

The health of Vera Cruz is perhaps worse than that of any other place on the habitable globe, and it is calculated that one-fifth of its inhabitants annually perish; for, from the month of June until October, the Mexican Vomito has a reign of terror, carrying to the tomb the old and young, and but seldom sparing the foreigner. The sickness of Vera Cruz is attributed to the increased intensity of the sun's heat, reflected from the high white sand-hills, that overlook the town, as also from the poisonous vapour which arises from the stagnant waters of the lakes and swamps which surround the city. The venomous insects that infest that hot region add likewise in no small degree, by never leaving the inhabitants to repose, and consequently causing feverish excitement and irritation, to promote disease; yet, it is asserted in history that, previous to the discovery of Mexico, and long after its settlement, the mortality as now known at Vera Cruz had not its existence; and thus, but in another instance, exhibiting the fact that, wherever the white man erects his habitation and plants civilization, pestilence and bilious maladies are his consequent accompaniments. However, the Northerners at Vera Cruz, like the frost at New Orleans, purify the atmosphere, and dissipate disease. The Northerners, as before stated, are periodical, in the months of October and November, and notwithstanding their destructive tendency upon the sea, yet they have a highly beneficial effect on land, breaking down the luxuriancy of vegetation on the coast, and driving before them all infection which the intense heat of summer may have taken from the decomposition of the vegetable kingdom; and thus it can be easily perceived that nature, in her economy, must have designed that as the frost never falls upon the plains of Mexico to kill malaria and destroy green vegetation, those north winds so much dreaded at sea, are sent in blessing to the landsmen.

Soon after my arrival at Vera Cruz, I gave to the servant who attended my room some clothing to be washed; but he soon returned with my bundle, bringing with him a German lady of the establishment as his interpreter, and informed me that the washerwoman refused to take the clothes, unless I would release her from all responsibility if a Norther should carry them away; whereupon assuming the hazard, on the following day, upon short notice, the winds came, and scattered my clothing like kites in the air, some to the country, and some to the sea, and some perhaps to needy Mexicans. The inhabitants, on the first appearance of the coming storm, are compelled immediately to tightly bar their doors and windows, stopping up the key-holes, and every other crevice, and

to keep them so, long after the Norther ceases to blow, to prevent light articles of their houses from flying away, as also their eyes from being put out by the sand thickly floating in the air.

A French gentleman, Mons. P. Thuillier, described to me the terrible havoc of a Norther, as seen by himself from his own window, in which nine vessels perished, one of which was driven against the walls of the city, whilst another was upset upon the beach, and on the following day, when she was scuttled, six live men, to the joy and surprise of the wreckers, were disembowelled from the schooner, which was half filled with water.

CHAPTER III.

Dined with Mr. Dimond. Descriptions of ruins. Isla de los Sacrificios. War-god Huitzilopotchili. The Mexicans believe that the period had arrived for the return of their deity. Cannibal priests. Arrival of Cortes. Montezuma's embassy. Vespus. Marina. Arrest of four Americans and two Dutchmen. Spanish treasure. Consent of Santa Anna to search for money. Arrest of Captain Place. Four days in Vera Cruz. Departure from Vera Cruz. The Ladrones. Description of them. Duplicity of the Mexicans. Santa Anna's wooden leg.

MR. DIMOND, with whom I dined on Sunday, the first day that I spent in Vera Cruz, was a native of the State of Connecticut; but his lady was a Virginian, which fact I was not apprised of until I had remarked to him, whilst at his house, the striking resemblance I discovered in a portrait likeness that hung in his drawing-room, of Dr. Parker, formerly of Virginia; when the consul informed me, that the old doctor was his father-in-law;—a most singular coincident. Mr. Dimond, for many years previous to his removal to Vera Cruz, had been the American Consul at Port au Prince, and in his conversation with me unhesitatingly said, that it was his conviction, resulting from his long residence in Hayti, that the slaves of the South, in the United States, were happier, and better provided for, than the blacks of that island, with their boasted freedom. Dinner being over, I accepted his polite invitation to accompany him in a walk to the *Passio*, which name, as I understood, means a drive or promenade.

The city of Vera Cruz, previous to the revolution, contained about twenty-five thousand inhabitants; but, distressing to tell, it does not now possess more than about four thousand. The general appearance of the town shows great decay and dilapidation; for the many scourges, by war and the decline of commerce, resulting from a system of government policy, which we shall hereafter explain, has reduced the once flourishing port of Mexico into a heap of ruins, and a by-word for civilized nations.

Upon my reaching the *passio*, which is beyond the westward gate of the city, my soul was pained at the ruin and waste that I there beheld. Much of the beauty of the *Passio* itself yet remained, for a large portion of its pavement, made of smooth and shiny bitumen—its many seats and circles—are yet perfect, affording the visitor much recreation, while strolling along its walks, as, at the same time, he feels refreshed by the cooling sea-breeze, which, at the hour of evening, always, most congenially, wafts in gentle zephyrs over it. But how sadly changed the scene since the old Dons of Spain are no longer there to improve and dignify the place. In vain the visitor looks for the flower-gardens, and the groves of orange, lemon and cocoa-nut trees, as, also, the pine-apple plant, filling the air with fragrance, as well as the fountains of water which skirted the *Passio* on both sides.

This delightful walk once pierced the centre of a broad street, bounded, on either hand, for half a mile, by rows of beautiful buildings—where are they now?—tumbled into ruins;—for there can be beheld the broken columns and fallen dome of a proud and lofty church, where once pealed the notes divine of the solemn organ. Indeed, ruin and decay may be seen in all,—in whatever direction the eyes may be turned, literally are beheld, “walls bowed, and crushed seats.” How impressively does the scene of this place remind the looker-on of the vanity and futility of all human things; and how melancholy the reflection to him who can stand on the spot and meditatively contemplate over the falling dwellings and palaces; where once the Spanish *belle*, with her tuned guitar, sweetly warbled her touching notes in the ears of her lover;—falling into heaps of mouldering rubbish,—

“The crush’d relics of their vanquished might,”

a retreat and shelter for sheep and swine; or else, made places for the butchering and the drying of meat. I am persuaded, from what I have learned of the history of Mexico, and all I have seen of Vera Cruz, that no greater calamity could have

befallen any people, than the acquisition, by the Mexicans, of their independence, and the expulsion of the old Spaniards from her dominions.

At the end of the *Passio* my attention was attracted by the sound of music, and, on approaching a falling building, which yet had standing a portion of its portal, supported by pillars, was seen a motley crowd; one of the men, a Mexican, was strumming on an indifferent Spanish guitar, while a negro was also thumbing a kind of harpsichord peculiar to the country. As the music was going on, a woman and a man were dancing, what I was informed to be a *fandango*. The woman wore the hat of her partner, and the dance consisted in a lazy shuffle to a slow tune. At a period of every five or ten minutes, the woman would commence a plaintive ditty, in which the whole crowd would join in chorus, and, what would otherwise have rendered the music agreeable, was, that the male voices attempted to imitate the female, and produced such a shrill, hideous sound, the like of which, for music, I had never before heard more ridiculous. Upon my inquiring the reason of the lady’s wearing the hat of the gentleman, I was informed that whenever an individual desired to dance with a lady, he would first present her with his hat, and, if she thus accepted his invitation, he could not again obtain his hat without redeeming it by paying one dollar; and in this way, I was told, the loafers of Vera Cruz devoted every Sabbath evening.

Upon continuing my walk further on the green turf of the level plain, a small building, with a belfry, and a high wall, encircling a large plat of ground, all of an antique and decayed appearance, struck my view. This was the cemetery, whose ready portals were continually receiving so large a portion of the human family. About midway between myself and the cemetery, I discovered the habit of a priest, and about him were some six or eight individuals, and I was informed, that at that place the priests were in the custom of meeting the corpse brought out of the city for interment, as to go too often into the cemetery was considered to expose too much the life of the holy father, and therefore there performed the last solemn duties of ablution, and of sprinkling dust and ashes over the remains of a departed fellow-being returning to his mother earth.

My mind, dissatisfied with all the objects presented to my view, my thoughts could but revert, with the *Isla de los Sacrificios* in broad aspect of the *Passio*, to the early history of the country. In 1618, Grijalva had the distinguished fame of being the first European who set foot on Mexican soil, and, at

the island above mentioned it was, where the Spaniard first beheld the trickling blood of human hecatombs on the altars of the Mexican war-god Huitzilopotchili, and from the ensanguined temples erected for his worship, perpetually ascended the smoke of human sacrifices in every town of the empire. How vast, then, the destruction of human life! In the mystic legends of the Mexicans, as to one of their tutelary deities, the god of the air, Quetzalcoatl, prepared the way by which, alone, a handful of Spaniards were enabled to overthrow a vast and powerful empire. This air god, doomed to exile by a superior divinity, was tall in stature, with a white skin, long dark hair, and a flowing beard. Seated in his wizzard skiff, made of serpents' skins, he embarked upon the Mexican gulf, to glide over the great waters of the fabled land of Hapallaw. But, previous to his departure, he promised his friends that himself and his descendants would again visit a country which he so much loved. And divine will did so provide, in the abundance of time, that the fair regions of Mexico should no longer be doomed to the loathsome and degrading practices of cannibalism, to satiate the bloody and depraved appetite of a frantic and bigoted priesthood. And, as an elegant author has remarked, it is "strange that in every country the most fiendish passions of the human heart have been those kindled in the name of religion."

It happened that, in the reign of Montezuma, the Mexicans were generally impressed with the opinion that the time had arrived for their god Quetzalcoatl to return—that deity so unlike the aspect of the Indian—for, with hair not so black, with fair skin and flowing beard, was a god incarnate, of person superior in dignity of mien to themselves; and, when compared to their other deities, possessed a beauty and a pureness entirely differing from the hideous appearance of other divinities, to appease the wrath of whom, it eternally required the smoking hearts of thousands of their Indian race to send up their barbarous and superstitious oblations to heaven, as the dear prize of their homage and devotion to them. Not so with Quetzalcoatl, for he had been their benefactor when residing amongst them, and, in the plenitude of his goodness, taught them the use and the art of manufacturing metals, a shining helmet of which he wore upon his head. He also instructed them how to cultivate their fields in maize, a single ear of which was a load for one man. In fine, this god had been their benefactor in every thing that was useful, or which contributed to their comfort and happiness; therefore it was with mingled hopes and fears that the Mexicans looked with con-

fidence for the appearing of him who was to guide them in the ways of knowledge, and to more exalted spheres of felicity.

The convictions of the Mexicans, in the time of Montezuma, that the period had arrived for the return of their deity, and, fortunately for the Spaniards, that opinion had been strengthened, just previously to their landing on the shores of Mexico, by the great lake of Tezcuco of the valley of Anahuac, without wind or earthquake, being suddenly tossed in boisterous waves, and overflowing its banks, swept from before its tide many of the houses of the city of Mexico; then a turret of the great temple took fire, without the cause of the lightning flash, or the hand of the incendiary, and defied alike the power of water to extinguish its flames, or the arm of man to arrest its progress; and then, the before unseen, shining orbs in the heavens, and a vivid sheet, or flood of fire, that spread along the broad expanse of the horizon to the east, rising to a pyramid, and tapering to a point as it ascended to its zenith, and at the same time voices of invisible spirits, or the whisperings of their gods, was heard in mournful and mysterious wailings in the air, prognosticating some calamity to their country; or else, the evidences of the gatherings of the wrath of the perturbed spirits of their gods, to break in future time upon the devoted heads of poor Indians.

As Montezuma, and his subjects, upon the arrival of the Spaniards, had a deep and mystic cloud cast over their spirits, by the troubling of the waters of the lake, and the terrific appearances of the heavens, they could but speedily anticipate the downfall of their empire. Indeed, to the royal Indian monarch, they were the handwriting upon the wall that made Belshazzar's knees smite together; and, to all human ken, were but angry and sublime enunciations of an all-wise overruling providence to an ignorant and bigoted people, that the white man, with thunder and lightning in his hand, was soon to demolish, and hurl from the battlements of their towering temples, the ensanguined deities and insatiate cannibal priests, erect the standard of the cross, from which can be seen the blood of the Lamb which taketh away the sins of the world;—and the terrible fate that overtook the priesthood of Montezuma should be a monument of warning to those of the present day, of the true God's displeasure with wickedness and abominations.

It was, therefore, under the superstitious presentiments of Montezuma, in the latter years of his reign, that Hernando Cortes, on the morning of the 21st April, 1519, landed on the

spot where now is the city of Vera Cruz; and, as I cast my eyes over the level plain, and beheld the white sand-hills, formed by the drifting of the sands during the blowing of the northern tornadoes, I could but picture, in my imagination, that I beheld the chivalrous few, under the banner of Castile, and commanded by the intrepid Cortes, encamped upon one of the eminences overlooking the plain below, and the surrounding country; whilst, at the same time, the natives, with presents of gold and flowers in their hands, came flocking in from all parts to behold the wonderful strangers. As they are pondering in their minds, whether or not the beings they beheld were gods, and of the family of Quetzalcoatl, or but mere men like themselves—behold! an embassy from the royal monarch of the land arrives, headed by a noble, Tuchtile; and, as he touches the earth with his hand, and then raises it to his head—see! he lays at the feet of Cortes, a golden sun, and silver moon, of ponderous weights, besides an hundred loads of rich and precious things of the country. Hear!—the bell has tolled the hour of vespers, and the Spaniards have all fallen to their knees; and, as father Olmedo, with solemn reverence, offers up his supplications to the most high God, the awe-struck natives are amazed at the worship of, to them, the unknown God of the Christians.

The religious services being ended,—see! in what bold relief the lovely Indian interpreter, Marina, whom chance had thrown in the possession of the conqueror, and of whom it is said, that Cortes “first made her his interpreter, then his secretary, and afterwards, won by her charms, his mistress, by whom he had a son, Don Martin Cortes; whom, although distinguished by his parentage, yet the Inquisition put him to the rack in the very city won by the sword of his father.” Yes, hear her, in the soft, sweet cadence of her voice, so peculiar to the females of her people, informing the great noble, that Cortes “was the subject of a potent monarch beyond the seas, who ruled over an immense empire, and had kings and princes for their vassals; that, acquainted with the greatness of the Mexican empire, his master had desired to enter into a communication with him, and had sent him as his envoy to wait on Montezuma with a present, in token of his good-will.”—And hear the noble express his “surprise to learn there was another monarch as powerful as Montezuma,” and inquire, “How is it that you have been here only two days, and demand to see the emperor?”—Long did my thoughts thus revel upon the early history of the country, (which, at the present day, although authentic in all its parts, yet, as seen through the vista of time, seems to be but the fabled account of some

ingenious romance,) until, at length, admonished by the lateness of the hour, I returned to the city and my lodgings.

Monday morning, the 20th instant, was hailed by me with much satisfaction, as my trunk had to remain locked up in the custom-house all day Sunday; the officers of Vera Cruz refusing to do business on that day, which disposition to keep the Sabbath, in this respect, loudly reflects to their credit.

After breakfast, Mr. Dimond requested the key of my trunk, saying that he would make application for it in person, and I did not hesitate to comply with his kind offer, by accepting the proffered service; for no one can feel comfortable without their wardrobe: and, as my journal, too, was in my trunk, I felt out of employment without it. Mr. Dimond was not long absent before he returned, and informed me, that he had passed my baggage through the hands of the officers of the custom-house, and a laughable time he had of it, he said, in a scramble for my chewing tobacco. I was aware, previous to my going to that port, that the article of tobacco was contraband, but who ever heard of an old Virginian starting on a journey without especially having first provided himself with a few manufactured lumps of the weed, to stimulate and cheer his imagination, in his absence from friends, and to give his mouth employment, whilst sitting in strange places, for the want of acquaintances with whom to converse. I had intentionally deposited my tobacco on the top of all the other articles in my trunk, to prove thereby, that I had no disposition to smuggle it; and, therefore, no sooner was my trunk opened than the best quality of that article that had ever come, perhaps, under the inspection of the officers of that port, lay staring them in the face; and no sooner was it seen than the voracious Mexicans laid violent hands upon it, and deposited it on a shelf in the store-room.

To this, Mr. Dimond made no objections; and the officers not finding any other goods, or more tobacco to seize upon; as they were about to close my trunk, my friend informed them, that the owner of that baggage ate the tobacco which they had taken, and that it was necessary for his comfort that he should have it, which piece of information so surprised them, that if I ate tobacco, they said I should have it.

However, my friend, Mr. Duplessis, was not so fortunate, for he had to pay eighteen dollars duty on his snuff, for private use. And thus, it seems, that while the Mexican was circling the smoke of his *cigarretto* through his nose, thinking it the only good way to use tobacco, I was amusing myself by chewing my quid, and, at the same time, my New Orleans friend, of French descent, was tickling his olfactory nerves by

copious pinches of snuff, to the delightful sneezing and convulsion of his whole system.

On my arrival at Vera Cruz, there was much excitement amongst the good citizens of that place, in consequence of the recent arrest of four Americans and two Dutchmen. These were men who had been deluded into an enterprise, which resulted in some very remarkable facts: and I am indebted to the American consul, who was interposing his official authority in their behalf, for a history of their unjustifiable confinement.

During the first revolution in Mexico, the old Spaniards were ordered to leave the country, by the revolutionists. A few wealthy persons, who were residents of Vera Cruz, determined that, previous to departing upon their exile, they would bury their gold and valuable plate in some select and secret place, believing, as they did, that the insubordination of the natives would soon be quelled by the royal forces; and, as they could not, with safety, convey it out of Mexico; to the unknown place of their destiny, driven, as they were, to seek refuge as best they could, from the homes of their adoption; this party of Spaniards, putting a mutual trust in each other, and with the common hope of again being permitted to reside peaceably at Vera Cruz, buried their treasures on a tract of land, now belonging to Santa Anna, distant from the city about nine miles. A map having been accurately drawn, and a written geography prepared, of the precise location where the secret deposit had been made, the party made safe their retreat from the scenes of revolution and persecution.

Time elapsed, and that, too, without a mitigation of the decree which expelled the refugees from Mexico, and, ultimately all the leagued party had deceased in Europe, or the United States, but one, and he, having made his retreat to New Orleans, the map and all the information appertaining to the hidden treasure, on his demise in that city, fell into the hands of an individual who had been intimate with the deceased Spaniard; and that person had employed the romantic adventurers to visit Mexico, and to dig for the hidden wealth, with a promise of a large portion of the products of the discovery, if made. The credulous Americans, upon landing at Vera Cruz, there found Santa Anna in a fret with his countrymen, because they had not cheered him as formerly on his arrival within their walls. The money-hunters unhesitatingly acquainted the dictator with their business, and requested his permission to search for the hidden treasures, which they informed him were upon his land. Santa Anna, after expressing his want of faith in the narrative of the men, with much kind

frankness gave his consent that they should, unmolested, search his premises for their golden expectations, whenever and as long as they pleased.

The foreigners, delighted with their kind reception, and the much-desired privilege granted to them, with thankful hearts, promised the dictator a portion of the profits if successful; and immediately repaired to Mango de Clavo, Santa Anna's *hacienda campus*, and commenced digging upon the spots of ground designated by the map and the written directions. But, to the great dismay of the party, before they had been allowed time to make any satisfactory progress, a band of soldiers came upon them, and, by the warrant of the dictator, arrested all of them, on the charge of their having been sent by the Texian government to *assassinate him*; and that their object was, not to hunt for treasure, but for his blood, which was more precious than mountains of gold. In support of this ridiculous allegation, one of the minions of Santa Anna, who had never seen Texas, and held no correspondence with the executive of that government, as to its secret or avowed intentions, made oath to the charge. Thus there was no remedy for the unfortunate adventurers but to be committed to gaol, where they could indulge their fancies in golden visions.

As for the Mexicans, who ever, in the history of their country, have been accustomed to the secret hand of their government-officers, in the degrading and vile acts of assassination and low stratagem, they were easy to believe that the government of Texas could be guilty of so disgraceful a deed as to commit an act of violence upon the person of the dictator. But, to the contrary, it was the belief of all foreigners in the country, that the charge was only a device of Santa Anna (in which some of his countrymen thought him very smart) to obtain the chart and instructions from these men, to secure to himself, as it is said he did, eight thousand doubloons, which had been buried by the old Spaniards.

Furthermore, to cap the climax of Santa Anna's perfidy, we give the following account:—Captain Place, a commander of an American merchant ship, who had arrived at Vera Cruz in the ship *Scotia*, since my own landing, was arrested on the same charge, without the least shadow of proof that he had ever had any intercourse or connection with the Americans who already were committed to prison; but, to the contrary, had never seen them, was also incarcerated in a loathsome and vile prison at Vera Cruz. The object of Captain Place's visit to that city was to collect from the Mexican government the sum of ten thousand dollars, which was due to him, for

supplies furnished the Mexican army during the war with Yucatan, in its late and glorious struggle for independence. As it regards the case of the American sea-captain, as I was informed by a highly respectable gentleman of his profession, it was obvious to all, that he had given no provocation whatever for an impeachment to be brought against him, to the effect of his being an accomplice with the Texians, as the dictator was pleased to denominate the American citizens, whom he had charged with a design to assassinate him. And it was thought to be the intention of Santa Anna, thus to pay the debt of Mexico, by forcing Captain Place to purchase his liberty at the dear rate of ten thousand dollars, he not having been able, up to the time of my leaving Mexico, to obtain a trial.

The only comment, which every lover of good faith, among Christian people of every country, can bestow upon such shameful and barbarous conduct, (which the honourable portion of the world, but for the publicity of the facts, will be hard of believing, that one occupying so high a place as Santa Anna could be guilty of,) is, that if the United States cannot, in future, protect its citizens abroad, its national honour will be for ever tarnished, and its boasted strength prove to be but pompous imbecility.

My stay in Vera Cruz was four days, and on the 23d inst. my Louisiana friend and self united a small allowance of clothing in the same trunk, a small one purchased for the occasion, and designed for immediate uses on the road, and at the city of Mexico, until our baggage should arrive there. We were reduced to the necessity of such a resort, or else hazard the loss of all our trunks by the robbers on the way. We, therefore, with drafts on houses in Mexico in our pockets, called by the Mexicans *libreances*, and but fifteen dollars in hand for expenses, having previously forwarded our trunks by the conductor, and which were to arrive at the city of Mexico in eighteen days from the time of their departure from Vera Cruz, took our leave of the city.

The price of the transportation agreed on, was ten dollars for each trunk. I found that to travel in Mexico, it is necessary to part with your baggage, and but occasionally to meet with it, as you would some dear friend, who would be so *obliging* as to make you an occasional loan, to supply your immediate necessities.

Our names having been entered at the dear rate of fifty dollars per seat in the diligencia, my departure was made, in company with four Americans, two Mexicans, one Belgian, one

Irishman and an English lady and her two children. At the time appointed for the diligencia to leave on its journey was eleven o'clock at night, it was a source of much regret to us all, as we would have the more to hazard our lives and property by departing at so late an hour, as the vehicle had been robbed on the three trips previous, almost at the gates of Vera Cruz, on one of which occasions a passenger lost his hand.

Although it was of service to me, as I did not understand the Spanish language, yet I could not but feel diverted when a friend, who had interested himself in my behalf, informed me of the words of command I would receive, if attacked by the robbers or *Ladrones*, as they are called in that language; which were "*boca baje*," which phrase, being translated into plain English, means "Stick your mouth in the dust;" a pe-remptory order, indeed, for unoffending travellers to receive, who were about to be stripped of their property; and, if resistance should be offered, their lives also. When the brigands hail the diligencia, the driver instantly comes to a halt, as he well knows, that, if he should crack his whip, and try to make safe his retreat from their murderous designs, (and sad experience has convinced him by the downfall of others,) his life, on an after occasion must pay the forfeit; and, therefore, when a halt is called, the poor passengers are invited, by the *ladrones*, to descend the steps and extend themselves, at full length, with their mouths to the earth; from which position if they should have the temerity to stir, they must receive either the flat side, or the sharp edge of a broad-sword. But, as we had been promised a double escort of soldiers, by the commandant of the garrison, to protect us from the much dreaded *ladrones*, we had but little anticipation of being interrupted.

How disagreeable it is to the traveller, wearied and fatigued as he may be, to be deprived of even the pleasure of looking out upon the prospect of the country, without the dreaded idea of beholding land-pirates in ambush, or in the full gallop of pursuit; but how much more disgraceful it is for a government to tolerate, by their neglect to suppress the evil, so dishonourable, unchristian, and criminal as it is, by permitting such things to be so universally practised, not only upon the public thoroughfares, but throughout the whole vast extent of the Mexican dominions. It is a sin peculiar to themselves, which should cover them with shame and the contempt of the world.

It is a crime which cries aloud to heaven to scourge a nation for their acts of commission and omission; and, as additional evidence of the testimony given by all travellers in

Mexico, and well deserving the attention of the incredulous, who find it difficult to believe that such enormities should not only be most open, but of outrageously frequent occurrence, they have only to be reminded of the notorious robberies committed upon two of the American ministers in a brief space of each other, viz. Mr. Shannon, accredited to the government of Mexico; and Mr. Cushing, returning from China. True, Santa Anna expressed his sorrow for the unfortunate Americans, but his sympathy was as much felt at heart, as are the tears of the crocodile. It would have been more congenial to his avaricious feelings to have felt in his pocket the result of the barbarous transactions, than to have wasted one moment's grief for the unfortunate ministers.

Understanding, as I now do, the duplicity of the Mexicans, and their policy, I should not be surprised if some in power should have known more of Mr. Shannon's robbery than might become them; for all must remember the pendency of the Texian question at that time. But as Santa Anna and his officers are the acknowledged heads of a band of pirates, it cannot be astonishing that he should tolerate such deeds; unless the ladrones should again steal his wooden leg, and throw him in a passion, *as it once happened*, when he caused the robbers to disgorge.

CHAPTER IV.

At 11 o'clock the diligencia is waiting. Two Mexicans on the back seat. Refusal to give it up for a lady. Departure from Vera Cruz. Escort. Sand flies. Drifted sand. Large beetle, Cocuyos. Vera Cruz road, the same that Cortes travelled. Tierra caliente. Varieties of flowers and shrubbery. Sultry heat. Halt of the diligencia at the Rancho. The escort takes leave. The road paved like a street upward of three hundred miles. President, Emperor and Dictator. Numerous bridges. La Puente del Ray. Breakfast. Romantic and sublime scenery. Santa Anna's new building. First day's ride. Wild scenery. Tierra templada. Stately forest. Varieties of musquite tree. Orizava is not a part of the Perote mountains. Grand view of the Orizava. The country volcanic. Lara. Jalapa. Wealth of the Dictator. The medicine Jalapa. The Plaza. The ladies of Jalapa. Departure from Jalapa. Humid vapours. Houses of seeds, sticks and earth. The aborigines. Tomb of an old Spaniard. Picturesque scenery. The plain of Perote. Andes and Cordilleras. Pastoral country. Pueblos built of sun-burnt brick. Roman Catholic house of worship. The haciendas. Ploughs in Mexico. Two perpetually snow-capped peaks. Arrival at Pueblo. Priests imposing on the people. Cathedral of Pueblo. The mountains covered with large timber. Arrieros. Mules loaded with silver. Valley of Mexico. The promised land. Geography of the valley of Mexico. A grand scene. Sterility of soil. Lake region. Hot springs. Volcanic eruptions. The causeway. Environs of Mexico. Lofty steeples. Arrived at the city of Mexico on the 26th Nov. Custom house. Gran Sociedad and Holy Ghost street.

At eleven o'clock on the night of the 23rd inst, the diligencia was waiting for its passengers, and on their arrival it was discovered that the two Mexicans had already secured the back seat. The gentleman who had the English Lady in charge, politely requested one of the Mexicans to give up his place, so that he, her protector, could be seated by her, and assist in holding her children. But to my surprise, contrary to all usages of stage-coach travelling in the United States, and to every thing else that I have observed in the distinguished politeness of the Mexican people, they positively refused; and the lady, who could only ride on a back seat, was obliged to be positioned between the two interesting Mexicans; they refusing also to give up the sides to a lady with an infant in her arms. I have been informed, by gentlemen who have travelled