

man, in the same hoarse voice, said, that it was the same if buried in the road, the mountain, or the river, the priest must have his fee. There was a great outcry; but the widow, in a weeping tone, declared that the money must be paid, and then renewed her exclamations: "My only help, my consolation, my head, my heart; you who was so strong, who could lift a ceroon of indigo:" "You said you would go and buy cattle;" "I said, 'Yes; bring me fine linen and jewellery.'" The words, and the piercing tone of distress, reminded me of a similar scene I had once beheld on the banks of the Nile. By invitation of one of the friends I entered the house. The corpse lay on the ground, in a white cotton dress extending from the neck to the feet. It was that of a young man, not more than twenty-two, with the mustache just budding on his upper lip, tall, and but a month before so strong that he could "lift a ceroon of indigo." He had left home to buy cattle, returned with a fever, and in a week was dead. A bandage was tied under his chin to hold up the jaw; his thin wrists were secured across his breast; and his taper fingers held a small crucifix made of corn-husks stitched together. On each side of his head was a lighted candle, and ants, which burden the ground, were swarming over his face. The widow did not notice me, but the mother and two young sisters asked me if I had no remedios; if I could not cure him; if I could have cured him if I had seen him before.

I left the bereaved family and withdrew. The man who had asked me to enter met me at the door, and gave me a seat among the friends. He inquired about my country, where it was, and whether the customs were like theirs; and very soon, but for the lamentations of the widow, many would have forgotten that a few yards from them lay a dead friend.

I remained with them an hour, and then returned to my hut. The piazza was full of hogs; the interior was a perfect piggery, full of fleas and children; and the woman, with a cigar in her mouth, and the harshest voice I ever heard, still brought in child after child, and piled them up on the floor. My men were already asleep outside; and borrowing an undressed ox-hide, I spread it on the floor at the end of the house; upon this I laid my pellen, and upon that I laid myself. The night before I had slept under a moscheto netting! Oh, padre of San Jacinto, that a man of my "rank and character" should come to this! The woman was sleepless; a dozen times she came out to smoke a cigar, or to drive away the hogs; and her harsh voice, and the screams from the house of mourning, made me rejoice when the cocks crew for morning.

CHAPTER IX.

CHIMALAPA—THE CABILDO—A SCENE OF REVELRY—GUASTATOYA—A HUNT FOR ROBBERS—APPROACH TO GUATIMALA—BEAUTIFUL SCENERY—VOLCANOES OF AGUA AND FUEGO—FIRST VIEW OF THE CITY—ENTRY INTO THE CITY—FIRST IMPRESSIONS—THE DIPLOMATIC RESIDENCE—PARTIES IN CENTRAL AMERICA—MURDER OF VICE-PRESIDENT FLORES—POLITICAL STATE OF GUATIMALA—AN EMBARRASSING SITUATION—THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY—MILITARY POLICE.

At peep of day I bathed in the Motagua. In the mean time the deaf and dumb boy prepared chocolate, and the corpse of the young man was borne to its final resting-place. I went over to the desolate house, bade farewell to the mourners, and resumed my journey. Again we had on our right the Motagua River and the mountains of Vera Paz. The road was level; it was excessively hot, and we suffered from thirst. At noon we stopped two hours at the village of Fisioli. Late in the afternoon we came upon a table-land covered with trees bearing a flower, looking like apple-trees in blossom, and cactus or tunos, with branches from three to fifteen feet long. I was in advance; and having been in the saddle all day, and wishing to relieve my mule, I dismounted and walked. A man overtook me on horseback, who touched me by telling me that my mule was tired. The mule, unused to being led, pulled back, and my new acquaintance followed, whipping her; and remembering the fable, and that I could not please everybody, I mounted, and we rode into Chimalapa together.

It was a long, straggling village, with a large church, but there was no padre, and I rode to the cabildo. This, besides being the town-house, is a sort of caravansary or stopping-place for travellers, being a remnant of Oriental usages still existing in Spain, and introduced into her former American possessions. It was a large building, situated on the plaza, plastered and whitewashed. At one end the alcalde was holding a sort of court, and at the other were the gratings of a prison. Between them was a room about thirty feet by twenty, with naked walls, and destitute of chair, bench, or table. The luggage was brought in, the hammock hung up, and the alcalde sent me my supper. Hearing the sound of a drum and violin, I walked to the house whence it issued, which was crowded with men and women smoking, lounging in hammocks, dancing, and drinking agua ardiente, in celebration of a marriage. The night before I had been present at a

death-scene. This was an exhibition of disgusting revelry, and the prominent vagabond was disposed to pick a quarrel with me; seeing which, I quietly walked back to the cabildo, shut the door, and betook myself to my hammock.

We started early, and at four o'clock entered the town of Guastatoya, beautifully situated, overlooking a valley in the rear of the square, waving with Indian corn, and rode up to the house of the brother of Doña Bartola, our hostess of Gualan, to whom I was recommended by her.

I had a good supper of eggs, frigoles, chocolate, tortillas, and was lying in a hammock with my boots off when the alcalde entered with a sword under his arm, followed by my host and several other persons, and told me that a party of robbers was out after me; that he had men on their traces, and wished to borrow my arms and servants. The latter I was willing enough to lend, for I knew they would find their way back; but the former, I thought, were more secure under my own eye. Being on the main road, I considered it so safe, that I had that day taken off the caps from my pistols and gun; but, drawing on my boots, recapping and distributing my surplus arms, we sallied forth. The muleteer would not go, but the deaf and dumb lad, with a face of fire, drew his machete and followed.

It was pitchy dark, and on first going out from the light I could not see at all, but stumbled along after my companions, who moved swiftly and without noise through the plaza, and along the whole length of the town. In the suburbs we approached a hut which stood alone, with the side toward us, closed, but the light of a fire issued from both ends; and here it was supposed the robbers were, unconscious of pursuit or suspicion. After a brief consultation, it was agreed that the party should separate, and one half enter at each end; and the alcalde's charge was to shoot the villains rather than let them escape. Stealing toward the hut, we rushed in at the same time from the opposite sides, and captured an old woman, who sat on the ground replenishing the fire. She was not surprised at our visit, and, with a bitter laugh, said the birds had flown. At that moment we heard the report of a musket, which was recognised as the signal of the men who had been stationed to watch them. All rushed out; another report hurried us on faster, and very soon we reached the foot of a mountain. As we ascended, the alcalde said that he saw a man crawling on his hands and feet up the side of the mountain, and, snatching my double-barrelled gun, fired at him as coolly as he would have done at a woodcock; all scattered in pursuit, and I was left with Augustin and the deaf and dumb boy.

Moving on, but not very fast, and looking back occasionally to the distant lights in the village, with an unknown mountain before me, and a dark night, I began to think that it was about enough for me to defend myself when attacked; although the affair was got up on my account, it was straining a point for me to pass the night in helping to rid the town of its robbers. Next, I reflected that, if the gentlemen we were in pursuit of should take it into their heads to double, my cap and white dress made me conspicuous, and it might be awkward to meet them at this place; and, in order to gain time for consideration what it was best to do, I walked back toward the town, and had not fully made up my mind when I reached the plaza.

Here I stopped, and in a few minutes a man passed, who said that he had met two of the robbers on the main road, and that they had told him they would catch me in the morning. They had got it into their heads that I was an aid-de-camp of Carrera, returning from Balize with a large amount of money to pay the troops. In about an hour the alcalde and his posse comitatus returned. I had no idea of being robbed by mistake; and, knowing the facility with which the robbers might go ahead and take a long shot at me, I asked the alcalde to furnish me with two men to go in advance and keep a look-out; but I was heartily sick of the country, and the excitement of its petty alarms.

Daylight dispelled the gloom which night had cast over my spirits. Leaving Guastatoya, for some distance I rode through a cultivated country, and the fields were divided by fences. Very soon I forgot all apprehensions of robbers, and, tired of the slow pace of the cargo-mules, rode on, leaving them far behind. At eleven o'clock I entered a ravine so wild that I thought it could not be the main road to Guatemala; there were no mule-tracks visible; and, returning, I took another road, the result of which was that I lost my way, and rode the whole day alone. I could gain no certain intelligence of Augustin and the muleteer, but continued on in the belief that they were before me. Pushing on rapidly, at dark I rode up to a hacienda on one side of the road, at which I was very kindly received by the proprietor, who was a mulatto, and, to my great surprise, I learned that I had advanced to within one long day's journey of Guatemala. He made me anxious, however, about the safety of my luggage; but for that night I could do nothing. I lay down opposite a large household altar, over which was a figure of the Virgin. At about ten o'clock I was roused by the arrival of Augustin and the muleteer. Besides their apprehensions about me, they had had their own difficulties; two of

the mules broke down, and they were obliged to stop and let them rest, and feed them.

Early the next morning, leaving the luggage with the muleteer (which, by the way, was at that time a very imprudent proceeding), and taking merely a change of apparel, I set out with Augustin. Almost immediately we commenced ascending a rugged mountain, very steep, and commanding at every step a wild and magnificent view; and from the top saw, at a great distance below us, in the hollow of an amphitheatre of mountains, the village of El Puente, the ground around which was white, and trodden hard by caravans of mules. We descended to the village, and crossed the bridge, which was laid on a stone arch, thrown across a ravine with a cataract foaming through it; at this point we were completely encircled by mountains, wild to sublimity, and reminding me of some of the finest parts of Switzerland. On the other side of the bridge we commenced ascending another mountain. The road was winding, and, when very high up, the view of the village and bridge, at the immense distance below, was surpassingly fine. Descending a short distance, we passed a village of huts, situated on the ridge of the mountain, commanding on both sides a view of an extensive valley four or five thousand feet below us. Continuing on this magnificent ridge, we descended upon a rich table land, and saw a gate opening into grounds which reminded me of park scenery in England, undulating, and ornamented with trees. In the midst of this stood the hacienda of San José, a long, low, stone building, with a corridor in front; it was one of those situations which, when least expected, touch a tender chord, call up cherished associations, make a traveller feel as though he could linger around it for ever, and particularly welcome to us, as we had not breakfasted.

It was a hacienda de ganados, or cattle-hacienda, and had hundreds of cattle roaming over it; but all that it could give us to eat was eggs, tortillas, and beans softened in hot water; the last being about equal to a basket of fresh chips. This over, we made a last push for Guatemala.

When we were yet two leagues from the city, Augustin's horse gave out. I was anxious to have a view of the city before dark, and rode on. Late in the afternoon, as I was ascending a small eminence, two immense volcanoes stood before me, seeming to scorn the earth, and towering to the heavens. They were the great volcanoes of Agua and Fuego, Water and Fire, forty miles distant, and nearly fifteen thousand feet high, wonderfully grand and beautiful. In a few moments the great plain of Guatemala appeared in view, surrounded

by mountains, and in the centre of it the city, a mere speck on the vast expanse, with churches and convents, and numerous turrets, cupolas, and steeples, and still as if the spirit of peace rested upon it; with no storied associations, but by its own beauty creating an impression on the mind of a traveller which can never be effaced. I dismounted and tied my mule. As yet the sun lighted up the roofs and domes of the city, giving a reflection so dazzling that I could only look at them by stealth. By degrees, its disk touched the top of the Volcano de Agua; slowly the whole orb sank behind it, illuminating the background with an atmosphere fiery red. A rich golden cloud rolled up its side and rested on the top, and while I gazed the golden hues disappeared, and the glory of the scene was gone.

Augustin came along with his poor horse hobbling after him, and a pistol in his hand. He had been told on the way that Carrera's soldiers were riotous, and that there were many ladrones about the suburbs of the city, and he was in the humour to fire upon any one who asked a question. I made him put up his pistols, and we both mounted. An immense ravine was still between us and the city. It was very dark when we reached the bottom of this ravine, and we were almost trodden down by a caravan of loaded mules coming out. Rising on the other side to the top, we entered the outer gate, still a mile and a half from Guatemala. Inside were miserable huts, with large fires before them, surrounded by groups of drunken Indians and vagabond soldiers, firing their muskets at random in the air. Augustin told me to spur on; but his poor horse could not keep up, and we were obliged to move on at a walk. As yet I did not know where to stop; there was no hotel in Guatemala. "What's the use of a hotel in Guatemala? Who ever goes to Guatemala?" was the answer of a gentleman of that place to my inquiries on this subject. I had several letters of introduction, and one was to Mr. Hall, the English vice-consul; and, fortunately, resolved to throw myself upon his hospitality.

We picked up a ragged Indian, who undertook to conduct us to his house, and under his guidance entered the city at the foot of a long straight street. My country-bred mule seemed astonished at the sight of so many houses, and would not cross the gutters, which were wide, and in the middle of the street. In spurring her over one, she gave a leap that, after her hard journey, made me proud of her; but she broke her bridle, and I was obliged to dismount and lead her. Augustin's poor beast was really past carrying him, and he followed on foot, whipping mine, the guide lending a hand before and behind. In this way we traversed the streets of Guatemala. Perhaps no diplo-

matist ever made a more unpretending entry into a capital. Our stupid Indian did not know where Mr. Hall lived; there were hardly any people in the streets to inquire of, and I was an hour hauling my mule over the gutters, and grumbling at the guide, before I found the house. I knocked some time without receiving any answer. At length a young man opened the shutter of a balconied window, and told me that Mr. Hall was not at home. This would not serve my turn. I gave my name, and he retired; and in a few minutes the large door was unlocked, and Mr. Hall himself received me. He gave me as a reason for not opening sooner, that the soldiers had mutinied that day for want of pay, and threatened to sack the city. Carrera had exerted himself in trying to pacify them, and had borrowed fifty dollars from his (Mr. Hall's) neighbour, a French merchant; but the inhabitants were greatly alarmed; and when I knocked at his door, he was afraid that the soldiers were beginning to put their threat in execution. Mr. H. had taken down his staff, because on their last entry, when he had his flag flying, the soldiers had fired upon it, calling it a *bandera de guerra*. They were mostly Indians from the villages, ignorant and insolent, and a few days before he had his hat knocked off by a sentinel because he did not raise it in passing, for which his complaint was then before the government.* The whole city was kept in a state of awe. No one ventured out at night, and Mr. Hall wondered how I had been able to wander through the streets without being molested. All this was not very agreeable, but it could not destroy my satisfaction in reaching Guatemala. For the first time since I entered the country, I had a good bed and a pair of clean sheets. It was two months that day since I embarked from New York, and only one since I entered the country, but it seemed at least a year.

The luxury of my rest that night still lingers in my recollections, and the morning air was the most pure and invigorating I ever breathed. Situated in the "Tierras templadas," or temperate regions, on a tableland five thousand feet above the sea, the climate of Guatemala is that of perpetual spring, and the general aspect reminded me of the best class of Italian cities. It is laid out in blocks of from three to four hundred feet square, the streets parallel and crossing each other at right angles. The houses, made to resist the action of earthquakes, are of only one story, but very spacious, with large doors and windows, protected by iron balconies. In the centre of the city stands the Plaza, a square of one hundred and fifty yards on each side, paved with stone, with a colonnade on three sides; on one of these stands the old vice-regal palace and hall of the Audiencia; on another are the *cabildo*,

* It is due to Carrera to say, that by his orders the soldier received two hundred lashes.

and other city buildings; on the third the custom-house and palace of the *ci-devant* Marquisate of Aycinena; and on the fourth side is the Cathedral, a beautiful edifice in the best style of modern architecture, with the archiepiscopal palace on one side, and the *College de los Infantes* on the other. In the centre is a large stone fountain, of imposing workmanship, supplied with pipes from the mountains about two leagues distant; and the area is used as a market-place. The churches and convents correspond with the beauty of the Plaza, and their costliness and grandeur would attract the attention of tourists in Italy or old Spain.

The foundation of the city was laid in 1776, a year memorable in our own annals, and when our ancestors thought but little of the troubles of their neighbours. At that time the old capital, twenty-five miles distant, shattered and destroyed by earthquakes, was abandoned by its inhabitants, and the present was built in the rich valley of Las Vacas, in a style commensurate with the dignity of a captain-generalship of Spain. I have seldom been more favourably impressed with the first appearance of any city, and the only thing that pained me in a two hours' stroll through the streets was the sight of Carrera's ragged and insolent-looking soldiers; and my first idea was, that in any city in Europe or the United States, the citizens, instead of submitting to be lorded over by such barbarians, would rise *en masse* and pitch them out of the gates.

In the course of the morning I took possession of the house that had been occupied by Mr. De Witt, late United States *chargé-d'affaires*. If I had been favourably impressed with the external appearance of the houses, I was charmed with the interior. The entrance was by a large double door, through a passage paved with small black and white stones, into a handsome patio or court-yard paved in like manner. On the sides were broad corridors paved with square red bricks, and along the foot of the corridors were borders of flowers. In front, on the street, and adjoining the entrance, was an ante-room with one large balconied window, and next to it a *sala* or parlour, with two windows. At the further end a door opened from the side into the *comedor* or dining-room, which had a door and two windows opening upon the corridor. At the end of the dining-room was a door leading to a sleeping-room, with door and one window, and then another room of the same size, all with doors and windows opening upon the corridor. The building and corridor were continued across the foot of the lot; in the centre were rooms for servants, and in the corners were a kitchen and stable completely hidden from sight, and each furnished with a separate fountain. This is the plan of all the houses in Guatemala;

others are much larger; that of the Aycinena family, for instance, covered a square of 200 feet; but mine combined more beauty and comfort than any habitation I ever saw.

At two o'clock my luggage arrived, and I was most comfortably installed in my new domicile. The sala or reception-room was furnished with a large book-case, containing rows of books with yellow bindings, which gave me twinging recollections of a law-office at home; and the archives of the legation had quite an imposing aspect.

My first business was to make arrangements for sending a trusty escort for Mr. Catherwood, and, this over, it was incumbent upon me to look around for the government to which I was accredited.

From the time of the conquest Guatemala had remained in a state of profound tranquillity as a colony of Spain. The Indians submitted quietly to the authority of the whites, and all bowed to the divine right of the Romish Church. In the beginning of the present century a few scattering rays of light penetrated to the heart of the American continent; and in 1823 the kingdom of Guatemala, as it was then called, declared its independence of Spain, and, after a short union with Mexico, constituted itself a republic, under the name of the United States of Central America. By the articles of agreement the confederacy was composed of five states, viz., Guatemala, San Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica. Chiapas had the privilege of entering if it should think proper, but it never did. Quezaltenango, a district of Guatemala, was afterwards erected into a separate state, and added.

The monster Party-spirit was rocked in the very cradle of their independence, and a line of demarcation was at once drawn between the Aristocratic and Democratic parties. The local names of these at first confused me, the former being called the Central or Servile, and the latter the *Federal* or Liberal, or *Democratic* party. Substantially they were the same with our own Federal and Democratic parties. The reader will perhaps find it difficult to understand that in any country, in a political sense, Federal and Democratic can mean the same thing, or that when I speak of a Federalist I mean a Democrat; and, to prevent confusion in referring to them hereafter, I shall call the Aristocratic the Central, and the Democratic the Liberal party. The former, like our own Federal party, was for consolidating and centralizing the powers of the general government, and the latter contended for the sovereignty of the states. The Central party consisted of a few leading families, which, by reason of certain privileges of monopoly for importations under the old Spanish government, assumed the tone of nobles, sustained by the priests and friars, and the religious feeling of

the country. The latter was composed of men of intellect and energy, who threw off the yoke of the Romish Church, and, in the first enthusiasm of emancipated minds, tore away at once the black mantle of superstition, thrown, like a funeral pall, over the genius of the people. The Centralists wished to preserve the usages of the colonial system, and resisted every innovation and every attack, direct or indirect, upon the privileges of the Church, and their own prejudices or interests. The Liberals, ardent, and cherishing brilliant schemes of reform, aimed at an instantaneous change in popular feelings and customs, and considered every moment lost that did not establish some new theory or sweep away some old abuse. The Centralists forgot that civilization is a jealous divinity, which does not admit of partition, and cannot remain stationary. The Liberals forgot that civilization requires a harmony of intelligence, of customs, and of laws. The example of the United States and of their free institutions was held up by the Liberals; and the Centralists contended that, with their ignorant and heterogeneous population, scattered over a vast territory, without facilities of communication, it was a hallucination to take our country as a model. At the third session of Congress the parties came to an open rupture, and the deputies of San Salvador, always the most Liberal state in the confederacy, withdrew.

Flores, the vice-chief of the State of Guatemala, a Liberal, had made himself odious to the priests and friars by laying a contribution upon the convent at Quezaltenango; and while on a visit to that place the friars of the convent excited the populace against him as an enemy to religion. A mob gathered before his house, with cries of "Death to the heretic!" Flores fled to the church; but as he was entering the door a mob of women seized him, wrested a stick from his hands, beat him with it, tore off his cap, and dragged him by the hair. He escaped from these furies and ran up into the pulpit. The alarm-bell was sounded, and all the rabble of the town poured into the plaza. A few soldiers endeavoured to cover the entrance to the church, but were assailed with stones and clubs; and the mob, bearing down all opposition, forced its way into the church, making the roof ring with cries of "Death to the heretic!" Rushing toward the pulpit, some tried to unhinge it, others to scale it; others struck at the unhappy vice-chief with knives tied to the ends of long poles; while a young fiend, with one foot on the mouldings of the pulpit and the other elevated in the air, leaned over and seized him by the hair. The curate, who was in the pulpit with him, frightened at the tempest he had assisted to raise, held up the Holy of Holies, and begged the mob to spare him, promising that he should leave the city immediately. The unhappy Flores, on his

knees, confirmed these promises; but the friars urged on the mob, who became so excited with religious frenzy, that, after kneeling before the figure of the Saviour, exclaiming, "We adore thee, O Lord, we venerate thee," they rose up with the ferocious cry, "but for thy honour and glory this blasphemer, this heretic, must die!" They dragged him from the pulpit across the floor of the church, and in the cloisters threw him into the hands of the fanatic and furious horde, when the women, like unchained furies, with their fists, sticks, and stones, beat him to death. His murderers stripped his body, leaving it, disfigured and an object of horror, exposed to the insults of the populace, and then dispersed throughout the city, demanding the heads of Liberals, and crying "Viva la Religion, y mueran los heregos del Congreso." About the same time religious fanaticism swept the state, and the Liberal party was crushed in Guatemala.

But the state of San Salvador, from the beginning the leader in Liberal principles, was prompt in its efforts of vengeance, and on the 16th of March, 1827, its army appeared within the outer gates of Guatemala, threatening the destruction of the capital: but religious fanaticism was too strong; the priests ran through the streets exhorting the people to take up arms, the friars headed mobs of women, who, with drawn knives, swore destruction to all who attempted to overturn their religion; and the San Salvadoreans were defeated and driven back. For two years the parties were at open war. In 1829 the troops of San Salvador, under General Morazan, who had now become the head of the Liberal party, again marched upon Guatemala, and, after three days' fighting, entered it in triumph. All the leaders of the Central party—the Aycinenas, the Pavons, and Peñoles—were banished or fled, the convents were broken up, the institution of friars abolished, the friars themselves put on board vessels and shipped out of the country, and the archbishop, anticipating banishment, or perhaps fearing a worse fate, sought safety in flight.

In 1831 General Morazan was elected president of the republic; at the expiration of the term he was reelected; and for eight years the Liberal party had the complete ascendancy. During the latter part of his term, however, there was great discontent, particularly on account of forced loans and exactions for the support of government, or, as the Centralists said, to gratify the rapacity of unscrupulous and profligate office-holders. The Church party was always on the alert. The exiles in the United States and Mexico, and on the frontier, with their eyes always fixed upon home, kept up constant communications, and fostered the growing discontents. Some of them, in a state of penury abroad, ventured to return, and these not being molested,

others soon followed. At this time came on the rising of Carrera, which was at first more dreaded by the Centralists than the Liberals, but suddenly, and to their own utter astonishment, placed the former nominally at the head of government.

In May preceding my arrival the term of the president, senators, and deputies had expired, and no elections had been held to supply their places. The vice-president, who had been elected during an unexpired term, was the only existing officer of the Federal Government. The states of Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica had declared themselves independent of the Federal Government. The states of San Salvador and Quezaltenango sustained the Federal Government, and Morazan, as commander-in-chief of the Federal forces, had defeated Ferrera, and established troops in Honduras, which gave the Liberal party the actual control of three states.

Virtually, then, the states stood "three and three." Where was my government? The last Congress, before its dissolution, had recommended that panacea for political ills, a convention to amend the Constitution. The governments of England and France were represented near that of Central America by consuls-general. Neither had any treaty; England could not procure one except upon a surrender of all claim to the Island of Roatan, in the Bay of Honduras, and to Balize. One had been drawn up with France, but, though pressed with great earnestness by the consul-general of that country, the senate refused to ratify it. Ours was the only government that had any treaty with Central America, and, up to the time of Mr. De Witt's departure from the country, we were represented by a chargé-d'affaires. The British consul-general had published a circular, denying the existence of the general government; the French consul was not on good terms with either party; and my arrival, and the course I might take, were a subject of some interest to politicians.

There was but one side to politics in Guatemala. Both parties have a beautiful way of producing unanimity of opinion, by driving out of the country all who do not agree with them. If there were any Liberals, I did not meet them, or they did not dare to open their lips. The Central party, only six months in power, and still surprised at being there, was fluttering between arrogance and fear. The old families, whose principal members had been banished or politically ostracized, and the clergy, were elated at the expulsion of the Liberal party, and their return to what they considered their natural right to rule the state; they talked of recalling the banished archbishop and friars, restoring the privileges of the Church, repairing the convents,

reviving monastic institutions, and making Guatemala what it had once been, the jewel of Spanish America.

One of my first visits of ceremony was to Señor Rivera Paz, the chief of the state. I was presented by Mr. Henry Savage, who had formerly acted as United States consul at Guatemala, and was the only American resident, to whom I am under many obligations for his constant attentions. The state of Guatemala, having declared its independence of the Federal government, was at that time governed by a temporary body called a Constituent Assembly. On the last entry of Carrera into the city, in March preceding my arrival, Salazar, the chief of the state, fled, and Carrera, on horseback, knocked at the door of Señor Rivera Paz before daylight, and, by his individual pleasure, installed him as chief. It was a fortunate choice for the people of Guatemala. He was about thirty-eight years of age, gentlemanly in his appearance and manners, and, in all the trying positions in which he was afterwards placed, exhibited more than ordinary prudence and judgment.

I had been told that it would be agreeable to the government of Guatemala for me to present my credentials to the chief of that state, and afterwards to the chiefs of the other states, and that the states separately would treat of the matters for which I was accredited to the general government. The object of this was to preclude a recognition on my part of the power which was, or claimed to be, the general government. The suggestion was of course preposterous, but it showed the dominion of party spirit with men who knew better. Señor Rivera Paz expressed his regret at my happening to visit the country at such an unfortunate period, and assured me of the friendly disposition of that State, and that it would do all in its power to serve me. During my visit I was introduced to several of the leading members of the administration, and I left with a favourable opinion of Rivera Paz, which was never shaken in regard to him personally.

In the evening, in company with Mr. Hall, I attended the last meeting of the Constituent Assembly. It was held in the old Hall of Congress; the room was large, hung with portraits of old Spaniards distinguished in the history of the country, and dimly lighted. The deputies sat on a platform at one end, elevated about six feet, and the president on an elevation in a large chair, two secretaries at a table beneath; and on the wall were the arms of the republic, the groundwork of which was three volcanoes, emblematic, I suppose, of the combustible state of the country. The deputies sat on each side, about thirty being present, nearly half of whom were priests, with

black gowns and caps; and by the dull light the scene carried me back to the dark ages, and seemed a meeting of Inquisitors.

The subject under discussion was a motion to revive the old law of tithes, which had been abolished by the Liberal party. The law was passed unanimously; but there was a discussion upon a motion to appropriate a small part of the proceeds for the support of hospitals for the poor. The priests took part in the discussion, and with liberal sentiments; a lay member, with big black whiskers, opposed it, saying that the Church stood like a light in darkness; and the Marquis Aycinena, a priest and the leading member of the party, said that "what was raised for God should be given to God alone." There was another discussion upon the point, whether the law should operate upon cattle then in being or to be born thereafter; and finally, as to the means of enforcing it. One gentleman contended that coercive measures should not be used, and, with a fine burst of eloquence, said that reliance might be placed upon the religious feelings of the people, and that the poorest Indian would come forward and contribute his mite; but the Assembly decided that the law should be enforced by "Las leyes antiguas de los Españoles," the old laws of the Spaniards, the severities of which had been one of the great causes of revolution in all Spanish countries. There was something horrible in this retrograde legislation. I could hardly believe that, in the nineteenth century, men of sense, and in a country through the length and breadth of which free principles were struggling for the ascendancy, would dare fasten on the people a yoke which, even in the dark ages, was too galling to be borne. The tone of debate was respectable, but calm and unimpassioned, from the entire absence of any opposition party. The Assembly purported to be a popular body, representing the voice of the people. It was a time of great excitement, and the last night of its session; and Mr. Hall and I, four men and three boys, were the only listeners.

As it was not safe to be in the streets after eight o'clock, the Assembly was adjourned, and, after a short session the next morning, assembled at a state breakfast. The place of meeting was in the old library, a venerable room, containing a valuable collection of rare old Spanish books and manuscripts, among which had lately been discovered the two missing volumes of Fuentes, and where I promised myself much satisfaction. The only guests were Mr. Hall, the French consul-general, Colonel Monte Rosa, an aide of Carrera, and myself. Carrera was invited, but did not come. The table was profusely ornamented with flowers and fruits. There was very little wine drunk, no toasts, and no gaiety. There was not a grey-haired man at table; all

were young, and so connected that it seemed a large family party; more than half had been in exile, and if Morazan returned to power they would all be scattered again.

I had been but three days in Guatemala, and already the place was dull. The clouds which hung over the political horizon weighed upon the spirits of the inhabitants, and in the evening I was obliged to shut myself up in my house alone. In the uncertainty which hung over my movements, and to avoid the trouble of housekeeping for perhaps but a few weeks, I dined and supped at the house of the señora—an interesting young widow—who owned mine (her husband had been shot in a private revolution of his own getting up), and lived nearly opposite. The first evening I remained there till nine o'clock; but as I was crossing on my return home, a fierce "Quien vive?"—"Who goes there?" came booming up the street. In the dark I could not see the sentinel, and did not know the password. Fortunately, and what was very unusual, he repeated the challenge two or three times, but so fiercely that the tones of his voice went through me like a musket-ball, and probably in a moment more the ball itself would have followed, but an old lady rushed out of the house I had left, and, with a lantern in her hand, screamed "Patria Libre."

Though silent, I was not idle; and when in a safe place thanked her from across the street, hugging close the inside of my doorway. Since Carrera's entry, he had placed sentinels to preserve the peace of the city, which was very quiet before he came, and his peace-officers kept it in a constant state of alarm. These sentinels were Indians, ignorant, undisciplined, and insolent, and fond of firing their muskets. They were ordered to challenge "Quien vive?" "Who goes there?" "Que gente?" "What people?" "Quel Regimento?" "What regiment?" and then fire. One fellow had already obeyed his orders literally, and, hurrying through the three questions without waiting for answers, fired, and shot a woman. The answers were, "Patria Libre," "Country free;" "Paisano," "Countryman;" and "Paz," "Peace."

This was a subject of annoyance all the time I was in Guatemala. The streets were not lighted; and hearing the challenge, sometimes at the distance of a square, in a ferocious voice, without being able to see the sentinel, I always imagined him with his musket at his shoulder, peering through the darkness to take aim. I felt less safe by reason of my foreign pronunciation; but I never met any one, native or stranger, who was not nervous when within reach of the sentinel's challenge, or who would not go two squares out of the way to avoid it.

CHAPTER X.

HACIENDA OF NARANJO—LAZOING—DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENCE—FORMULAS—FÊTE OF LA CONCEPCION—TAKING THE BLACK VEIL—A COUNTRYWOMAN—RENOUNCING THE WORLD—FIREWORKS, ETC.—PROCESSION IN HONOUR OF THE VIRGIN—ANOTHER EXHIBITION OF FIREWORKS—A FIERY BULL—INSOLENT SOLDIERY.

THE next day, in company with Mr. Savage, I rode to Naranjo, a small hacienda of the Aycinena family, about seven miles from the city. Beyond the walls all was beautiful, and in the palmy days of Guatemala the Aycinenas rolled to the Naranjo in an enormous carriage, covered with carving and gilding, in the style of the grandees of Spain, which now stands in the court-yard of the family-house as a memorial of better days. We entered by a spacious gate into a road upon their land, undulating and ornamented with trees, and by a large artificial lake, made by damming up several streams. We rode around the borders of the lake, and entered a cattle-yard of considerable extent, in the centre of which, on the side of a declivity, stood the house, a strong stone structure, with a broad piazza in front, and commanding a beautiful view of the volcanoes of the Antigua.

It was the season for marking and numbering the cattle, and two of the Señores Aycinena were at the hacienda to superintend the operations. The cattle had been caught and brought in; but, as I had never seen the process of lazoing, after dinner a hundred head, which had been kept up two days without food, were let loose into a field two or three miles in circumference. Eight men were mounted, with iron spurs three inches long on their naked heels, and each with a lazo in hand, which consisted of an entire cow's hide cut into a single cord about twenty yards long; one end was fastened to the horse's tail, which was first wrapped in leaves to prevent its being lacerated, and the rest was wound into a coil, and held by the rider in his right hand, resting on the pommel of the saddle. The cattle had all dispersed; we placed ourselves on an elevation commanding a partial view of the field, and the riders scattered in search of them. In a little while thirty or forty rushed past, followed by the riders at full speed, and very soon were out of sight. We must either lose the sport or follow; and in one of the doublings, taking particularly good care to avoid the throng of furious cattle and headlong riders, I drew up to the side of two men who were chasing a