save the country, which was then threatened by its neighbors. In consequence, on the 8th of October, 1814, Francia was made dictator for three years. This was not enough to satisfy the ambitious ruler, and he played his cards so shrewdly that, on the 1st of May, 1816, a new congress proclaimed him supreme and perpetual dictator.

It was no common man who could thus induce the congress of a republic to raise him to absolute power over its members and the people. Francia at that time was fifty-nine years of age, a lean and vigorous man, of medium stature, with piercing black eyes, but a countenance not otherwise marked. The son of a Frenchman who had been a tobacco manufacturer in Paraguay, he was at first intended for the church, but subsequently studied the law. In this profession he had showed himself clever, eloquent, and honorable, and always ready to defend the poor and weak against the rich. It was the reputation thus gained which first made him prominent in political affairs.

[pg 272] Once raised to absolute power for life, Francia quickly began to show his innate qualities. Love of money was not one of his faults, and while strictly economical with the public funds, he was free-handed and generous with his own. Thus, of the nine thousand pesos of annual salary assigned him, he would accept only three thousand, and made it a strict rule to receive no present, either returning or paying for any sent him. At first he went regularly every day to mass, but he soon gave up this show of religious faith and dismissed his private chaplain. In fact, he grew to despise religious forms, and took pleasure in ridiculing the priests, saying that they talked about things and represented mysteries of which they knew nothing. "The priests and religion," he said, "serve more to make men believe in the devil than in God."

Of the leading principle of Francia's political system we have already spoken. It had been the policy of the old Jesuit missions to isolate the people and keep them in strict obedience to the priesthood, and Francia adopted a similar policy. Anarchy prevailed without, he said, and might penetrate into Paraguay. Brazil, he declared, was seeking to absorb the country. With these excuses he forbade, under the severest penalties, intercourse of any character between the people of Paraguay and those of neighboring countries and the entry of any foreigner to the country under his rule.

In 1826 he decreed that any one who, calling himself an envoy from Spain, should dare to enter Paraguay without authority from himself should be put to death and his body denied a burial. The same severe penalty was decreed against any native who received a letter speaking of political affairs and did not at once present it to the public tribunals. These rigid orders were probably caused by some mysterious movements of that period, which made him fear that Spain was laying plans to get possession of the country.

[pg 273] In the same year the dictator made a new move in the game of politics. He called into being a kind of national assembly, professed to submit to its authority, and ratified a declaration of independence. Just why this was done is not very clear. Certain negotiations were going on with the Spanish government, and these may have had something to do with it. At any rate, a timely military conspiracy was just then discovered or manufactured, a colonel was condemned to death, and Francia was pressed by the assembly to resume his power. He consented with a show of reluctance, and only, as he said, till the Marquis de Guarini, his envoy to Spain, should return, when he would yield up his rule to the marquis. All this, however, was probably a mere dramatic move, and Francia had no idea of yielding his power to any one.

The dictator had a policy of his own—in fact, a double policy, one devoted to dealing with the land and its people; one to dealing with his enemies or those who questioned his authority. The one was as arbitrary, the other as cruel, as that of the tyrants of Rome.

[pg 274] The crops of Paraguay, whose wonderful soil yields two harvests annually, were seized by the dictator and stored on account of the government. The latter claimed ownership of two-thirds of the land, and a communal system was adopted under which Francia disposed at will of the country and its people. He fixed a system for the cultivation of the fields, and when hands were needed for the harvest he enlisted them forcibly. Yet agriculture made little progress under the primitive methods employed, a broad board serving for a plough, while the wheat was ground in mortars, and a piece of wood moved by oxen formed the sugar-mill. The cotton, as soon as picked from the pods, was spun on the spinning-wheel, and then woven by a travelling weaver, whose rude apparatus was carried on the back of an ox or a mule, and, when in use, was hung from the

branch of a tree.

Commerce was dealt with in the same way as agriculture. The market was under Francia's control, and all exchange of goods was managed under rules laid down by him. He found that he must open the country in a measure to foreign goods, if he wanted to develop the resources of the country, and a channel of commerce was opened on the frontier of Brazil. But soldiers vigilantly watched all transactions, and no one could act as a merchant without a license from him. He fixed a tariff on imports, kept them in a bazaar under military guard, and sold them to the people, limiting the amount of goods which any of his subjects could purchase.

As a result of all this Francia brought about a complete cessation of all private action, the state being all, and he being the state. All dealing for profit was paralyzed, and agriculture and commerce alike made no progress. On the other hand, everything relating to war was developed. It was his purpose to cut off Paraguay completely from foreign countries, and to be fully prepared to defend it against warlike invasion.

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INDIAN SPINNING AND WEAVING.

Of his books, the one he most frequently consulted was a French dictionary of the arts and industries. From this he gained the idea of founding public workshops, in which the workmen were stimulated to activity alike by threats and money. At one time he condemned a blacksmith to hard labor for awkwardness. At another, when he had erected a gallows, he proposed to try it on a shoemaker if he did not do his work properly, while promising to richly reward him if he did.

Military roads were laid out, the capital and other cities were fortified, and a new city was built in the north as a military post to keep the savage Indians under control. As for the semi-civilized Mission Indians, they were gradually brought under the yoke, made to work on the land, and enrolled in the army like other citizens. In this way a body of twenty thousand militia and five thousand regular troops was formed, all being well drilled and the army supplied with an excellent cavalry force. The body-guard of the dictator was made up of picked troops on whose fidelity he could rely.

Francia dwelt in the palace of the old Spanish governors, tearing down adjoining houses to isolate it. Constantly fearful of death and danger, he did not trust fully to his vigilant body-guard, but nightly slept in a different room, so that his sleeping apartment should not be known. In this he resembled the famous Louis XI., whom he also imitated in his austerity and simplicity of manners, and the fact that his principal confidant was his barber,—a mulatto inclined to drink. His other associate was Patiños, his secretary, who made the public suffer for any ill-treatment from his master. The remainder of the despot's household consisted of four slaves, two men and two women. In dress he strove to imitate Napoleon, whom he greatly admired, and when drilling his troops was armed with a large sword and pistols.

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There remains to tell the story of the cruelties of this Paraguayan Nero. With his suspicious nature and his absolute power, his subjects had no more security for their lives than those of old Rome. Plots against his person—which he identified with the state—served him as a pretext for seizing and shooting or imprisoning any one of whom he was suspicious. One of his first victims was Yegros, his former associate in the consulate. Accused of favoring an invasion of Paraguay, he and forty others were condemned to death in 1819.

More than three hundred others were imprisoned on the same charge, and were held captive for eighteen months, during which they were subjected by the tyrant to daily tortures. The ferocious dictator took special pleasure in the torment of these unfortunates, devising tortures of his own and making a diversion out of his revenge. From his actions it has been supposed that there were

[pg 277] the seeds of madness in his mind, and it is certain that it was in his frequent fits of hypochondria that he issued his decrees of proscription and carried out his excesses of cruelty.

When in this condition, sad was it for the heedless wretch who omitted to address him as "Your Excellence the Supreme, Most Excellent Lord and Perpetual Dictator!" Equally sad was it for the man who, wishing to speak with him, dared to approach too closely and did not keep his hands well in view, to show that he had no concealed weapons. Treason, daggers, and assassins seemed the perpetual tenants of Francia's thoughts. One country-woman was seized for coming too near his office window to present a petition; and he went so far, on one occasion, as to order his guard to fire on any one who dared to look at his palace. Whenever he went abroad a numerous escort attended him, and the moment he put his foot outside the palace the bell of the Cathedral began to toll, as a warning to all the inhabitants to go into their houses. Any one found abroad bowed his head nearly to the ground, not daring to lift his eyes to the dictator's dreaded face.

[pg 278] It is certainly extraordinary that in the nineteenth century, and in a little state of South America, there should have arisen a tyrant equal in cruelty, in his restricted sphere, to the Nero and Caligula of old or the Louis XI. of mediæval times. Death came to him in 1840, after twenty-six years of this absolute rule and in his eighty-third year. It came after a few days of illness, during which he attended to business, refused assistance, and forbade any one not called by him to enter his room. Only the quick coming of death prevented him from ending his life with a crime; for in a fit of anger at the *curandero*, a sort of quack doctor who attended him, he sprang from his bed, snatched up his sword, and rushed furiously upon the trembling wretch. Before he could reach his intended victim he fell down in a fit of apoplexy. No one dared to disregard his orders and come to his aid, and death soon followed. His funeral was splendid, and a grand mausoleum was erected to him, but this was thrown down by the hands of some enemies unknown.

Thus ended the career of this extraordinary personage, one of the most remarkable characters of the nineteenth century. Carlos Antonio Lopez, his nephew, succeeded him, and in 1844 was chosen as president of the republic for ten years, during which he was as absolute as his uncle. He continued in power till his death in 1862, but put an end to the isolation of Paraguay, opening it to the world's commerce.

[pg 279] He was succeeded by his son, Solano Lopez, whom we mention here simply from the fact that the war which Francia had so diligently prepared for came in his time. In 1864 the question of the true frontier of the state brought on a war in which Brazil, the Argentine Republic, and Uruguay combined to crush the little country in their midst. We need only say here that Lopez displayed remarkable powers as a soldier, appeared again and again in arms after seemingly crushing defeats, and fought off his powerful opponents for five years. Then, on the 1st of May, 1870, he was slain in a battle in which his small army was completely destroyed. Paraguay, after a valorous and gigantic struggle, was at the mercy of the allies. It was restored to national life again, but under penalty of the great indemnity, for so small a state, of two hundred and thirty-six million pesos.

[pg 280] **TACON THE GOVERNOR AND MARTI THE SMUGGLER.**

In 1834 Don Miguel Tacon, one of the most vigorous and tyrannical of the governor-generals of Cuba, took control of the island, which he ruled with a stern will and an iron hand. One of the purposes in which he was most earnest was that of suppressing the active smuggling on the coast, all the naval vessels under his command being ordered to patrol the coast night and day, and to have no mercy on these lawless worthies. As it proved, all his efforts were of no avail, the smugglers continuing to ply their trade in spite of Tacon and his agents.

The despoilers of the revenue were too daring and adroit, and too familiar with the shoals and rocks of the coast waters, to be readily caught, and the lack of pilots familiar with this difficult navigation prevented any close approach to their haunts. In this dilemma Tacon tried the expedient of offering a large and tempting reward to any one who would desert the fraternity and agree to pilot the government vessels through the perilous channels which they frequented. Double this reward, an almost princely prize, was offered for the person of one Marti, dead or alive.

[pg 281] Tacon had good reason to offer a special reward for the arrest of Marti, who was looked upon as the leader and chief offender of the smugglers. A daring and reckless man, notorious as a smuggler and half pirate, his name was as well known in Cuba as that of the governor-general

himself. The admirers of his daring exploits grew to know him as the King of the Isle of Pines, this island being his principal rendezvous, from which he sent his fleet of small, swift vessels to ply their trade on the neighboring coast. As for Tacon's rewards, they were long as ineffective as his revenue cutters and gunboats, and the government officials fell at length into a state of despair as to how they should deal with the nefarious and defiant band.

One dark, dull night, several months after the placards offering these rewards had been posted in conspicuous places in Havana and elsewhere, two sentinels were pacing as usual before the governor's palace, which stood opposite the grand plaza of the capital city. Shortly before midnight a cloaked individual stealthily approached and slipped behind the statue of the Spanish king near the fountain in the plaza. From this lurking-place he watched the movements of the sentinels, as they walked until they met face to face, and then turned back to back for their brief walk in the opposite direction.

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It was a delicate movement to slip between the soldiers during the short interval when their eyes were turned from the entrance, but the stranger at length adroitly effected it, darting lightly and silently across the short space and hiding himself behind one of the pillars of the palace before they turned again. During their next turn he entered the palace, now safe from their espionage, and sought the broad flight of stairs which led to the governor's rooms with the confidence of one thoroughly familiar with the place.



THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL'S PALACE, HAVANA.

At the head of the stairs there was another guard to be passed, but this the stranger did with a formal military salute and an air of authority as if his right to enter was beyond question. His

manner quieted all suspicion in the mind of the sentinel, and the newcomer entered the governor's room unchallenged, closing the door behind him.

Before him sat the governor-general in a large easy-chair, quite alone and busily engaged in writing. On seeing him thus unattended the weather-beaten face of the stranger took on a look of satisfaction. Evidently his secret plans had worked fully to his desire. Taking off his cloak, he tossed it over his arm, making a noise that attracted the governor's attention. Tacon looked up in surprise, fixing his eyes keenly upon his unlooked-for visitor.

"Who is this that enters, at this late hour, without warning or announcement?" he sternly asked, looking in doubt at the unknown face.

"One who brings information that the governor-general wants. You are he, I believe?"

"I am. What do you want? And how did you, a stranger, pass my guard without challenge?"

[pg 283] "That is not the question. Your Excellency, I understand, has offered a handsome reward to any one who will put you on the track of the rovers of the gulf?"

"Ha! is that your errand?" exclaimed Tacon, with sudden interest. "What know you of them?"

"Excellency, I must speak with caution," said the stranger. "I have my own safety to consider."

"That you need not fear. My offer of reward also carries pardon to the informant. If you are even a member of the confederation itself you will be safe in speaking freely."

"I understand you offer an additional reward, a rich one, for the discovery of Captain Marti, the chief of the smugglers?"

"I do. You may fully trust in my promise to reward and protect any one who puts me on the track of that leader of the villains."

"Your Excellency, I must have special assurance of this. Do you give me your knightly word that you will grant me a free pardon for all offences against the customs, if I tell all you wish to know, even to the most secret hiding-places of the rovers?"

"I pledge you my full word of honor for that," said the governor, now deeply interested.

"You will grant me full pardon, under the king's seal, no matter how great my offences or crimes, if you call them so, may have been?"

"If what you reveal is to the purpose," said Tacon, wondering why his visitor was so unduly cautious.

"Even if I were a leader among the rovers myself?"

[pg 284] Tacon hesitated a moment, looking closely at the stalwart stranger, while considering the purport of his words.

"Yes," he said, at length. "If you will lead our ships to the haunts of Marti and his followers, you can fully depend on the reward and the pardon."

"Excellency, I know you well enough to trust your word, or I should never have put myself in your power."

"You can trust my word," said Tacon, impatiently. "Now come to the point; I have no time to waste."

"Your Excellency, the man for whom you have offered the largest reward, dead or alive, stands before you."

"Ha! you are

"Captain Marti."

The governor started in surprise, and laid his hand hastily on a pistol that lay before him. But he regained his self-possession in a moment, and solemnly said,—

"I shall keep my promise, if you keep yours. You have offended deeply, but my word is my law. But to insure your faithfulness, I must put you for the present under guard."

"As you will, your Excellency," said Marti.

Tacon rang a bell by his side, an attendant entered, and soon after Marti was safely locked up, orders being given to make him comfortable until he was sent for. And so this strange interview ended.

[pg 285] During the next day there was a commotion in the harbor of Havana. An armed revenue cutter, which for weeks had lain idly under the guns of Morro Castle, became the scene of sudden

activity; food, ammunition, and other stores being taken on board. Before noon the anchor was weighed and she stood out into the open sea. On her deck was a man unknown to captain or crew, otherwise than as the pilot of their cruise. Marti was keeping his word.

A skilled and faithful pilot he proved,—faithful to them, but faithless and treacherous to his late comrades and followers,—for he guided the ship with wonderful ease and assurance through all the shoals and perils of the coast waters, taking her to the secret haunts of the rovers, and revealing their depots of smuggled goods and secret hiding-places. Many a craft of the smugglers was taken and destroyed and large quantities of their goods were captured, as for a month the raiding voyage continued. The returns to the government were of great value and the business of the smugglers was effectually broken up. At its end Marti returned to the governor to claim the reward for his base treachery.

"You have kept your word faithfully," said Tacon. "It is now for me to keep mine. In this document you will find a free and unconditional pardon for all the offences you have committed against the laws. As for your reward, here's an order on the treasury for—"

[pg 286] "Will your Excellency excuse me for interrupting?" said Marti. "I am glad to have the pardon. But as for the reward, I should like to make you a proposition in place of the money you offer. What I ask is that you grant me the sole right to fish in the waters near the city, and declare the trade in fish contraband to any one except my agents. This will repay me quite well enough for my service to the government, and I shall build at my own expense a public market of stone, which shall be an ornament to the city. At the expiration of a certain term of years this market, with all right and title to the fisheries, shall revert to the government."

Tacon was highly pleased with this proposition. He would save the large sum which he had promised Marti, and the city would gain a fine fish-market without expense. So, after weighing fully all the *pros* and *cons*, Tacon assented to the proposition, granting Marti in full legal form the sole right to fish near the city and to sell fish in its markets. Marti knew far better than Tacon the value to him of this concession. During his life as a rover he had become familiar with the best fishing-grounds, and for years furnished the city bountifully with fish, reaping a very large profit upon his enterprise. At the close of the period of his monopoly the market and privileges reverted to the government.

[pg 287] Marti had all he needed, and was now a man of large wealth. How he should invest it was the question that next concerned him. He finally decided to try and obtain the monopoly of theatrical performances in Havana on condition of building there one of the largest and finest theatres in the world. This was done, paying the speculator a large interest on his wealth, and he died at length rich and honored, his money serving as a gravestone for his sins.

[pg 288] **KEARNEY'S DARING EXPEDITION AND THE CONQUEST OF NEW MEXICO.**

We have told the story of the remarkable expedition of Vasquez de Coronado from Mexico northward to the prairies of Kansas. We have now to tell the story of an expedition which took place three centuries later from this prairie land to the once famous region of the "Seven Cities of Cibola." In 1542, when Coronado traversed this region, he found it inhabited by tribes of wandering savages, living in rude wigwams. In 1846, when the return expedition set out, it came from a land of fruitful farms and populous cities. Yet it was to pass through a country as wild and uncultivated as that which the Spaniards had traversed three centuries before.

[pg 289] The invasion of Mexico by the United States armies in 1846 was made in several divisions, one being known as the Army of the West, led by Colonel Stephen W. Kearney. He was to march to Santa Fé, seize New Mexico, and then push on and occupy California, both of which were then provinces of Mexico. It was an expedition in which the soldiers would have to fight far more with nature than with man, and force their way through desolate regions and over deserts rarely trodden by the human foot.

The invading army made its rendezvous at Fort Leavenworth, on the Missouri River, in the month of June, 1846. It consisted of something over sixteen hundred men, all from Missouri, and all mounted except one battalion of infantry. Accompanying it were sixteen pieces of artillery. A march of two thousand miles in length lay before this small corps, much of it through the land of the enemy, where much larger forces were likely to be met. Before the adventurers, after the green prairies had been passed, lay hot and treeless plains and mountain-ranges in whose passes

the wintry snow still lingered, while savage tribes and hostile Mexicans, whose numbers were unknown, might make their path one of woe and slaughter. Those who gathered to see them start looked upon them as heroes who might never see their homes again.

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On the 26th of June the main body of the expedition began its march, taking the trail of a provision train of two hundred wagons and two companies of cavalry sent in advance, and followed, three days later, by Kearney with the rear. For the first time in history an army under the American standard, and with all the bravery of glittering guns and floating flags, was traversing those ancient plains. For years the Santa Fé trail had been a synonym for deeds of horror, including famine, bloodshed, and frightful scenes of Indian cruelty. The bones of men and of beasts of burden paved the way, and served as a gruesome pathway for the long line of marching troops.

The early route led, now through thick timber, now over plains carpeted with tall grasses, now across ravines or creeks, now through soft ground in which the laden wagons sank to their axles, and tried the horses severely to pull them out. To draw the heavy wagons up the steep ridges of the table-lands the tugging strength of a hundred men was sometimes needed.

Summer was now on the land, and for days together the heat was almost unbearable. There was trouble, too, with the cavalry horses, raw animals, unused to their new trappings and discipline, and which often broke loose and scampered away, only to be caught by dint of weary pursuit and profane ejaculations.

For six hundred miles the column traversed the great Santa Fé trail without sight of habitation and over a dreary expanse, no break to the monotony appearing until their glad eyes beheld the fertile and flowery prairies surrounding Fort Bent on the Arkansas. Here was a rich and well-watered level, with clumps of trees and refreshing streams, forming convenient halting-places for rest and bathing. As yet there had been no want of food, a large merchant train of food wagons having set out in advance of their own provision train, and for a few days life ceased to be a burden and became a pleasure.

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They needed this refreshment sadly, for the journey to Fort Bent had been one of toil and hardships, of burning suns, and the fatigue of endless dreary miles. The wagon-trains were often far in advance and food at times grew scanty, while the scarcity of fuel made it difficult to warm their sparse supplies. During part of the journey they were drenched by heavy rains. To these succeeded days of scorchingly hot weather, bringing thirst in its train and desert mirages which cheated their suffering souls. When at length the Arkansas River was reached, men and animals alike rushed madly into its waters to slake their torment of thirst.

At times their route led through great herds of grazing buffaloes which supplied the hungry men with sumptuous fare, but most of the time they were forced to trust to the steadily diminishing stores of the provision wagons. This was especially the case when they left the grassy and flowery prairie and entered upon an arid plain, on which for months of the year no drop of rain or dew fell, while the whitened bones of men and beasts told of former havoc of starvation and drouth. The heated surface was in places incrustated with alkaline earth worn into ash-like dust, or paved with pebbles blistering hot to the feet. At times these were diversified by variegated ridges of sandstone, blue, red, and yellow in hue.

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A brief period of rest was enjoyed at Fort Bent, but on the 2d of August the column was on the trail again, the sick and worn-out being left behind. As they proceeded the desert grew more arid still. Neither grass nor shrubs was to be found for the famishing animals; the water, what little there was, proved to be muddy and bitter; the wheels sank deep in the pulverized soil, and men and beasts alike were nearly suffocated by the clouds of dust that blew into their eyes, nostrils, and mouths. Glad were they when, after three days of this frightful passage, they halted on the welcome banks of the Purgatoire, a cool mountain-stream, and saw rising before them the snowy summits of the lofty Cimmaron and Spanish peaks and knew that the desert was passed.

The sight of the rugged mountains infused new energy into their weary souls, and it was with fresh spirit that they climbed the rough hills leading upward towards the Raton Pass, emerging at length into a grand mountain amphitheatre closed in with steep walls of basalt and granite. They seemed to be in a splendid mountain temple, in which they enjoyed their first Sunday's rest since they had left Fort Leavenworth.

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The food supply had now fallen so low that the rations of the men were reduced to one-third the usual quantity. But the new hope in their hearts helped them to endure this severe privation, and they made their way rapidly through the mountain gorges and over the plains beyond, covering from seventeen to twenty-five miles a day. Ammunition had diminished as well as food, and the men were forbidden to waste any on game, for news had been received that the Mexicans were gathering to dispute their path and all their powder and shot might be needed.

The vicinity of the Mexican settlements was reached on August 14, and their desert-weary eyes beheld with joy the first cornfields and gardens surrounding the farm-houses in the valleys, while groves of cedar and pine diversified the scene. With new animation the troops marched on, elated with the tidings which now reached them from the north, that Colonel Kearney had been raised to the rank of brigadier-general, and a second item of news to the effect that two thousand Mexicans held the cañon six miles beyond Las Vegas, prepared to dispute its passage.

This was what they had come for, and it was a welcome diversion to learn that the weariness of marching was likely to be diversified by a season of fighting. They had made the longest march ever achieved by an American army, nearly all of it through a barren and inhospitable country, and it was with genuine elation that they pressed forward to the cañon, hopeful of having a brush with the enemy. They met with a genuine disappointment when they found the pass empty of foes. The Mexicans had failed to await their coming.

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Kearney had already begun his prescribed work of annexing New Mexico to the United States, the Alcalde and the prominent citizens of Las Vegas having taken an oath of allegiance to the laws and government of the United States. As they marched on, a similar oath was administered at San Miguel and Pecos, and willingly taken. Here the soldiers fairly revelled in the fresh vegetables, milk, eggs, fruits, and chickens which the inhabitants were glad to exchange for the money of their new guests. Orders had been given that all food and forage obtained from the peaceable inhabitants should be paid for, and Kearney saw that this was done.

At Pecos they had their first experience of the antiquities of the land. Here was the traditional birthplace of the great Montezuma, the ancient temple still standing whose sacred fire had been kindled by that famous monarch, and kept burning for long years after his death, in the hope that he would come again to deliver his people from bondage. At length, as tradition held, the fire was extinguished by accident, and the temple and village were abandoned. The walls of the temple still stood, six feet thick, and covering with their rooms and passages a considerable space. The Pueblo Indians of the region had refused to fight for the Mexicans, for tradition told them that a people would come from the East to free them from Spanish rule, and the prophecy now seemed about to be fulfilled.

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The next hostile news that reached the small army was to the effect that seven thousand Mexicans awaited them in Gallisteo Cañon, fifteen miles from Santa Fé. This was far from agreeable tidings, since the Mexicans far outnumbered the Americans, while the pass was so narrow that a much smaller force might have easily defended it against a numerous foe. The pass had been fortified and the works there mounted with six pieces of cannon, placed to make havoc in the invaders' ranks.

Fortunately, once more the advancing troops found a strong pass undefended. The Mexican officers had quarrelled, and the privates, who felt no enmity towards the Americans, had left them to fight it out between themselves. Deserted by his soldiers, Governor Armijo escaped with a few dragoons, and the Americans marched unmolested through the pass. On the same day they reached Santa Fé, taking peaceful possession of the capital of New Mexico and the whole surrounding country in the name of the United States.

Not for an hour had the men halted that day, the last of their wearisome march of nine hundred miles, which had been completed in about fifty days. So exhausting had this final day's march proved that many of the animals sank down to die, and the men flung themselves on the bare hill-side, without food or drink, glad to snatch a few hours of sleep. As the flag of the United States was hoisted in the public square, a national salute of twenty-eight guns was fired from a near-by hill, and the cavalry rode with waving banners and loud cheers through the streets. They had cause for great gratulation, for they had achieved a remarkable feat and had won a great province without the loss of a single man in battle.

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By the orders of General Kearney a flag-staff one hundred feet high was raised in the plaza for the American flag, and the oath of allegiance was taken by the officials of the town. They were willing enough to take it, since their new masters left them in office, while the people, who had been told that they would be robbed and mercilessly treated, hailed the Americans as deliverers rather than as enemies. The same was the case with all the surrounding people, who, when they found that they would be paid for their provisions and be left secure in their homes, settled down in seeming high good will under the new rule.



OLDEST HOUSE IN THE UNITED STATES, SANTA FE.

Santa Fé at that time contained about six thousand inhabitants. After St. Augustine it was the oldest city within the limits of the United States. When the Spaniards founded it in 1582, it was built on the site of one of the old Indian pueblos, whose date went back to the earliest history of the country. The Spanish town—The Royal City of the Holy Faith, *La Villa Real del Santa Fé*, as they called it—was also full of the flavor of antiquity, with its low adobe houses, and its quaint old churches, built nearly three centuries before. These were of rude architecture and hung with battered old bells, but they were ornamented with curiously carved beams of cedar and oak. The residences were as quaint and old-fashioned as the churches, and the abundant relics of the more ancient Indian inhabitants gave the charm of a double antiquity to the place.

[pg 297] From Santa Fé as a centre General Kearney sent out expeditions to put down all reported risings through the province, one of the most important of these being to the country of the warlike Navajo Indians, who had just made a raid on New Mexico, driving off ten thousand cattle and taking many captives. The answer of one of the Navajo chiefs to the officers of the expedition is interesting.

"Americans, you have a strange cause of war against the Navajos," he said. "We have waged war against the New Mexicans for several years. You now turn upon us for attempting to do what you have done yourselves. We cannot see why you have cause of quarrel with us for fighting the New Mexicans in the West, while you do the same thing in the East. We have no more right to complain of you for interfering in our war than you have to quarrel with us for continuing a war we had begun long before you got here. If you will act justly, you will allow us to settle our own differences."

[pg 298] The Indians, however, in the end agreed to let the New Mexicans alone, as American citizens, and the matter was amicably settled. We may briefly conclude the story of Kearney's expedition, which was but half done when Santa Fé was reached. He was to continue his march to California, and set out for this purpose on the 25th of September, on a journey as long and difficult as that he had already made. He reached the Californian soil only to find that Colonel Fremont had nearly finished the work set for him, and a little more fighting added the great province of California to the American conquests. Thus had a small body of men occupied and conquered a vast section of northern Mexico and added some of its richest possessions to the United States.

[pg 299] **THE SECOND CONQUEST OF THE CAPITAL OF MEXICO.**

The ancient city of Mexico, the capital of the Aztecs and their Spanish successors, has been the

scene of two great military events, its siege and capture by Cortez the conqueror in 1521, and its capture by the American army under General Scott in 1847, three and a quarter centuries later. Of the remarkable career of Cortez we have given the most striking incident, the story of the thrilling *Noche triste* and the victory of Otumba. A series of interesting tales might have been told of the siege that followed, but we prefer to leave that period of mediæval cruelty and injustice and come down to the events of a more civilized age.

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One of the most striking scenes in the campaign of 1847 was the taking of the fortified hill of Chapultepec, but before describing this we may briefly outline the events of which it formed the dramatic culmination. Vera Cruz, "the city of the True Cross," founded by Cortez in 1520, was the scene of the American landing, and was captured by the army under General Scott in March, 1847. Then, marching inland as Cortez had done more than three centuries before, the American army, about twelve thousand strong, soon began to ascend the mountain-slope leading from the torrid sea-level plain to the high table-land of the old Aztec realm.

Sixty miles from Vera Cruz the American forces came to the mountain-pass of Cerro Gordo, where Santa Anna, the president of Mexico, awaited the invaders with an army of thirteen thousand men. The heights overhanging the road bristled with guns, and the lofty hill of Cerro Gordo was strongly fortified, rendering the place almost impregnable to an attack from the direction of Vera Cruz. Scott was too able a soldier to waste the lives of his men in such a perilous assault, and took the wiser plan of cutting a new road along the mountain-slopes and through ravines out of sight of the enemy, to the Jalapa road in the Mexican rear. An uphill charge from this point gave the Americans command of all the minor hills, leaving to the Mexicans only the height of Cerro Gordo, with its intrenchments and the strong fortress on its summit.

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On the 18th of April this hill, several hundred feet in rugged height, was assailed in front and rear, the Americans gallantly climbing the steep rocks in the face of a deadly fire, carrying one barricade after another, and at length sweeping over the ramparts of the summit fortress and driving the defenders from their stronghold down the mountain-side. Santa Anna took with him only eight thousand men in his hasty retreat, leaving three thousand as prisoners in the American hands, with forty-three pieces of bronze artillery and a large quantity of ammunition. Within a month afterwards Scott's army marched into the city of Puebla, on the table-land, sixty-eight miles from the capital. Here they rested for several months, awaiting reinforcements.

On August 7 the army resumed its march, now less than eleven thousand strong, the term of several regiments having expired and their places been partly filled by untried men, none of whom had ever fired a gun in war. On they went, up-hill still, passing the remains of the old city of Cholula with its ruined Aztec pyramid, and toiling through a mountain region till Rio Frio was reached, fifty miles from Puebla and more than ten thousand feet above the level of the sea.

A few miles farther and the beautiful valley of Mexico lay suddenly revealed before them like a vision of enchantment. It was a scene of verdant charm, the bright green of the fields and groves diversified with the white walls of villages and farm-houses, the silvery flow of streams, and the gleaming surface of winding lakes, while beyond and around a wall of wooded mountains ascended to snowy peaks. It was a scene of summer charm that had not been gazed upon by an invading army since the days when Cortez and his men looked down upon it with warm delight.

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The principal lakes visible were Lake Chalco, with the long, narrow lake of Xochimilco near it, and seven miles to the north Lake Tezcuco, near the western shore of which the city of Mexico was visible. Between Chalco and Tezcuco ran the national road, for much of its length a narrow causeway between borders of marsh-land. Near Lake Xochimilco was visible the Acapulco road. Strong works of defence commanded both these highways.



ON THE BORDER OF LAKE CHALCO.

Scott chose the Acapulco road for his route of approach, the national road being commanded by the lofty and strongly fortified hill of El Peñon, precipitous on one side, and surrounded by marshes and a deep ditch on the other. The Acapulco road was defended by strongly garrisoned fortresses at Contreras and Churubusco, but seemed more available than the other route. Still farther north and west of the capital was a third approach to it over the road to Toluco, defended by works at Molino del Rey and by the fortified hill of Chapultepec. It was evident that the army under Scott would go through some severe and sanguinary fighting before the city could be reached.

It is not our purpose to describe the various engagements by which this work was accomplished. It must suffice to say that the strong hill fort of Contreras was taken by a surprise, being approached by a road leading to its rear during the night and taken by storm at sunrise, seventeen minutes sufficing for the important victory. The garrison fled in dismay, after losing heavily.

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An advance was made the same day on the nearby Mexican works at San Antonio and Churubusco, and with the same result. The garrison at San Antonio, fearful of being cut off by the American movement, evacuated the works and retired upon Churubusco, hotly pursued. The Americans, inspired by success, carried all before them, taking the works at the bridge of Churubusco by an impetuous charge and soon putting the enemy to flight. Meanwhile, General Shields attacked the Mexican reserve, consisting of four thousand infantry and three thousand cavalry, whose line was broken by a bayonet charge.

The whole Mexican force was, by these well-devised movements, forced back in terrible confusion, and was quickly fleeing in panic. The fugitives were cut down by the pursuing Americans, who followed to the immediate defences of the capital, where the pursuit was checked by a heavy fire of grape-shot. Thus in one day the Americans, nine thousand strong, had captured three strong positions, held by three times their number, the Mexicans losing in killed, wounded, and prisoners over six thousand men, while the American loss in killed and wounded was less than a thousand.

Negotiations for peace followed, but they came to nothing, the armistice that had been declared terminating on the 7th of September. The problem that now lay before General Scott was a very different one from that which Cortez had faced in his siege of the city. In his day Mexico was built on an island in the centre of a large lake, which was crossed by a number of causeways, broken at intervals by canals whose bridges could be removed.

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During the centuries that succeeded this lake had disappeared, low, marshy lands occupying its site. The city, however, was still reached by causeways, eight in number, raised about six feet above the marsh level. In these ended the five main roads leading to the city. A large canal surrounded the capital, and within its circle were smaller ones, all now filled with water, as this was the rainy season. The problem of bridging these under fire was one of the difficulties that confronted the Americans.

General Scott decided to approach the city by the causeways of San Cosmé, Belen, and Tacubaya, which were defended by formidable works, the outermost of which was Molino del Rey, a fortified position at the foot of a slope beyond which a grove of cypresses led to the hill of Chapultepec. It consisted of a number of stone buildings, some of which had been used as a foundry, but which were now converted into fortresses. This place was carried by storm in the early morning of September 8, and the stronger position of Casa de Mata, a quarter of a mile from Chapultepec, was captured by a fierce assault the same day. Only Chapultepec now lay between the Americans and the Mexican capital.

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The stronghold of Chapultepec, of which the places just taken were in the nature of outworks, remained to be captured before the city could be reached from that quarter. Chapultepec is an isolated rocky hill, about one hundred and fifty feet in height, and was surmounted by a large stone building which had been used as the bishop's palace, but was now converted into a strong fortress. It was well prepared for defence in guns and garrison, and was the most difficult to win of the fortifications of the capital. The western side was the most accessible, but the face of this, above the grove of cypresses which covered its base, presented a steep, rocky, and difficult ascent.

To deceive the enemy, a feigned advance upon another section of the city was made on the 12th of September. The two divisions engaged in this returned that night to Tacubaya, near Chapultepec, though a force still threatened the southern causeways. Four batteries had been posted within easy range of the castle of Chapultepec during the night of the 11th, and all next day they kept up a steady fire upon it, driving its defenders back and partly wrecking the walls. On the morning of the 13th the batteries resumed their fire, while the forces chosen for the assault approached the hill from different directions through the fire of the enemy.

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Two assaulting columns of two hundred and fifty picked men each, from Worth's and Twigg's divisions, advanced with scaling ladders, while the batteries threw shot and shell over their heads to drive the defenders from the walls. Major-General Pillow led his division through the grove on the east side, but he quickly fell with a dangerous wound, and General Cadwalader succeeded him. Before him was a broken and rocky ascent, with a redoubt midway in its height. Up the steep rocks climbed the gallant stormers, broke into the redoubt with a wild cheer, and

put its defenders to flight. On up the steep they then clambered, passing without injury the mines which the Mexicans had planted, but which they could not fire without killing their own men. In a few minutes more the storming party reached the summit and climbed over the castle wall with shouts of victory, driving back its defenders. Soon the United States flag was seen floating over the ramparts, a roar of cheers greeting the inspiring spectacle.

On the southeast Quitman's column of assault was making like progress, while Smith's brigade captured two batteries at the foot of the hill on the right, and Shield's brigade crossed the meadows under a hot fire of musketry and artillery and swept up the hill to the support of the stormers.

Thus the castle of Chapultepec, the last and strongest citadel of the Mexicans, had fallen before an impetuous charge up a hill deemed inaccessible, in the face of a hot fire, and the city itself lay at the mercy of the invaders. The causeway which it defended formed a double roadway on each side of a great aqueduct, with stone arches and pillars. Shields charged impetuously along this causeway, towards the city, two miles distant, while Quitman pursued the fleeing enemy along the neighboring causeway of Belen.

[pg 307] An aide sent by Scott came riding up to Shields to bid him halt till Worth, who was following the San Cosmé causeway, could force its defences. The aide politely saluted the eagerly advancing general and began, "General Scott presents his compliments

"I have no time for compliments just now," roared out Shields, and spurred briskly onward to escape the unwelcome orders which he felt were coming. Soon he had led his men into the suburbs of the city, while Worth and Quitman charged inward over the neighboring causeways with equal impetuosity.

A strong force was quickly within the streets of the city, assailed by skirmishers firing from houses and gardens, who could be reached only by forcing a way in with pickaxes and bars. Two guns were brought in by Worth's column and planted in position to batter down the San Cosmé gate, the barrier to the great square in the city's centre, and which fronted the cathedral and palace. Quitman and Shields had to fight their way through as hot a fire, and as they charged inward found themselves before the citadel, mounting fifteen guns. At this point a severe loss was sustained, but the assailants held their own, mounting guns to attack the citadel the next morning.

These guns were not used. Before daylight a deputation of the city council waited on General Scott and announced that the army had evacuated the city, and the government officials had fled. It was not long afterwards before the Stars and Stripes were floating over the National Palace and in the great plaza.

[pg 308] Fighting continued for a day longer between the Americans and about four thousand soldiers and liberated convicts, who fought with desperate fury for their country and were not put down without considerable loss. On the morning of September 16 the army of the United States held undisputed possession of the famous old capital of Mexico. Fighting continued, however, elsewhere for some months later, and it was not till the 2d of February, 1848, that a treaty of peace was signed.

[pg 309] **WALKER THE FILIBUSTER, AND THE INVASION OF NICARAGUA.**

On the 15th of October, 1853, a small and daring band of reckless adventurers sailed from San Francisco, on an enterprise seemingly madder and wilder than that which Cortez had undertaken more than three centuries before. The purpose of this handful of men—filibusters they were called, as lawless in their way as the buccaneers of old—was the conquest of Northwest Mexico; possibly in the end of all Mexico and Central America. No one knows what wild vagaries filled the mind of William Walker, their leader, "the gray-eyed man of destiny," as his admirers called him.

Landing at La Paz, in the southwestern corner of the Gulf of California, with his few companions, he captured a number of hamlets and then grandiloquently proclaimed Lower California an independent state and himself its president. His next proclamation "annexed" to his territory the large Mexican state of Sonora, on the mainland opposite the California Gulf, and for a brief period he posed among the sparse inhabitants as a ruler. Some reinforcements reached him by water, but another party that started overland was dispersed by starvation, their food giving out.

[pg 310] Walker now set out with his buccaneering band on a long march of six hundred miles through a barren and unpeopled country towards his "possessions" in the interior. The Mexicans did not need any forces to defeat him. Fatigue and famine did the work for them, desertion decimated the band of invaders, and the hopeless march up the peninsula ended at San Diego, where he and his men surrendered to the United States authorities. Walker was tried at San Francisco in 1854 for violation of the neutrality laws, but was acquitted.

This pioneer attempt at invasion only whetted Walker's filibustering appetite. Looking about for "new worlds to conquer," he saw a promising field in Nicaragua, then torn by internal dissensions. Invited by certain American speculators or adventurers to lend his aid to the democratic party of insurrectionists, he did not hesitate, but at once collected a band of men of his own type and set sail for this new field of labor and ambition. On the 11th of June, 1855, he landed with his small force of sixty-two men at Realijo, on the Nicaraguan coast, and was joined there by about a hundred of the native rebels.

[pg 311] Making his way inland, his first encounter with the government forces took place at Rivas, where he met a force of four hundred and eighty men. His native allies fled at the first shots, but the Americans fought with such valor and energy that the enemy were defeated with a loss of one-third their number, his loss being only ten. In a second conflict at Virgin Bay he was equally successful, and on the 15th of October he captured the important city of Granada.

These few successes gave him such prestige and brought such aid from the revolutionists that the opposite party was quite ready for peace, and on the 25th he made a treaty with General Corral, its leader, which made him fairly master of the country. He declined the office of president, which was offered him, but accepted that of generalissimo of the republic, an office better suited to maintain his position. His rapid success brought him not only the support of the liberal faction, but attracted recruits from the United States, who made their way into the country from the east and the west alike until he had a force of twelve hundred Americans under his command.

General Corral, who had treated with him for peace, was soon to pay the penalty for his readiness to make terms with an invader. He was arrested for treason, on some charge brought by Walker, tried before a court-martial at which the new generalissimo presided, sentenced to death, and executed without delay.

The next event in this fantastic drama of filibusterism was a war with the neighboring republic of Costa Rica. Both sides mustered armies, and a hostile meeting took place at Guanacaste, on March 20, 1856, in which Walker was worsted. He kept the field, however, and met the foe again at Rivas, on April 11. This time he was victorious, and the two republics now made peace.

[pg 312] His military success seemed to have made the invader securely the lord and master of Nicaragua, and he now threw aside his earlier show of modesty and had himself elected president on June 25. He had so fully established himself that he was recognized as head of the republic by President Pierce, on behalf of the United States. But he immediately began to act the master and tyrant in a way that was likely to bring his government to a speedy end.

Money being scarce, he issued currency on a liberal scale, and by a decree he restored the system of slavery which had been abolished thirty-two years before. Not content with these radical measures within the republic itself, he was unwise enough to create for himself a powerful enemy in the United States by meddling with the privileges of the Vanderbilt Steamship Company, then engaged in transporting the stream of gold-hunters to California over a Nicaraguan route. Walker revoked their charter and confiscated their property, thus bringing against his new government a fire in the rear.

His aggressive policy, in fact, made him enemies on all sides, the Central American states bordering on Nicaragua being in sore dread of their ambitious neighbor, while the agents of the Vanderbilt Company worked industriously to stir up a revolt against this soaring eagle of filibusterism.

[pg 313] The result was a strong revolt against his rule, and he soon found himself confronted by a force of patriots in the field. For a short time there were busy times in Nicaragua, several battles being fought by the contending forces, the war ending with the burning of Granada by the president. Finding that the whole country was rising against him and that his case had grown desperate, Walker soon gave up the hopeless contest and surrendered, on May 1, 1857, to Commodore C. H. Davis of the United States sloop-of-war "St. Mary," who took him to Panama, where he made his way back to the United States.

Thus closed the conquering career of this minor Cortez of the nineteenth century. But while Walker the president was no more, Walker the filibuster was not squelched. The passion for adventure was as strong in his mind as ever, and his brief period of power had roused in him an unquenchable thirst for rule. In consequence he made effort after effort to get back to the scene of his exploits, and rise to power again, his persistent thirst for invasion giving the United States authorities no small trouble and ending only with his death.

In fact, he was barely at home before he was hatching new schemes and devising fresh exploits. To check a new expedition which he was organizing in New Orleans, the authorities of that city

had him arrested and put under bonds to keep the peace. Soon after that we find him escaping their jurisdiction in a vessel ostensibly bound for Mobile, yet making port first in Central America, where he landed on November 25, 1857.

[pg 314] This effort at invasion proved a mere flash in the pan. No support awaited him and his deluded followers, and in two weeks' time he found it judicious to surrender once more to the naval authorities of the United States; this time to Commodore Paulding, who took him to New York with his followers, one hundred and thirty-two in number.

His fiasco stirred up something of a breeze in the United States. President Buchanan had strongly condemned the invasion of friendly territory in his annual message, but he now sent a special message to Congress in which he equally condemned Commodore Paulding for landing an American force on foreign soil. He decided that under the circumstances, the government must decline to hold Walker as a prisoner, unless he was properly arrested under judicial authority. At the same time Buchanan strongly deprecated all filibustering expeditions.

The result of this was that Walker was again set free, and it was not long before he had a new following, there being many of the adventurous class who sympathized warmly with his enterprising efforts. This was especially the case in the South. Thither Walker proceeded, and, inspired by his old enthusiasm, he soon organized another company, which sought to leave the country in October, 1858. He was closely watched, however, and the whole company was arrested at the mouth of the Mississippi on the steamer on which passage had been taken.

[pg 315] President Buchanan had issued a proclamation forbidding all such expeditions, and Walker was now put on trial before the United States Court at New Orleans. But the case against him seemed to lack satisfactory evidence, and he was acquitted.

Desisting for a time from his efforts, Walker occupied himself in writing an account of his exploits, in a book entitled "The War in Nicaragua." But this was far too tame work for one of his stirring disposition, and in June, 1860, he was off again, this time making Honduras the scene of his invading energy. Landing at Truxillo on the 27th, he seized that town and held it for eight weeks, at the end of which time he was ordered to leave the place by the captain of a British man-of-war. The president of Honduras was rapidly approaching with a defensive force. Walker marched south, but his force was too small to cope with the president's army, and he had not gone far before he found himself a captive in the hands of the Honduran government. Central America had by this time more than enough of William Walker and his methods, and five days after his capture he was condemned to death and shot at Truxillo.

Thus ended the somewhat remarkable career of the chief of filibusters, the most persistent of modern invaders of foreign lands, whose reckless exploits were of the mediæval rather than of the modern type. A short, slender, not especially demonstrative man, Walker did not seem made for a hero of enthusiastic adventure. His most striking feature was his keen gray eyes, which brought him the title of "the gray-eyed man of destiny."

[pg 316] **MAXIMILIAN OF AUSTRIA AND HIS EMPIRE IN MEXICO.**

It is interesting, in view of the total conquest and submission of the Indians in Mexico, that the final blow for freedom in that country should have been made by an Indian of pure native blood. His name was Benito Juarez, and his struggle for liberty was against the French invaders and Maximilian, the puppet emperor, put by Louis Napoleon on the Mexican throne. In the words of Shakespeare, "Thereby hangs a tale."

For many years after the Spanish colonies had won their independence the nations of Europe looked upon them with a covetous eye. They would dearly have liked to snap up some of these weak countries, which Spain had been unable to hold, but the great republic of the United States stood as their protector, and none of them felt it quite safe to step over that threatening bar to ambition, the "Monroe Doctrine." "Hands off," said Uncle Sam, and they obeyed, though much against their will.

[pg 317] In 1861 began a war in the United States which gave the people of that country all they wanted to do. Here was the chance for Europe, and Napoleon III., the usurper of France, took advantage of it to send an army to Mexico and attempt the conquest of that country. It was the overweening ambition of Louis Napoleon which led him on. It was his scheme to found an empire in Mexico which, while having the name of being independent, would be under the control of France and

would shed glory on his reign.

At that time the President of Mexico, the Indian we have named, was Benito Juarez, a descendant of the Aztec race, and, as some said, with the blood of the Montezumas in his veins. Yet his family was of the lowest class of the Indians, and when he was twelve years old he did not know how to read or write. After that he obtained a chance for education, and in time became a lawyer, was made governor of his native state, and kept on climbing upward till he became secretary of state, president of the Supreme Court, and finally president of Mexico.

He was the man who had the invaders of his country to fight, and he fought them well and long. But the poor and undisciplined Mexicans were no match for the trained troops of France, and they were driven back step by step until the invaders were masters of nearly the whole country. Yet Juarez still had a capital and a government at San Luis Potosi, and all loyal Mexicans still looked on him as their president.

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When Napoleon III. found himself master of Mexico, he looked around for a man who would serve him as a tool to hold the country. Such a man he found in Ferdinand Joseph Maximilian, the brother of the emperor of Austria, a dreamer rather than a man of action, and a fervent believer in the "divine right of kings." This was the kind of man that the French usurper was in want of, and he offered him the position of emperor of Mexico. Maximilian was taken by surprise. The proposition was a startling one. But in the end ambition overcame judgment, and he accepted the lofty but perilous position on the condition that France should sustain him on the throne.



HOUSE OF MAXIMILIAN AT QUERETARO.

The struggle of the Mexicans for freedom was for the time at an end, and the French had almost everywhere prevailed, when in 1864 the new emperor and his young wife Carlotta arrived at Vera Cruz and made their way to the city of Mexico. This they entered with great show and ceremony and amid the cheers of many of the lookers on, though the mass of the people, who had no love for emperors, kept away or held their peace.

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The new empire began with imperial display. All the higher society of Mexico were at the feet of the new monarchs. With French money to pay their way and a French army to protect them, there was nothing for Maximilian and Carlotta to do but enjoy the romance and splendor of their new dignity. On the summit of the hill of Chapultepec, two hundred feet above the valley, stood the old palace which had been ruined by the American guns when Scott invaded Mexico. This was rebuilt by Maximilian on a grand scale, hanging gardens were constructed and walled in by galleries with marble columns, costly furniture was brought from Europe, and here the new emperor and empress held their court, with a brilliant succession of fêtes, dinners, dances, and receptions. All was brilliance and gayety, and as yet no shadow fell on their dream of proud and royal reign.

But the shadow was coming. Maximilian had reached Mexico in June, 1864. For a year longer the civil war in the great republic of the north continued; then it came to an end, and the government of the United States was free to take a hand in the arbitrary doings on the soil of her near neighbor to the south.

It was a sad blow to the ambitious schemes of Napoleon, it was like the rumble of an earthquake under the throne of Maximilian, when from Washington came a diplomatic demand which, translated into plain English, meant, you had better make haste to get your armies out of Mexico; if they stay there, you will have the United States to deal with. It hurt Louis Napoleon's pride. He shifted and prevaricated and delayed, but the hand of the great republic was on the throat of his new empire, and there was nothing for him to do but obey. He knew very well that if he resisted, the armies of the civil war would make very short work of his forces in Mexico.

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Maximilian was strongly advised to give up his dream of an empire and leave the country with the French. He changed his mind a half-dozen times, but finally decided to stay, fancying that he could hold his throne with the aid of the loyal Mexicans. Carlotta, full of ambition, went to Europe and appealed for help to Napoleon. She told him very plainly what she thought of his actions; but it was all of no avail, and she left the palace almost broken-hearted. Soon after Maximilian received the distressing news that his wife had lost her reason through grief, and was quite insane. At once he made up his mind to return to Europe, and set out for Vera Cruz. But before he got there he changed his mind again and concluded to remain.

At the end of January, 1867, the French army, which had held on until then, with one excuse after another, left the capital city, which it had occupied for years, and began its long march to the sea-shore at Vera Cruz. Much was left behind. Cannon were broken up as useless, horses sold for a song, and the evacuation was soon complete, the Belgian and Austrian troops which the new emperor had brought with him going with the French. Maximilian did not want them; he preferred to trust himself to the loyal arms of his Mexican subjects, hoping thus to avoid jealousy. As for the United States, it had no more to say; it was content to leave this shadow of an empire to its *loyal* Mexicans.

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It cannot be said that Maximilian had taken the right course to make himself beloved by the Mexicans. Full of his obsolete notion of the "divine right of kings," a year after he had reached Mexico he issued a decree saying that all who clung to the republic or resisted his authority should be shot. And this was not waste paper, like so many decrees, for a number of prisoners were shot under its cruel mandate, one of them being General Orteaga. It has been said that Maximilian went so far as to order that the whole laboring population of the country should be reduced to slavery.

While all this was going on President Juarez was not idle. During the whole French occupation he had kept in arms, and now began his advance from his place of refuge in the north. General Escobedo, chief of his armies, soon conquered the northern part of the country, and occupied the various states and cities as soon as they were left by the French.

But neither was Maximilian idle. Agents of the Church party had finally induced him to remain, and this party now came to his aid. General Miramon, an able leader, commanded his army, which was recruited to the strength of eight thousand men, most of them trained soldiers, though nearly half of them were raw recruits.

With this force Maximilian advanced to Querétaro and made it his head-quarters. Juarez had meanwhile advanced to Zacatecas and fixed his residence there with his government about him. But the president and cabinet came very near being taken captive at one fell swoop, for Miramon suddenly advanced and captured Zacatecas by surprise, Juarez and his government barely escaping.

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What would have been the result if the whole Mexican government had been taken prisoners it is not easy to say. Not unlikely, however, General Escobedo would have done what he now did, which was to advance on Querétaro and invest it with his army. Thus the empire of Maximilian was limited to this one town, where it was besieged by an army of Mexican patriots, while, with

the exception of a few cities, the whole country outside was free from imperial rule.

Soon the emperor and his army found themselves closely confined within the walls of Querétaro. Skirmishes took place almost daily, in which both sides fought with courage and resolution. Provisions grew scarce and foraging parties were sent out, but after each attack the lines of the besiegers became closer. The clergy had made liberal promises of forces and funds, and General Marquez was sent to the city of Mexico to obtain them. He managed to get through the lines of Escobedo, but he failed to return, and nothing was ever seen by Maximilian of the promised aid. Such forces and funds as Marquez obtained he used in attacking General Diaz, who was advancing on Pueblo. Diaz besieged and took Pueblo, and then turned on Marquez, whom he defeated so completely that he made his way back to Mexico almost alone under cover of the night. It was the glory gained by this act that later raised Diaz to the presidency, which he held so brilliantly for so many years.

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The hopes of Maximilian were dwindling to a shadow. For two months the siege of Querétaro continued, steadily growing closer. During this trying time Maximilian showed the best elements of his character. He was gentle and cheerful in demeanor, and brave in action, not hesitating to expose himself to the fire of the enemy. Plans were made for his escape, that he might put himself at the head of his troops elsewhere, but he refused, through a sense of honor, to desert his brave companions.

Daily provisions grew scarcer, and Maximilian himself had only the coarse, tough food which was served to the common soldiers. Day after day Marquez was looked for with the promised aid, but night after night brought only disappointment. At length, on the night of May 14, General Lopez, in charge of the most important point in the city, turned traitor and admitted two battalions of the enemy. From this point the assailants swarmed into the city, where terror and confusion everywhere prevailed. Lopez had not intended that the emperor should be captured, and gave him warning in time to escape. He attempted to do so, and reached a little hill outside the town, but here he was surrounded by foes and forced to deliver up his sword.

Juarez, the Indian president, was at length full master of Mexico, and held its late emperor in his hands. The fate of Maximilian depended upon his word. Plans, indeed, were made for his escape, but always at the last moment he failed to avail himself of them. His friends sought to win for him the clemency of Juarez, but they found him inflexible. The traitors, as he called them, should be tried by court-martial, he said and abide the decision of the court.

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Tried they were, though the trial was little more than a farce, with the verdict fixed in advance. This verdict was death. The condemned, in addition to Maximilian, were his chiefs in command, Miramon and Medjia. The late emperor rose early on the fatal morning and heard mass. He embraced his fellow victims, and as he reached the street said, "What a beautiful day! On such a one I have always wished to die."

He was greeted with respect by the people in the street, the women weeping. He responded with a brief address, closing with the words, "May my blood be the last spilt for the welfare of the country, and if more should be shed, may it flow for its good, and not by treason. Viva Independencia! Viva Mexico!"

In a few minutes more the fatal shots were fired, and the empire of Maximilian was at an end.

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MACEO AND THE STRUGGLE FOR CUBAN INDEPENDENCE.

On the 24th of February, 1895, the people of Havana, the capital of Cuba, were startled by a report that rebels were in the field, a band of twenty-four having appeared in arms at Ybarra, in the province of Matanzas. Other small bands were soon heard of elsewhere in the island. A trifle this seemed, in view of the fact that Cuba was guarded by twenty thousand Spanish troops and had on its military rolls the names of sixty thousand volunteers. But the island was seething with discontent, and trifles grow fast under such circumstances. Twenty years before a great rebellion had been afoot. It was settled by treaty in 1878, but Spain had ignored the promises of the treaty and steadily heaped up fuel for the new flame which had now burst out.

As the days and weeks went on the movement grew, many of the plantation hands joining the insurgents until there were several thousand men in arms. For a time these had it all their own way, raiding and plundering the plantations of the loyalists, and vanishing into the woods and mountains when the troops appeared.

The war to which this led was not one of the picturesque old affairs of battles and banners, marches and campaigns. It displayed none of "the pomp and circumstance of glorious war;" forest ambushes, sudden attacks, quick retreats, and brisk affrays that led to nothing forming the staple of the conflict. The patriots had no hope of triumphing over the armed and trained troops of Spain, but they hoped to wear them out and make the war so costly to Spain that she would in the end give up the island in despair.

The work of the Cuban patriots was like the famous deeds of Marion and his men in the swampy region of the Carolina coast. Two-thirds of Cuba were uncultivated and half its area was covered with thickets and forests. In the wet season the low-lands of the coast were turned into swamps of sticky black mud. Underbrush filled the forests, so thick and dense as to be almost impassable. The high bushes and thick grasses of the plains formed a jungle which could be traversed only with the aid of the machete, the heavy, sharp, cutlass-like blade which the Cuban uses both as tool and sword, now cutting his way through bush and jungle, now slicing off the head of an enemy in war.

Everywhere in the island there are woods, there are hills and mountains, there are growths of lofty grass, affording countless recesses and refuges for fugitives and lurking-places for ambushed foes. To retire to the "long grass" is a Cuban phrase meaning, to gain safety from pursuit, and a patriot force might lie unseen and unheard while an army marched by. In brief, Cuba is a paradise for the bush-fighter, and the soldiers of Spain were none too eager to venture into the rebel haunts, where the flame of death might suddenly burst forth from the most innocent-looking woodland retreat or grass-grown mead. The soldiers might search for days for a foe who could not be found, and as for starving out the rebels, that was no easy thing to do. There were the yam, the banana, the sweet potato, the wild fruits of the woodland, which the fertile soil bore abundantly, while the country-people were always ready to supply their brothers in the field.

Such was the state of affairs in Cuba in the rebellion of 1895. For a time the rebels gathered in small bands with none but local leaders. But the outbreak had been fomented by agents afar, fugitives from the former war, and early in April twenty-four of these exiles arrived from Costa Rica, landing secretly at a point near the eastern end of the island.

Chief among the new comers was Antonio Maceo, a mulatto, who had won a high reputation for his daring and skill in the past conflict, and who had unbounded influence over the negro element of the rebellion. Wherever Maceo was ready to lead, they were ready to follow to the death if he gave the word, and he soon proved himself the most daring and successful soldier in the war.

He did not make his way inland with safety. Spanish cavalry were patrolling the coast to prevent landings, and Maceo and his comrades had a brisk fight with a party of these soon after landing, he getting away with a bullet-hole through his hat. For ten days they were in imminent danger, now fighting, now hiding, now seeking the wild woodland fruits for food, and so pestered by the Spanish patrols that the party was forced to break up, only two or three remaining with Maceo. In the end these fell in with a party of rebels, from whom they received a warm and enthusiastic welcome.

Maceo was a rebel in grain. He was the only one of the leaders in the former war who had refused to sign the treaty of peace. He had kept up the fight for two months longer, and finally escaped from the country, now to return without the load of a broken promise on his conscience.

The new leader of the rebellion soon had a large following of insurgents at his back, and in several sharp brushes with the enemy proved that he could more than hold his own. Other patriots soon arrived from exile,—José Marti, the fomenter of the insurrection; Maximo Gomez, an able soldier; and several more whose presence gave fresh spirit to the rebels. The movement, which had as yet been a mere hasty outbreak, was now assuming the dimensions of a regular war, hundreds of patriots joining the ranks of these able leaders, until more than six thousand men were in the field.

Almost everywhere that they met their enemy they were largely outnumbered, and they fought mostly from ambush, striking their blows when least expected and vanishing so suddenly and by such hidden paths that pursuit was usually idle. Much of their strength lay in their horses. No Cossacks or cowboys could surpass them as riders, in which art they were far superior to the Spanish cavalry. Many stories are told of women who rode in their ranks and wielded the machete as boldly and skillfully as the men, and in this there is doubtless much truth. Their horses were no show animals, but a sore-backed, sorry lot, fed on rushes or colla, there being no other grain, left standing unsheltered, rain or shine, but as tough and tireless beasts as our own bronchos, and ever ready to second their riders in mad dashes on the foe.

The favorite mode of fighting practised by the insurgents was to surprise the enemy by a sharp skirmish fire, their sharp-shooters seeking to pick off the officers. Then, if there was a fair opportunity, they would dash from their covert in a wild cavalry charge, machete in hand, and yelling like so many demons, and seek to make havoc in the ranks of the foe. This was the kind of fighting in which Maceo excelled.

Through 1895 the war went on with endless skirmishes and only one affair that could be called a battle. In this Maceo was the insurgent leader, while Martinez Campos, governor-general of

Cuba, a man looked upon as the ablest general of Spain, led the Spanish troops. Maceo had caused great annoyance by attacks on train-loads of food for the fortified town of Bayamo, and Campos determined to drive him from the field. Several columns of Spanish troops were set in motion upon him from different quarters, one of these, fifteen hundred strong, led by Campos himself. On the 13th of July the two armies met, Maceo, with nearly three thousand men, being posted on a stock-farm several miles from Bayamo.

The fight began with a sharp attack on the Spaniards, intended to strike the division under Campos; but by an error it fell upon the advance guard, led by General Santocildes, which was saluted by a brisk fire from the wooded hill-sides. Santocildes fell dead, and a bullet tore the heel from the governor-general's boot.

Maceo, surmising from the confusion in the Spanish ranks that some important officer had fallen, now launched his horsemen upon them in a vigorous machete charge. Though Campos succeeded in repelling them, he felt himself in a critical situation, and hastily drew up his whole force into a hollow square, with the wagons and the dead horses and mules for breastworks. Around this strong formation the Cubans raged for several hours, only the skill of Campos saving his men from a disastrous rout. An assault was made on the rear guard early in the affray, Maceo hoping to capture the ammunition train. But its defenders held their ground vigorously, and fought their way to the main column, where they aided to form the square. Finally the Spaniards succeeded in reaching Bayamo, pursued by the Cubans and having lost heavily in the fight. They were saved from utter destruction by Maceo's lack of artillery, and Campos was very careful afterwards not to venture near this daring leader without a powerful force.

Maximo Gomez, one of the principal leaders in the earlier war, had now been appointed commander-in-chief of the Cuban forces, with Antonio Maceo as his lieutenant-general. He had made his way westward into the province of Santa Clara, and in November Maceo left the eastern province of Santiago de Cuba to join him. In his way lay the trocha, the famous device of the Spaniards to prevent the free movement of the Cuban forces. It may be of interest to describe this new idea in warfare, devised by the Spaniards to check the free movement of their rebel foes.

The word trocha means trench, but the Spanish trochas were military lines cut through the woods and across the island from side to side, and defended by barbed-wire fences, while the felled trees were piled along both sides of the roadway, making a difficult breastwork of jagged roots and branches. At intervals of a quarter-mile or more along this well-guarded avenue were forts, each with a garrison of about one hundred men, it needing about fifteen thousand to defend the whole line of the trocha from sea to sea.

Such was the elaborate device adopted by Campos, and by Weyler after him, to check the Cuban movements. We need only say here that, despite its cost and the number of men it tied up on guard duty, the trocha failed to restrain the alert islanders. Gomez had crossed it in his movement westward, and Maceo now followed with equal readiness. He made a feint of an attack in force on one part of the line, and when the Spaniards had concentrated to defend this point, he crossed at an unprotected spot, without firing a shot or losing a man.

Westward still went the Cubans, heedless of trochas and Spaniards. From Santa Clara they entered Matanzas province, and from this made their way into the province of Havana, bringing the war almost to the gates of the capital. Spain had now sent more than one hundred thousand troops across the ocean, though many of these were in the hospitals. As for the Cubans, the island had now risen almost from end to end, and their force was estimated at from thirty to fifty thousand men. It was no longer a rebel outbreak that Spain had to deal with, it was a national war.

By the end of the year the Cubans were firmly fixed in Havana province, many negro field-hands and Cuban youths having joined their ranks. They fought not only against the Spaniards, but against the bandits also, of whom there were many abroad plundering from both sides alike. These were hanged by the patriots whenever captured. Maceo was the active fighter of the force, Gomez being occupied in burning sugar-cane fields and destroying railroads, so as to deprive Spain of the sinews of war.

In January, 1896, a new movement westward was made, Maceo leading his men into the province of Pinar del Rio, which occupies the western end of the island. Here was the great tobacco district, one into which insurrection had never before made its way. Within a year rebellion had covered the island from end to end, the Spaniards being secure nowhere but within the cities, while the insurgents moved wherever they chose in the country. The sky around the capital was heavy with smoke by day and lurid with the flames of burning fields at night, showing that Gomez was busy with his work of destruction, burning the crops of every planter who sought to grind his cane.

Let us now follow the daring mulatto leader through the remainder of his career. General Weyler had now succeeded Campos, and began his official life with the boast that he would soon clear the provinces near Havana of rebels in arms. But he was hardly in the governor's chair when Maceo was back from the west and swooping down on the city of Jaruco, which he looted and burned.

Weyler sent troops into Pinar del Rio, where they found no one to oppose them, and he was soon able to inform the world by a proclamation that this province was pacified. But the ink was barely dry upon it when Maceo, having burnt the port of Batabano, on the southern coast, was back in the "pacified" province, where he made his head-quarters in the mountains and defied all the power of Spain.

[pg 334] Instead of seeking him here, Weyler now attempted to confine him by building a new trocha, cutting off that end of the island. This took two months to complete, during which Maceo continued his work almost unopposed, destroying the tobacco of loyalists, defeating every force sent against him, and leaving to Spain only four fortified cities in the southern part of the province.

Not until autumn opened did Weyler take the field, marching into Pinar del Rio at the head of thirty thousand men, confident now of putting an end to the work of his persistent foe, whom he felt sure he had hemmed in with his trocha. Between the two forces, Spanish and Cuban, the province was sadly harried, and became so incapable of supporting a large force that Maceo was obliged to dismiss the most of his men.

Leaving the slender remnant under the control of one of his lieutenants, he once more passed the trocha, this time rowing round its end in a boat and landing in Havana province. He had sent orders in advance for a concentration of the Cuban forces in this region, that he might give Weyler a new employment.

The daring partisan leader was near the end of his career, brought to his death by the work of a traitor, as was widely believed. While waiting for the gathering of the forces, he, with the few men with him, was fired on from a Spanish ambush, and fell, mortally wounded.

[pg 335] Thus died the most dashing soldier that the Cuban rebellion called into the field. Dr. Zertucha, of his staff, was charged with treachery in leading him into this ambush, though that is by no means proved. Maceo was one of nine brothers, all soldiers, and all of whom had now died in the great struggle for Cuban independence. His body was recovered from the enemy after a desperate fight; his valiant spirit was lost to the cause. Yet his work had not been without avail, and the country for which he had fought so bravely was left by him on the highroad to liberty.

[pg 336] **LIEUTENANT HOBSON AND THE SINKING OF THE
"MERRIMAC."**

About three o'clock of a dark morning, whose deep gloom shrouded alike the shores and waters of Cuba's tropic isle, a large craft left the side of the "New York," the flag-ship of Admiral Sampson's fleet off Santiago, and glided towards the throat of the narrow channel leading to its land-locked harbor. This mysterious craft was an old coal-carrier named the "Merrimac." On board were Richmond P. Hobson, Assistant Naval Constructor, and seven volunteer seamen. Their purpose was to sink the old hulk in the channel and thus to seal up the Spanish ships in Santiago harbor. The fact that there were ten chances to one that they would go to the bottom with their craft, or be riddled with Spanish bullets, did not trouble their daring souls. Their country called, and they obeyed.

[pg 337] Ranged along the sides of the ship, below decks, was a series of torpedoes, prepared to blow the vessel into a hopeless wreck when the proper moment came. A heavy weight in coal had been left on board, to carry her rapidly to the bottom, and there was strong hope that she could be dropped in the channel, "like a cork in the neck of a bottle," and "bottle" up Admiral Cervera and his cruisers. That it was an errand of imminent risk did not trouble the bold American tars. There were volunteers enough eager to undertake the perilous task to form a ship's crew, and to the six seamen chosen Coxswain Clausen added himself as a stowaway. The love of adventure was stronger than fear of death or captivity.

It was the morning of June 3, 1898. During the night before an attempt to go in had been made, but the hour was so late that the admiral called the vessel back. Now an earlier start was made, and there was no hinderance to the adventurous voyage. Heavy clouds hid the moon as the "Merrimac" glided in towards the dark line of coast. Not a light was shown, and great skill was needed to strike the narrow channel squarely in the gloom. From the "New York" eager eyes watched the collier until its outlines were lost beneath the shadow of the hills. Eyes continued to peer into the darkness and ears to listen intently, while a tense anxiety strained the nerves of the watching crew. Then came a booming roar from Morro Castle and the flash of a cannon lit up for

an instant the gloom. Other flashes and booming sounds followed, and for twenty minutes there seemed a battle going on in the darkness. The "Merrimac" was under fire. She was meeting her doom. What was the fate of Hobson and his men?

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Cadet J. W. Powell had followed the collier with a steam launch and four men, prepared to pick up any fugitives from the doomed ship. He went daringly under the batteries and hung about until daylight revealed his small craft, but not a man was seen in the ruffled waters, and he returned disappointed at 6.15 A.M., pestered by spiteful shots from the Spanish guns. He had followed the "Merrimac" until the low-lying smoke from the roaring guns hid her from view. Then came the explosion of the torpedoes. Hobson had done his work. Powell kept under the shelter of the cliffs until full day had dawned, and before leaving he saw a spar of the "Merrimac" rising out of the water of the channel. The sinking had been accomplished, but no one could say with what result to Hobson and his men.

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Let us now leave the distant spectators and go on board the "Merrimac," seeking the company of her devoted crew. It was Hobson's purpose to sink her in the narrowest part of the channel, dropping the anchor and handling the rudder so as to turn her across the stream. Her length was sufficient to close up completely the deeper channel. He would stop the engines, let fall the anchor, open the traps made for the sea-water to flow in, and explode the torpedoes. Ten of these lay on the port side of the ship, each containing eighty-two pounds of powder, and they were connected so that they could be fired in train. There were two men below, one to reverse the engines, the other to break open the sea-traps with a sledge hammer. Those on deck were to let fall the anchor and set the helm. Then Hobson would touch the electric button and fire the torpedoes, and all would leap overboard and swim to the dingy towing astern, in which they hoped to escape. Such were their plans; but chance, as it so often does, set them sadly astray.

On through the darkness they went, hitting the channel squarely, and steaming in under the frowning walls of the Morro through gloom and death-like silence. But the Spaniards were not asleep. A small picket-boat came gliding out under the collier's stern and fired several shots at the suspicious craft. One of these carried away the rudder and spoiled one important item of the plans. The dingy, which was trusted to for escape, disappeared, perhaps hit by one of these shots. The picket-boat, having done this serious mischief, then hurried ashore and gave the alarm, and quickly the shore batteries were firing on the dark hull. The ships in the harbor echoed the shots with their guns. The Spaniards were alert. They thought that an American battle-ship was trying to force its way in, perhaps with the whole fleet in its wake, and were ready to give it a hard fight.

Through the rain of balls the "Merrimac" drove on, unhurt by the bombardment, and even by a submarine mine which exploded near her stern. The darkness and her rapid motion rendered her hard to hit, and she reached the desired spot, in the narrowest spot of the channel, none the worse for the shower of iron hail.

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So far all had gone well. Now the critical moment had arrived. Hobson gave the signal fixed upon, and the men below reversed the engine and opened the sea connections. They then dashed for the deck. Those above dropped the anchor and set the helm. Only then did Hobson, to his bitter disappointment, discover that the rudder had been lost. The ship refused to answer her helm, and the plan of setting her lengthwise across the channel failed. The final task remained. Touching the electric button, the torpedoes went off with a sullen roar and the ship lurched heavily beneath their feet. The sharp roll threw some of the men over the rail. The others leaped into the sea. Down went the "Merrimac" with a surge at the bow, cheers from the forts and the ships greeting her as she sank. The gunners thought they had sent to the depths one of the hostile men-of-war.

At the last moment of leaving the "New York" an old catamaran had been thrown on the "Merrimac's" deck, as a possible aid to the crew in extremity. This float lay on the roof of the midship house, a rope fastening it to the taffrail, with enough slack to let it float loose after the ship had sunk. It was a fortunate thought for the crew, as it afforded them a temporary refuge in place of the lost dingy.

We may let Lieutenant Hobson speak for himself at this point in our narrative. He says, "I swam away from the ship as soon as I struck the water, but I could feel the eddies drawing me backward in spite of all I could do. This did not last very long, however, and as soon as I felt the tugging cease I turned and struck out for the float, which I could see dimly bobbing up and down over the sunken hull.

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"The 'Merrimac's' masts were plainly visible, and I could see the heads of my seven men as they followed my example and made for the float also. We had expected, of course, that the Spaniards would investigate the wreck, but we had no idea that they would be at it as quickly as they were. Before we could get to the float several row-boats and launches came around the bluff from inside the harbor. They had officers on board and armed marines as well, and they searched that passage, rowing backward and forward, until the next morning. It was only by good luck that we got to the float at all, for they were upon us so quickly that we had barely concealed ourselves when a boat with quite a large party on board was right beside us."

An event which they thought unlucky now proved to be the salvation of the fugitives, who very likely would have been shot on the spot by the marines if they had then been seen from the boats.

The rope which fastened the float to the ship was too short to let it swing free, and one of the pontoons that supported it was dragged partly under water, lifting the other above the surface. If the raft had lain flat on the water they would have had to climb on top and would have made an excellent mark for the marines. As it was they got under its lifted side, and by thrusting their hands through the slats that formed the deck they kept their heads above the water, and had a chance to breathe.

[pg 342] Luckily for them the Spaniards paid no attention to the old, half-sunken raft that floated above the wreck. They came near it frequently, and the hidden sailors could hear their words, but no one seemed to suspect it. The fugitives spoke only in whispers and at times were almost afraid to breathe, lest they should be heard, but their hiding-place remained unsuspected.

The water, warm at first, grew cold as the hours went on, and their fingers ached as they clung desperately to the slats. As the night passed their teeth began to chatter with the cold till it seemed to them as if the Spaniards must hear the sound, so distinctly to their ears came the noises on the water and on shore. The situation, in fact, became at last so trying that one of the men let go and began to swim ashore. Hobson called him back, and he obeyed, but the call was heard by the men in the boats and created some commotion. They rowed up towards the float and looked sharply about, but no one thought of investigating the float itself, and soon they went off into the shadows again, letting the hidden men once more breathe freely.

[pg 343] The question that most interested the Spaniards was to learn what ship it was they had sunk. Hobson heard them talking and guessing about it and understood many of their words. He soon perceived that the officers had taken in the situation and were astonished at the boldness and audacity of the attempt. The boats appeared to be from the fleet, a fact to the lieutenant's satisfaction, as he felt more like trusting to the tender mercies of a Spanish sailor than of a soldier. At this point we let him take up the narrative again.

"When daylight came a steam-launch full of officers and marines came out from behind the cliff that hid the fleet and harbor and advanced towards us. All the men on board were looking curiously in our direction. They did not see us. Knowing that some one of rank must be on board, I waited till the launch was quite close and hailed her.

"My voice produced the utmost consternation on board. Every one sprang up, the marines now crowded to the bow, and the launch engines were reversed. She not only stopped, but she backed off until nearly a quarter of a mile away, where she stayed. The marines stood ready to fire at the word of command when we clambered out from under the float. There were ten of the marines, and they would have fired in a minute had they not been restrained.

"I swam towards the launch, and then she started towards me. I called out in Spanish, 'Is there an officer on board?' An officer answered in the affirmative, and then I shouted in Spanish again, 'I have seven men to surrender.' I continued swimming, and was seized and pulled out of the water.

[pg 344] "As I looked up when they were dragging me into the launch, I saw that it was Admiral Cervera himself who had hold of me. He looked at me rather dubiously at first, because I had been down in the engine-room of the 'Merrimac,' where I got covered with oil, and that, with the soot and coal-dust, made my appearance most disreputable. I had put on my officer's belt before sinking the 'Merrimac,' as a means of identification, no matter what happened to me, and when I pointed to it in the launch the admiral understood and seemed satisfied. The first words he said to me when he understood who I was were, '*Bienvenida sea usted,*' which means 'You are welcome.' My treatment by the naval officers, and that of my men also, was courteous all the time I was a prisoner. They heard my story, as much of it as I could tell, but sought to learn nothing more.

"Sharks? No, I did not have time to think of them that night," was Hobson's reply to a question. "We saw a great many things, though, and went through a great many experiences. When we started out from the fleet I tied to my belt a flask of medicated water, supplied to me by my ship's surgeon. The frequency with which we all felt thirsty on the short run into the passage and the dryness of my mouth and lips made me believe that I was frightened. The men felt the same, and all the way the flask went from hand to hand. Once I felt my pulse to see if I was frightened, but to my surprise I found it normal. Later we forgot all about it, and when we got into the water there was no need for the flask."

[pg 345] The remainder of this stirring adventure must be told more briefly. The prisoners were taken ashore and locked up in a cell in Morro Castle. Meanwhile, there was much anxiety on the fleet as to their fate, but this was relieved by the generous conduct of the Spanish admiral, who sent his chief-of-staff out the next morning under a flag of truce to report their safety and to make an offer for their exchange. Cervera's message was highly complimentary. It ran:

"Admiral Cervera, the commander of the Spanish fleet, is most profoundly impressed with the brilliant courage shown by the men who sank the steamer 'Merrimac' in our harbor, and in admiration of their courage he has directed me to say to their countrymen that they are alive, and, with the exception of two of the men who were slightly hurt, they are uninjured. They are now prisoners of war and are being well cared for, and will be treated with every consideration."

Cervera kept his word, though the captives found themselves in different hands later, when they

were turned over to General Linares, commander of the troops in Santiago. They remained in captivity about five weeks, being exchanged on July 7, when a Spanish lieutenant and fourteen privates were offered in exchange for Hobson and his gallant seven. The story of their return to the American ranks is an exhilarating one. As the brave eight passed up the trail leading to the American lines through the avenue of palms that bordered the road, the soldiers stood in reverent silence, baring their heads as the band struck up "The Star-Spangled Banner." But as Hobson and his men swung onward cheers and a roar of welcome broke the silence, while a cowboy yell came from the Rough Riders. Breaking from all restraint, the men rushed in, eagerly grasping the hands of Hobson and his men. All the way to Siboney the cheers and excitement continued, and when Hobson set foot on the deck of the "New York" the crew grew wild with enthusiasm, while Admiral Sampson embraced him in the warmth of his greeting. As for his comrades, they were fairly swallowed up in the delirious delight of the men. Thus ended one of the most gallant deeds of that short war.

It must be said, however, that, skilfully as it had been managed, the effort to close the port proved a failure. Though the sunken ship closed part of the channel, there was room enough to pass beside her, this being strikingly proved on the morning of July 3, when the squadron which Hobson had sought to bottle up came steaming down the channel past the sunken "Merrimac" and put out to sea, where it started on a wild fight for freedom. The result of this venture does not need to be retold, and it must suffice to say that a few hours later all the Spanish ships were shell-riddled wrecks on the Cuban shore, and Cervera and all who survived of his men were prisoners in American hands. But the admiral was as much of a hero as a captive, for his captors could not soon forget his generous treatment of Hobson and his men.

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