

CHAPTER XVIII.

DEPARTURE FOR GUATIMALA—ESPARZA—TOWN OF COSTA RICA—THE BARRANCA—WILD SCENERY—HACIENDA OF ARANJUEZ—RIVER LAGARTOS—CERROS OF COLLITO—HERDS OF DEER—SANTA ROSA—DON JUAN JOSÉ BONILLA—AN EARTHQUAKE—A CATTLE FARM—BAGASES—GUANACASTE—AN AGREEABLE WELCOME—BELLE OF GUANACASTE—PLEASANT LODGINGS—CORDILLERAS—VOLCANOES OF RINCON AND OROSI—HACIENDA OF SAN TERESA—SUNSET VIEW—THE PACIFIC AGAIN.

ON the thirteenth day of February I mounted for my journey to Guatemala. My equipage was reduced to articles of the last necessity: a hammock of striped cotton cloth laid over my pellow, a pair of alforgas, and a poncha strapped on behind. Nicolas had strung across his alvarada a pair of leather cohines, in shape like buckets, with the inner side flat, containing biscuit, chocolate, sausages, and dolci, and in front, on the pommel, my wearing apparel rolled up in an ox-hide, after the fashion of the country. During my whole stay at the convent the attentions of the padre were unremitting. Besides the services he actually rendered me, I have no doubt he considers that he saved my life; for during my sickness he entered my room while I was preparing to shave, and made me desist from so dangerous an operation. I washed my face by stealth, but his kindness added another to the list of obligations I was already under to the padres of Central America.

I felt great satisfaction at being able once more to resume my journey, pleased with the lightness of my equipage, the spirit of my mules, and looked my journey of 1,200 miles boldly in the face. All at once I heard a clattering behind, and Nicolas swept by me on a full run. My macho was what was called *espantoso*, or scary, and started. I had very little strength, and was fairly run away with. If I had bought my beasts for racing I should have had no reason to complain; but, unluckily, my saddle turned, and I came to the ground, fortunately clearing the stirrups, and the beast ran, scattering on the road, pistols, holsters, saddle-cloths, and saddle, and continued on bare-backed toward the town. To my great relief, some muleteers intercepted him, and saved my credit as a horseman in San José. We were more than an hour in recovering scattered articles and repairing broken trappings.

For three days my road was the same that I had travelled in entering Costa Rica. The fourth morning I rose without any recur-

rence of fever. Mr. Lawrence had kindly borne me company from San José, and was still with me; he had relieved me from all trouble, and had made my journey so easy and comfortable that, instead of being wearied, I was recruited, and abandoned all idea of returning by sea.

At seven o'clock we started, and in half an hour reached Esparza. From this place to Nicaragua, a distance of 300 miles, the road lay through a wilderness; except the frontier town of Costa Rica, there were only a few straggling haciendas, twenty, thirty, and forty miles apart.

In half an hour we crossed the Barranca, a broad, rapid, and beautiful river, but which lost in my eyes all its beauty, for here Mr. Lawrence left me. Since the day of my arrival at San José he had been almost constantly with me, had accompanied me in every excursion, and during my sickness had attended me constantly. We exchanged adieus from the backs of our mules, and, not to be sentimental, lighted our cigars.

I was again setting out alone. I had travelled so long with companions or in ships, that when the moment for plunging into the wilderness came, my courage almost failed me. And it was a moment that required some energy; for we struck off immediately into one of the wildest paths that I met on the whole of that desolate journey. The trees were so close as to darken it, and the branches so low that it was necessary to keep the head constantly bent to avoid hitting them. The noise of the locusts, which had accompanied us since we reached the mountain of Aguacate, here became startling. Very soon families of monkeys, walking heavily on the tops of the trees, disturbed these noisy tenants of the woods, and sent them flying around us in such swarms that we were obliged to beat them off with our hats. My macho snorted and pulled violently on the bit, dragging me against the trees; and I could not help thinking, if this is the outset, what will be the end?

We continued in the woods till about two o'clock, when, turning off by a path to the right, we reached a clearing, on one side of which was the hacienda of Aranjuez. The entrance to the house was by a ladder from the outside, and underneath was a sort of store-house. It was occupied by a major-domo, a Mestitzo, and his wife. Near it was the kitchen, where the wife and another woman were at work. The major-domo was sitting on the ground doing nothing, and two able-bodied men were helping him.

After dinner I led the mules to a stream, on the banks of which were tufts of young grass, and while I was sitting here two wild

turkeys flew over my head and lighted on a tree near by. I sent Nicolas for my gun, and soon had a bird large enough for a household dinner, which I sent immediately to the house to be converted into provender. At sundown I returned, and then discovered a deficiency in my preparations, which I felt during the whole journey, viz. of candles. A light was manufactured by filling a broken clay vessel with grease, and coiling in it some twisted cotton, with one end sticking out about an inch. The workmen on the hacienda took advantage of the light, and brought out a pack of cards. The wife of the major-domo joined them, and seeing no chance of a speedy termination of the game, I undressed myself and went to bed. When they finished, the woman got into a bed directly opposite mine, and before lying down lighted another cigar. The men did the same on the floor, and till the cigars went out continued discussing the game. The major-domo was already asleep in the hammock. All night the wife of the major-domo smoked, and the men snuffed and snored. At two o'clock I rose and went out of doors. The moon was shining, and the freshness of the morning air was grateful. I woke Nicolas, and paying the major-domo as he lay in his hammock, at three o'clock we resumed our journey. I was charmed with this place when we reached it, and disgusted when we left. The people were kind, and of as good disposition as the expectation of pay could make them, but their habits were intolerable.

The freshness of the morning air restored my equanimity; the moon shed a glorious light over the clearing, and lighted up the darkness of the forest. We heard only the surge of monkeys, as, disturbed by our noise, they moved on the tops of the trees.

At eight o'clock we reached the river Lagartos, breaking rapidly over a bed of white sand and gravel, clear as crystal, and shaded by trees, the branches of which met at the fording-place, and formed a complete arbour. We dismounted, took off the saddles from our mules, and tied them to a tree, kindled a fire on the bank, and breakfasted. Wild scenes had long lost the charm of novelty, but this I would not have exchanged for a *déjeuner à la fourchette* at the best restaurant of Paris. The wild turkey was not more than enough for my household, which consisted of Nicolas.

Resuming our journey, we travelled all day, and as the sun was getting low, we came out into a large clearing, on one side of which stood the hacienda of Santa Rosa. The house stood on the right, and directly in front, against the side of a hill, was a large cattle-yard, enclosed by a hard clay wall, divided into three parts, and filled with cows and calves. On the left was an almost boundless plain, inter-

persed with groves of trees; and as we rode up a gentleman in the yard sent a servant to open the gate. Don Juan José Bonilla met me at the porch, and before I had time to present my letter, welcomed me to Santa Rosa.

Don Juan was a native of Cartago, a gentleman by birth and education, and of one of the oldest families in Costa Rica. He had travelled over his own country, and what was very unusual in that region, had visited the United States, and though labouring under the disadvantage of not speaking the language, spoke with great interest of our institutions. He had been an active member of the Liberal party; had laboured to carry out its principles in the administration of the government, and to save his country from the disgrace of falling back into despotism. He had been persecuted, heavy contributions had been laid upon his property, and four years before he had withdrawn from Cartago and retired to this hacienda. But political animosity never dies. A detachment of soldiers was sent to arrest him, and, that no suspicion might be excited, they were sent by sea, and landed at a port on the Pacific within the bounds of his own estate. Don Juan received an intimation of their approach, and sent a servant to reconnoitre, who returned with intelligence that they were within half a day's march. He mounted his horse to escape, but near his own gate was thrown, and his leg badly broken. He was carried back insensible, and when the soldiers arrived they found him in bed; but they made him rise, put him on horseback, hurried him to the frontiers of the state, and left him, communicating to him his sentence of banishment, and death if he returned. The boundary-line of the state of Costa Rica is a river in the midst of a wilderness, and he was obliged to travel on horseback to Nicaragua, a journey of four days. He had never recovered the use of his leg, which was two or three inches shorter than the other. He remained two years in exile; and on the election of Don Manuel de Aguila as chief of the state, returned. On the expulsion of Don Manuel he retired again to his hacienda, and was then busily engaged in making repairs for the reception of his family; but he did not know at what moment another order might come to expel him from his home.

While sitting at the supper-table we heard a noise over our heads, which seemed to me like the opening of the roof. Don Juan raised his eyes to the ceiling, and suddenly started from his chair, threw his arms around the neck of a servant, and with the fearful words "temblor!" "temblor!" "an earthquake!" "an earthquake!" all rushed for the doors. I sprang from my chair, made one bound across the room, and cleared the piazza. The earth rolled like the pitching of a ship in a heavy sea. My step was high, my feet barely touched

the ground, and my arms were thrown up involuntarily to save myself from falling. I was the last to start, but, once under way, I was the last to stop. Half way across the yard I stumbled over a man on his knees, and fell. I never felt myself so feeble a thing before. At this moment I heard Don Juan calling to me. He was leaning on the shoulder of his servant, with his face to the door, crying to me to come out of the house. It was pitchy dark; within was the table at which we had sat, with a single candle, the light of which extended far enough to show a few of the kneeling figures, with their faces to the door. We looked anxiously in, and waited for the shock which should prostrate the strong walls, and lay the roof on the ground. There was something awful in our position, with our faces to the door, shunning the place which at all other times offers shelter to man. The shocks were continued perhaps two minutes, during which time it required an effort to stand firm. The return of the earth to steadiness was almost as violent as the shock. We waited a few minutes after the last vibration, when Don Juan said it was over, and, assisted by his servant, entered the house. I had been the last to leave it, but I was the last to return; and my chair lying with its back on the floor, gave an intimation of the haste with which I had decamped. The houses in Costa Rica are the best in the country for resisting these shocks, being, like the others, long and low, and built of adobes, or undried bricks, two feet long and one broad, made of clay mixed with straw to give adhesion, and laid when soft, with upright posts between, so that they are dried by the sun into one mass, which moves with the surface of the earth.

Early in the morning two horses were at the door, and two servants in attendance for a ride. Don Juan mounted the same horse which he had ridden in his exile, and was attended by the same servants. Heretofore I had always heard constant complaints of servants, and, to do them justice, I think they are the worst I ever knew; but Don Juan's were the best in the world, and it was evident that they thought he was the best master.

The estate of Don Juan covered as much ground as a German principality, containing 200,000 acres, and was bounded on one side, for a long distance, by the Pacific Ocean. But a small portion of it was cultivated, not more than enough to raise maize for the workmen, and the rest was a roaming-ground for cattle. More than 10,000 were wandering over it, almost as wild as the deer, and never seen except as they crossed a path in the woods, or at the season of lazoing them, for the purpose of taking an account of the increase.

I had set out on this long journey without any cargo-mule, from the

difficulty of procuring one that could keep pace with the riding-beasts; but we had felt the inconvenience of being encumbered with luggage; and, besides Don Juan's kindness to me at his house, he furnished me with one which he had broken expressly for his own use in rapid journeys between Cartago and the hacienda, and which he warranted me, with a light load, would trot and keep-up with mine.

Late in the afternoon I left his hospitable dwelling. Don Juan, with his deaf and dumb boy, accompanied me a league on the way, when we dismounted and took leave of each other. My new mule, like myself, was very reluctant to leave Don Juan, and seemed to have a sentiment that she should never see her old master again. Indeed it was so difficult to get her along, that Nicolas tied her by the halter to his mule's tail, after a manner common in the country, and thus leading her along, I followed at her heels. The deer were more numerous than I have yet seen them, and I now looked at them only as animating a beautiful landscape. At dark we began to have apprehensions about the road. There was a difficult mountain-pass before us, and Nicolas wanted to stop and wait till the moon rose; but as that would derange the journey for the next day, I pushed on for more than an hour through the woods. The mules stumbled along in the dark, and very soon we lost all traces of a path; while trying to find it, we heard the crash of a falling tree, which in the darkness sounded appalling, and made us hesitate to enter the woods. I determined to wait for the moon, and dismounted. Peering into the darkness, I saw a glimmering light on the left. We shouted with all our strength, and were answered by a pack of barking dogs, and moving in that direction, reached a hut where three or four workmen were lying on the ground, who were at first disposed to be merry and impertinent when we asked for a guide to the next hacienda; but one of them recognised my cargo-mule, said that he had known it since he was a child (rather doubtful praise of my new purchase), and was at length induced to make us an offer of his services. A horse was brought, large, wild, and furious, as if never bitted; snorting, rearing, and almost making the ground shake at every tread; and before the rider was fairly on his back he was tearing in the dark across the plain. Making a wide sweep, he returned, and the guide, releasing the cargo-mule from that of Nicolas, tied her to the tail of his horse, and then led the way. Even with the drag of the cargo-mule it was impossible for him to moderate his pace, and we were obliged to follow at a most unhappy rate. It was the first piece of bad road we had met with, having many sharp turns, and ascents and descents, broken and stony. Fortunately, while we were in the woods, the moon rose, touched with a silvery

light the tops of the trees, and when we reached the bank of the river it was almost as light as day. Here my guide left me, and I lost all confidence in the moon, for by her deceitful light I slipped into his hand a gold piece instead of a silver one, without either of us knowing it.

As we ascended the bank after crossing the stream, the hacienda was in full sight. The occupants were in bed, but Don Manuel, to whom I was recommended by Don Juan, rose to receive me.

At daylight the next morning, as the workmen on the hacienda were about going to work, we set off again. In an hour we heard the sound of a horn, giving notice of the approach of a drove of cattle. We drew up into the woods to let them pass, and they came with a cloud of dust, the faces of the drivers covered, and would have trampled to death anything that impeded their progress.

Late in the afternoon we came into a broad avenue and saw marks of wheels. At dusk we reached the river which runs by the suburbs of Guanacaste, the frontier town of Costa Rica. The pass was occupied by an ox-cart, with four stubborn oxen, which would not go ahead and could not go back. We were detained half an hour, and it was dark when we entered. We passed through the plaza, before the door of the church, which was lighted up for vespers, and rode to a house at which I had been directed to stop. Nicolas went in to make preliminary inquiries, and returning, told me to dismount, and unloaded the luggage-mule. I went in, took off my spurs, and stretched myself on a bench. Soon it struck me that my host was not particularly glad to see me. Several children came in and stared, and then ran back into another room; and in a few minutes I received the compliments of the lady of the house, and her regret that she could not accommodate me. I was indignant at Nicolas, who had merely asked whether such a person lived there, and without more ado had sent me in. I left the house, and with the halter of my macho in one hand and spurs in the other, and Nicolas following with the mules, sought the house of the commandant. I found him standing on the piazza, with the key in his hand, and all his household stuff packed up outside, only waiting till the moon rose to set out for another post. I believe he regretted that he could not accommodate me, nor could he refer me to any other house; but he sent his servant to look for one, and I waited nearly an hour, up for a bidder.

In the mean time I made inquiries about my road. I did not wish to continue on the direct route to Nicaragua, but to go first to the port of San Juan on the Pacific, the proposed termination of the canal to connect the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. The commandant

regretted that I had not come one day sooner. He mentioned a fact of which I was aware before, that Mr. Bailey, an English gentleman, had been employed by the government to survey the canal route, and had resided some time at the post, and added that since his departure it was perfectly desolate; no one ever visited it, not a person in the place knew the road to it, and, unluckily, a man who had been in Mr. Bailey's employ had left that morning for Nicaragua. Most fortunately, on inquiry, the man was found to be still in the place, and he, too, intended setting out as soon as the moon rose. I had no inducement to remain; nobody seemed very anxious for the honour of my company, and I would have gone on immediately if the mules had been able to continue; but I made an arrangement with him and his son to wait till three in the morning, then to conduct me to the port, and thence to Nicaragua. At length the commandant's servant returned and conducted me to a house with a little shop in front, where I was received by an old lady with a *buenos noches* that almost surprised me into an idea that I was welcome. I entered through the shop, and passed into a parlour which contained a hammock, an interlaced bedstead, and a very neat *catre* with a gauze mosquito netting, and pink bows at the corners. I was agreeably disappointed with my *posada*, and while conversing with the old lady, was dozing over a cup of chocolate, when I heard a lively voice at the door, and a young lady entered, with two or three young men in attendance, who came up to the table in front of me, and throwing back a black mantilla, bade me *buenos noches*, put out her hand, said that she had heard in church that I was at her house, and was so glad of it; no strangers ever came there; the place was completely out of the world, very dull, &c. &c. I was so surprised that I must have looked very stupid. She was not regularly handsome, but her mouth and eyes were beautiful; and her manner was so different from the cold, awkward and bashful air of her countrywomen, so much like the frank and fascinating welcome which a young lady at home might extend to a friend after a long absence, that if the table had not been between us I could have taken her in my arms and kissed her. I pulled up my shirt collar, and forgot all my troubles and perplexities. Though living in that little remote town, like young ladies in large cities, she had a fancy for strangers, which at that time I regarded as a delightful trait of character in a woman. Her every-day beaux had no chance. At first they were very civil to me, but they became short and crusty, and, very much to my satisfaction, took themselves off. It was so long since I had felt the least interest in a woman, that I gave myself a benefit. The simplest stories of other countries and other people

were to her romance, and her eye kindled as she listened; soon the transition came from facts to feelings, and then that highest earthly pleasure, of being lifted above every-day thoughts by the enthusiasm of a high-minded girl.

We sat up till twelve o'clock. The mother, who at first had wearied me, I found exceedingly agreeable; indeed, I had seldom known a more interesting old lady; for she pressed me to remain two or three days and rest; said the place was dull, but that her daughter would try to make it agreeable; and her daughter said nothing, but looked unutterable things.

All pleasure is fleeting. Twelve o'clock came, an unprecedented hour, for that country. My ordinary prudence in looking out for a sleeping-place had not deserted me. Two little boys had taken possession of the leather bed; the old lady had retired; the beautiful little cartaret remained unoccupied, and the young lady withdrew, telling me that this was to be my bed. I do not know why, but I felt uneasy. I opened the mosquito-net. In that country beds are not used, and an oxhide or mat, often not so clean as it might be, is the substitute. This was a mat, very fine, and clean as if perfectly new. At the head was a lovely pillow with a pink muslin covering, and over it a thin white pillow-case with a bewitching ruffle. Whose cheek had rested on that pillow? I pulled off my coat, walked up and down the room, and waked up one of the boys. It was as I supposed. I lay down, but could not sleep, and determined not to continue my journey the next day.

At three o'clock the guide knocked at the door. The mules were already saddled, and Nicolas was putting on the luggage. I had often clung to my pillow, but never as I did to that pink one with its ruffled border. I told Nicolas that the guide must go home and wait another day. The guide refused. It was the young man; his father had already gone, and had ordered him to follow. Very soon I heard a light footstep, and a soft voice expostulating with the guide. Indignant at his obstinacy, I ordered him away; but very soon I reflected that I could not procure another, and might lose the great object I had in view in making this long journey. I called him back, and attempted to bribe him; but his only answer was, that his father had started at the rising of the moon, and ordered him to follow. At length it was arranged that he should go and overtake his father and bring him back; but perhaps his father would not come. I was pertinacious until I carried the point, and then I was more indifferent. After all, why should I wait? Nicolas said we could get our clothes washed in Nicaragua. I walked out of doors, and resolved that it was

folly to lose the chance of examining a canal route for the belle of Guanacaste. I hurried through my preparations, and bade her, I may say, an affectionate farewell. There is not the least chance that I shall ever see her again. Living in a secluded town, unknown beyond the borders of its unknown state, between the Andes and Pacific Ocean, probably she is already the happy wife of some worthy townsman, and has forgotten the stranger who owes to her some of the happiest moments he passed in Central America.

It was now broad daylight. It was very rare that I had left a place with so much regret; but I turned my sorrow into anger, and wreaked it upon Nicolas and the guide. The wind was very high, and, sweeping over the great plain, raised such clouds of dust as made riding both disagreeable and difficult. This ought to have had some effect in restoring my equanimity, but it did not. All day we had on our right the grand range of Cordilleras, and crowning it at this point the great volcanoes of Rincon and Orosi. From thence a vast plain, over which the wind swept furiously, extended to the sea. At one o'clock we came in sight of the hacienda of Santa Teresa, standing on a great elevation, and still a long way before us. The hacienda was the property of Don Augustin Gutierrez of San José, and, with two others, was under the charge of his son Don Manuel. A letter from his father had informed him of my coming, and he received me as an old acquaintance. The situation of the house was finer than that of any I had seen. It was high, and commanded a view of an immense plain, studded with trees in groups and in forest. The ocean was not visible, but we could see the opposite coast of the Gulf of Nicoya, and the point of the port of Culebra, the finest on the Pacific, only three and a half leagues distant. The hacienda contained 1,000 mares and 400 horses, more than 100 of which were in sight from the door. It was grand enough to give the owner ideas of empire. Toward evening I counted from the door of the house seventeen deer, and Don Manuel told me that he had a contract for furnishing 2,000 skins. In the season a good hunter gets twenty-five a-day. Even the workmen will not eat them, and they are only shot for the hide and horns. He had forty workmen, and an ox was killed every day. Near the house was an artificial lake, more than a mile in circumference, built as a drinking-place for cattle. And yet the proprietors of these haciendas are not rich; the ground is worth absolutely nothing. The whole value is in the stock; and allowing two pounds a head for the horses and mares would probably give the full value of this apparently magnificent estate.

Here, too, I could have passed a week with great satisfaction, but

the next morning I resumed my journey. Though early in the dry season, the ground was parched, and the streams were dried up. We carried a large calabash with water, and stopping under the shade of a tree, turned our mules out on the plain and breakfasted. I was riding in advance, with my poncha flying in the wind, when I saw a drove of cattle stop and look wildly at me, and then rush furiously toward me. I attempted to run, but, remembering the bull-fights at Guatemala, I tore off my poncha, and had just time to get behind a high rock as the whole herd darted by at their full speed. We continued our route, from time to time catching glimpses of the Pacific, till we reached a clear, open place, completely protected from the wind, and called the Boca of the Mountain of Nicaragua. A large caravan had already encamped, and among the muleteers Nicolas found acquaintances from San José. Their cargoes consisted of potatoes, sweet bread, and dolces for Nicaragua.

Towards evening we wound for a short distance among the hills that enclosed us, ascended a slight range, and came down directly upon the shore of the sea. I always had a high feeling when I touched the shore of the Pacific, and never more so than at this desolate place. The waves rolled grandly, and broke with a solemn roar. The mules were startled, and my macho shrunk from the heaving water. I spurred him into it, and at a moment when I was putting in my pocket some shells which Nicolas had picked up, he ran away. He had attempted it several times before in the woods; and now, having a fair chance, I gave him a full sweep of the coast. We continued nearly an hour on the shore, when we crossed a high, rough headland, and again came down upon the sea. Four times we mounted headlands, and again descended to the shore, and the heat became almost intolerable. The fifth ascent was steep, but we came upon a table covered with a thick forest, through which we proceeded until we came to a small clearing with two huts. We stopped at the first, which was occupied by a black man and his wife. He had plenty of corn; there was a fine pasture-ground near, so hemmed in by the woods that there was no danger of the mules escaping, and I hired the man and woman to sleep out of doors, and give me the hovel to myself.*

* At this place Mr. Stephens devoted a few days to examine the ground between the Pacific Ocean and the Lake of Nicaragua, through which the projected inter-oceanic canal is proposed to be made, and on the 1st of March resumed his journey towards Guatemala.—F. C.

CHAPTER XIX.

VISIT TO THE VOLCANO OF MASAYA—VILLAGE OF MASAYA—LAKE OF MASAYA—NINDIRI—ASCENT OF THE VOLCANO—ACCOUNT OF IT—THE CRATER—DESCENT INTO IT—VOLCANO OF NINDIRI—IGNORANCE OF THE PEOPLE CONCERNING OBJECTS OF INTEREST—RETURN TO MASAYA—ANOTHER COUNTRYMAN—MANAGUA—LAKE OF MANAGUA—FISHING—BEAUTIFUL SCENERY—MATEARES—QUESTA DEL RELOX—NAGAROTIS—CROSSES—A GAMEKEEPER—PUEBLO NUEVO.

MARCH 1.—Anxious as I was to hurry on, I resolved nevertheless to give one day to the Volcano of Masaya. For this purpose I sent a courier ahead to procure me a guide up the volcano, and did not get off till eleven o'clock. At a short distance from the city we met a little negro on horseback, dressed in the black suit that nature had made him, with two large plantain leaves sewed together for a hat, and plantain leaves for a saddle. At the distance of two leagues we came in sight of the volcano, and at four o'clock, after a hot ride, entered the town, one of the oldest and largest in Nicaragua, and though completely inland, containing, with its suburbs, a population of 20,000. We rode to the house of Don Sabino Satroon, who lay, with his mouth open, snoring in a hammock; but his wife, a pretty young half-blood, received me cordially, and with a proper regard for the infirmities of an old husband and for me, did not wake him up. All at once he shut his mouth and opened his eyes, and gave me a cordial welcome. Don Sabino was a Colombian, who had been banished for ten years, as he said, for services rendered his country; and having found his way to Masaya, had married the pretty young half-breed, and set up as a doctor. Inside the door, behind a little stock of sugar, rice, sausages, and chocolate, was a formidable array of jars and bottles, exhibiting as many colours and as puzzling labels as an apothecary's shop at home.

I had time to take a short walk around the town, and turning down the road, at the distance of half a mile came to the brink of a precipice, more than a hundred feet deep, at the foot of which, and a short distance beyond, was the Lake of Masaya. The descent was almost perpendicular, in one place by a rough ladder, and then by steps cut in the rock. I was obliged to stop while fifteen or twenty women, most of them young, passed. Their water-jars were made of the shell of a large gourd, round, with fanciful figures scratched on them, and painted or glazed, supported on the back by a strap across the forehead, and