

dim and hazy, and without any brightness. The dust on the ground was four inches thick; the branches of trees broke with its weight, and people were so disfigured by it that they could not be recognised.

Towards evening my men all woke; the wind was fair, but they took things quietly, and after supper hoisted sail. About twelve o'clock, by an amicable arrangement, I stretched myself on the pilot's bench under the tiller, and when I woke we had passed the volcano of Tigris, and were in an archipelago of islands more beautiful than the islands of Greece. The wind died away, and the boatmen, after playing for a little while with the oars, again let fall the big stone and went to sleep. Outside the awning the heat of the sun was withering, under it the closeness was suffocating, and my poor mules had had no water since their embarkation. In the confusion of getting away I had forgotten it till the moment of departure, and then there was no vessel in which to carry it. After giving them a short nap I roused the men, and with the promise of a reward induced them to take to their oars. Fortunately, before they got tired we had a breeze, and at about four o'clock in the afternoon the big stone was dropped in the harbour of La Union, in front of the town. One ship was lying at anchor, a whaler from Chili, which had put in in distress and been condemned.

The commandant was Don Manuel Romero, one of Morazan's veterans, who was anxious to retire altogether from public life, but remained in office because, in his present straits, he could be useful to his benefactor and friend. He had heard of me, and his attentions reminded me of what I sometimes forgot, but which others very rarely did, my official character; he invited me to his house while I remained in La Union, but gave me intelligence which made me more anxious than ever to hurry on. General Morazan had left the port but a few days before, having accompanied his family thither on their way to Chili. On his return to San Salvador he intended to march directly against Guatemala. By forced marches I might overtake him, and go up under the escort of his army, trusting to chance to avoid being on the spot in case of a battle, or from my acquaintance with Carrera get passed across the lines. Fortunately, the captain of the condemned ship wished to go to San Salvador, and agreed to accompany me the next day.

CHAPTER XXI.

JOURNEY TO SAN SALVADOR—A NEW COMPANION—SAN ALEJO—WAR ALARMS—STATE OF SAN SALVADOR—RIVER LEMPA—SAN VICENTE—VOLCANO OF SAN VICENTE—THERMAL SPRINGS—COJUTEPEQUE—ARRIVAL AT SAN SALVADOR—PREJUDICE AGAINST FOREIGNERS—CONTRIBUTIONS—PRESS-GANGS—VICE-PRESIDENT VIGIL—TAKING OF SAN MIGUEL AND SAN VICENTE—RUMOURS OF A MARCH UPON SAN SALVADOR—DEPARTURE FROM SAN SALVADOR—LA BARRANCA DE GUARAMAL—VOLCANO OF IZALCO—DEPREDACTIONS OF RASCON—ZONZONATE—NEWS FROM GUATIMALA—JOURNEY CONTINUED—AGUISALCO—APENECA—MOUNTAIN OF AGUACHAPA—SUBTERRANEAN FIRES—AGUACHAPA—DEFEAT OF MORAZAN—CONFUSION AND TERROR.

At five o'clock the next afternoon we set out for San Salvador. Don Manuel Romero furnished me with letters of introduction to all the Gefes Politicos, and the captain's name was inserted in my passport.

I must introduce the reader to my new friend. Captain Antonio V. F., a little over thirty, when six months out on a whaling voyage, with a leaky ship and a mutinous crew, steered across the Pacific for the Continent of America, and reached the port of La Union with seven or eight feet water in the hold and half his crew in irons. He knew nothing of Central America until necessity threw him upon its shore. While waiting the slow process of a regular condemnation and order for the sale of his ship, General Morazan, with an escort of officers, came to the port to embark his wife and family for Chili. Captain F. had become acquainted with them, and through them with their side of the politics of the country; and in the evening, while we were riding along the ridge of a high mountain, he told me that he had been offered a lieutenant-colonel's commission, and was then on his way to join Morazan in his march against Guatemala. His ship was advertised for sale, he had written an account of his misadventures to his owners and his wife, was tired of remaining at the port, and a campaign with Morazan was the only thing that offered. He liked General Morazan, and he liked the country, and thought his wife would; if Morazan succeeded there would be vacant offices and estates without owners, and some of them worth having. He went from whaling to campaigning as coolly as a Yankee would from cutting down trees to editing a newspaper. It was no affair of mine, but I suggested that there was no honour to be gained; that he would get his full share of hard knocks, bullets, and sword-cuts; that if Morazan succeeded he would have a desperate struggle for his share of the

spoils, and if Morazan failed he would certainly be shot. All this was matter he had thought on, and before committing himself he intended to make his observations at San Salvador.

At ten o'clock we reached the village of San Alejo, and stopped at a very comfortable house, where all were in a state of excitement from the report of an invasion from Honduras.

The captain had great difficulty in procuring mules; he had two enormous trunks, containing, among other things, Peruvian chains and other gold trinkets to a large amount; in fact, all he was worth. In the evening we walked to the plaza; groups of men, wrapped in their ponchas, were discussing in low tones the movements of the enemy, how far they had marched that day, how long they would require for rest, and the moment when it would be necessary to fly. We returned to the house, placed two naked wooden-bottomed bedsteads in one, and having ascertained by calculation that we were not likely to be disturbed during the night, forgot the troubles of the flying inhabitants, and slept soundly.

On account of the difficulty of procuring mules, we did not set out till ten o'clock. The climate is the hottest in Central America, and insalubrious under exposure to the sun; but we would not wait. Every moment there were new rumours of the approach of the Honduras army, and it was all important for us to keep in advance of them. I shall hasten over our hurried journey through the state of San Salvador, the richest in Central America, extending 180 miles along the shores of the Pacific, producing tobacco, the best indigo, and richest balsam in the world.

In the afternoon of the second day we came in sight of the Lempa, now a gigantic river rolling on to the Pacific. Three months before I had seen it a little stream among the mountains of Esquipulas. Here we were overtaken by Don Carlos Rivas, a leading Liberal from Honduras, flying for life before partisan soldiers of his own state. We descended to the bank of the river, and followed it through a wild forest, which had been swept by a tornado, the trees still lying as they fell. At the crossing-place, the valley of the river was half-a-mile wide; but being the dry season, on this side there was a broad beach of sand and stones. We rode to the water's edge, and shouted for the boatman on the opposite side. Other parties arrived, all fugitives, among them the wife and family of Don Carlos, and we formed a crowd upon the shore. At length the boat came, took on board sixteen mules, saddles and luggage, and as many men, women and children as could stow themselves away, leaving a multitude behind. We crossed in the dark, and on the opposite side found every hut and shed filled

with fugitives; families in dark masses were under the trees, and men and women crawled out to congratulate friends who had put the Lempa between them and the enemy. We slept upon our luggage on the bank of the river, and before daylight were again in the saddle.

That night we slept at San Vicente, and the next morning the captain, in company with an invalid officer of Morazan's, who had been prevented by sickness from accompanying the general in his march against Guatemala, rode on with the luggage, while I, with Colonel Hoyas, made a circuit to visit El Infierno of the volcano of San Vicente. Crossing a beautiful plain running to the base of the volcano, we left our animals at a hut, and walked some distance to a stream in a deep ravine, which we followed upward to its source, coming from the very base of the volcano. The water was warm, and had a taste of vitriol, and the banks were incrustated with white vitriol and flour of sulphur. At a distance of 100 or 200 yards it formed a basin, where the water was hotter than the highest grade of my Réaumur's thermometer. In several places we heard subterranean noises, and toward the end of the ravine, on the slope of one side, was an orifice about 30 feet in diameter, from which, with a terrific noise, boiling water was spouted into the air. This is called El Infiernillo, or the "little infernal regions." The inhabitants say that the noise is increased by the slightest agitation of the air, even by the human voice. Approaching to within range of the falling water, we shouted several times, and as we listened and gazed into the fearful cavity, I imagined that the noise was louder and more angry, and that the boiling water spouted higher at our call. Colonel Hoyas conducted me to a path, from which I saw my road, like a white line, over a high verdant mountain. He told me that many of the inhabitants of San Miguel had fled to San Vicente, and at that place the Honduras arms would be repelled; we parted, little expecting to see each other again so soon, and under such unpleasant circumstances for him.

I overtook the captain at a village where he had breakfast prepared, and in the afternoon we arrived at Cojutepeque, until within two days the temporary capital, beautifully situated at the foot of a small extinct volcano, its green and verdant sides broken only by a winding path, and on the top a fortress, which Morazan had built as his last rallying-place, to die under the flag of the Republic.

The next day at one o'clock we reached San Salvador. Entering by a fine gate, and through suburbs teeming with fruit and flower trees, the meanness of the houses was hardly noticed. Advancing, we saw heaps of rubbish, and large houses with their fronts cracked and falling, marks of the earthquakes which had broken it up as the seat of

government, and almost depopulated the city. This series of earthquakes commenced on the third of the preceding October, and for twenty days the earth was tremulous, sometimes suffering fifteen or twenty shocks in twenty-four hours, and one so severe that, as Mr. Chatfield told me, a bottle standing in his sleeping-room was thrown down. Most of the inhabitants abandoned the city, and those who remained slept under matting in the courtyards of their houses. Every house was more or less injured; some were rendered untenable, and many were thrown down. Two days before, the vice-president and officers of the Federal and State Governments, impelled by the crisis of the times, had returned to their shattered capital. It was about one o'clock, intensely hot, and there was no shade; the streets were solitary, the doors and windows of the houses closed, the shops around the plaza shut, the little matted tents of the market-women deserted, and the inhabitants, forgetting earthquakes, and that a hostile army was marching upon them, were taking their noonday siesta. In a corner of the plaza was a barricado, constructed with trunks of trees, rude as an Indian fortress, and fortified with cannon, intended as the scene of the last effort for the preservation of the city. A few soldiers were asleep under the corridor of the quartel, and a sentinel was pacing before the door. Inquiring our way of him, we turned the corner of the plaza, and stopped at the house of Don Pedro Negrete, at that time acting as vice-consul both of England and France, and the only representative at the capital of any foreign power.

In the evening I called upon the vice-president. Great changes had taken place since I saw him at Zonzonate. The troops of the Federal government had been routed in Honduras; Carrera had conquered Quezaltenango, garrisoned it with his own soldiers, destroyed its existence as a separate state, and annexed it to Guatemala. San Salvador stood alone in support of the Federal Government. But Señor Vigil had risen with the emergency. The chief of the state, a bold-looking mulatto, and other officers of the government, were with him. They knew that the Honduras troops were marching upon the city, had reason to fear they would be joined by those of Nicaragua, but they were not dismayed; on the contrary, all showed a resolution and energy I had not seen before. General Morazan, they said, was on his march against Guatemala. Tired as they were of war, the people of San Salvador, Señor Vigil said, had risen with new enthusiasm. Volunteers were flocking in from all quarters; and with a determination that was imposing, though called out by civil war, he added that they were resolved to sustain the Federation, or die under the ruins of San Salvador. It was the first time my feelings had been at

all roused. In all the convulsions of the time I had seen no flush of heroism, no high love of country. Self-preservation and self-aggrandisement were the ruling passions. It was a bloody scramble for power and place; and sometimes, as I rode through the beautiful country, and saw what Providence had done for them, and how unthankful they were, I thought it would be a good riddance if they would play out the game of the Kilkenny cats.

In the excitement and alarm of the place, it was very difficult to procure mules. As to procuring them direct for Guatemala, it was impossible. No one would move on that road until the result of Morazan's expedition was known; and even to get them for Zonzonate it was necessary to wait a day. That day I intended to abstract myself from the tumult of the city and ascend the volcano of San Salvador; but the next morning a woman came to inform us that one of our men had been taken by a pressgang of soldiers, and was in the carcel. We followed her to the place, and, being invited in by the officer to pick out our man, found ourselves surrounded by 100 of Vigil's volunteers, of every grade in appearance and character, from the frightened servant-boy torn from his master's door to the worst of desperadoes; some asleep on the ground, some smoking stumps of cigars, some sullen, and others perfectly reckless. Two of the supreme worst did me the honour to say they liked my looks, called me captain, and asked me to take them into my company. Our man was not ambitious, and could do better than be shot at for a shilling a day; but we could not take him out without an order from the chief of the state, and went immediately to the office of the government, where I was sorry to meet Señor Vigil, as the subject of my visit and the secrets of the prison were an unfortunate comment upon his boasts of the enthusiasm of the people in taking up arms. With his usual courtesy, however, he directed the proper order to be made out, and the names of all in my service to be sent to the captains of the different pressgangs, with orders not to touch them. All day men were caught and brought in, and petty officers were stationed along the street drilling them. In the afternoon intelligence was received that General Morazan's advanced guard had defeated a detachment of Carrera's troops, and that he was marching with an accession of forces upon Guatemala. A feu-de-joie was fired in the plaza, and all the church bells rang peals of victory.

In the evening I saw Señor Vigil again and alone. He was confident of the result. The Honduras troops would be repulsed at San Vicente; Morazan would take Guatemala. He urged me to wait; he had his preparations all made, his horses ready, and, on the first notice

of Morazan's entry, intended to go up to Guatemala, and establish that city once more as the capital. But I was afraid of delay, and we parted to meet in Guatemala; but we never met again. A few days afterwards he was flying for his life, and is now in exile, under sentence of death if he returns; the party that rules Guatemala is heaping opprobrium upon his name; but in the recollection of my hurried tour I never forget him who had the unhappy distinction of being vice-president of the Republic.

I did not receive my passport till late in the evening, and though I had given directions to the contrary, the captain's name was inserted. We had already had a difference of opinion in regard to our movements. He was not so bent as I was upon pushing on to Guatemala, and besides, I did not consider it right, in an official passport, to have the name of a partisan. Accordingly, early in the morning I went to the Government House to have it altered. The separate passports were just handed to me when I heard a clatter in the streets, and fifteen or twenty horsemen galloped into the courtyard, covered with sweat and dust, among whom I recognised Colonel Hoyas, with his noble horse, so broken that I did not know him. They had ridden all night. The Honduras troops had taken San Miguel and San Vicente, and were then marching upon San Salvador. If not repulsed at Cojutepeque, that day they would be upon the capital. For four days I had been running before these troops, and now, by a strange caprice, at the prospect of actual collision, I regretted that my arrangements were so far advanced, and that I had no necessity for remaining. I had a strong curiosity to see a city taken by assault, but, unfortunately, I had not the least possible excuse. I had my passport in my hand and my mules were ready. Nevertheless, before I reached Don Pedro's house I determined to remain. The captain had his sword and spurs on, and was only waiting for me. I told him the news, and he uttered an exclamation of thankfulness that we were all ready, and mounted immediately. I added that I intended to remain. He refused; said that he knew the sanguinary character of the people better than I did, and did not wish to see an affair without having a hand in it. I replied, and after a short controversy, the result was as usual between two obstinate men: I would not go and he would not stay. I sent my luggage-mules and servants under his charge, and he rode off, to stop for me at a hacienda on the road, while I unsaddled my horse and gave him another mess of corn.

In the meantime the news had spread, and great excitement prevailed in the city. Here there was no thought of flight; the spirit of resistance was general. The impressed soldiers were brought out from

the prisons and furnished with arms, and drums beat through the streets for volunteers. On my return from the Government House I noticed a tailor on his board at work; when I passed again his horse was at the door, his sobbing wife was putting pistols in his holsters, and he was fastening on his spurs. Afterward I saw him mounted before the quartel, receiving a lance with a red flag, and then galloping off to take his place in the line. In two hours all that the impoverished city could do was done. Vigil, the chief of the state, clerks, and household servants, were preparing for the last struggle. At twelve o'clock the city was as still as death. I lounged on the shady side of the plaza, and the quiet was fearful. At two o'clock intelligence was received that the troops of San Vicente had fallen back upon Cojutepeque, and that the Honduras troops had not yet come up. An order was immediately issued to make this the rallying-place, and to send thither the mustering of the city. About 200 lancers set off from the plaza with a feeble shout, under a burning sun, and I returned to the house. The commotion subsided; my excitement died away, and I regretted that I had not set out with the captain, when, to my surprise, he rode into the courtyard. On the road he thought that he had left me in the lurch, and that, as a travelling companion, he ought to have remained with me. I had no such idea, but I was glad of his return, and mounted, and left my capital to its fate, even yet uncertain whether I had any government.

The captain had given me a hint in a led horse which he kept for emergencies, and I had bought one of an officer of General Morazan, who sold him because he would not stand fire, and recommended him for a way he had of carrying his rider out of the reach of bullets. At the distance of two leagues we reached a hacienda where our men were waiting for us with the luggage. It was occupied by a miserable old man alone, with a large swelling under his throat, very common all through this country, the same as is seen among the mountains of Switzerland. While the men were reloading, we heard the tramp of horses, and fifteen or twenty lancers galloped up to the fence; and the leader, a dark, stern, but respectable-looking man about forty, in a deep voice, called to the old man to get ready and mount; the time had come, he said, when every man must fight for his country; if they had done so before, their own ships would be floating on the Atlantic and the Pacific, and they would not now be at the mercy of strangers and enemies. Altogether the speech was a good one, but made from the back of a horse by a powerful man, well armed, and with twenty lancers at his heels, it was not pleasant in the ears of the "strangers" for whom it was intended. Really I respected