

tion of it, though he always spoke in the first person of what he had done and what he intended to do. One of the hangers-on, evidently to pay court to him, looked for a paper bearing his signature to show me as a specimen of his handwriting, but did not find one. My interview with him was much more interesting than I had expected; so young, so humble in his origin, so destitute of early advantages, with honest impulses, perhaps, but ignorant, fanatic, sanguinary, and the slave of violent passions, wielding absolutely the physical force of the country, and that force entertaining a natural hatred to the whites. At parting he accompanied me to the door, and in the presence of his villainous soldiers, made me a free offer of his services. I understood I had the good fortune to make a favourable impression; and afterward, but, unluckily during my absence, he called upon me in full dress and in state, which for him was an unusual thing.

At that time, as Don Manuel Pavon told me, he professed to consider himself a brigadier-general, subject to the orders of the government. He had no regular allowance for the maintenance of himself and troops; he did not like keeping accounts, and called for money when he wanted it; and, with this understanding, in eight months he had not required more than Morazan did in two. He really did not want money for himself, and as a matter of policy he paid the Indians but little. This operated powerfully with the aristocracy, upon whom the whole burden of raising money devolved. It may be a satisfaction to some of my friends to know that this lawless chief is under a dominion to which meeker men are loth to submit; his wife accompanies him on horseback in all his expeditions, influenced by a feeling which is said to proceed sometimes from excess of affection; and I have heard that it is no unimportant part of the business of the chief of the state to settle family jars.

As we were returning to my house, we met a gentleman who told Mr. Pavon that a party of soldiers was searching for a member of the Assembly who was lying under the displeasure of Carrera, but a personal friend of theirs; and as we passed on we saw a file of soldiers drawn up before his door, while others were inside searching the house. This was done by Carrera's orders, without any knowledge on the part of the government.

## CHAPTER XII.

PARTY TO MIXCO—A SCENE OF PLEASURE—PROCESSION IN HONOUR OF THE PATRON SAINT OF MIXCO—FIREWORKS—A BOMBARDMENT—SMOKING CIGARS—A NIGHT-BRAWL—SUFFERING AND SORROW—A COCKFIGHT—A WALK IN THE SUBURBS—SUNDAY AMUSEMENTS—RETURN TO THE CITY.

IN consequence of the convulsions and danger of the times, the city was dull, and there was no gaiety in private circles; but an effort had been made by some enterprising ladies to break the monotony, and a party, to which I was invited, was formed for that afternoon to Mixco, an Indian village about three leagues distant, at which the festival of its patron saint was to be celebrated the next day with Indian rites.

At four o'clock in the afternoon I left my door on horseback to call on Don Manuel Pavon. His house was next to that of the proscribed deputy, and a line of soldiers was drawn around the whole block, with the purpose of preventing an escape, while every house was searched. I always gave these gentlemen a wide berth when I could, but it was necessary to ride along the whole line; and as I passed the house of the deputy, with the door closed and sentinels before it, I could but think of his distressed family, in agony lest his hiding-place should be discovered.

Don Manuel was waiting for me, and we rode to the house of one of the ladies of the party, a young widow whom I had not seen before, and who, in her riding-dress, made a fine appearance. Her horse was ready, and when she had kissed the old people good-bye, we carried her off. The women-servants, with familiarity and affection, followed to the door, and continued farewell greetings and cautions to take good care of herself, which the lady answered as long as we were within hearing. We called at two or three other houses, and then all assembled at the place of rendezvous. The court-yard was full of horses, with every variety of fanciful mountings. Although we were going only nine miles, and to a large Indian village, it was necessary to carry beds, bedding, and provisions. A train of servants large enough to carry stores for a small military expedition was sent ahead, and we all started. Outside the gate all the anxieties and perils which slumbered in the city were forgotten. Our road lay over an extensive plain, seeming, as the sun went down behind the volcanoes of Agua and Fuego, a beautiful

bowling-green, in which our party, preceded by a long file of Indians with loads on their backs, formed a picture. I was surprised to find that the ladies were not good horsewomen. They never ride for pleasure, and, on account of the want of accommodation on the road, seldom travel.

It was after dark when we reached the borders of a deep ravine separating the plain from Mixco. We descended, and, rising on the other side, emerged from the darkness of the ravine into an illuminated street, and, at two or three horses' lengths, into a plaza blazing with lights and crowded with people, nearly all Indians in holiday costume. In the centre of the plaza was a fine fountain, and at the head of it a gigantic church. We rode up to the house that had been provided for the ladies, and, leaving them there, the gentlemen scattered to find lodgings for themselves. The door of every house was open, and the only question asked was whether there was room. Some of the young men did not give themselves this trouble, as they were disposed to make a night of it; and Mr. P. and I, having secured a place, returned to the house occupied by the ladies. In one corner was a tienda about ten feet square, partitioned off and shelved, which served as a place for their hats and shawls. The rest of the room contained merely a long table and benches. In a few moments the ladies were ready, and we all sallied out for a walk. All the streets and passages were brilliantly illuminated, and across some were arches decorated with evergreens and lighted, and at the corners were altars under arbours of branches adorned with flowers. The spirit of frolic seemed to take possession of our file-leaders, who, as the humour prompted them, entered any house, and after a lively chat left it, contriving to come out just as the last of the party were going in. In one house they found a poncha rolled up very carefully, with the end of a guitar sticking out. The proprietor of the house only knew that it belonged to a young man from Guatemala, who had left it as an indication of his intention to pass the night there. One of the young men unrolled the poncha, and some loaves of bread fell out, which he distributed, and, with half a loaf in his mouth, struck up a waltz, which was followed by a quadrille; the good people of the house seemed pleased at this free use of their roof, and shaking hands all around, with many expressions of good will on both sides, we left as unceremoniously as we had entered. We made the tour of all the principal streets, and as we returned to the plaza the procession was coming out of the church.

The village procession in honour of its patron saint is the great pride of the Indian, and the touchstone of his religious character.

Every Indian contributes his labour and money toward getting it up, and he is most honoured who is allowed the most important part in it. This was a rich village, at which all the muleteers of Guatemala lived; and nowhere had I seen an Indian procession so imposing. The church stood on an elevation at the head of the plaza, its whole façade rich in ornaments illuminated by the light of torches; and the large platform and the steps were thronged with women in white. A space was cleared in the middle before the great door, and with a loud chant the procession passed out of the doorway. First came the alcalde and his alguazils, all Indians, with rods of office in one hand, and lighted wax candles, six or eight feet long, in the other; then a set of devils, not as playful as the devils of Guatemala, but more hideous, and probably better likenesses, according to the notions of the Indians; then came, borne aloft by Indians, a large silver cross, richly chased and ornamented, and followed by the cura, with a silken canopy held over his head on the ends of long poles borne by Indians. As the cross advanced, all fell on their knees, and a stranger would have been thought guilty of an insult upon their holy religion who omitted conforming to this ceremony. Then came figures of saints larger than life, borne on the shoulders of Indians; and then a figure of the Virgin, gorgeously dressed, her gown glittering with spangles. Then followed a long procession of Indian women dressed in costume, with a thick red cord twisted in the hair, so as to look like a turban, all carrying lighted candles. The procession passed through the illuminated streets, under the arches, and stopping from time to time before the altars, made the tour of the village, and in about an hour, with a loud chant, ascended the steps of the church. Its re-entry was announced by a discharge of rockets, after which all gathered in the plaza for the exhibition of fireworks.

It was some time before these were ready, for those who had figured in the procession, particularly the devils, were to be the principal managers. Our party was well known in Mixco; and though the steps of the church were crowded, one of the best places was immediately vacated for us. From their nearness to Guatemala, the people of Mixco knew all the principal families of the former place, and were glad to see so distinguished a party at their fiesta; and the familiar but respectful way in which they were everywhere treated, manifested a simplicity of manners and a kindness of feeling between the rich and the poor, which to me was one of the most interesting parts of the whole fête.

The exhibition began with the Toros; the man who played the bull gave universal satisfaction; scattering and putting to flight the crowd

in the plaza, he rushed up the steps of the church, and, amid laughing and screaming, went out. Flying pigeons and other pieces followed; and the whole concluded with the grand national piece of the Castle of San Felipe, which was a representation of the repulse of an English fleet. A tall structure represented the castle, and a little brig, perched on the end of a stick, like a weathercock, the fleet. The brig fired a broadside, and then, by a sudden jerk, turned on a pivot and fired another; and long after, until she had riddled herself to pieces, the castle continued pouring on all sides a magnanimous stream of fire.

When all was over we returned to the posada. A cloth was spread over the long table, and in a few minutes, under the direction of the ladies, covered with the pic-nic materials brought from Guatemala. The benches were drawn up to the table, and as many as could find seats sat down. Before supper was over there was an irruption of young men from Guatemala, with glazed hats, ponchas, and swords, and presenting a rather disorderly appearance; but they were mostly juveniles, brothers and cousins of the ladies. With their hats on they seated themselves at the vacated tables, and, as soon as they had finished eating, hurried off the plates, piled the tables away in a corner, one on the top of the other, and the candles on the top of all, the violins struck up, and gentlemen and ladies, lighting cigars and cigarillos, commenced dancing. I am sorry to say that generally the ladies of Central America, not excepting Guatemala, smoke,—married ladies, puros, or all tobacco, and unmarried, cigarillos, or tobacco wrapped in paper or straw. Every gentleman carries in his pocket a silver case, with a long string of cotton, steel and flint, taking up nearly as much space as a handkerchief, and one of the offices of gallantry is to strike a light; by doing it well, he may help to kindle a flame in a lady's heart; at all events, to do it bunglingly would be ill-bred. I will not express my sentiments on smoking as a custom for the sex. I have recollections of beauteous lips profaned. Nevertheless, even in this I have seen a lady show her prettiness and refinement, barely touching the straw to her lips, as it were kissing it gently and taking it away. When a gentleman asks a lady for a light, she always removes the cigar from her lips. Happily, the dangerous proximity which sometimes occurs between gentlemen in the street is not in vogue. The dancing continued till two o'clock, and the breaking up was like the separation of a gay family party. The young men dispersed to sleep or to finish the night with merriment elsewhere, and Don Manuel and I retired to the house he had secured for us.

We were in our hammocks, talking over the affairs of the night, when we heard a noise in the street, a loud tramping past the door

and a clash of swords. Presently Mr. P.'s servant knocked for admission, and told us that a man had been killed a few doors off by a sword-cut across the head. Instead of going out to gratify an idle curiosity, like prudent men we secured the door. The tramping passed up the street, and presently we heard reports of firearms. The whole place seemed to be in an uproar. We had hardly lain down again before there was another knock at the door. Our host, a respectable old man, with his wife, slept in a back room, and, afraid of rioters, they had a consultation about opening it. The former was unwilling to do so, but the latter, with a mother's apprehensions, said that she was afraid some accident had happened to Chico. The knocking continued, and Raffael, a known companion of their son, cried out that Chico was wounded. The old man rose for a light, and, apprehending the worst, the mother and a young sister burst into tears. The old man sternly checked them, said that he had always cautioned Chico against going out at night, and that he deserved to be punished. The sister ran and opened the door, and two young men entered. We could see the glitter of their swords, and that one was supporting the other; and, just as the old man procured a light, the wounded man fell on the ground. His face was ghastly pale, and spotted with blood; his hat cut through the crown and rim as smoothly as if done with a razor, and his right hand and arm were wound in a pocket-handkerchief, which was stained with blood. The old man looked at him with the sternness of a Roman, and told him that he knew this would be the consequence of his running out at night; the mother and sister cried, and the young man, with a feeble voice, begged his father to spare him. His companion carried him into the back room; but before they could lay him on the bed, he fell again and fainted. The father was alarmed, and when he recovered, asked him whether he wished to confess. Chico, with a faint voice, answered, As you please. The old man told his daughter to go for the padre, but the uproar was so great in the street that she was afraid to venture out. In the meantime we examined his head, which, notwithstanding the cut through his hat, was barely touched; and he said himself that he had received the blow on his hand, and that it was cut off. There was no physician nearer than Guatemala, and not a person that was able to do anything for him. I had had some practice in medicine, but none in surgery; I knew, however, that it was at all events proper to wash and cleanse the wound; and with the assistance of Don Manuel's servant, a young Englishman whom Don Manuel had brought from the United States, laid him on a bed. This servant had had some experience in the brawls of the country, having

killed a young man in a quarrel growing out of a love affair, and been confined to the house seven months by wounds received in the same encounter. With his assistance I unwound the bloody handkerchief; as I proceeded I found my courage failing me, and as, with the last coil, a dead hand fell on mine, a shudder and a deep groan ran through the spectators, and I almost let the hand drop. It was cut off through the back above the knuckles, and the four fingers hung merely by the fleshy part of the thumb. The skin was drawn back, and showed on each side four bones protruding like the teeth of a skeleton. I joined them together, and as he drew up his arm, they jarred like the grating of teeth. I saw that the case was beyond my art. Possibly the hand might have been restored by sewing the skin together; but I believed that the only thing to be done, was to cut it off entirely, and this I was not willing to do. Unable to give any further assistance, I wound it up again in the handkerchief. The young man had a mild and pleasing countenance; and as thankful for my ineffectual attempt as if I had really served him, told me not to give myself any more trouble, but return to bed; his mother and sister, with stifled sobs, hung over his head; his father retained the sternness of his manner, but it was easy to see that his heart was bleeding; and to me, a stranger, it was horrible to see a fine young man mutilated for life in a street-brawl.

As he told the story himself, he was walking with some of his friends, when he met one of the Espinozas from Guatemala, also with party of friends. The latter, who was known as a bully, approached them with an expression in Spanish about equivalent to the English one, "I'll give it to you." Chico answered, "No you won't," and immediately they drew their swords. Chico, in attempting to ward off a stroke, received it on the edge of his right hand. In passing through all the bones, its force was so much broken that it only cut the crown and rim of his hat. The loss of his hand had no doubt saved his life; for, if the whole force of the stroke had fallen on his head, it must have killed him; but the unfortunate young man, instead of being thankful for his escape, swore vengeance against Espinoza. The latter, as I afterwards learned, swore that the next time Chico should not escape with the loss of his hand; and, in all probability, when they meet again one of them will be killed.

All this time the uproar continued, shifting its location, with occasional reports of firearms; an aunt was wringing her hands because her son was out, and we had reason to fear a tragical night. We went to bed, but for a long time the noise in the street, the groans of poor Chico, and the sobbing of his mother and sister, kept us from sleeping.

We did not wake till nearly ten o'clock. It was Sunday; the morning was bright and beautiful, the arches and flowers still adorned the streets, and the Indians, in their clean clothes, were going to Sunday mass. None except the immediate parties knew or cared for the events of the night. Crossing the plaza, we met a tall, dashing fellow on horseback, with a long sword by his side, who bowed to Mr. Pavon, and rode on past the house of Chico. This was Espinoza. No one attempted to molest him, and no notice whatever was taken of the circumstance by the authorities.

The door of the church was so crowded that we could not enter; and passing through the curate's house, we stood in a doorway on one side of the altar. The curate, in his richest vestments, with young Indian assistants in sacerdotal dresses, their long black hair and sluggish features contrasting strangely with their garb and occupations, was officiating at the altar. On the front steps, with their black mantas drawn over their heads, and their eyes bent on the ground, were the dancers of our party the preceding night; kneeling along the whole floor of the immense church was a dense mass of Indian women, with red head-dresses; and leaning against the pillars, and standing up in the background, were Indians wrapped in black chamarros.

We waited till mass was over, and then accompanied the ladies to the house and breakfasted. Sunday though it was, the occupations for the day were a cockfight in the morning and bullfight in the afternoon. Our party was increased by the arrival of a distinguished family from Guatemala, and we all set out for the former. It was in the yard of an unoccupied house, which was already crowded; and I noticed, to the honour of the Indians and the shame of the better classes, that they were all Mestizoes or white men, and, always excepting Carrera's soldiers, I never saw a worse looking or more assassin-like set of men. All along the walls of the yard were cocks tied by one leg, and men running about with other cocks under their arms, putting them on the ground to compare size and weight, regulating bets, and trying to cheat each other. At length a match was made; the ladies of our party had seats in the corridor of the house, and a space was cleared before them. The gaffs were murderous instruments, more than two inches long, thick, and sharp as needles, and the birds were hardly on the ground before the feathers of the neck were ruffled and they flew at each other. In less time than had been taken to gaff them, one was lying on the ground with its tongue hanging out, and the blood running from its mouth, dead. The eagerness and vehemence, noise and uproar, wrangling, betting, swearing,

and scuffling of the crowd, exhibited a dark picture of human nature and a sanguinary people. I owe it to the ladies to say, that in the city they never are present at such scenes. Here they went for no other reason that I could see than because they were away from home, and it was part of the fête. We must make allowances for an education and state of society every way different from our own. They were not wanting in sensibility or refinement; and though they did not turn away with disgust, they seemed to take no interest in the fight, and were not disposed to wait for a second.

Leaving the disgusting scene, we walked around the suburbs, one point of which commands a noble view of the plain and city of Guatemala, with the surrounding mountains, and suggests a wonder, that, amid objects so grand and glorious, men can grow up with tastes so grovelling. Crossing the plaza, we heard music in a large house belonging to a rich muleteer; and, entering, we found a young harpist, and two mendicant friars, with shaved crowns, dressed in white, with long white mantles and hoods, of an order newly revived in Guatemala, and drinking agua ardiente. Mantas and hats were thrown off, tables and seats placed against the wall, and in a few moments my friends were waltzing.

This over, the young men brought out the ladies' mantas, and again we sallied for a walk; but, reaching the plaza, the young men changed their minds, and seating the ladies, to whom I attached myself, in the shade, commenced prisoner's base. All who passed stopped, and the villagers seemed delighted with the gaiety of our party. The players tumbled each other in the dust, to the great amusement of the lookers-on; and this continued till we saw trays coming across the plaza, which was a sign of dinner. This over, and thinking that I had seen enough for one Sunday, I determined to forego the bullfight; and in company with Don Manuel and another prominent member of the Assembly, and his family, I set out on my return to the city. Their mode of travelling was primitive. All were on horseback, he himself with a little son behind him; his daughter alone; his wife on a pillion, with a servant to support her; a servant-maid with a child in her arms, and a servant on the top of the luggage. It was a beautiful afternoon, and the plain of Guatemala, with its green grass and dark mountains, was a lovely scene. As we entered the city we encountered a religious procession, with priests and monks all bearing lighted candles, and preceded by men throwing rockets. We avoided the plaza on account of the soldiers, and in a few minutes I was in my house, alone.

## CHAPTER XIII.

EXCURSION TO LA ANTIGUA AND THE PACIFIC OCEAN—SAN LUCAS—MOUNTAIN SCENERY—EL RIO PENSATIVO—LA ANTIGUA—ACCOUNT OF ITS DESTRUCTION—AN OCTOGENARIAN—THE CATHEDRAL—SAN JUAN OBISPO—SANTA MARIA—VOLCANO DE AGUA—ASCENT OF THE MOUNTAIN—THE CRATER—A LOFTY MEETING-PLACE—THE DESCENT—RETURN TO LA ANTIGUA—CULTIVATION OF COCHINEAL—CLASSIC GROUND—CIUDAD VIEJA—ITS FOUNDATION—VISIT FROM INDIANS—DEPARTURE FROM CIUDAD VIEJA—FIRST SIGHT OF THE PACIFIC—ALOTENANGO—VOLCAN DEL FUEGO—ESCUINTLA—SUNSET SCENE—MASAGUA—PORT OF ISTAPA—ARRIVAL AT THE PACIFIC.

On Tuesday, the 17th of December, I set out on an excursion to La Antigua Guatemala and the Pacific Ocean. I was accompanied by a young man who lived opposite, and wished to ascend the Volcano de Agua. I had discharged Augustin, and with great difficulty procured a man who knew the route. Rumaldo had but one fault—he was married: like some other married men, he had a fancy for roving; but his wife set her face against this propensity; she said that I was going to El Mar, the sea, and might carry him off, and she should never see him again, and the affectionate woman wept at the bare idea; but upon my paying the money into her hands before going, she consented. My only luggage was a hammock and pair of sheets, which Rumaldo carried on his mule, and each had a pair of alforjas, or saddle-bags. At the gate we met Don José Vidaurre, whom I had first seen in the president's chair of the Constituent Assembly, and was going to visit his hacienda at the Antigua. Though it was only a journey of five or six hours, Señor Vidaurre, being a very heavy man, had two led horses, one of which he insisted on my mounting; and when I expressed my admiration of the animal, he told me, in the usual phrase of Spanish courtesy, that the horse was mine. It was done in the same spirit in which a Frenchman, who had been entertained hospitably in a country house in England, offered himself to seven of the daughters, merely for the compliment; and my worthy friend would have been very much astonished if I had accepted his offer.

The road to Mixco I have already described. In the village I stopped to see Chico. His hand had been cut off, and he was doing well. Leaving the village, we ascended a steep mountain, from the top of which we had a fine view of the village at its foot, the plain and city of Guatemala, and the Lake of Amatitan, enclosed by a belt of mountains. Descending by a wild and rugged road, we reached a