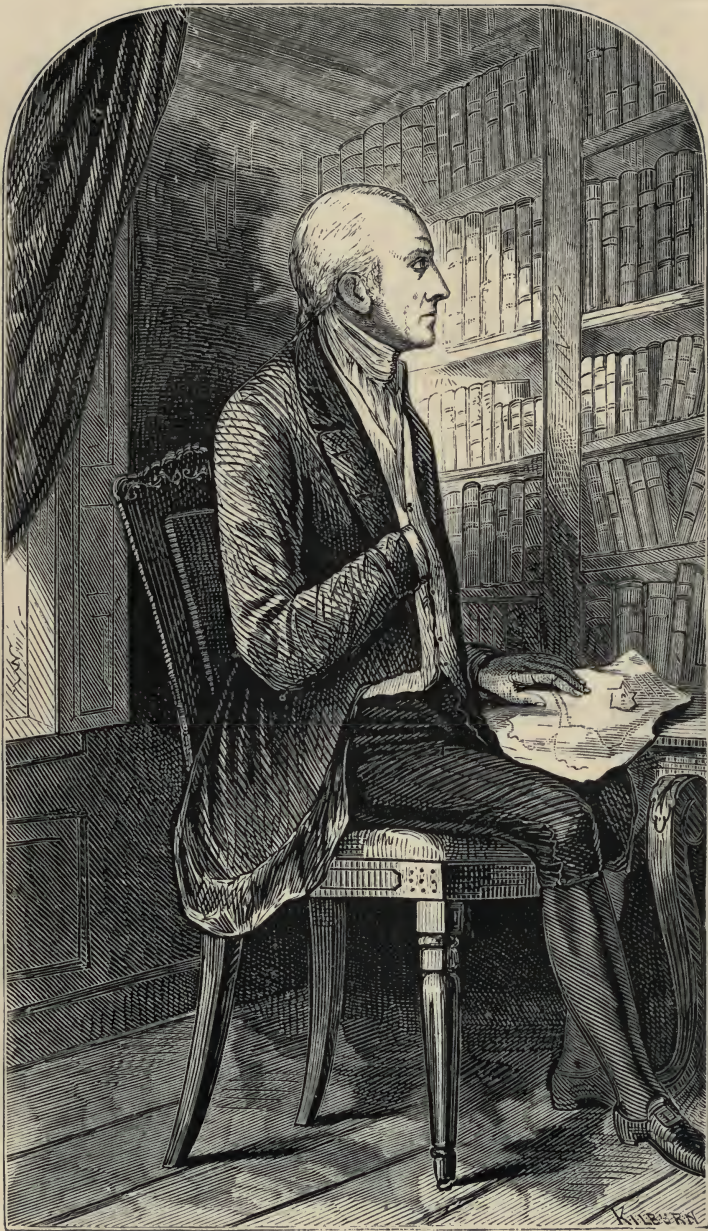


UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO



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JOSÉ RODRIGUEZ GASPAS FRANCIA.—See note, p. 223.

THE
HISTORY OF PARAGUAY,

WITH

Notes of Personal Observations,

AND

REMINISCENCES OF DIPLOMACY UNDER
DIFFICULTIES.

BY

CHARLES A. WASHBURN,

COMMISSIONER AND MINISTER RESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES AT ASUNCION
FROM 1861 TO 1863.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

1526-1537.

Introductory.—Discovery of Paraguay by Sebastian Cabot.—Antecedents of Cabot.—Origin of the Name Rio de la Plata.—San Espiritu.—The City of the Cesars.—Cabot returns to Spain, 1530.—His Character and Death.—Expedition of Don Pedro de Mendoza in 1534.—Unpopularity of Mendoza.—Buenos Aires.—Difficulties with the Natives.—Famine and Pestilence.—Corpus Cristi.—Efforts to establish Communication with Peru.—Death of Mendoza.—Domingo Martinez de Irala.—First Settlement of Asuncion.—Plague of Locusts.—Ruiz de Galan.—Internal Dissensions.—Battle with the Payaguas.—Treachery.—Battle with the Guaranis.—Miraculous Interference.—Irala chosen Governor.—Arrival of Emigrants.—Colonists united in Asuncion.—Favorable Prospects . . . I

CHAPTER II.

1537-1542.

Wise Administration of Irala.—Union of the Spanish and Indian Races.—Conversion of the Indians.—The Guarani Language.—Its Preservation a Doubtful Blessing.—Character of Irala.—His Justice towards the Indians.—Plot of the Indians for the Destruction of the Colony.—Its Discovery.—Execution of the Leaders.—The Colonists abandon all Hope of returning to Spain.—Condition of the different Tribes previous to the Arrival of the Spaniards.—Manners and Customs.—The Guaicurus.—Their Character and Habits.—The Mbayas.—Infanticide.—Final Extinction.—The Payaguas.—Origin of the Name "Paraguay."—Other Tribes of the Guarani Family.—The Guaranis compared with other Indian Nations.—Theory of Naturalists respecting the Origin of the Human Race.—The Guarani only capable of Improvement and Religious Impressions 29

CHAPTER III.

1542-1545.

Expedition of Alvar Nuñez de Vera Cabeza de Vaca.—Changes his Route.—Overland Journey.—Arrives in Asuncion, 1542.—His Reception.—

Takes Possession of the Government. — His Instructions from the Emperor. — Difficulties in administering the Government. — Disaffection among the Officers. — Difficulties with the Indians. — His Magnanimous Course towards them. — Peace concluded. — Conspiracy formed against Cabeza de Vaca. — He is seized and imprisoned. — Irala proclaimed Governor. — Cabeza de Vaca sent a Prisoner to Spain. — Unjust Treatment of him by the Emperor. — He is finally tried and acquitted . . . 48

CHAPTER IV.

1545 - 1557.

Prosperity of the Colony. — New Towns built. — Results of the Admixture of the two Races. — Expeditions against the Indians. — Irala succeeds in opening Communication with Peru. — Political Affairs of that Country. — Irala returns to Asuncion. — Expedition under Captain Nuño de Chaves sent to explore the Region of the Upper Paraguay. — Consequences resulting from the Failure of that Expedition. — Death of Irala. — His Character and Public Services. — Influence of the Jesuits upon the Character of the Paraguayan People. — Paraguay constituted a Bishopric, 1547 . . . 57

CHAPTER V.

1560 - 1636.

Buenos Aires founded a Second Time, 1580 ; declared to be a Separate Colony, 1620. — Saavedra appointed Governor. — Arrival of Jesuit Missionaries. — Pedro de la Torre, First Bishop of Paraguay ; his Efforts in Behalf of the Indians. — Labors of the Jesuits. — Fraud and Deceit employed to cheat the Indians into Christianity. — Superstition. — The Virgin of Caacupé, and other Miracle-Workers. — Conflicting Opinions respecting the Influence of the Jesuits on the Indians. — Towns founded by the Jesuits. — Destruction of the Reductions of Guayrá. — Opposition of the Spanish Government to the Enslavement of the Indians. — Don Luis de Cespedes Jaray. — Expulsion of the Jesuits. — Destruction of the Spanish Settlements in Guayrá. — It becomes a Part of the Brazilian Empire . . . 68

CHAPTER VI.

Opposition to the Jesuits by the Government and Priesthood. — They are made Independent of the Government of Paraguay. — Bernardino de Cardenas, Bishop of Paraguay. — Attempts to control the Civil Government by Force of Papal Thunder. — Uses his Influence against the Jesuits. — His Banishment. — Returns to Asuncion. — Elected Governor. — Persecutes the Jesuits. — Demonstration against the Jesuit College. — Cardenas removed from Office. — Francisco Solano, the First American Saint. — Stories concerning him. — Paucity of Words in the Indian Languages. — The Jesuits restored to their Dignities and Privileges. — Their Internal

Domestic Policy. — The Spanish Encoménderos. — The System of the Jesuits. — Its Evil Effects upon the Indians. — Prepares the Way for the Rule of Dr. Francia 89

CHAPTER VII.

Diego de los Reyes Balmaceda appointed Governor, 1717. — Rebellion of Antiquera. — Defeat of the Rebels by Zavala, Governor of Buenos Aires. — Flight, Capture, and Death of Antiquera, 1731. — Martin Barua appointed Governor. — Return of the Jesuits. — Political Parties. — Second Rebellion. — Battle near Pirayu, December 15, 1733. — Zavala puts down the Second Rebellion. — Jesuitism in Europe. — Sebastian Carvalho, Marques of Pombal. — Expulsion of the Jesuits from Portugal, Spain, and France. — Remonstrance of the Pope. — Charges against the Brotherhood by the Council of Spain. — The Act of Expulsion finally approved and ratified by the Pope, 1773 108

CHAPTER VIII.

Expulsion of the Jesuits. — They are sent to Europe. — Great Power and Wealth of the Jesuits previous to their Expulsion. — Their Doctrines and Practices. — Condition of the Indians after their Expulsion. — Hardship and Suffering. — Contest of the Civil and Ecclesiastical Authorities for the Spoils left by the Jesuits. — Conflict of Authority. — Unhappy Condition of the Indians. — Tyranny of Lazaro Ribera Espinosa. — Don Bernardo Velasco. — The Province of Misiones constituted, 1803. — Revolution in Buenos Aires. — Declaration of Independence proclaimed May 25, 1810 126

CHAPTER IX.

The Revolution in Buenos Aires. — Popularity of Governor Velasco. — Efforts of the Junta of Buenos Aires to create a Revolution in Paraguay. — Don Manuel Belgrano's Campaign against Paraguay. — He arrives at the Banks of the Parana, December 4, 1810. — Proclamation to the People of Misiones. — Letter to the Governor of Paraguay. — Barbarous Proclamations. — Crosses the Tebicuari. — Wise Course of Velasco. — Critical Situation of Belgrano. — Battle of Paraguari. — Defeat of Belgrano. He falls back to the Tacuari, to await reinforcements. — Is there attacked by the Paraguayans under Yegros. — Belgrano saves his Army by Diplomacy. — His Proclamation to the Paraguayan People. — Sows the Seeds of Revolution. — Character of Belgrano 139

CHAPTER X.

Revolution in Paraguay. — Don Pedro Somellera. — Success of the Revolutionists. — Incapacity of the People for Self-Government. — José Gaspar

Rodriguez Francia. — His Origin, Early Education, and Character. — Letters of John P. and William P. Robertson. — Work of Rengger and Longchamp. — Francia pursues the Profession of a <i>Tinterillo</i> . — His Tastes, Habits, and Disposition. — His Dislike of the Spanish and the Priesthood. — His Flattery of the Lower Orders. — Anecdote concerning him	156
--	-----

CHAPTER XI.

Inability of the Paraguayan People to form a Government for themselves. — Francia made a Member of the first Junta. — Congress called to determine the Form and Character of the New Government. — Declaration of Independence. — Treatment of Dr. Somellera at the Hands of Francia. — Retirement of Francia from the Junta. — Alleged Conspiracy against the Junta. — The Conspirators arrested and condemned to Death without Form of Process — Francia interposes, and stays the Effusion of Blood. — Different Accounts of the Affair. — Reasons for supposing it to have been an Infamous Trick contrived by Francia. — Dr. Somellera's Criticisms on the Works of Rengger and Robertson	173
--	-----

CHAPTER XII.

The Indecision of the Junta. — Francia withdraws, and La Cerda is named Asesor. — His Popularity and Manner of doing Business. — Francia in Retirement. — His Intrigues for Restoration. — Condition of Paraguay at this Time. — A Day's Festivities. — Doña Juana Ysquibel. — Arrival of Don Nicholas Herrera as Special Envoy from Buenos Aires. — Francia recalled to the Junta. — He assumes Absolute Power. — Banishment of La Cerda. — A Congress convoked. — Character of the Congress, and Description of the Members. — The Junta abolished, and Francia and Yegros appointed Consuls. — Abuses corrected. — Espionage. — Quotation from Robertson	185
---	-----

CHAPTER XIII.

The Joint Consulship. — Francia's Views and Aspirations in Regard to an Alliance with Great Britain. — His Ignorance of European Affairs. — Perfects his System of Espionage. — Arbitrary Measures. — Decree concerning Marriages. — Its Influence upon the Morals of the Country. — Francia becomes the Head of the Church. — A Vicar-General appointed to administer the Spiritual Affairs of the Country. — Another Congress called. — The Consulship abolished. — Francia made Dictator. — Personal Habits of the Dictator, Mode of Life, Treatment of his Subordinates, Personal Appearance, Grotesque Costume, Vanity, and Egotism. — Military Displays	205
---	-----

CHAPTER XIV.

Condition of the Country under the Rule of the Dictator. — Government Spies: their Modes of Operation. — Universal Distrust. — Officers and Soldiers licensed Libertines. — The Dictator in Public. — Humiliating Observances. — Another Congress called, 1817. — Francia made Perpetual Dictator 226

CHAPTER XV.

José de Artigas. — Gauchos and Estancieros. — Antecedents of Artigas. — Commences his Career as Captain of Banditti, 1808. — Ineffectual Attempts to put him down. — Receives a Commission from the Crown of Spain. — Deserts, and joins the Revolutionists in Buenos Aires, 1813. — Again deserts and fights "on his own Hook." — His Relations with Dr. Francia. — Duties assessed upon Paraguayan Vessels. — Destruction of the Missions of Entre Rios. — Overthrow of Artigas. — He escapes to Paraguay. — His Treatment at the Hands of Francia 233

CHAPTER XVI.

Last Years of Artigas's Life. — His Apotheosis. — Banda Oriental. — Republicanism in Spanish America. — M. Aimé Bonpland. — Arrives in Buenos Aires, 1817. — Explorations and Observations in the Interior. — A Missionary of Civilization. — Establishes a Colony in Corrientes. — Experiments with Paraguay Tea. — Destruction of the Colony, and Seizure and Detention of Bonpland by Dr. Francia. — Ineffectual Attempts to obtain his Release. — Other Foreigners allowed to leave the Country. — Bonpland's Labors in Paraguay 253

CHAPTER XVII.

General Isolation. — The Closing of the Ports. — Effect upon the Commercial Condition of the Country. — Improvement in Agriculture and Manufactures. — These Forced Improvements but Incidents of Acts of the Grossest Tyranny. — Francia as a Cattle-Doctor 267

CHAPTER XVIII.

Scarcity of Data for a History of Francia's Times. — Capricious Character of his Government. — His Jealousy of all Persons of Intelligence. — He gives a Levee. — Unnatural Conduct towards his Father. — Treatment of his Natural Children. — Religious Belief. — Banishment of Mendez. — The Prisons. — The Chamber of Truth. — Tevego a Place of Exile. — Executions. — Persecution of the Spaniards. — Forced Contributions. — Marriage discountenanced; forbidden except with Negroes. — Francia makes himself the Head of the Church. — Question of his Insanity. — His Motives in closing the Ports and excluding Foreigners 276

CHAPTER XIX.

The Yegros Conspiracy. — Its Counterpart. — The Chamber of Torture. — Execution of the Alleged Conspirators. — Espionage. — Francia turns Land Surveyor. — The City laid Prostrate. — Needless Destruction of Property. — Reconstruction. — Francia's Treatment of Old Spaniards. — General Velasco. — Francia's Letter in Reply to Rengger 297

CHAPTER XX.

The Urdapilleta Family. — Father and Son condemned to Death. — Saved by the Death of the Dictator. — The Schoolmaster Escalada's Testimony. — His Contempt for Francia's Scientific and Literary Attainments. — Francia's Treatment of his Brothers, Sisters, and Natural Children. — The Different Versions of the Yegros Conspiracy. — Devised by Francia as a Pretext for Killing off all the Leading Men. — The Example imitated by the First Lopez and improved upon by the Second. — The People not permitted to know anything, except that Certain Persons have been arrested and executed, and their Property confiscated. — The Observance of Legal Forms. — The Confiscation of Cabañas's Estate. — Iturbe. — The Arrest and Suicide of General Caballero. — Francia's System perfected by Lopez 312

CHAPTER XXI.

Last Years of the Dictator. — His Death and Funeral Ceremonies. — Superstition of the People. — His Tomb broken open and his Remains carried off. — A God of Evil. — Terror inspired by his Name. — His Character 327

CHAPTER XXII.

Condition of the Country after the Death of Francia. — Policarpo Patiño. — The Junta. — Imprisonment and Death of Patiño. — The Triumvirate. — Carlos Antonio Lopez. — Congress convoked. — Lopez and Alonso made Consuls. — Antecedents of Lopez. — Reforms in the Government. — Francisco Solano Lopez. — Education. — Crude Laws. — Gradual Extinction of Slavery. — Removal of Commercial Restrictions. — The Consulship abolished and Lopez elected President, 1844, for three Years. — Independence of Paraguay. — Foreign Emigration encouraged. — Alliance with Corrientes. — Edward A. Hopkins. — United States and Paraguay Navigation Company 334

CHAPTER XXIII.

The United States and Paraguay Steam Navigation Company — Difficulties with Lopez. — Expedition of Lieutenant Thomas J. Page to the Plata. —

Opposition of Lopez to the American Company. — Insults and Annoyances. — The Enterprise broken up. — Lieutenant Page succeeds in extricating the Company from the Power of Lopez. — Treaty between the United States and Paraguay. — The Water Witch sent to explore the Waters of the Parana. — Fort Itapiru. — The Water Witch fired upon. — Eagerness of Page to avenge the Insult to the Flag. — Commodore Salter refuses to take any Action in the Matter. — Duties of Naval Officers . . . 361

CHAPTER XXIV.

The United States Government takes up the Cause of the Rhode Island Company. — An Expedition with a Special Commissioner sent to Paraguay to demand Indemnity. — Urquiza obtains a Copy of the Secret Instructions and visits Lopez. — Arrival of Commissioner Bowlin in Paraguay. — Negotiations. — A Convention formed. — The Expedition returns to the United States. — The Commissioners meet in Washington. — Result of the Arbitration. — Chagrin of President Buchanan at the Decision. — His Message to Congress 377

CHAPTER XXV.

The Family of Carlos Antonio Lopez. — Paraguay and Corrientes make Common Cause against Buenos Aires. — The Paraguayan Army. — The Alliance abandoned. — Lopez's Appearance in Public. — Dissolute Character of his Sons — Pancha Garmendia. — Lopez invents a Conspiracy. — James Canstatt, an Englishman, included among the Conspirators. — Interference of Consul Henderson. — Energetic Action of the English Government. — Lopez as a Mediator between the Province of Buenos Aires and President Urquiza. — F. S. Lopez as an Ambassador of Peace. — Attempt of the English Gunboats to make a Prisoner of Lopez. — A Hostage for Canstatt. — The Tacuari blockaded till Canstatt is liberated. — Lopez forced to make Restitution to Canstatt. — Re-establishes Friendly Relations with England. — Execution of the Brothers Decoud. — Libertinism and Vengeance 388

CHAPTER XXVI.

Francisco Solano Lopez sent Ambassador to Europe. — Madam Lynch. — Colony of French Agriculturists introduced into Paraguay. — Hardships and Sufferings. — Attempt to desert. — Isolation of Paraguay. — The Gran Chaco. — Barbarous Treatment of the French Colonists. — Efforts of the French Consul in their Behalf. — Action taken by the French Government. — They are finally allowed to leave the Country. — The French Claims. — Lopez increases his Army. — Relations with Brazil. — The Brazilian Squadron. — Negotiations. — Treaty concluded. — Line of Steamers established between Rio and Cuyuba. — Measures taken by

Lopez to increase his Revenue. — Yerba Maté. — Customs. — Internal Revenue. — Incomes of the Lopez Family. — Government Lands. — Influence of Lopez's Government upon the Industry of the People . . . 405

CHAPTER XXVII.

The Question between the United States and Paraguay at the Inauguration of President Lincoln. — A Resident Commissioner appointed to Paraguay. — He is accompanied by an Agent of the Rhode Island Company. — Lieutenant William H. Maccomb. — Arrival in Asuncion, November 14, 1861. — Lopez refuses to reopen the Question of the Rhode Island Company. — His Grudging Civility towards the Commissioner. — Physical Aspects of Paraguay. — The Parana and Paraguay Rivers. — Early Settlements. — The Tres Bocas. — Gran Chaco. — Cerrito. — Humaitá. — The Vermejo. — Villa del Pilar. — The Tebicuari. — Villa Franca. — Villeta. — San Antonio. — Lambaré. — Asuncion. — Arsenal. — Custom-House. — San Pedro. — Concepcion. — San Salvador. — Description of a Paraguayan Town. — The General Configuration of the Country. — The Forests. — Dwellings. — Productions. — Characteristics of the People. — The Future Paraguayan Race. — The Natural Wealth of the Country. — The Fruits. — The Climate. — Diseases brought in the Train of War. — Sufferings of the People 423

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Personal Experiences and Adventures. — Society in Asuncion. — Hospitality of the Paraguayans. — The Club Balls and Banquets. — New Fashions. — The Casal Family. — Wealth and Extravagance without Comfort. — José Mauricio Casal. — His Sons and Daughters. — News from Home. — Domestic Arrangements. — Food of the Country People. — Amusements. — Dancing. — Harvest of the Sugar-Cane. — Ballads and Music 439

CHAPTER XXIX.

The Yerba Maté. — A French Savant. — Visit to the Yerbales. — Capiatá. — The Hospitable Cura. — Itaguá: Nicholas Troya and Alexandro Cavallero. — Pirayu. — Paraguari. — The Grotto of St. Thomas. — The Fernandez Family. — Ibitimi. — The Tebicuari. — Villa Rica — Caaguazu. — The Gefé and the Club. — The Yerbales. — Collecting and curing the Yerba. — Life at the Yerbales. — Subsequent Fate of all who showed Attention and Hospitality 450

CHAPTER XXX.

The Elder Lopez not naturally of a Sanguinary Disposition. — Treatment of Foreign Diplomates. — His Peculiar Etiquette. — Disputes with the

Pope. — He retains the Church Property. — Bishops of Paraguay. — The Constitution. — Ignorance and Indifference of the People in Political Affairs. — All Power with the Executive. — The Subserviency of Congress. — How chosen. — Lopez, in Imitation of Rosas, declines a Re-election. — An Awkward Failure 463

CHAPTER XXXI.

F. S. Lopez in Europe. — Armies moving to the Crimea. — His Visions of Military Glory. — He inaugurates a New Policy for Paraguay. — Warlike Preparations. — Steam Vessels. — Military Arsenal. — Railroad. — Great Increase of the Army. — Death of Carlos Antonio Lopez. — Francisco Solano assumes the Control of the Government. — Character of Carlos Antonio Lopez. — Condition of Paraguay under his Rule. — Government Exactions. — Internal Improvements. — Public Morals. — Education. — Foreign Relations. — Condition of Paraguay as compared with Argentine Provinces 471

CHAPTER XXXII.

The Constitution of Paraguay. — Francisco Solano Lopez secures his own Election. — His Treatment of the Friends of the Deceased President. — The Meeting of the Congress. — The Mode of Business and the Debates. — Discussion between Varela and Vasquez. — Fate of Varela. — Padre Maiz and other Priests. — Arrest, Torture, and Death of Chief-Justice Lescano. — Another Conspiracy alleged to have been discovered. — Treatment of the Accused 483

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Revolution in the Banda Oriental. — Venancio Flores. — Juan F. Giro elected President. — Treachery and Violence. — Machinations of Paranhos. — Flores made Minister of War. — Flight of Giro. — The Triumvirate. — Flores as President. — His Overthrow. — Don Luis Lamas. — War between Buenos Aires and the Argentine Confederation. — Bartolome Mitre. — Battles of Cepeda and Pavon. — Rebellion of Cesar Diaz. — Antonio de las Carreras. — Bernardo P. Berro elected President. — The Flores Invasion. — Florencio Varela. — "La Tribuna" of Buenos Aires. — Progress of the Revolution. — Flores sustained by Outlaws and Brazilians 491

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Policy of Brazil and Buenos Aires respecting Paraguay and Uruguay. — Correspondence between Lopez and Mitre. — Lopez's Preparations for War. — The Province of Rio Grande. — Smuggling Expeditions. — Invasion of

Flores. — His Mode of Warfare. — Weakness and Vacillation of President Berro. — Don Antanacio C. Aguirre Acting President. — Don Felipe Netto's Efforts to involve Brazil in a War with the Oriental Republic. — José Antonio Saraiva. — Brazil sends Commissioners to Montevideo. — Imperial Designs of President Lopez. — He is disappointed in his Matrimonial Designs. — He assumes to be the Champion of Republicanism 509

CHAPTER XXXV.

Intervention of Brazil in the Affairs of Uruguay. — Correspondence between Saraiva and the Oriental Minister for Foreign Affairs. — Don Cesar Sauvan Vianna de Lima. — Sir Edward Thornton. — Don José Vasquez Sagastume. — Lopez declines to form an Alliance with Uruguay. — Violation of Confidence. — Official Receptions. — Lopez assumes the Character of Arbiter. — The English in Paraguay. — Case of William Atherton. — Advice of the English Minister. — Carlos and Fernando Saguier 526

CHAPTER XXXVI.

The Funeral of Carlos A. Lopez. — Rivalry of his Sons' Mistresses. — A Fancy-Dress Ball. — The Saguier escape from Paraguay. — Treatment of Atherton. — The People forced to appear happy and devoted to Lopez. — Frauds on English Employees. — Paraguay repudiated by the English Government. — The French Consul, Laurent Cochelet 535

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Banda Oriental. — The Demands of Brazil. — Gauchoism in the Ascendant. — Leandro Gomez. — Carreras sent to Paraguay. — Lopez declines an Alliance with the Banda Oriental, but protests against the Occupation of Oriental Territory by the Brazilian Forces. — Carreras constituted the Government. — Operations of the Brazilian Squadron. — Bombastic Circular of the Admiral. — Seizure of the Marques de Olinda, and Treatment of those on Board. — The Brazilian Minister. — Efforts in his Behalf. — Interview with the President. — Discussion of the Military Situation. — Privileges of Foreign Ministers. — Official Correspondence 547

HISTORY OF PARAGUAY.

PARAGUAY.

CHAPTER I.

1526-1537.

Introductory. — Discovery of Paraguay by Sebastian Cabot. — Antecedents of Cabot. — Origin of the Name Rio de la Plata. — San Espiritu. — The City of the Cesars. — Cabot returns to Spain, 1530. — His Character and Death. — Expedition of Don Pedro de Mendoza in 1534. — Unpopularity of Mendoza. — Buenos Aires. — Difficulties with the Natives. — Famine and Pestilence. — Corpus Cristi. — Efforts to establish Communication with Peru. — Death of Mendoza. — Domingo Martinez de Irala. — First Settlement of Asuncion. — Plague of Locusts. — Ruiz de Galan. — Internal Dissensions. — Battle with the Payaguas. — Treachery. — Battle with the Guaranis. — Miraculous Interference. — Irala chosen Governor. — Arrival of Emigrants. — Colonists united in Asuncion. — Favorable Prospects.

TILL within a few years the country of which I propose to write was so little known that but few people could tell anything more of it than that a region called Paraguay existed, and was to be found on all the maps of South America. Of the general aspect of this country and its history the popular knowledge was limited to traditions of its settlement by Spanish colonists, of the establishment of a religious order within its borders, which flourished for a time and was then expelled, to be succeeded by the reign of a gloomy despot, who made the land one vast prison-house, over which he ruled with a rod of iron. In these early traditions the land was always represented as of surpassing beauty and fertility, and the people as of exceeding gentleness and hospitality, who received the weary traveller and the war-worn soldier in a manner so simple and kind that they soon forgot their distant homes and friends, and resigned themselves to a life of idleness and sensuous enjoyment, which they were as unwilling to

relinquish as were the companions of Ulysses to leave the Syrtes after having once eaten of the lotus fruit. By many persons the land was classed with that fatuous city so long said to exist in some part of Central America, to which many travellers had gone, but whence none had returned. Connected with these stories of Paraguay were others based on the accounts of Spanish and Portuguese voyagers and discoverers in South America, concerning a country which the companions of the great navigator, Sebastian Cabot, found somewhere in the interior of the continent, and which proved to be only a death mirage to many an unfortunate expedition.

But these vague traditions of the past, which gave such a romantic coloring to all that was known of Paraguay that it seemed to be suspended, like the flying island, between the domains of fiction and reality, have recently been dispelled, and the lurid light of a war which only terminated when the nation and race were virtually extinct has drawn the eyes of the world to this secluded region, which has been the scene of the darkest tragedy of modern times.

The historical account of the country where these tragic events occurred requires neither to be overdrawn nor highly colored to trespass hard on the limits of human credulity. A plain narrative of facts will be as much as the reader can believe. The naked history of the country has been so remarkable, the character of the people so peculiar, the government so anomalous, the prominent historic figures so strange, and the last scene of the long tragedy of personal government, which, while it lasted, held an entire people submissive to a despotism of unexampled severity, has in all its aspects been so terrible, that the writer who attempts to describe them must omit much, and tone down more, if he would be fully credited. The materials exist for a strange book, and as little is known of the country or its traditions, even by those most intelligent and most familiar with the history of the rest of the world, it must be entirely the fault of the writer if his work shall not be interesting. It will embrace the history of a people and nation during their whole existence, — a people

the like of which never existed before and never can exist again.

PARAGUAY is situate between the parallels of $21^{\circ} 20'$ and $27^{\circ} 32'$ south latitude, and between $18^{\circ} 16'$ and $22^{\circ} 39'$ east of Washington. Its area is about once and three-fourths that of the State of Pennsylvania, being a little over eighty-two thousand square miles. This is the Paraguay known and acknowledged by the adjacent nations. But from the time when its independence was first asserted, it has always had disputes in regard to boundaries with every country whose territory adjoins it, and this area would be doubled were the questions of limits all decided in its favor. The disputed territory, however, being almost destitute of population, it matters little what may be the rightful and legal boundaries as affecting the history of the country or the character and habits of the people.

Paraguay, of which so little is generally known that it is usually spoken of as a new country, was one of the first in America settled by Europeans, and its capital, Asuncion, was a thriving colony long before the landing of the Pilgrims of Plymouth Rock, and even before John Smith made the traditional acquaintance of Pocahontas. The credit of the discovery of this country is generally, and I believe correctly, ascribed to Sebastian Cabot, the son of John Cabot the famous navigator, who was the first European that ever set foot in North America.

The adventures of Sebastian Cabot concern this work only so far as they relate to Paraguay. But as he was the first European who ever ascended the river Plata, it is proper to remark of him, that the place of his birth has been a matter of much doubt and dispute, though the preponderance of testimony goes to prove that he was born in England. John Cabot was, like Columbus, a native of Genoa, though he married and resided for years in Venice, where several of his children were born. He afterwards moved to England, and took up his residence in Bristol, where, it is claimed by many,

Sebastian was born. He there entered into the service of the English government, and under a contract with King Henry VII. he made several voyages to the West, and was the first to discover the continent of North America. In some of these voyages he was accompanied by his son Sebastian, who, after his father's death, entered into the service of the King of Spain, and under his patronage became a famous and successful navigator, and the discoverer of countries before unknown.

The discoveries of John Cabot in North America, and while in the English service, though vastly more important in their results than those subsequently made by Sebastian, were in themselves less meritorious, and for a long time excited far less attention. The difference in the results, however, is to be ascribed to difference in the character, habits, and religion of the people of the two nations which he served, and the different objects had in view by the respective emigrants. The Spanish adventurers cared little for countries whose wealth was only in their soil, and to be extracted by patient labor. They were eager and enterprising in the search for regions rich in gold, silver, spices, and precious stones. The countries discovered in North America by the elder Cabot, which gave England the pretext for claiming not only them but the vast regions adjoining, offered little to tempt the cupidity of the Spaniards; and they were left to those colonists who went there to remain and enjoy the fruits of their own toil, rather than grow rich on the spoil of a conquered race. On the other hand, the countries to which Spanish avarice and superstition were directed were abounding in wealth, and the invaders had little thought of benefiting themselves, except by despoiling the rightful possessors of their treasures. They went to rob the natives of their gold and silver, and to force them to be their slaves and drudge for more. At the same time that they enslaved them, they tortured them into the profession of the religion they had imported; and as they had seen that in the Old World the love of money was the root of all evil, and the cares of this world

and the deceitfulness of riches were ever in the way of conversion to the true faith, they piously relieved the Indians of these snares of the soul, even going so far in the discharge of their painful duty as to relieve them of life at the same time, if necessary to get their possessions into their own hands. They came with the sword of rapine in one hand and the torch of the Inquisition in the other. The seeds sown by them have given forth such fruits of anarchy, superstition, revolution, and barbarism as have marked the history of Mexico, Central America, and the South-American states ever since. On the other hand, that country where first landed the Pilgrim fathers, who came not to rob the Indians, but to labor and earn their bread as God ordained of old, — not to persecute others into their belief, but to enjoy their own in peace, and who there first set the seal of their faith and the impress of their form of government, — that country is now the home of liberty and law, national strength, and advanced civilization. In view of these results that have followed from the early discoveries of John and Sebastian Cabot, we may well pay a passing tribute to their memory, and be grateful to that Providence that gave their great talents and virtues to England before they were secured to the service of Spain.

It was in the month of April, 1526, that Cabot, with three small vessels and one private caravel, and three hundred and fifty men, left Spain with the object of reaching the Moluccas, or Spice Islands. It was his purpose to reach them by passing through the Straits of Magellan, that had been discovered, as early as 1519, by that famous navigator whose name they bear. But, like Columbus and many others of the early explorers, Cabot, in seeking for one thing, found another. Having been compelled from the smallness of his vessels and scanty supplies to abandon his project of following the route of Magellan, he turned northward, and, entering the broad bay that forms the mouth of the Rio de la Plata, he ascended it, under the illusion that he had discovered another channel by which he could pass through to the Pacific. He soon learned, however, that the river was not a channel to the Pa-

cific, and his vessels had already suffered so much since he left Spain, that he was obliged to abandon his idea of reaching the Moluccas until he could obtain large reinforcements of both men and ships. He therefore set about the exploration of the country, where his apparent ill fortune had cast him. Fifteen years before, in 1511, Juan Diaz de Solis had, with a similar object, — that of finding a western passage to the Indies, — entered the same broad estuary whence he was never to return. Going ashore on the island of Martin Garcia, he was murdered by the savages and his expedition broken up. The river, however, received, and was known by, the name of the Rio de Solis until some time after the advent of Cabot, who, deluded by the reports of the Indians whom he encountered on the banks of what is now called the Paraguay, gave that affluent the name of the Rio de la Plata (River of Silver). And as the marvellous accounts of vast quantities of gold and silver near its head-waters reached Europe at the same time with the news of its discovery, the alluring name of Rio de la Plata was soon applied to the whole river below, thus superseding entirely the name of Rio de Solis.

The great navigator lived to learn, however, that the silver, of which he heard such marvellous accounts, all came from a land which he was never to see, and that the valley of the River of Silver was almost destitute of the precious metals.

The Rio de la Plata, or River Plate, or what passes for that at present, can hardly be considered a river. The name is used vaguely and with different meanings as it is applied to the river or the valley ; as by the latter is included the whole vast territory drained by all those great rivers that find their outlet to the ocean through the broad estuary that is strictly the Rio de la Plata. Above the confluence of the Uruguay and the Parana, those rivers are always called by their respective names ; and hence the Plata only extends from that point to the ocean, a distance of less than two hundred and fifty miles.

Entering this broad estuary, Cabot with his small fleet skirted along its banks past where Buenos Aires now stands, mak-

ing observations as he went, until he arrived at the mouth of the Uruguay. This river he first undertook to explore, but after various disasters and losses he divided his forces, and, leaving his two larger vessels, he entered the Parana with only a small brig and the caravel. As he passed up the river, the Indians came in large numbers to the river-banks, being greatly astonished at the sight of the vessels. He proceeded up the river to the mouth of the Carcaraña, or Tercero as it is now called, where he landed and commenced building a fort. This was the first Spanish settlement in this part of the world, and was named, by Cabot, San Espiritu. Here he left seventy men to guard the place, and then pursued his voyage. Before departing, however, he strictly enjoined those left in charge of the fort to cultivate the most friendly relations possible with the Indians, and to improve the time of his absence by explorations of the adjacent country. The neighboring Indians appeared very friendly and harmless, and after the departure of the commander small parties were sent out to make observations on the character and productions of the country. One of these parties, consisting of five persons under the command of a person named Cesar, never returned; and from the adventures of the party, real or imaginary, originated the tradition of a great inland city, near the foot of the Andes, far away to the southwest of all regions then known or explored by Europeans. It is certain that these men never returned, and what became of them is not known. But the tradition was current, many years later, that after long wandering they came to a finely cultivated and fertile country, inhabited by a race of people highly civilized and living in refinement and luxury. They were said to be possessed of great stores of gold and silver, and cattle and horses in vast numbers. The capital of this marvellous country was said to be an immense city, in which were to be found all the splendors and refinement of the most luxurious cities of the East. The architecture was elegant and grand; the streets wide, regular, and clean, and the torrents from the Andes were carried in immense aqueducts to all parts of the city, where health, comfort, or utility

might require. The stories of the wonderful wealth of this fabled land grew more and more extravagant as time passed, and one expedition after another set out in search of it. As none ever returned, it was supposed they had found the El Dorado so delightful that they would not leave it, even for so short a time as was necessary to notify their fellow-adventurers of their good fortune. After many years, however, the report got currency that Cesar and his followers had been detained by the king of the country they had discovered; that he had treated them with great kindness, but for a long time refused them permission to leave his dominions; but that after many years he relented and allowed them to depart, not, however, till so long a period had elapsed, that, on returning to the site of the colony of San Espiritu founded by Cabot, they found it had long since disappeared and themselves abandoned in a sea of forest. At last, however, they struck the trail that led to the Pacific, and, following the tide of the gold-seekers to Peru, it was there that one of the party related his adventures to somebody else, who in turn related them to Ruy Diaz de Guzman, the first historian of Paraguay.

From a source so misty and mythical came this legend or tradition, and for several generations the belief in that region of fabulous wealth was so strong that repeated expeditions were formed, both in Chili and Buenos Aires, to search for the "City of the Cesars," as it was called, until subsequent explorations satisfied all searchers for it that there was not, and never had been, any such place.

After leaving San Espiritu, the passage of Cabot and his party up the river was slow and difficult. The channel is so tortuous, that, for a sailing-vessel to make continuous headway against the stream, the wind must blow from all points of the compass during the twenty-four hours. Besides, the river is in some parts so broad and full of islands that it appears more like a succession of lakes than a flowing stream, and for the first explorers it was a work of tedious labor and trial to find the channel. To avoid the delays caused by adverse winds, and a current running in every direction within the

space of a few miles, Cabot resolved to clear away the decks, and raze the sides of his vessels, and then fit them with rowlocks and oars, so as to be able to double the short bends in the river when the wind was unfavorable.

At length, however, he arrived with his little force of one hundred and twenty men at the confluence of the Parana and Paraguay, about three hundred and fifty miles above Fort San Espiritu. Here the Parana appearing to be the larger river, they followed it up about one hundred and fifty miles; but finding the volume of water rapidly diminishing, and the navigation difficult, by reason of the frequent rapids, they stopped at a place near the island of Apipé, where they remained some thirty days, exploring the neighboring country and trafficking with the Guarani Indians, whom they met there. These Indians, having some trinkets of gold and silver, were asked where they obtained them. They replied that they came from the west. The party thereupon returned to the mouth of the Paraguay, for they could see nothing to tempt them to remain in a country which promised no spoils of gold and silver to be taken from the heretic and heathen. The spoils of Mexico and Peru had dazzled the eyes of the Spanish adventurers, and Paradise itself would not have satisfied them without a plentiful supply of the precious metals. Cabot's aspirations were those of a good, great, and wisely ambitious man, and he looked for fame as a discoverer. But nothing would satisfy the great monarch whom he served, Charles V., except gold, and his followers and companions knew no motive but greed.

Returning to the mouth of the Paraguay, the little party began the ascent of the river, which above its confluence with the Parana flows between well-defined banks, and is consequently of easy navigation. They met with no incident of importance till they reached a point called Angostura, some eight leagues below Asuncion, where the little river Cañabé unites with the Paraguay. Here they were attacked by a large force of Payagua Indians, and a fierce battle was fought. The accounts of this battle are conflicting, — one of them say-

ing that the Indians attacked the intruders in great force, having as many as three hundred canoes, each with its complement of warriors; that the Spaniards made fearful havoc among them with their cannon and small arms, losing only two of their own force, who were taken prisoners. This account is contradicted by other writers, who state that the Spaniards lost heavily, and, among others, the officer second in command of the expedition. Whatever their losses, however, the party continued their voyage up the river, passing by the site of the present capital, Asuncion. Wherever they stopped they cultivated friendly relations with the Indians, and exchanged with them such things as they could spare for those products of the country required for food, and for their trinkets of gold and silver. The latter were the great object of their desire, and they eagerly inquired whence they came. The answer was always the same, — from a country far to the west. Cabot now believed that he was near the rich mines of Peru, and was strengthened in his conviction that he had discovered a new route to that land of untold wealth, much more available and easy of passage than the one by the Isthmus of Darien. He now believed that the wealth of the Indies must find its way to Europe by the river he was the first to discover, and it was not till he had passed a long distance above the mouth of the Parana that he fixed on the name Rio de la Plata as the title of the Paraguay. But this name soon came to be regarded as that of the entire river to its mouth, and now that which Cabot thus denominated the River of Silver is seven hundred miles from the body of water which to-day bears the name.

In order to prosecute his discoveries, and establish this line of communication with Peru, Cabot soon found that an increase of force was indispensable; and so, after making various expeditions into the interior of the country, and informing himself of the great natural resources of Paraguay, notwithstanding its lack of mineral wealth, he returned to the fort at San Espiritu, whence he despatched two of his most trusted followers to Spain, in order to obtain the needed reinforce-

ments and the royal authority to continue his expedition into a different region from that he had set out to explore. They took with them several Guarani Indians and an assortment of the productions of Paraguay ; and the accounts they gave of the fertility of the soil, the salubrity of the climate, the general aspect and beauty of the country, the gentle and docile character of the predominant class of Indians, would at another time have secured to them an enthusiastic reception and a ready compliance of the government with their request. But at that time the spoils of Peru were pouring into Spain, and government and people were all mad for gold. Hence the story of a land of surpassing beauty and agricultural wealth attracted but little attention. The country promised no rich spoils to military invaders, and no large military force ever entered Paraguay. Hence the subjugation to the Spanish rule was gradual, and the people became subjects, rather than slaves, of the superior race.

The causes that, according to the late Mr. Buckle, had developed the civilization of Peru and Mexico, had never existed in the countries of the Plata. In those countries only of the New World had there been that combination of the elements that lead to the accumulation of wealth, and consequently to the existence of classes. The class having wealth naturally had leisure for the cultivation of such arts and sciences as had ever chanced to dawn on their unenlightened intellects ; and to preserve the advantages of their wealth they had in the course of ages wrought out the governments and civilization that existed at the time of the Spanish invasion. Wealth had brought luxury, and luxury had brought in its train the pomp and pride of power, to be supported by heavy taxes on the poor and by large standing armies. But in the other parts of America, where Nature was less prolific and spontaneous in her bounties, the native Indians had never advanced beyond their nomadic character. It was the same in the regions of the Plata as in that part of North America now constituting the United States. There were many tribes, more or less numerous and powerful, but none worthy to be

called nations, or having sufficient wealth to tempt the cupidity of European monarchs to undertake large and expensive expeditions to effect their subjugation or conversion. Hence it was that small colonies, usually fitted out at private expense, were sent out to get possession of such sections of country as might be desirable for trade or agriculture, and which they would be able to hold against the neighboring savages. These colonies, to a considerable extent, went forth with similar ideas to those who first peopled those parts of North America south of New England. That the pioneers of civilization in the North experienced cruel hardships is well known ; and were we to pursue the early history of the regions of the Plata, we should find it made up of adventure and danger on one side, and treachery and hate on the other. The exceptions of the Puritans and the Quakers do not disprove the fact, that the art, cunning, and fraud of the European were as a rule met with treachery, hate, and cruelty by the savage.

More fortunate than Columbus, Raleigh, and others of the most meritorious discoverers of the New World, Sebastian Cabot realized something more than envy and misrepresentation for his services. His messengers not having succeeded in obtaining the reinforcements he had asked for, he determined, in 1530, to return himself to Spain, to impress upon the king the importance of his discoveries. But the great monarch was too much occupied in fighting heretics in Europe, and robbing the heathen in Mexico and Peru, to spend time or money on a new country that did not promise immediate returns. Cabot resumed his old position of *Piloto Mayor*, which he had held before his last expedition to America. This position, as the chief director of all foreign expeditions of Spain, was perhaps the one for which at his time of life he was best adapted. He was now an old man, and his name and fame as a navigator excelled that of any person living ; and though he remained in Europe, he could still pursue his studies as a geographer, and plan and execute other projects of discovery. He lived some thirty years after returning from

America, and after a life of vicissitudes and adventures of the most extraordinary character, with a name unblemished and unstained by any of the excesses or cruelties that have blackened the memory of nearly every one of the early American discoverers, he at last returned to England, "to die at home at last."

It was four years after Cabot's return to Spain — that is, in 1534 — before another expedition was fitted out for the Rio de la Plata. The projector of this expedition was Don Pedro de Mendoza, a member of the royal household and a gentleman of large fortune, who had seen service under the Emperor in his Italian wars. He offered to do at his own expense what Cabot could do only with the assistance of the crown. He asked and obtained permission to fit out an expedition at his own cost to take possession of the countries discovered by Cabot, and establish settlements at such points as he might select. In return for this service he was to be appointed Governor, with the title of Adelantado, and was to enjoy certain privileges, supposed to be of great value, on the sole condition that the Emperor was not to be called upon to defray any part of the expenses. The extraordinary privileges granted by the crown consisted of the right to rob the Indians and retain an unusual part of the spoils, paying less than the customary percentage of the treasure so stolen into the royal treasury. As marking the moral character of the period and of the great monarch who regarded it as his peculiar mission to exterminate heresy from the earth, it should be observed, that the atrocious conduct of Pizarro in his treatment of the Inca was so far regarded as legitimate and proper, that in the contract, or *Asiento*, with Mendoza, Charles V. expressly stipulated that the ransom of any other foreign sovereign who might be captured, though by law all belonging to the Emperor, should be divided among the conquerors, reserving to the crown only the royal fifth.

According to the *Asiento*, the Adelantado was to take out one thousand men, fully armed and equipped, with supplies sufficient for a year. He was also to take out a number

of missionaries to convert the Indians as fast as they robbed and enslaved them. The fate of this expedition, conceived in such a spirit of iniquity, was such as it deserved.

The favorable terms granted to Mendoza being made public, people came forward in great numbers, eager to join the expedition. Many men of rank and position offered to join, and so popular was the enterprise, that instead of one thousand men, as had been agreed upon, it was found at the first muster, after they had got started, that there were two thousand six hundred and fifty men, besides the crews of the fourteen ships, bound for the River of Silver.

As is usually the case in such enterprises, there were several turbulent spirits in the party, and, unfortunately, Mendoza was not the man to command their obedience or respect. Several disgraceful incidents occurred before the expedition reached the Plata. The military commander of the troops was Don Juan de Osorio, an officer of high repute, who had distinguished himself under the "Great Captain." The Adelantado soon became very unpopular, while Osorio was greatly beloved. This excited the jealousy of Mendoza, and while the fleet was at Rio de Janeiro he ordered Osorio to be put under arrest. Osorio requested to be brought before the Adelantado, that he might clear himself of the charges that had been made against him. But on coming into the presence of the Adelantado, that high official fell into a great passion, and used most violent and insulting language to his lieutenant. As Osorio was leaving, the Adelantado made some brutal remark, which the Alguazil Mayor, or chief constable, Juan de Ayolas, understood to be an order to despatch him, when he drew a dagger and plunged it into his heart.

Thus fell the man of most importance for the success of the expedition, through the bad temper and arrogance of the chief in command. The event rendered Mendoza more unpopular than ever, and caused many misgivings as to the success of the expedition. Indeed, the subsequent fate of both the Adelantado and the Alguazil might well lead them to

suppose that they were pursued by the avenging spirit of Osorio.

It was in the month of January, 1535, that the expedition first entered the Río de la Plata. With a perversity of judgment that seemed to characterize all the acts of Mendoza, he moved up the broad and noble estuary, passing by the most suitable places for a town site, until he came to a place that combined all the inconveniences that could possibly exist on the banks of a large navigable river. The point thus selected, and where now stands the principal city of the Plata, has probably the worst harbor in the world for a large commercial town. Large vessels must always lie off some two or three leagues from the shore, and those of lighter draft that venture within the inner roads are liable to be left high and dry on the hard bottom, or *tosca*, when a *pampero*, or strong wind, from the west sets in. But if the wind blows strongly from the southeast, then they are liable to drag their anchors and be carried up so high inland, that, when the wind veers again, they are left many rods from the water, and can only be broken up for firewood. The cost of lightering a vessel of her cargo is much more than the freight of it from New York or Liverpool. The country in the vicinity, for as far as the eye could reach, was a dead level plain, without bush or tree; the air in the hot, dry season being frequently so full of dust as to be almost insupportable, and the soil of that sticky, clayey character that a slight rain would render it almost impassable for man or animal. And this place was selected by Mendoza as the site of the first Spanish settlement in South America; and its history illustrates the fact, confirmed by a thousand instances, that where the pioneers of a country first fix their abiding-place, there will be the principal town of the vicinity, even though other points near by possess greater advantages. And as if to be in harmony with the paradoxical and illusive name of River of Silver, this first settlement was called Buenos Aires. The tradition is, that the first person of Mendoza's party who landed exclaimed as he touched the shore, "*Que buenos aires son estos!*" This ex-

clamation was accepted as a good augury by the commander, and the name of the place was, with true Spanish brevity and piety, declared to be Santa Maria de Buenos Aires.*

In his dealings with the Indians, Mendoza showed the same want of sense and tact as in everything else. On landing at Buenos Aires and examining the stock of provisions remaining, it was found that instead of a supply for twelve months, as had been stipulated, so little was left that the men had to be put at once on short allowance. The Querandi Indians whom they met, prompted by curiosity, came around in great numbers, and brought them some small supplies of game and fish; but as they did not bring sufficient for so large an army, Mendoza thought to intimidate and compel them. Greater folly it is impossible to conceive; for however sad havoc he might make in their number, and at however small loss to himself, it was clear that after having defeated them he would get no more provisions from that source, and his men were at the point of starvation. Undeterred by any such prudential considerations, the Adelantado ordered out a body of three hundred troops with a small cavalry force, which he placed under the command of his brother, Don Diego de Mendoza, who was the admiral of the squadron, and sent it out to chastise the Indians and teach them to show more hospitality. They soon encountered a large body of the natives, who lured them into an attack in the midst of a morass, where, though the Spanish veterans made fearful havoc among the savages, killing more than a thousand, the larger half of their own party was killed, including the admiral himself.

After this the Indians kept aloof for a time, contenting themselves with hovering about and sweeping down on any small parties that might be sent out in quest of food.

The Spaniards were now reduced to the greatest distress. To protect themselves, they erected a large fort, within which they put up some thatched mud houses to shelter themselves from the sun and rain. To the famine succeeded pestilence,

* The name given to the city on its *second* foundation was still longer: Ciudad de la Santisima Trinidad, Puerto de Santa Maria de Buenos Aires.

and there, shut up within their mud walls, the twenty-five hundred Spaniards yet left, who had come out to the River of Silver confident of speedy fortunes, saw no prospect before them but utter annihilation. Vessels had been despatched up and down the coast to look for a supply of food, but without obtaining any. Another, commanded by Ayolas, had been sent up the river, and he had not been heard from. The soldiers were reduced to eat their horses, dogs, cats, rats, and anything that would support life. One incident will suffice to illustrate their desperate condition. Three men were hung for stealing a horse, and the next morning it was found that they had been cut down and eaten by their companions. In this awful condition they were attacked by a force estimated by early writers at no less than twenty thousand. The Querandis, after the fatal battle against Diego de Mendoza, had called in the neighboring tribes to assist in the extirpation of the common enemy. Their principal weapon was the *bolas*. This consisted of several pieces of cord tied together at one end, with balls or weights attached to the loose strands at the other. A practised hand may throw this instrument with great accuracy to a long distance. It was the chief weapon used by the natives to bring down birds on the wing, and break or entangle the legs of the wild animals of the *pampas*. On this occasion, the Indians in vast hordes surrounded the fort of the Spaniards, and threw their *bolas*, to which they had attached burning matches. These falling on the roofs of the thatched hovels, they were soon all in a blaze, while three of the small vessels in the little river called the Riachuelo were set on fire in the same way. But the guns of the other vessels were now brought to bear on the savages, and made such havoc that they quickly dispersed. Nevertheless, though the savages had been driven back, the prospect was no less gloomy than before. But, fortunately, at this time a gleam of light breaks in on the ill-starred expedition. Ayolas's party, that had been sent up the river, returned with a supply of maize, which they had obtained from the Timbu Indians, the same with whom Cabot had been wise enough to establish friendly

relations some seven years before. Ayolas, finding the Timbus so friendly and well disposed, left one hundred of his men with them, having first made a plan for a new fort, which he named Corpus Cristi, at a short distance from Cabot's former settlement of San Espiritu, that had been abandoned soon after the departure of the great navigator for Spain.

The favorable report brought by Ayolas of the friendly character of the Timbus induced Mendoza to abandon Buenos Aires, with his shattered forces, for the more hospitable regions of the interior. Of the two thousand six hundred and fifty men, besides the crews of the vessels, who had left Spain a year before, there remained but five hundred and sixty at Buenos Aires, and of these sixty died from exhaustion ere they reached the new fort.

From Corpus Cristi the Adelantado despatched Ayolas, with three hundred men, to explore the river above, and learn if it were practicable to carry into effect the original plan of the enterprise, which was to open easier communication with Peru. The Alguazil set forth on this forlorn undertaking, leaving his chief to await his return, as on his success now depended the last hope of the Adelantado. But Ayolas never reached Peru, and never returned to Corpus Cristi; and Mendoza, discouraged and broken-hearted, and worn out with disease and grief, after waiting a year, and hearing nothing of him, resolved to return to Spain. The multitude of disasters he had encountered, and the misery and destruction brought upon his companions through his incapacity, were too much for a mind no stronger than his. He died on the passage home, a raving maniac.

Before leaving for Spain, the Adelantado having received no news of Ayolas, and seeing no other means of obtaining succor for his companions, despatched a near relative of his — Don Gonzalo de Mendoza — to Spain, to bring the necessary relief. But Gonzalo, greatly to the surprise and joy of all, soon returned, having obtained a good supply of provisions on the coast of Brazil. This happy turn of affairs induced the Adelantado to send Don Gonzalo and Don Salazar de Es-

pinosa on another expedition, this time up the river, and in search of Ayolas. Before departing, the Adelantado appointed Ayolas his lieutenant, to succeed, on his return, to the command of the colony. Months before he had seen all his own bright prospects vanish, and had asked for the appointment of a successor. The successor named by the crown was Ayolas. Ayolas, however, was away on his expedition to the North, and it was known to the Spanish government that he had been absent a year from the colony, and it was doubtful whether or not he would ever return. He had not been heard of since his departure, though his orders at setting out were to be back in four months at the furthest. But though his return was extremely doubtful, Mendoza determined not to appoint another to serve in his stead, as he feared the conflict of authority that might arise if Ayolas were to come back and find another holding a commission from himself. Ayolas, however, was never to hear of the honors which his king had intended for him.

One good, however, resulted to the colony from the uncertainty regarding the fate of Ayolas. At the same time that his commission was sent out, an instrument, or letters-patent, was issued, providing for the choice of a successor by the colonists, should Ayolas not have previously come back. This act of confidence in the popular choice, so at variance with the general usage of the Spanish government, in this case at least had a favorable result. There chanced to be one man among the companions of Pedro de Mendoza gifted by nature with all those qualities required in a leader and founder of a colony, one of those rare individuals who by sheer force of character, by their courage, tact, energy, and justice, leave the impress of their genius on their age and generation. This man, Domingo Martinez de Irala, then holding the rank of captain, had been sent with Ayolas to establish communication with Peru. His position was that of admiral of the small fleet of three vessels that conveyed the expedition up the river. The party proceeded on their voyage, and, like Cabot before them, on reaching the confluence of the Parana and Paraguay, they

first ascended the former, though it flows from the eastward, and from the direction opposite to which they were to look for those regions that had given the name to the river. They soon returned, and followed the Paraguay as far as what is now known as Fort Olimpo, $21^{\circ} 2' S.$, and some two hundred and forty miles above the site of the present capital, Asuncion. From this point Ayolas, with two hundred men, leaving but one hundred with Irala to guard the vessels and wait his return, marched into the interior to the west, in search of the fields of gold and rivers of silver that were luring him to destruction. Not one of the party ever saw the face of a white man afterwards.

Irala remained at Olimpo, or, as it was then named in the verbose piety of the Spaniards, Nuestra Señora de la Candelaria (Our Lady of the Candlemas), where he busily employed himself in exploring the country, and in cultivating friendly relations with the Payagua Indians who dwelt in the vicinity. While engaged in this laudable work, the expedition that had been sent by the Adelantado, under command of Gonzalo de Mendoza and Salazar de Espinosa, in search of Ayolas, arrived at Candelaria. From this point many parties were sent out to look for the long-absent Alguazil and his companions, but as no trace of them could be found, Mendoza and Espinosa insisted on returning to Corpus Cristi. But Irala still refused to abandon all hope of finding and saving his former chief, and therefore the commanders of the expedition sent in search of him and Ayolas returned, leaving him but a single vessel and his former force of one hundred men.

In descending the river from Candelaria, Mendoza observed that the place where Asuncion now stands had, from its topographical situation, peculiar advantages as a port or trading-post on the imaginary route to Peru. The river there makes an elbow, turning to the right, with an abrupt bluff just below on the left bank, forming thus a harbor of deep water close to the shore in front of where the city now stands. From the top of the bluff the river can be distinctly seen for leagues, and the whole country for miles in every direction is

distinctly visible. Mendoza saw the advantages the place offered both for commercial purposes and for defence against hostile attacks, and he therefore resolved to remain there with a small body of men and erect a fort, while his companion, Espinoza, should proceed to Corpus Cristi or Buenos Aires and make a report of the attractions they had found up the river. The Indians they here encountered were the mild and tractable Guaranis, whose gentle manners and hospitable character contrasted strangely with the savage ferocity of the warlike Querandis, who had waged such vindictive war against them while at Buenos Aires. Mild and peaceable as these natives appeared, Mendoza knew enough of the Indian character to realize that a fortified post was the first essential among savages. He therefore immediately commenced building a fort; and as the day on which he begun this work chanced to be the 15th of August (1537), which in the Catholic calendar is the day of the Assumption of the Virgin, he gave to the place the name La Asuncion.*

Espinoza returned to Corpus Cristi, and thence to Buenos Aires, where a small force had always remained, to receive, welcome, and warn any arrivals subsequent to the departure of the main forces under Pedro de Mendoza for Corpus Cristi. The favorable reports given by him of the fine climate and fertile soil of Paraguay, as well as of the friendly reception they had met with from the Guaranis, were enough to make his

* In giving the names of places, I follow the spelling of the people who inhabit them. The early Spanish discoverers generally gave names having some peculiar signification, which, translated into another language, would be spelt differently. Thus Asuncion, in Spanish, is in meaning equivalent to Assumption in English, to Assomption in French, and to Assumpçao in Portuguese. Buenos Aires, translated into English, would be Good Airs, and Santa Fé would be Holy Faith. But no writer pretends to give the names of places uniformly as they would read if translated to the idiom in which he writes. I know not by what right, or according to what rule, an author changes some and allows others to stand as in the original. As it is considered the right of every man to spell his own name after his own fashion, and to require at least as a courtesy that others shall spell it in the same way, I see no good reason why the same rule should not obtain among writers when giving the names of places in countries where a different language from their own is spoken.

comrades, and others who had since arrived, eager to quit a region where they had suffered so terribly. They gladly left a place where they had experienced nothing but suffering and disappointment, where they were surrounded by savages bearing an implacable hatred towards them, and where death from starvation was ever threatening those whom the savages could not reach.

They therefore embarked for Asuncion, leaving only a small force sufficient to hold the fort, and reached their destination without any important incident. But instead of escaping from a land of famine to one of plenty, they found, on reaching the desired haven, that a plague of locusts had passed over the country but a short time before, consuming every green thing, leaving myriads of their numbers dead as they passed, filling the wells and springs and many other places with their bodies, to infect the air and breed a pestilence.

Thus it seemed that the companions of Mendoza were pursued by a relentless fate, not only while they remained at Buenos Aires, but until they had made an expiation by suffering in other parts. The visitation of the locusts, however, is a thing of rare occurrence, and when they do appear their ravages are generally confined to a strip of country of but few leagues in width, passing from west to east for a long distance; and though destructive of every leaf and plant in their course, the region they infest is not sufficient in extent to create anything like a general famine.

The fertile soil of Paraguay and the quick spontaneous growth soon repaired the ravages made by the locusts, and the colony from its commencement had every promise of uninterrupted prosperity. But the ambitious schemes of some of the leaders, whose object it was, not to found colonies, but to get gold, soon marred all their bright prospects. Irala, after waiting nine months at Olimpo and the vicinity, and having made every possible effort to learn something of his chief, Ayolas, reluctantly abandoned the search, and set out with his party to descend the river. The colony at this

time was under the command of Ruiz de Galan, who had arrived subsequent to the first settlement of the place, and who, ranking Gonzalo de Mendoza, had assumed the authority as Governor. On the arrival of Irala, a dispute arose between him and Galan regarding the right to the chief command. It was quickly settled, however, by Galan making a close prisoner of his competitor. But Irala was not one to allow personal feelings or interests to interfere with the welfare of the colony, and it was arranged that he should be set at liberty, when he would return to Olimpo.

On returning to his former camping-ground he found the Payagua Indians, with whom he had previously cultivated friendly relations, were preparing to make an utter extermination of all trespassers on their ancient domain. Irala discovered their intention without their being aware of it, and when they thought to surprise him they met with both a surprise and a terrible defeat. Irala united the greatest courage and energy with herculean strength, and on this occasion he had need for each. The Payaguas are generally large and powerful men, much above the average of the South-American savages, and in this battle twelve of the strongest set upon him at once. Seven of the twelve he killed with his own hand. Some of the best authorities have it that he killed them all.

While Irala was thus engaged in the fruitless search for Ayolas, Galan left his post to return to Buenos Aires. He reached Corpus Cristi about the 1st of January, 1538, and there, in conjunction with the forces then guarding that station, he committed an act of such gross and cowardly treachery on the unoffending natives as has few parallels in the catalogue of wrongs inflicted by civilized Christians on the savage heathen. The unsuspecting Timbus had been in the habit of supplying the fort at Corpus Cristi with such provisions as it was in their power to obtain, and in return they had been treated with kindness by the Spaniards, till they were disarmed of all suspicion, and had taken no precautions against surprise, nor made any preparations for defence. Thus ex-

posed, Galan fell upon one of their little villages one morning at daybreak, burnt their houses, massacred the men, and made prisoners of the women and children, whom he allotted to the soldiers. After this feat Galan pursued his way to Buenos Aires, leaving Antonio de Mendoza in command at Corpus Cristi, with only one hundred men. The neighboring Indians did not wait long for their revenge. The Spaniards had killed the goose that laid the golden egg. They had destroyed some and outraged others of the Indians who had supplied them with food, and now they could not venture beyond the fort to obtain it except in considerable numbers. One day, when full one half of their whole body had gone out for this purpose, and were at a good distance from the fort, the Indians, who had watched their opportunity, fell upon them so furiously that scarcely a single one escaped. The fort was next attacked, and all within it would doubtless have shared the same fate but for the timely arrival of two vessels with troops from Buenos Aires, which had been despatched from there for its relief, in anticipation that the Indians would avenge themselves for the treachery of Galan on the small party left to guard the little settlement.

With this opportune reinforcement the Indians were finally defeated, but not without the loss of many Spaniards, among whom was Antonio de Mendoza, the commander of the fort. In this action first appears the name of a person who subsequently figured notably in the history of Paraguay. This was Don Diego de Abreu, at that time holding the rank of captain.

It was in this battle, that, according to the writers of the time, a miracle occurred, the account of which is implicitly believed in by most Paraguayans to this day. According to the tradition, while the battle was fiercest, there appeared on the top of the principal tower of the fort the figure of a man dressed in white, with a drawn sword in his hand, which flamed so resplendent that at the sight of it the Indians fell, blinded and astonished, to the ground. This miraculous intervention gave the victory to the Spaniards, and as it occurred on the 3d of

February, the day, according to the calendar, of San Blas, it was taken for granted that that saint had appeared in person to rescue the faithful and confound the heathen. From that time to this, San Blas has been regarded as the patron saint of Paraguay. Whether Galan regarded the appearance of the saint as an approval of his treacherous massacre of the Indians, the record does not say.

After this event at Corpus Cristi, Ruiz de Galan, Salazar de Espinosa, and several other persons of note in the history of the times, returned to Paraguay, taking with them nearly all of those who had remained in the fortress at Buenos Aires, or had arrived from Europe subsequent to the general evacuation of the place by Pedro de Mendoza. On reaching Asuncion, they found that Irala had returned from his second expedition after Ayolas, but that no Ayolas was to be found.

The emergency provided for in the royal letters-patent, that in case of the non-return of Ayolas the colonists should choose a governor from among themselves, had now arrived. This privilege was wisely exercised, for by this time Irala had had opportunity to display his great courage, energy, and disinterestedness, and though San Blas had testified in favor of Galan, yet the colonists with great unanimity elected the conqueror of the Payaguas in preference to the hero of Corpus Cristi.

The first important act of Irala after his election as Governor was to order the complete evacuation of Buenos Aires, and all the colonists to unite at Asuncion. About the same time that the last of the unfortunate Spaniards who had tried to found a colony at Buenos Aires took their departure for Paraguay, there arrived at the mouth of the river an Italian vessel, with emigrants who had left their country with the intention of going to Peru by way of the Straits of Magellan ; but the vessel, being unable to make its way through that dangerous and then little known channel, turned back and entered the Plata, where the whole party disposed of their effects, and joined their fortunes to the Spaniards, and with them moved up the river to Asuncion.

Thus the remnants of all the different expeditions to the

Plata, as well as many straggling emigrants, speculators, and priests, were found united in Asuncion, in the heart of a most prolific country, having a mild and salubrious climate, and inhabited by a race of Indians well affected towards them. It was far inland, nearly a thousand miles from tide-water, and everything seemed to promise rest and plenty to the pioneers who had been so long buffeted by adverse fortune.

The date of these events was as early as 1537,* eighty-three years before the landing of the Pilgrim fathers at Plymouth, and seventy years before the first settlement at Jamestown. Thus Asuncion is older than any town in the United States, and one of the oldest founded by Europeans in America.

* Azara fixes the date a year earlier; but this author, though generally very accurate, is believed to be in error here.

CHAPTER II.

1537-1542.

Wise Administration of Irala. — Union of the Spanish and Indian Races. — Conversion of the Indians. — The Guarani Language. — Its Preservation a Doubtful Blessing. — Character of Irala. — His Justice towards the Indians. — Plot of the Indians for the Destruction of the Colony. — Its Discovery. — Execution of the Leaders. — The Colonists abandon all Hope of returning to Spain. — Condition of the Different Tribes previous to the Arrival of the Spaniards. — Manners and Customs. — The Guaicurus. — Their Character and Habits. — The Mbayas. — Infanticide. — Final Extinction. — The Payaguas. — Origin of the Name "Paraguay." — Other Tribes of the Guarani Family. — The Guaranis compared with other Indian Nations. — Theory of Naturalists respecting the Origin of the Human Race. — The Guaranis only capable of Improvement and Religious Impressions.

NO sooner was Irala established in authority, than the colony began to experience the benefits of his energy and judgment. His first efforts were to conciliate the Indians in the vicinity, who were beginning to doubt the advantages of having such neighbors. But at the same time that he refused to permit injustice towards them by his followers, and labored to win their confidence by kindness and fair dealing, he took prompt measures to guard against treachery or surprise, by creating strong palisades, within which the colony could defend themselves in any sudden attack.

On entering upon his duties as governor of the new colony, two courses were open to him: one was that usually pursued by colonial governors in the New World, to rob and exterminate the native race; the other, to Christianize, elevate, and assimilate it to the European. Irala chose the latter, and though the results were not very successful, yet the effort to improve and elevate, rather than to rob and destroy, was worthy a Christian and a philanthropist.

The impress of Irala's government was thus permanently fixed on the character, social and political, of the people. During his administration they had entered on that road towards the peculiar civilization which produced the Paraguayan nation as it afterwards became. To assimilate the two races so that one should not become the slaves of the other was a difficult task; but Irala undertook to accomplish it, and succeeded. Yet these two races, that were made to live on terms approaching equality, were as different almost in their habits and nature as it is possible for two branches of the human family to be. This was the time of Spain's greatest power and splendor; and among the colonists were veterans who had fought through half Europe under the great Emperor. Then there were ambitious, aspiring young officers, who had borne his banners or spent their early manhood around his brilliant court. Beside these were many private individuals of good family and fortune, who, fired with the spirit of romance and adventure, had gone to the New World. These people, with their various tastes and projects, had formed connections with the Guarani women, to whom they were attached by no religious, legal, or moral bonds. Irala endeavored to impress upon his followers the duty of fidelity in such connections, and the obligations of paternity.

Among the accessions to the colony, after the abandonment of Buenos Aires, were two priests of the order of St. Francis, who at once commenced the work of converting the simple Guaranis to the Roman Catholic religion, the forms and ceremonies of which had a great charm for their unsuspecting nature. In this they were encouraged and assisted in every way by Irala. He saw that if the Spaniards were to mingle with the natives on any terms approaching equality, or if the priests would exercise effectually their spiritual functions, the two races must speak the same language. That the existing generation of natives should learn Spanish was out of the question, but the Spaniards might learn the Guarani. In fact, the soldiers, all of whom had already formed connections more or less regular and permanent with the

native women, were fast learning their idiom. The priests applied themselves to acquire it and to make it a written language, that they might preach in that tongue. Thus it came about that the Guarani continued to be, and is yet, the language of the country. At present it is seldom written, and is so mixed with Spanish as to be very different from what it was at that time. The Spanish is the only language taught in the schools; but still most Paraguayans, from the highest to the lowest, prefer their native Guarani.

Whether or not it was wise policy to preserve the native dialect may be a question. It doubtless served the purposes of the early fathers, and enabled them to gain and retain an influence over the natives otherwise impossible. It may also be a question whether it were wise policy to encourage the Spaniards to take Indian women for wives and treat their natural progeny as children, instead of leaving them to follow the ways of their mothers. That both measures were most efficient for missionary, proselyting purposes, there can be no question. But if we judge from the result on the welfare of the country, we must come to a different conclusion, as to their wisdom, from what we shall if we regard them as measures of abstract right and justice. It is to these measures that the strange history and present condition of the country may be traced. The same unwritten language is still the common dialect of the country, and the mixed race, after more than three hundred years, is but a few removes from its primitive barbarism. Though the Guarani language and race were thus preserved, the condition of the people and their subsequent fate at the hands of an unnatural ruler, the offspring of this admixture of races, prove that their preservation was a doubtful blessing to the world. Nevertheless, the policy of Irala was humane and well intentioned, and showed that he at least desired to respect the rights of the possessors of the soil, and no further to change or violate their customs and prejudices than was required for the security and protection of his own people. His dealings with the Indians were in marked contrast with

those of all other Spanish adventurers to the New World ; and no European of any race or nation, not even William Penn, deserves so high credit for justice towards them as Irala. Penn only professed to deal with them honestly, but Irala labored incessantly to raise them from barbarism to civilization and Christianity. The Indians with whom Penn had to deal have disappeared from the earth, but the race that Irala undertook to elevate yet exists, is recognized as a nation, and has carried on a longer war against greater odds than was ever known before. And yet it is probable that only a small proportion of the readers of this history, all of whom know the story of Penn by heart, ever heard of Domingo Martinez de Irala.

But though the Guaranis were docile and peaceable as compared with the other Indians of the Plata, they had still much of that peculiar cunning and treachery in their character which have always rendered the aborigines of America unsafe neighbors. At first they appeared highly pleased at the advent of the Spaniards, but they soon began to suspect that their presence boded no good to them as a people, and with great secrecy arranged a plot for the surprise and destruction of the entire colony. The Governor, having observed how much impressed the natives had been at beholding the religious functions and ceremonies, had given orders for a procession and festival of extraordinary magnificence, to take place on Holy Thursday (1539). The Indians were invited to assemble for the occasion ; but instead of the usual number at such festivals, it was noticed that they were several times more numerous than ever before. Irala suspected there was some cause for this not apparent, but he could detect nothing ; and the plot was revealed, almost at the last hour, by an Indian girl, the servant and friend of Salazar de Espinosa, whose Indian lover had revealed to her the plan of the conspiracy. But the girl, thinking more of the white lover than of the tawny one, hastened to inform him of his danger, and gave him the names of the principal conspirators. The Governor took instant measures to have his whole force under

arms and ready for action, but without giving the Indians the least sign that their plot was discovered. Just before the time fixed upon by the savages for the havoc to commence, and in the presence of the multitude, the leaders were suddenly seized, and their treacherous plot proclaimed aloud. Struck with astonishment and a sense of guilt, they confessed their crime, when, prompt as the decrees of fate, the ringleaders were executed in presence of their fellow-conspirators. Such energy struck terror into the hearts of the Indians, who confessed their complicity with the plot of assassination, but protested that for the future they would not only abandon all such designs, but would ever after be good and faithful friends and allies of the Spaniards.

Beyond this, the caciques and other principal Indians, who had held aloof hitherto from intimacy with the Spaniards, now offered to give up their daughters and sisters to them to be their servants, or rather, like the Sabine women, to become the means of forming a common bond of affection and dependence between the two races. The Spaniards, who had left their own country thinking to achieve fame and fortune in the New World and then return to claim the hands of the daughters of the old hidalgos of Castile or Aragon, soon gave up all thought or hope of ever seeing their native land again. Their early experience and hardships had made them long for rest, and when they reached Paraguay they forgot friends and home, and took to themselves the brown daughters of the wilderness instead of the proud beauties for whose smiles they had braved the perils of the deep and the hardships of the pioneer. "We will return no more" was the refrain of their hearts, and their actions, if not their lips, said, —

"Let what is broken so remain, —
 The gods are hard to reconcile;
 'T is hard to settle order once again.
 There *is* confusion worse than death,
 Trouble on trouble, pain on pain,
 Long labor unto aged breath,
 Sore task to hearts worn out with many wars,
 And eyes grown dim with gazing on the pilot stars."

The admixture of the Spanish and Indian races for the first two or three generations resulted, if we credit the earliest and one of the most reliable historians of the country (Ruy Diaz de Guzman), in the improvement of both. At least they had many quiet and domestic virtues which in that age were not consistent with the character of the Spanish cavalier. As Guzman was a Spaniard of pure blood, and certainly not prejudiced in favor of the Indians, the following testimony to the credit of the progeny of the mixed races may be fairly regarded as impartial : —

“ They are generally good soldiers, of great spirit and valor ; expert in the use of arms, especially in that of the musket, — so much so that when they go on long journeys, they are accustomed to live on the game which they kill with it. It is common for them to kill birds on the wing, and he is accounted unfit for a soldier who cannot bring down the pigeon or the sparrow. They are such excellent horsemen that there is no one who is not able to tame and ride the unbroken colt. The women, generally, are of an elevated and honest character ; virtuous, beautiful, and of gentle disposition ; endowed with discretion and industry, and expert with the needle, in which employment they are continually engaged ; from all of which there has resulted to that colony so much increase and prosperity.”

Irala was chosen Governor only for the short term of three years. In that time he had laid the foundation for results such as those described by Guzman. He had both awed and conciliated the Indians, and bound them to the Spaniards by the strongest ties that could be devised ; he had founded various other settlements, besides Asuncion, that exist as villages to this day ; he had caused a church and other public buildings to be erected, and, as far as human foresight could provide, had laid the foundation of a colony that promised to be the nucleus of a great and powerful nation. Every physical feature of the country conspired to this end, — a climate warm, but of wonderful salubrity ; a soil of such exceptional fertility as to produce not only most of the cereals, roots, and fruits of other countries, but to yield spontane-

ously more kinds of valuable plants and herbs, more varieties of the best wood, and more fruit of various kinds, than any other known part of the world ; besides this, it had the negative merit—more important than all to the permanent prosperity of an infantile state—of an utter lack of silver and gold.

There are other reasons, however, besides those already given, why the Paraguayan colony should have had an experience and history different from any other in America. These are to be found mainly in the peculiar character and habits of the Indian tribe or nation among which this colony was founded, or rather on which it was grafted. A brief description of them would therefore seem to be in place before proceeding further.

The Guaranis were, at the time of the discovery of the Plata by Juan Diaz de Solis, much the most numerous Indian nation in South America. The savage and fierce Querandis and Charruas that he first met were branches of the same family. But having for many generations been exposed to a harder climate, where nature produced spontaneously but little of what was required for their sustenance, they developed into the hardy race that so bravely and successfully disputed with the troops of Charles V. the right to the possession of the lower regions of the Plata. Other tribes, like the Timbus, the Caracarás, Aomas, Chiriguanos, and many more, are supposed, from the similarity of language and other resemblances, to have originally descended from the same stock.

But the Guaranis of Paraguay were not of a temper or spirit to successfully oppose the invasion of the foreigner. They were neither vindictive nor warlike. As compared with the Querandis they were indolent, amiable, and without spirit or ambition. Their character and habits, before they had been seriously changed by contact with the Spaniards, may be learned from the following extract from Azara, whose great work on Paraguay and the adjacent countries is, and ever has been, regarded as a classic of the highest authority in all matters relating to the early history of that country, the character

of its people, its physical features, and its animal and vegetable productions.*

Of the Guaranis in their primitive state he thus speaks :—

“This nation is the most numerous, and occupies more territory than all the others I have encountered, since up to the time of the discovery of America they inhabited all the country now possessed by the Portuguese. But within the limits of my description it extends to the north from the country of the Charruas, Bohanes, and

* Felix de Azara was born in Catalonia in the year 1746. He belonged to one of the most distinguished and influential families of Spain. His brother, Don Nicholas de Azara, was one of the ablest diplomatists of his time, having been for many years the Spanish Ambassador at Rome, and afterwards at Paris. He was a member of the Congress of Amiens, and was one of the signers of that famous treaty. In the year 1777, Spain and Portugal entered into a treaty called the treaty of San Ildefonso, in which it was stipulated that the two governments should send commissioners to run the boundary lines between the Spanish and Portuguese possessions throughout South America. Felix de Azara was appointed, on the part of Spain, as commissioner for the section comprising the northeastern limits between Paraguay and Brazil. He proceeded to Paraguay, and awaited the coming of his Portuguese colleagues; but they never arrived, and Azara remained twenty years in the country, repeatedly asking to be recalled, but never getting permission from his government to leave the country. Thus in enforced exile he passed the best years of his life in gathering and collating facts in regard to the plants, the forests, the peculiar animals with their habits, the birds, the fishes, and the insects of the country. With no theory to advance, no proselyting object in view, but animated with the sole desire to add to the world's knowledge of a vast, fertile, and unknown region, and with a jealous desire to give nothing but the exact truth, his book is now justly regarded as incomparably better than any that has since appeared. This work was dedicated to his brother Nicholas, and as nothing can better show the tender simplicity and fidelity of the man than this dedication, I give a translation of it here :—

“DEAR NICHOLAS, — Scarcely were we born when our parents separated us. During our lives we have never seen or conversed with each other but for the short space of two days in Barcelona, where I met you by accident. You have lived in the great world, and by your dignity, talents, virtues, and works you have made yourself illustrious in Spain and throughout all Europe; but I, without ever having arrived at any notable employment, without having had opportunity to know either you or others, have passed the best twenty years of my life in the extremes of the earth, forgotten by my friends, without books or anything written capable of instructing me; continually occupied in travelling through deserts or through immense and tremendous forests, almost without society other than that of the birds and wild animals, I have written the history of these; I send it and dedicate it to you, that through it you may know me and form an idea of my labors.”

Minuanes to the parallel of sixteen degrees, without passing to the western side of the Paraguay River, except at the two extremities ; that is, at the south they inhabited the islands of the Parana, and the western bank of the Rio de la Plata, about Buenos Aires, while to the north they were found as far west as the Andes, where a large number of them resided, bearing the name of Chiriguanos. . . . It should be observed, that, within the time here mentioned, there are other nations shut up in the midst of it, such as the Tupis, the Guayanás, the Nuaras, the Nalicuégos, and the Guasarapos. All these nations differ as much from each other as each differs from the Guaranis, as will be shown. The Guarani nation occupies the great extent of country of which I have spoken, without forming any political body, and without recognizing any common chief. . . . The Guarani nation, throughout its whole extent, was divided into little societies or hordes, independent of each other, and each one with a different name, taken from their cacique, or captain, or from the place they inhabited. Sometimes all the tribes that lived on the bank of a certain river or in a certain district were comprehended under one name. This is the origin of the multitude of names that the conquerors gave to the different tribes that made up the Guarani nation. For example, without going out of the country now under description, they called the Guaranis by the names, Mbayas, Caracarás, Timbus, Tucaques, Carios, Mangolas, and many others. The habits of this nation were not in all parts the same. All the tribes that inhabited the immense tract possessed by the Portuguese were taken and held as slaves, and as they mixed with negroes brought from Africa, the race, as a race, is almost extinct. Beside this, the Portuguese of San Pablo, commonly called Mamelukes, did not content themselves with what I have just indicated ; they made great and repeated raids into this country, and carried off, not only all the Guaranis they found at liberty, but as many as eight settlements (*pueblos*) that had been founded and established by the Spaniards in Paraguay.

“ The conduct of the Spaniards has been very different. They have never sold a single Guarani, and preserve even now, in the Jesuit and other pueblos, thousands in a state of entire freedom, since there exists in the country I am describing a multitude of tribes beside Guaranis as free as before the arrival of the Spaniards. In the proper place I shall speak of the Guaranis, the sub-

jects of Spain, that form the Christian pueblos. But now I only speak of this nation in a state of freedom, and as those who live in this state now dwell in the great forests, where I have not had opportunity to enter, my description will be proved from the perusal of ancient manuscripts and from personal information derived from those who had seen such Indians in their native freedom ; to this I will add what I myself have observed whenever I have met any of these savages, and what I have noted among their converts to Christianity. In general, the Guaranis (unmixed) all live on the skirts of the forest, or in little openings that are found among the hills. And if they sometimes are located in the open plains, it is where there is no other tribe living near by. They feed upon honey, wild fruit, monkeys, etc., though their principal resource is derived from the cultivation of maize, beans, onions, ground-nuts, sweet potatoes, and mandioca. If they dwell near the rivers, they catch fish with arrows, or with fish-hooks made of wood, and some of them have little canoes. When they have made a harvest, they hoard it up for the rest of the year, as they do not find so many birds or quadrupeds for their sustenance as those do who live upon the plains. Wherefore they never go to the chase or to collect wild fruits but when they are not occupied in agriculture, and they never go so far away but that they may be at hand for the harvest ; for this reason they are fixed, and not migratory, like the other nations of which I have spoken. Their language is very different from any other, but it is the same among all the tribes of this nation, so that speaking it you may travel all through Brazil, pass through Paraguay, and go through to Peru. This language is considered the most copious of all the savage idioms of America. Notwithstanding, it lacks for many expressions. It has only four numerals, and it is not possible in it to express five or six. The pronunciation is nasal and guttural. The padre Luis Bolaños has translated our catechism into this language, and the Jesuits have invented signs to express its nasal and guttural sounds, and they have even printed a dictionary and grammar of this language. But notwithstanding such aids it is very difficult to learn it, and requires more than a year to do it.

“The medium stature of this nation appears to me to be two inches less than that of the Spaniards, and consequently is much less than that of some other nations of South America. They are also more squat and ugly ; they are not so dark as some others, but

have a reddish tint; the women have small feet and hands, and other peculiarities. The men, in some instances, have a little beard and a little down on the body, which distinguishes them from other Indians, though in this they are very different from Europeans. . . . The fecundity of this nation is not equal to that of ours, as I have never found but one Indian who was the father of more than ten children. The average number, one with another, is four to one family. The number of women is always greater than that of the men in the proportion of fifteen to fourteen. Their physiognomy is sombre, sad, and subdued. They speak little, and without ever crying out or complaining. Their voices are never hoarse, nor are they sonorous; they never laugh loudly, and the face never shows any signs of passion. They are very dirty, they recognize no Divinity, neither recompense, laws, punishment, nor obligation, and they never look a person in the face with whom they are conversing. In their marriages and amours they show the greatest coldness. The union of the sexes is neither followed nor preceded by any preparation or demonstration. They know no such thing as jealousy. It is well known with what frankness and pleasure they gave up their daughters and women to the conquerors, and they even do the same now, though converted to Christianity. The women marry very young, commonly at ten or twelve; the men a little later, after which they form a separate family. I have never found among the ancient manuscripts any allusion to music or dancing among the Guaranis. . . . Each division or tribe has its captain, or cacique, whose dignity is commonly hereditary, and to whom some consideration is paid, though no reason can be given for it. There is never any difference between the cacique and others in his lodgings, dress, decoration, nor any distinct marks; he is obliged to labor like the others, without receiving tribute, service, or obedience."

These were the Guaranis, among whom the Spaniards landed when they came to Asuncion, of whom Azara thus speaks. The Spanish race grafted on this has produced the present Paraguayan nation. As they were the most numerous, so they were the most intelligent and docile, of all the South American Indians east of the Andes. And yet so low were they in the scale of human intelligence, that Azara says

of them, "to compare the Peruvians with the savage nations of Paraguay and the Rio de la Plata would be to make a parallel between debasement of body and mind, and elegance, grandeur, strength, valor, and pride."

Of this great Guarani family, composed of so many tribes, and differing so much from each other, one of the most important, formerly, was the Mbayas.* This once powerful tribe regarded themselves as the natural enemies of all other tribes, nations, or people. In some respects they were greatly superior to those Guaranis whom the Spaniards met at Asuncion, and among whom they domiciled themselves. They were of larger stature, more active and courageous. But they were addicted to some barbarous practices of the most disgusting and horrible character. These practices, so destructive of their race, must have been of recent invention, or the tribe could never have become so numerous as it was at the time of the arrival of the Europeans. But they had no tradition of prophet or spirit that had taught them their abominations. Of them, their practices and their faith, the same author says:—

"As in their stature, strength, beauty, and elegance they are far superior to the Spaniards, they regard the European race as quite inferior to their own. As regards religion, they adore nothing, neither do they observe anything that makes the least allusion to this subject or to the future life. To explain their first origin, they express themselves in the following terms. 'In the beginning God created all nations as numerous as they now are, not contenting himself with the creation of one man and one woman; and he distributed them over all the face of the earth. Afterwards it occurred to him to create a Mbaya with his own particular woman, and as he had given away all the lands to other nations, so that there remained no more to allot, he ordered the bird called the caracara to go tell them that for his part he was very sorry there was no more land to give them; that therefore he had not created more than two Mbayas; but to remedy this inconvenience he had com-

* Though so classified by Azara, it is asserted by others that the Mbayas did not belong to the family of the Guaranis. Their language and habits are certainly so different as to lead to that conclusion.

manded that they should always wander through the territory of other nations, making war upon all, killing all adult men, and adopting the children and women to augment their number.' Never were divine precepts more faithfully observed, as the only occupation of the Mbayas is to wander about hunting and fishing to support themselves, and making war on the whole human race, killing or preserving alive their enemies, conformably with the order of the caracara. They make an exception of the Guanans, with whom they maintain close friendship. Indeed, the Mbayas always have a multitude of Guanans that serve them voluntarily as slaves, and gratuitously cultivate their lands and render other services. Besides these the Mbayas have other slaves, being the children and women which they capture, who are not only of the Indian, but of the Spanish race. The Mbayas have great affection for their slaves. They never command them with imperious tone, nor censure nor punish them, nor sell them, even though they may be prisoners of war. They trust to the good faith of the slave, and are content with what he is willing to do, and share with them all they have. Thus it happens that no prisoner, though a slave, desires to leave them; it is the same with the Spanish women they have with them, notwithstanding some of them were grown to womanhood, and had children, before being taken. What a contrast to the treatment that Europeans give to their African slaves!"

The Mbayas were brave and expert warriors, showing great courage and strategy in time of battle. But they were always content with a single success, and, that achieved, they left the field. But for this peculiarity of their tactics, says Azara, not a Spaniard or Portuguese would have been left on the confluents of the Plata. In their customs as regards polygamy and divorce, they were like the other Indian nations, the marriage being a union only so long as it might suit the two parties. But they had one custom so abhorrent to all natural instincts that few savages would follow it. This was the practice of killing at its birth every child born of a woman, save one. The first children of a couple were always killed off without the least remorse or compunction, and only when the mother apprehended that from her age or infirmities she would not bear another did

she attempt to rear her infant. If, after this, another was born, it was instantly killed. Not only had they this horrible custom, but women would subject themselves to the most terrible beatings about the stomach and bowels, in order, as they said, that they might not lose their form and comeliness by too frequent child-bearing. The effect of this practice was necessarily to cause the population to decrease ; and as no tribe or nation that adhered to it could long exist, it was probably adopted some time after the arrival of the Spaniards in the Plata. At least, no mention is made of it by their earliest writers. The race, numerous and powerful as it had been, soon became extinct, as did that of the Guaicurus, another tribe living on the right bank of the river, and which had been once even more powerful and proud than the Mbayas. These two, for some time previous to their extinction, had the same execrable custom of murdering all new-born children save one to a family.

Of this tribe (the Guaicurus) Azara remarks :—

• “It was one of the most numerous, and in my judgment was the most valiant, the strongest, the most warlike, and having the most lofty stature. They dwelt in the Chaco, almost in front of Asuncion. . . . Of this nation, once so proud and considerable, there exists now but a single person, and he is the finest formed man in the world, being six feet seven inches in height. He has three wives, and not to be too much alone he has joined the tribe of the Tobas, and adopted their dress and style of painting themselves.”

The only other tribe of Indians that had sufficient strength to oppose themselves to the Spaniards and to seriously molest them, and whose warfare enters into the history of the country, was the Payaguas. The name of the river, and subsequently of the country, was probably derived from this nation. The Payaguas were they who first encountered the expedition of Cabot and gave battle, and it was a branch of the same tribe that Irala found near Candelaria or Olimpo. Hence the name which the Indians of the lower country had

already given it, — the "Rio de los Payaguas." The Spaniards, by a corruption of spelling, called it Paraguá or Paraguay, and thus the name of the country is derived from the name of a race now extinct.



THE LAST OF THE PAYAGUAS.

The Payaguas were a brave and warlike people, and from the first looked with distrust and suspicion on the Spaniards, regarding them much as the Puritans of New England were regarded by Philip of Pokanoket and his followers. For a long time they were the constant and implacable enemies of the foreigners, and many thousands of the early Spaniards perished at their hands; so that at various times they threatened the extinction, not only of the Spanish colonies, but of the Portuguese settlements to the north. But their incessant wars told heavily on their numbers, till at last they made peace with the colony at Asuncion, and from that time be-

came dependent on their former enemies. Instead of warring upon them, they were so reduced in numbers that they were willing to render any service to the foreigners, like catching fish, taking care of their horses, and laboring in any menial capacity. But they never amalgamated with the Spaniards, nor with other Indians. Poor menial dependants, they retained all their former pride and undisguised contempt for everybody who was not a Payagua. Even to the time of the commencement of the late war, when the last man was taken for a soldier and the women to perform the drudgery of the camp, although the nation was reduced to some fifty persons dwelling on the bank of the river near the capital, they regarded themselves, as indeed do most nations and sects, as the chosen and elect of earth and heaven.

The early writers give the names of many other tribes which were said to belong to the great Guarani family. They differed very much from each other, however, in character, habits, and appearance. The Guaranis proper, who were known by no other name,—those who belonged to the same tribe or nation that was first met at Asuncion,—were the only natives the Spaniards could or would unite with, and from the union with them is the Paraguayan nation descended. They were less warlike, less active, inferior in stature, and more ugly in appearance than some, and not so completely debased and barbarous as others. In fact, some of the smaller tribes were but a little removed from the wild brutes of their own jungles. The lowest in the scale, perhaps, were the Guatos, who dwelt to the north of the Rio Apa, on some islands in a lake called the Lake of Jarayes. This tribe consisted of less than one hundred persons, and they were as unapproachable as wild beasts. No other person, Indian or foreigner, could ever come near, but that they would fly and hide in impenetrable jungles. For many generations they had held the same marshy fastnesses without increase or diminution, so far as their neighbors knew of their number. The tradition among the other tribes was that they had a language of their own; that they lived

like unreasoning animals, without laws, religion, or chiefs. As compared with the Guatos the Guaranis were a civilized nation, but to compare the latter with the Peruvians that Pizarro encountered would be, as remarked by Azara, "to make a parallel between debasement of body and mind, and elegance, grandeur, strength, valor, and pride."

These smaller tribes may now be said to be extinct. There are still Indians to the north of Paraguay called Guatos. But they are entitled to that appellation only because of their low and debased condition. And yet they are greatly superior to the Guatos described by Azara. There are also many Indians, remnants of tribes, still living in what is called the Gran Chaco, on the right or west bank of the Paraguay, all of whom are now incorrectly called Guaicurus. But the Guaicurus nation has long been extinct, and the miserable wretches who inhabit that vast wilderness are so low in the scale of reasoning beings that one might doubt whether or not they have human souls.

It is alleged by naturalists that animals of the same genus will breed upon each other, and that when such is not the case, and that they will not, or do not, cross the one species with another, they must have had a different origin, and could not have descended from the same first progenitors; that the horse cannot be an improved ass, or the ass a degenerate variety of the horse, for though the mule is the fruit of the union of the two, yet there the power of reproduction ceases; that the wild goose and the tame goose could not have descended from the same original stock, since the mongrel of the two cannot continue his generation; whereas it is known that other species of animals having greater difference in appearance and habits — like the bull-dog and the King Charles spaniel, or the Cochin China hen and the little bantam — cross and mix, and the progeny of these cross again indiscriminately with other breeds, and this continually to any degree of relationship, and that all the shades of breed or blood may be found in the same animal. If this theory be correct, then the inference is strong that the

Guaranis and the other Indians of Paraguay had not a common origin or progenitors. The Spaniards in Paraguay never crossed with any but the Guaranis. There may have been instances of issue from a union of a Guaicuru or Payagua and a European. But if there were, there the cross must have stopped; for such a thing as a Payagua or Guaicuru with a tint of white blood was, to the best of my knowledge, never heard of. These and several other tribes of this region neither had, nor could be made to have, any ideas of a future state, or that they had immortal souls. The description of

“ . . . the poor Indian! whose untutor'd mind
Sees God in clouds, or hears him in the wind,”

would never apply to them. The missionaries found it labor lost to preach to them. They might tell of life and immortality beyond the grave, but the savage instinct told them that it did not apply to them, and so we never hear of a Guaicuru or Mbaya Christian or convert. For some inscrutable and wise purpose they were created to live and die in the primeval forest, and to become extinct from the earth. They never could be improved. They had two qualities, to a high degree, in common with the wild beast and the most civilized men, — physical courage and strength. Their only care was to get wherewith to eat, and then, like the hog or alligator, to lie in the sun for it to digest. During the several months of the author's detention in Corrientes, during the late war, he saw much of the Chaco Indians. The large military camp there rendered necessary the slaughter of many beef cattle to supply the troops and hospitals. Many Indians would come over from the Chaco in their canoes to dispute with the buzzards and the cur dogs for the offal of the slaughter pens. With this they would stuff themselves to repletion, and then sleep till they could repeat the unctuous feast. The habits of the different tribes varied accordingly as they lived on the bank of a river, in the open plains, or in the forest; but they nearly all cultivated little patches of maize, sugar-cane, and mandioca. They depended, more or less, according as they were situated, on the chase or on fishing for their supply of food. In a

word, the native was the savage Indian of the New World, and, when that is said, his character, his habits, his laziness, are all pretty well understood. According to the development theory of the most eminent naturalists, it would appear that the Guaranis were of the lowest grade of human beings, and that the surrounding tribes were just at that stage of development below the line of humanity. The one race would cross with the Europeans, but not with the Payaguas or Guairurus. They also were susceptible of religious impressions, and had an instinctive sense of a future life. But no religious impression could ever be made on the surrounding tribes, who were a degree lower in intelligence than the Guaranis. They could never be made to realize that there was a future state, and if "instinct," as Pope says, "must be right," then none of the tribes of the Plata save the Guaranis had human souls. It is from the different branches of this family, and from them alone, that all the people of the Plata, of mixed Indian and European blood, have descended. There was a great difference, however, between the Querandis and the Charruas near the mouth of the river, and the Guaranis of Paraguay, though all are from the same original stock. The Guaranis, among whom the Spaniards first pitched their tents, took more kindly to improvement than the tribes around them; they had more gentleness, and were more susceptible of religious impressions. They had houses of mud and thatch, such as could be made without tools of iron or steel, of which they were ignorant. In many respects they were similar to the inhabitants of the Marquesas and Omoo Islands, as described by Mr. Herman Melville. But they had not, like the Typees, the vice of cannibalism. Some writers have attempted to fasten this charge upon them. But no one, it is believed, having personal knowledge on the subject, has ever accused the Paraguayan tribes of any such practice. They either deny it; or make no allusion to it, as they would naturally do of a thing unknown or unthought of. With this brief digression on the character and habits of the native race, the direct history is now resumed.

CHAPTER III.

1542 - 1545.

Expedition of Alvar Nuñez de Vera Cabeza de Vaca. — Changes his Route. — Overland Journey. — Arrives in Asuncion, 1542. — His Reception. — Takes Possession of the Government. — His Instructions from the Emperor. — Difficulties in administering the Government. — Disaffection among the Officers. — Difficulties with the Indians. — His Magnanimous Course towards them. — Peace concluded. — Conspiracy formed against Cabeza de Vaca. — He is seized and imprisoned. — Irala proclaimed Governor. — Cabeza de Vaca sent a Prisoner to Spain. — Unjust Treatment of him by the Emperor. — He is finally tried and acquitted.

THE abandonment of Buenos Aires and the removal of the colony to Asuncion had not been foreseen by the Spanish government. It was known that Ayolas and his party had disappeared, and, naturally, there was much anxiety to learn the fate of his companions who had remained behind him. In the mean while, the colonists having wisely improved their privilege of electing their own Governor *ad interim*, in the event of the non-return of Ayolas, by choosing Irala, had, under his wise guidance, made great progress in consolidating their own power, at the same time that they had attached to them by interest and domestic ties the largest tribe of Indians. But of the success of the policy initiated by Irala little was known at the court of Charles V., and it was considered a matter of the first necessity to send additional forces to sustain the colonists, and also an executive officer duly accredited from the crown to command obedience, and by his prestige and judgment advance the imperial pretensions.

But where was such a man to be found? Certainly not among the courtiers or statesmen who flattered or counselled the Emperor. They might be able advisers in war, cunning to manage an intrigue, swift in devising taxes, and sharp on

the scent of victims for an *auto-de-fe*; but such qualities could not satisfy the requirements of the mighty champion of the Holy Inquisition. Cruel and remorseless as was the bigotry of the great Emperor, it did not obliterate his practical sense. To all appearance he had found the right man for the unpromising position.

The person selected for the post was Alvar Nuñez de Vera Cabeza de Vaca, a man whose life seemed a romance stranger than fiction. He had already passed through the most trying vicissitudes imaginable, and under all circumstances had ever united strict integrity with sound judgment and practical sense. Connected with an influential family, he had filled various important posts at home until, in the year 1528, he accompanied the expedition sent to conquer Florida, as treasurer. This expedition was probably the most unfortunate that ever set sail from Europe. The ships that bore the party were nearly all lost in a hurricane, though that which carried Cabeza de Vaca reached the Florida coast, when every soul perished at the hands of the savages, save only Cabeza de Vaca and his slave. He made his captors believe he was rarely skilled in the healing art, and so effectually made good his pretensions by some cures he wrought, that the Indians regarded them as miracles, and from a slave promoted him to be their chief, or cacique. In this capacity he passed ten years, until the news reached him of the great events that were enacting in Mexico, when so great was his influence, and so entirely had he gained the confidence and regard of his people, he was permitted, in 1540, to go and join his countrymen, taking with him a considerable number of Florida Indians. The strange account of his adventures, with the proofs he brought of its truth, seemed little less miraculous to his own people than had his wonderful skill in medicine to the credulous Indians.

Cabeza de Vaca had not only the personal qualities and prestige of adventure that the position required, but he was possessed of a considerable fortune, which he was ready to embark in another expedition to the Plata. This latter was a

great consideration with the government ; for though at that time Spain was despoiling Mexico and Peru of their treasures, these were insufficient to support the magnificence of the court, and carry on the gigantic wars which his most catholic Majesty was waging against half of Europe. Hence it was an object to intrust the command of foreign expeditions to men of wealth, who would fit them out wholly or in part at their own expense, and who would trust to find their recompense in what they might obtain in the invaded countries.

The nomination of Alvar Nuñez de Vera Cabeza de Vaca—a name too long to be often repeated, and having so many words that some writers speak of him as Alvar Nuñez, and others as Cabeza de Vaca, and which, translated, would read *Alvar Nuñez de Vera cow's head*—was enough to awaken great interest in the enterprise, and he soon found more persons eager to follow his fortunes and share the dangers and rewards of adventure than he could take with him. Among them were several destined to fill important positions in the future history of Paraguay.

This expedition consisted of four ships, with their crews, and four hundred soldiers. From long experience, Cabeza de Vaca had learned the wants of a savage people, and from this could infer the necessities of a new colony. He accordingly laid in a stock of seeds and plants not known in the New World, and took with him a variety of domestic animals. He was the first to carry horned cattle to the valley of the Plata, from which have descended the innumerable herds that for so many generations furnished the most important articles of commerce in those vast regions.

Like many of the early expeditions to America, that of Cabeza de Vaca suffered terribly in the voyage across the Atlantic. The vessels of that day were small and badly constructed, and a sea voyage in one of them was a very different thing from a trip in a clipper ship of modern times. So seriously did this small fleet suffer, that on reaching the island of Santa Catalina, some nine hundred miles to the north of the mouth of the Plata, Cabeza de Vaca determined to cross

from there to the main-land, and thence proceed directly to Paraguay. Before setting out on this difficult journey, he had learned of the general prosperity of the colony, of the election of Irala as Governor, and of the difficulties he was having in repressing some of his turbulent companions, who were greedy for gain by injustice to the Indians, and who thought that, as the Governor was elected by them, he ought to permit them to rob and oppress the natives without restraint. With a disregard of danger and toil characteristic of the man, he therefore left his ships to make their way as best they could to the mouth of the river, and thence to Asuncion, while he, with the larger part of his troops, set out for the same destination through the unknown forests. This journey of so large a force, through an unbroken wilderness, for some two thousand miles, has no parallel in the early history of America. The party reached Asuncion on March 11, 1542, having been four months and nine days on the route. Not a man had been lost on the whole journey, except one, who was accidentally drowned in crossing a river. Cabeza de Vaca's knowledge of the Indian character was such, that he made friends of all the natives through whose countries he passed. His men therefore scarcely wanted for anything on the route, and arrived in Paraguay in better health and condition than when they left the sea-coast. Before reaching his destination, he sent couriers in advance to announce his approach, and on nearing Asuncion he was met by a large concourse of people to welcome him as their new Governor, or Adelantado. Irala took the initiative in giving a cordial reception to his successor, and immediately resigned all authority into his hands, and the universal joy gave promise of harmony and prosperity.

The new Governor had come under very peculiar instructions from the King. They were very minute, and related to details that should have been left to the discretion of the Adelantado. Some of these instructions were sufficiently curious to be noted here. One was, that no lawyer or solicitor was to be permitted to exercise his calling. Nobody was to

be denied permission to return to Spain whenever he might desire, and every one was to have the privilege of appealing directly to the home government, and even to the King. No one was to be prosecuted for debt for the first four years of the new administration. The estates of persons deceased intestate were to be strictly administered upon, and the rights of property of individuals made secure against the avarice of officials.

These instructions Cabeza de Vaca endeavored to execute faithfully and literally. But it was a task beyond his power or that of any man. Few of the Spanish officials were satisfied with the returns that honesty and faithful service would command. Irala, by his great activity and enthusiasm, by holding out hopes and visions of yet opening the way to Peru, had been able to restrain their cupidity and enforce obedience. But Cabeza de Vaca held out no such hopes, and the adventurers who had left home to rob and convert the heathen saw their "castles in Spain" vanishing into thin air. The stern morals and strict justice of Alvar Nuñez did not accord with the practices or hopes of many of the leading colonists. In consequence, there arose a party in opposition to him and his government, — a thing as impossible in Irala's administration as another leader than Napoleon would have been under the First Empire, or another than Cromwell in the time of the Commonwealth. But his severe discipline, as it limited the power of extortion of the officers, rendered him popular with the soldiers and the people generally; and in spite of disaffection among the former he inflicted a severe chastisement on the Payaguas, who, while professing friendship for the Europeans, were discovered in a plot for their utter extermination. He sent overtures of peace and amity to the Guaicurus, who attacked his ambassadors and obliged them to fly. He therefore sent a strong force against them, and though they pursued their usual mode of warfare, falling back and fighting behind ambushes, they were followed to their hiding-places, where many were killed and a large number taken prisoners. With these trophies he re-

turned to Asuncion, where he gave orders for his prisoners to be treated with the greatest kindness. Having convinced them that the Spaniards wished to live in peace with the Indians, he selected some of the most intelligent of them and sent them back to their own people to offer terms of peace. The Guaicuru chiefs were greatly astonished to see their subjects return, not only alive and well, but full of admiration for their captors, and especially for their magnanimous Governor. This generous confidence on the part of Cabeza de Vaca had its desired effect. Twenty of the principal Guaicurus were sent to arrange the terms, and thus a peace was concluded that lasted for many years.

Alvar Nuñez continued with great activity in the work of conciliating the Indians by kindness when possible, by force when kindness would not avail, and by good faith always. The limits of this work will not allow of a complete account of the labors and difficulties of this faithful, energetic servant of the crown. But faithful and energetic though he was, he was not precisely the man for the position he was called to fill. In integrity, in energy, in purity of purpose, and in knowledge of the Indian character, his superior was not to be found; but with all these qualities he had not the tact to overawe and control his own countrymen. His rules of conduct were so tight that his subordinates would not bear their tension. He might be considered as a sort of Spanish Catholic Puritan; but his associates and subjects knew nothing of Puritan abnegation and self-control. With such different ideas and motives of conduct, it was impossible but that there should arise an opposing party composed of leading and influential members of the colony. With the common soldiers and the natives he was popular; for they regarded him as their protector against the petty tyranny of the subordinate officers. The latter, for the same reason, determined to be rid of his presence. Taking advantage, therefore, of his being sick and confined to his bed, and of the absence of Irala, who as chief in command of the military had been sent into the Cordilleras to chastise the natives that

had been causing much trouble, a large number of the disaffected officers assembled on some pretext near his house, and, no guard being ready to repel them, they entered, dragged him from his bed, sick as he was, and, loading him with fetters, cast him into prison and subjected him to most cruel indignities. The next day the people were called together, and the chief conspirators read a declaration to the effect that Alvar Nuñez de Vera Cabeza de Vaca having been guilty of the greatest crimes, and having the evident purpose of despoiling the colonists of their riches, was therefore deposed from his authority, and Domingo Martinez de Irala was proclaimed a second time, by the popular voice, Governor of the colony. It was also declared in this proclamation of the populace, that Nuñez should be sent to answer to the King for his misconduct.

When Irala returned from the Cordilleras he found everything in the greatest confusion. Even the best friends of Cabeza de Vaca were alarmed at the opposition he had provoked, and their alarm was much increased by the ill-timed efforts of some of his partisans to get up a counter-revolution. The conduct of Irala at this crisis has been very much criticised, and very differently estimated by different writers. That as lieutenant to Alvar Nuñez he had not acted with the same energy and good faith as when he was himself at the head of the government no one denies; but that he was in any way privy to the conspiracy, or that he approved it after its work was done, there exists no other evidence than the fact that he accepted the post from which Nuñez had been evicted. This in itself is a strong presumption against him, but it is not conclusive. On his return to the capital, it was the all but unanimous voice, even of the friends of the fallen Governor, that Irala should accept the offered position. They knew, and he knew, that if he refused to accept the post, and Cabeza de Vaca were released and restored to power, there existed such animosities as would lead to anarchy; that the colony would probably be ruined. There was no other man to be thought of for the position but one of these two. Under

these circumstances Irala accepted the position, and Cabeza de Vaca was sent to Spain, that the government there might decide on the merits of the unhappy quarrel that had arisen between the two Governors. As the distinguished prisoner was being taken on board the vessel that was to bear him to Spain, he availed himself of his undoubted right to name his successor. Knowing that his arrest was illegal, and that it was for himself, and not for his subordinates, to name a substitute in case he must leave, he, at the moment of embarking, proclaimed aloud, that, in the name of the King, he appointed Juan de Salazar y Espinosa as the lawful and legitimate Governor. Little or no respect, however, was given to this verbal appointment, as Salazar had neither prestige nor talents to command it.

The services and sacrifices of Alvar Nuñez were but illy requited by his sovereign. He had too rigidly obeyed his instructions, and the great Emperor, like an Emperor later and greater than he, was as severe on those who erred from obedience as those who erred from disregard of his orders. With Charles V., as with Napoleon, it was a crime to fail. To bring the faithful Adelantado to trial was sure to fix the responsibility of his failure on those who had given him his instructions. This the government was not disposed to do, and though a neglect to do so was calculated to work the greatest injustice to both Cabeza de Vaca and to Irala, it refused for eight years to give a hearing to the former, and its approval of the latter was in such a way as to leave the charge of insubordination and schism hanging over him. Both had a right to complain, not so much of each other as of the crown; but as Alvar Nuñez had most implicitly obeyed instructions, he experienced most of that gratitude in which princes excel,—neglect. At last, after years of waiting, and long after Irala had been formally appointed Governor of the colony at Asuncion, Cabeza de Vaca was able to obtain an official investigation into his administration. Of course he was acquitted of every charge that had been brought against him. As if to make a mockery of his vindication, he was

declared to be rehabilitated in his authority ; but he was destined never to return to Paraguay. In the long time that had intervened between his seizure and deportation and his rehabilitation, events had occurred that rendered his vindication an aggravation and his obedience a reproach. While waiting for the charges against him to be investigated, the government had indirectly pronounced against him by continuing to recognize Irala as Governor, and when at last he was declared acquitted of every charge against him, the government would not carry into effect the decree of the Council of the Indies. Irala was governing with great success, and the colony was in a flourishing condition, and it was not thought expedient to endanger its prosperity in order to do justice to a faithful public servant. The political life of Alvar Nuñez de Vera Cabeza de Vaca was at an end.

CHAPTER IV.

1545 - 1557.

Prosperity of the Colony. — New Towns built. — Results of the Admixture of the two Races. — Expeditions against the Indians. — Irala succeeds in opening Communication with Peru. — Political Affairs of that Country. — Irala returns to Asuncion. — Expedition under Captain Nuño de Chaves sent to explore the Region of the Upper Paraguay. — Consequences resulting from the Failure of that Expedition. — Death of Irala. — His Character and Public Services. — Influence of the Jesuits upon the Character of the Paraguayan People. — Paraguay constituted a Bishopric, 1547.

THE reports that reached Spain of the fine climate and soil of Paraguay, its beautiful diversity of hills and valleys, plains and woodlands, of a native race gentle and friendly to the foreigner, were sufficient to divert many emigrants from the more civilized countries of Peru and Mexico, where, though larger rewards were promised, the labors and dangers were correspondingly increased. The colony prospered greatly. Many towns were built more or less distant from Asuncion, each having an established municipal government in imitation of that at the capital, and to which the Indians as well as the Spaniards were to look for protection and justice. It was the constant endeavor of Irala to level all distinctions between the Europeans and the natives, and this he effected in a great measure by encouraging his countrymen to take the brown daughters of the forest for wives, to learn their language and conform to their customs in matters not of essential importance. This policy led to a very rapid increase of the colony, not so much, however, in his own lifetime as afterwards, when the sons and daughters of the mestizos grew up to maturity, and the lines of distinction between the two races became less marked,

until at last the whole Guarani nation became, as it were, a Spanish colony.

Thus the government and policy of Irala permanently fixed the character, social and political, of the people. During his long administration they had entered so far on the road marked out for them by him, that they must continue to pursue it indefinitely. The singular combination of the Spanish cavalier and the Indian produced that form of civilization, the fruit of which was eventually the Paraguayan nation. From a union of such opposites there necessarily resulted a people of strange contradictions; a mixture of refinement and barbarism, civilization and ignorance. The cavaliers of Spain, high-spirited, punctilious, proud, and arrogant, took to themselves the dusky maids of Paraguay with their simple, rustic habits, their ignorance of domestic duties, their rude tastes, their simple innocence; and the result to their posterity has been what a philosopher might have foreseen, — the two extremes of refined courtesy and primitive barbarism. The Paraguayans descended from this cross are as punctilious, as courteous in deportment, as observant of the little amenities of civilized life, as were the courtiers of Charles V.; but in the houses of the richest of them is an absence of everything like comfort almost as great as among the Chaco Indians. A young lady who at a ball would be dressed with taste, and even elegance, and who would dance as gracefully as the belle of "our first society," the next day in her own house would be found barefooted, dressed with nothing but a chemise and petticoat, and invariably smoking a cigar; while in the two or three rooms of the house the furniture required by absolute necessity for eating, drinking, and sleeping would be so scanty as to be of less cost and value than that of the ball-dress of one of the daughters the evening before. Civilization is a plant whose growth is so slow as to be almost imperceptible. How many centuries has it taken for the present most enlightened nations to reach their as yet far from perfect development! Examples such as the history of Paraguay furnishes would

seem to indicate that there is an innate barbarism in the human race that cannot be changed by education or custom till generation after generation has been exposed to the civilizing process. The very nature of the savage must be changed before he will take kindly to civilization; and it is as certain that an Indian child taken in infancy from its parents, and brought up with all the care that the most humane and refined can bestow upon it, will still be a savage in many of its tastes and habits, as that the young partridge hatched by the domestic hen will at the first opportunity flee to the woods. The contact with the Europeans, and the mixture of the blue blood (*sangré azul*) of Spain, in three hundred years only produced a semi-civilization. The race of 1860 still had the peculiar qualities and characteristics of both branches of the original stock. It was an anomalous people, and the like had never been seen in any other country of America. The reason of this may be found in the fact, that in no other colony did the early colonists in large numbers adopt the native language and take the Indian women as wives.

The colonists continued to prosper so long as Irala was at their head, notwithstanding he was compelled to make many expeditions against unfriendly Indians, who were ever plotting their destruction. In one of these, that occurred soon after his restoration to power, as many as two thousand of the savages were slain, and more than that number taken prisoners. These last were distributed among the soldiers as prisoners of war (1545).

Many of the Spanish officers and soldiers under Irala's command were impatient at not finding any of the gold for which they had left their homes, and were anxious to make another effort to effect a passage through to Peru, notwithstanding the disastrous results of all previous attempts. Their Governor shared in this feeling, though from motives different from those of his followers. He therefore determined to lead an expedition himself; when this fact was known, no one doubted of its success. Naming Francisco de Mendoza as

Acting Governor during his absence, he set out with three hundred and fifty soldiers, nearly half of whom were cavalry, and two thousand Guarani Indians. It is, perhaps, needless to say that, after immense hardships and numerous engagements with the savages, Irala and his party were successful, and reached the confines of Peru. There they learned of great changes in the affairs of that country since their last information respecting it. They were informed of the civil war between Almagro and Pizarro, and the subsequent assassination of the latter. They also learned of the rebellion of Gonzalo de Pizarro, and its overthrow by that wonderful man of peace, La Gasca. Irala sent forward a deputation to advise La Gasca of his approach, and to offer the service of himself and followers in support of the royal authority. La Gasca received the messengers of Irala with kindness, though they were as unwelcome as unexpected. Many of the defeated partisans of Gonzalo Pizarro were lurking about, and he feared that they would try and enlist the soldiers of Irala to unite with them, and make another attempt at revolution. La Gasca, it seems, too, did not put full confidence in the professions and loyalty of Irala, and, being the direct representative of the crown, he removed him from the governorship of Paraguay, and appointed Diego Centeno in his place. But Centeno was an old man, and at the time of his appointment was on his death-bed at Chuquisaca. No one else was appointed by La Gasca in place of his old friend and devoted follower, and Irala, still Governor, returned to Asuncion.

Irala and his party were absent a year and a half on this expedition. During this time he had fought many battles with the Indians, and on his return brought, instead of gold and silver, twelve thousand captives, mostly women and children, who were allotted out to his followers as slaves. His long absence had caused many to believe he had shared the fate of Ayolas, and would never return. His lieutenant, Mendoza, had been killed in an insurrection against his authority, headed by Diego de Abreu. The insurrection was suppressed, and its leader executed. In the absence of a

controlling mind there had appeared several ambitious of leadership. But Irala arranged all these disputes and rivalries, conciliating two of the most formidable and able of the malecontents, Francisco Ortiz de Vergara, and Alonzo Riquelme de Guzman, father of the historian Ruy Diaz de Guzman, by giving them his daughters in marriage.

The conduct of Irala in carrying off his prisoners to be treated as slaves does not appear in keeping with his general character. He is to be judged, however, by the moral code that prevailed in the sixteenth, and not by that of the nineteenth century. In his day, few questioned the right of the civilized invader to enslave or destroy the savage heretic. Yet Irala, though he distributed his captives among his own people as slaves, did not condemn them to perpetual bondage. He made provision, that, after one or two lives, their descendants should be enfranchised and become citizens; and thus, though coming far short of modern ideas of natural right and justice, he showed himself far in advance of his times.

The experience of Irala in the upper waters of the Paraguay had impressed upon him the importance of having a Spanish colony in that vicinity, whether that was to be the route of the great highway to Peru or not. He therefore despatched a party consisting of two hundred Spaniards and fifteen hundred Guaranis, under command of Captain Nuño de Chaves, to found a town at some point above Olimpo, wherever the situation might appear to be most eligible. Chaves was a man of energy, but vain and ambitious, and when once away from the control of his chief, he thought to strike off and found a colony on his own account. He accordingly ascended the river to a point above where Curumba now stands, and thence struck inland to the west, intending to go so far into the interior as to be beyond the reach or power of Irala or the government of Paraguay. He had to encounter many tribes of Indians, and had many battles with them, till his men, seeing that his conduct and plans were in direct violation of his orders, demanded that he should return to carry out his instructions, and make a settlement on the Upper

Paraguay. But he refused to yield to their demands, and the larger part of his troops deserted, and returned to Asuncion. Thus the expedition failed of its object, and from this failure the whole history of all the countries of the Plata has been changed. Had a Spanish settlement been established at that time on the upper waters of the Paraguay, the vast regions of Matto Grosso and Alta Amazonas would have continued a Spanish possession as long as Spain held dominion over any part of South America. Another colony than that at Asuncion, some three or four hundred miles higher up the river, would have rendered impossible the dark and gloomy reign of Francia; nor could the late war, that has made a desert of Paraguay, ever have taken place. By the failure of this expedition, the country was left to be taken possession of by the Portuguese, and is now a part of the Brazilian Empire. To that it has always been a source of expense and danger. It is so far distant from the more thickly settled parts of the empire, that it is next to impossible to reach it by land; and to approach it by water, rivers must be ascended that are controlled by three distinct powers. It gives no revenue to the crown, but has long been a constant tax on the national treasury, and at last was the occasion of a war that, while it almost depopulated Paraguay, wellnigh bankrupted the three powers allied against it.

A continuous narrative of the great and important events of Irala's life cannot be given in this work. From his first landing in the New World to his death, his career was a romance of activity, adventure, danger, and toil, all devoted to a conscientious discharge of his duty alike to his sovereign, his fellow-adventurers, and the defenceless natives. He was always active, now going forth to chastise some troublesome Indians, and now hurrying back to arrange disturbances and rivalries at the capital. Then he is busily engaged in assisting the missionaries in the work of Christianizing, instructing, and civilizing the Guaranis, and in establishing subordinate colonies at different points more or less distant; and suffice to say, that, to the day of his death, he continued to be the head

and soul of the colony. He died in 1557, at the village of Ita, some twenty-five miles from Asuncion, whither he had gone to superintend the cutting of some timber for a cathedral in the capital. There, at the age of seventy years, he was seized with a sudden and violent fever, and expired, lamented alike, strange as it may seem, by his own countrymen, the Guaranis he had subdued, and the captured Indians of other tribes that he had enslaved. He was buried in the cathedral which he was engaged in building at the time of his death, — the first and the last great man ever known by the countries of the Plata.

Irala had lived long enough to see his policy vindicated by its success. The colony under his administration had grown rich, numerous, and strong, as no other colony in the New World had ever done with the same assistance from the mother country. That the results of his plans subsequent to his death were so different from what he anticipated may be ascribed to one of two natural causes, of which he had neither knowledge nor experience, — to the mixture of two races so incongruous that a hopeless inferiority should result from their amalgamation; or to adventitious circumstances that intervened, and perverted into evils measures in themselves good, just, and humane. To sustain the former hypothesis is scarcely possible; but there are many reasons for believing the latter.

The mixed character of the Paraguayan nation had been fixed by Irala, and for two hundred and fifty years after his death there was no violent revolution within, nor influx of foreign elements from without, to affect or change the national character. But it did change, until we have seen the whole people the mere passive instruments of their own destruction, — machines without will, and without the consciousness of power or self-assertion, mere material for war that could be directed as if insensate.

Before dying, Irala had named as his successor the original founder of Asuncion, Gonzalo de Mendoza. The nomination was approved, as the people then thought that whatever had been done by Irala must be right, as at a later period our people

have thought that whatever was done by George Washington or Abraham Lincoln must necessarily have been right. But Mendoza died within a year of his nomination, and was succeeded by the son-in-law of Irala, Francisco Ortiz de Vergara. After the death of the founder of Paraguay, however, it was no longer a question of the stability of the colony. The Guarani Indians, more docile than any others in that part of the world, and more intelligent than the most, had, after some feeble attempts to destroy the uninvited Spaniards, ere this given up all hope of throwing off their dominion, and accepted them as the dominant race. The half-breeds, now coming of age, formed a connecting link between the two races; and as the brown señoritas of the country looked more kindly on the gallant Spaniards than on the dusky natives, the morality of the country being then, as ever since, of a most easy character, the succeeding generations showed an astonishing number having the blood of the two races in their veins.

It is beyond the purpose of this work to follow chronologically or treat historically many events that, though in themselves interesting, had no permanent influence on the general character and condition of the Paraguayan nation. The frequent skirmishes with the Indians, the perpetual jealousies and contentions for power, were matters of course, and can have no interest except for the people of the country. But for two hundred years after the death of Irala there was no event of sufficient influence or importance, either of a warlike or a political nature, to seriously affect or change the national character. The change that came over the people was wrought by other means. Early in the history of the colony the disciples of Ignatius Loyola fixed upon Paraguay as a field for their operations; and after they once were domiciled there, the history of the Jesuits was the history of Paraguay. The intrigues and conspiracies for the civil power were of little importance, for they left no permanent impression. There were some sixty different governors during the colonial period of the country, but little

more than the names of most of them is known. Their descendants have atoned with their lives for the eminence their forefathers enjoyed. The conduct of the prince that took the hint from his courtier who cut off the heads of the tallest poppies, and served his ablest men in the same way, has been so closely imitated for the past fifty years, that nearly every family that could boast of gentle blood was extinct long before the termination of the great war in which all were indiscriminately sacrificed. The colony, in spite of petty jealousies and rivalries, was growing richer and stronger; the people in their unambitious way were prosperous; many thousand cattle and sheep grazed upon the open plains; the earth yielded its fruits so profusely that the necessities of life were had with very little labor, and nature had done all that was possible to tempt the people to a life of indolence and arcadian simplicity.

After the first dangers and toils of the pioneers were over, and the comforts of civilized life were procurable in the colony, many of the emigrants from Spain took with them their wives and children. The proud dames of Castile looked with a natural contempt on the Guarani women with whom their countrymen had consorted, and those who could boast the blue blood (*sangré azul*) of Spain affected great superiority to their darker neighbors. This pride of blood was long maintained among those families who could boast of it, especially by the female portion; the men being more indifferent to it, as they very likely would have, in addition to the legitimate family of the pure stock, several others of a mixed nature. Alas! could the aristocratic and proud Spaniards have foreseen the persecutions and disabilities, the tortures, imprisonment, and death, that were to be visited on their descendants for no crime but that of unmixed blood, they would have shuddered at its possession and claimed affinity with the Guarani.

The peculiar character of the Paraguayan people, however, as it has appeared during the last half-century, is not to be ascribed solely, nor even mainly, to the incongruous mixture

of races from which it sprung. In the earlier periods of its existence there was as much independence and individuality of character as among any of the Spanish American colonies. This seems evident from the insubordination to authority that showed itself whenever power was grossly abused; and it was only after the influence of the Jesuits had emasculated the general mind of all sense of responsibility and every feeling of personal reliance, that the whole race became the willing forgers of their own fetters. It was through their system and polity that the national character was so thoroughly changed; and only by carefully tracing the course of their history can we find a solution of the peculiar development and formation of a people so extraordinary as the Paraguayans. The impress left by this brotherhood on the mind and habits of the people was so deeply fixed, that the expulsion of the order has not yet liberated them from the superstition, the moral and mental thralldom, to which they had become addicted, and which rendered it possible for the history of the country in later times to be little else than a tale of horrors.

As early as 1547 the Spanish court had asked from the Pope that the colony of Paraguay should be constituted a bishopric. The request was granted. The papal bull was issued, and the Friar Juan de Barrios, of Toledo, was named bishop. But owing to age and infirmities he never left Europe. In 1555 another bishop, Pedro de la Torre, was nominated to the place, and immediately embarked for Paraguay. Previous to this the whole of the South American possessions claimed by Spain were considered a part of the viceroyalty of Peru. The Viceroy of Peru and the *Audiencia* of Charcas had authority from the crown to administer the government of the Paraguayan colony, and all others that had been established in the valley of the Plata; but as an appeal to the King might result in a reversal of the action both of Viceroy and Council, Paraguay gradually became independent of her occidental neighbor, to which the establishment of a separate bishopric largely contributed. This bishopric included within

its domain the whole valley of the Plata. But the great influx of population into the lower provinces soon rendered them too powerful and populous to remain in any respect tributary to Paraguay. It had been felt, soon after the breaking up of the colony at Buenos Aires and the final transfer of all its remnants to Asuncion, that there should be a town near the mouth of the river of sufficient strength to defend itself against the Indians, where vessels to and from Europe might load or discharge their cargoes and obtain supplies for their crews. Buenos Aires, therefore, was founded a second time, in 1580; and, notwithstanding its incommodious and unsafe harbor, it soon became a flourishing colony, and within a quarter of a century had as large a population as Asuncion. In 1620 the crown of Spain declared it, with all the regions of the Plata below the confluence of the Paraguay and Parana, to be a separate colony; and the Pope, at the request of the King, established a new bishopric, to hold spiritual dominion over it.

CHAPTER V.

1560-1636.

Buenos Aires founded a Second Time, 1580; declared to be a Separate Colony, 1620. — Saavedra appointed Governor. — Arrival of Jesuit Missionaries. — Pedro de la Torre, First Bishop of Paraguay; his Efforts in Behalf of the Indians. — Labors of the Jesuits. — Fraud and Deceit employed to cheat the Indians into Christianity. — Superstition. — The Virgin of Caacupé, and other Miracle-Workers. — Conflicting Opinions respecting the Influence of the Jesuits on the Indians. — Towns founded by the Jesuits. — Destruction of the Reductions of Guayrá. — Opposition of the Spanish Government to the Enslavement of the Indians. — Don Luis de Cespedes Jaray. — Expulsion of the Jesuits. — Destruction of the Spanish Settlements in Guayrá. — It becomes a Part of the Brazilian Empire.

THOUGH in point of time Paraguay had precedence of all the colonies of the Plata, and for a while was in strength and numbers the most important of all the Spanish dependencies east of the Andes, it gradually lost its relative rank after the second settlement at Buenos Aires, in 1580. This place, notwithstanding the inconveniences of its harbor, was to be the site of a great city, and after the Indians in the neighborhood had ceased to be dangerous, it soon became the metropolitan port of the entire valley. Other colonies were formed in the interior, all of which were dependent on it as the commercial *entrepôt*, so that, in time, Paraguay became a place of secondary importance. The colony of Tucuman had been founded as early as 1564, but as it did not have the advantages of river communication with the ocean like Paraguay, and in its early settlement had no master spirit like Irala to convert the natives into peaceable subjects, it did not flourish and grow strong and rich like its rival. Notwithstanding this, however, the jurisdiction of the Governor of Tucuman, Ramirez de Velazco, was in 1596 extended over Paraguay, and thus the older and more numerous colony was assigned a secondary position. Velazco, however, did not

choose to take upon himself the increased responsibility, and by his wise choice of a substitute completely allayed any feelings of jealousy that his own appointment might have caused. The man to whom he delegated his authority was Hernando Arias de Saavedra, a native of Paraguay, who in his capacity of Governor displayed an ability and administrative capacity that had never been equalled by any of the governors from Spain save the great Irala. He made expeditions in various directions, even going down to Buenos Aires, where he embarked on a voyage of discovery along the coast, to the south of the mouth of the river. He cruised along the coast of Patagonia for some six hundred miles, and, after incredible hardships at the hands of the treacherous savages of these regions, was taken prisoner, with all his command. He succeeded, however, in escaping, and afterwards in rescuing all his companions. The results of his numerous expeditions served to convince him that there was a better way to subdue the Indians than to exterminate them, and that, as it would be a hard task to kill them all, it would be well to try and convert them. He therefore appealed to the court of Spain to aid him in this new plan of conquest, and, in 1608, King Philip III. issued the royal letters-patent to the Order of Jesus, for the conversion of the Indians of the province of Guayrá. This district of Guayrá comprised both banks of the Upper Parana, and is nearly east of Asuncion. In this region the towns of Ontéveros, Ciudad Real, and Villa Rica had been founded as early as 1554 by Don Ruy Diaz de Melgarejo. The first of the Jesuit priests who embarked on this mission were two Italians, Simon Maceta and Jose Cataldino. They reached Asuncion in 1610; but, on their arrival, Saavedra was no longer in power, having been superseded by Don Diego Marin Negron. The two padres, however, applied themselves with zeal to their pious work, and commenced forming the first Jesuit *reduction** on the banks of the Upper

policy of
South
easier to
convert
than
kill

* *Reduction* is the term used to express a town or settlement founded by the Jesuits, to which the Indians were invited to resort to receive instruction and become members of the community that was entirely under Jesuit control.

Parana, and in the vicinity of the towns founded by Melgarejo. The first reduction was called Loreto. Others of the same character were soon founded, as more of the Jesuit fathers soon found their way to this region, which had been selected for the field of their missionary labor in the New World. After the death of Negron, in 1615, Gonzales de Santa Cruz was named Governor by the Viceroy of Peru, but the court of Spain had by this time come to realize that Saavedra was the ruling spirit of the colony. He was therefore again appointed Governor, and held the office till 1620, when having succeeded in his two great projects, one of separating the government of the lower provinces from that of Paraguay, and the other of enlisting the Order of Jesus to undertake the conversion of the Indians, he retired from public life, to enjoy his honors free from the cares and responsibilities of office.

The first Jesuits that came to America landed at Bahia de Todos los Santos (Bay of All Saints) within ten years after the establishment of their order. The character of Ignatius Loyola the founder of this religious body, the principles of the order, the tendency and morality of their teachings, have been too often discussed and criticised to require here anything more than a plain historical statement of their work in Paraguay and the results which followed. As has always been the case with the first devotees of a new religious faith, a new system of government, or new schools of morality, the disciples of Loyola embraced his doctrines with great enthusiasm. In that age of superstition, or "age of faith," as it has since been called by those who mourn its departure, with its Holy Inquisition and machinery of torture, the Church was the great lever of power to which the military was often subordinate. To advance the cause of the Church and exterminate heresy was the chief duty of man, and no means were too cruel, no fraud too gross, no perfidy too scandalous, no torture too refined, to increase the power of those who professed to be followers of the Prince of Peace. Torquemada with his Holy Inquisition, and Alva with his hosts,

had burned and slain their thousands of victims, to the infinite delight of their master, Philip II., and yet heresy would still abound, in spite of "pious combustion" or ruthless slaughter. It was at this time, when Spain, then the most powerful nation in the world, had been overtaxed in her wars against the infidels, — who, nevertheless, would not be convinced of their errors, but had waxed strong and numerous under persecution, — that Loyola conceived his idea of a universal regeneration by different means than those which had been employed by popes and kings for so many generations and with such unsatisfactory results. It was a pious and humane work that he proposed to his followers, and one that required the most entire abnegation and self-sacrifice. The world was to be renounced, and all its temporal blessings. The members of the order were to know no other duty or life than that of bringing the pagan and the infidel within the pale of the true Church. Wherever their presence was required, there were they to go without question. They were to brave toil, danger, and death, to cross oceans, travel across trackless deserts or through deep, dense forests, with no weapons but the symbols of their Church and the faith and doctrines they proclaimed. By these means they hoped to reach the heart and conscience of the savage and compel the respect and admiration of the enlightened.

The first followers of Loyola embraced his views with enthusiasm and entered on their work in the true spirit of gospel missionaries. They looked for no earthly recompense; they aspired only to bring the lost millions of the world into the fold of the Church, looking for their reward in the life to come. It was at that period in the existence of this order when its members were in the heat of enthusiasm and faith, that the first of the Jesuit fathers were despatched to the wilds of America on their sublime mission. They entered on their work with fervor and alacrity, and adhered to the principles of their order. The forms and ceremonies of the Roman Catholic Church were well calculated to make an impression on the minds of the ignorant

and unsuspecting natives, and the story of Christ, his death and resurrection, and of the miracles wrought by saints and apostles, were accepted with little hesitation by these children of the wilderness. And when the natives saw that they came not to rob them of their gold or silver, nor to despoil them of their women, nor to drag them away and sell them into slavery, they eagerly conformed in all things essential to the rules and doctrines of the fathers.

The Jesuit fathers, on reaching Asuncion, found the colony very much distracted by the controversies and rivalries existing between the secular and spiritual authorities. The arrival of the Jesuits was calculated to aggravate, rather than allay, this discord. The first bishop, Pedro de la Torre, was a Franciscan, and his coming had been hailed with great joy by all parties. He had arrived in the time of Irala, who was so thoroughly the governor, that the bishop could do little else than second his efforts.

After the death of Irala, the policy which he had initiated, of incorporating the Indians into the body politic until the natives and the foreigners should become a homogeneous nation, was not followed by his successors with the same regard for the rights of the aborigines that he had always enforced. As has been seen, the prisoners taken by him in his wars with the Indians were usually allotted to their captors as slaves. The larger number were assigned to officers of note who had distinguished themselves at their capture, and who were under very stringent obligations to treat them well, and give them spiritual instruction. But in cases where whole tribes surrendered there was no allotment, and they were established by themselves in separate villages, under the general laws of the colony, to be administered by their own chiefs. A part of the males, however, were compelled to give one sixth of their time in labor to the colonists, but this could be exacted only for two lives, after which term the whole tribe were to be forever free. During Irala's lifetime these regulations were rigidly enforced; but when the government fell into weaker hands, and when priests and civil and military officers were

struggling for the right and power to oppress, it frequently fared hard with the poor Indians. In truth, the treatment of the Indians in Paraguay, though far more indulgent than what had been inflicted on the natives of Peru, Mexico, or Brazil, was nevertheless very severe, and disgraceful to their oppressors. They were not slaves, for they could never be bought or sold; but they were subjected to labor for those who had no interest in their lives, and who were under no responsibility to care for them and support them when sick. The abuses to which they were subjected were carried to so great an extent as to call for remonstrance and intervention from abroad. They were treated much worse in Peru than in Paraguay, and indeed so notorious was the cruelty practised on them there, that the padre Diego de Torres, with several assistants, was despatched from Rome as Provincial, with special orders to investigate the wrongs of the Indians and correct the abuses of which they were the victims. But the Spaniards wanted nobody to come between them and their greedy rule. The fathers, however, though unable to effect much, succeeded to some extent in alleviating the miseries of the unhappy natives, and in making it more respectable to treat them as human beings. Afterwards Torres went to Paraguay, but as his reputation had preceded him he was badly received by the Spaniards, who did not relish the idea that they were to be interfered with in their rights of living on the compelled labor of others. The arrival of the Jesuits, therefore, whose professed object was the redemption of the oppressed natives, was not welcomed by those who were living on their unrecompensed toil.

But the first labors of the Jesuits were not, and were not intended to be, exercised in the colony of Asuncion or any of its nearer branches. They first cast their eyes towards the province of Guayrá, situate some three hundred miles to the northeast of Asuncion, on the upper waters of the Parana, and near the Great Falls, or Salto de Guayrá, where, some years before, Ruy Diaz de Melgarejo had established the three towns, Ciudad Real, Ontéveros, and Villa Rica.

It was beyond these settlements, some sixty leagues to the east, on the Ibai, a tributary of the Parana, that the Jesuits established their first reduction, Loreto. Scarcely a vestige or trace of either of these villages or of the reduction now remain. The first settlers, after suffering incredible hardships from the Indians and the more savage Portuguese, were compelled to abandon the province. Twice was the site of Villa Rica changed, and it was not till 1678 that the present town known by that name was founded. The Jesuits, when compelled to abandon their first settlement at Loreto, descended the river, and established themselves in what is now known as the *Misiones*, on the left bank of the Parana, giving the same name to the place as they had given to that which they had abandoned.

But the Jesuits, notwithstanding the sublime devotion to duty that moved the early members of the order, recognized, in practice at least, if not in theory and principle, the idea that the end justifies the means; that, as their ends were pure and holy, they might employ fraud and deceit in their attainment. Though it is generally believed that the labors of this order in the countries of the Plata reflect more credit on it than any other portion of its history, yet the same fatal moral heresy that has made the very name of Jesuit a byword and a reproach — a synonyme for deceit and treachery — here, too, bore its legitimate fruits. The early fathers who came to Paraguay did not scruple to employ fraud to cheat the Indians into Christianity; they resorted to deceit as freely as did their brethren who hung around the courts of Europe, and swindled and robbed and cheated princes and potentates for the benefit of their holy order.

The early fathers, both the Franciscans and Jesuits, claimed to themselves the possession of miraculous powers. The Jesuits pretended to be descendants of St. Thomas, with a commission direct from Heaven to forgive sins, and to promise to all who would acknowledge the authority of the Roman Church, and enter within its pale, the reward of eternal felicity. The simple Indians accepted as true the words of the

fathers, as they were supported by what seemed to them miraculous deeds. The spirit of St. Thomas was good enough to appear on certain convenient occasions, to impress them with the ocular proof of his presence ; and so thoroughly convinced were the natives of being under the special protection of this saint, that a person in this age who should doubt it would be accounted as " little better than one of the wicked." It is known to this day, by proof as unquestionable to a Paraguayan mind as that the seasons succeed each other in their order, that the cross of St. Thomas is still miraculously borne about from one place to another, to the great comfort of believers and the confounding of sceptics. Its most fixed abiding-place on earth before the late war, or rather where it was most often to be seen, was in a small cave or fissure near the village of Paraguari, to which many pilgrims were wont to resort.

There was until recently another, miraculous agency in the country, having even more efficacy than that of St. Thomas. This was the image of the Virgin, in the church of the village, or *capilla*, of Caacupé, situated some twelve leagues from the capital. The miraculous character of this image was discovered a little less than a century ago, when the wife of the chief of the district, having a sick daughter, made a vow that if the child should recover she would give a valuable bracelet to the Virgin. The child did recover, and the mother told her neighbors of the circumstance, and when they had sick children they resorted to the Virgin, and made similar vows of jewels, and met with a similar return. At length the news of the miraculous cures came to the knowledge of the Bishop of Paraguay, and, to test the matter, he made a pilgrimage to the place, to see if the Virgin would work a miracle for him. She graciously complied, and the bishop formally inaugurated the worship of the Virgin of Caacupé, sending forth an episcopal letter accrediting the practice, and promising indulgence to the pilgrims who should visit the shrine. Thus the worship became legal and orthodox, and, according to the reports of those who have visited it, this is as good a miracle-worker as any country in the world can

boast. For more than eighty years multitudes of people have been in the habit of visiting it, always carrying offerings of valuable jewels. There are several well-authenticated cases of persons whose offerings were of inferior quality being overtaken, soon after making them, with some terrible calamity. What became of all those jewels will be shown in one of the later chapters of this work.

There is also a miraculous cross in Corrientes that has wrought wonders on various occasions, and in fact every place or town of much importance in that part of the world has something of a miraculous character to save the people from everything but their sins.

The first success of the Jesuits in the conversion of the Indians was so wonderful that the fathers thought themselves specially favored of Heaven. The natives not only embraced their faith, but entered their reductions and accepted the mild rule of the spiritual traders. The name of a foreigner had before been as terrible as that of a destroying angel. The Spaniards had come to the country to get gold, and, disappointed in that, they had taken possession of the territory and forced the natives of that vicinity to most cruel, unrequited drudgery, while the Portuguese of Brazil had dragged off thousands of them to be sold into hopeless slavery. But the Jesuits had come to live and die among them. They sought not earthly possessions for themselves, but said to the trusting Indians, "Come and live with us; we will teach you to live in greater ease and comfort; we will instruct you in the ways of peace, security, and bliss; and we will show you how, when this brief life is past, you may live with us in Paradise, where the maize is sweeter, the fruits more juicy, maté more abundant, the women more numerous and amiable, than it ever entered into your hearts to conceive." This contrast between the promises of the Jesuits and the practices of both Spanish and Portuguese colonists naturally won the confidence of the Indians. They flocked to the reductions for the double purpose of securing the promised blessings, and also for the protection that beings,

thus acting under the direct inspiration of Heaven, might be able to afford them. Nor were the confiding natives disappointed in their reception and treatment. They were to enjoy not only spiritual blessings, but temporal exemptions; for it had been made a preliminary condition between the crown and the founders of the reductions, that they were to be forever free from all control by the colonial civil or military authorities. It was also one of the primary and cardinal principles in the organization of the order that the natives should not be enslaved or subjected to unrecompensed labor.

The conduct of the Jesuits towards the Indians has been variously judged by different writers. But they have had the advantage of telling their own story, and none, of their own knowledge, to contradict them. They have had almost a complete monopoly of the means for making known their doings to the rest of the world. They always represented the success of their system as marvellous, and themselves as saints specially favored of Heaven, and that their success proved it. But *they* wrote the books, and not the Indians. Had the latter been able to tell their story, it might have been very different. When the man and lion, in the fable, had a dispute as to which was superior to the other, the man took the lion to a piece of statuary where the lion was represented as crouched at the feet of the man. At this the lion said, that, when lions became sculptors, the man would be represented at the feet of the lion. In the case of the Jesuits, *they* were the men and the natives were the lions, and they have given their own history so that it should be as creditable as possible to their own order. The most read, quoted, and credited of their historians is Charlevoix. But he was never in Paraguay, or near the reductions. His voluminous work was made from the writings of the fathers, and he had not even the advantage of knowing anything of his subject from personal observation, or of learning anything from the Indians themselves, of their condition or treatment. His work, therefore, should be styled "A Defence

of the Jesuits in Paraguay, by a Member of their Order," rather than "A History," etc.* Whenever a lay writer has ventured to question incidentally the policy or conduct of the Jesuits, he has always called down on himself the most furious attacks of their defenders. Even Azara, who in everything else is admitted to have been a model of patience, truth, and impartiality, is accused of prejudice and partiality whenever he alludes to the Jesuits. Nor in these

* To show the character of Charlevoix's work, nothing can be more conclusive of its unreliable character than extracts from it. The following will show both the credulity of the man and the mendacity of his authorities. As it is not easy to disprove his accounts of marvellous and miraculous deeds of the fathers, I limit myself to his descriptions of some of the animals they encountered, — animals, it need not be said, that were never seen except by Jesuit fathers.

"Many of these reptiles live upon fish; and Father Montoya informs us that he one day happened to spy a huge snake whose head was as big as a calf's, fishing on the banks of a river; the first thing the monster did was to discharge by its mouth a great quantity of foam into the river; he then thrust his head into the water, and kept it very quiet till a great many small fishes, attracted by the foam, had gathered about it, when, suddenly opening his jaws, he laid about him and swallowed in great numbers all those who were unhappy enough to lie within his reach. . . . This monstrous species of reptiles never quit the water; and in the rapids, which are pretty common in the Parana, they are often seen swimming with a huge tail, and their head, which is likewise very large, above water. . . . It is certain that this great river swarms with sharks, much larger than those of other rivers; and that they lie in wait for oxen that come to drink its waters, seize them by the muzzle, and stifle them.

"In some parts of this country there are chameleons from five to six feet long, that carry their young ones about with them, and always keep their mouths open on that side from whence the wind blows. They are a very mild, but a very stupid animal. The monkeys here are in size almost equal to the human species, have great beards, and long tails. . . . The ravens here are white. . . . Among the fish found in the rivers and lakes there is one which differs in nothing from a hog, but that it has no teeth; and a water dog which barks like the land dogs of Europe. A missionary one day spied one of these animals on the banks of a river, when, having been wounded with an arrow, he fell to barking with all his might, till several others immediately came to his assistance and transported him to the other shore." — *The History of Paraguay: containing amongst many other New, Curious, and Interesting Particulars of the Country, a full and authentic Account of the Establishments formed there by the Jesuits, from among the Savage Natives; in the very Centre of Barbarism; Establishments allowed to have realized the Sublime Ideas of Fenelon, Sir Thomas More, and Plato.* Written originally in French, by the celebrated FATHER CHARLEVOIX; in Two Volumes. London: Printed for Lockyer Davis, in Holborn, Printer to the Royal Society. MDCCLXIX.

contradictory opinions does sectarian prejudice have much to do. The Protestant writers generally speak of them and their labors in Paraguay with almost unqualified praise, while their bitterest assailants are Roman Catholics, of whom the Franciscans were the most hostile and censorious. In these conflicting opinions it is but justice that the Jesuits should be judged by that test which must be final against all theories and disputed facts: "By their fruits ye shall know them."*

That the Jesuit fathers, who first undertook the conversion of the Paraguayan Indians, were actuated and moved by entire disinterestedness has never been questioned; and from the fact that they were not actuated by self-interest, it is to be inferred that their rule was just and mild compared with that of the gold-seeking Spaniards and Portuguese. But the pioneers who had caught the enthusiasm of Loyola from his own lips, and entered on the work of conversion from no hope of earthly reward, but expecting to be exposed to toils, dangers, and death in the performance of their duty, were succeeded by men of a very different stamp, — by men who found that a

* "Meanwhile we have proof that the Communist idea had taken possession, not merely of some individuals, but also of entire corporations, and these the most erudite as well as the most influential. When the Jesuits wished to organize a social order in Paraguay, what were the plans suggested by their previous studies? They were those of Minos, Plato, and Lycurgus. They realized Communism, which, in turn, did not fail to realize its sad consequences. The Indians descended some degrees below the savage state. Yet, such was the inveterate prejudice of Europeans in favor of Communist institutions, always presented as the type of perfection, that the world celebrated the happiness and virtue of these beings without name (for they were no longer *men*) who were vegetating under the yoke of the Jesuits.

"Had Rousseau, Mably, Montesquieu, Raynal, these great preachers up of the missions, verified the facts? Not the least in the world. Could their Greek and Latin books deceive them? Could any one go astray, when taking Plato for guide? The Indians of Paraguay were then happy, or ought to be so, under penalty of being miserable against all the rules! Azara, Bougainville, and other travellers, set out, under the influence of these preconceived ideas, to go and admire such marvels. At first the sad reality could not reach their eyes, for they could not believe it. But they were compelled to yield to evidence, and to state at last, to their great regret, that Communism, seducing as a chimera, is a frightful reality." — *Baccalauréat et Socialism*, par F. BASTIAT.

Jesuit father might enjoy a life of luxury, indolence, and power.

It has been often represented that the early fathers were received and welcomed by the Indians of South America as though they had already been warned from on high of their approach. But this is only one of their own inventions. That the Indians rushed to them as "the hart panteth after the water brook," and cast off the carnal man, and became spiritually new beings, is not only contrary to reason but is denied and repudiated as false by the most reliable writers of the times, and is proved untrue by all contemporaneous history that does not come from the Jesuits themselves. According to Azara, it was not for spiritual, but material, aid that the Indians first came in such large numbers to the reductions. In his own words:—

"The Jesuits say, that, to convert the Indians, their conduct was restricted to persuasion and apostolic preaching. Notwithstanding, two things are to be noticed: one is that their first ten towns were founded within the short space of twenty-five years, and that their zeal and preaching had no other result for one hundred and twelve years, that is, from 1634, the date of the foundation of San Cosmé, till 1746, when they reached the reduction of San Joaquin, and during this long interval they did not establish any other town except that of Jesus, and that less by their preaching than by the aid of the Indians of Itapua; the second observation is that the twenty-five years so fruitful in founding towns are at precisely the time when the Portuguese everywhere furiously persecuted the Indians in order to sell them into slavery, and when the frightened Indians fled for refuge to the region between the Parana and the Uruguay, and to the neighboring forests, where their bloodthirsty enemies could not easily penetrate, and which they did not do. Combining these two observations, there is reason to believe that the famous Jesuit towns owed their formation rather to the fear that the Portuguese inspired among the Indians, than to the persuasive talent of the Jesuits. Indeed, it was natural that those religious persons should subject and direct the Indians very easily, as is always the case with an expatriated and panic-stricken people. The rapid establishment of the first ten colonies, not followed by others, supposing the zeal

of the missionaries to have been the same, and that there was no lack of savages, indicate that there must have intervened some other cause in the formation of the towns of the Parana and the Uruguay. That which appears to me most natural is that the terror which the Portuguese had inspired was the same which had induced the Spaniards to establish their towns in Guayara. This idea is, moreover, confirmed in a certain manner by the character of the measures adopted by the Jesuits to subject other towns besides the reductions. They considered useless and entirely discontinued the ways of persuasion, and resorted to temporal means; but they managed these with as much prudence as moderation and skill; wherefore they appear worthy of the higher praise. It is true, that they concealed with great care their conduct in this respect; this was natural, as, being ecclesiastics, they wished to pass as such in all their actions. But I had opportunity to be informed of this conduct, and will relate how it was.

“Knowing that some savage Guaranis existed in Taruma, the Jesuits sent them some small presents, which were carried to them by the Indians that spoke the same language, selected from the older towns. These embassies and presents were repeated, and the recipients were told that they were sent by a Jesuit who loved them tenderly, and who desired to come and live with them, and to furnish them other things much more precious, one of which was a large supply of cattle, so that they could live without labor. The Indians accepted these offers, and the Jesuit set out with what he had promised, besides a considerable number of Indians selected from the missions already established. These Indians remained with the Jesuit, as being necessary to build him a house, and take care of the cattle, that were soon finished off, as the neophytes thought of nothing but eating. The savages then asked for more cattle, which other Indians, selected like the first, went to bring them, and all remained in the place under pretext of constructing a church and other edifices, and of cultivating maize, mandioca, and other things for the use of the Jesuit and all the people. The food, the kindness of the padre, the good conduct of the Christian Indians that had brought the cattle, the feasts, the music, and the avoidance of every appearance of subjection, drew to this village the savages of the whole country around. When the priest saw that his chosen Indians were more numerous than the

savages, he one day called them together, and in a few soft words told them it was not right that their brothers should labor for them. Some of them appeared very much disgusted, but seeing the superiority of the forces of the priest, who was wise enough to conciliate some of them, and to punish others with great moderation, and to watch them all for some time, the town of San Joaquin was finally established. The Jesuit did even more than this, for he took away all the savages and distributed them among the missions of the Parana. They escaped, however, and returned to their own country, notwithstanding the great distance."

The colony of San Estanislao was established by similar art, fraud, and cruelty. Swindling was the first step in the plan of conversion. The Indians were cheated into the belief that the padres had come to supply them with cattle, to teach them how, with less labor, they could raise their maize and mandioca; and they could not deny that a religion was highly evangelical which promised them, not only the blessings of a future life, but also in this world beef and indolence. In the first missions, or reductions, of Guayrá, however, the Jesuits had not found it necessary to employ either force or fraud in order to make Christians of the savages. The fear of the Portuguese was enough to cause them to fly to the reductions to seek the protection of the Jesuits. The latter gladly received them, and under their mild rule, supported by the mysterious symbols and gorgeous ceremonies of the church, their pretended miraculous powers, and the promises held out to those who would profess belief and conform to the essentials, the savages were made neophytes as fast as they could be told off.

But the reductions of Guayrá, as we have already seen, were doomed to an early destruction. The story of their fate is one of the darkest in the history of South America. They were exposed to an enemy compared with which all others that had visited them were as mild and gentle protectors. They were marked by their neighbors to the east as victims to that system which honored statesmen, aged bishops, and learned divines within our own times have boastingly characterized as a

“divine institution.” To the credit of the Spanish government it may be said, that from the first it set itself against the enslavement of the Indians of the Plata. They were subjected to forced servitude to an extent limited by law, but right of property in them and their children was not acknowledged. It is true they were treated with great hardship in many instances, and were, in fact, no better off than slaves, but cruelties practised on them were in violation of the royal orders and to satisfy the cupidity of individuals. The Portuguese in Brazil, however, had no such refined distinctions. They not only forced the natives mercilessly to toil for them, but they bought and sold them like cattle in the market-place, and sent them to labor in districts so distant that no hope could remain to them of ever seeing their native land again. Many thousands were sold in the markets of Rio de Janeiro ; some to labor like felons in the streets, others to be sent to the mines, to be used like brutes, till death should relieve them. Catching Indians and selling them for slaves was found to be a profitable business, and any practice that *pays* is sure to have followers and advocates. The province of San Paulo, in Brazil, adjoining Guayrá, seems to have had more than its share of the desperadoes who, after the discovery of the New World, infested both land and sea. The city of San Paulo was a sort of head-quarters for pirates, slave-dealers, and outlaws of every kind ; and they scoured the country around to catch the helpless natives and drag them to their slave-marts, thence to be carried into helpless servitude. Bands of these murdering robbers were organized for the purpose of making raids into the Indian country, and bringing in men, women, and children to be sold as merchandise. As the supply gave out in the vicinity of the sea-coast, the Paulistas, or Mamelucos, as they were called, went farther into the interior, and were carrying their work of devastation and death towards the banks of the Parana at the time that the Jesuit fathers began their labors of conversion among the Indians of Guayrá. The reduction of Loreto was the scene of the first Jesuit labors, and that, like those founded afterwards in the vicinity, formed

a nucleus around which gathered the Indians who were fleeing from the dreaded Mamelucos. The fathers received them with open arms, and promised them protection in this life and salvation in the next, on condition they would acknowledge themselves converts to the Church, and receive the ordinance of baptism as the visible evidence that they had passed from darkness to light, from spiritual death to spiritual life. As in the nature of things the Indians could understand nothing of the mysteries and symbols in which they were told they must believe, they accepted the terms offered, and became good Christians by name, but changed in little else. They were ignorant savage Indians still, with habits and morals as gross and low as ever.

The rule of the Jesuits at this time, however, was very different from what it afterwards became. The early fathers labored faithfully to benefit the natives, first gaining their respect and confidence and then rebuking their indolence and vices. The success of their efforts in the first instances was such as greatly to exalt their hopes, and other reductions were founded in Guayrá and vicinity. The fathers alleged that conversions made so fast and easily must have been made through the power of God's word as spoken through their sanctified lips. Others say, and especially the Franciscans, that they owed all their success to the fear of the Mamelucos. The coincidence of events would lead to this inference, as the frontier missions were attacked by these freebooters soon after they were founded, and when the neophytes had no means for successful resistance. Many of them were killed, but many were taken prisoners and sent to the human shambles.

Notwithstanding such reverses, however, the Jesuits prospered in their pious work to such an extent that they still proclaimed they were under the special protection of Providence. But about this time an event occurred that would have caused people of weaker faith than theirs to suspect that they were not so miraculously favored as they had supposed. A new Governor for Paraguay was appointed, whose

policy and interest were at direct variance with the plans of the Jesuits. His name was Don Luis de Cespedes Jaray. This man was married to a Portuguese woman whose proper position should have been that of queen of the pirates and brigands of San Paulo, rather than governor of the Governor of Paraguay. Her sympathies were with the Portuguese of Brazil, rather than with the Spaniards and Indians of Paraguay. Cespedes was on his way to his post when he first met this Jezebel, whose maiden name was Victoria Correa de Saá. She was connected with a family of wealth and influence in Rio de Janeiro, and Cespedes, during his delay in that city, fell completely into the hands of the Brazilians, and made a bargain with the Paulistas to assist them in kidnapping the people whom he had been sent to govern and protect. Instead of continuing his voyage by sea to Buenos Aires, and thence ascending the river to Asuncion, in obedience to instructions, Cespedes resolved to pass by land across the country. He travelled with an immense escort, more like an Eastern prince returning with his bride from a neighboring court, than as the military and civil ruler of a little-known and half-explored country. The first point he reached within the possessions of the Spaniards was the reduction of Loreto, on the banks of the Ibai, a tributary of the Parana. Cespedes saw the flourishing state of this place, and his eyes fell on the robust forms of the neophyte Indians with such admiring expression as it may be supposed would light up, in former times, the face of a planter or slave-trader from the South at the sight of a school of colored children in New York or Boston.

The Jesuits and their followers awaited the coming of the new Governor with joyful anticipation, as they believed that, coming as he did through the country of the Mamelucos, he must have become fully informed of their atrocities, and would at once use his authority to check them. But Cespedes had made his own interests identical with those of their dreaded enemies. His wife's estates in Brazil needed laborers to cultivate them, and this monster of infamy made

a treaty with the murdering, robbing Mamelucos, by which he was to lend them his official influence and power to enable them to sack the reductions and missions and carry off the converted Indians, on condition that he should receive six hundred of the unhappy captives to labor on his lately acquired haciendas. This bargain being struck, a large number of Paulistas accompanied the Governor to the missions, ostensibly as an escort of honor, but really to perfect their plans for future spoliation.

The Jesuit fathers were naturally alarmed at these evidences of a good understanding between the Governor and their enemies, and his conduct towards them was not calculated to dissipate their fears. His manner was haughty, cold, and contemptuous, and he refused even to consider their request that measures might be taken to protect them from the Mamelucos.

Thus left to themselves, the missions of Guayrá fell an easy prey to the slave-captors, and in the following years they were all destroyed. The neophytes were carried off by thousands and sold into slavery. Finding nothing was to be hoped for from the government at Asuncion, and that the only refuge was flight, the scattered fugitives, to the number of some twelve thousand, resolved to abandon that part of the country and seek elsewhere security from the bloodthirsty Mamelucos. They therefore descended the Parana to the Salto de Guayrá, or Great Falls, where they found that they must abandon their boats, and make their way below, through almost impenetrable forests, and over a country so jagged and rough that many perished by exposure and want of food on the way. History furnishes few parallels to the sufferings and patient endurance of these fugitives. The resignation and hopefulness of the fathers, the trusting faith and willing obedience of the natives, should have had an abler chronicler than has yet undertaken to record them. But once, as they thought, at a safe distance from the Paulistas, the fathers again began their work, and founded other reductions, in several instances giving the

same names to them as had been given to those they had abandoned. These reductions were located in what has ever since been known as the *Misiones*, and most of them were situate between the Parana and the Uruguay, though some of them were founded on the right bank of the Parana, in what is now Paraguay.

Not only was the Governor, Cespedes, inimical, from self-interest, to the Jesuits, but the Franciscan priests in the capital regarded them with envy, suspicion, and jealousy. These last fomented the animosity of the people against them, so that government, priests, and people regarded with favor, rather than otherwise, the destruction of the missions and the expulsion of their founders.

The disciples of Loyola, however, though coming professedly to convert the Indians, had other objects in view. There was something inherent in the order that seemed to incite its members to universal dominion. They aspired to influence in everything,—things temporal and political as well as spiritual; and while their principal work was the subjugation and conversion of the Indians, they let slip no opportunity for gaining political power in the civil and military affairs at Asuncion. Hence they had provoked opposition, and were generally unpopular. The people and priests of Paraguay were well pleased with the expulsion of the Jesuits of Guayrá. But, like the fox in the fable, the Mamelucos were not satisfied with what Cespedes had offered them. They had no sooner depopulated the Jesuit reductions of Guayrá than they turned their eyes on the Spanish towns in the same province, and thus the towns founded by Melgarejo,—Ontéveros, Villa Rica, and Ciudad Real,—soon shared the fate that, when it fell upon the reductions, had been regarded by the Franciscans with apathy, if not with approbation.

The result of these incursions of the Mamelucos was, that no vestige of a Spanish settlement was left in the province of Guayrá, and that portion of this immense province to the east of the Parana became a part of what is now the Bra-

zilian Empire, — an event that never could have occurred but for the great crime of Cespedes. Had there remained a permanent Spanish colony in Guayrá, we may observe, as we did when commenting on the failure of Chaves to establish a colony on the Upper Paraguay, it would have been impossible for Paraguay to have been so isolated as to have fallen under the absolute rule of that sombre figure that so long hovered over it with remorseless cruelty, and the later tragedy of its depopulation would have been equally impossible.

It is some satisfaction to know that the great crimes of Cespedes at last reached the ears of the Audience of Charcas, which summoned him to its presence, and condemned him to pay a heavy fine, and stripped him of all authority, forbidding him to hold any public office whatever for the space of six years. What became of him afterwards is not known, but Paraguay was never again afflicted nor disgraced by his presence.

CHAPTER VI.

Opposition to the Jesuits by the Government and Priesthood. — They are made Independent of the Government of Paraguay. — Bernardino de Cardenas, Bishop of Paraguay. — Attempts to control the Civil Government by Force of Papal Thunder. — Uses his Influence against the Jesuits. — His Banishment. — Returns to Asuncion. — Elected Governor. — Persecutes the Jesuits. — Demonstration against the Jesuit College. — Cardenas removed from Office. — Francisco Solano, the First American Saint. — Stories concerning him. — Paucity of Words in the Indian Languages. — The Jesuits restored to their Dignities and Privileges. — Their Internal Domestic Policy. — The Spanish Encomenderos. — The System of the Jesuits. — Its Evil Effects upon the Indians. — Prepares the Way for the Rule of Dr. Francia.

THOUGH driven out of Guayrá, the Jesuits did not for that reason abate their zeal and labors. They continued in their new reductions the work of proselyting, and were steadily and constantly working in ways most subtle and insidious to gain influence and power in the capital. The Indians up to this time greatly preferred their rule to that of the military, and gave in their adhesion and services in such numbers that the reductions grew strong and rich ; but the government at Asuncion looked upon them with distrust, and the Franciscans, headed by the Bishop of Paraguay, undertook to reap the harvest where the Jesuits had sown the seed and cultivated the soil. The proximity of some of the new reductions to the towns founded by the Spaniards exposed them to great annoyances ; so that in these extremities, threatened by the Paulistas on one side and the priests and government of Paraguay on the other, the Jesuit fathers determined to appeal to the crown of Spain and the Pope for aid and protection.

The appeal in both cases was favorably responded to. Their representative to the court of Spain, Father de Montoya,

obtained a royal grant that rendered the missions independent of the government of Paraguay. They were also allowed to provide the Indians with firearms to be used in defence of the missions. The response of the Pope would have been equally effective for their protection, had papal thunder and threats been of any force against the godless Paulistas. But men whose business is robbery, whose traffic is in human flesh, and whose whole political creed and system are based on the increase, perpetuation, and extension of human slavery, whose corner-stone of government is a gigantic crime, habitually give little heed to the denunciations of their acts.

Encouraged by the material support of the King and the spiritual approbation of the Pope, the Jesuits undertook their own defence; and when the next raid was made upon them by the Mamelucos, so well were they prepared to receive them, that, though the Paulistas came in large force, numbering not less than one thousand men, very few escaped to tell the tale of their surprise and defeat. After this the reductions were not disturbed by the Mamelucos, and yet troubles ever seemed to follow them. As the capital, Asuncion, was the principal *entrepôt* of all the neighboring regions, the Jesuits necessarily had extensive business relations with that place; and, besides, the fathers, as was ever their habit, were working constantly to increase their influence among the people. Hence it happened that between them and the bishop and clergy of Asuncion, the most of whom were Franciscans, there existed anything but a feeling of brotherly love and Christian charity.

The Bishop of Paraguay at this time figures prominently in the history of the country. His name was Bernardino de Cardenas. He was a man of great ambition and implacable resentments, and he hated the Jesuits with a stronger unction than he ever administered to a dying saint. He assumed the right to dictate in everything, and woe to the person that ventured to thwart him! In that age, the greatest terror that could be held up to frighten the true believer was the threat of excommunication, and Cardenas fulminated his terrible anathemas against all alike who dared stand in his way, from

the Governor of the colony to the rival in his gallantries. But the good bishop seemed to forget, that, by using this terrible weapon too often, he weakened the force of it ; and the excommunicated, mostly of the better class of citizens, became so numerous and influential that the bishop's fulminations were little feared and less respected. Nevertheless, it was felt by some to be a terrible thing to be under the ban of excommunication, and of those who dreaded this awful curse as the greatest misfortune that could befall a man was the then (1644) Governor of the colony, Gregorio de Hinistrosa. He had ventured to differ from the bishop on some matter, when the latter locked the gates of heaven upon him, and put the keys in his pocket. The people were scandalized at seeing the Governor disgraced, and the bishop trying to control the civil government by force of papal thunder ; and there were such signs of an impending tumult, that, to avoid the storm, the bishop left the city and took up his residence at Yaguaron, a town some thirty miles to the southeast of the capital. Hither the unhappy Governor followed him, as an abject penitent, seeking forgiveness. He came before the haughty prelate, and with his face in the dust, kneeling at the bishop's feet, he prayed that the dreadful ban might be removed. The bishop haughtily rebuked and warned him, but granted his prayer as indulgences were granted to the rich, on payment of a heavy fine.

The bishop now, having the Governor prostrate at his feet, had both the civil and spiritual power virtually in his own hands, and his next step was to humble the Jesuits, and destroy their influence. He forbade the fathers to preach within the capital, and closed up their schools. To all these proceedings the imbecile Governor made no resistance. But the high-handed proceedings of the bishop having come to the ears of the Audience of Charcas, both the Council and the Viceroy were indignant at the pitiful part that Hinistrosa had acted. He was severely reprimanded for allowing himself to be overborne and disgraced by an arrogant prelate who had no business to meddle with other than spiritual affairs. Cardenas

was denounced as having degraded his cloth, and as being unworthy of his elevated position. As the cry of "Land!" gives more courage to the shipwrecked, famished sailor, so did the action of the Audience give courage and resolution to the faint-hearted Governor. He quietly gathered together a force sufficient for his purpose, and by a quick and silent night-march he appeared with his forces at Yaguaron, before the bishop had received any information of what was coming. The bishop's house was immediately surrounded, and Hinistroza entered his sleeping-apartment, where he found him but half dressed. The bishop quickly divined that the tables were turned upon him, and retreated from his house to the church. He was followed by the Governor and his party until he reached the steps leading to the altar, when from that elevated position, thinking to strike terror into the hearts of his pursuers, he turned, and, launching forth a string of anathemas as long and strong as rage and hate could express, he demanded of Hinistroza to know the cause of such violence. The Governor, now no longer prostrate and penitent, replied, in terms equally scornful, that he had come to serve on him a sentence of banishment by order of the Viceroy, for having usurped the power which had been conferred on himself by the King of Spain. Cardenas, finding that his power had departed, and that the people, angrily confronting him, regarded his execrations as so much sound and fury, saw that all his curses were impotent to turn the edge of a single Toledo blade, and then with a bad grace he promised to yield to the sentence of deposition. But though he surrendered to the Governor, his tongue was still free, and he broke forth afresh in a storm of objurgations and abuse against the Governor and his followers, hurling forth anathemas and excommunications against them all, and piling up more curses on their exposed heads than ever Dr. Slop invoked on the offending Obadiah. But the Governor little heeded his curses and objurgations, and took him a quasi-prisoner to Asuncion, where the haughty prelate, finding himself no longer able to pursue his turbulent prac-

tices, and utterly without power, declared that such a godless set of excommunicants were unworthy of his sacred presence. With proud scorn, therefore, he turned his back upon the city, — that, notwithstanding, showed great signs of rejoicing by the ringing of bells and various public demonstrations of delight, — and left it to share the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah.

But Cardenas was not a man to abandon his once-conceived projects. He retired to Corrientes, and from there made known his grievances to the Audience of Charcas; and by much importunity he succeeded, after a time, in getting permission to return to Asuncion, for the alleged purpose of arranging his private affairs. He knew that, returning as by authority, he would be able again to wield much influence, if not actually to defy the Governor. But the latter stood in his way only for a little time; for soon after the return of the bishop, and when he had fairly established relations with his old friends and supporters, his old enemy, Hinistroza, died. In that emergency the choice of a successor was to be made by the people, according to the early edict of Charles V. Cardenas, who less than five years before had left the city before the indignant hootings of the multitude, was now (1648) by the same people chosen Governor, in addition to his spiritual office.

The bishop governor had now full power to carry out his long-cherished purpose, — the expulsion of the Jesuits. He publicly proclaimed that he was determined to drive them from Asuncion; and with this object in view he called together all the people capable of bearing arms, — making use, as usual, of the much-dreaded threat of excommunication in case of refusal to lend their assistance to the work. A large crowd was collected, and the first demonstration was made on the Jesuit college. Its surrender was demanded with threats and menaces, notwithstanding the protests of the rector, who asserted that the order of Jesuits exercised their rights under a royal grant, and would not surrender them. The doors were then forced open by the rabble, and the priests driven out, and all alike, priest and neophyte, sick and well, were dragged to

the bank of the river, and placed in boats, and, without sail or oar, cast adrift to the mercy of the current. The college was then sacked, the plate stolen, and the statues of the two great Jesuit saints, St. Loyola and St. Xavier, were changed in form and figure, and converted by a peculiar kind of transubstantiation to represent another sort of saints, after the manner of the showman, who changes his wax figures to be truthful, lifelike statues of the most popular heroes of the time in the town where he is next to exhibit them.

But, in the nature of things, the rule of this worthy bishop could not longer endure. The Audience of Charcas again denounced him, and summoned him for trial to the Grand Council of Peru, and Sebastian de Leon was commanded to put these orders in force. Cardenas, however, was contumacious, and resolved to oppose by force the orders of the Viceroy. But he again found that the thunders of the Church, which he hurled at the malecontents, had no power when not supported by the secular arm of royal authority. He retired, crestfallen, to his native place of Charcas, since called Chuquisaca, and there ended his mischievous and turbulent life.

The disgrace and deposition of Cardenas attached to his party, so that the Jesuits, who were at once recalled, had things for a time pretty much their own way. The Mamelucos, who, owing to the war then existing between Spain and Portugal, and to the persecutions of the Jesuits by Cardenas, had been encouraged to renew their hostilities, were now met and repulsed at every point; and such savage Indians as had taken advantage of the exposed condition of the missions to attack them, as well as some of the Spanish settlements, were quickly put to rout, and perfect quiet and security restored.

The jealousy, however, existing between the Jesuits and the Franciscans was the source of perpetual discord, and the civil government of the Spaniards was generally in sympathy with the latter. The Franciscans had the advantage of having an American saint in their calendar, who had been in Asuncion, which the Jesuits could not yet boast. A saint already canonized, of whose miraculous deeds there were yet living witnesses,

was to be revered, and his co-workers while he was yet in the flesh were not to be treated lightly.

Of this first American saint, Francisco Solano, little is known, except what he himself reported. On his appearance at Asuncion, in 1589, he told such marvellous stories of miraculous conversions under his teachings, that he was looked upon as divinely inspired. But, besides his own words, there now exists no evidence that he was anything more than a successful impostor. The writers of the time, however, who were nearly all priests, agree in investing him with miraculous powers. He was the popular saint, and both Jesuits and Franciscans strove to magnify his name. To discredit him would have weakened the faith of laymen and neophytes, and, as is always the case with modern miracle-workers, it was thought impious to inquire closely into the truth of his stories.

Francisco Solano, of the Order of San Francisco, reached Asuncion in 1589. He was a native of Spain, and had come to Peru several years before. Thence he crossed the Andes, and, passing through the Gran Chaco, he descended the Bermejo River to its confluence with the Paraguay, and reached Asuncion. It was to this journey that his miraculous works appear to have been limited; and here, according to his own account, he met with a success such as never attended John the Baptist when preaching in the wilderness. He represented that as he came along he learned the languages of the different tribes or nations, and preached to them in their own tongues about the birth, death, and transfiguration of Christ, the mysteries of the Trinity, transubstantiation, and atonement; that he explained to them the symbols of the Church, the papal succession from St. Peter down, and that with his burning words he awakened the Indians by thousands, tens and hundreds of thousands, to a sense of their lost and perishing condition, and that they came in tears and penitence and accepted his words, acknowledged their belief, and, receiving baptism, had been admitted into the fold of the only true Church. It is impossible, at this day, to disprove the statements of Francisco Solano, but

their impious absurdity is evident. The languages of the Indians could not by any possible application be made to express the ideas such as he pretended to convey. The poverty of the Indian dialects of the Gran Chaco is scarcely surpassed by that of the dumb brutes. The following quotation from the manuscript notes of Mr. Porter C. Bliss, who in the year 1863 travelled over the same region where Francisco Solano is said to have performed his miracles, will give some idea of the paucity of words among them : * —

“It is well known, that, out of the hundred thousand odd words which are given in Webster’s or Worcester’s Dictionaries, not more than five thousand are actually used in ordinary conversation, and form the *stock* of an uneducated man. Of these five thousand words, at least half are *synonymes* whose use might be dispensed with. There would remain two thousand five hundred. But of these a large portion are peculiar to the exercise of some profession or industry unknown to savage tribes, another large portion consists of the names of commercial products, animals, plants, and minerals belonging to remote countries ; another large portion relates to intellectual and moral emotions of which the savage is incapable. It will be readily seen that these repeated excisions reduce the language of a savage tribe within very moderate limits.

“In fact, the language of a Chaco tribe consists only of some one to two hundred verbs, expressing the simplest actions and emotions ; of four or five hundred nouns, which comprise all the animals, trees, plants, and other natural objects known to them ; of fifty or sixty adjectives, which (dispensing with synonymes) suffice to express all their ideas of form, size, and character ; and of the pronouns, prepositions, conjunctions, etc., which are few in number, and equally necessary in all languages. Thus the verb to *move*, in one of the Chaco languages, when combined with prepositions or adverbs, does duty for the distinct ideas of to *walk, run, step, go, come*, etc.

* It may be said that no writer or ethnologist has ever investigated or studied the character and history of the South American Indians so thoroughly as has Mr. Bliss, and probably there is no other man living so thoroughly conversant with the history of the valley of the Plata. Should he ever arrange his vast materials for publication, the work will be an encyclopædia of everything historical, ethnological, or scientific, pertaining to that immense basin.

“An amusing instance of the paucity of words referred to may be given from my voyage of exploration in the river Bermejo, in the Gran Chaco. We had on board a cacique of the *Ocole* tribe, named *Gabriel*, who understood a little Spanish. It was my custom daily to note down a number of words from his mouth, thus gradually forming a vocabulary. One day as we were seated on deck, I pointed out a *crow* on the bank, and inquired its name, which he gave me, — *kidimit*. On another occasion I asked him the word for *pantaloons*; he gave me the same word, *kidimit*. Again, on other occasions, I asked for the separate words *black*, *darkness*, *night*, *sky*, *cloud*, *heaven*, to all of which he responded, *kidimit*. It was only after comparing together my various lists of words that I discovered how many times this word had been repeated. It was then an obvious inference that the fundamental idea was *blackness*, since the crow, the pantaloons, the sky, the cloud, etc. were all black.”

How the good priest was to impress his ideas on a people through such a medium as their own language is only to be explained on the theory that he not only had the miraculous gift of tongues, but that the Indians, for the time, were favored with inspired ears. That miracles were wrought by Francisco Solano it is of course impossible to disprove at this time by contemporary evidence, but if they were, they must have been such as to have changed the nature and intellect of the Indians. In their stupid, besotted ignorance, it would have been impossible for them to understand the holy mysteries delivered to them through their own vernacular, unless miraculously gifted with understandings such as they never had before nor since. But if the poverty of the language, the paucity of words, and the utter impossibility of forming any expressions from their meagre vocabulary to convey the ideas of faith, atonement, remission of sins, transubstantiation, the Trinity, and other things essential to be a member of the “Holy Mother Church,” are not sufficient to prove Francisco Solano to have been an impostor, there are still other and stronger reasons for questioning the statements of the reverend father.

In these later, degenerate, and sceptical days, the most exacting ritualist or ultramontane believer would hardly

pretend that miracles are wrought except for some great, good, and enduring purpose. In this case, however, if miracles were wrought, no such purpose was gained, as it appears that the Indians were not at all improved, for this world at least, by their wonderful conversion. They appear to have soon after relapsed into their original sin, and to-day there is not a vestige of the labors of St. Francisco Solano to confirm his testimony. On the contrary, the Indians themselves, among whom he wrought such wonders, have all disappeared; and when Mr. Bliss travelled over the country where they once dwelt in great numbers, there was scarcely to be found a sign that the country had ever been inhabited. Had a missionary, not of the true faith, done the same as did Francisco Solano, and had similar results followed it, it is to be feared that the "Holy Church" would have declared him an emissary of the Evil One, and that the people had been destroyed as a punishment for going after strange gods.

Francisco Solano remained two years at Asuncion, enjoying high honors, but it does not appear that before so many witnesses his marvellous powers were longer available. The light of intelligent eyes put him out as completely as it does modern spirit-rappers. He was held in great reverence, however, on account of what he pretended to have done elsewhere, and Charlevoix speaks of him as so highly gifted and divinely inspired as clearly to have been assigned by Providence for the special work of evangelizing the Indians. But he remarks, with a simplicity not usual in a Jesuit father, that in the midst of his wonderful achievements he was recalled from the field of his labors by his superiors, as if Providence, in granting him miraculous powers, had forgotten the other necessary steps to make them effective.

The Jesuits, after the banishment of Cardenas (1649), being restored to their dignities and privileges, applied themselves with greater earnestness than ever to increase their power in Asuncion. Their plan was eminently Jesuitical. It was to work insidiously, and, while professing to care only for things spiritual, to really control the civil authorities. By establish-

ing and controlling the schools, the young would be educated to look to their order as the source of knowledge ; and, with the educated classes in their favor, they would easily dominate the ignorant multitude. The missions, now grown rich and strong, were already completely under their control, so that they seemed in a fair way of establishing a nation in one of the most fertile regions of the earth, with ample territory to expand till it should become the most powerful in the world.

The growing influence of the Jesuits was naturally regarded with great jealousy and distrust by the Franciscans, and by all others who aspired to authority or influence in the country. The Indians who were not in the reductions preferred the Jesuit rule to that of the civil government, as the former repudiated everything like personal servitude wherever they were not the absolute masters ; and in the reductions the service they required of the neophytes was always represented to be very different from slavery, and as being for the common benefit. The system of the Jesuits was very different from that of the Spaniards ; and as between the two, for the influence on the character of the Indians, both present and prospective, that of the Jesuits, where their power was absolute, as in the reductions, was infinitely the worst. It had been the plan of Irala to make a homogeneous nation of the mixed Spanish and Indians, and that there should be no privileges on one side or disabilities on the other by reason of difference of race. Prisoners of war were subjected to a limited service to their captors, that worked no disgrace or disability in the blood ; and the only servitude known was that which, in opposition to the fundamental law, a cunning people could exercise over a race, simple, credulous, and submissive. From the original union of the races it must inevitably result, that, as very few females had ever come to Paraguay from Europe, the power would soon be in the hands of those of mixed blood, and whatever nationality or civilization might be developed, it would probably contain within itself the men who were to govern it.

But the system of the Jesuits admitted of nothing of this

kind, so far as it affected the natives. They were to be laborers in the common vineyards, having no rights, no power, no liberty, except such as it pleased the fathers to grant; no hope for an improved future for themselves nor for their children; but all was a plain level of communism that must have formed an industrial paradise such as would have delighted Fourier or Owen. No white layman, no one but a Jesuit priest, could ever settle within the precincts of the missions, and hence there was no change ever to be hoped for in the condition of the natives. The power was all in the hands of the fathers, and the Jesuit system never contemplated that the natives should ever be anything but slaves, — slaves to the fathers, but not to be sold to men less holy than themselves, and who might neglect their spiritual interests.

The following extract from Azara gives an idea of the system of the Jesuits. As he writes from knowledge derived from eye-witnesses, and his statements of fact agree with those of the fathers themselves, though his conclusions as to the effects of the system differ widely from theirs, it may be taken as a correct exposition of the internal domestic policy of the missions of the Jesuits.

“The thirty-three Jesuit missions were ruled in the following manner: Two Jesuits resided in each pueblo. The one called the Cura had either been provincial or rector in their colleges, or was at least a grave padre. He did not exercise any of the functions of a Cura, and frequently did not know the language of the Indians. He occupied himself only with the temporal administration of all the property of the pueblo, of which he was the absolute director. The spiritual department was confided to another Jesuit, called *compañero*, or Vice-Cura, subordinate to the first. The Jesuits of all the pueblos were under the superintendence and vigilance of another, named the *Superior* of the missions, who had, moreover, the power to confirm from the Pope. To control these pueblos they had no laws, either civil or criminal; the only rule was the will of the Jesuits. Though in each pueblo there was an Indian called a *corregidor*, and others called *alcaldes* and *rejidores* (mayor and aldermen), that formed a municipal body, like what they have in

the Spanish colonies, no one of them exercised the least jurisdiction, and they were only instruments that served to execute the will of the Curas, even in criminal cases. The Curas who inflicted the punishments were never cited before the King, nor before any of the ordinary tribunals. They compelled the Indians of both sexes, and of every age, to labor for the community, without permitting any person to labor at all for himself. All must obey the orders of the Cura, who stored up the produce of the labor, and who had the charge of supplying food and clothing to all. From this it is seen that the Jesuits were absolutely masters of everything; that they completely disposed of the surplus stock of the whole community; and that all the Indians were equal, without any distinction, and unable to possess any private property. There could be no motive of emulation to induce them to exercise their talents or their reason, since the most able, the most virtuous, the most active, was not better fed or clothed than the others, nor would he obtain any enjoyment that was not common to all. The Jesuits have persuaded the world that this kind of government was the only one suitable for the Indians, and had rendered happy those who were like children and incapable of taking care of themselves. They add, that they direct them as a father governs his family, and that they collect and keep in the storehouses the products of the harvests, not for private use, but to make a proper distribution to their children, who, incapable of provision, do not know how to preserve anything for the sustenance of their families. This manner of government has appeared in Europe worthy of such great encomiums, that the lot of these Indians has almost come to be envied. But this is done without reflecting that these same Indians in a savage state did know how to support their families, and that individuals of the same Indians that had been subjugated in Paraguay lived an age before in a state of liberty, without knowing of such community of goods, without the necessity of being directed by any person nor of being excited or forced to labor, and without a public storehouse or distribution of the harvest; and that, too, notwithstanding they had to support the charge of the commanderies that took the sixth part of their annual labor. It seems, then, they were not such children, nor were they so incapable, as the fathers tried to make them appear. But were such incapacity certain, their not having sufficient time in a century and a half to correct such de-

fects, one of the two following causes appears reasonable, — either the administration of the Jesuits was contrary to the civilization of the Indians, or they were such a people as were incapable of emerging from their primitive state of infancy.”

The Spaniards, previous to the founding of the Jesuit reductions, had established posts in various parts to serve the double purpose of a local government and of transacting such small business with the Indians in the way of traffic as might be required for the common benefit. These posts were called “encomiendas,” and the persons in charge “encomenderos.” Under the rule of these encomenderos the Indians were required to give one sixth of their labor for the benefit of the encomienda. Several of these posts, as Loreto, San Ignacio, Miri, Santa Maria de Fé, and other places, were located near the Parana, and in the vicinity of the reductions founded by the Jesuits after their expulsion from Guayrá by the Mamelucos. These encomiendas were regarded with great disfavor by the Jesuits, who at once set to work to break them up. They would have no Europeans near them, except members of their own order. They began by pathetic complaints of the hardships to which the Indians were subjected under the rule of the avaricious, cruel encomenderos ; that they had to give one sixth part of their labor to them ; that this labor was so severe as to kill them by hundreds and thousands. They complained, also, that the encomenderos were so grossly immoral that their presence greatly interfered with their own mission of conversion, and that altogether they were greatly in the way, and a reproach to their own holy work and pious example. These representations being made to the court of Spain, the encomenderos were compelled to withdraw ; and the Jesuits were left in absolute control of the missions and the neighboring country. Then, instead of a sixth part of their labor to be given to the foreigners, the good Jesuits only asked the whole, giving in return what the master usually gives to the slave, — just enough to enable him to support life and strength, so that he may labor the more.

But these charges against the rule of the Spaniards in Paraguay are not sustained by any writers of the times, except the Jesuits themselves. The very system initiated by the great Irala precluded that cruel treatment of the Indians which every other system encouraged. Harshly and unjustly as they were often used after Irala's death, they nevertheless enjoyed rights, privileges, and protection such as no other Indians of the New World ever received at the hands of the Europeans. Indeed, there was little motive among the generality of the Spaniards for treating the natives with extreme severity. Most of them were connected with the natives by domestic ties. The mixed race so preponderated as to have a positive influence not to be disregarded. There were no mines to be worked, no cities to be built from the products of mines, no large establishments of rich conquerors to be adorned and beautified. There was little commerce and less luxury. The only labor to which the encomenderos, of whose oppressions the Jesuits so much complained, could put the Indians, was agriculture ; and all the natives were required to do, or, in the nature of things, could do, for their advantage, was to till so much of the ground as would suffice to supply the actual wants of these few resident Spaniards. Certainly, the hardship of being compelled to provide the maize, mandioca, cigars, sugar, and yerba-mate for one encomendero to each thousand people, when his presence among them not only was intended to be, but actually was, mutually beneficial, was not so grievous as to be insupportable. The labor required for this in a country so productive as Paraguay was very slight. It was, moreover, alleged by the Jesuits, that the Indians were forced to labor in the Yerbales for the benefit of the Spaniards. But at that day very little yerba was consumed, not more than could be gathered and cured by a hundred and fifty Indians. The task of collecting this amount could not have been so very severe on the thousands from whom this small force was taken. The whole history of the Spaniards in Paraguay, before they fell under the baleful influence of the Jesuits, tends to show that

instead of seeking to extort fortunes from the natives,— though the pioneers had come with that object,— they soon formed connections with the women of the country, and, giving up all hopes of ever returning to Spain, they only sought to live in ease, indolence and quiet, exacting little from the Indians, since little was required to gratify their simple wants.

But the Jesuits, instead of demanding but a tithe of the products of the Indians' labor, exacted all, and denied to the producer the right of property. The doctrine laid down by Abraham Lincoln, that every man has the right to eat the bread which his hands have earned, did not enter into their political creed. They held rather to the opposite doctrine, that Indians had no rights that Jesuits were bound to respect; that their duty was to labor incessantly, and receive in return such pittance as the fathers thought necessary to keep up their strength, in the same manner as draught animals are fed for the sake of the labor that may be performed by them. In recompense for such services they were at last to be dismissed with extreme unction to another world, where they were to be rewarded without cost to the Jesuits.

In a country like Paraguay, to supply the mere wants, the actual necessities, of life, so far as regards food and clothing, requires very little labor. But the Jesuits must not only be fed, like the encomenderos, but they must have houses and churches of vast proportions and elaborate workmanship, in order to convince the ignorant natives that they were the disciples and followers of "Him who had not where to lay his head." To construct these immense buildings, the Indians were kept remorselessly at work. Besides the ruder kinds of labor, they were taught to work in iron and wood, to spin and weave, and do many things convenient to the Jesuits, but of no benefit to themselves. The fruits of all their toil went to enrich the churches and the Order of Jesus. Whatever they had for exportation, principally hides and tallow, went to buy pictures and gold and silver ornaments for the churches. If the Indians were taught to make and use tools of iron and steel, it was that they might make fine carvings, images, and

other trumpery of like usefulness. The doors and window-frames of the churches and colleges, and of all houses that belonged to the holy order, were of the finest workmanship, carved from the hardest, most indestructible woods in the country. Many of these exist to the present day, and, though they have been exposed to wind and weather for two hundred years, they are still well preserved, and show that they were wrought with immense labor and skill.

But even these labors would not have been so great as to have overtaken the Indians, had there not been superadded the task of forging their own fetters, or, more literally, of making the reductions serve as prison-houses to themselves. As the Jesuits would permit the presence of no laymen in their vicinity, so they would not allow the Indians to hold communication with anybody beyond their own precincts. To prevent this, as well as to render desertion impossible, they made a sort of intrenched camp of each reduction, the ditches being dug after the manner of the militia-general in the Mexican War, to guard against the forces within the intrenchments. Guards and sentinels were kept posted at all the avenues of egress from the pueblo. The frontiers of the missions and the dividing lines between them were guarded like a military camp, and the enslaved Indians were not allowed to pass from one to the other. They were as in great prison-pens, with holy fathers for overseers. To render them as helpless as possible, they did not allow the Indians ever to mount a horse, or learn to ride or guide him, except a very few who were required to act as couriers or guard the cattle. But as the same trenches and natural enclosures for the men would serve also to fence in the cattle, few were required as herdsmen.

To render the isolation more complete, the Indians of the missions were not taught any European language. The fathers pretended to educate them in Guarani, and taught them to repeat and chant the formularies of the Church. But they were kept in that condition of ignorance, that, if by any chance a curious traveller or scientific explorer were to

meet with one of them, he must first learn the language before he could ascertain anything of the degradation of the people.

The Jesuits paid no tax nor tribute to the King nor to anybody else. Few of them were Spaniards, yet they were allowed an *imperium in imperio* within the dominions of the Spanish crown. Within the missions they were supreme and independent, in virtue of their pious and holy character, and all that was accumulated went to enrich their own order. Being thus absolute in authority, and permitting no other Europeans to come near who might criticise their system or practices, they had the advantage of being their own chroniclers, and they made good use of their own trumpets. They published to the world such glowing accounts of their successes, not only in converting the Indians, but in civilizing them, that it came to be generally believed throughout Christendom that the fathers of Paraguay ruled with the power of love alone, and that the Indians basked in a state of perpetual ease, peace, and comfort, laboring only so much as health and their own welfare required. No one could contradict them, and therefore their reports went unchallenged. Hence it was that writers of all creeds and denominations, those friendly to the Jesuits and those opposed to them, Catholics and Protestants alike, came to regard the works of the fathers in Paraguay as exceptional and in all respects beneficial. But in effect it was the worst government ever devised by the perverted ingenuity, selfishness, and bigotry of man. The Indians under it were abject slaves, with no possible chance of rising into a condition fit for free men, or men capable of self-government, or self-support. The crucial test of a good and wise administration is that under it the people have advanced in intelligence, and grown self-reliant and capable of self-government, so that, if the existing government or all of its members should be removed, the people would be so accustomed, not only to law and order, but to the responsibilities of power, that they would rapidly improvise another adapted to their necessities, without revolution or

serious derangement. But the policy of the Jesuits was precisely the reverse of this. It was to make the Indians as helpless and dependent as it is possible for human beings to be, and preclude every hope or aspiration towards a better condition.

The exercise of absolute power within the missions only did not satisfy the Jesuits. Their influence was to be seen and felt everywhere. It was the same with them in Paraguay as throughout Europe. They aimed at universal dominion. They were not content with attending to merely spiritual affairs, but they must be all the while intriguing to get control of the civil government. Their most subtle idea was to keep the keys of knowledge as far as possible in their own hands, and by giving gratuitous instruction to the youth of wealthy families to make proselytes of them, and through them, or by their aid, to govern the multitude. Their system of government came at length to be regarded as the only one feasible and efficient, both in the missions and throughout Paraguay, and it was but a slight modification of that system applied to a people already prepared to receive it that produced the merciless rule of Dr. Francia. It was the Jesuit system still, when the power was all concentrated in the hands of the cruel Dictator; the difference being that the power was wielded by one man, instead of by a hierarchy. The people were so emasculated of all sense of power or influence in the government, that neither the Dictator nor the fathers ever could conceive of anything so absurd as that any subject could have any rights that did not accord with the interest, caprice, or wishes of the supreme power. This is, and ever has been, since the days of the Jesuits, the conviction, the controlling idea, the consciousness, of those rulers of Paraguay that the country itself has produced. Though the fathers in Paraguay shared the fate of the brotherhood elsewhere, and were long since driven from the country, yet the seed sown by them has produced such fruit that at last the land is left little more than a dreary desert. In the late war the final harvest was gathered in.

CHAPTER VII.

Diego de los Reyes Balmaceda appointed Governor, 1717. — Rebellion of Antiquera. — Defeat of the Rebels by Zavala, Governor of Buenos Aires. — Flight, Capture, and Death of Antiquera, 1731. — Martin Barua appointed Governor. — Return of the Jesuits. — Political Parties. — Second Rebellion. — Battle near Pirayu, December 15, 1733. — Zavala puts down the Second Rebellion. — Jesuitism in Europe. — Sebastian Carvalho, Marques of Pombal. — Expulsion of the Jesuits from Portugal, Spain, and France. — Remonstrance of the Pope. — Charges against the Brotherhood by the Council of Spain. — The Act of Expulsion finally approved and ratified by the Pope, 1773.

FROM the time of the removal of the bishop governor, Cardenas, in 1648, Paraguay remained for a long time undisturbed by any violent internal dissensions, and was left in peace by all its neighbors. There were occasional invasions, at remote points, by unfriendly Indians, and there were petty quarrels between rival aspirants for power; but the general course of events was peaceful, and the colony was all the while growing numerous and rich and strong. The Jesuits made the best of this time of quiet. They had worked successfully to get a controlling interest in the civil government of the colony, and in the missions were absolute. They had had more than a century in which to Christianize and civilize the Indians, and the result was that the missions were as near a state of perfection as could ever be expected under Jesuit rule. The Indians had degenerated into mere helpless, passive machines. And of this condition a late writer, whose narrative* of what he saw does him great credit, but whose historical part seems to be a re-hash of the writings of Charlevoix and other Jesuit writers, says that "the rising generation of Indians, impressed with a profound sense of gratitude for the temporal and spiritual benefits to

* La Plata, the Argentine Confederation, and Paraguay. By Thomas J. Page.

which Jesuit trading had advanced them, contemplated without doubt its permanency." Well they might, for after so long a servitude, with no light or knowledge of the outer world, no memory and scarcely a tradition of anything but the degrading slavery to which they had been born, what hope of change was it possible for them to have? But it is one of the provisions of nature that abuses too gross and too long continued work their own destruction. The bow will not bear too strong a tension without breaking, and human nature cannot be forever outraged without danger of revolt; and the greater has been the tyranny and oppression, the greater the abuses when the chains of despotism are once broken. The excesses of the French Revolution were but the reaction of the human mind long held in galling fetters; and it was only when slavery became the corner-stone, the divine institution, to be defended and preserved though the government and nation and all else should fall, that the American people were roused to declare that the accursed thing should perish forever.

The Jesuits, had they confined themselves to their missions, might long have continued in undisturbed possession, but, as in Europe, the fathers must have a finger in every political pie, and were not contented unless they could control the civil power. At length the time arrived when their influence was to receive a shock from which it was never to recover. Their vaulting ambition had "o'erleaped itself, and fell on the other."

In 1717, Don Diego de los Reyes Balmaceda was named Governor of Paraguay by the Viceroy of Peru. But the nomination was not well received, and, after two years of contention, charges of so serious a nature were preferred against him that they were thought worthy of investigation by the Audience of Charcas. The Audience was occupied for three years in considering the charges and counter-charges. In the meanwhile Don Jose de Antiquera y Castro had succeeded in obtaining the nomination for Governor to succeed Balmaceda should he be condemned, after which the Audience issued

a decree suspending the functions of the latter. Antiquera at once hastened to Paraguay to assume power, although the occasion for which he had been prospectively appointed had not yet arrived. Knowing that he was acting informally and illegally, he thought to cut the Gordian knot of dispute as to which was the rightful governor by making a prisoner of Balmaceda. But the Governor chanced to be absent in the missions at the time of the arrival of Antiquera at Asuncion, and, though the latter made great efforts to catch him, he succeeded in escaping to Corrientes. The violent measures of Antiquera were immediately repudiated by the Viceroy, who declared Balmaceda to be reinstated in authority, and ordered the usurper to give up all pretensions to power. But Antiquera, by the time these orders were received, had organized a considerable military force, and treated them with contempt. He refused to obey the Viceroy, and having gone through the forms of a popular election that he might have some seeming title to the governorship, he then, instead of resigning in favor of Balmaceda, sent a party to Corrientes, who made him their prisoner and carried him to Asuncion. Here, then, was open rebellion against the crown, and the Viceroy sent instructions from Peru to the military commander of the Plata, Don Baltasar Garcia de Ros, who had formerly been Governor of Paraguay, to dispossess Antiquera of his authority, and re-establish Reyes Balmaceda. Garcia Ros hastened at once to Paraguay with such forces as he could readily collect ; but, on reaching the river Tebicuari, he found that Antiquera was defiant, and with such forces at command that he must return for reinforcements. This bold attitude of defiance on the part of Antiquera greatly astonished the Governor of Buenos Aires, Bruno Mauricio de Zavala, who had been so confident that Antiquera would not resist the royal authority that he had sent to Garcia Ros requesting him to supply him with troops to assist in the defence of Montevideo against the Portuguese. This letter, intended for Ros, fell into the hands of Antiquera, who, thinking to conciliate Zavala and reconcile him to his remaining in power, sent him six hundred troops armed and

equipped. But the news of Antiquera's continued contumacy having reached the ears of the Viceroy of Peru before the arrival of Antiquera's forces, the Governor had received orders to lose no time in putting down the rebellion in Paraguay and re-establishing the legal authority. But Zavala was too busy with the defence of Montevideo to go in person to Paraguay. He sent Ros a second time on the same mission, placing under his command two hundred Spanish troops and all the Indians of the missions. The Jesuits in the quarrel had taken part originally with Balmaceda, and, in imitation of Cardenas, Antiquera had expelled all the members of the order from Asuncion. They therefore lent the services of the Indians with alacrity to put down the usurper. But, arriving again at the Tebicuari, Ros was met by Antiquera with a force of three thousand men, and disastrously defeated and compelled to return to Buenos Aires.

The rebellion had now assumed such proportions that its suppression could not be left to inferior hands. It must either be put down at once, or a part of the Spanish dominions would be wrested from the power of the crown. A new Viceroy having been appointed about this time, he was incensed at his predecessor for not having taken more energetic measures to stop the rebellion. He at once wrote to Governor Zavala, in the most peremptory terms, commanding him to hasten immediately to Paraguay with sufficient force to drive out Antiquera or take him prisoner, and send him to Lima for trial. Zavala set out on this undertaking in December, 1724. Antiquera, now realizing that he had the whole force of the Spanish government in South America against him, endeavored, through the new bishop of Paraguay, Fray José Palos, to persuade Zavala that he would submit, and that therefore he should not push matters to extremities, but return to Buenos Aires. Zavala was not to be deceived, and Antiquera soon learned that orders for his arrest were out should he show himself either in Corrientes or in Santa Fé. Antiquera, now aware of his desperate situation, began to prepare, with renewed activity, to defend himself. But when Zavala had

reached the mission of San Ignacio, he was met by the bishop, Palos, who came to assure him, that, if he would proceed without troops to Asuncion, Antiquera would quietly surrender to him. Zavala, however, put no confidence in his promises, and when this was known the followers of Antiquera began rapidly to desert him, and on the 5th of March, 1725, he fled from the country, and took refuge in a convent in Cordova. Thence he went to Bolivia, intending to throw himself on the Audience of Charcas for protection. But he soon learned that he was looked upon as a common enemy. A price had been set on his head, or rather a reward offered for his capture. He was arrested at Chuquisaca in Bolivia, and taken before the Audience, under whose authority he had first aspired to the governorship. The Audience sent him to Lima to be tried, where he was detained as a prisoner till the Viceroy could write to Spain for permission to send his troublesome guest thither to be tried; but the orders came back that he must be tried where he was, and, if found guilty, executed. He was therefore brought before the Audience of Peru, and, after a trial that lasted several years, was found guilty of high treason, and condemned to death. Though so gross an offender, yet his trial had lasted so long that, as in the case of Warren Hastings, the public feeling towards him had been entirely changed from what it was at the time of his arrest. He was a brave, bold, able, and bad man, yet he had the popular sympathies. His offences had not been greater than others', and not so great as those of Cardenas, who was neglected, and left to die in peace, his offences having been pardoned by the Pope before his death; and though he had not the stores of papal thunder to launch on the heads of his enemies, the people could not see why he should be made an example, and treated with exceptional harshness.

The Audience, in passing sentence, prescribed the manner of execution, so as to give as much dramatic effect as possible. The love of sight-seeing, so inherent in the Spanish character that every occasion is taken to gratify it, whether it be a religious procession or ceremonial, a bull-fight, or an *auto-*

de-fe, was not to be disregarded when so eminent a criminal as Antiquera was to suffer. The sentence was, that he should be taken from the prison, clothed in cloak and hood, and mounted upon a horse caparisoned with black ; that he should thence be conducted through the streets, preceded by a herald, who was to proclaim aloud the crimes of the illustrious victim, till they came to the great square, where he was to be executed on a scaffold, in full view of the multitude. The 5th of July, 1731, was the day fixed for the execution. The popular feeling was very strong against the execution of this sentence, and when Antiquera was brought out to be conducted to the scaffold, he found himself surrounded by a frenzied multitude, clamoring for mercy, and denouncing the injustice of his sentence. The crowd gathered round so thick and furious that a body of soldiers was called out to drive them back ; but the citizens paid no regard to this threat, and it was apprehended that a rescue would be attempted, when the Viceroy and his guard appeared upon the scene. His appearance enraged the multitude still more. He found himself surrounded by an angry mob, and himself the object of their imprecations. The Viceroy gave orders to fire on the prisoner. The order was answered by a volley of musketry, and Antiquera and two friars near him fell dead from their horses. This action abashed the mob, and Antiquera's body was placed upon the scaffold and his head severed from his body.

After the flight of Antiquera from Paraguay, Don Martin de Barua was named Governor, and after a little time the Jesuits were allowed to return to Asuncion. They came in great pomp from the missions as returning lords of the manor, and twelve miles from the capital were met by a grand procession, headed by the Governor, bishop, and all the important functionaries, civil and military.

The return of the Jesuits was displeasing to a great many of the people, and especially to the partisans of Antiquera, of whom many were left, and with whom the Governor, Barua, was so much in sympathy, that when a new Governor, Don Ignacio Soroeta, arrived, duly commissioned by the Viceroy,

neither government nor people would acknowledge his authority ; and so, being without official recognition, and unable to obtain it, he immediately left to return to Peru. In the mean while the country was in a state of political ferment. The people wanted no more governors sent to them from abroad, and they were tired of Jesuit intrigue and interference. The royal rescript of Charles V., by which, in certain emergencies, the people were to choose their own governors, had borne its legitimate fruit. The people had learned to exercise political power, and their best rulers had been those first designated by themselves. The Governor, Barua, secretly favored the plans of the adherents of Antiquera and other malecontents ; but not wishing to incur the danger of open opposition to the Viceroy, he resigned, and the state was left without a head. The unsatisfactory condition of affairs in Paraguay, and the belief that the real instigator of the disturbances was the prisoner Antiquera, had caused the Audience of Lima to hasten his trial. But the effect of his execution was the reverse of what was expected. When the news of it reached Asuncion, the indignation of the people was extreme, and they manifested their rage by falling on the Jesuits and expelling them again from the city. There was now a declared party against longer submission to royal authority. The party took the name of *comuneros*, while those who still held out for the King were called *contrabandistas*. The former held the reins of power after Barua's resignation, and they improvised a government composed of a Junta, with a President as the executive head of authority. The first President, Don José Luis de Bareiro, was soon found to be too indulgent towards the *contrabandistas*, and the feeling against him was so strong that he was glad to escape from the country. His place was promptly filled by a more decided *comunero*, Don Miguel de Garay.

A hostile collision was now feared between the dominant party in Asuncion and the nearest reductions. The Jesuits had already learned how necessary to despotism is a large standing army, and at this time they had a strong force of

their neophytes, or more properly slaves, in the field. As many as seven thousand were stationed as an advanced guard on the Tebicuari. But before a collision occurred a new Governor arrived upon the scene. This was Don Manuel de Ruiloba. Not knowing the reception he might meet with at Asuncion, he first presented himself at the missions, where he found a large military force already organized to his hand. From there he sent forward overtures to the insurgents, such as seemed to satisfy them. At any rate they sent back words of welcome, and promised to recognize and obey his authority. Ruiloba went forward to the capital, and was agreeably surprised at his reception. He entered with all formality on the duties of his office ; but, none the wiser for his knowledge of the recent disturbances, and of the tempestuous elements with which he had to deal, he proceeded as though absolute lord and governor of the whole country. One of his first acts was an attempt to disband the comuneros, so that there should be no party or organization to question or dispute his authority. But this was so vehemently resisted that the Governor soon found himself in open opposition to the most numerous party in the state. The rebels openly defied him, and a civil war actually commenced. But in the first action between the Governor and the royalists and the insurgents, which took place near Pirayu, on the 15th of December, 1733, some thirty miles from Asuncion, the unfortunate Governor was killed.

At this crisis of affairs it happened that the bishop of Buenos Aires, Juan de Arregui, who had come to Asuncion to be consecrated, was still there. The rebels resolved to elect him Governor, and the bishop accepted the doubtful and dangerous honor. But he found himself a mere tool in the hands of the Junta, who compelled him to assent to and sign the most sweeping acts of confiscation against the Jesuits, and against such individuals as held out for the King. The Governor soon realized that the commotion which he had at first encouraged was not only beyond his control, but even threatened his own destruction. He therefore embarked for

Buenos Aires to attend to his episcopal functions, content to leave civil affairs to other hands. Before departing, however, he nominated as his successor, Don Cristoval Dominguez de Obelar.

Thus Paraguay was again in a position of defiant rebellion ; and this time the people had the same stern, resolute character to deal with as before. Zavala, who was still Governor of Buenos Aires, and who had so successfully extinguished the rebellion of Antiquera, had just been appointed President of the Audience of Charcas when these violent proceedings in Paraguay occurred. With his habitual caution and celerity combined, he blockaded Paraguay at all points. With a small force of veteran troops he then ascended the river to the missions, where he found a force of six thousand Indian troops, that, under Jesuit instruction, had arrived at the perfection of discipline. With these he advanced towards Asuncion till he reached the Tebicuari, that had been the scene of so many combats between the Paraguayans and their invading enemies.

The comuneros had no adequate force to oppose to the well-disciplined troops of Zavala. The skirmishes which occurred all proved disastrous, and showed that it was hopeless for them, unorganized and undisciplined as they were, to resist. They quickly abandoned all idea of opposition. Zavala advanced to Asuncion amid general acclamations. The Jesuits now returned more powerful, more arrogant, and more generally detested than ever. Their presence was hateful to everybody. It was clear that a divided allegiance was impossible wherever they had any power. They aspired to be absolute, and the Spaniards and half-breeds saw that they must become mere passive, blind machines in their hands, like the Indians of the missions, or else the Jesuits must be expelled. Heretofore the latter had had the ear of the King and had been sustained by him in everything. To contend against them, backed up by the Spanish government, was hopeless. The crown must be advised of the real state of affairs, of the tyranny exercised over the enslaved Indians whom they paraded as civilized Christians, of their fraud and duplicity,

their design of founding a Jesuit empire, and their military organization. The Spaniards saw the only way to attack the Jesuits successfully was to expose them. Then the truth in regard to their iniquities began to dawn on the civilized world. Then ensued a war of charges and counter-charges, of accusations and denials, of crimes proved and offset by the greater crimes of the accusers. But the result was damaging to the Jesuits. Hitherto they had monopolized the field of letters so far as their own actions were concerned, but the revelations of the Spaniards now showed conclusively that the Jesuit Arcadia was a more absolute despotism than Europe had ever known ; that, so far from Christianizing the savages, even their humanity was not recognized, but in all things they were assimilated to and treated like the brute beasts ; that the religious forms and ceremonies through which they were made to pass were to them mere forms and drudgery of which they understood nothing.

But the reign of Jesuitism in Europe was drawing near its end. For two hundred years it had tyrannized over kings and courts. Its machinery for governing was so perfect, its contempt for anything like honesty or honor in all things affecting the interests of the order was so palpable, that it was clear to the most stupid king, as well as to the wisest statesman, that unless the Order of Jesus were crushed it must dominate all Christendom. It must perish, or civilization must take the form it had in China and the missions of Paraguay. The dogmas of Loyola admitted of no middle course ; no expansion of mind, no elevation, or mental enfranchisement ; nothing but a sullen obedience to papal assumption. So powerful had the order become, that kings were afraid to move without its approbation. Its system of espionage was so thorough that there was no longer any such thing as confidence between courts and sovereigns. The most secret and confidential instructions from the monarch to his ambassador were sure to be known to the Jesuit fathers ere they reached their destination. Naturally the sovereigns felt humiliated at their helpless-

ness; but what could they do? The first step towards throwing off the yoke would be at once known, and woe to him who should first venture to break with the holy order. But at last there appeared a man having the nerve and the courage, and, at the same time, such influence with his government that he ventured to grapple with the common enemy. This was Sebastian Carvalho, Marques of Pombal. Though a Portuguese, and representing one of the weakest of the European powers, he boldly took the initiative for the overthrow of the order. He himself had been brought up in their school. The fathers had recognized his great talent and force of character, and had encouraged his promotion by a government absolutely under their control, not doubting that he would be a doughty champion of their cause. And so he was in his early career. Like St. Paul, who verily thought he ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth, he persecuted with a zeal that bade fair to secure him canonization. As the agent of his government he was sent to England, where he first saw a people who were not under the control of an infallible Church, and yet were nevertheless none the less virtuous, prosperous, and happy. Afterwards he was employed on other important diplomatic missions, and he found that wherever the influence of the order was weakest there was the greatest general prosperity. His own country, ever since it had fallen under the malign influence of the Jesuits, had been growing weaker and poorer. He saw in them the cause of his country's disgrace. He knew that with men so artful, so unscrupulous, as they were, no half-way measures would avail. For two hundred years they had been supreme in their influence over the Portuguese government, and in that time Portugal had all the while been growing weaker and less respected throughout the world. Pombal, while still a friend to the Jesuits, had acquired a position in the administration such as a strong mind is very sure to attain when it is taken into the councils of inferiors. He became all-powerful, being to the rest of the government something

like what, in these later times, Cavour was to Italy and Bismark has been to the government of Prussia.

The occasion of the first open rupture with the Jesuits was the refusal of the fathers in the Paraguayan missions to abide by the terms agreed on by the Spanish and Portuguese governments for the settlement of the questions of boundary of their South American possessions. The Portuguese held the important position of Colonia, on the Plata, nearly opposite Buenos Aires, while there were several missions on the Uruguay in unpleasant proximity to the Portuguese possessions. An arrangement was made by which Nova Colonia was to be given over to Spain, while the Uruguay missions should be delivered over to the Portuguese. When commissioners were sent over to complete the arrangement, the fathers refused to abide by it. Pombal represented this action as defiant and rebellious, and from that time he made unrelenting war upon them till he had the satisfaction of seeing the order broken up and virtually destroyed.

Knowing the craft and the power of the Jesuits, Pombal did not wait to enlist other governments, kings, or ministers to act in concert with Portugal. He knew that if he depended on diplomacy and intrigue the Jesuits would easily outwit him. He knew, however, that they were generally feared and hated in every court of Europe, and took the resolution to act independently. He therefore, in 1759, addressed a letter to the Pope, Clement XIII., informing him that his government had determined to make a donation to him of all the Jesuits in Portugal. Without waiting for an answer, and before the Pope had time to launch out either bulls or excommunications, Pombal had them all seized and shipped to the states of the Church. They were all landed at Civita Vecchia as so much inconvenient rubbish. Having succeeded so well at home, Pombal then endeavored to enlist the other Catholic governments to the same thing. France was the first to follow his example.

The Spanish throne was occupied at this time by Charles III., a sovereign of energy compared with others of the pe-

riod, which, indeed, is saying but little. But weak kings may have strong ministers. The King of France, Louis XV., was not of sufficient force of character to adopt any violent measure of his own accord. But his chief adviser, Madame de Pompadour, had enough for herself and the King too, and it did not suit her purpose to hold a divided empire over the King. The Jesuits, at that time, could not exist without political power. Therefore they must give way.

In Spain, however, the Jesuits had always had much more influence than in France, bigotry and superstition being national characteristics. The newly crowned King had brought with him from Naples his favorite and adviser, Squillaci. The presence of this favorite was displeasing to the Spaniards, notwithstanding which he was made prime minister. This provoked great enmity towards him; but, having the King's ear, he wished to show the proud and high-spirited Spaniards — a people who had recently been, and still thought themselves, the most powerful nation in the world — that his will was law and they must obey, and that the people, according to a favorite doctrine of the time, had nothing to do with the laws but to obey them. His power over the King was so absolute that even the Jesuits found their occupation gone. Squillaci cared as little for their enmity as he did for that of the hidalgos. He endeavored not only to dominate at court and prescribe general laws, but to interfere with the dress of the citizens. The long cloak and slouched hat of the period was the ordinary dress of the Spanish cavalier. Squillaci undertook to suppress them. A great commotion ensued. If the imported favorite might to-day proscribe one dress, he might put the nation in livery to-morrow. A fierce, angry mob filled the streets of the capital, furious for the blood of the obnoxious minister; but he was not to be found. Then a body of troops, called the Walloon Guards, were called out to disperse the mob by force; but the mob quickly dispersed them, many of the Guards being killed. The King appeared in person, and pathetically begged the people to desist from their violence, promising to dismiss the hated minister, and to do anything

else that in reason they might ask. But the words of the weak King fell powerless from his lips, and the mob seemed to be growing more and more furious. At this moment some Jesuit fathers appeared in the midst of the multitude and warned them to desist. The people listened to them, and dispersed without further violence. The King could not understand how he, the anointed of the Lord to rule his people, should be no more respected, while these priests had only to say, "Peace, be still," and they were obeyed. This led him to mistrust that the Jesuits had instigated the mob, knowing that they could control it. Squillaci was dismissed, and the King suspected it was the Jesuits who had forced him to this measure; and for a new minister he selected the Count de Aranda, a man of a very different stamp from the weak but arrogant and haughty Neapolitan.

The King, however, was in mortal fear of the Pope. For a long time the Spanish crown had been, for all ecclesiastical purposes, a mere appanage of the Vatican. The Spanish kings, from the illustrious Charles V., and through the dreary reign of Philip II. and his successors, had regarded it as their first and most sacred duty to war on the infidel; and both Charles and Philip believed that their long and exhausting campaigns were not for empire, but that they were holy wars. Nevertheless, the divine right of the King was not to be questioned; and how could he rule by divine right, when the Jesuits had more power than he? Pombal had acted without consulting the Pope, and Portugal was better off for being rid of the order, its government and King more respected at home and abroad. But to expel the entire brotherhood from Spain, which was their stronghold, and where bigotry and superstition existed in the beauty of perfection, was a far more serious undertaking. The measures taken, therefore, to effect their expulsion, were on a scale corresponding with the magnitude of the work to be done. The royal decree was accordingly issued, banishing the Jesuits from all the Spanish dominions, and forbidding them to return or to hold any intercourse whatever with any subject of Spain or any person re-

siding within its territory. The order was followed by instant measures to put it in execution. The colleges were surrounded, the bells taken possession of by the soldiery, so that no tumult should arise ; the fathers were told to secure and take with them such things as their breviaries, linen, money, and a few other trifles, and march forth. They were then escorted, like so many prisoners or criminals, to the sea-coast, and shipped away. They had, and could have, no other destination than Italy, for no other country would receive such a consignment ; and even the Holy See already had, thanks to Pomбал and Pompadour, an excess of the commodity. The Jesuits were a very convenient engine for his Holiness so long as they were about foreign courts, acting as keepers of royal consciences, betraying state secrets, and making the Pope the arbiter of kings ; but a community of Jesuits in his own dominions was, like an army of generals with no soldiers, of little use for active service. The Pope determined not to receive them, and on their arrival at Civita Vecchia they were refused a landing by the Superior or General of their own order, Father Ricci. Though it is probable that this company was not worse than the average of the order, and contained many good, venerable, learned, and pious men, yet so detestable had the Jesuits become in the eyes of laymen generally, that this shipload of holy fathers was as unwelcome at any port in Christendom as was ever a cargo of criminals at Botany Bay. The King insisted that they should be allowed to land ; to which the answer was delivered from the guns of the fortress, probably not with the intention to injure the vessels, but as a positive intimation that they must leave those waters. The vessels then put to sea. The doomed Jesuits were now the pariahs and outcasts of the earth. They touched at Leghorn and Genoa, but at each place they were denied a landing. For more than six months were they drifting about, and, like the Flying Dutchman, never reaching a hospitable port. The springs of humanity towards them seemed to be dried up. So many intrigues, plots, treacheries, assassinations, and abominations of various kinds had been laid at their door, that the

world generally had come to regard them as an order of conspirators, dangerous to the peace of the world. At last, after much crimination and recrimination, they were permitted to land at Corsica, where they were as unwelcome as they had been to their own General, Father Ricci, on first reaching Civita Vecchia.

A month after the unhappy Jesuits had left the coast of Spain, the King wrote a letter to the Pope in justification of their expulsion. In this remarkable letter he says that as it "is the first duty of a sovereign to watch over the peace and preservation of his state, and provide for the good government and tranquillity of his subjects," he has therefore, "in compliance with this principle, been under the imperious necessity of resolving on the immediate expulsion of all the Jesuits who are established in his kingdom and dominions, and to send them to the states of the Church, under the immediate, wise, and holy direction of your most holy beatitude, and most worthy father and master of all the faithful." To this, which an unbeliever might regard as sarcastic, the King adds the more comforting words, that he has made provision for the payment to each expelled Jesuit of "a sum sufficient to support him for life."

The Pope, however, was greatly afflicted at this step of the King of Spain, and on the 16th of February, 1767, he addressed a brief to him, which, though it commenced with the phrase, "To our dearest son in Jesus Christ, health and apostolic benediction," was nevertheless a bitter remonstrance against the measure, a vindication of the Jesuits, and a severe condemnation of the King. In the face of all that had been said against the Jesuits, the Pope declares that "the body, the instruction, the spirit, of the Company of Jesus is absolutely innocent; and not only innocent, but that it is pious, it is useful, it is holy; and all this considered with reference to its laws, to its maxims, or to its objects."

The Pope's brief was laid before the Extraordinary Council of the King, and was by them treated with scant courtesy; and in reply to the King's request for their opinion, they say

the brief is wanting in that spirit of courtesy and moderation due to the King of Spain and the Indies. They intimate, too, that their resolution is taken, and the question will not be reopened, whatever complaints the Pope may make; and that to enter into controversy on the merits of the case would be to incur the most grievous inconvenience of compromising the sovereign prerogative of his Majesty, who is to God alone responsible for his actions. They then proceed to accusations against the Jesuits, notwithstanding the Pope has so solemnly affirmed that their body was "pious, useful, holy." They say that one Jesuit father, "Padre Luis de Molina, altered the theological doctrines; that Padre Juan Aldiuno carried his scepticism so far as to doubt the authenticity of the sacred writings; that in China and Malabar they have rendered compatible at once the worship of God and mammon; that they have lent a deaf ear to pontifical decisions. In Japan they have persecuted the very bishops and other religious orders, in a manner so scandalous that it can never be blotted from the memory of man; while in Europe they have been the focus and *point d'appui* of tumults, rebellions, and regicides. These deeds, notorious to the whole world, have been overlooked in the pontifical brief."

These charges against the brotherhood, thus defiantly thrown out by the Extraordinary Council of Spain, indicate very clearly what was the general opinion of Roman Catholic laymen at the time of the expulsion of the order. There was no question as between believers and heretics, but it had become the almost universal opinion of laymen and priests alike, except those of this one order, and of all who were not Roman Catholics, that the Jesuits were an insufferable evil, not entitled to toleration, and scarcely to existence.

Another of the charges against them was, "that it is proven by the undeniable testimony of their own papers, that in Paraguay they took the field with organized armies to oppose themselves to the crown." This accusation, however, as far as it relates to overt acts, would appear to be unjust; and yet it was evidently their intention to be in a condition to sus-

tain themselves against any forces that might be sent against them, whether they were the King's troops or those in rebellion against him. It is not to be denied, however, that in the different controversies they had given their support to the side of the crown.

The Pope, Clement XIII., still supported the cause of the Jesuits, and died without sanctioning the act of expulsion. But his successor, Clement XIV., having been raised to the Papal See after the Jesuits had lost their influence, and the Church generally being hostile to them, the new Pope was more likely to respect this feeling than was his predecessor, who had found the Jesuits his most useful instruments in gaining and wielding political power. Clement XIV., in 1773, six years after the expulsion from Spain, approved and ratified the act, justified the King, and so strongly pronounced against the Jesuits, recognizing as proved against them the countless charges of almost every crime known to men, that from that time there was no hope the order would ever be re-established or revived. It had become a defunct body, that no Promethean heat could relume.

CHAPTER VIII.

Expulsion of the Jesuits. — They are sent to Europe. — Great Power and Wealth of the Jesuits previous to their Expulsion. — Their Doctrines and Practices. — Condition of the Indians after their Expulsion. — Hardship and Suffering. — Contest of the Civil and Ecclesiastical Authorities for the Spoils left by the Jesuits. — Conflict of Authority. — Unhappy Condition of the Indians. — Tyranny of Lazaro Ribera Espinosa. — Don Bernardo Velasco. — The Province of Misiones constituted, 1803. — Revolution in Buenos Aires. — Declaration of Independence proclaimed May 25, 1810.

THE expulsion of the Jesuits from Paraguay was included in the plan of the King of Spain. In his letter to the Pope, he said that he was under the imperious necessity of expelling them from all his dominions. This, of course, included Paraguay; and as their expulsion from there was a part of the same general plan, a sketch of the manner of the expulsion from the mother country should necessarily be included in a work of this kind.

So well prepared was the government of Spain to make thorough work of the expulsion, that four days after issuing the royal decree banishing the order from Spain a ship of war was despatched to the Plata bearing peremptory orders from Count de Aranda to the Viceroy at Buenos Aires to take immediate measures for the sudden and simultaneous seizure of all the Jesuits within his jurisdiction, and to ship them without delay to Europe.

The Viceroy at that time was Francisco de Paula Bucareli. He received his orders on the 7th of June, 1767, and entered on his task with a zeal and alacrity that showed his judgment approved the measure. As quickly as possible he despatched sealed instructions to all the governors and local magistrates within his viceroyalty, with orders that they were

not to be opened till the 21st of July. On that day in every town where there were Jesuits the seals of these instructions were to be broken, and the magistrates were to find themselves positively commanded, in the name of the King, to seize, on the following day, all Jesuits that could be found, and to send them to Buenos Aires.

The magnitude of the task imposed on the Viceroy may be inferred from his own account, which he gave to the Count de Aranda after it was completed. In this report he says : —

“I had to anticipate all its consequences upon five hundred Jesuits, distributed over a distance of more than seven hundred leagues ; possessed of twelve colleges ; of one house of residence ; of more than fifty estancias, and places where they were building, which are so many more colleges, and settlements made up of a vast number of servants and slaves ; of thirty towns of Guarani Indians, with more than a hundred thousand inhabitants ; and of twelve thousand Abipones, Macobies, Lulis, and various other nations of Chiquitos ; not to speak of many more, of whom, on the Jesuitical principle of keeping the Indians from all intercourse with the Spaniards, we know nothing. . . . The largest college, that of Cordova, is generally reputed as the head of the powerful empire of the Jesuits. Empire it may truly be called ; because, counting Indians, slaves, and other servants, they have in this vast country more vassals than the King.”

The news of the expulsion from Spain, however, became public in Buenos Aires on the 3d of July nineteen days before the time fixed upon by Bucareli for the simultaneous arrest of the order. Were he to wait for that day before putting his instructions in execution, the Jesuits, who had a large, well-armed, and well-disciplined army in Paraguay, might be prepared to make an effective resistance. He determined to anticipate the hour and seize the Jesuits, as fast as possible, wherever found, and have them sent directly to Buenos Aires. Commencing in this way, those nearest Buenos Aires were first gathered into the Viceroy's fold. But it was not till August that Cordova was taken possession of by the Spanish

soldiery. The Jesuits made no opposition, though the troops came in by daylight, and no attempt was made to surprise them. It had been charged by the Spanish Council that the Jesuits had tampered with the doctrines of the Church. With the troops which entered Cordova, this was a sufficient reason, not only for seizing on whatever property they found belonging to the order, but for destroying their immense and invaluable library, consisting not only of very many rare printed works, but of many manuscripts of great importance, that were thus irretrievably lost.

The captured Jesuits were remitted to Spain from time to time, in groups of forties and fifties, and the King immediately sent them as additional donations to his Holy Father. The fathers of the Paraguayan missions, however, were not disposed to yield without showing a taste of their quality. Their first device was to prepare an address to be signed by those Indians to whom the Jesuits had assigned the duty of enforcing their orders on the community. These were dignified as a municipal government, but they had no other authority than to enforce the commands of the fathers. Twelve of these local functionaries signed this paper, one of whom signed not only for himself, but in behalf of forty-one caciques. This remarkable document is in its language a most humble request from the Indians of the mission of San Luis to their local governor that the Jesuits may continue to live with them. It says: "All this people, men, women, and young persons, and especially the poor, pray for the same with tears in their eyes." As in this memorial the Jesuits are exalted, the friars and priests of other orders who are to replace them are reprobated as having no care or love for the Indians. This paper was not promulgated till after the Jesuits had been taken away from some of the neighboring missions. That it was a trick of the Jesuits with which the Indians who signed it had nothing to do but obey the order to affix their signatures, if so it were they could write their names, was evident on the face of it. Bucareli took it as an indication that the Jesuits would not surrender without an effort to retain their

power and vast wealth. He accordingly took such energetic measures as the means at his command would permit to compel them to submit. He sent a body to that pass of the Tebicuari which had been the scene of most of the important battles of the country, besides a similar force at San Miguel, which is some twelve leagues from this pass of the Tebicuari. With another force he ascended the Uruguay, and, to counteract any effect that the letters purporting to come from the Indians might have, Bucareli had another letter prepared, to be signed by the Indian judges and caciques of some thirty towns situated between the Uruguay and Parana, in which they express great thankfulness to the King for having relieved them from the arduous life to which they were before subjected. Their gratitude to Bucareli is expressed in these words: "To him in person, and in the name of your Majesty, it is that we trust for the arrangement of all our differences, and for the rescuing us from that miserable state of bondage in which, like the vilest of slaves, we have been so long held." While these letters prove nothing as to the real wishes and opinions of the Indians, they do prove their utter mental degradation, and that they were ready to do without question whatever they were commanded to do. In the argument, therefore, they make against the Jesuits. But it was now evident that resistance was hopeless. Many of the missions had already fallen into the hands of the Spaniards, and, though they could bring a strong military force of neophytes into the field, they did not venture on this last resort. They were probably actuated by motives similar to those which influenced the Southern slaveholders during the Great Rebellion. These had maintained before the world that their slaves were well fed, not overworked, contented, and happy, and that in case of war they would eagerly take up arms in defence of the lives and property of their beloved masters. So they doubtless would as against a foreign enemy whose purpose it was to retain them in slavery. But when the war came, and with it the prospect of freedom to the slaves, it was not thought advisable to put arms into their hands.

The Jesuits, like the slaveholders, might boast of the happiness of their slaves, their piety, and their love toward themselves. But they had not succeeded, after a hundred and fifty years' seclusion and total darkness, in imbruting them so far that they could be trusted when the question of their own liberation was presented. The author of "La Plata, the Argentine Confederation, and Paraguay,"* from whose work most of the popular knowledge of these countries possessed by the American people is derived, is enthusiastic in praise of the Jesuits, "their missionary labors and imperishable glory." His work is of great value, and generally accurate in all matters of which he professes to speak from personal knowledge and observation. But he regards the Jesuits with the eyes of a slaveholder. In the opinion of the authors of the Rebellion, the highest civilization, the best government, is that where the great mass of the people are slaves, and the few live in luxury and idleness on the bread they have never earned. In the history of the Jesuits this system appears in all its perfection. The fathers were so absolute that the Indians had fallen into a condition of imbecility but little removed from beasts of burden; and naturally, when the drivers and overseers were taken away, the helpless neophytes perished rapidly, and the missions that had kept in luxury so many Jesuit fathers, and built such elegant churches, and heaped up such massive stores of gold and silver, had accumulated such fine pictures, statues, and frescos, all paid for by the blood and sweat of Indians who had become passive brutes in the service, soon fell into neglect, and are now but insignificant villages, or, perhaps, mere desert places.

It seems strange, and at first view lamentable, that an order commencing as did the Order of Jesus, with such holy and pious objects, whose founders were men of such devotion and earnestness, who gave up all for the cause of their Divine Master, and were ready to endure anything and sacrifice everything if thereby they might bring the lost to redemption, should thus come to an ignominious end and their memory

* Thomas J. Page.

be ever after almost universally execrated of mankind. But there was a fatal error in their doctrine and practice, and the word "Jesuit" or "Jesuitical" expresses the nature of this error. The early fathers imagined that their purposes were so holy that they might use fraud to attain them, that the end justified the means; and they disregarded the words of the Master they professed to serve, who had forbidden them to do evil that good might come. When men act on this principle, they in effect cut adrift from all moral responsibility. No longer acknowledging accountability to man, they set up their own standard of morals, and then human passions and selfish interests have full sway. The doctrine of non-accountability to man, whether held by kings or by religious orders, is found by experience to lead to both corporal and mental tyranny, and is now pretty well exploded. Charles I. believed in it, and the people cut his head off; and to that tragic act England owes much of its freedom and greatness. The Jesuits believed in it, and they have a name that is a reproach.

All history shows that, the worse a system of government is, the more suffering will a violent and radical change produce among the people. A despotism that forbids all freedom of action, and renders freedom of thought dangerous, will, if long continued, render the subjects of it powerless to help themselves if it be suddenly removed. The natives over whom the Jesuits had ruled till they were as stolid as brutes and as helpless as children must therefore, in the nature of things, suffer incredible hardships if the directing hand of the taskmaster were suddenly withdrawn. But so extensive were the power and influence of the order that their expulsion could only be effected by the most prompt and energetic action. Their policy was so insidious, and they had so many ramifications among all circles of the different courts and governments, that only by a sudden blow could their overthrow be effected. The order for their expulsion coming upon them so unexpectedly, they were doubtless for a time subjected to great hardships, which might have been avoided if the measure would have admitted of deliberation. In Europe, however,

the hardships and sufferings were limited to the Jesuits themselves. In the missions of Paraguay it was very different. There they had held such absolute sway over the Indians during their rule of a century and a half, that they had reduced them to be "no longer men, beings without name." * The authority of the fathers being suddenly withdrawn from them, they were as helpless and unprotected as so many sheep. No plan of government, however, suitable for their condition, was substituted by the Spaniards. They were left exposed to such civil and ecclesiastical authorities as remained in Paraguay after their former masters were taken away. Unfortunately, the civil and ecclesiastical authorities were independent of each other, and of course were antagonists and rivals for the power over the Indians and the spoils left by the Jesuits. The condition of the poor natives was now, if possible, worse than it had ever been under their former masters. They had never known the least feeling of independence or personal responsibility, and two sets of taskmasters, rivals in authority, now came in to claim their obedience and services instead of one. The priests appointed two curates for each town to attend to their spiritual wants, while a civil administrator was nominated to manage their temporal affairs. The Indians, who had always before received all their orders from the fathers, could not comprehend how they could be made subject to mere laymen. They therefore frequently appealed to the curates against the administrator, and the former, in order to strengthen their own authority and increase their gains, were constantly fermenting discontent and disregard of the civil ruler. Hence there were perpetual intrigues and rivalries existing between the civil and spiritual functionaries, the result of which was that the poor Indians were ground to powder between the upper and the nether millstones. The evils which they experienced from this conflict of authority are thus described by Don Gonzalo de Doblas, who fourteen years after the expulsion of the Jesuits was appointed Governor of the Province of Corrientes :—

* Bastiat.

“At length the Indians were made to understand that it was only on matters connected with their salvation they were to listen attentively to the curates, but on everything else to their lay administrator only. This put no end, however, to the dissensions between administrator and curates ; because, as they both lived in the same house, and, as regards their functions, were, to a certain extent, dependent on each other, they never were agreed as to what was the true balance of power.

“The curates wanted the Indians to attend mass and the counting of their beads every day, and at whatever hour the priests might choose. This was often purposely made a very inconvenient hour. Thereupon the laymen interposed to prevent compliance, sometimes with reason, and sometimes without it. The result was that the curate ordered the Indians that obeyed the administrator to be flogged, and the administrator awarded stripes to those who obeyed the curate. Both chastisements fell upon the miserable Indians, without further delinquency on their part than that of not knowing exactly which party to obey, or of obeying the party they liked best.

“Not even the mayor and aldermen escape this cruel species of torture. They are often bastinadoed by order of both curates and lay administrator, without knowing to which of them it is their duty to adhere.

“From petty jealousies and personal feuds, inflammatory discords are every day kindled into a flame. As the town is obliged to support the curates, and as all provisions are under the control of the administrator, this person, when at war, as he almost invariably is with the curates, takes advantage of this control to avenge himself. He makes them wait ; he gives them the worst of everything ; doles out to them the most scanty supply ; and aggravates the hardship by the infliction of innumerable petty grievances. The curates, it is true, have not always justice on their side ; for they often exact rations so superabundant that they not only maintain with them a number of servants, but six or eight adherents.

“As in the towns there are no master tradesmen to work for those who will buy what they make, and as not even a peon can be hired without previous appeal to the administrator, because all are subject to the law of community of goods, as the Indians do not understand what it is to sell the produce of their labor, and there is

thus no way of being supplied with many actual necessaries, the practice observed is this: if any functionary wants a pair of shoes, he calls in the shoemaker, gives him the leather, and says to him, 'Make me a pair of shoes.' He makes and brings them. If they give him anything, he takes it, and if not, he goes his way without making any demand. It is the same in everything else. If the curate employs the shoemaker, being on bad terms with the administrator, the moment the latter knows what the shoemaker is about, off he despatches him to work for 'the community,' in order to retard or altogether frustrate the work for the curate. The curate gets to know this, he bristles with ire, and the result of the whole matter is, that the Indian shoemaker has to pay the penalty of stripes from the curate, because forced by the administrator to abandon his last.

"If the Indians view with indifference any property of their own, that which belongs to 'the community' they behold with abhorrence. The time, consequently, during which they are employed in the production of such property, they would as willingly spend in the galleys. The habits to which they have been trained, their great submission and humility, and the constant fear of the whip, are alone sufficient to bend them to their hard task. But even thus it is with the greatest difficulty they can be collected and driven to their work. For every operation it is necessary to name an overseer. There are overseers of the weavers, of the carpenters, of the smiths, of the cooks, of the sextons, of the butchers, and of every branch, in short, of occupation. The same system is necessary in the working of the fields. Now, as all are Indians, it is necessary to place over those first overseers others to watch over them. This second class of overseers is generally taken from among the judges and aldermen; and there is as little confidence placed in them as in those they are appointed to superintend; so that, over all, it is necessary to appoint an overseer-in-chief, the mayor. But even the mayor, as well as all the others, in order that any work may be done, must be watched by the administrator; and when the most is got that under this complicated system of vigilance can be obtained, it is not one fourth of what the men could naturally do."

Previous to their expulsion, as has been said before, the Jesuits had never been content to confine themselves to the missions, but were always interfering with the civil gov-

ernment at Asuncion ; and to increase their influence and make it permanent they took it upon themselves to give instruction to such youths of the country as they presumed might in after life exert a political influence. The education thus inculcated was, of course, such as would tend to make them passive subjects in the hands of their teachers, and to instil into their minds the conviction that all matters of government, both civil and ecclesiastic, should be left to the fathers, and that it was presumptuous and sacrilegious for laymen to lay claim to any power in such matters. The influence and the purpose of the Jesuits was, as far as possible, to assimilate the laws and the people of Paraguay to the neophytes of the missions. How well they succeeded will appear as we proceed.

The country, from the time of the rebellion of the comuneros in 1735, for a period of seventy years, may be said to have enjoyed almost uninterrupted peace and quiet. The Indians on the borders were occasionally troublesome, and it was necessary to send troops to chastise them ; but none of these forays were of sufficient importance to check the general prosperity. The colony had in these years a variety of governors, but none of any transcendent merit, and some of whom were as bad as their weak abilities would permit. In 1796 one of the worst of them all, Lazaro Ribera Espinosa, was appointed, and he held the office, notwithstanding his arrogance and tyranny, for ten years. His government was in all respects oppressive and odious. The colony was treated by him as a mere dependency of Spain, where the creoles had scarcely any rights as against the avarice and greed of the Spanish officials. All the traffic was monopolized by the Governor and his favorites, so that the native producers realized for their tobacco, their hides and tallow, yerba, and other articles of exportation, but a tithe of what they were worth at the time in Buenos Aires. The principal agent or instrument of Ribera, in his work of spoliation and oppression, was a native Paraguayan by the name of José Espinola. On him was devolved the task of carrying into

effect the policy of the Governor; and with such zeal did he apply himself to the work, as to make himself the most obnoxious and thoroughly hated man in Paraguay. The complaints against Ribera's government at length became so grave as to provoke the intervention of the crown, and a man of an entirely opposite character was appointed to succeed him. This was Don Bernardo Velasco, a man whose virtues and unhappy fate will form one of the many sad episodes in the course of this history.

In 1803 the King of Spain issued a decree constituting that broad strip of country between the Parana and the Uruguay which included the site of all the missions between those rivers a separate province, independent both of Paraguay and Buenos Aires. This province was called Misiones, and Bernardo Velasco was appointed Governor by the Viceroy at Buenos Aires. In 1805 he was appointed Governor of Paraguay by the King, in addition to the Deputy-Governorship of Misiones, held under the Viceroy. The licentiate, Benito Velasco, was appointed by the King his counsellor or legal adviser. To him the Governor intrusted the immediate command of Misiones, and as adviser or counsellor, called *teniente letrado*, he appointed Dr. Pedro Somerella.

The revolution in Buenos Aires, by which the independence of that province was achieved, had been, owing to favoring circumstances, accomplished by stratagem and almost without bloodshed. The rule of Spain was odious to all the *Porteños*, as the people of Buenos Aires were called,—for it was always the policy of the mother country to treat her colonies as having no rights that native-born Spaniards were bound to respect. All the higher offices of trust or profit were monopolized by the Spaniards, and all trade or commerce with any nation but Spain was strictly prohibited. Everything, in fact, was managed solely for the advantage of Spain; and the officials, sent over to rule and plunder the colonists, regarded all creoles with contempt, as though they were beings of an inferior order. The successful example of the United States in their revolt against England had not taught the Spaniards

either wisdom or moderation, but it had taught the creoles to look to themselves for relief from an odious tyranny. A crisis in the affairs of Spain gave them an opportunity to strike for independence at a time when the mother country was powerless to maintain her authority. The successful arms of Napoleon at this time had so nearly achieved the conquest of Spain, that the weak and unfortunate King, Charles IV., was induced to abdicate in favor of his son, Ferdinand VII.; and, the latter being cajoled into making over his rights to the Emperor of the French, Joseph Bonaparte was made King. The disaffected creoles seized the occasion to manifest their loyalty to their hereditary sovereigns, whom they detested, by refusing to transfer their allegiance. The Viceroy, Cisneros, who held his authority from a king who had abdicated, was a man exactly suited to their purposes, being weak, unpopular, and vacillating. They could dispose of him on the pretence they were repudiating the Bonaparte king.

The plot for the overthrow of the viceregal government seems to have been confined to a very few persons. On the evening of the 23d of May, 1810, a native by the name of Cornelio Saavedra, colonel of one of the best city regiments, having arranged with certain other subordinate officers to support him, and having his men so disposed as to be ready for any contingency that might arise, quietly waited on the Viceroy, and in terms polite but unmistakable told him that the people had resolved on a new order of things. A similar intimation was made at the same moment to the Audiencia, or Supreme Tribunal, and also to the Cabildo, or Municipal Council; and the latter were compelled to call a *cabildo abierto*, or a sort of mass convention of the people. This assembly decided to depose the Viceroy and establish a governing Junta, to be composed mainly of native-born citizens. Of this Junta, Cisneros was made a member, being thus compelled to appear as one of the body that had degraded him, and to give his viceregal orders for the furtherance of their designs. The spiritless Viceroy, no longer pompous and arrogant, yielded submissively; and thus it went forth to the

country that the movement was with his approbation, and that the proceedings taken were not revolutionary, but to defend and maintain the rights of the lawful King, Ferdinand VII. The popular sentiment, however, was averse to having anything more to do with the Viceroy, or with Spain so long as it was a French dependency, and on the 25th of May the final declaration of complete and entire independence of the Bonaparte dynasty was proclaimed. The poor Viceroy having now done all in his power to disgrace himself and injure Spain was immediately put on board a vessel and shipped homewards as a thing no longer wanted in the Argentine country.

The proceedings of the Junta, with the Viceroy acting in concert with it, being made known throughout the provincial towns and among the troops, the measures were generally acquiesced in and approved, so that all foreign authority was strangled for the time without firing a gun. Once fairly rid of the Viceroy, however, the people threw off all pretence of loyalty to King Ferdinand, though, for political reasons, the provisional government assumed to be acting in his name and cause.

CHAPTER IX.

The Revolution in Buenos Aires. — Popularity of Governor Velasco — Efforts of the Junta of Buenos Aires to create a Revolution in Paraguay. — Don Manuel Belgrano's Campaign against Paraguay. — He arrives at the Banks of the Parana, December 4, 1810. — Proclamation to the People of Misiones. — Letter to the Governor of Paraguay. — Barbarous Proclamations. — Crosses the Tebicuari. — Wise Course of Velasco. — Critical Situation of Belgrano. — Battle of Paraguari. — Defeat of Belgrano. He falls back to the Tacuari, to await Reinforcements. — Is there attacked by the Paraguayans under Yegros. — Belgrano saves his Army by Diplomacy. — His Proclamation to the Paraguayan People. — Sows the Seeds of Revolution. — Character of Belgrano.

WHEN the news of the revolution in Buenos Aires reached Paraguay, it created little excitement compared with the manner in which it was received in other places. Paraguay was a thriving colony when the savage Querandis were masters of the country near the mouth of the river. Its government had always been independent of Buenos Aires, and its governors, when not elected temporarily by the people, had always been appointed by the King, or provisionally by the Viceroy of Peru. The people, therefore, did not see how a revolt or tumult there was anything to them. Buenos Aires might rebel, but Paraguay, especially at that time, had no motive to do so. Their Spanish Governor was an exceedingly popular and just man, and the contrast between his rule and that of his predecessor, Ribera, was so great, that people apprehended only evil could result from a change. In due form they were invited to join their fortunes with those who ostensibly had only rebelled against the alien government imposed by Napoleon. But Velasco, who held his commission from the legitimate King of Spain, and who in the perplexed state of affairs at home could hardly tell what superior he was bound to obey, did the wisest thing possible and gave no answer to the self-constituted supporters of an

abandoned dynasty. He was invited to repudiate the authority of King Joseph, and, instead, recognize that of King Ferdinand VII. But neither Joseph nor Ferdinand were anything to him, till one or the other could show that he was *de facto* king, and into this imbroglio it was but natural that Paraguay should have no wish to enter. This sensible course was attributed by the revolutionists of Buenos Aires to the influence of the Governor, and they supposed that the popular will had not been allowed an expression, and that, if the fear of the government were removed, the people with one voice would resent being transferred like cattle to a sovereign of whom they only knew that he was a usurper and a stranger in race and language.

With this erroneous idea the Junta of Buenos Aires believed that it would be a well-timed measure to send a military force to Paraguay to liberate their brother patriots, and assist them against the Bonaparte king. A force of nearly a thousand men was accordingly raised, and the command given to Don Manuel Belgrano, a man of unquestioned ability, but at that time without military experience.

Ignorance of the popular sentiment and of the general condition of affairs in Paraguay was, and always has been, not only in Buenos Aires, but everywhere else beyond its limits, most obtuse and profound. Before sending forward this military force, the Junta thought it would be at least courteous first to send an agent to sound the temper of the people, and effect, if possible, an amicable arrangement. For this delicate mission they selected of all men living the one most odious to the Paraguayan people. This was that same José Espinola who had been the principal lieutenant and facile agent of Governor Velasco's predecessor, Rivera, and whose presence could only awaken in the minds of the Paraguayans the memory of that avaricious and cruel despotism from which they had escaped to enjoy the mild and just rule of Velasco. Whatever the merits of the proposition from the Junta of Buenos Aires, the fact that Espinola was their agent was enough to set the people against it. Velasco

himself, according to the distinguished and learned author of the *Historia de Belgrano*,* was not hostile to the proposed change in the political relations of the Argentine countries, as he considered that the power of Spain had succumbed, and therefore that the setting up of Ferdinand was but to make him a stalking-horse until they were ready to assert their absolute independence. But the native officers of the Paraguayan army, both from hatred to Espinola and from local or state pride, indignantly refused to entertain the proposition of the Buenos Airean Junta, and they had sufficient influence with the cabildo to outweigh the authority of the Governor and break off all relations with Buenos Aires. They insisted, however, that Velasco, though not fully sharing their opinions or prejudices, should still remain in authority; for all had confidence in his integrity, and he was known to be a brave, able, and experienced soldier, having distinguished himself greatly in the wars between Spain and France, and also in the defence of Buenos Aires against the English.

It was on the 4th of December, 1810, that Belgrano with his army, which had received some small reinforcements on the route, reached the banks of the Parana, opposite the island of Apipé. From this point Belgrano issued a proclamation to the people of Misiones, little consistent with the illustrious character ascribed to him by his distinguished biographer. In this proclamation, which was both bombastic and absurd, he says: "The most excellent government Junta, in the name of his Majesty Ferdinand VII., commands me to restore to you your rights of liberty, property, and security of which you have been deprived for so many generations, serving as slaves to those who have only tried to enrich themselves at the cost of the sweat of your brows, and even of your own blood." Thus avowing that he came in the name of King Ferdinand, the legitimate heir of those sovereigns who had exercised the tyranny complained of, the falsity of his professions was transparent.

* "*Historia de Belgrano*," by Bartolome Mitre, late President of the Argentine Republic, and Commander-in-Chief of the Allied Army.

Belgrano soon after moved his camp to Candelaria, one of the old Jesuit reductions, on the left bank of the Parana and nearly opposite Itapua, now more generally called Encarnacion. Though a Paraguayan force nearly equal to his own was on the opposite bank of the river, Belgrano effected the passage of his whole army with scarcely any loss, and, that achieved, he felt himself master of the situation; but he was soon undeceived. The country on which he was to enter is thus described by President Mitre: "The Territory of Paraguay, towards the southern part, may be described as a great delta or peninsula formed by the fork of the great rivers, the Parana and the Paraguay. These two rivers are the natural frontiers of the country for more than four fifths of its extent. A large and dense forest stretches out towards the interior, and shuts in on all sides that mysterious region that nature has adorned with all the beauties of the tropics and in which Providence has accumulated her gifts. Long cordons of swamps and marshes produced by the uniform level of the ground, and filled with thousands of poisonous snakes, extend along the coasts of the Parana; and the humidity with which they impregnate the atmosphere, united to the heat of the climate, contributes to relax the fibre of those who are not accustomed to breathe those enervating emanations." The truthfulness of this description President Mitre had opportunity to verify years after, as well as to learn that, after passing the morasses to firmer ground, the country was intersected by several streams of depth and breadth so considerable that they could not be forded unless when low, and only at certain passes even then. In entering such a country, Belgrano, if he did not take such a force as was sure to win, exposed himself to be caught in a trap or "shut up in a bottle." Nevertheless, with a temerity amounting to folly, and having at that time less than a thousand men and without any tidings to encourage his belief that disaffection existed among the Paraguayans, Belgrano, having first proposed an armistice, wrote a letter to Governor Velasco, inviting him, together with the bishop and cabildo, to submit to the Junta of Buenos Aires, and to name a

deputy to proceed thither and treat with the General Congress. This letter to Velasco, considering the relative positions of the two, doubtless caused a grim smile to the old veteran; and the mystery is how a man of sense and real ability — and such the subsequent career of Belgrano proved him to be — could ever have dictated anything so pompous and absurd. He said: "I bring you persuasion and force, and I cannot doubt that your Honor will admit the first, avoiding the effusion of blood between brothers, sons of the same soil and vassals of the same King. Do not persuade yourself this is from fear; my troops are superior to yours in enthusiasm, because they defend the cause of the country and the King under principles of sound reason, while those of your Honor only defend your person." The bearer of this letter was sent a prisoner in irons to Asuncion; and had he been the author of it, few would deny that he had been rightly served, unless the plea were allowed that he was *non compos mentis*.

To the commander of the troops immediately in front of him he also, at the same time, wrote a letter in a similar strain, saying: "I bring peace, union, friendship in my hands, for those who receive them as they ought to do; in the same manner I bring war and desolation for those who do not accept these blessings."

While the two commanding generals were waiting, according to the armistice, the reply of Governor Velasco, it appears that a Paraguayan party crossed over the river and committed certain hostile acts on the territory occupied by the invaders. This provoked Belgrano to declare the armistice broken, and he then wrote another letter to the Paraguayan commander that was not only stupid, but stupidly barbarous. He said "that he would have all to understand that he was going to cross the Parana; that any European who should be taken with arms in his hands, or away from his home, would be immediately shot, and it would be the same with the natives of Paraguay, or of any other country, that should fire on the troops of his command." President Mitre says, that, in making this threat, Belgrano but obeyed the instructions of the

Junta. But what a cause must that have appeared to the Paraguayans, when one of its first acts was to give instructions of so atrocious a character; and what general of even ordinary humanity would accept a command with orders to summarily shoot all prisoners taken with arms in defence of their country against an army of invasion!

The duplicity of Belgrano, however, was worse than his barbarous proclamations. His apologists affirm, that, while he was pretending to fight for the rights of Ferdinand VII., he used his name only as a decoy, to be discarded as soon as the Paraguayans had been deceived into acquiescence with the Junta; after this the plan was to repudiate all connection or dependence on any foreign power, and have a king or emperor of their own. Belgrano at that time was not, and did not pretend to be, a Republican. He announced himself as coming to fight for the rights of that reigning family under whose rule Paraguay had been groaning for ages, and those who would not join him he denounced as Spanish royalists, and upholders of King Joseph, who, at least, was not of the race of the oppressors of Paraguay. But the Paraguayans, who knew nothing and cared nothing about King Joseph, and who had a just and wise governor, holding his power from King Charles IV., the father of Ferdinand, and never revoked by the latter, could not understand the subtleties of Belgrano's reasoning, or, perhaps, they understood it too well; and the first answer returned to his haughty summons was that they had done nothing against their much-loved sovereign, but were resolved to defend his rights. Both sides then appeared to be fighting for the same cause,—that of Ferdinand VII. The Paraguayans, under a governor duly commissioned by the King, and whose appointment had never been cancelled, were arming to sustain his lawful successor, while the Porteños, who had rebelled against Spain, made a prisoner of the Viceroy, and banished him from the country, were coming to teach them loyalty.

Flushed with the ease with which he had crossed the river, Belgrano believed that the road to Asuncion was to be but a

triumphal march; and so confident was he of sweeping all before him, that he would not wait for the reinforcements, consisting of about four hundred men and two pieces of artillery, that were hastening to join him. He even left behind him a company of cavalry as being unneeded. He had supposed that whatever fighting was to be done would be near the river, and having crossed that, and overcome the strategic advantage which it afforded the Paraguayans, he considered that the most difficult part of his conquests was already achieved.

But though Velasco did not interpose any serious obstacles to the advance of Belgrano, it was in order that, when he did turn upon him, his ruin might be complete. He ordered his forces to fall back as Belgrano advanced, and that all the inhabitants should precede the troops, leaving nothing behind them that could be of any use to the invaders. The *soi-disant* liberator, therefore, as he advanced, found the country deserted, and instead of the thousands that he supposed would rally to his standard, scarcely a single Paraguayan could be seen. And yet the *liberator* pursued his way, thinking they were all flying in terror before him. In his ignorance of the topography of the country, he had thought to march directly on Asuncion, crossing the river Tebicuari-guazu at the point of its confluence with the Tebicuari-mini.

Before crossing this river, Belgrano committed another of his characteristic mistakes, that should be noticed as showing how completely he was infatuated, — to use no harsher term. In a skirmish between outposts, two soldiers of the Paraguayan army were taken prisoners. One of these, a Spaniard by birth, was shot by the order of Belgrano. His eulogist and biographer, President Mitre, excuses this act, so entirely at variance with his own career as a soldier, by saying that he acted in obedience to the orders of the Junta respecting Spaniards found in arms against him. But this excuse cannot be admitted, as Belgrano, in his letter to the Paraguayan commander, already quoted from, says that Paraguayans taken with arms in their hands would be treated in the same way as foreigners;

all were to be summarily shot. But as in this case it appears that he did not shoot the Paraguayan prisoner, it seems he disobeyed his instructions in one case and observed them in the other, so that it stands clear that he acted on his own authority and according to his own cruel caprice. "This barbarous execution," says Mitre, "as it appears in the official letter of Belgrano, is the only stain on his Paraguayan campaign." And well it might be the only one of the kind, for he was soon to learn that if such savage barbarity were to be the rule of the war, it might be doubtful if he or one of his followers would ever return to tell the tale of their overthrow. He certainly took no more prisoners till the question was not whether he should shoot them, but whether they or their brothers in arms would shoot him.

After this achievement his army crossed the Tebicuari, meeting with little resistance, and Belgrano supposed he had gained another great victory, as a force of four hundred Paraguayans had fled before a scouting-party of fifty. Such easy triumphs convinced Belgrano that he had only to march, slay, and conquer. But these seeming victories were but snares to entangle him. Velasco was well informed of all his movements, and knew that the farther he advanced into the interior the weaker he would be; that he could receive nothing from his base of supplies, while his own forces would be constantly augmenting, and the country through which they retreated furnished everything required for subsistence. But notwithstanding this, Belgrano pushed on, so confident of victory that he gave orders, after the manner of Cortez when he burned his ships, to destroy everything along the route, make a desert of the country, and leave nothing that might afterwards be of service to the doomed Paraguayans, or to his own troops should they ever have to repress the same road. It was not till after he had passed the Tebicuari, and was within twenty leagues of the capital, that it first dawned on the mind of the infatuated commander that he was in an enemy's country. As he proceeded, he saw that, while the Paraguayans were falling back, they were concentrating their forces; and he

could also see that, rude and undisciplined as were the troops, their officers did not commit the errors of inexperienced generals by fighting in detachments or allowing themselves to be beaten in detail. Belgrano, however, regarded with supercilious contempt the wise tactics of the veteran Velasco, and, though marching with a force of less than one to seven of the enemy, he divided his small army, the main body proceeding in front at too long a distance from the reserve with the baggage to support it in case of an attack, and liable to be cut off from it altogether. "This imprudent decision," says Mitre, "when the enemy might be supposed near, shows in a new general more temerity than knowledge of the rules of war."

It was on the 15th of January when the invading troops first met the Paraguayan advanced guard, which, as was their policy, fled precipitately before them. Encouraged by this repeated falling back, Belgrano hurried on until he came to an open plain, and saw a small elevation, or hill, at some distance in front. Having gained this point, that commanded the view for a long way, he looked before him to see what had become of the fugitive Paraguayans. From there he saw the Paraguayan army, and that it was several times more numerous than his own; that, in addition to its naturally strong position, it was strongly and skilfully fortified. The Argentine general, however, though up to this time he had evinced little but self-confidence and folly, was not dismayed; and from the moment when he realized his position it must be admitted that he showed great courage and ability. He saw that to retreat was even more dangerous than to advance. Notwithstanding the small number of his troops, being but as hundreds to thousands, he saw that it would give him a great moral advantage to make the first attack. His decision was quickly taken. His troops were better armed and better disciplined than the Paraguayans, and he had a battery of artillery to which the Paraguayans had nothing to correspond; and as many of the enemy were armed only with bows and arrows and rudely made lances, he believed that when he opened upon

them they would all scatter in confusion. His little force was posted on the hill before mentioned, where, before making the attack on which he had resolved, he waited for three days to rest his men and gain as much knowledge as possible of the position and strength of the enemy. The Paraguayans remained quiet, but always showed front when the least movement was made by the invaders, and they kept up a lively fire of cannon and musketry, "that," says Mitre, "showed a greater abundance of ammunition than of valor." But what was this waste of ammunition, or lack of valor or of generalship, when compared with the weary years of long-range practice of the allied troops, outnumbering the Paraguayans as three to one, under Mitre's own command, in the next war with Paraguay! Thus situated it would have been fatal for Belgrano to attempt a retreat, and an attack in open daylight would be at least hazardous. Notwithstanding that, Mitre says: "The soldiers they were to attack had never heard the whistling of a bullet, and it was to be expected they would be frightened if they were charged upon with resolution." Alas, what seas of blood it cost to erase from General Mitre's mind this mistake in regard to the Paraguayan character!

The plan of battle was to fall on the Paraguayan camp before daylight, counting on the surprise that such an assault would produce. Having resolved on this mode of attack, Belgrano called a council of war, having first, as his eulogist intimates, made up his mind not to respect its opinion if it differed from his own. In thus acting on his own judgment, Mitre finds much to commend in his hero, comparing him by implication to Charles XII. of Sweden. On another occasion, when he had been outwitted by the Paraguayans, who, feigning to fly in terror and dismay before him, had drawn him into inextricable difficulties and dangers, he compared him to Napoleon in his fatal Russian campaign. On other occasions he excuses his military errors by citing instances of the mistakes of several great conquerors, so that his hero, were he to read his biographer's eulogium, might well exclaim in the words of Pope:—

“Go on, obliging creatures ; make me see
All that disgraced my betters met in me.”

The attack was commenced by a small force of cavalry and infantry with two pieces of artillery, and the surprise of the Paraguayans was complete. They, nevertheless, returned an irregular fire, holding their assailants in check for half an hour. Yet their line was broken and their principal battery taken. As daylight appeared and disclosed to Velasco the turn affairs had taken, he gave up all for lost, if we are to believe President Mitre. But from the context this appears improbable ; for in the very next sentence the poet, statesman, soldier, and biographer says, with an innocence bordering on simplicity, that by a casual coincidence, at the same moment the first column fell upon the camp of the enemy, the Paraguayans were just preparing to make a similar attack on the camp of Belgrano. The Porteños, however, being first in point of time, had the advantage of the surprise ; and according to Mitre it would have been an utter rout but for another blunder on the part of the general second in command, for which the general-in-chief was justly responsible. Velasco, however, in giving his version of the same affair, while admitting that his raw militia were surprised, and that with such crude material it was scarcely possible to guard against surprise, asserts that but for the fact that the division attacked had not kept together as ordered, but had dispersed or joined themselves with other divisions, they “would have defeated the insurgents.” Had the surprise been followed up by throwing the two reserved columns on the broken wings, the result might have proved a great disaster to the Paraguayans ; but far from this the cavalry was sent in pursuit of the dispersed Paraguayans, who were already in flight towards the village of Paraguari, situate some seven hundred yards back of the point held by their rear-guard. The *patriots*, as the Porteños called themselves, no sooner entered this town in pursuit of the fugitives, than they began sacking the place, leaving their companions hopelessly exposed, as one to a dozen, against the now confident Paraguayans. Belgrano’s troops, however, fought

valiantly, and the combat had lasted three hours, and until they burnt their last cartridge; then the signal was given for the scattered forces to gather at one point. But the pillagers of Paraguari, now drunk with the wine and spirits they had found, and considering the battle already gained, gave no heed to it. A worse confusion than this now ensued. On one wing the ammunition was entirely exhausted, and the general in command sent to his chief to ask for a fresh supply. A wagon-load was at once despatched under an escort of cavalry. But so little was there of military order or discipline, that this body of cavalry was taken for enemies by those it was going to relieve, and the cry arose, *Nos cortan*, — “We are cut off,” and the general, believing such to be the case, ordered a retreat, thus leaving those who had advanced to Paraguari in the flush of victory to ignominious capture.

The retreat was effected without loss, as the Paraguayans were too undisciplined to take advantage of their success; and when they saw the Portefios falling back, they considered their work done, and neglected to follow up the retreating enemy.

But the victory was clearly with the Paraguayans.

This battle was important as affecting the future of Paraguay; but when we consider the small number of killed and wounded, it appears a very trifling affair, and reflects anything but credit on the invaders. Being better armed and drilled than the Paraguayans, who had little to oppose to them but their unskilled, reckless valor, it was to be supposed that they would have left a large number of their enemies killed or wounded on the field. But they did nothing of the kind. Only thirty Paraguayans were killed, sixteen taken prisoners, and a few wounded. Belgrano, on the other hand, left one hundred and twenty prisoners in the hands of his enemies, and ten killed, though he succeeded in bearing away his wounded. He also succeeded in reaching the Tebicuari and crossing it before any Paraguayans appeared in pursuit. Thence he fell back to the Tacuari, intending there to make a stand and await reinforcements. Though defeated in battle,

and though he had not yet seen the first Paraguayan of those he had come to liberate, he had as yet no thought of abandoning the campaign. He still cherished the illusion that he was to free the Paraguayan nation from the yoke of Spanish bondage, though still professing to act in the name of that royal family which had imposed it, and to reinstate a fallen dynasty in power so that it might renew its oppression and tyranny. His experience seemed to have taught him little, or he must have seen that a united and brave people, as the Paraguayans had shown themselves, could never be conquered by any force that Buenos Aires could send against them. Yet he still persisted in a contempt for his adversaries, — the greatest error into which a military man can fall; and after having recrossed the Tacuari he once more divided his forces, sending one fifth of his men to Candelaria, some thirty miles distant, and reserving to himself only four hundred to guard his position on the bank of the river. Such repeated errors, it would seem, ought to be sufficient to render a biographer sceptical of the greatness of his hero. But such is not the case with the author of the *Historia de Belgrano*, for he observes: "To these military errors the Argentine arms are indebted for one of the most beautiful acts of war, and Belgrano the occasion to show the truly heroic temper of his soul."

There, on the left bank of the Tacuari, he proposed to take advantage of the natural strength of the position and wait for reinforcements, and when they should arrive to renew his efforts to bring to allegiance to King Ferdinand VII. the perverse Paraguayans, who had never rebelled against him, and knew no other sovereign.

As soon after the victory of Paraguari as a sufficient force could be organized for the pursuit of the retreating Porteños, Governor Velasco despatched it under command of Colonel Fulgencio Yegros, a man who was to figure prominently in the future history of Paraguay, and, like the Governor himself, destined to become a victim to the future Dictator of Paraguay. The forces under Yegros, though greatly out-

numbering the Porteños, did not at first attack them when they came up with them, as it seems to have been the desire of Velasco, that, after the punishment they had received at Paraguari, they should be allowed to leave the country as easily as possible. But when it was found that the invaders did not intend to leave Paraguay, and were waiting till they should be prepared again to take the offensive, Velasco took the necessary measures to compel them to depart. So cautiously did he make his preparations, that Belgrano received no warning of the impending danger, till one morning just before sunrise, and within three minutes after his advanced sentinels had given the announcement that all was quiet, he found himself attacked at three points at once. Thus surprised, the little army of Belgrano made a valiant defence; but, of course, against such odds there could be only one result. The little band appeared to be at the mercy of their foes. All looked to the commander-in-chief, supposing he would surrender. But at that critical moment a flag of truce was seen to approach. The bearer of it came with a summons to Belgrano to surrender at discretion, with the alternative, that, if the demand were not complied with, he and his whole force would have their throats cut. To this proposition, so similar in terms and spirit to the barbarous threat of Belgrano himself on entering the country, the General, now grown wiser, answered that he should never surrender the arms of the King that were in his possession, and to tell the Paraguayan chief to come and take them whenever he pleased.

No sooner had the flag-bearer returned than Belgrano announced to his men that to save themselves they must again take the offensive. His little force, now reduced to less than three hundred, answered him with alacrity, and by a sudden and unexpected attack, aided by the advantageous position which he held, he struck dismay into the minds of his enemies. Such reckless intrepidity caused the Paraguayans to pause, and impressed upon them, as Belgrano intended, the conviction that the little force was resolved to perish to the last

man sooner than surrender. Availing himself of this opportune moment, Belgrano then sent in his turn a flag of truce to the enemy, and with it he made such representations as show him to have been more of a diplomatist than a general. He said that he and his army had come to Paraguay, not to conquer its people, but to assist them in throwing off a hated foreign yoke ; but their good intentions having been repulsed, they desired to recross the Parana, for which purpose he proposed a cessation of hostilities, that all further effusion of blood between brothers might be stayed. The terms were assented to, on the condition that the whole army should set out on its return the next morning at ten o'clock.

It was now the particular desire of Belgrano not to leave Paraguay without doing something to convince the people that his motives in coming were not those of a conqueror, but rather those of a friend and deliverer. He therefore dropped all hypocritical cant about fighting for King Ferdinand and against the Bonaparte usurper, and in a preamble to the stipulations for the cessation of hostilities he took occasion to recite the grievances under which all the Spanish colonies had long groaned, and to promise the Paraguayan people that, the Spanish dominion once ended, they should have free commerce with the world, and be at liberty to export without hindrance all the products of their country, and especially their tobacco, which had been a monopoly in the hands of government favorites, who bought it at their own prices and exported it to sell at a profit of several hundred per cent. He also said that, as he had come to aid the Paraguayans, and not to conquer them, all the cattle and horses which had been taken for the use of his troops would be paid for in kind. He also presented the sum of seventy gold ounces, to be distributed among the widows of those who had fallen from a mistaken patriotism while fighting against him. This magnanimous conduct on the part of the defeated and disappointed general so won the hearts of the simple Paraguayans, and especially that of the general then in command, Cabañas, that

the conviction forced itself on their minds that they had been fighting friends, having a common cause and common interests with themselves, instead of enemies. Belgrano and his officers, after the surrender, sought in every way possible to impress on those Paraguayans with whom they came in contact that it was for their interest, as well as for all other South American colonists, to cut adrift from Spain, and to convince them of the great advantages that would accrue from independence. Cabañas readily appreciated the force of this reasoning, as did Velasco and many others, and before the remnants of Belgrano's army left the country the seeds of revolution were already sown. They were soon to bear fruit.

The campaign of Belgrano against Paraguay thus brought to a close was in a military point of view a most disastrous failure. It appears incredible that a man possessed of the capacity which Belgrano subsequently displayed in his long, successful, and honorable career should have ventured on such an undertaking without more knowledge than he had of the people and of the country that he was to invade. He underrated the fighting qualities of the Paraguayans, as his biographer, President Mitre, the commander-in-chief of the allied army that made the next war on Paraguay, underrated it. The latter might have learned prudence and wisdom from the mistakes of his hero, but he failed to do so; and when in his boasting speech to the people of Buenos Aires in April, 1865, he promised to be in Asuncion within three months, it was with the same vaunting confidence that Belgrano had manifested fifty-five years before.

It is not within the scope of this work to follow the fortunes of Belgrano beyond the limits of Paraguay. The history of his life and times has been written by one of the first scholars and most accomplished gentlemen that South America has produced, but one whose talents, like those displayed by Belgrano in his Paraguayan campaign, are not of a military order. The errors of Belgrano are admitted with a frankness not usual to biographers who write *con amore*. His

courage and address are duly applauded, and his general character on the whole fairly estimated ; but yet we suspect that like the poet Archias, who with his poetry had long since been forgotten but for Cicero's defence of him, so Belgrano will be indebted for his name in history less to his own deeds than to the eloquent tribute of Bartolome Mitre.

CHAPTER X.

Revolution in Paraguay. — Don Pedro Somellera. — Success of the Revolutionists. — Incapacity of the People for Self-Government — José Gaspar Rodríguez Francia. — His Origin, Early Education, and Character. — Letters of John P. and William P. Robertson. — Work of Rengger and Longchamp. — Francia pursues the Profession of a *Tinterillo*. — His Tastes, Habits, and Disposition. — His Dislike of the Spanish and the Priesthood. — His Flattery of the Lower Orders. — Anecdote concerning him.

THE army of Belgrano having recrossed the Parana, the Paraguayan troops were recalled to Asuncion, with the exception of some two or three hundred under the command of Yegros, who remained on the right bank of the river till the Porteños should leave that part of the country. There was, however, no longer anything like hostile feeling between the two armies. Familiar intercourse was kept up between the officers on both sides, and Belgrano, who had conceived a great regard for Cabañas, to whom he had finally surrendered, labored successfully to convince him that the object had in view by the government Junta in Buenos Aires was the common liberation of all from the yoke of Spain. The subordinate officers labored in turn with all the Paraguayans they met to impress them with the same ideas, and it took little to persuade them that all had common interests and should be united in a common cause. Velasco was soon advised of the progress made by Belgrano in conquering by reason and argument those who had conquered him in arms. He hastened to the front to stop all communication with the Porteños, but he was too late. The idea had become general that Paraguay should be independent. The seed scattered had taken root, and it was not long before the fruit was ripe for the harvest.

The returning conquerors, who had gone forth to fight in

good faith for their lawful king, and had come back conquered by the tact and statesmanship of Belgrano, and converts to the cause of independence, had no idea of the way to achieve it. Their Governor was popular and much beloved, and they knew of no mode of government except the old Spanish routine. The secretary of the Governor, however, Don Pedro Somellera, was a Porteño, an old friend of Belgrano, and a man of advanced ideas, who fully approved of the revolution in Buenos Aires, and saw that Paraguay could not be longer dependent on Spain if the river below were held by the revolutionists. To him Belgrano addressed a letter, setting forth the real motive of the revolution in Buenos Aires, and the reasons why Paraguay should follow the example thus set by their neighbors. Somellera entered at once into the views of Belgrano. He saw no obstacle in the way of revolution except the old Governor, who, he well knew, would not betray his trust, and had the entire confidence of the people. But Velasco's relations with the cabildo were not entirely harmonious. This body had received early in the month of May, 1811, and after the defeat of Belgrano, an offer from General Sousa, who was commanding a Portuguese army in the Banda Oriental, of a sufficient force to guard and defend the country, should it ever be again attacked by the Porteños. The cabildo, with a stupidity scarcely credible, received this offer as a special interposition of Providence, and decided to accept it. But the Governor strenuously opposed the admission of such a Trojan horse, and had very sharp and prolonged controversies with the cabildo. The latter, however, determined to admit as auxiliaries five hundred men, who were to be supported by Paraguay after once crossing the Parana. A letter was accordingly prepared for General Sousa, accepting his offer on the part of the cabildo, and delivered to his agents, Abreu and Nuñez, who had come to effect the negotiation. To this measure Governor Velasco was strongly opposed as fraught with many dangers to the authority of Spain, while his secretary was opposed to it for the reason that it might interfere with the revolution that he was already planning

with some of the military leaders. The letter of the cabildo to General Sousa was therefore taken away from the Portuguese ambassadors, and the project frustrated in that way. "The cabildo," says Somellera, "were astonished, and took unkindly the tenacity of Governor Velasco. They were unanimous in their excitement against this honored chief, and this act was inconsistent with his general moderation. The cabildo attributed the resistance of the Governor to my counsels, and was not entirely deceived."

As it was known to Somellera that Yegros, who had remained near the Parana with two hundred men, had become a convert to the project of independence, it was at first thought prudent to defer any action till his return. But the perverse conduct of the cabildo in deciding to call in Portuguese auxiliaries, and the fear that the plan of a revolution was suspected, determined the leaders to precipitate it before any precautionary measures against it could be taken. The military leader was Don Juan Pedro Cavallero,—a name, like that of all the prominent men of the time, destined to fill a sad page in their country's chronicles. When word was carried to Somellera that their plan was known to the government, he remarked: *Si nos han de ahorcar mañana, muramos hoy; digales V. que esta noche despues de la queda hemos de tomar el cuartel*,—"If they are to hang us to-morrow, let us rather die to-day; tell them that to-night after the last beat of the music we will take the barracks."

This advice was followed by Cavallero, who, with a few followers, at the hour indicated, took possession of the cuartel without opposition of any kind. The Governor's house was not more than a hundred yards from the barracks, but Velasco knew nothing of what was going on till all power was in the hands of the revolutionists. When he learned what was done, he neither made nor counselled resistance. He saw it would be vain and suicidal. The people of Paraguay had become inoculated with the desire to be independent of Spain, and Velasco knew it was for their interest to become so. He therefore resigned his office, and, making no resistance, acqui-

esced in the new order of things. Thus the independence of Paraguay was achieved without the loss of a life. Says Somellera, there did not occur in it "a single shot, nor wound, nor insult."

A people more unfit to organize a government than were the Paraguayans at that time can scarcely be imagined. It had been the policy of the Jesuits to keep them as ignorant as possible of every duty but that of unquestioning, passive obedience. They indeed had been obliged to share their power with the civil authorities in the capital and elsewhere, outside of their missions, but it was a part of their craft to possess themselves of the springs of knowledge, to have the schools under their direction, and to guard against the admission of any secular learning that might breed doubt or inquiry. And after the expulsion of the Jesuits the government throughout all the Spanish colonies continued to be administered almost exclusively by native Spaniards, holding authority from the King; so that the people, though they knew they wanted independence, and to be relieved from the onerous taxation to which they had long been subjected, nevertheless knew not how to take advantage of their changed circumstances.

In this emergency, the immediate author of the revolution, Dr. Somellera, undertook the work of constructing a government. His plan was to form a Junta composed of three members, of which the two popular military leaders, Cavallero and Yegros, were to be members. But neither of these had any knowledge of the work he was called on to perform. Yegros, though he had won considerable distinction in the war against the Porteños, was a weak, pompous man, and almost as ignorant of letters and of laws as the horse he rode. Nor was Cavallero, whom Somellera had named as president of the Junta, much better. In this emergency it was necessary to find some one, a native of the country, more liberally educated, and who knew something of legal forms and proceedings, to put the Junta in operation. Unfortunately there was but one native Paraguayan in the country qualified

for the work. This was the since famous Dr. Francia, who had been educated at the University of Cordova, in the Argentine province of the same name, and whose occupation had been that of a *tinterillo*, or writer to prepare papers, collect and adduce evidence in legal cases, such as was to be submitted to the illiterate judges of such tribunals as then existed. He was at that time about fifty-two years of age, and was selected by Somellera for the third member of the Junta, as being most competent to perform the necessary duties. Of this singular individual, the blight of whose presence has never yet been lifted from Paraguay, it now becomes necessary to speak.

José Gaspar Rodriguez Francia was born, as is generally believed, in Asuncion, about the year 1758. Of his pedigree and early history little is known, and the accounts given by those writers who profess to know most on the subject are conflicting. Francia himself always professed to be of French extraction, and each of the authors of the only works which give a history of his reign has accepted his own account of his origin as the true one. He was, however, of Portuguese descent, as is well known to the older Paraguayans, from some of whom have been gathered many facts in this history which have never before been published. His father, Garcia Rodriguez França was a Brazilian, and a native of Rio de Janeiro. The spelling of the name was changed by the son to encourage the belief that it was of French origin, as his true name, França or Franza, was very common, and is so to this day, among the Portuguese and Brazilians. Some sixty years before the revolution the Spanish government contracted with certain Brazilians to go to Paraguay and establish the manufacture of plug or twist tobacco, and to teach the Paraguayans, especially the Indians, how to cultivate that plant more successfully. Among these Brazilians was Garcia Rodriguez França. These immigrants had all the privileges of Spaniards, and received a salary of two dollars per day. França, though coming into the country as a laborer for daily wages, was evidently a man of more intelligence than most Para-

guayans, for not long after he was named as director (*administrador*) of the tobacco culture and manufacture in the town of Yaguaron, or Dogtown, some twelve leagues from the capital. Of the mother of Francia nothing is known, although inquiries have been made of many of the oldest and most intelligent Paraguayans.

So well did the elder França improve his worldly circumstances, that when his son attained a proper age he was able to send him abroad to be educated. At that time the College and University of Cordova enjoyed a great reputation as a seminary of learning. Thither young Gaspar was sent. Somellera, who was at the same University, though long after, says that there was nothing of record or tradition there to distinguish Francia from hundreds of others who went through their course of studies and left, and were never inquired for or heard of afterwards ; and La Guardia, the only other Paraguayan who was ever educated at Cordova, and who had gone there at the recommendation of Francia, and with introductory letters from him, could never learn that his patron had ever displayed talent or scholarship at all above the common level while at the University. His early education he had received at the schools of Asuncion, which had been established by the Jesuits, and which during his early boyhood were probably under their control. But as the order was expelled when he was only some ten or twelve years of age, these schools must have passed into the hands of the Franciscans before he left for Cordova. He entered the University, as he himself said,* as a student for holy orders, as that was the only career open to natives of the country. He continued there until he obtained the degree of Doctor in Theology, and then, as Rengger observes, doubtless using Francia's own words, "the study of the canon law having inspired him with a great inclination to jurisprudence, he decided not to receive orders, and devoted himself to the law." But he never became a lawyer, advocate, or solicitor in any proper sense of the term. He returned to Asuncion with his

* Rengger.

degree of Doctor in Theology, and as such obtained a chair or professorship in the college there. But his arbitrary and quarrelsome character was so intolerable that he was forced to resign, and he then turned his attention to the only kind of law practice known in the country. It was a practice, however, that any one could follow who knew how to read and write, and could draw up papers in the ordinary forms. There were no lawyers in Paraguay at that time, and never have been since, such as they are in other countries. The nearest approach to them were what were called *tinterillos*,—men who prepared the papers and accounts of their clients, to be submitted without verbal argument to the alcalde or judge having jurisdiction. Of this class was Francia. He never could have qualified as a lawyer in Asuncion, for there was neither lawyer nor bar nor teacher of jurisprudence in the country before nor since his time. Rengger, however, assuming that such was his profession, says he must have studied it in the University of Cordova. But that was not one of the branches taught at that ecclesiastical school. Another writer,* generally correct, who had much personal intercourse with Francia during the first years of his reign, also says he was a lawyer, but as he seemed to be aware that he could never have become so in Cordova, he says that, whilst absent from Paraguay, Francia passed over to Chili, and there pursued his legal studies and took his degree. But Francia never was in Chili, and never left Paraguay after his return from the University, and hence never could have been a lawyer. The few persons in Paraguay when Francia came into power who were permitted to leave it, and from whose testimony nearly all that is known of that terrible man has been derived, were men especially favored by him, as is proved by the fact that he permitted them to leave the country. But even these all experienced the cruel force of his iron hand, and, having the awe and dread he inspired among all who approached him, it is not strange that they should regard him as a man of more talent than he actually possessed. But the

* Robertson.

illusion fades as time reveals his acts and shows no glimpse of talent, of learning, or of any redeeming feature whatever. It has been the custom, or more properly the cant, of nearly all who have written on the character of Francia, from Carlyle down to his weakest echoes, to represent Francia as a man invested with very superior mental powers. But he has left no record of having possessed either learning or talent, or even ordinary judgment. A fool with malignity dominating his character might do all that Francia ever did. He had the one quality of stubborn, stupid self-conceit united to such extreme selfishness that reason, or truth, or pity, or natural affection could not affect it.

In the state in which Paraguay was after the revolution, it required neither superior talent nor education to lead the simple people, whose ignorance was their inheritance from the Jesuit fathers. Francia, thanks to the profits of the twist tobacco, had enjoyed for a Paraguayan youth extraordinary advantages of education; and being a recluse in his habits, maintaining an air of great mystery, and assuming to know much of the occult sciences, he passed among his neighbors as a man of marvellous knowledge. With this knowledge he achieved absolute power, and a man once in power becomes an object of interest to others besides the ignorant and superstitious, and whether weak or great, good or bad, people like to know all about him. Flunkyism is a weakness so universal that people generally care more to know of the sayings and doings of a half-idiot king than they do of those of the wisest philosopher or statesman in his dominions. Popular histories are made up, to a great extent, of events of no general importance, as people read with more avidity anecdotes of court scandal and royal duplicity than of the hidden springs of national greatness. What the sovereign head of the government will say in a given contingency is an early question with many, whether he be a great ruler like Cromwell, an idle profligate like Charles II., or a dissolute fop like George IV. Francia, because of his power, which he held so long and with such terrible effect, made himself an

historic character. A stronger and wiser, even though no better, man than he, would have seen that his course must have been succeeded by an infamous notoriety; but weak, vain, and conceited, he pursued his dark and dismal way hated by all, and knowing he was hated, and finding his only delight in the misery he could cause to others.

It has seemed necessary to give this outline of the character of Francia at the outset of his history, that the events of his reign, as they will be given in detail, may not grate too harshly on the popular belief as to the capacity for wickedness to which men unrestrained by any other influence than their own ambition and passions may attain. The story of the Dictator's reign will be given in the best chronological order that the data will admit.

The published works concerning Francia's time having any authentic value are very few. Indeed, the latest of those writers who pretended to give any account of him and his government left Paraguay in May, 1825, more than fifteen years before the death of the Dictator, and no one has ever attempted to give the history of those gloomy years. But of the first years of his reign a tolerable idea may be gathered from the rambling letters of the brothers John P. and William P. Robertson, two young Scotchmen, one of whom, John P., first arrived in Asuncion in 1812, and one or both of whom were there till 1816. These letters,* first published in 1838, entitled "Four Years in Paraguay," were followed soon after by others † purporting to be a sequel to the first, under the title of "Francia's Reign of Terror."

Three years after the departure of the Robertsons, two other foreigners entered Paraguay, and were there detained for six years by the Dictator, at the expiration of which time they were allowed to depart. These were Rengger and Longchamp, two doctors of medicine, both natives of Switzerland,

* Four Years in Paraguay; comprising an Account of that Republic under the Government of the Dictator Francia. By J. P. and W. P. Robertson.

† Francia's Reign of Terror; being a Sequel to Letters on Paraguay. By J. P. and W. P. Robertson.

and both naturalists, who in 1818 arrived in Buenos Aires, having come to the Plata with the purpose of pursuing their favorite studies of natural history and botany by a prolonged tour through South America, availing themselves of their medical knowledge as a means to aid them in their scientific pursuits. They found, on reaching Buenos Aires, that, owing to the ravages of Artigas throughout many of the Argentine provinces, there would be great danger in attempting to carry their plans into effect unless they could reach Paraguay, where they heard the most profound peace existed. Though advised of the character of the Dictator's government, they did not suppose that, with objects and intentions so harmless as theirs, they would ever be molested, and therefore they entered the country whence they were to emerge only after six years' detention. They arrived at Asuncion on the 30th of July, 1819, and great was their surprise when they found such a literal reign of terror among the inhabitants that the persons to whom they applied on their arrival for aid or information advised them with bated breath to be careful and circumspect, without daring to explain themselves further. Thus caught in a trap, Rengger and Longchamp made the best of their situation, and so well succeeded in not giving offence to the Dictator, that in May, 1825, they were permitted to leave the country. Once beyond the tyrant's power, Dr. Rengger wrote and published an account of the experience of himself and his companion during their detention, and of what he had seen and knew of Paraguay and its Dictator. These works, both of Robertson and Rengger, are valuable as giving personal experiences and observations. Rengger's book is the evident attempt of a man, knowing he has a strange story to tell, to tell it honestly, without affectation or literary pretensions. The Robertsons' books, though disfigured by tedious attempts at fine writing, are, nevertheless, the work of men evidently intending to tell the truth, but whose vanity and egotism were such that they could not see nor describe anything in which they were not personally concerned and did not prominently

figure. But both Rengger and Robertson fell into various errors, most of which were in favor of Francia. Their books when first published were generally condemned as giving exaggerated, if not false, accounts of the government and character of the Dictator. But in the case of that human monstrosity, the adage that the "Devil is not so black as he is painted," should be reversed. The worst acts narrated by either Robertson or Rengger would be regarded by almost any Paraguayan now fifty years of age, if there be any such now living, as events of such ordinary occurrence in his youth as scarcely to excite surprise. During the residence of both Rengger and Robertson in Paraguay, they were more favored by the Dictator than anybody else within his dominions. Both were men of intelligence, who had seen countries that he knew little about, and with them only did he condescend to converse, during the whole thirty years of his dictatorship, with anything like familiarity or ease. His treatment of them was generous and humane compared with his treatment of everybody else, and the crowning act of his clemency was in allowing them to escape from his power. For this they owed him the gratitude that the stork owed to the wolf when he was permitted to withdraw his head from the beast's throat, where he had ventured it to extract a troublesome bone. Perhaps the stork for such favor was bound always to speak of the wolf as a good-natured beast, and perhaps Robertson and Rengger were under like obligations to speak but well of Francia. Against Dr. Rengger's work especially can it be alleged that it shows partiality for the Dictator; it magnifies his abilities, gives him credit for clemency when he does not deserve it, and excuses atrocities whose only apology is the devilish malignity of their perpetrator. Yet Carlyle, in his celebrated essay on Francia, this model hero after the Carlylean standard, complains of the "running shriek," that is heard in all they tell of the Dictator. But the "running shriek," though not agreeable to the ear, is not supposed to endure long. Whoever sits himself to study and learn the history of

Francia and his times must submit to something worse than a "running shriek," for he will find that a chronic, muffled shriek was going up from the bottom of every heart during those dreary thirty years. The subject is as painful a one as history can present, and yet there are those, leaders of public opinion, who would make a hero of this incarnation of every wickedness. In this work, therefore, such use of what has been before published will be made as it has been possible to verify, and a great many facts and incidents will be added, gathered from the witnesses or victims of Francia's cruelty. Nothing in the way of general objugation or "running shriek" can carry conviction like authentic facts circumstantially related; and therefore, at the risk of being tedious, I shall make such a catalogue of crimes of almost every grade and kind that man ever committed, that even a Carlyle will find scant material for a hero, except of the order of Belial.

From the time of Francia's leaving his chair in the college of Asuncion till the revolution, a period of some twenty-five years, he passed a quiet and obscure life, living part of the time in the capitol, and pursuing his profession of *tinterillo*, and the rest of his time he passed on one of the two small *chacras* that he owned, a few leagues from town. He was a man of very simple, inexpensive habits, and lived like a recluse or misanthrope, without friends, and with only one or two domestics. With such tastes and habits, and surrounded by people for whose good or evil opinion he cared nothing, without a wife or legitimate children, and having no feeling of affection for his brothers, sisters, or natural children, he cared little for the accumulation of wealth. Money had little value in his eyes. He did not need it for his personal uses, for his tastes were too simple; he did not want it that he might use it to make other people happy, for his only pleasure in life was to see other people cringing, abject, and miserable. He did not desire it for his posterity, for he had no natural affection, and his children were all illegitimate. Therefore Francia passed in his transactions as a *tinterillo* for an honest man. He was cynical in his disposition, and generally disliked

by his neighbors, and in return he disliked them intensely. Under the Spanish rule nearly all the offices of trust or profit were held by Spaniards, and by Spaniards who had come to the country to acquire wealth. Corruption was therefore a very common practice in all departments. Francia disliked the Spanish, and disliked the rich suitors; and by thwarting them he could not only gratify his spite, but win the favor and support of the lower classes. Hence he was a power in the country, feared, hated, and respected. Being the only Paraguayan (with a single exception) who had been educated outside of the limits of the country, and affecting to be very learned, he might easily pass for an oracle of wisdom among a people over whom the influence of the Jesuits hung for ages like a cloud. To read or speak any other language than Spanish and Guarani was a thing almost unknown among the Paraguayans. And Francia had some knowledge of French, of which he was exceedingly vain, as it not only gave him a reputation for learning, but encouraged the deception that he was of French extraction. He also pretended to a great knowledge of mathematics and astronomy, but of his attainments in those branches no evidence exists, except that it is known that when he tried to apply his knowledge of mathematics practically he made a failure that would have been ridiculous but for its tragical results. There was scarcely any one in the country to criticise his pretensions as a mathematician or to compare notes with him, and he left no proof or record of having any more knowledge of the exact sciences than is possessed by most school-boys of a New England academy. The only books he had on these subjects were of the most elementary kind, yet his slight knowledge of them was sufficient to impose on those who hardly knew the use of the Spanish numerals the idea that his head was the repository of vast learning. The few people who entered his doors saw a small library of books, mostly in a language strange to them. This library, though not so large nor well selected as would be found in the home of most New England mechanics, appeared of Bodleian dimensions to people who did not read

at all, or whose reading was limited to the catechism. But what surprised them most was a mysterious instrument through which he used to survey the country far and near by day, while by night it was known he used to look through it at the stars. This, though only a common telescope, or rather theodolite, was a thing whose uses the neighbors of Dr. Francia did not understand; and though they did not trouble themselves to inquire about it so long as he was only a private person, yet when he became absolute in his authority, and had established his system of espionage so thoroughly that the most confidential expressions between man and wife or parent and child, and, as it sometimes seemed, even unspoken thoughts, found their way to him, it is not strange that the ignorant and superstitious Paraguayans should believe that he was conferring with the demons of night through that strange-looking instrument. But that superstition which he fostered when it magnified himself, he utterly abhorred when it made in favor of anybody else. He had a most bitter dislike of the Franciscan priests; for the people of the lower orders, to whom he looked to support him, were the most undoubting believers in all the fathers told them. Their influence over the common people was a great annoyance to Francia, as, however much they might fear him, they could not give up at will their traditional faith. The fathers, unfortunately, as a class, were both ignorant and immoral, and a better man than Francia might have despised them, and despised the people for having any faith in them. Though educated for the Church, he was an infidel in theory, while in practice he seemed to believe in a god of evil that he would placate by his atrocities. His favorite books were the writings of Volney, Voltaire, and Rousseau, a fact that might reconcile Carlyle to more toleration of those free-thinkers if he could suppose that Francia drew the inspiration of his cruelty from their works. But the mental thralldom against which they protested was a mild form of that which he imposed, and his admiration of them was not for their doctrines in regard to human rights, but for their arguments and reasoning against

the clergy. The gross ignorance and scandalous lives of the Paraguayan priests made them the object of his contempt and sarcasm, at the same time that their influence over the common people provoked his malice and envy.

The shortcomings of the clergy, however, concerned him very little until he found it necessary, in order that his own power might be absolute, to destroy theirs. He never made pretensions to morality himself, or even decency in his amours. His liaisons were with the lowest, and his natural children were left to follow their mothers in the most menial employment. In his younger days, he had shown a weakness in common with other men. He so far fell in love with a young woman as to ask her hand. The young lady, Doña Petrona Zavala, did not reciprocate, and whether the heart of Francia was wounded or not by the refusal of the young woman it is certain that his pride was, as she was afterwards made to feel. After her rejection of Francia, she married Don Juan José Machain, who received with his bride, as a dowry, the implacable hate of Francia. Yet it was towards this man that Francia behaved, on one occasion, in a manner that would lead one to suppose he was following the Christian precept, "If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink; for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head." The anecdote, which has been often told to the credit of Francia, is substantially as follows. Francia was applied to by a man of the name of Domingo Rodriguez to bring a suit against Machain for an amount that, if he could succeed, would prove the ruin of his old rival. Knowing Francia to be a mortal enemy of Machain, Rodriguez took it for granted that he would, for a liberal retainer, undertake his cause. Francia listened to the applicant until he saw that his plan was by fraud and bribery to rob Machain of his estate; that he had no real or just claim, but was relying on corruption and the known enmity of Francia to Machain to effect an impudent fraud. Francia, however, refused to take up his case and advised him to drop it. But when he saw that Rodriguez was resolved to go on with it, he told him that if he

did so, instead of assisting him, he would take up the cause of his much-hated enemy. The suit, however, was commenced. Rodriguez was rich, and the judge was known to be accessible. Francia now resolved to interfere. Wrapping himself in his cloak, one dark night, he sallied forth, and went to the house of that enemy whom he had determined to serve. Great was the astonishment of Machain, as he sat at his table with all his title-papers before him contemplating the prospect of his ruin, when in stalked Dr. Francia. Had he come to insult him and to sneer at him in his distress? It was not so. His first words were: "You know I am your enemy. But I know that Rodriguez, who is my friend, is bent on an act of gross injustice towards you, and will certainly succeed unless I interfere. I come to offer you my services." Machain, surprised and thankful, put the case in Francia's hands. The first paper, or "escrito," sent in to the judge confounded that functionary, as he had previously supposed that judgment could be given with impunity in favor of the client that would pay for it most liberally, and the advocates of Rodriguez found that they must lose their case, if any respect were paid to either the law or evidence. The judge, in this unfortunate aspect of affairs, told the leading counsel that he could not give a verdict in favor of his client, unless they would first bribe Dr. Francia to acquiesce. Rodriguez took the kindly hint, and sent his counsel with one hundred gold ounces to propitiate the obstinate Francia. But he had no sooner stated his business and intimated that the judge approved of this way of dispensing justice, than Francia turned upon him and exclaimed: *Salga V. con sus viles pensamientos y vilisimo oro de mi casa!* — "Get out of my house with your vile thoughts and viler gold!" The counsel, abashed and confounded, withdrew, and Francia, without giving the complotters time to consider the changed aspect of affairs, hastened at once to the house of the judge. He first related the circumstances of the interview just held with the opposing counsel, and then told the judge that he was a disgrace to the position which he held; that, knowing his villany, he had him in his power, and that

if, the next day, judgment was not given for his client, he would drive him from the bench and make his titles and honors the emblems of his shame and disgrace. The next day came, and with it a decision in favor of Machain.

This affair soon became known to everybody, and Francia's reputation as a just man was greatly extended and magnified. But he was none the less an enemy of Machain than before, as the latter was made to feel years after, which the readers will see when they read the record of the merciless cruelties of the Dictator.

CHAPTER XI.

Inability of the Paraguayan People to form a Government for themselves. — Francia made a Member of the first Junta. — Congress called to determine the Form and Character of the New Government. — Declaration of Independence. — Treatment of Dr. Somellera at the Hands of Francia. — Retirement of Francia from the Junta. — Alleged Conspiracy against the Junta. — The Conspirators arrested and condemned to Death without Form of Process. — Francia interposes, and stays the Effusion of Blood. — Different Accounts of the Affair. — Reasons for supposing it to have been an Infamous Trick contrived by Francia. — Dr. Somellera's Criticisms on the Works of Rengger and Robertson.

THE independence of Paraguay had been achieved too easily. The people were unfit to form a government for themselves, after having thrown off one that greatly oppressed them. The influence of the Jesuits, whose policy it had been to render the people as helpless and dependent as possible, remained for a long time after the order had been expelled. The most intelligent of the native people were mere children in all matters of a political character. They knew little but implicit obedience, and never having had any contact with other people or other nations, they were just in a fit condition to become the willing tools of the strongest man that should arise among themselves. Had they gained their independence after a long struggle with a foreign enemy, the war must have brought out some men of courage and capacity, and have given the common people an idea that there might be a power independent of and apart from the central government at Asuncion. The revolution itself was the work of a foreigner. He knew that the people were tired of paying tribute to Spain, and that, once the government being changed, they would pay the same respect and deference to the new one as to the old. But how to

organize a government on a new plan out of the materials at hand was the difficulty that presented itself to Dr. Somellera, after he had succeeded in the overthrow of his chief, Governor Velasco. With no disposition to violence, the people, from the utter lack of all practical knowledge, were on a sea of anarchy. But as the deposed Governor had been exceedingly popular, there was no feeling of resentment towards anybody in the country. Somellera, as a matter of necessity, took the initiatory steps towards establishing some sort of authority, and appears to have followed the course that had been taken in Buenos Aires. This was to establish a Junta. The only real power now left in the capital was in the hands of the military, of which Caballero was military commander. It was with his connivance that Somellera effected the revolution, and he was named for President of the Junta. Somellera himself seems to have had no personal ambition to gratify, and to have been actuated solely by a desire to see the country liberated from the yoke of Spain. He has himself given an account of the part he took at that critical time, in a review that he wrote of the work of Rengger and Longchamp. In this review, which he professes is to correct some errors into which the Swiss doctors had fallen by receiving Dr. Francia's own words as true, he gives from his own knowledge the history of those times which both Rengger and Robertson received at second-hand. He severely criticises many of the statements of Dr. Rengger, and, though giving him credit for a sincere intention to tell the exact truth, he believes that his book is altogether too favorable to Francia, and that it was written rather in his interest than otherwise. From Rengger's book we shall give extracts to show how the Dictator was regarded by an author who was considered as too friendly to him to be impartial by one who knew Francia as well as himself. And we shall afterwards have occasion to show in what terms of vulgar abuse the Dictator spoke of one who had given only a plain narrative of what he had seen, erring only on the side of indulgence and leniency to the tyrant.

Francia had taken no part in the revolution, and, so far as we have any evidence, had taken no part in politics previous to that time. His inordinate vanity had been continually chafed at seeing the Spaniards holding most of the more important and responsible offices, while he, the star-gazer, who could read French and could solve a problem in algebra, and had even gone as far in geometry as the *pons asinorum*, had never risen above a simple alcalde or municipal judge. So far as was known of his political ideas, he had been opposed to the revolution in Buenos Aires. The manner in which he came to be a member of the first Junta is thus given by Dr. Somellera. Having taken the reins of power into their own hands, he says: "We immediately began to consider upon the government that should succeed that of Velasco. I proposed a Junta of three, and that Caballero should be the president until the arrival of Fulgencio Yegros, whose brother Tomas was charged to make public this act, and I proposed that Dr. Francia should be one of this Junta. He was the only Paraguayan that could direct them. . . . My proposal was generally reprobated; the officers knew that he had been opposed to the revolution in Buenos Aires; but I, who in a meeting called by Velasco the year before, had heard him express the opinion that the Spanish government had fallen, tried to persuade these officials of their mistake; and in support of my opinion I referred to the Padre Fernando Caballero, a pious Franciscan, respected for his age and for the ecclesiastical sway that he held with his order. . . . He was in Buenos Aires the 25th of May (the day of the revolution there), after that he came to Asuncion, and had advocated the justice of the cause; most of the revolutionary officials knew him, and had conferred with him. His judgment upon the part to which Dr. Francia was inclined, notwithstanding the relationship that existed between him and the Doctor, would suffice to remove their doubts, and I proposed that we should consult the Padre Caballero. They agreed with me, and I arranged that he should come to their quarters. Whilst awaiting the arrival of the Padre Caballero,

that part of the work directed to the government Junta at Buenos Aires was attended to, and Don José de Maria was ordered to prepare to start in the morning for Corrientes in a canoe, as soon as the projected Junta should be formed. It was at this moment when Padre Caballero arrived, and he then gave in expressive terms his felicitations to the revolutionists. I impressed upon him what we thought of doing, and spoke of the little security we had in regard to the views of Dr. Francia. His answer was: 'I answer with my blood for the views (*modo de pensar*) of my *sobrino* (nephew) Gaspar.' This tranquillized the officials, and they agreed that the place which I had proposed should be given to Dr. Francia. He was then in his country-house (*chacra*) at Ibirai,* some four leagues distant from the capital, where he had fixed his residence near a year before. I had not seen him since June of the previous year. So I wrote a brief note to Francia, giving him notice of what was done, and I called upon him with urgency that he should take the direction of affairs. I hastened the coming of Francia, because all my desire was to free myself from the compromises I had made, and return with my family to Buenos Aires. At eight in the morning of the 15th (May) Dr. Francia had arrived at the *cuartel*. I informed him quickly of what had transpired, and of the state in which the business was, and of the despatch of a messenger to Buenos Aires."

Thus Francia was named a member of the first Junta, for the reason that he alone of all the Paraguayans in Asuncion had sufficient education and knowledge of forms to organize into working order the improvised government. Somellera was a foreigner, and, besides, he wished to return to his home in Buenos Aires. There was one other man in the country deemed fit for the task, Dr. José M. Baiz, who was not obnoxious to the suspicion of being opposed to the revolution; but he was a son-in-law of Espinola, the detested confidant and agent of Velasco's predecessor in the governorship, and the same who had been so unwisely sent by the Junta at

* The distance of Ibirai from Asuncion is less than two leagues.

Buenos Aires to persuade the Paraguayans to follow their example. But a greater, and indeed an insuperable, objection to making him a member of the Junta, instead of Francia, was the fact that he was not at the moment in the capital. He was in Concepcion, some three hundred miles away, and there was no time to be lost. Francia was accordingly called in, and the Junta was made up. The first act was to call a Congress, which was done on the following day, the 16th of May. This Congress could have little formality and less authority, and was composed of such persons as were invited by the Junta, of which Francia was the scribe and working member, to attend; and it was called only to determine the form and character of the new government. This Congress, or, as it might more properly be called, informal assembly, met on the 17th of June, and adjourned on the 20th, during which time a plan of government that had been prepared by Francia was submitted, and of course approved. According to this plan, the Junta was to consist of five members, including a secretary. Yegros was named President, and the other members were the commander of the troops, Caballero, a priest by the name of Bogardin, Dr. Francia, and Don Fernando Mora. The last was named secretary. The term of their authority was limited to five years.

This Congress issued a declaration of independence, which independence the country has maintained ever since. Buenos Aires, though it had deposed the Viceroy and set up a government of its own, was yet looking for a sovereign to be sent to it from among the royal beggars of Europe, who at that time, owing to the confusion created among them by Napoleon, were both numerous and needy. Paraguay was accordingly the first of the South American states to declare its entire and absolute independence. The declaration was to this effect: —

“1st. That Paraguay should govern itself without intervention from Buenos Aires, proclaiming by that act the Paraguayan independence.

“2d. That, notwithstanding, it would preserve good relations with that Province and send deputies to the general Congress.

“3d. That the custom-house duties should be regularly administered, and that the monopoly of tobacco should be suppressed.

“4th. That in no case should the laws or resolutions of the Congress of Buenos Aires be binding on Paraguay, without being first approved by the Paraguayan general assembly.”

This declaration, with such scanty outlines of organic law, having been approved by the Congress, it adjourned. Everything had been done conformably with Francia's suggestions, and thus the government was inaugurated. At this point we will resume Dr. Somellera's narrative:—

“On the evening of the day of the adjournment of the Congress the aspect of affairs was changed. Francia had labored with his colleagues, and already the proposed journey of Don José de Maria to Buenos Aires was reconsidered, and it was determined that Don José Tomas Yegros should go in the character of envoy to represent the Junta as soon as all should be arranged; then I began to observe a certain briskness (*despejo*) in Francia. From my first arrival in Paraguay we had treated each other with frankness and friendship. During the years 1808 and 1809 he had visited me daily. In the former of these years he had been *alcalde* of the first grade, and in the latter I had labored that he might be named *sindico procurador* (state attorney), and I tried to persuade him to accept the office. We gave each other the title of *compañero*, from having been educated, both of us, in the college of Monserrat in Cordova. This evening I wondered at the ceremony with which he treated me; but I never suspected the extremity to which matters had arrived. On the morning of the 16th, Caballero sent to call me; I found him with Iturbe and other officers; Francia had retired to his house; the call of Caballero was to give me a satisfactory explanation for the detention of the despatch to Buenos Aires as had been agreed upon at daylight the morning before. A little later Francia returned, and he could not dissemble his displeasure at seeing me there with the officers. We went on telling some anecdotes of the night of the 14th that pleased Francia. At my retiring, he spoke to me very particularly. We crossed over the yard to the door of the cuartel, and in this transit he told me it was necessary that each one should serve his country; that I had not failed in Paraguay, and would be of much service in my own country. I answered him that for what

I had done in these times all was with the same idea, and that I thought of going to Buenos Aires with my family as soon as the river should be free. . . . This innuendo worked, as it was intended, its effects. I did not return to enter the cuartel for a month, when I was carried there. I tried to isolate myself, notwithstanding which some of the officers visited me ; they knew not the evil they were doing me."

None but the officers, however, were permitted to see him. He was shut up in a small room by himself, and not allowed to communicate with his family.

This was the treatment that Somellera received at the hands of Francia, so soon as he had the power to inflict it. Being a man of intelligence, the people might, in their extremities, look to him for counsel and advice, and this would interfere with Francia's plans for immediate and absolute power. He was therefore put out of the way. But he was not alone in receiving such flattering attentions from Francia.

"In the same cuartel," he adds, "the members of the cabildo that had been displaced by the revolution were also prisoners. This was one of the things that mortified me most, to see myself a prisoner with those over whom I had just triumphed, and shut up with them in the very place of the triumph. A few days after Governor Velasco entered, a prisoner, and was placed in a cell in front of the one I occupied. There was on guard in the cuartel, Lieutenant Rivarola, who was one of my friends, that I had often met at the house of Don Francisco Recalde. This officer informed me of the imprisonment of Velasco and where he was. He assured me how earnestly Caballero was working for my liberation, and gave me hopes of obtaining it. At nine o'clock in the evening of the following day I was transferred to the public prison, and put in a little room separate from the prisoners. My keeper was only the jailer, independent of the guard of the barracks. I attributed this transfer to the visit of Lieutenant Rivarola. Francia feared nothing so much as my communication with the officers. Here I was better off. I had a window with a view to the river and the Chaco. They allowed me books ; my brother Benigno was sent to the same prison, and his company was a great consolation. My jailer was a kind-hearted Biscayan. Notwithstanding, I began to distrust some of his acts of

carelessness. Sometimes, at retiring after his evening visit and after bringing us supper, he turned the key, leaving the door open. As I had so many reasons to suspect Francia, I believed that this carelessness was a trick dictated by him to surprise me in flight if I attempted it. When there was such neglect on the part of the jailer, we fastened the door securely within. Everything was to be feared from that tyrant. Francia was not satisfied with the seclusion to which I was reduced in the prison. . . .

“About the middle of August I was put aboard of a scow that was anchored at some distance from the bank. As it was a boat without a keel, hard to steer, and loaded with sacks of yerba, it dispelled my fears that they intended to confine me in Fort Borbon. Such a boat could not go up stream. The vessel and cargo belonged to a Spaniard, its captain, or *patron*, was a Brazilian or Portuguese, and to him all the crew were subject. The Portuguese treated me with kindness and respect. My guard was a picket of four soldiers and one corporal, that were on the bank in view of our vessel, and permitted no one to approach it, nor could any one of the guard come on board. The soldiers searched the boy that brought my food. When the weather did not admit of his coming on board, I contented myself with dry biscuit. The Portuguese proposed to me to rescue me from my prison and take me to Buenos Aires, since, making use of a good canoe, he said it would be an easy and a safe thing to do. At the suggestion I remembered the negligence of my jailer in leaving open the door of my cell. I thanked him, and excused my irresolution by saying I could not abandon my family in Paraguay. Some fifteen days after this the Portuguese, on coming aboard, called me to his cabin, and told me in secrecy that a revolution was preparing in the city by the Spaniards against the Junta, with the object of restoring Velasco and the cabildo, and that the scheme was well advanced; that he would advise me of the time of the movement and put me ashore. I asked him who headed this movement; he answered that it was Don Mariano Mallada, and that there were in it all the Spaniards, the prisoners of the cuartel, and many Paraguayans. I knew the incapacity of Mallada, and all the Portuguese had told me appeared to be a fiction. Mallada was a Correntino whom I had known in Buenos Aires since his youth, both of us being then in the school of Matórras; notwithstanding which he was a dunce, a scoundrel, and one of those most in the

confidence of Francia. Who knows, said I, that they have not seduced him? I thanked the Portuguese for his information, and begged him to advise me of whatever he might learn of the matter. The neglect of the jailer with the door of my prison, and the invitation to flight of this same Portuguese, came to my mind. But he had given me notice of a revolution of the Spaniards against the government, and for me to keep silence would be a charge that Francia could justly bring against me. On a scrap of paper not clean, and with a piece of lead I had prepared for the purpose, I wrote to Francia all that the Portuguese had told me."

This extract, of such length, from the notes of Somellera, is given to show that it was Francia's system from the first to lay snares for innocent persons, and also to show that his favorite conspiracy, which his apologists always quote to prove that it was the conspirators against his life that transformed him from a just and wise ruler to a cruel despot, was but a trick and device of his own that would give him occasion to murder some and hold all in greater terror. This appears to have been the first of the many conspiracies that were discovered in Paraguay after the revolution; and all that followed for the next sixty years, and till the final overthrow of the younger Lopez, were close imitations of it. All were the work of the ruling despot, and devised as an excuse for destroying suspected enemies and inspiring general terror.

This alleged conspiracy took place in the latter part of September, 1811. Dr. Rengger, who had doubtless received the account of it from Francia's own lips, makes the time when this occurred a year or two later, and when Francia, disgusted with his colleagues, had retired from the Junta. But it was only a day or two after Dr. Somellera, having shunned all the snares laid for him by Francia, had at last been allowed to leave the country. It was, according to Rengger, during the retirement of Francia from the Junta, that this conspiracy against it was formed:—

"It was at this period that Francia distinguished himself by an act of humanity, if not of pure policy, that gained him the good opinion of all just men. The Spaniards and their partisans among the

creoles had planned a counter-revolution that was discovered without difficulty. All the accomplices were arrested, and the judges, without other form of process, and in virtue of their simple moral conviction, condemned them to death. Two were instantly shot, and their bodies suspended from a gallows; perhaps they were the least guilty, but they were certainly the poorest. When Francia, who was in his country-house, knew of these executions, he flew to the capital, and stayed the effusion of blood. He knew too well the weakness of the Spanish party to fear any attempts they could make, and he thought that example of rigor was sufficient to restrain them. They only made a part of the conspirators pass under the gallows from which dangled the bodies of the two victims, condemning others to prison for an indefinite period, that was shortened by paying large sums to the state, or to the families of the first functionaries."

This account, written thirteen years after the event, by Dr. Rengger, who never set foot in the country till long after the occurrence, is thus noticed by Somellera:—

"Dr. Rengger does not give the date of this counter-revolution; he does well, for that would have shown all the iniquity of those he tried to applaud; it would have proved that there was no counter-revolution plotted, and that all that tragic farce was a snare set by Dr. Francia, in order to satisfy his desire of shedding blood to frighten the Spaniards. The facts of this affair I will relate as they were told to me at Angostura, three days after their occurrence, by Dr. Ventura Bedoya, a native of Asuncion, who was present; and they were confirmed by many others who were there, and one of whom was an actor in the scenes.

"These are the facts: on the morning of the 29th of September, 1811, a group of soldiers, with some prisoners, all led by an officer, Don Mariano Mallada, rushed out from the cuartel; they brought out two cannon that were under the command of two prisoners, both artillery officers, Juan B. Zavala and Francisco Guerreros. They came forth shouting loudly, beating drums, and crying, *Viva el Rey, viva nuestro Gobernador, y mueran los traidores!*—'Live the King, live our Governor, and perish the traitors!' At the noise, some people, as was common, collected in the plaza where the mob had gathered. Some of those thus coming together were made prisoners by the rioters themselves, and some by soldiers that came out

of the cuartel. Among those made prisoners were a Dominican friar, Padre Taboada, a boy who had been a servant of the Governor, a native of Castile, whose name I do not remember, and a Catalonian named Martin, who had a *pulperia* (drinking-shop) in the house of Juan Francisco Decoud. The two last were immediately shot and suspended from a gallows; others were made to pass under it, among whom was the Padre Taboada. I know not why the historian should say that these two unfortunates were certainly the poorest.

"I asked Bedoya if the results had been serious to many, and how the movement had terminated. He said it was a serious affair only to the two who were shot; that after Padre Taboada and others had passed under the gibbet, the cry was raised, 'Viva la Junta!' and then all retired to the cuartel, bearing back the cannon with them. I could but bear in mind the account of the revolution of the Spaniards, which the skipper of the vessel in which I was a prisoner brought to me in the beginning of September, and which I have already mentioned.

"This lamentable event, which Dr. Rengger refers to in order to magnify the humanity of Dr. Francia, is a proof of his iniquitous barbarity. That counter-revolution of the Spaniards, that movement of the 29th of September, was an infamous trap contrived by Dr. Francia. The proofs of it are most convincing.

"In the first place, in the month of September, 1811, there did not exist in Paraguay any Spaniard capable of heading an enterprise against the new order of things. The members of the *cabildo* and Governor Velasco were all prisoners, and besides, there was no man from whom such a thing was to be feared. . . . In the second place, that movement of the 29th, headed by Mallada, is the same that in the beginning of September the master of the vessel informed me of, and the same that I denounced to Francia after my arrest. This man, cowardly, distrustful, suspicious, did not heed my information. He did not take any notice of it, nor investigate the origin of the story of the master of the scow. Mallada continued in the same service in the cuartel as he had done before.

"In the third place, the artillery officers, Zavala and Guerreros, who were prisoners, and that appeared in the plaza directing the cannon which they brought among the crowd, were, without doubt, the most culpable in it. It would seem that the rigor should have been exercised towards them; but it was not thus. They, instead

of being punished, were rewarded; their salaries that had accrued in the time of the Spanish government were paid to them, and they were set at liberty. Zavala went to Montevideo and entered the Spanish service, and afterwards was often with me in Buenos Aires and told me of this fantastic revolution of Mallada, and of the secret notice that he had given him that it was a trap.

“The reasons given me by Zavala, why he and Guerreros engaged in this plot were the following: first, they knew it was by the connivance of the government; second, if they refused they would have been exposed to be assassinated in their cells, either from the anger that their refusal would cause, or to hide the secret; third, that by appearing to approve they could give notice to the Spaniards so that they would not join in the riot, — as they did not; for, having been forewarned, none of the principal persons of the vicinity went into the plaza. He added that Velasco and the members of the cabildo remained quiet, as they had been warned of this pretended counter-revolution.

“I do not doubt that Dr. Rengger, in relating the event of the 29th of September, has done no more than tell us what Dr. Francia told him. Nobody but himself could invest with colors of humanity an act the most unjust and barbarous. How could this writer attribute humanity to a man of whom he had just said, in the same chapter, he had repressed all tender affections, and knew not friendship? ‘Humanity in Dr. Francia! He never appeared to be a man belonging to the human race, and only his death is a proof that he was.’”

Dr. Somellera is equally severe on Robertson, alleging that every act instanced either by him or Rengger as indicating humanity or justice in Francia was prompted by utter selfishness and malignity on the part of the Dictator, and that he acted solely with the conviction that it proved him to be a being of superior order when all trembled in his presence, and only held their lives subject to his pleasure or caprice.

CHAPTER XII.

The Indecision of the Junta. — Francia withdraws, and La Cerda is named Asesor. — His Popularity and Manner of doing Business. — Francia in Retirement. — His Intrigues for Restoration. — Condition of Paraguay at this Time. — A Day's Festivities. — Dona Juana Ysquibel. — Arrival of Don Nicholas Herrera as Special Envoy from Buenos Aires — Francia recalled to the Junta. — He assumes Absolute Power. — Banishment of La Cérda. — A Congress convoked. — Character of the Congress, and Description of the Members. — The Junta abolished, and Francia and Yegros appointed Consuls. — Abuses corrected. — Espionage. — Quotation from Robertson.

THE violent and unjust measures that characterized Francia's first elevation to power are not to be laid to his charge alone. To the weakness, timidity, and ignorance of the Junta may justly be ascribed the crime of permitting a mind so sombre and wicked as his was known to be to obtain absolute power. When he entered their counsels he was not absolute, as is evident from the fact that after some six months he retired from it, disgusted because he could not have everything his own way. It was impossible that men like Caballero and Yegros, ignorant as they were, yet having some sense of dignity, and too proud to engage in any act of baseness, would engage in such low tricks as suited the dark, sinister purposes of Francia. He was not yet strong enough to venture on their arrest and execution, and then to set himself up as absolute ruler, nor were they sufficiently self-confident to defy him, and rid themselves and the country of his ominous presence, by those strong measures that they knew to be necessary. Francia, however, knew their weakness and his own power. He knew that if he left the Junta he would leave all the other members in a state of confusion; that they would hardly know how to make a law, or, if made, to put it in force. Somellera had left the country, and there was no

other one of whom he need feel jealous. He therefore at the end of a few months left the Junta to get on without him, and retired to his country-house at Ibirai.

Francia having withdrawn, the Junta was reconstituted, and in his stead, Don Gregorio de la Cerda was called in to make up the full number of the body as organized by Somellera. La Cerda was taken for two reasons ; one was his popularity, and the other was that he had sufficient education to draw up official papers. Necessarily he was made the secretary, or, as they called it, the "asesor," of the Junta. This Don Gregorio was an important character in many ways. He was one of those good-natured, ever-serviceable men, that, affecting much knowledge, hold it at the service of everybody. He had a pleasant word for every beggar, and a compliment for every pretty face, and bore so little malice in his nature, that, while he was on good terms with all the fathers of the more respectable families, the mothers almost universally looked to him to be godfather (*compadre*) to their children. Hence it was that he was a sort of general godfather, or *padrino* ; and as the godmothers, or *madrinas*, were many, he came to have a kind of relationship with nearly all the best families in the capital. Of course his influence was great among the people, and correspondingly great was the anger of Francia when he saw him called to fill the place he had himself vacated.

To give an idea of the simple, unsophisticated way in which the government was administered by Don Gregorio, as well as to show the general condition of the people and the way their business was managed, we shall give the following extracts from Robertson. It should be here premised that Robertson was largely engaged in merchandising ; that, at the time, Buenos Aires was at war with Spain, and the ports of Paraguay were closed to all foreigners. Robertson, however, by use of his credits in Buenos Aires, and with the proceeds of a cargo of merchandise that had come consigned to him from that port, had purchased from the merchants of Asuncion, and others who were desirous of making remittances below, a large quantity of Paraguayan produce, consisting

mainly of hides, tobacco, and yerba. Naturally he was anxious to get permission to ship it below, and as Don Gregorio de la Cerda was virtually the government, he made it his business to get into his confidence and good graces. Of course there was nothing easier than that with a person so exuberant with good-nature. Having first propitiated the general compadre, he had an interview with him which he thus relates :—

“‘*Señor Don Juan,*’ he said to me one day, ‘*es preciso que de algun modo V. me permita servirle,*’—‘Mr. Robertson, I insist upon it that in some way you permit me to serve you.’

“There was no one in Paraguay who could so well serve me as Don Gregorio. He was lord paramount there, and directed all the operations of the government.

“‘Well, Senor Don Gregorio,’ I replied, ‘you know the port of Paraguay is now closed against the egress of both persons and property. You know, too, that I have a great deal of the latter locked up in unprofitable stagnation here. Besides, I desire very much to return for a season to Buenos Aires. Now, if you will obtain permission for me to take away both my person and property in one of the many ships lying empty and inactive in the river, you will do me a very essential favor.’ The best of compadres and friends instantly replied, ‘*Por hecho,*’—‘Consider the matter settled.’ ‘There are,’ he continued, ‘some difficulties in the way. There will be great jealousy on the part of all the merchants on account of your being authorized to break the embargo. The Spanish marines, you know, are in the river, and making prizes of all vessels which sail from neutral ports; and Vattel lays it down as a principle of national law, that no neutral can be allowed to carry his property from one belligerent port to another, unless the ship in which it is be under the flag of his own nation and be manned by at least one third subjects belonging to it. But never mind, we will find a way of smoothing these difficulties, provided you have really made up your mind to run the risk, which you know is imminent, of capture.’

“‘That,’ I replied, ‘is entirely my affair; and my mind is quite made up on the subject.’

“Don Gregorio was one of those active and fidgety spirits that, having once undertaken a business, give themselves no rest, day or

night, till it is accomplished. He immediately sat down and dictated to an amanuensis the petition to government, embracing all the points of my request, and of the fate of which petition he knew himself to be sole arbiter. He explained and mollified, in the present instance, the objections of Vattel; he made out a very ingenious case of hardship for me; and he called on the government, as it valued the friendship of Great Britain, to grant the reasonable request of the only British subject then in Paraguay. There were a number of technical formalities to be gone through in the way of taking the opinions and informes (dicta) of the various lawyers and men in office. The cabildo, or court of aldermen, were to give their informes, the judge of commerce and the director of customs were to give theirs. The juez de alzada, or judge of appeal, was to give his opinion, and the fiscal his. Every one of these honorable and learned gentlemen were compadres of Don Gregorio (he was godfather to the children of each), and the idea of one compadre's opinion being against another's, especially as Don Gregorio was the government 'asesor,' was not to be entertained. Every one of them therefore set down exactly what the compadre dictated. Within eight days from the time of presenting my petition all was granted."

Thus were affairs managed by the great La Cerda after Francia had left the Junta, and while the latter was brooding over the slight put upon him by attempting to carry on the government without him.

He was not idle, however, in his retirement. He had tasted the sweets of power, and like the tame tiger, that is harmless as long as he is fed only on milk and vegetable food, having once tasted blood has ever after an unappeasable thirst for it, so Francia, now some years past fifty, thought only of regaining power and slaking his thirst for revenge with human blood. His first step was to make people realize that they were badly governed. They were almost invariably contented with the existing order of things, and, save a few Spaniards who had held official positions, there was scarcely a person in the country who did not rejoice that they were no longer subject to the grinding oppression of Spain. That the river was closed, or nearly so, to commerce, was no fault of the Junta; and it was therefore idle for Francia to talk to

the farmers and landholders in the interior of their material sufferings and grievances. He nevertheless sought interviews with them, and as they came to and went from the capital they were induced to visit his house, where he would receive them with courtesy, show them his books and mysterious theodolite, and then seek to make them discontented with the government by telling them that they were the wise men, they were the Solons who ought to be in authority, instead of such vulgar, ignorant fellows as Caballero, Yegros, La Cerda, and the others. The revolution he represented to them to have been a failure, for though it had been successful in so far as it had overthrown the Spanish authority, yet it had been succeeded by a government much worse, as it was composed of ignorant pretenders, whereas it should have been in the hands of such wise, experienced, and able men as were his auditors. Of the Junta, Yegros and Caballero were particularly his aversion, as they were both generals, both had acquired distinction in the war against Buenos Aires, both had favored the revolution, and both were held in much awe and respect by the people. As military men they were entitled to wear gold lace, and wherever they went the common people gave way and looked upon them as great conquerors and national deliverers. To a man of Francia's inordinate, self-devouring vanity, one who could read French and make an equation in algebra, the sight of these men with their trappings and escorts was a thousand times worse than was to Haman the sight of Mordecai, the Jew, sitting at the king's gate. To the more wealthy and influential landholders, or *estancieros*, therefore, who lived scattered about in different parts of the state, he managed to make known the grievances they had not before realized. Aroused to a sense of their wrongs and importance, these now dissatisfied persons would secretly visit Francia at his country-house, where he would dilate on their sufferings, boast of the reforms he had introduced or projected while a member of the Junta, and promise them all a surfeit of honors and wealth should he ever return to power. To the lower classes of the capital Francia was at the same time particularly condescend-

ing, and in every way tried to make it appear that he was their champion against the more wealthy, whom he treated with ostentatious contempt.

Gradually the public mind became impressed with the idea that Francia, though in retirement, was a power, was the coming man. The *estancieros*, who came in from the country, with wonderful unanimity spoke of him as the man for the times. His acts of extreme severity when he was in the Junta had been confined to foreigners, of whom those who still remained in the country had little influence. The Junta was inherently impotent to do anything to stem the current that was setting in against it and in favor of Francia. Some of the old and more intelligent Spaniards saw to what things were tending, and with gloomy forebodings awaited the result which they had no power to avert. They had already so far divined the character of Francia, that had he propounded the question of Hazael, "Is thy servant a dog, that he should do this thing?" they could have answered in the affirmative.

But what was the actual condition of the country at the time? Was Paraguay in so miserable a condition as Francia represented, and was Asuncion so like Sodom or Gomorrah as Carlyle would have us believe when his hero angel stepped forward to rescue it, and avert from it the flames of consuming heaven? An extract from Robertson, though only a chance and rambling description of a day's festivities, will convey a very clear idea of the condition of the people and the liberty then enjoyed.

At the time of Robertson's residence in Paraguay, there lived at a distance of some two leagues from the capital an old woman having a large estate, who took a great fancy to the young Scotchman and offered him her country-house, putting at his service her horses, her cooks, grooms, and everything that he could possibly require in the way of eating and drinking that could be obtained in Paraguay. This strange character was very rich for a Paraguayan dame, and had some designs on the heart and hand of our ungallant

author, who thus describes her: "The old lady was eighty-four years of age; rich, hale, healthy, vigorous, and active; and she was in the habit of riding to Asuncion from her country-house and back again three times a week. Though a wrinkled skeleton and brown as an Egyptian mummy, she was erect; she did not totter at all; and her utterance, even in Spanish, was clear, unbroken, and distinct. Her name was Doña Juana Ysquibel."

This gay and amorous damsel having made some advances towards the Scotch youth of twenty-one, even at that age beginning to take lessons on the guitar on his account, was very properly told not to make a fool of herself. At this rejection of "her hand and fortune," the enraged woman broke out in furious ejaculations and reproaches, and Robertson concluded that on the following morning he would change his domicile. But the morning brought to the mind of the disappointed Doña Juana the reflection that her guest, Don Juan, was in the right, and had given very good advice, and she sought an interview with him to prevent, what she had foreseen might happen, his departure from her house. Don Juan promised to stay on condition that he was to supply his own wants and should hear no more of her love and music. To make the reconciliation complete, however, Doña Juana insisted on celebrating the day of their common saint, St. John, by giving a grand entertainment at her house in Campo Grande to all the aristocracy of Asuncion. To this Don Juan assented, on the condition that it was to be at his own expense, and the two set off for the capital in order to give out the invitations. The youth of twenty-one and the dame of eighty-four, each well mounted and each accompanied by a servant riding in the rear, proceeded towards the town, calling, in their circuit, at the houses of the better class of the people, bidding them come to the feast. The social distinctions there were not clearly marked, and before they had gone the rounds of the town a large number of people had been invited to the festivities. It was intended to be, however, a very fashionable and aristocratic affair. All the mem-

bers of the government were invited, and all the officials of any rank or note in the vicinity. The priests were invited as a matter of course; the officers of the barracks, the old ex-Governor, General Velasco, and farmers, merchants, and shop-keepers, all were bid to come and help celebrate the festival given in honor of the saint of Don Juan and Doña Juana. The next thing was to make the necessary preparations for so grand a celebration; and the assistance of several of the neighbors was called in, and ample provision was made that none who came should depart dissatisfied with their entertainment. To quote the words of Robertson:—

“The natal day of Saint John dawned auspicious on Ytapúa. The most sumptuous and abundant arrangements were made by Doña Juana, as well in honor of her saint as for the good cheer of her guests. These amounted to about two hundred, and embraced all grades, from the members of the government down to the shop-keepers of Asuncion. Doña Juana’s first care was to decorate with uncommon splendor a large image of Saint John the Evangelist, which, in a costly crystal box, she preserved as the chief ornament of her principal *sala*, or drawing-room. He was painted anew and regilt; he had a black velvet robe purchased for him and trimmed with deep gold lace. Hovering over him was a cherub; and with more historical propriety than I should have expected from a Roman Catholic artist in Paraguay, there were thrown up behind the saint some artificial rocks, moss, and trees, meant to represent the Isle of Patmos, in which he wrote the Apocalypse. Every friend of Doña Juana had lent some part of her jewelry for the decoration of the holy man. Rings sparkled on his fingers, collars hung around his neck, a tiara graced his venerable brow, the lacings of his sandals were set with pearls, a precious girdle bound his slender waist; and six large wax candles were lighted up at the shrine. There, imbosomed in fragrant evergreens,—the orange, the lime, the acacia,—stood the favorite saint, destined to receive the first homage of every guest that should arrive. The orange-groves on either side of the house were festooned with variegated lamps ready to be lighted. The tables were laid out by the best confectioners in Asuncion; the old Governor’s cooks were hired for the occasion, and every one was requested to bring as many of his own domestics as he could.”

All being arranged, Doña Juana awaited the arrival of her guests ; and as it was about sundown there was a general setting forth of the invited guests, some on horses, some on mules or donkeys, and some in carts and carriages. The straggling procession had at their head a company of Franciscan friars, preceded by the band of music from their own monastery. The friars, though clothed according to the rules of their order to show their humility, rode on fine, well-groomed horses, richly caparisoned, and in this way they indulged the pride which was in their hearts, though conforming to the rules of their order. They were followed by the Dominicans and Recolletanos, and all approached, uncovered, and knelt before the image of the saint, and then reverently retired.

“The priests were followed by the wives of the members of the Junta, who came in the state carriage, a lumbering old wagon nearly a hundred years old. They were escorted by their husbands, mounted on horseback and dressed in ball-room costume. Their heavy sabres dangled by their sides ; yet they were clothed in short knee-breeches and silk stockings, while their horses, trained for such special occasions to dance, moved on by the side of the carriage that dragged its ponderous weight through ruts of sand often eight and ten inches deep. This party was succeeded by Don Gregorio de la Cerda and twelve or fourteen of his comadres. The latter were in caravans, with awnings over them, and mattresses under the ladies to break the shock of the constant jolting of the clumsy wagon. They were drawn each by four oxen, and moved at the rate of two miles an hour. Then six out of the twelve comadres had infants with them. Don Gregorio (their guardian angel) was mounted on a superb white horse, caparisoned after the highest style of Spanish luxury and antiquity, and he had one favorite godson before and another behind him. No man was ever so rich in godchildren as Don Gregorio, and therefore no man was so potent. If a man wishes to become, in that country, a first-rate character, let him lay himself out to become a general godfather. After Don Gregorio came groups of officers in full dress, escorting each on horseback his favorite dulcinea. In many cases the lady rode on a pillion behind her dragoon, and not a few palfreys were mounted by two Paraguayan sylphs, escorted by their favorite *paysitos*, or young country beaux.

In poured the *tenderos*, or shopkeepers, in all their finery of upstart wealth and vulgarity; in came Dr. Burgos, powdered and pomatumed and frizzled from top to toe; in came the merchants, full of 'wise saws and modern instances'; and finally in came the late gentlemanlike, modest, and dignified Spanish Governor, General Velasco. He was attended simply by his butler and *valet-de-chambre* (for the faithful man served him in both capacities) and a groom.

"All his power was gone; his honors were laid in the dust; there were his rivals revelling in those attributes and distinctions which but a few months ago were exclusively his own; and yet not a frown not a symptom of jealousy or mortified pride clouded his brow. Good man, how little he deserved the awful fate which at a subsequent period overtook him during Francia's indiscriminating and unrelenting reign of terror!

"By the time the whole party was assembled, the shades of evening were beginning to throw their sombre hues over the scene of the lawn. The sun set in great splendor, and the moon rose in equal brightness. What added greatly to the romantic simplicity of the scene was, that, ever and anon, little groups of Paraguayan peasantry, uninvited, except by the report they had heard of the rejoicings that were to take place at Doña Juana's, came through the valley in different directions. They were escorted by one or two *guitarreros* (players on the guitar), who accompanied themselves on that instrument to some plaintive *triste*, or national ballad. As they emerged from behind the copses, or came out from the surrounding dark woods, in their white dresses, they looked in the distance like inhabitants of another world; and as their simple and harmonious music came undulating from different quarters upon the breeze, one might have fancied it a choral contribution of the shepherds of Arcadia.

"Very different were the revels within and immediately around the dwelling of Doña Juana. Some were dancing on the lawn, some in the saloons; some were cracking jokes amid peals of laughter loud and long; here was a party of friars busy at *malilla* (or whist), and there another rejoicing in the pleasures of the tempting wines and viands which were spread out for all. A few of the more bold of the holy fathers were winding through the mazes of the dance. They were distinguishable chiefly by their bulk from their fair partners, both being clad in petticoats.

“Here was a personage named Bedoya, nearly seven feet high, and with latitudinal amplitude much more than proportioned to his longitudinal dimensions. Still he was dancing with no small glee, and perspiring with no little profusion. The members of the government threw off all restraint, and danced, drank, and smoked cigars just like the rest of their subjects. Up got Doña Juana, in her eighty-fourth year, and danced a *sarandig*, or heel-dance; swains with their nymphs crowded the orange-grove, and each there wooed ‘his ain kind dearie.’ The servants collected in groups round the fires lit in the groves for their cooking purposes; every little singing company, as it came up, was accommodated with room, and entertained with good cheer; defiance seemed to be bidden to the ills of life; and, uncouth as was the music of the church choirs, and vociferous as was the din of the guests, yet the whole scene had an air thrown over it of abundance, simplicity, and cordial hilarity, which I shall not soon forget.

“Both the light and the music of the revels must have reached Dr. Francia’s cottage; and at this very time he was planning those schemes which have since been carried into execution, and have at once hushed hilarity and extinguished the light of liberty.

“The old Spanish Governor, Velasco, observed to me with remarkable and foreboding emphasis: ‘Ah, Mr. Robertson, I am afraid this is the last scene of festivity we shall ever see in Paraguay!’

“At length the envious day broke in upon our revelries. The ladies began to look very wan, and the candles and lamps to grow very dim. The lungs of the musicians were exhausted; some of the friars had lost their money at cards, and many of the guests their wits over their wine. Mothers looked after their daughters, servants after their carriages and carts. Many husbands were, by their wives, caught napping, but all were obliged to obey orders. They ran into the paddock to catch their horses, and afterwards busied themselves in saddling them. Warm coffee and chocolate were handed round; servants bustled and equipages started; troops of hallooing horsemen took the road; off went the friars, and off with them the musicians. By nine o’clock in the morning there was nothing left to behold but the vestiges of the gayety of the night past.”

Certainly this is not an unpleasant picture of domestic life. It does not indeed present a very high order of refinement

or morality, but in all that for which the government was responsible it appears to have been unobjectionable. The people were happy and contented; they had freedom of thought and expression, and from the highest to the lowest were permitted without question the inalienable rights of "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." If the morals were easy and the habits careless and unthrifty, it was not for the temporal power to correct them. The province of government is to give security of life and property, not to enforce sumptuary laws nor interfere with personal liberty so long as it does not offend public decency or the rights of others. If the standard of morality was low, it was the spiritual guides and teachers against whom this charge should be brought, not against the civil government whose functions are, or should be, limited to matters of material polity, leaving all questions of faith and ethics to private judgment. But not "to consider too curiously" the question of morality, it must be admitted that the Paraguayans were a happy people. There existed that freedom from constraint and that simplicity calculated to entice the romantic adventurers of all countries to emigrate thither; and the future of Paraguay, when the Spanish dominion was once thrown off, was full of promise. Yet this was the time when, according to Carlyle, "there occurred fatuities, mismanagements innumerable; then discontents, open grumblings, and, as a running accompaniment, intrigues, caballings, outings, innings; till the Government House, fouler than when the Jesuits had it, became a bottomless, pestilent inanity, insupportable articulate-speaking soul." Indeed, so corrupt was everything, according to our reviewer, that the one just man in Paraguay, the only hater of shams, the only man "who would do himself an injury to do a just or true thing under the sun," had left the government Junta with his moral sense shocked and disgusted. It was during this retirement that the *fête champêtre* of Doña Juana took place.

The signal for the return of Francia to become a second time a member of the Junta was the nomination, by the government of Buenos Aires, of Don Nicholas Herrera as diplo-

matic agent to proceed to Paraguay for the purpose of making a treaty of commerce and comity between the two nations. When the news of this nomination reached Asuncion, there was great consternation in the Junta and little less among the revolutionists generally. Francia busied himself by magnifying the importance of the impending negotiation, and labored to create a suspicion that the Porteños, having failed to subject Paraguay to her dominion by force of arms, was now seeking by diplomacy to accomplish the same thing. The public anxiety was naturally excited, and even of those who hated Francia, most admitted that he was more competent to treat with the coming envoy than any member of the Junta, or than any other Paraguayan. The old Governor Velasco was fully competent, and had the entire confidence of the people; but he was a Spaniard, and had been opposed to the revolution, and so it was with all the other Spaniards of wealth, education, or influence. The other members of the Junta, Yegros, Caballero, Bogarin, and Mora, felt their own incompetency, and they knew that their asesor, La Cerda, great as he was at managing neighborhood difficulties, competent as he was to demolish Vattel, and popular as he might be as godfather to all their children, the making of a treaty with a foreign power was not within the range of his peculiar talents. Francia was accordingly recalled to the Junta with the general acquiescence. In the mean while and during his retirement, he had managed to gain over to his support the officers in immediate command of the troops, and with them at his beck the real power was almost absolutely in his own hands. On his return, therefore, he did not come in as a member, but as director or ruler of the Junta. La Cerda was dismissed contemptuously, and Francia took the post of asesor. Mora was also dismissed, and, more fortunate than La Cerda, he was allowed to live for a while in the country. This, it should be borne in mind, was as early as 1813, and before there had ever been any hostile attempt against Francia either personally or politically. The date is important as showing that the excuses which have been made for Francia's cruelties were based

on erroneous statements of facts. It has often been alleged that he had been driven to these severities by the repeated attempts on his life. As has been shown, the only outbreak since the revolution was a trick of his own to ensnare the unwary and find an excuse for murdering them; yet almost his first act after coming again into power was to order the arrest of La Cerda, and decree his banishment from the country within eight days. Of him says Robertson: "The universal compadre, the zealous friend, the powerful patron of almost all the principal people in Asuncion, they one and all deserted him, not, certainly, because in his misfortune they esteemed him less, but because they esteemed their own safety more. Such were the fears which they had already begun to entertain of the ruthless and jealous temper of the restored member of the Junta, Francia." When Robertson, who at that time was treated with familiarity and confidence by Francia, ventured with more fidelity and courage than discretion to speak to the asesor in behalf of his friend, who to do him a favor had demolished Vattel, he was answered thus: "I think it proper to send him out of the way, because he had the impudence, on my leaving the government, to take the assessorship of it, knowing I both hated and despised him." This in 1813, and Francia lived till 1840, and each year, as resistance became more hopeless, his tyranny became more severe, his acts more cruel.

The colleagues of Francia in the Junta did not venture to oppose him, as they well knew that the military were debauched, and that the officers in authority were ready to execute any order of the asesor. In fact, Francia was already absolute, though as yet feeling insecure in his position, and fearing lest too arbitrary measures should produce a reaction against him. The chains for the people were already forged. His next measure was to compel them to fix them irremovably on their own limbs. The means adopted to effect this was to convoke a Congress, and by intrigue and threats pass such measures as would be suicidal to individual liberty. Instructions were accordingly issued, soon after Francia's return to

power, for the inhabitants of the different districts to send deputies to the Congress that was to decide on the important measure of a treaty of commerce and amity with Buenos Aires. Francia had long been preparing for the time when a Congress should be called, and now he took good care that the members sent from the different districts should be entirely at his control. As for the town members, he cared little whether they were friends or enemies, as he was sure to have a majority sufficient to overcome all opposition. In some cases his declared enemies were named members of this Congress for the very purpose of impaling them by their own acts. Let them vote against Francia or any of his proposed measures, they knew the awful fate that awaited them; let them vote for him, and they would be committed to his policy.

The envoy from Buenos Aires, Don Nicholas Herrera, in due time arrived. His reception was similar to what a hawk might receive on alighting in a farm-yard full of poultry. People had already learned to be in mortal fear of Francia, and it was well known that he disapproved the idea of a treaty, and that whoever should show courtesy or hospitality to Señor Herrera would do so at his peril. The Minister is soon aware that he is an unwelcome guest. He is given inferior accommodations, and finds himself watched and followed at every step. He hears rumors of personal danger, and it is more than a week before he can get an interview with any member of the Junta.

In the mean while the time arrived that had been named for the meeting of the Congress. The deputies came in from all parts. Francia now became the prince of hosts, the most polite gentleman, the most attentive friend. He told them all that affairs were to be administered in a different way from formerly. The shop-keeper was to have greater ease and freedom in obtaining his wares from abroad, and in exporting the produce of the country; the more wealthy *estanciero* was told that he was a man of great importance, and thenceforth should have a voice in the government; the Indian *alcalde* was promised whatever he might chance most to want. In

this way Francia conciliated the country deputies so that they were prepared to do the only work he had for them, and that was to rivet the fetters he had prepared for their own limbs, at the same time that they might be flattered into the belief that they were in reality the governing power.

The manner of convoking congresses in Paraguay from that time to the present has been somewhat different from what it is in the United States. The local officials in the different districts, or *partidos*, hold their authority direct from the supreme government at Asuncion, and they are bidden to send such and such men to the capital to attend the Congress. In these later years they pretended to go through a kind of election, but the names announced by the local judge, *juez*, and the chief of police, or *gefefe*, are always unanimously returned. In Francia's time, however, the persons whose presence was desired at the Congress were called directly, and they dared not disobey the summons. This first Congress called by Francia consisted of about two hundred members. The large majority was from the country, and, from the appearance they made on their arrival in the capital it is believed that they had not been selected because of any superior ability as debaters or statesmen. In fact, they knew no more of the duties of a congressman than they did of the differential calculus. They were a motley set of Indian caciques, half-breeds, boatmen, country farmers, and village shop-keepers. The Indian thus honored would be the head man of an Indian village, who, holding a sort of commission from the central government, and acting in concert with a couple of friars, had authority over the natives. He would have all the Indian's love of finery and gaudy display, united to the formality and gravity of a Spanish hidalgo. Draped with ribbons and tinsel, borrowed probably from the priests for the solemn occasion, he would ride through the town, attended by two servants, in a dress like that worn before the first sin of Adam. Before leaving home they had all been made to understand that the great potentate before whom they were to appear was the Carai (*Lora*) Francia. On reaching the

capital, therefore, each one would approach the Government House, before which there was, and is, a fine lawn, and pay his respects to the lean, scowling figure standing in the veranda to receive his homage by making his horse perform sundry tricks, after which he would solemnly file off and withdraw to make room for another deputy, who, though a landed proprietor, or shop-keeper, or *vaqueano* (herdsman) would go through a form of salutation as grotesque and absurd. In these exercises, which were repeated every day for weeks, the deputies thought they were fulfilling their duties as statesmen, overweighted by their responsibilities. But as the day for the opening of the Congress was postponed for two months after the arrival of the deputies, they got tired of the labors and honors of public life, and wanted to close up their official duties and return, the Indian to his village of mud-huts, the farmer to look to his crops, the *vaqueano* to his herds, and the shop-keeper to his store. They received no pay for their services, and the delay in opening the Congress was prolonged purposely by Francia, in order that the money they had brought with them should get exhausted, and the country members should become so tired of the city, and so eager to get home, that, when it should finally meet, they would ask no questions, but vote through everything submitted without hesitation or question.

During this time that the members were waiting in the capital till it should please Francia to open the Congress, they had been duly indoctrinated with a wholesome dread of any connection with Buenos Aires ; and when at last the day arrived, and they were summoned to attend the august assemblage, the question of the treaty was the first submitted to their consideration, and of course the measure was rejected. To consider that subject had been the ostensible motive in calling the Congress together, but Francia, finding it so plastic in his hands, proposed a measure of reform in the government that completely changed its character. This was to abolish the old Junta of five, and substitute for it two consuls, himself and Yegros, with joint and equal power, who were to be the

government for the following year. This measure was sprung upon the Congress, and passed almost before any one but its contriver was aware of its meaning and purport. Francia was named the First Consul, and Yegros the Second. The selection of Yegros had been made for two reasons: first, he was popular with the people, and especially with the soldiers; and, second, he was ignorant and vain, and Francia was well aware that, by proposing him as his colleague, he would at the same time conciliate the people, while in no respect would his own power be divided.

These two measures having been acted on, the Congress was instantly dissolved, and the members, having seen "how absolute the knave was," were glad to escape from the city and return to their homes, fully satisfied with congressional honors.

Having attained all but absolute power, Francia set himself to improving the machinery of government, and doubtless effected some much-needed reforms. Routine, circumlocution, and delays had long been felt to be grievous evils in all matters of official administration, and it was well understood that justice was of that kind which could be had for a consideration. These abuses of subordinate officials who corruptly assumed power and responsibility were entirely inconsistent with Francia's plan of being absolute in everything. The abuses were stopped. The corrupt officials were degraded, and laziness and procrastination were no longer tolerated. Francia required prompt returns to him of everything that had been done by every petty official. Only by having everything quickly brought to his attention could he know and direct all.

The system of espionage that he had been gradually extending for years and while he was in retirement was now brought to a degree of perfection never known before. It was so thorough that people soon began to find that their most insignificant acts were known, and that opinions expressed the most confidentially, or, as they thought, not expressed at all, had reached the ears of the First Consul.

People might well think the theodolite had marvellous powers.

He now began that mode of life that he never varied till his death, twenty-seven years later. He personally attended to everything, without trusting to any one more than the dry, mechanical details, and all these were carefully inspected by an eye that gleamed with joy whenever it found an error, as it promised a feast of torture. Though no beadle of a parish workhouse was ever more inquisitive after the fragments, or more jealous of his power and the dignity due to his position, yet he was anxious to be regarded as the head of a government having its different departments and bureaus, each having its proper and independent duties. He would speak of "my government," "my people," "my army," "my marine," with all the pompous dignity of a speech from the throne of England. The following extract from Robertson, however, will show how well this dignity was kept up, and that while nature made Francia so ill that he was the worst possible ruler of a nation, he would have been stupendous as the governor of a poorhouse or as warden of a prison. Says Robertson:—

"Meantime my intercourse with the Consul not only continued, but increased. I had frequent citations to attend him at the Government House, or, as it was officially styled, Palace. Our interviews were always in the evening, and were sometimes protracted till eleven o'clock. Francia's greatest pleasure consisted in talking about the 'War Department'; and he would go into the most absurd minutiae with a positively childish delight. On one occasion the gunsmith came in with three or four old muskets repaired. Francia held them up one by one to his shoulder, and pointing them, as in the act of firing, drew the trigger. When the flint struck good fire, the Consul was charmed, and said to me, 'What do you think, Mr. Robertson, will my muskets carry a ball to the heart of my enemies?' Next, the master tailor presented himself with a tight fit for a grenadier recruit. The man for whom the coat was made being ordered in, and stripped to try it on, got at length, after some very awkward attempts, his arms into it. The fit was not a very soldier-like one in my eyes; for I thought the high waist and the

short, the very short, tails of Francia's grenadier coat rather uncouth. Still it was a fit according to the Consul's fancy, and he praised the tailor, and told the soldier to mind how he ever got a stain or *mancha* upon it. Last of all came in two sturdy mulattoes, one with a grenadier's bearskin cap, and another with brown belts and cartouch-box. They were all fitted on the martyr of a soldier, into whose hands finally Francia put one of the muskets. He then said, 'There, Mr. Robertson, this is the style in which every one of my grenadiers shall be equipped.' Such exhibitions as these were of frequent occurrence, and they always elicited glee and good-humor from Francia. His grenadier company was his great hobby; and I never saw a little girl dress out her doll with more self-importance and delight than did Francia, with his own hands, dress and fit out each individual grenadier of his guard."

What a hero for the great hero-worshipper! "Thou lonely Francia!"

CHAPTER XIII.

The Joint Consulship. — Francia's Views and Aspirations in Regard to an Alliance with Great Britain. — His Ignorance of European Affairs. — Perfects his System of Espionage. — Arbitrary Measures. — Decree concerning Marriages. — Its Influence upon the Morals of the Country. — Francia becomes the Head of the Church. — A Vicar-General appointed to administer the Spiritual Affairs of the Country. — Another Congress called. — The Consulship abolished. — Francia made Dictator. — Personal Habits of the Dictator, Mode of Life, Treatment of his Subordinates, Personal Appearance, Grotesque Costume, Vanity, and Egotism. — Military Displays.

THE joint consulship lasted but a year, when it expired by limitation. While it lasted, Francia directed and controlled everything as much as though he had been sole consul. But as Yegros desired to have some appearance of authority, it was arranged that orders should come nominally from him for the first three months, then from Francia for three months, then again for another quarter from Yegros, and the last three months from Francia. To give an idea of the united wisdom possessed by the two consuls, the following anecdotes from Robertson will suffice: —

“We had received letters from Buenos Aires, and were giving the consuls the latest news from Europe. We mentioned, among other things, that the Emperor Alexander had joined the general alliance against Napoleon, and that several vessels loaded with arms and munitions of war had been despatched from England to Russia. ‘*Malhaya!*’ said Yegros, after considering awhile, — ‘*Malhaya so-plara un viento sur largo y recio que trajese todos estos buques aguas arriba!*’ — ‘O that a long and strong south-wind would blow, and force all these vessels up the river.’ Yegros fancied that if the south-wind blew long enough it would force every vessel bound for the Baltic up the Paraguay and into the port of Asuncion. ‘Just consider,’ said Francia, after his compañero, as he called him, was

gone, 'if such an animal, such a fool as that, be capable of governing a republic!'"

Certainly this does not show Yegros to have been a geographer like Humboldt or Malte Brun. But his ignorance was shared by almost the entire people, and to this day nine tenths of the people of Paraguay imagine that all the countries of Europe and North America are situated *aquas abajo*, down river, and there are few who can tell whether London is in England or England in London, whether Europe is in North America or North America in Europe. They have heard the names of these countries, but have no other idea of where they are than that all who come from them come up the river. Francia, having been educated at a university, could hardly be so ignorant as that, but the following anecdote will show that his general knowledge was but little superior to that of his colleague.

The business of Robertson required his presence in Buenos Aires, and he also desired to return for a brief period to England. The port of Asuncion, however, was closed against all egress, and only by special favor of Francia could he get permission to leave the country. This he succeeded in obtaining, as the Consul had reasons of his own for wishing him to go to England. When he was about ready to start, Francia one day summoned him to his presence, and what happened afterwards I give as related by him:—

"On arrival at the Palace I was received with more than ordinary kindness and affability by the Consul. His countenance was lit up into an expression that almost approached to that of glee; his scarlet cloak depended in graceful folds from his shoulder; he seemed to smoke his cigars with unusual relish; and quite in opposition to his usual rule of burning only one light in his small and humble audience chamber, there blazed in it on that evening two of the best mould candles. Shaking hands with me very cordially, 'Sit down, Don Juan,' said he. He then drew his chair close to mine, and desired I would listen very attentively to what he had to say. He addressed me thus:—

"'You know what my policy has been with respect to Paraguay;

that I have kept it on a system of non-intercourse with the other provinces of South America, and from contamination by that foul and restless spirit of anarchy and revolution which has more or less desolated and disgraced them all. Paraguay is in a more flourishing state now than any of the countries around it ; and while here all is order, subordination, and tranquillity, the moment you pass its boundary the sound of the cannon and the din of civil discord salute your ears. As may naturally be anticipated, these internal broils paralyze industry, and chase prosperity from the land. Now, whence arises all this? Why, from the fact that there is not a man in South America but myself who understands the character of the people, or is able to govern them. The outcry is for free institutions ; but personal aggrandizement and public spoliation are the objects alone sought. The natives of Buenos Aires are the most fickle, vain, volatile, and profligate of the whole of Spain's late dominions in this hemisphere ; and therefore I am resolved to have nothing to do with the Porteños. My wish is to promote an intercourse with England direct ; so that whatever feuds may distract the other states, and whatever impediments they may choose to throw in the way of commerce and navigation, those states shall themselves be the sole sufferers. The ships of Great Britain, triumphantly sweeping the Atlantic, will penetrate to Paraguay, and, in union with our flotillas, will bid defiance to all interruption of commerce from the mouth of the Plate to the Lake Jarayes. Your government will have its minister here, and I shall have mine at the Court of St. James. Your countrymen shall traffic in manufactures and munitions of war, and shall receive in exchange the noble products of this country.'

"At this point of his oration the Consul rose with great emotion, but evident delight, from his chair, and calling to the sentinel at the door, desired him to order in the serjeant of the guard. On appearance of this person the Doctor gave him a significant and peremptory look, and told him emphatically to bring 'that.' The serjeant withdrew, and in less than three minutes returned with four grenadiers at his back, bearing, to my astonishment, among them, a large hide package of tobacco of two hundred weight, a bale of Paraguay tea of similar dimensions and exterior, a demijohn of Paraguay spirits, a long loaf of sugar, and several bundles of cigars, tied and ornamented with variegated fillets. Last of all came an

old negress with some beautiful specimens of embroidered cloth made from Paraguay cotton, and used there by the luxurious as hand-towels and shaving-cloths.

“I thought this very kind and considerate ; for though I could not but wonder at the somewhat barbarian ostentation in the mode of making the present, yet I never doubted that the accumulated native productions, now arranged in order before me, were intended as a parting manifestation of the Consul’s regard. Judge, then, of my surprise (you will see it cannot bear the name of disappointment) when, after ordering his soldiers and the negress out of the room with a *vayanse* (begone), he broke forth in the following strain :—

“ ‘Señor Don Juan, these are but a few specimens of the rich productions of this soil, and of the industry and ingenuity of its inhabitants. I have taken some pains to furnish you with the best samples which the country affords of the different articles in their respective kinds, and for these reasons : You are now going to England ; you know what a country this is, and what a man I am. You know to what an unlimited extent these productions can be reared in this paradise, I may call it, of the world. Now, without entering upon the discussion as to whether this continent is ripe for popular institutions (you know I think it is not), it cannot be denied that, in an old and civilized country like Britain, where these institutions have gradually and practically (not theoretically) superseded forms of government originally feudal till they have forced themselves upon legislative notice in a ratio proportioned to the growing education of the majority, they are those best adapted to secure the greatness and stability of a nation. And that England is a great nation, and that its people are knit together as one man upon all questions of momentous national concern, is undeniable.

“ ‘Now, I desire that, as soon as you get to London, you will present yourself to the House of Commons, take with you these samples of the productions of Paraguay, request an audience at the bar ; inform the assembly that you are deputed by Don Gaspar Rodriguez de Francia, Consul of the Republic of Paraguay, to lay before it these specimens of the rich productions of that country. Tell them I have authorized you to say that I invite England to a political and commercial intercourse with me ; and that I am ready and anxious to receive in my capital, and with all the deference due to diplo-

matic intercourse between civilized states, a minister from the Court of St. James ; I also will appoint to that Court an envoy of my own.

“ ‘Such a treaty of commerce and political alliance may then be framed as shall comport at once with the dignity and interests of the great empire of England, and with those of the rising state which I now rule. Paraguay will be the first republic of South America, as Great Britain is already the first of European nations. The alliance seems, therefore, natural ; and how beneficial for the European state, you, Señor Don Juan, can fully elucidate and explain.’

“ ‘Such were the terms, and almost the words, in which Francia delivered himself of his views and aspirations in reference to an alliance with Great Britain. I stood, as you may imagine, aghast, at the idea of being appointed a minister plenipotentiary, not to the Court of St. James, but to the House of Commons. I was charged especially not to take a private interview with the head of the executive. ‘For,’ said Francia, ‘I know well how apt great men in England are, unless under the fear of responsibility to the House of Commons, to treat questions even so important as this with levity or disregard.

“ ‘Present yourself,’ continued he, ‘at the bar of the House, and there deliver my message, as of old the ambassadors of independent states delivered theirs to the senate of Rome. According to the reception which they shall give to you, one of their countrymen, and above the suspicion, therefore, of being a witness in my favor, shall be the reception (*acogimiento*) which I will extend to their ambassador to this republic.’

“ ‘Never in my life was I more puzzled how to act or what to say. To refuse the Quixotic mission, and thus incur at once the Consul’s displeasure and draw down upon my own devoted head the ruinous consequences of it, was an alternative too horrible to be thought of. The only other was to acquiesce ; and to this I came, in spite of the strong sense of the ludicrous which pressed itself upon me, as I drew a picture of myself forcing my way to the bar of the House of Commons ; overpowering, with half a dozen porters, the Usher of the Black Rod, and delivering, in spite of remonstrance and resistance, at once my hide-bound bales of Paraguay merchandise, and the oration, verbatim, of the First Consul. But Assumption was a great distance from St. Stephen’s. I therefore bowed assent to Dr. Francia’s proposition, and trusted to the chapter of accidents

for providing me, when the time should come, with a suitable apology for having been unable to get into the predicament which he had so graciously prepared for me.

“Having taken leave, the sergeant and grenadiers, heavily laden, followed me home, where I not a little astonished the new-comer, my brother, with the account of the diplomatic interview to which I had been called. I bade defiance to his scepticism on the subject, by making the soldiers unload at his feet the ponderous physical evidence by which I sustained the truth of my tale.

“At a subsequent interview, Francia made out a long list of commissions for me to execute. I was to bring him gold lace, a cocked hat, a dress sword, a pair of double-barrelled pistols, sashes, sabres, soldiers’ caps, musical and mathematical instruments, with a very protracted detail of *et ceteras*. About the procuring of these, however, I had by no means so many misgivings as in regard to my power of persuading Mr. Speaker and the House of Commons to accede to the political and commercial league of which the Consul was so full.

“Thus did matters stand. I was to sail in a fortnight, with an exclusive license for the exportation of my property and person, and upon an understanding that, if I proceeded home, I should do there my endeavors to bring about an intercourse between England and Paraguay, which I was about as likely to effect as a junction between any two of the planets the most remote from each other in our system.

“A circumstance occurred, during our interview, curiously illustrative of the growing despotism, the abrupt manner, and rude disregard of propriety which Francia was taking daily less pains to conceal, whenever his capricious humor was at variance with anything said or done by those around him. The question with him was not how unconsciously offence might be given : it was enough that it was taken. He stopped not to inquire whether it was the result of ignorance, or even of well-meant deference and assiduity. His irritable and jaundiced temper sought, at the moment, something on which to vent its spleen ; and the innocent and guilty were alike immolated at the shrine of his caprice. In the instance referred to, while Francia was dilating to me upon his prospective alliance with Great Britain, the sentry announced as being in the lobby the Minister of Finance. This office was then united with that

of Director of Customs, though the double functionary was no better than a subordinate clerk of the Consul. It was the duty and the daily practice of the financial minister to be in attendance, at a certain hour, in the lobby of the haughty Doctor, at once to give an account of the transactions of the day and to take instructions for to-morrow. The hour of this accustomed interview was now occupied by Francia in the opening up to me of day-dream projects, much more fraught with importance to him than the routine account of a day's receipt and expenditure of the treasury, albeit, on ordinary occasions, this was exacted, to the last maravedi, with scrupulous and inquisitorial severity.

“‘*El Señor Tesorero aguarda,*’—‘Mr. Treasurer waits,’ said the sentinel. ‘*Que aguarde,*’—‘Let him wait,’ replied the Consul. Two hours did the Consul’s harangue to me and subsequent explanations occupy; and when, at the close of it, he saw me off, escorted by the grenadiers with the tobacco and yerba bales on their shoulders, the treasurer was still pacing up and down the corridor of the Palace, and waiting, as he had been ordered to do, his master’s further commands. Upon seeing Francia come out, the Minister of Finance went up to him, and, most respectfully taking off his hat, asked him if he were that night to give in his accounts. ‘Take him to the guard-house,’ said the supercilious despot. ‘Did I not tell the fellow (*el bribóor*) to wait? and now he must needs ask questions.’

“Off was the Chancellor of the Exchequer marched to the guard-house, and there, on a bullock’s raw hide, in company with the soldiers, was he constrained to ruminate all night on the danger of breaking in upon the Consul’s associations, even for the purpose of rendering an account of his stewardship.”

The cannie Scotchman prized his life and liberty too highly to tell the Consul to his face how ridiculous was the mission on which he proposed to send him. That he did not tell him so at the time and march off to prison immediately afterwards, to be shot at the tyrant’s convenience, instead of seeming to acquiesce and thus save his life to write and publish his recollections of Francia’s atrocities, seems greatly to have surprised the hero-worshipper. “A man who said he would do, and then did not do, was at no time a man admirable to Francia.” *

* Carlyle’s Essay on Francia, Foreign Quarterly Review.

During the year of the consulship, Francia worked incessantly to perfect his system of espionage. He was insidiously working through the lowest and vilest agents to find out family secrets, to learn from the servants if they had ever overheard anything to his disparagement. He was then preparing for his great work of vengeance. But as if to provoke inimical expressions he resorted to a measure the most revolting and humiliating to the old Spanish families that could possibly be devised. This was the publication of a decree prohibiting all Spaniards from contracting marriage except with negresses or mulattoes. This bitter insult proclaimed through the town by a crier, accompanied by a drum and fife, was felt not only to be shamefully degrading, but it blighted the hopes of many who were looking forward to a life of virtue. It was the more galling from the superiority that the Spaniards had always assumed over the creoles. The native Spaniards, not only in Paraguay, but throughout all South America, even though they were but tinkers, cobblers, or rag-pickers at home, considered that they were doing honor to any part of South America in which they should condescend to reside, and that the richest and oldest families must needs be flattered by their attentions. This conceit Francia took as a direct insult to himself, for was he not a native of the country?

The effect of this cruel insult was such as might have been expected and was doubtless intended. It not only humbled the Spaniards, so that those who had been accustomed to boast their *sangré azul* might well envy the native-born Paraguayans, even those having a shade of the Indian tint, but it prevented marriage and encouraged licentiousness. Persons previously engaged, finding they could never marry, adopted the practice of illicit cohabitation, and as the proudest and most intelligent were among the first to set the example, it soon ceased to be a scandal, or illegitimacy a reproach. Even before Francia's time the morals of the people were extremely slack. The influence of the Jesuits in this respect had been entirely and wholly bad, as their system encouraged profligacy in their neophytes in the same way as

was lately the custom on the slave plantations of the South. Men and women were made to live together in one case as it pleased the padres, and in the other as it suited the planters, with no respect to family ties or the loves and likings of the persons most interested. After the expulsion of the Jesuits, the influence and example of the priests were equally bad, as they were generally scandalously dissolute, and the coil or cowl was considered but as a covering for a licensed seducer. Their nasal sanctity, under cloak of which they imposed on those who feared their displeasure, gave not only the cynical Francia, but every intelligent person, reason to despise them. But it was not because of their lazy and dissolute lives that he hated them. The morals of the people gave him no concern. But the priests, in spite of their gross sensuality, had great influence, especially among the lower classes, among whom Francia was resolved to be all powerful. A church government like that existing in Paraguay, which exercised authority independent of the civil power, being, as it was, of a secret and inquisitorial character, was inconsistent with his absolute rule, and he destroyed it as ruthlessly as he had destroyed all the other barriers to his despotic sway. He did not object to people confessing to the padres, but the padres must then confess to him all they had heard in the confidence of the confessional. These requirements greatly scandalized the bishop and some of the priests, when Francia made short work of their scruples by taking all the church property into his own hands, degrading and persecuting the bishop till he became insane, and appointing a creature of his own, whom he called the vicar-general, to administer the spiritual affairs of the country. The principal convent, that of San Francisco, was taken for soldiers' barracks, the street processions were suppressed, the assembling in the churches at night was forbidden, and Francia was head of the church within his own dominions.

The joint consulship expired in October, 1814, but before its expiration Francia took good care to have another Congress called, and such a one as he could easily control. This

time the order was given that the Congress should consist of a thousand members, and the different partidos were assessed for the number they must send, in much the same manner as they were required to contribute cattle for the use of the state. The local magistrates holding their authority from Francia, whose word was law with them, made the selections, and when all was ready set out for the capital, driving along their conscripted members of Congress as though they had been recruits for the army or cattle for the shambles. Of the thousand deputies thus favored with office and honors, seven eighths at least were from the country districts; and as they could expect no pay for their services, and money was a very scarce commodity with them, they brought with them such country produce as they had to defray their expenses while serving the state. As on the former occasion, the members were anxious to get through their business as soon as possible and get away. Francia arranged the order of proceedings to his satisfaction at two preliminary meetings, at which his confidential friends had the whole direction. His first object was to get Yegros out of the way, as both he and Caballero were, in spite of all his efforts, still dangerously popular with the rank and file of the troops. The first measure proposed, therefore, was that, instead of two consuls, there should be one chief magistrate, to be called a Dictator.*

The subsequent proceedings are thus described by Robertson:—

“The proceedings were opened by Mr. Speaker about nine o'clock in the morning, and notwithstanding all the precautions which Fran-

* Among the deputies was Francisco La Guardia, who, like Francia, had been educated at the University of Cordova. He had gone thither at the recommendation of Francia, and taken letters from him certifying to his attainments and character. He was absent twelve years, and on his return Francia was the secretary, or asesor, of the first Junta. He was living when I was in Paraguay, and from him I learned many things of Francia and his times. He proposed in the Congress, that the choice of a Dictator, the question of a dictatorship having been already settled, should be decided by lot. Though this proposition was rejected, Francia was greatly displeased with his quondam *protégé*. Yet, strange to say, he survived the Dictator.

cia had taken, some awkward inquiries began to be made about the propriety of a dictatorship. The services and abilities of Francia were spoken of in the highest terms, indeed he was loaded with the most extravagant praises ; but it was doubted whether a dictatorship would conduce so much to his glory as a more limited power, assisted by a national Congress. Hereupon debates commenced and heats ensued. I went up myself to the church about twelve o'clock. The doors were shut, but great confusion seemed to prevail within. At last one of the dimity-jacketed members came out wiping his forehead, and seeming to have suffered much either from the heat of the church or of the debate. 'How go things within, my friend?' said I to the Representative. 'Why,' replied the honest member, 'to tell you the truth, these are matters that I do not pretend at all to understand ; but I judge from the noise that all goes well.'

"About two o'clock, as the members of Congress were still in warm debate, Francia got impatient, and very politely sent a numerous guard of honor to wait on the members. The troop was well armed, and quite surrounded the church. This hint was sufficient even for the clod-pated deputies in dimity jackets ; besides, the dinner-hour was past, and hunger as well as the mustaches of the Quarteleros hastened a decision. At this juncture, one of the most energetic of Francia's partisans rose, and in a stentorian voice called silence. 'Gentlemen,' said he, 'why should we waste our time here? The Carai (Lord) Francia wishes to be absolute, he ought to be absolute, and I say' (here he struck the table at which he stood with his whole force) 'he shall be absolute!' The question was then put to the vote, and without one dissentient voice Francia was invested with the dictatorship for three years. The Congress dissolved itself instantly ; the Quarteleros marched to the Government House with flying colors ; and Francia heard, with the malignant sneer of a devil on his face, that Paraguay was all his own.

"The insensate populace celebrated with mirth and music and festive meetings that night the decision of the Congress. Alas, the low sobs and moanings of those who were destined soon to be bereaved widows and wretched orphans, the heavy sighs of the prisoners, and the groans of those whose blood was erelong to irrigate the streets of Asuncion, ought alone to have announced that Francia was Dictator of Paraguay!"

Nearly fifty years later, the people of Paraguay were called

upon to rejoice at the happy result of another election. A worse than Francia had succeeded to power, — one whose career was to be marked by acts of violence and cruelties compared with which those of Francia were mild and gentle, and they were to cease only when the extermination of the race should leave no more victims to his vengeance. At that time there were no insensate cheers; though the cannon belched forth their salvos, and bands of music played martial and joyful airs, and wine and spirits were freely circulated, there was no popular enthusiasm, no joy on any face. The people seemed to have a premonition of their impending fate, and that the peals of the cannon were but heralding the doom of their extinction as a people!

Though Francia had won over to himself most of the subordinate officers, yet the rank and file of the troops were very much dissatisfied when they found that the new Congress had left their old and favorite general out of the government. So great was the disaffection that an outbreak was feared. But the commandant of the cuartel, Caballero, who had been in the first Junta, had fought with credit against Belgrano, and been one of the most influential promoters of the revolution, though known to be an enemy to Francia, sacrificed his personal feelings and went to the cuartel, and by his personal influence among the troops prevailed upon them to return to duty and accept the new arrangement. This magnanimous act on the part of Caballero was afterwards requited by Francia as he and his imitator Lopez requited everybody that ever did him or the state a service. To deserve well of the state was enough to make a mortal enemy of Francia, and as we go on following his career we shall find the road strewn with the heads of the men who deserved the gratitude of their countrymen.

The motion submitted to the Congress to make Francia Dictator included the two provisions that he should be styled His Excellency and receive the annual salary of nine thousand dollars; but with ostentatious self-denial he refused to receive but a third part of that sum, saying that the state

had more need of the balance than he had. He might as well have refused to accept anything, for the whole revenue of the country was paid directly into his hands, and he confiscated at pleasure the fortunes of everybody, and gave no account to any one of the way in which the money was expended. The income of the country was neither more nor less than Francia's salary; and from that day till the end of the Lopez rule, if any person had ventured to inquire how the public revenue was spent, he would soon have found himself where his complaints would not reach beyond four walls.

And here it seems opportune to speak of the personal habits of the Dictator. His mode of life was always very simple and regular. He cared nothing for good eating or drinking. He seldom took wine, and his meals never consisted of more than two or three very plain dishes. Like all Paraguayans he smoked a great deal. Before he aspired to rule, he was addicted to gambling, and was a gross libertine, whose mind had been so corrupted by indulgence that his tastes led him to seek such intrigues that a half-breed slave would scorn to be his rival. After he attained the supreme power, he gave up gambling and intrigues that might draw attention, never allowing any woman to approach him except his negro domestics. His temperance and frugality in regard to the pleasures of the table have been much commended, as though these were great and extraordinary virtues. His indifference to all his kindred has also been often adduced as evidence of his honesty and disinterestedness. But what if his table expenses, instead of being half a dollar a day, had been fifty times that sum, it would have been as a grain of sand on the sea-shore compared with the hundreds of thousands he was constantly extorting from his miserable people. His own fortune was amply sufficient for all his wants, and that he did not squander the money of the state for what he had no taste or desire for is made a merit by his excusers. It was his only one, and well may they make the most of that. That he never favored any of his blood relations at the expense of the state is in itself to his credit, but Francia

was so intensely selfish, so egotistical, and so indifferent to everything but his own power and person, that he knew no such thing as ties of kindred or natural affection. His nearest relatives he imprisoned or put to death without remorse or compunction, and no one could assign any other reason for it than that he wanted to impress on every one how terribly, unmovably, absolute he was. What merit not to enrich at the expense of the state those whom at the slightest whim he was ready to murder!

Francia, like all tyrants who give way to their cruel propensities, was a great coward, and in constant fear of assassination. From the time that he first became Dictator till the final expulsion of the younger Lopez, conspiracy and assassination were the perpetual dread of the despot in power. They all seemed to realize that they had committed such cruel injustice towards individuals and families, there must necessarily be many who, if the opportunity were offered them, would improve it by ridding themselves of the perpetrator. To guard against any attempt upon his life, the Dictator, in the early days of his power, ordered that every person who happened to be in the street as he passed through it should stand motionless and uncovered, with his arms by his sides and head bowed, until he had gone by. This, however, did not seem to be a sufficient precaution, so that his guards were instructed frequently to cut down with their sabres such people as chanced to be in those streets through which he was to pass. After that, as soon as it was known that he was out, people fled to their houses, shut their doors, and the town, so far as he could see, had the appearance of being entirely deserted. He had several houses in which he was accustomed to sleep, but no one knew until the afternoon before which one he would select for the coming night. His more usual residence was in the old Government House, which is yet standing, though he passed a great deal of his time at the hospital, which was a little out of town, upon an acclivity on which no other buildings were standing. His object in changing so often was supposed to be to defeat any plan of conspiracy

that might possibly have been concocted without his knowledge. The life that a man must lead in this constant fear, with no other reason than that he knows he has given many people good cause for assassinating him at sight, one would suppose to be as wretched as it is possible to endure in this world. Francia, however, passed a life of this kind for nearly thirty years, which could hardly have been possible had he not been conscious, during the last years of his reign, that all hope of escape from his tyranny, and even the natural feelings of resentment, had ceased to exist in the minds of the people, and had he not become aware that whatever he might do would be as passively submitted to as a decree of fate. After the departure of the Swiss doctors, there is no record or tradition that he ever spoke to a human being, though he lived sixteen years longer, except as to a dog or to an abject slave. He never conversed with anybody further than when some unhappy subject would apply to him for some slight favor, on which occasion, if the person were permitted to enter his dark and narrow room, he would rise up from his table, having two loaded pistols lying upon it before him, and when the humble suppliant had entered the door, he was compelled, not only to keep his hands down, but to keep them rigid and fixed at an angle of some fifteen or twenty degrees from his body, to show that he had no weapon in either of them, and if he had any about his person, this position would enable Francia to make use of his own pistols before the petitioner could do him any harm. The unhappy man, half frightened to death, would stop as soon as he was within the room, some fifteen or twenty feet from Francia, when the haughty Dictator would ask what he wanted. The petitioner would make his petition, when, according to the whim which took the Dictator, he would either grant the request and send him away, or perhaps pour out a torrent of abuse, order his arrest, and send him to the prison or the *banquillo*. This was the extent of his social intercourse for sixteen years. Even to his domestic servants he maintained his gloomy taciturnity. Of these he had three, all females, one of whom was supposed to hold

another relation to him. None of them, however, ever dared to speak to him to tell him that anything was wanted in the house, even to supply his own necessities. He allowed them a few reals a day to obtain the food necessary for the house. The cost of what he consumed himself did not probably exceed a single shilling a day. A little soup, or *puchero*, a bit of bread (or *chipa*, a substitute made from the flour of the mandioca), a taste of *dulce*, of the preserved fruit of the country, together with, occasionally, a glass of milk, and the frequently taken *maté*, or Paraguay tea, sufficed for all his wants in the way of eating and drinking. In the evening, when the sentinels were set and the spies at work, he would sit for hours with his chair leaning against a tree in the yard, his chin upon his breast, apparently absorbed in thought. No one could approach him, no one of his servants would venture to address him, unless to convey to him a message from the outside. So great was the dread of his servants, that they dared not speak to him of any domestic matter. They moved about as silently as if in the presence of death, and yet they were sometimes afraid lest they might offend him by not advising him of what was required for the next day's necessities. On such occasions, two of them would contrive to be near him and whisper to each other, intending to be overheard, that there was this thing wanted for the Carai's (Lord's) dinner the next day; that there was no milk, no more yerba, no money to go to market with. Thus advised of what was required, Francia would provide whatever was needed, and give such orders as would relieve the servants of their difficulties. He had no pet or favorite animal, and in fact he lived, as it were, conscious of being universally feared and hated. In this way his life was passed, not a friend to console, not an eye to greet him except in distrust and fear. "Thou lonely Francia!"

Of the all-absorbing vanity that on his attainment of power caused him to disregard every sentiment of honor and every feeling of pity, which are supposed to affect all the human race, but which certainly never affected him, there is very little recorded, and in the nature of the case little more

of it can ever be known than what has been recorded by Robertson and Rengger. These were the only persons that in a period of more than a quarter of a century he ever allowed to approach him with anything like familiarity. The former left the country in 1815, and the latter in 1826. The dark days of his reign are considered as having hardly begun before Robertson quitted the scene. He had up to that time put no one to death, except those that were killed in his pretended counter-revolution. But even then, and while he was Consul, his countrymen approached him with such fear that their words would almost stick in their throats.

“Sometimes,” says Robertson, “while conversing with me, his guard would announce visitors; they were often sent away, sometimes admitted. In this latter case Francia assumed a cold and stern inflexibility of feature. He stood erect. The crouching applicant came to the door. ‘What do you want?’ Francia would abruptly and harshly say. The want was expressed with tremor or with profound reverence. ‘*Bien-retirese,*’ — ‘Very well, retire.’ The self-constituted intruder would retire accordingly, too happy to escape from the presence of the haughty Consul; and then the latter would turn to me and resume his discourse. . . . His conversation was chiefly of a political nature, and he himself was the centre of perfection to which all his observations pointed. If he touched on scientific or literary subjects, it was still to boast of some acquirement of his own. His vanity, under a thin skin of pretended indifference to fame or applause, oozed out at every word he pronounced. His own government, his own political sagacity, his wisdom, his acquirements, he constantly contrasted with those of others, and as constantly to his own advantage. Paraguay was a Utopia realized, and Francia was the Solon of modern days.

“He spoke contemptuously of all Europe with the exception of England. Paraguay and England, England and Paraguay, — these were the enlightened countries which he wished to see united, like the Siamese twins, firmly and irrevocably in one.

“He could not bear to hear of the celebrity, glory, or renown of any South-American but himself. General San Martin, the great and honest champion of South American independence, and General Alvear, at that time the successful and energetic leader of the for-

tunes of Buenos Aires, he hated with a deadly hate. It was when speaking of them alone that I used to see all the malignity of Francia's character. He always began his discourses about his celebrated contemporaries with affected and bitter contempt; but he invariably ended with violent and passionate declamation."

Though Francia, with the exception of England, despised all Europe, including France, he yet condescended to think and speak highly of Napoleon, whom he complimented as being very like himself. How this must have soothed the great captive at St. Helena could he have known it, and also known of the military exploits of his South American champion! In some way Francia had become possessed of one of those unsightly caricatures of Napoleon, such as were very common in many parts of Europe at the time that his great military successes were astonishing the world, and he was painted as a monster or an ogre whose daily rations were "three sheep a day and all the children he could catch." This caricature represented the great captain as dressed in a most grotesque manner. But Francia had taken it for a real likeness, and adopted the style of dress, doubtless thinking that two men so much alike should dress in the same manner. We have no copy of that picture, but from the style of dress that he adopted on his military parades we may judge how like it was to the well-known gray overcoat, cocked hat, and generally plain attire, that is always suggested by the name of Napoleon. Though Francia affected such contempt for everybody, yet, as we have seen, it was gall and wormwood for him to witness public admiration and respect for any one but himself. Yegros and Caballero, who had distinguished themselves in the war and in the revolution, and who, being military men, moved about in gold lace, would by general accord have places of honor assigned to them, and wherever they might go people would give way to them or respectfully salute them as they passed. Such deference to them, while Francia passed unobserved and unnoticed, was to a man of his insensate, intense vanity nothing less than criminal. But he had his revenge. The time came when he too could dress in uniform, not in-

deed like a poor general of gauchos, but like the other famous warrior, the great Napoleon. But it is hardly probable that even the caricature showed a uniform so grotesque as Francia thought necessary to adopt in order to display his multiform greatness. He must have a dress symbolical of his many great qualities. Unfortunately, nature had not given him the physique of a hero.* He was about five feet ten inches in height, lean and cadaverous almost as a mummy, with bony, shrunken hands, and legs so attenuated and fleshless that the genius of Famine would have disowned them. A "whiskered pander" he could not be, for though he tried very hard he could never coax whiskers to his face. On his upper lip he succeeded in beating up some straggling furze that would pass for mustaches, but on his cheeks and chin he could never raise enough to more than show the barrenness of the soil. His long, dank, coarse hair, drawn back, hung about his neck and shoulders, while his sharp features, sallow face, and devilish black eyes made him appear as hopeless a figure to pad or stuff into anything officer-like in appearance as ever perplexed a court tailor. It had long been his habit, before he was

* I have never seen or heard of but two pictures that pretended to be likenesses of Francia. An engraving from one of these is given in Robertson's *Letters on Paraguay*. In this he is represented as a tall, well-formed man, answering to the following description as given in the book: "I beheld a gentleman of about fifty years of age, dressed in a suit of black, with a large scarlet *capote*, or cloak, thrown over his shoulders. . . . The stranger's countenance was dark, and his black eyes were very penetrating, while his jet hair combed back from a bold forehead, and hanging in natural ringlets over his shoulders, gave him a dignified and striking air. He wore on his shoes large gold buckles, and at the knees of his breeches the same." The picture is evidently a sketch from memory, and in no sense a portrait or likeness, as it is certain that Robertson, leaving Paraguay as he did, could not have brought away a portrait of the Dictator, and he had no communication with him afterwards.

The engraving given as a frontispiece to this volume is from a painting of which there were several photographic copies in Paraguay a few years ago. I could never learn when it was painted or the name of the artist. The old people there who remembered the face, figure, and garb of the Dictator, said it was an excellent likeness, and that the style of dress in which he is represented is that in which he always, for more than twenty-five years, appeared in public. The attitude and surroundings of the portrait are such as a pedant and charlatan would naturally select.

Dictator, to dress in knee-breeches, silk stockings, and light, thin shoes, and he boasted that he had never worn boots since he was a student. Whether or not the caricature of Napoleon represented him with his lower extremities thus clad is not now known; but if it did not, Francia would not for that reason give up his tights and pumps. He probably thought these gave him more the appearance of a civic ruler. His entire costume, when he went forth, was as follows: First his knee-breeches and stockings, both of silk, fastened at the knees with gold buckles; his low, light shoes, also with gold buckles, and his military spurs fastened over his stockings; then a Spanish military coat, with much gold lace and many bright buttons; and upon his head a high cocked hat, with a large, erect, red feather, and a cockade brilliant and gaudy. On his left breast he wore a star of dimensions so grand, and so elaborately wrought with different colors, as to resemble a lamp-mat inlaid with blue, red, and white beads. This star or badge, says Robertson, was copied from the Nuremberg caricature. Around his waist he wore a blue satin sash, with a large tassel at each end. At his side he carried a long cavalry sword with steel scabbard. Thus gorgeously arrayed, he was prepared to mount his charger. The steed destined to the honor of bearing this mighty conqueror was caparisoned with bridle and saddle heavily mounted with silver, and a pair of holsters, in each of which was a loaded double-barrelled pistol. These arms were probably worn to show his valor, as we have known many who, before "the age of *Southern* chivalry was gone," always, in times of the most perfect quiet and order, went about loaded down with revolvers and bowie-knives to show that they were men of courage. But his outfit is not complete without his emblem of civic authority, which consists of a cane, or staff, with a gold head and black tassel, that has a socket fitted to hold it affixed in front of him to the saddle. With all these insignia of military and civil power he mounts his horse to marshal his legions. With his sabre drawn, he leads forth his two or three companies of cavalry. These men, who are a sort of

“old guard,” have every one been equipped under his own eye, and they follow him to the field where glory waits them. “At slow time!” exclaims the Dictator. “At quick time!” he next cries out, as soon as they come into an open space. “Charge at full gallop!” when they dash forward against the enemy, who would doubtless turn and fly, or fall by thousands, if they were only there. But as none except imaginary foes were to be found, after half an hour’s slaughter of them the order would come to halt, when, instead of distributing prizes or conferring the order of the Legion of Honor, he would send his aids to beat over the head and shoulders any one who had been unable, from having an inferior or fractious horse, to keep in the ranks. These were all the military achievements that Francia ever took part in. During the long term of his reign, there were many occasions when the Indians of the Chaco and to the North became troublesome, and parties were sent to chastise them, but Francia never ventured where he imagined there was any danger. His cowardice was consistent with his whole character. Hating everybody and delighting in cruelty, he had a consciousness that everybody hated him, and would, if they could or dared, do him an injury. In every act of his life he acted on that hypothesis; and devoured by the conceit that he was of more importance than all else in the world, he would put to death the best men in the country with no more compunction than most persons would feel at killing a troublesome mosquito.

CHAPTER XIV.

Condition of the Country under the Rule of the Dictator. — Government Spies : their Modes of Operation. — Universal Distrust. — Officers and Soldiers licensed Libertines. — The Dictator in Public. — Humiliating Observances. — Another Congress called, 1817. — Francia made Perpetual Dictator.

A GOVERNMENT like that of Francia could only be supported by force. The fears of the people might cause them to endure a tyrant whom they detested. Of this Francia was well aware, and he gradually gathered into his own hands all the reins of authority by surrounding himself with persons of low character, who were entirely dependent upon him. Suspicious of every one, he resorted to every device to learn the sentiments of all who had either wealth or influence. The whole military force of the country was subject to his orders, and his first thought was so to organize it as to make it a grand engine of *espionage*. In imitation of Dionysius, who had a room so built that every whisper uttered in it would reach his own ear in a distant apartment, Francia sought to make Paraguay a great whispering gallery, where every word expressed or thought entertained should come to his knowledge. It was the duty of every policeman and every soldier in the country to be a spy, and report all he saw. Woe to him if he knew aught that could be construed to any one's prejudice, and failed to do it! To effect this, those officers and soldiers who had been for some time in the service, and who had friends or families in the capital, were gradually weeded out, and replaced by others from the lowest ranks, and mostly from the interior. These were taught to look to Francia for every benefit and for everything necessary to existence. They soon found that the most direct road to favor was by insolence and rapacity towards the better class

of people, and especially the old Spanish families and those creoles having most Spanish blood in their veins. Their discipline was of the severest kind in all things relating to their duties as police, soldiers, or spies, and they were shown no mercy if caught delinquent in the least point of their assigned routine. But off duty they were permitted to indulge in almost every license. They were privileged ravishers, against whom it was dangerous to protest. For more than a quarter of a century the dread of these favored libertines was such that no woman who wished to be regarded as respectable dared venture into the streets, unless so accompanied by her family or friends that their very number might protect her from insult or worse. The houses of such were all this time like prisons. There were no social gatherings; there was neither laughter nor social converse, except in subdued tones and on the most commonplace subjects. Every man feared his neighbor as being a spy on his actions; and yet, notwithstanding the greatest caution, every little while some person's absence from his home and haunts would be noticed by his neighbors, and some servant or member of his family would be seen taking his food through the streets towards the prison. Nobody would know what had been his offence, nor would any one dare to inquire. A question regarding any act of the Dictator was enough to insure the inquirer years of imprisonment.

So searching and thorough was the system of espionage that distrust was universal, and no one dared to trust a secret to any other person. The object of the Dictator seemed to be to make everybody afraid of everybody else, so that, whatever animosity his tyranny might create in the breast of any individual, he would fear to confide in any friend or companion. In this way, he would be sure that there could be no combination against him. To create this impression, he resorted to every kind of eavesdropping; he would have his secret police in league with the servants of the better class of families, to gather from them any chance remark, any expression of discontent, that might be made from husband to

wife, or wife to daughter, or daughter to lover. Somehow, and in a way that people could not imagine, all their secret thoughts seemed to reach the Dictator, till it came to this, that no man dared speak to a living soul of anything that might reflect on the beneficent rule of the Dictator. But it was not enough to say nothing. It was expected that every man should constitute himself a spy on everybody else, and if his own wife were to let fall an expression of discontent, that he should hurry to the Dictator to denounce her. If he failed to do that, and it came to the Dictator's ears by any other channel, away they would both be sent to prison, whence, in all probability, they would never come out alive.

His two favorite and most trusted spies, in the earlier part of his tyranny, were his barber, and an inspector of yerba named Orrego. The barber, who was a black, dirty, fat, and lazy fellow, was the last person one would suspect of being a spy. He was so good-natured as to appear almost silly, and always ready to condole with those who were afflicted, and to express sorrow for those who had incurred the Dictator's displeasure. But woe to them if, in his hearing, a question, or even a sigh, escaped them! His innocent, stolid face would show nothing but compassion or pity, but in his next attendance on the Dictator the whole story of his discoveries would be revealed. But the blow would not fall immediately; time would be allowed to elapse, so that the barber might not be suspected as the informant.

The inspector Orrego, who, besides being a government official, kept a *pulperia*, or drinking-house, is thus described by Robertson:—

“He was a joyous and good-natured-looking little man, not much more than five feet high, with a portly body, a round and laughter-loving face, and a look of easy indifference and simplicity which would have made you believe him altogether incapable of guile or deceit. He used to wear a gaudy-colored handkerchief about his head, with a small coarse hat stuck on the top of it. His *calador*, or long steel probe, sharp at the end and hollow in the centre, with which he pierced and drew out samples of yerba from

the *sernos*, was always in his hand ; and he went gossiping about in the prosecution of his business, received by all and suspected by none. This little man I found was one of Francia's principal and most confidential spies. Seeing the open favor shown to me by Francia, and knowing that I would not betray him, he could not help boasting to me of the secret intimacy which he was permitted with the Consul. He was *reconocedor del Gobierno*, or government inspector of yerba, and this lulled any suspicion which might arise from his being frequently seen with Francia. Little Orrego, when his public-house was filled with the lower orders, would hold forth in eloquent strains of Guarani in praise of 'Caria Francia,' and when going about the stores or warehouses and shops of the better citizens, he caught up all that was said of the Consul without appearing to listen to a single word. While a conversation was going on, I have seen the little fellow astride of a bale of yerba, striking the hard substance under him with his calador, half whistling or humming a tune, in apparent abstraction of all that was going forward, and yet drinking in every word that was uttered around him. 'But, Orrego,' said I one day, 'I hope you do not betray your friends.' He fidgeted, and looked uneasy. 'Ah,' said he, 'Carai Francia is a hard man to deal with. I do my best to let things go on as quietly as possible, but I *dare* not deceive the Consul. He has many others besides myself, and *I do not know who they are* ; if through any of them I was detected in a falsehood, or in anything like equivocation, you know what would be the result to me.' I knew, indeed, but too truly, that the result would be imprisonment and irons for life. Orrego was a cunning though good-hearted little man ; and you will perceive what an admirable sort of tool he was with which to work out dark ends like those of the First Consul. Most of the spies, I believe, were chosen with the same keen observation of character."

During the time of the joint consulship, Francia was accustomed to ride out every day, attended by a guard of only three or four. At his appearance everybody in the streets was expected to stand still, the men and boys with hat in hand and heads bowed, to wait for his Excellency to pass by. These humiliating observances were more strictly enforced after he became sole Dictator. His body-guard was increased

to a numerous escort, and his title of Excellency was then changed to that of *El Supremo*, The Supreme. In his all-devouring vanity he could think of no inferior title that would express his transcendent greatness, and as no language has a term to express a power or being superior to that of the Almighty, poor Francia was obliged to rest content at that of equality. From that time till his death, no one was allowed to allude to him in any way but as *El Supremo*. After his election as Dictator, any hesitation in stopping instantly when he appeared in sight and waiting with uncovered head was sure to call down on the delinquent several sabre-blows, and, in some instances, from the edge of the weapon. To this requirement is ascribed a practice that prevailed until the commencement of the late war. This was the custom of giving hats to all male children from the time they are large enough to run about the streets, and when they have not another article or shred of clothing about them. They must have hats to hold humbly before them, and thus show their respect for *El Supremo* ; but they could go till they were full grown with no other garment, unless from shame they were induced to cover themselves. The practice thus begun was continued under Francia's successor as a habit rather than a police regulation ; and up to the time that the war began, and so long as hats were procurable, it was the custom for the children of the lower classes, from the age of four to ten, to go about with no article of dress or protection from sun, wind, or rain, but a straw or palm hat to salute any person they might see in uniform.

But after the expiration of the first dictatorship and Francia had been made "perpetual Dictator," it was found that the most humble demeanor frequently would not save a man who was unfortunate enough to meet *El Supremo* as he was out on his daily *paseos* ; and people hid in their houses, or fled from the streets through which he was to pass, as though a whole caravan of wild animals had been let loose in the public plaza.

As he would ride through the streets, surrounded by his escort, he would seem to notice nothing. His head always

fell forward, and his chin rested on his chest; and the centaur-like garb, half military, half civic, that covered his fleshless limbs, rendered him an uncouth figure to look upon. But though he seemed to see or direct nothing, some of his escort evidently knew what would prove agreeable to their master, and what persons they could outrage with his approbation. An illustration of this was related to the author by his old friend, La Guardia, before mentioned as having been sent to the University of Cordova as a *protégé* of Francia, and who, on his return, kept up intimate relations with him until his elevation to power. But after he became Dictator he tolerated no familiarity or intimacy with any of his countrymen, and he was esteemed the happiest man who attracted least notice from El Supremo. La Guardia, one afternoon as he was walking through the town, found, as he turned the corner of the street, that the guard which always rode a hundred yards more or less in advance of the Dictator was directly abreast of him. Following at the usual distance was Francia with a single soldier at his side, having a drawn sword in his hand; in the rear followed, at a respectful distance, the other members of his escort. At the sight La Guardia considered himself a lost man. It was too late to turn and fly. The craven fear that people always exhibited in presence of the Dictator would enrage him, though he did all he could to create it, and an air of confidence was sure to bring death or imprisonment to any one that assumed it. La Guardia therefore stood still, his hat in hand and his head bowed, thinking that perhaps his time had come. But to his great relief the cloud passed by, and the lightning did not fall. Fifty years after this the old man related the circumstance as a remarkable escape.*

* "The owner of the house in which we lived, Don Pascual Echagüe, was a native of Santa Fé, but married to a Paraguayan lady of good family and settled in Asuncion. A pasquin on the Dictator was found one morning, stuck on the wall of the house in which our landlord resided with his family. To suppose that Echagüe himself had stuck it there was monstrous and absurd; yet that day he was thrown into prison and into chains. His unhappy wife, after her husband had languished in solitary confinement for some months, contrived to get an interview with the Dictator. She threw herself at his feet. Her tears and

The first dictatorship expired, according to the law creating it, in three years ; and though long previous to its termination an order of the Dictator announced by the town crier was unquestioned, and passed as the unassailable law of the country, as much so as if a part of the organic act establishing the government, Francia decided to call another Congress to re-elect himself, instead of proclaiming by a decree that his term was perpetual. Accordingly, in 1817, he called another Congress. But by this time no one thought of questioning anything that he might propose. The persons named by himself as members of this body came as ordered, voted as they knew would please El Supremo, and, as soon as he permitted, adjourned and went to their homes. To save himself the trouble of convoking other congresses, he had himself made perpetual Dictator ; and this done he sent away the deputies, and never after pretended to do anything except as might please his own sweet will. From 1817 to 1840 there was no sign or pretence of authority except the will of Francia.

her sobs choked her utterance. ‘Woman,’ said the tyrant, ‘what do you want here?’ ‘O my husband, my husband!’ was all the unhappy lady could articulate. Francia then turned to his guard and said : ‘Order another *barra de grillos* (iron fetters) to be placed on Echagüe, and an additional one every time this mad woman dares approach me.’ The wretched husband, like many other victims, died in his prison and in his chains.”—ROBERTSON, *Letters on Paraguay*.

“Some time after the ineffectual application in favor of Echagüe by his wife, another but more distant relation of his, having been employed in some matters by Francia, ventured once more to intercede for the imprisoned, enchained, and dying man.

“‘Sir,’ said the Dictator, ‘I have permitted you to approach my person, not because you deserve it, but because I chose it. You now pretend to *dictate* to me, and, by interceding for your friend, impugn the judgment by which he has been consigned to perpetual imprisonment and chains. Go where he is, and there, like a dog as you are, rot and die in the contiguous dungeon.’

“The friend of Echagüe thus rotted and died.”—ROBERTSON, *Reign of Terror*.

CHAPTER XV.

José de Artigas. — Gauchos and Estancieros. — Antecedents of Artigas. — Commences his Career as Captain of Banditti, 1808. — Ineffectual Attempts to put him down. — Receives a Commission from the Crown of Spain. — Deserts, and joins the Revolutionists in Buenos Aires, 1813. — Again deserts and fights "on his own Hook." — His Relations with Dr. Francia. — Duties assessed upon Paraguayan Vessels. — Destruction of the Missions of Entre Rios. — Overthrow of Artigas. — He escapes to Paraguay. — His Treatment at the Hands of Francia.

WE may here diverge for a time from the dismal story of Francia's career, and rest from the "running shriek." So long as one writes of him, he can have nothing to tell but a catalogue of crimes committed by a man possessed of no redeeming quality. Throughout the whole of the perpetual dictatorship, the history of the country is but a prolonged wail of misery. Paraguay for all that time is a land where mirth and laughter are unknown, where confidence and friendship do not exist, where home is indeed "no home," for home confidences are feared lest El Supremo should know of them.

Events are now transpiring on the borders of Paraguay and in the provinces below that have an important bearing on the subsequent history of all the countries of the Plata, and we have to consider a state of things in some respects worse than existed in Paraguay. The provinces next below Paraguay, on the left bank of the Parana, were at this time the home of the worst gang of banditti ever known in America. The condition of the inhabitants on the whole, however, was better than that of the Paraguayans, in the same way that the condition of people in those sections of Italy infested by brigands is better than that of the condemned wretches whose prison is near the "Bridge of Sighs." It is possible to get out of one, but not possible to get out of the other. So, if life or property

were too insecure in Corrientes and Entre Rios, the inhabitants could sometimes go away and stay away; but it was not possible to leave Paraguay.

It was before the election of Francia as perpetual Dictator in 1817 that he found himself menaced by his neighbors to the South. Indeed, as long before as 1814, he had been greatly annoyed by the armed freebooters that ravaged, and we may say governed, the provinces of Corrientes and Entre Rios. The leader of this band of cut-throats, whose name for some six years was a terror to all decent people, was José de Artigas. This man was a famous character in his day, and his influence for evil was greater, perhaps, than that of any man in South America during the time of his lawless career. He was born in or near Montevideo, about the year 1768. His family belonged to that class of cattle-raisers who, having early begun in that business, which afterwards became very profitable, acquired considerable wealth, though leading a life but few removes from the barbarous. This scion of the family was therefore brought up, or allowed to grow up, as a gaucho, receiving no education but that of riding and breaking wild horses, throwing the lasso, and catching, marking, and slaughtering cattle. In these accomplishments he greatly excelled, and became at once the terror and the admiration of other gauchos. He had the qualities for a leader of desperadoes, and the state of society at that time in the Banda Oriental* was such that there was always a great number of that class of restless vagabonds, whose whole character, as it was then and is now, is expressed by the one word *gaucho*, — men with no interest in the country, and no desire for any; who know no more of the comforts of civilized life than the Indians of the Gran Chaco, and who differ from them mainly

* The Banda Oriental, as it is almost universally called in the countries of the Plata, is usually designated on the maps as the Republic of Uruguay. Being situate to the eastward of Buenos Aires, the Portefios gave it this name, signifying the eastern side or section. In official documents it is styled *La Republica Oriental del Uruguay*, — “The Oriental Republic of the Uruguay.”

in the fact that they are not so lazy, are more athletic and sanguinary, and have more animal spirits. A horse and his trappings, and their own peculiar garb, a knife and a lasso, are all the gaucho requires. Let him acquire by plunder or otherwise thousands of dollars, and he will not rest till the last dollar is squandered in gaming and dissipation. The gaucho is *sui generis*. No other part of the world but the pampas of South America has ever produced any similar race of beings. To the peculiar geographical features of the country must be ascribed this anomalous development of character. Those vast plains extending almost from the ocean to the foot of the Andes, and from Paraguay to Patagonia, having an area sufficient for four kingdoms as large as France, or some eight hundred thousand square miles, is even yet to a great extent an uninhabited, unreclaimed waste. In the time of Artigas it was much less advanced than now from the state in which it was when, near three hundred years before, Sebastian Cabot first cast his eyes over this wide domain. There were many towns of more or less importance scattered about and generally situate on the banks of the navigable rivers. But the interior was only settled by estancieros and their dependants. The capitalist who succeeded in getting a title to a large tract of land, generally many thousand acres, would erect on it such buildings as were indispensable, and commence the raising of cattle and horses. These were only valued for their hides and tallow. Here, far removed from everything like society or civilization, the estanciero would settle down with his wife, and raise up a family of children. To take care of the herds many men would be required, and these would have their mud hovels near the large estancia, where they would live and breed like savages. The children of the proprietor would grow up untaught in everything except the labors of the estancia; but being privileged to lord it over the sons of the dependants, they early develop into juvenile tyrants, and soon pass beyond all constraint except their own bad passions. When grown to be men, and when they come to inherit the estates of their fathers, they have no taste for any of those

refinements or comforts that partially modified the manners and customs of the first settlers, whose early life, perhaps, had been spent in towns or cities. After this first remove from civilized society, the estanciero became to all intents and purposes a gaucho ; as much so as any man who labored for him for no other reward than the beef he might require to eat. With the thousands and hundreds of thousands of horned cattle, horses, and sheep that in time came to roam over his vast possessions, the estanciero must have great numbers of peons, or laborers, to take care of them. Over these the illiterate estanciero would reign supreme, with no one to dispute or even question his authority. Literally, he "was monarch of all he surveyed." Having scarcely any intercourse with the outer world, being unable to read, and only going to the nearest market town when it might be necessary to sell his hides and tallow, he saw his flocks increase, and lived undisturbed, unless an occasional foray of the Indians might interrupt his ease and indolence. A French writer, M. Chevalier St. Robert,* has given a description so correct and so graphic of the race of gauchos, that no apology will be needed for introducing so long an extract as the following :—

"His children and his domestics, gauchos like himself, pass the same sort of life, that is to say, without ambition, without desires, and without any species of agricultural labor. All they have to do is to mark and to kill, at certain periods, the herds of oxen and flocks of sheep which constitute the fortune of the estanciero, and that satisfy the wants of all. Purely carnivorous, the gaucho's only food consists of flesh and water ; bread and spirituous liquors are as much unknown to him as the simplest elements of social life. In a country in which the only wealth of the inhabitants arises from the incessant destruction of innumerable flocks, it can be easily understood how their sanguinary occupation must tend to obliterate every sentiment of pity, and induce an indifference to the perpetration of acts of cruelty. The readiness to shed blood — a ferocity which is at the same time obdurate and brutal — constitutes the

* *Le General Rosas et la Question de la Plata.* Par M. Chevalier St. Robert. Translated by M. B. McCabe.

prominent feature in the character of the pure gaucho. The first instrument that the infantile hand of the gaucho grasps is the knife ; the first things that attract his attention as a child are the pouring out of blood and the palpitating flesh of expiring animals. From his earliest years, as soon as he is able to walk, he is taught how he may with the greatest skill approach the living beast, hough it, and, if he has the strength, kill it. Such are the sports of his childhood ; he pursues them ardently, and amid the approving smiles of his family. As soon as he acquires sufficient strength, he takes part in the labors of the estancia ; they are the sole arts he has to study, and he concentrates all his intellectual powers in mastering them. From that time forth he arms himself with a large knife, and for a single moment of his life he never parts with it. It is to his hand an additional limb ; he makes use of it always, in all cases, in every circumstance, and constantly with wonderful skill and address. The same knife that in the morning had been used to slaughter a bullock or to kill a tiger aids him, in the daytime, to cut his dinner, and at night to carve out a skin tent, or else to repair his saddle or to mend his mandoline. With the gaucho the knife is often used as an argument in support of his opinions. In the midst of a conversation apparently carried on in amity, the formidable knife glitters on a sudden in the hands of one of the speakers, the ponchos are rolled around the left arm, and a conflict commences. Soon deep gashes are seen on the face, the blood gushes forth, and not unfrequently one of the combatants falls lifeless to the earth ; but no one thinks of interfering with the combat, and when it is over the conversation is resumed as if nothing extraordinary had occurred. No person is disturbed by it, not even the women, who remain as cold, unmoved spectators of the affray. It may easily be surmised what sort of persons they must be of which such a scene is but a specimen of their domestic manners. Thus the savage education of the estancia produces in the gaucho a complete indifference as to human life, by familiarizing him from his most tender years to the contemplation of a violent death, whether it is that he inflicts it on another or receives it himself. He lifts his knife against a man with the same indifference that he strikes down a bullock ; the idea which everywhere else attaches to the crime of homicide does not exist in his mind ; for in slaying another he yields not less to habit than to the impulse of his wild and barba-

rous nature. If perchance a murder of this kind is committed so close to town that there is reason to apprehend the pursuit of justice, every one is eager to favor the flight of the guilty person. The fleetest horse is at his service, and he departs, certain to find, wherever he goes, the favor and sympathy of all. Then, with that marvellous instinct which is common to all the savage races, he feels no hesitation in venturing into the numerous plains of the pampas. Alone, in the midst of a boundless desert, and in which the eye strains itself in vain to discover a boundary, he advances without the slightest feeling of uneasiness; he does so watching the course of the stars, listening to the winds, watching, interrogating, discovering the cause of the slightest noise that reaches his ears, and he at length arrives at the place he sought, without ever straying, even for a moment. The lasso which is rolled around his horse's neck, the bolas suspended to his saddle, and the inseparable knife, suffice to assure him food and to secure him against every danger, even against the tiger. When he is hungry he selects one out of the herd of beeves that cover the plain, pursues it, lassos it, kills it, cuts out of it a piece of flesh, which he eats raw or cooks, and thus refreshes himself for the journey of the following day. If murder be a common incident in the life of a gaucho, it often also becomes the means to him of emerging from obscurity and obtaining renown amongst his associates. When a gaucho has rendered himself remarkable by his audacity and address in single combats, companions gather around him, and he soon finds himself at the head of a considerable party. He commences a campaign, sets himself in open defiance to the laws, and in a short time acquires a celebrity which rallies a crowd about him."

Of this class was José Artigas. He was a gaucho by instinct and inclination. Though born near Montevideo and passing much of his boyhood there, he took to the wild life of the pampas as readily as a young duck takes to the water. It is even said that in his youth he never learned either to read or to write, and only when he became an important chieftain did he constrain himself to this disagreeable task. His whole ambition was to be a leader of others much like himself, and the terror of all who would not pay tribute to him. He was as ignorant as the horse he rode of all the world beyond the

plains which he aspired to rule. Possessed of great physical strength and endurance, he early became a leader of the criminals from all the neighboring country, and of such other gauchos as found the quiet life of the estancia too tame or unremunerative. He was soon strong enough in numbers to despise the law and put its officers at defiance. He and his band roamed where they listed and took all that they required. Such as gave up willingly what was wanted, and made no complaint, were not further molested, but whoever protested or appealed to the government for protection received no mercy. His flocks and herds would be driven away, and he and his family would be no more heard of. Hence many people compounded with him, paying such tribute as he might exact. His control over his men was complete, and whoever could show a band of his marauders the tax receipt of their chieftain had his property respected.

This bandit commenced his career in a small way as early as 1808, some seven years before Montevideo achieved its independence. But as the street sewer gathers in what is foul and useless, increasing in volume as it passes through the populous city, so Artigas, as he went on in his career of crime, gathered around him all the vile scum of society, — outlaws, thieves, murderers, and such gauchos as were too dangerous or too lazy to be tolerated near the estancias; all flocked to his standard, for he could protect them and save them from the penalties due to their crimes. The whole force lived by robbery, either in the way of blackmail levied on those who would pay him to be protected from his troops, or by the direct plunder of others who could not or would not make terms with him. At first his operations were comparatively on a small scale, and he neither aspired nor pretended to be anything but a cattle and horse thief, selling his surplus plunder sometimes in the Banda Oriental and sometimes in Buenos Aires, where he always found a ready sale for all the cattle and horses he could bring to market. As his forces became more numerous, he grew more daring, and swept over not only the Banda Oriental, but even sent his bands of marauders into

the Brazilian province of Rio Grande to gather up the herds of cattle and horses, and whatever else could be easily carried away, and then retreat so rapidly as to render futile every attempt at pursuit.

The Governor of Montevideo several times sent such forces as he could collect to put down this modern Cacus. But the royal troops were invariably defeated, as in a country like the Banda Oriental a force like that of Artigas could not be overcome by ten times their number of organized troops. Like a later gaucho chieftain whose history we have yet to relate, it was not the policy of Artigas to fight, except with everything in his favor. Were he known to be in one place with a large force, and a body of royal troops was sent to capture him, before they could reach his camping-ground he would be a hundred miles or a hundred leagues distant with his whole band. His followers required no commissariat. If their horses gave out, they selected fresh ones that were to be found in great numbers on the intervening estancias; and for food they only had to kill and eat the cattle and sheep they were sure to find grazing on the estancias by which they passed. The lasso, the rude saddle called *recado*, the sheath-knife, were all that the gaucho soldier required to secure him against every want. His clothing was such as in his maraudings might fall into his hands, though the true gaucho dress was his favorite costume. This consists, when complete, of a shirt and a square piece of cloth brought around the hips so as to form two loose bags for the legs, and fastened about the waist with a broad leather belt, ornamented with all the silver coins, having eyes soldered to them like buttons, that he is the owner of. Over his shoulders he wears a *poncho*, which is a thick woollen cloth about five feet long and three and a half wide. Through a slit made lengthwise in the middle of this the wearer thrusts his head, and the garment, falling from his shoulders and about his sides and hips, effectually protects him from cold, wind, and rain. A brigandish hat and huge spurs, with or without boots, complete the uniform of the gaucho.

For warlike purposes, however, Artigas found it necessary to have other arms for his men than the sheath-knife; and it was to obtain these that the cattle stolen from the estancieros of his own country were sent to the market of Buenos Aires. Arms, ammunition, and the cloth requisite for their rude dress, were about all that they could not secure in their favorite pastime of robbery.

The Governor of Montevideo, being unable to subdue Artigas, whose forces were constantly increasing, and whose range of devastation was as constantly extending, proposed to treat with the gaucho chieftain. He proposed to make Artigas his ally in support of law and order, to give him a commission in the service of the King of Spain as captain of mounted militia, or, as they were called, *Blandengues*. Artigas accepted the terms, and entered Montevideo with his murdering band. But desperate and lawless as they were, they were all implicitly subject to him. There was no trifling with his authority among his followers. His word was law. His men were now regularly paid, and their wants were provided for; and their leader told them to stop robbing and murdering and serve as a general police for the country to maintain law and order. For a time the novelty of an honest life satisfied Artigas, and for a time the people of the country around Montevideo, and indeed the whole Banda Oriental, enjoyed a security and prosperity which they had not known for a long time before.

At this time the revolution in Buenos Aires took place, and war in Spain ensued. Artigas, tired of inaction, and the novelty of an honest life having worn off, would fain take part in the war; and as he was already in the King's service, and in honor bound to fight his battles, he, of course, deserted, and went over to the other side. He passed over with many of his followers to Buenos Aires, and in 1813, when Montevideo, that still held out as a Spanish colony, was besieged by the Porteños under General Alvear, Artigas, then having the rank of colonel, served with that zeal and malignity that are at all times peculiar to deserters and traitors. But the service under a Porteño general was not congenial to the tastes of Artigas.

He was a red-handed, ignorant gaucho, and his presence was an offence to the revolutionary leaders of Buenos Aires, who were men of education, and who believed in conducting war with some regard to humanity and the rights of private persons. So with characteristic treachery, while the siege was yet going on, Artigas again deserted, taking with him his whole command, consisting of eight hundred men, all of whom were his own countrymen and most of them gauchos like himself.

The double traitor now adopted the course of warfare suited to his tastes. Nominally fighting against Alvear and the Porteños, he was in no way subordinate to the Governor of Montevideo. He was literally "fighting on his own hook." He assumed the title of "Lord Protector," and, marching to the northward toward Entre Rios, the gauchos in great numbers flocked to his standard. Two different expeditions were sent against him, one under General Quintana being detached from the besieging force, and the other under command of Baron Holderberg, a German adventurer in the service of Buenos Aires, who, with a force of less than one fifth of that of Artigas, crossed over the river at Santa Fé, nearly opposite to what was then called the Bajada, and where now is the city of Parana, the capital of the Confederation from 1852 to 1861. Of course the Baron was defeated, and he and all his force taken prisoners.

The Most Excellent Lord Protector now had full sway. Buenos Aires, having the war with Spain on her hands, must devote her whole resources to the maintaining of her independence, and must leave the wild gaucho to ravage the upper provinces till a more convenient season should arrive for making war upon them. Of the country lying between Buenos Aires and Paraguay, and of the larger part of the Banda Oriental, he became for the time the absolute sovereign. Though he never crossed the Parana, yet in Santa Fé his authority was so far acknowledged, during the later part of his career, that such tribute as he demanded was paid as the price of exemption. So that whole vast country was con-

verted into one great region where no law prevailed but the will of the Most Excellent Protector, a man who knew neither mercy, truth, nor justice. And yet, withal, he was none of your sceptics or humanitarians, for whom Francia's eulogist has so much contempt, albeit he does not praise his hero's piety. He had a priest always at his ear, acting as counsellor, secretary, friend, and confessor. He was surrounded by cut-throats, for none others were congenial companions. But of them all, says Rengger, the most infamous was this friar, whose name was Monterroso, and, like another bishop of whom we shall speak by and by, he always advised the most sanguinary measures.

The proceedings of Artigas, so far as they were damaging to Buenos Aires, were entirely such as were agreeable to the Dictator of Paraguay. Francia greatly dreaded a collision with the Porteños, for though the army of Belgrano had been conquered by the Paraguayans under Velasco, he knew that he and his government were so detested that if Paraguay were again invaded by an army from Buenos Aires, every man that could desert to it would do so. Buenos Aires was his great terror and aversion. From no other power had he reason to fear any interference with his absolute despotism. From Artigas's banditti he had little to dread, for he had sufficient troops stationed at the passes of the river to repel any force that the Protector could spare on such an expedition. And while Artigas kept up his marauding warfare, it was certain Buenos Aires could never send any force against him. He served as a buffer between Francia and his most dreaded enemy.

Francia, however, needed arms from abroad as well as Artigas, and the latter had the power, if not to stop all river navigation, at least to render it very difficult and dangerous. The vessels that attempted the long and perilous voyage from Buenos Aires to Paraguay always sailed under the flag of some neutral nation, generally the English. But this did not give immunity to contraband of war; and as it was not in accordance with the interest or policy of Artigas that Francia

should receive munitions of war, he kept a sharp lookout for all vessels that might be making their way *aguas arriba* (up river). This interference with the Dictator greatly irritated him. The "Most Excellent Lord Protector" and the "Supremo" were jealous of each other. The presence of an army like that of Paraguay, so near the territory that he claimed as his own, was a constant menace to Artigas; and, on the other hand, his own habit of taking whatever arms he could find in vessels bound to Paraguay, and of detaining those bound *aguas abajo*, or down river, loaded with the produce of Paraguay, till they should pay such toll as he might demand, greatly exasperated Francia. That they might not thus annoy each other, but make common cause against Buenos Aires, Artigas several times proposed terms to Francia whereby they should both engage not to molest each other. But Francia treated the advances of Artigas with scorn and insult. At this Artigas was greatly enraged, and by means of his gaucho troops, among whom were Indians and half-breeds, he induced the Indians of the half-ruined missions of Entre Rios to revolt. These missions still belonged to Paraguay, and were kept in subjection by the troops of the Dictator, who was well aware that they could not hold their position against the forces of Artigas. He therefore gave orders that at the first outbreak his troops should retire, burning as they went every sign of a habitation, and destroying everything that could be of use either to the Indians or their gaucho allies. The order was obeyed, and thus fifteen of the old mission towns, and those the most flourishing yet remaining, were entirely destroyed.

After this, Francia closed up more closely than ever all communication between Paraguay and the outer world. He would not risk his troops across the river to make war on Artigas, but he would nevertheless prevent him from assessing duties on vessels going below with Paraguayan produce. He therefore shut up the ports completely, and allowed neither vessel nor person to leave Paraguay. It is true this was ruinous to his own subjects; but the interests of his people

never troubled Francia. His own dignity and greatness were so vast that his mind could contain nothing else.

Artigas, like Francia, had a mortal hatred for the native Spaniards; and whenever such fell into his power, it was his delight to torture them by means of unheard-of cruelty. One of his happy conceits was to have them sewed up in the green hides of bullocks just flayed, and then leave them in the burning sun till death should set them free. In justice to Francia it should be said he never tortured for the mere sake of torture. The people whom he put to death were in his eyes too insignificant to merit so much attention. He would, indeed, cast persons into prison, and load them with fetters, knowing they must expire under the protracted agony, and he would look with fiendish complacency at his victims as they were shot and bayoneted before his eyes. But this was all in the way of business. He never would prolong their misery before his eyes, that he might delight in their shrieks and groans. In this respect he differed from Artigas, and from the tyrant of Buenos Aires, Rosas, who subsequently distinguished himself as the most ingenious torturer from the time of the Inquisition to that of the second Lopez.

The disputes and hostile demonstrations between Francia and Artigas began early in the career of the former as supreme Dictator. Indeed, they commenced in the time of the joint consulate, and the knowledge of the atrocities of Artigas in the adjoining provinces served to some extent to reconcile the Paraguayans to the tyranny of Francia; while Corrientes, on the opposite bank of the Parana, was overrun by bands of murdering gauchos, Paraguay enjoyed the peace and quiet of the tomb.

To give an idea of the state of affairs as they existed in the two countries, I must ask indulgence for again citing the testimony of the already often-quoted Robertson. In fact, as far as the reign of Francia is concerned, there are only two authors to quote, — Rengger and Robertson. They only — with the exception of Molas and of Somellera, who left Paraguay before the “reign of terror” had fairly commenced — have ever pub-

lished anything from personal experience and observation, and until now I am not aware that any one has ever given to the world anything additional respecting the horrors of Francia's time.*

Robertson, as it appears, had, after that memorable interview with Francia, when he was commissioned to go before the House of Commons with bales of tobacco and yerba, and demijohns of rum and molasses, to prove by ocular demonstration the great wealth and resources of Paraguay, ventured to return to Asuncion without fulfilling his high diplomatic mission. Apprehending that the Dictator would be greatly disappointed should he return without bringing word that the English government was anxious to form an alliance offensive and defensive against all the world besides with such a powerful and wise potentate as himself, Robertson thought to placate his resentment by taking to him a small quantity of arms and such other things as he thought would be most acceptable. At the time there was no declared war existing between the different provinces of the Plata. Artigas was regarded by the government of Buenos Aires as neither more nor less than a bandit and an outlaw, and Francia claimed to be neutral and independent of them both. Under these circumstances Robertson, having first consulted the commander of the English squadron then lying in the Plata, and having obtained a sailing license from him, loaded a small brigantine with such wares as he knew to be most in demand in Paraguay. Before departing, however, he was solicited by General Alvear, who was then director of affairs in Buenos Aires, to endeavor to open a negotiation with Francia by which arms and ammunition were to be supplied to Paraguay on condition that the Dictator would furnish a certain number of troops to Buenos Aires. It should be borne in mind that at this time

* The notes of Don Mariano Molas, which have recently been published in book form in Buenos Aires, contain a list of Francia's decrees during the first half of his reign, and they also give an account of his principal acts of tyranny during the same period. Molas was a prisoner for many years, and it was not till long after his death that his manuscripts saw the light. I have never been able to get a copy of the published volume.

the population of Paraguay exceeded that of all the other Argentine provinces together, excepting only Buenos Aires; and Alvear believed that, by acting in concert with the Dictator, the gaucho rule might be easily put down. Robertson, however, very properly, as a neutral and a merchant, refused to have anything to do with the transaction. But as his vessel was to take a letter-bag to Paraguay, the government might avail itself of the opportunity to send its proposals direct to Francia by means of a sealed letter. Such a letter was accordingly sent, and the vessel left for Asuncion.

The voyage was about half accomplished, and the little vessel was one evening, owing to head winds, fastened to the bank of the river, and the proprietor had gone on shore to shoot partridges, when it was suddenly pounced upon by a band of *Artigueños* (soldiers of Artigas). These ragged, fierce-looking ruffians took possession of the vessel, seizing poor Robertson just as he was coming on board, unsuspecting of danger, and not without many kicks and sabre-blows he was pinioned and fastened to a ring-bolt on the deck of the vessel. The scenes that followed are thus described by him: "The deck was in possession of between thirty and forty of the very worst class of the marauding soldiers of Artigas; the hatches of the vessel were open, and the cases and bales of merchandise, every one of them more or less violated, lay strewed about; my scattered wardrobe was partitioned off among the robbers; wine was spilt and glass broken in every direction; one man was lying on my bed in a state of intoxication, and by his side sat three more, wrangling over a pack of cards; and as if gambling were not of itself a sufficient excitement, they were quaffing large libations of raw spirits. Every one of the demon-like gang was more or less in a state of intoxication; and while, with frequent reference to me, significant gestures were passing from one to the other, commingled with open threats of instantly taking my life unless I discovered to them all the valuable property, and especially the money, they supposed to be in the vessel, I was left in profound ignorance of the cause and origin of so barbarous a violation of

law. Night came on; sentinels were placed over the crew on shore; I was more tightly bound; and, after witnessing for hours a scene of license and debauch too frightful to be conceived of and too gross to be portrayed, I was thrust into the hold of the vessel, and had the hatches closed over my head."

In the morning a soldier, by birth an Indian, was sent below to conduct the prisoner on deck, and "when he reached there," continues our author, "every sort of menace was resorted to in order to extort from me a secret which I had not to reveal. 'Where is your money?' and 'Where are the rest of your arms?' were the oft-reiterated demands. They had got all I had of both, but my protestations to this effect seemed of no avail. Twice was I taken out of the vessel to the shore, and twice were the men drawn up to shoot me."

But the man was not shot, as he lived to record the tale. Among these ruffians there was a sort of tacit understanding, almost an established rule, that any soldier who had distinguished himself by any peculiar excesses should be entitled to ask a favor of his chief, which the latter was bound to grant or to refuse with the prospect that the party refused would take it as a personal affront, and cut his throat at the first convenient opportunity. Robertson was already tied to a tree, and the soldiers were ready for the word, when the same Indian who had conducted him from the cabin stepped forward from the ranks and asked that he might not be shot. The request was granted, and as the *protégé* of the Indian who had saved his life the cords were removed from his limbs. The robbers, however, took all his clothes that were on board the vessel and distributed among themselves; but as he had not sufficient to clothe the whole party of forty, they were obliged to put up with something less than full dress for all. One would take a pair of pantaloons, another a shirt, and a third a swallow-tailed coat, dispensing with the two former articles; one took a pair of boots, another an opera-hat; one took his watch-chain, seal, and keys, and another his watch. So rigged out in a style more motley than even one of Fran-

cia's congressmen, they left the lawful proprietor with nothing but a tattered great-coat and an old greasy poncho.

After a series of trials, being shut up in the mean while in a sort of prison-pen among those who had distinguished themselves for their crimes to such an extent that it was deemed unsafe for them to be at large, he was fortunate enough to get sight of an old acquaintance, a servant formerly in his employ. To him in hurried words he communicated his situation, and bade him fly to Buenos Aires and inform Captain Percy, the commander of the British squadron there, of what he had seen. Fortunately this officer was not like some admirals, and at once despatched a war vessel to the brigand head-quarters, with a letter to the gaucho chief demanding the instant release of Robertson and the restoration of his property. This prompt action on the part of the English naval commander had the intended effect. The prisoner was at once released, and his property, so far as possible, restored to him. The arms had been too much needed and too soon distributed to be returned to their owner.

The vessel, with the remaining part of the cargo, was again despatched for Paraguay, but this time without the owner, who resolved to visit Artigas in his camp and recover damages for the losses he had sustained.

Making his way to the head-quarters of the Most Excellent Protector, he found him seated on a bullock's skull at a fire kindled on the mud floor of his hut, eating beef from a spit, and drinking gin out of a cow's horn. He was surrounded by a dozen officials in weather-beaten attire, all similarly engaged. The Protector was dictating to two secretaries, as, unfortunately, his early education was so limited that he could little more than write his name. They all had a squalid, brigandish look, and the party had the appearance of ferocious banditti, who had no more sense of decency or regard for cleanliness than so many swine. Still, there was something ludicrous in the scene, for strewn about the room and trampled on the mud floor were a great number of envelopes from all the different provinces in the confedera-

tion addressed to "His Excellency the Protector." Outside, however, there was an appearance of business, as couriers were arriving frequently on panting, overridden horses, with despatches, while fresh horses stood at his door ready for them to mount and carry his orders to his lieutenants in different parts. The Most Excellent Protector sat upon his bullock's skull as upon a throne, smoking and eating and drinking and swearing, while he despatched the business brought to his notice and sent his couriers to execute his orders. They were coming and going all the time, and each one, while waiting to be again despatched, would cut a slice from the slaughtered bullock that was near at hand, and, half roasting it in the fire, would appease his hunger, and soon be ready for another gallop across the plains. When he found that Robertson had brought a letter from the commander of the English gunboat, he at once became very civil to him; for while he felt that he could hold his own against the government of Buenos Aires or Montevideo, distracted as they were by intestine feuds, and straining every nerve to maintain themselves against the power of Spain, he yet did not wish to give offence to England, or to force her to become an ally of Buenos Aires in effecting his overthrow. As it was, his situation was desperate enough; for, knowing himself to be the common enemy of mankind, he was almost constantly expecting an attack, and therefore he always had around his hut a large number of horses ready saddled and bridled, sufficient for himself and his staff to escape in case of a sudden attack; and it was the same with his followers, who were bivouacked near by. As horses were plenty, and as their only cost was the stealing of them, they, as a rule, had two or three to each man, so that all the time every one of his soldiers had a horse ready to mount at a moment's notice, and in five minutes after the word was given his whole army could be put in motion. The celerity with which they would move was most astonishing; and as they had no object in sparing their horses, they would ride them in full gallop at the top of their speed until they were about to give out, when

they would catch others, and, transferring the trappings, would in three minutes' time be again sweeping at full speed over the country. I give the remainder of this description in Robertson's own words: "He had about fifteen hundred tattered followers in his camp, who acted in the double capacity of horse and foot soldiers. They were chiefly Indians, taken from the decayed establishments of the Jesuits, admirable horsemen, and inured to every species of privation and fatigue. The sloping hills and the fertile plains of the Banda Oriental and Entre Rios furnished abundant pasture for their horses, as well as numerous herds of cattle for slaughter. They wanted little more. A scanty jacket, and one poncho tied around the waist in the form of a Highlander's kilt, while another hung over their shoulders, completed, with the foraging-cap and a pair of *potro* boots, large spurs, a sabre and blunderbuss, and a knife, the Artigueno's attire. Their camp was made of rows of hide huts and mud hovels, and these, together with about a dozen cottages of a somewhat better description, constituted what was called the 'Villa de la Purificacion.'"

Such was Artigas in his prosperity. It is hard to conceive of a character worse than his. He was an enemy of his kind, and his whole delight was in desolation and rapine. It is no wonder that the mild and peaceable Paraguayans, on hearing of his atrocities, should cower and shrink under that even worse rule which was reducing them to a state of slavery, in which even their thoughts were punished as capital crimes. This dread of Artigas was artfully used by the Dictator, in the early part of his despotic career, to make his own person more absolute. But at length Artigas found insubordination in his camp, and one of his lieutenants, Ramirez by name, revolted against his chief, and so thoroughly routed his remaining forces that the Most Excellent Protector, in stress of intrigue, fled to Paraguay. He threw himself on the clemency of a ruler who never before had known clemency or mercy. This man had given Francia more cause for enmity than any other living. He had waged war upon him, embargoed the naviga-

tion of the river, taken his property, and thrown defiance in the face of the Supremo. But Francia's treatment of him was an exception — and, I believe, the only exception — to his general conduct. Instead of having him immediately shot or immured in a prison till he died, he was sent to the district of Curuguati, a distance of some sixty leagues from the capital, and allowed a pension of thirty dollars a month until the death of Francia.*

What passport Artigas had to the good graces of Francia is unknown, and it is probable that the credentials which secured him the clemency of the Dictator were his reputation of having cut more throats than any man then living. He had one characteristic, however, in common with Francia, and this may have won the regard of the Dictator. He too, like the Supremo, was utterly destitute of natural affection. This is evident from his mode of life after entering Paraguay. He retired to the residence allotted to him, and never more learned or inquired anything about his fellow-robbers, his family, or his friends, if, indeed, he had left any.

* "The bandit" (Artigas) "cultivated fields, did charitable deeds, and passed a life of penitence, for his few remaining years." — CARLYLE.

As a specimen of Carlyle's accuracy, this will do pretty well. Artigas entered Paraguay in 1817, and lived there till he died in 1851, thirty-four years,— surviving Francia by nearly eleven years

"But in that year, 1819" (in fact it was 1817), "the firebrand Artigas was finally quenched; obliged to beg a lodging even of Francia, his enemy, and got it hospitably, though *contemptuously*. . . . Francia's treatment of Artigas, his old enemy, the bandit and firebrand, reduced now to beg shelter of him, is good, humane, even *dignified*." — IDEM.

CHAPTER XVI.

Last Years of Artigas's Life. — His Apotheosis. — Banda Oriental. — Republicanism in Spanish America. — M. Aimé Bonpland. — Arrives in Buenos Aires, 1817. — Explorations and Observations in the Interior. — A Missionary of Civilization. — Establishes a Colony in Corrientes. — Experiments with Paraguay Tea. — Destruction of the Colony, and Seizure and Detention of Bonpland by Dr. Francia. — Ineffectual Attempts to obtain his Release. — Other Foreigners allowed to leave the Country. — Bonpland's Labors in Paraguay.

IN his later years, after the death of the Dictator, the quondam Most Excellent Protector left his "cultivated fields" and the scenes of his "charitable deeds," — never heard of in Paraguay, — and moved to Ibirai, where he passed his remaining days. Though he now lived near the capital, and was occasionally visited by strangers from Buenos Aires and Montevideo, he took no interest in anything or anybody beyond his own household. He had never had any ties of affection, and never inquired about any of his old acquaintances. In his younger days his life had been that of a wild beast that robbed and murdered for the pleasure it afforded him. In his later years he was the same beast, with his teeth drawn and his claws clipped.

And yet the worst thing in connection with Artigas is still to be told. It is the story of his apotheosis. While he lived it was impossible to make anything of him better than a savage, a beast. But after his death, and when his ferocity or brutishness could no longer rebuke the gaucho spirit that would magnify him into a hero, his remains were honored with ceremonies and a mausoleum such as no other South-American ever received; and there have been South-Americans of as lofty patriotism as the world has known, — men who have realized the gaucho disposition of their countrymen, and who

have sacrificed everything to change it. The best have fallen by the wayside, and ere the achievement of any high reputation. But the names of San Martin, Balcarca, Sarmiento, and many others, must always appear on the page of history as meteor lights to prove that there is no redemption for the race which they aspired to lead to a higher civilization. Not from want of leaders, but from inherent gauchoism, have these nations and peoples remained in a state of semi-barbarism, and from which of themselves they can never emerge.

In dearth of material for heroes, people sometimes magnify into such doubtful or positively vicious characters. The little state of the Banda Oriental, or Republic of Uruguay, never as yet has had but one man whose reputation has extended beyond South America. That one is the great robber, Artigas. The name of no other Oriental that I could mention would be remembered as ever having been heard of before by any American or European; and I hazard nothing in saying that no reader of this book, unless he has actually been in the countries of which I am writing, can recall the name of a single Montevidean or Oriental excepting Artigas. But notwithstanding this dearth of superior men, and perhaps by very reason of it, it has always been one of the most pugnacious, belligerent, quarrelsome states in South America. It has, in fact, no right to a separate national existence. Its territory does not exceed seventy-five thousand square miles in extent, and its population is but about three hundred and fifty thousand. But with the exception of Paraguay, it is the most fertile and productive district of South America. Its climate is one of the finest in the world, and the face of the country is that of a vast rolling prairie, diversified with undulating hills capped with abundant timber. In all parts it is watered by living streams that preclude, to a great extent, the dangers of the drouth, or *seca*, that frequently proves fatal to thousands of sheep and cattle on the level pampas of Buenos Aires. It is the favorite region where European emigrants prefer to settle; and with a stable and honest government it would in a few years become one of the richest and most prosperous

countries in the world. On the east it fronts directly on the Atlantic, and to the south on the broad Rio de la Plata. The site of its principal town, Montevideo, is of very great importance in a military point of view to both of the neighboring powers, Brazil and the Argentine Republic, and each is jealous of the other lest it gain a preponderating influence in the national councils.

It is most unfortunate, that, after the expulsion of the Spaniards, this fine province was not permanently annexed to the Argentine Confederation, or even to Brazil. In either case, there is no reasonable doubt that the wealth and population of the country would have been double what it is. In the latter event, however, it would in all probability have united with the large and powerful province of Rio Grande, far the most powerful of the Brazilian provinces, and have formed a separate republic of respectable proportions and of sufficient resources to maintain its independence against either of its neighbors. But this union would have had many disadvantages, chiefly arising from the difference of race. The antipathy existing between the Spaniards and Portuguese has existed for ages, till it is a part of the nature of each to hate the other. It is, perhaps, more intense and bitter between their American descendants than it ever was among their ancestors. The subjection of the Spaniards of the Banda Oriental, therefore, to the rule of the Brazilians, could only have been effected by force so long applied as virtually to destroy the Spanish race and influence. But none of these objections to a union with Buenos Aires existed. Of the same race, language, and religion, nothing but local prejudices and party feuds could prevent such union. Both gravitated from mutual interest towards such a result.

It was at this time that Artigas with his hordes of robbers appears as a great marplot. First turning traitor to his own country, he passes over to Buenos Aires; then he deserts his new friends and sets up as general freebooter, and by devastating the interior provinces the union that in all probability would have followed a speedy fall of the Spanish authority in

Montevideo was postponed and delayed till circumstances so changed it never was effected. For his instrumentality in this bad work, and for the results that followed from his devastations, — results that he neither foresaw nor desired, and in which, when effected, he took no interest, — he was regarded after his death by the Montevideans as the preserver of their independence. The occasion was therefore taken in 1857, six years after his death, when, owing to certain angry disputes with Buenos Aires, the feeling in favor of a separate national independence ran high among all parties, to testify to the world their appreciation of the services of Artigas. A deputation of the most influential and respectable citizens of Montevideo was appointed to proceed to Paraguay and disinter the great throat-cutter, and remove his remains to Montevideo. They performed their work as if engaged in honoring the remains of a canonized saint ; and on their arrival at Montevideo the funeral ceremonies were so gorgeous, the masses and processions so numerous, the candles and incense so profusely burned, a heretic might have well thought the crimes of the defunct must be enormous, and that prayers and penances enough to save a city like Sodom were necessary to save Artigas from an endless woe. A magnificent tomb was erected over his remains, and the visitor to the cemetery of Montevideo, when he views the marble pile, may well ask what hope there is of a nation or race that thus deifies a monster of human depravity.

Nominally the Banda Oriental has preserved its independence and nationality, and its people boast of it as though they had thereby saved themselves from a hated foreign yoke. But the limited territory and the geographical position of the country forbid that it should ever be anything but an insignificant state, unable to defend its rights at home or protect its citizens abroad. Only people who have travelled considerably in foreign countries can realize fully the advantage of being the subject of a great and powerful government. Such governments assume to defend the rights of their citizens wherever they are, and any contemptible despotism that de-

lights to show its power by persecution of foreigners is very sure to discriminate in favor of those nations that have the largest squadrons. On the other hand, the subject of the petty dukedoms and principalities of Europe are absolutely at the mercy of the governments into whose territory they happen to stray. Of the truth of these propositions, we shall have numerous illustrations in the latter part of this Paraguayan history. And yet the Orientales are as boastful and proud of their independence as though it had brought blessings instead of calamities, peace and prosperity instead of anarchy and ever-recurring civil war. They yet honor Artigas as their national hero, as the representative gaucho. In my own time I have known one of the best of them, a courteous, well-educated gentleman, a young man respected by his government, and holding the office of Secretary of Legation in Paraguay, of distinguished talent, amiable character, and great urbanity of deportment, to go on a pilgrimage to the former residence of this pest of society, and carry away as a sacred relic a brick or a tile of the house in which he had lived. When such are honored, who would not desire the refuge of obscurity!

As family quarrels are hardest to reconcile, and neighborhood disputes are more angry than those that are participated in by large communities, so are party feeling and political feuds more intense and bitter in proportion as the country is small and insignificant. In a great nation there is a multiplicity of interests and numberless questions affecting the politics, the religion, the commerce, and the morals of the entire population, and the people in the different communities generally agree with each other on some points, and differ on others. But in a nation too small to have such varied interests, people are prone to range themselves into parties on questions of local importance. Hence family feuds grow into national questions, traditional animosities divide people into hostile parties, and the politics of the country have reference mainly to the past. In the United States, and indeed in most popular governments, men aspire to power and influence by proclaiming their principles, and by trying to convince the

people that the policy they will carry out, if elected, is the best for the general interest. But there is nothing of this kind in the Spanish American countries. No candidate comes forward with a programme of principles, and tries to prove that with such a policy the country must prosper. Like the wit who wrote for antiquity, they legislate for the past, and people are called upon to vote for men, not for their merits, nor for what they propose to do if elected, but because their fathers or grandfathers were killed in some former civil war, the animosities of which remain in all their intensity.

The first idea of a republican government is a thing utterly unknown throughout all Spanish America. At a popular election the party having for the time being the reins of power almost invariably returns its candidates. Hence the changes are almost always effected by revolutions or civil wars. But the defeated parties do not hold themselves under any obligation to abide the result. If they ever enter the contest hoping to win, like the gambler who quietly pockets his winnings as long as the cards run in his favor, but, on losing, grabs the pool, or like our "Southern brethren" after the first election of Mr. Lincoln, they do not, if out-voted, consider themselves as morally bound to respect the result. If they can get up a revolution with a reasonable chance of winning, they are sure to do it.

And how is all this to end? Many people will say, let them change their form of government and establish monarchies, and call to each one of these distracted countries a scion of royalty, and then let all the people rally around his throne. But the people will not have a monarchy, and if foreign sovereigns were to attempt to impose one of their throneless adventurers on them as a ruler, the lesson of Mexico proves how all would unite to expel the invader. Besides, the form of government has little to do with changing the character of a people. Were the popular leader of either of the parties in any South American republic a prince of any royal family of Europe, the people would still be as prone as ever to revolution and civil war. There is that fatal want of respect for

law or for constituted authority which, in one word, may be described as gauchoism, and which seems to be a quality inherent in the race, and would be the same under one form of government as another.

The evil, however, is effecting its own cure. While the natives of the Spanish or mixed blood are wasting their possessions and destroying each other, there is a tide of emigration setting in from Europe that ere long must completely swamp the gaucho influence. These emigrants are mostly from England, Ireland, Germany, and Italy. They care nothing about the traditional family and party feuds rife among the natives of Spanish descent. They only want security and protection for life and property, and of course are opposed to everything like revolution or civil war. The returns which they have received for the investment of capital have in times past, and whenever the country has been quiet for a few years, been enormous. They are fast acquiring possession of landed property, and the available active capital is mostly in the hands of foreigners. Hitherto they have generally abstained from any part in politics ; but this cannot always last. They have too large interests at stake to allow the political power to remain much longer in gaucho hands. Every war and every revolution, however, increases their relative strength. They pursue their peaceful avocations while the gauchos are engaged in their favorite pastime of exterminating each other. The war with Paraguay may, for this reason, prove of advantage to the Valley of the Plata as far as it has been destructive to a race that can never be improved, and left the regions of their excesses to become the homes of a law-abiding, industrious, and thriving population. From iniquitous beginnings good results may flow. The gaucho race as a disturbing element has been very much weakened by the war. Brazil has been forced, in the exigencies that have arisen during its progress, to provide for the speedy abolition of slavery, and the despotism of Paraguay, whose existence was a source of danger and embarrassment to the adjoining countries, and a reproach to the age, has been forever destroyed.

The connection of Artigas with the history of Paraguay has led me into an inevitable digression upon the condition of the other countries of the Plata, and especially of the Oriental Republic of the Uruguay. The relevancy of this will appear long before the conclusion of this history. It will be found that in the political condition of the Banda Oriental the first hostilities of the war that resulted so disastrously to Paraguay had their origin.

A few years after the overthrow of Artigas and his band, and the escape of the gaucho chief to Paraguay, another individual equally noted, but enjoying another kind of celebrity, and in a different sphere of society, fell into the power of Francia. This was the celebrated naturalist, M. Aimé Bonpland. The companion and fellow-traveller of the still more celebrated Humboldt had fixed his attention on the interior of South America as offering a rich and unexplored field for his favorite investigations and pursuits, in which all the civilized world was interested. He arrived in Buenos Aires in 1817, accompanied by his wife and daughter, and remained there and in the vicinity for about two years, engaged in his favorite occupation, and in 1819 set out on an exploring expedition through the provinces of the interior. He had observed that throughout a large part of South America the use of the Paraguayan tea, or yerba maté (*Ilex Paraguayensis*), was almost universal. He observed that people who were accustomed to it had a great fondness for it, preferring it to the tea of China, to coffee, cocoa, or any other beverage whatever. An analysis showed to him that it had all the essential qualities of China tea, and he believed that by cultivating and curing it with more care it could be made to supersede the use of the China tea in other countries than South America. He therefore determined to make a thorough experiment, and wait the results. He established himself at Candelaria, on the left bank of the Parana, in the province of Corrientes, nearly opposite Itapua, or, as it is now generally called, Encarnacion. Here he gathered around him a colony of Indians, whom he employed and instructed in cultivating the soil. He never

employed force, for he had none at his command, but by his example and his kindness towards them he so won their confidence and affection that his word was law and his precepts were their religion. He taught them to depend on the labor of their hands for their support, and showed them how easy, by a little care and forethought, it was to have abundance of food for the whole time, instead of depending on their former precarious means of support, — like hunting and fishing, — that sometimes exposed them to great destitution. He was a man exactly calculated to be a missionary of civilization to the savages. He had great skill as a physician, and his knowledge of plants and herbs enabled him to effect such wonders in the healing art as to appear miraculous to the simple natives.

The colony prospered exceedingly. The enterprise was one that, it would seem, could provoke neither jealousy nor enmity. The great work of Bonpland was to investigate the secrets of nature, and learn how far the fruits of this prolific country could be made useful to mankind. Even the gauchos respected him. True he had neither flocks nor herds to tempt them, and they had not the wantonness to destroy his colony from the mere love of destruction.

He had been about two years thus engaged ; he had transplanted his slips of the yerba maté, that promised well ; he had proved to the Indians that a better life was possible to them than they had ever known ; and he was laboriously seeking to ascertain the mercantile and medicinal value of the woods, trees, and plants of that part of the world. His mission was one of philanthropy and self-abnegation. He had gone into the wilderness to spend his days as a benefactor of mankind.

While thus engaged, and knowing that he meditated harm to no one in the world, and laboring only to be of use to his fellow-men of all nations and countries, his work is suddenly brought to a close by the Dictator of Paraguay. The jealous Francia has observed his proceedings, and stealthily, while Bonpland has been pursuing his peaceful avocations, he has

collected a force on the opposite side of the river. The first that the naturalist and his people know is that an armed force has entered the colony and begun cutting and slaying alike men, women, and children. It is a body of Francia's troops, consisting of four hundred men, sent to break up the establishment. The Indians are killed without mercy, and Bonpland himself receives a dangerous sabre-cut in the head. The defenceless Indians who are not slain escape to the woods and jungles; and Bonpland, heavily loaded with fetters, is taken across the river.

The establishment being thus broken up, and Bonpland secure within the territory of the Dictator, his shackles were taken from his ankles, and he was permitted to reside as a prisoner at large, at Santa Maria, some sixty leagues to the southeast of Asuncion. But as he had cut no throats, nor baked anybody in the sun, as had Artigas, he had not the necessary title to the gratitude of Francia, and did not, like the great gaucho, receive any pension from the Dictator. On the contrary, he lived in extreme indigence, at first in absolute want. But his passion for his favorite studies did not desert him. If he could still pursue them, he would be comparatively happy. He asked permission to visit Asuncion, but his request was not granted. He then asked to be allowed to explore other parts of the country, simply as a naturalist, that he might discover what wealth yet unknown might be found in the plants, herbs, gums, and woods of the interior, to discover sources of wealth of which Francia would be the sole beneficiary. But this petition was as ungraciously refused as the other.

Francia, in recounting to Rengger the circumstances of Bonpland's capture, alleged, in justification of it, that his cultivation of the yerba maté would diminish the revenues of Paraguay, which at that time had a monopoly of the article. He alleged, as another reason, that the territory where the colony was established belonged to Paraguay. But as he never before or since exercised jurisdiction there, and it was known and acknowledged to be within the province of Cor-

rientes, the assertion was absurd and impudent, as was the other accusation against Boupland, that his object was not to cultivate the yerba, but to co-operate with Ramirez, the gaucho chief who had rebelled against Artigas, and was afterwards Most Excellent Protector. "But at this very time," says Rengger, "and for long before, the head of Ramirez was exposed in an iron cage to the eyes of the public in the city of Santa Fé."

At last, after long waiting and hoping that the Dictator would relent toward him, Bonpland settled down at Cerrito, a place near Santa Maria, where he endeavored, on a miniature scale, to gather around him a colony of natives, and be to them as a father and messenger of civilization, as he had been to his larger colony at Candelaria. His skill as a surgeon and physician was again in requisition, and he soon won the love and confidence of all around him. He had no society except the ignorant semi-savage natives, no books, and therefore could not pursue his favorite studies except at great disadvantage; but he never complained, never meddled with anything but his fields and gardens.

But Bonpland, though he knew it not, was not forgotten in his misfortunes. His seizure and detention were made the subject of much comment among all civilized nations, but Francia had him hard and fast, and the more foreign governments and people complained of the act, so long as they sent no vessels of war to enforce their demands, the more self-complacent was he, as, by defying them, all the more important a character did he think himself to be. First the court of Rio de Janeiro attempted to so far placate the tyrant as to induce him to release Bonpland. But the effort was ineffectual. Afterwards the Institute of France took up the matter, and sent a special agent, who went as far as the banks of the Parana, for the same object. The agent, M. Grandsire, himself a naturalist, wisely kept out of Francia's reach and communicated with him only by letter. Even in him Francia could see only a political envoy and spy, and, instead of complying with the request, he

only restricted and watched Bonpland more closely than before.

In the mean while several other foreigners who had been detained for years were allowed to leave Paraguay, and among them were the two Swiss doctors, Rengger and Longchamp. The English Chargé d'Affaires in Buenos Aires, Sir Woodbine Parish, had so far imposed on the vanity of Francia as to make him believe that something like what the Dictator had proposed to Robertson some seven years before could be effected if he would relax his rule a little towards Englishmen, so that they would not be afraid of detention in case they entered Paraguay on commercial business. The bait was eagerly swallowed by Francia, and the English, a few Porteños, and some of other nationalities, were allowed to leave a country that had for nearly a dozen years been their prison. Having thus acceded to the request of Sir Woodbine Parish, Francia in imagination saw an end of all his troubles. Indeed, he had but one; that was the lack of arms and ammunition, of which the governments below would not permit the transmission up the river. But now Francia had allied himself with England; Paraguay and England, England and Paraguay, were to form a union that should be the envy and the wonder of all other nations. Francia imagined that, if necessary, England would send her whole fleet to the Plata, in order that he might get a few muskets, and then he could hurl defiance at Buenos Aires and all his enemies. He communicated to Sir Woodbine, that, having shown so friendly a disposition towards England, he should expect the British government to keep the river open for him to import munitions of war. But that was more than the minister could promise. He wrote a courteous letter of thanks, however, to the Dictator for permitting his countrymen to leave Paraguay, but informed him that his government could not guarantee to him the free navigation of the river. He at the same time took occasion to renew his request for the liberation of M. Bonpland, stipulating that, if he should be permitted to leave the country, he

would respect any conditions that might be imposed upon him.

The anger of Francia was unbounded when he found that England would not protect him in the importation of arms. He had been outwitted by Sir Woodbine, and he had no remedy. The English subjects were safe and beyond his reach, and he could not glut his rage by his favorite diversions of shooting and imprisoning. The letter from his Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires was returned to him with no other comment than what might be inferred from the superscription on the envelope containing it, which was thus: "To — Parish, English Consul, Buenos Aires." Of course poor Bonpland was left to linger in his misery. He was not permitted to know of the interest taken in him beyond the limits of Paraguay, or of the efforts made for his release. His wife was incessant in her labors to interest influential parties in his behalf. But there was only one influence that could affect Francia, and that was the influence of fear. A threat of sending a squadron of war vessels to Asuncion to knock his capital about his ears would have doubtless made him eager to concede all that was asked. But none of the European powers would do that, so the Dictator knew, and the neighboring powers were too much occupied with their own intestine feuds, and were too jealous of each other, to attempt anything of the kind.

But M. Bonpland had within himself the means of his release. His life was a rebuke to Francia. With nothing but his own hands and kindly heart, he had, in the course of years, made himself a comfortable home, surrounded by willing subjects, who looked to him as their guide and father. He taught the natives how easy it was to live in comfort and plenty. He instructed them in the use of tools, and encouraged them to cultivate the soil to a greater extent than had been their wont, to have better houses, to clothe themselves decently, and give up their semi-savage habits. Under his watchful eye the flocks and herds increased, and the natives, whom he had found little better than wandering

savages, under his direction had become a thriving colony. The French captive governed them as he pleased, for they obeyed him as their best friend. All this was observed by Francia, and his never-failing vanity was touched. That any of his subjects should look to any one but El Supremo for anything was an insult to his government. It was easy enough for him to shoot Bonpland or to imprison him; but he seemed to feel that that would cause too great a scandal, and call down upon him more obloquy than he cared to face. To be rid of him he therefore took another way.

One evening Bonpland was visited by one of Francia's officers, and informed that he must leave Paraguay the same night. He was permitted to take a few clothes and a few dollars in money, and then hurried to the bank of the river, whence he was taken in a canoe to the other side and left to his fate. Nine years had he been in Paraguay. During this long and cruel detention he had, by his industry and kind treatment of the natives, and in spite of all disadvantages, accumulated considerable property, that he held in trust for those around him. But as before Francia had forced him to abandon all and enter penniless within his gloomy dominions, so now, when he had ties of interest and affection for the simple people by whom he was surrounded, he was cast out destitute by the envious despot.

The seizure and detention for so many years of M. Bonpland is not properly entitled to so large a space in the history of Paraguay as I have given it, as it had no political importance, and neither during his captivity nor afterwards did it have any influence for good or evil on the general policy of the Dictator or his relations with other nations. It is given at such length as an instance of the acts of Francia, not so bad as hundreds of others, and only of more interest than they by reason of the distinguished character of the sufferer.

CHAPTER XVII.

General Isolation.—The Closing of the Ports.—Effect upon the Commercial Condition of the Country.—Improvement in Agriculture and Manufactures.—These Forced Improvements but Incidents of Acts of the Grossest Tyranny.—Francia as a Cattle-Doctor.

AFTER the defeat of Artigas by his lieutenant, Ramirez, the latter with his bands of gauchos hung upon the southern frontiers of Paraguay, making occasional forays and keeping the Dictator in a state of constant fear. Vessels leaving for Buenos Aires were liable to capture by any band of gauchos that might get sight of them. Francia therefore, soon after he came into power, forbade the departure of any vessels, except at very rare intervals, when he had some purpose of his own to subserve. But from the time that Robertson was permitted to leave, in 1815, till 1825, when Rengger, Longchamp, and several English were allowed to do the same, all egress from the country was absolutely prohibited, and to the time of the Dictator's death, in 1840, no other person, except Bonpland, left the country. The merchants, therefore, who had at the time of the revolution accumulated large quantities of the produce of the country, consisting principally of hides, tobacco, and yerba maté, found themselves suddenly ruined. The risks from Ramirez and his men at that time, it is true, were great, but if overtaken by them they could generally, on payment of a sum of money, get permission to go on with that part of the cargo that was of no use to the gauchos. Besides, these very dangers gave a pretext and occasion for charging high prices. Excessive profits among business men imply extreme risks; and when large fortunes are speedily made, they are usually acquired by those bold speculators who take all the chances. The profits of the

Paraguay trade were then enormous,* and so far from being detrimental to the interests of those engaged in it, the gaucho robbers were an actual benefit to them, as they prevented competition, and left the whole business to be monopolized by a few. But Francia refused permission for any vessel to leave the port, and after that the general commerce was virtually at an end. The goods rotted in the storehouses, and the vessels rotted in the river. The prices of everything from abroad naturally increased enormously, for nothing was allowed to be imported.

This state of things did not fully accord with the interests of the Dictator, as some articles from abroad were needed for the purposes of the state. But the general isolation, that allowed him full power, with no one to criticise his acts whose voice he could not instantly silence, was exactly to his mind. Beyond the confines of Paraguay it was indeed reported that he ruled his people with an iron hand, but of the individual acts of his tyranny nothing was known. He therefore sought to open communication so far as to allow the admission of such goods as he wanted, without permitting any personal communication between his prisoners and the outer world. The port of Ñeembucu, now called the Villa del Pilar, was accordingly made a sort of *entrepôt*, to which a few vessels were permitted to ascend. This was the lowest town of any importance on the river, though some fifty miles above the confluence of the Parana and Paraguay. The country below there, forming the delta, is a succession of marshes and lagoons, alternating with level plains, on many of which the trees and underbrush form an almost impenetrable jungle. In the one, tigers and pumas held undisturbed possession; and in the other, alligators and snakes abounded. This broad waste served the purposes of Francia most effectually, as in later times, from its strategetic position, it served another purpose. It served Francia as a barrier to prevent egress

* Robertson gives an instance where a quantity of salt taken in as ballast, that cost two hundred dollars in Buenos Aires, was sold in Paraguay at a profit over and above all expenses of sixty thousand dollars.

and ingress, and it afterwards served to facilitate the extermination of the nation.

To this point vessels, having first obtained permission from the Dictator, were allowed to ascend. But before going even thus far, the captain or supercargo of each vessel was obliged to forward a manifest of his cargo, which was sent on to Asuncion, when the Dictator made a selection of the goods to be admitted, and named the price he would pay for them in the produce of the country, generally in yerba maté. The vessel was then allowed to go up to Ñeembucu and make the exchange, but the strictest caution was taken that no word of intelligence from the outer world should penetrate to the interior. The goods were taken thence to the capital, and deposited in the government storehouses, and such as were not used for the army were sold out to the inhabitants at prices unknown elsewhere within the last two centuries. A common silk handkerchief, such as would cost in England from two to three shillings, would sell in Paraguay for as many sovereigns. A yard of broadcloth, worth five dollars in Buenos Aires, would cost ten times the amount in Asuncion. A black fur or silk hat would sell for sixty dollars, and a yard of black silk for an ounce. And these were the prices when the products of the country were nearly valueless; when the cattle had increased to vast herds throughout the country; when the tobacco could not be exported, and was only raised for home consumption; when the hides were not worth preserving, as they could not be shipped away, and the bales of yerba maté were rotting in the storehouses of their owners. A good horse could be bought for a silver dollar, and a fat ox for two or three shillings, so that a hat would cost the price of sixty horses or eighty horned cattle.

Thus shut in and forbidden all communication with the rest of the world, the people of Paraguay, finding that any exhibition of thrift, or restiveness, or talent was sure to expose them to the merciless jealousy of the Dictator, fell into a state of apathy and stolidity. But the people were not savages. They must have some of the comforts and necessaries of

civilization, and to obtain them they must make them for themselves. The protectionist doctrine was strictly applied by Francia. The natural result followed; people learned to manufacture for themselves. They made themselves chairs and tables, rough boxes to hold their clothes, and bedsteads with strips of green hide for bed-cords. They learned, too, to spin and weave. But in their mode of doing these things there had been no improvement since the days of Penelope. Even to this day the spindle is the principal thing used besides the fingers for spinning the cotton. This, in order to be worked, must be prepared, whipped, and combed with great care; and then with a spindle about six inches long, to which the thread is attached, they draw out the fibres with a twirl, which when sufficiently twisted they wind up on the spindle in a way that no skill or dexterity can make otherwise than tediously slow; then another yard is spun in the same way and wound up, and then another, till the spindle will hold no more. How many yards a woman can spin in a day one person may imagine as well as another, but it is apparent that the labor requisite for a yard of cloth is a matter of weeks. Occasionally a coarsely made, old-fashioned spinning-wheel, imported in the colonial time, may be seen in the houses of some of the better class. But these are used only for fabrics of coarse texture, and are so imperfectly made that spinning with them is still a slow process. The weaving is done on looms made in the country; and as there are people who make that their speciality, the process, though so slow that it would exhaust the patience of any one not a Paraguayan, is comparatively a short operation. But with the weaving given out by the piece, it is yet a good year's labor for a woman to make a fine cotton shirt. Some of them, it is true, are uselessly fine, and have an amount of embroidery hardly comporting with the bare feet and half-wild aspect of the wearer. Many of the women attain great skill in the working of this embroidery, and the men were compelled to learn something of the use of tools that they would not have needed to learn had the ports been open. But further than that there was no im-

provement in anything. The labor required for decent clothing was so great that people soon learned to go half naked and think nothing of it. A single bullock's hide would buy more cloth, and of a better quality, in Buenos Aires, than a woman in Paraguay could make in a year. But the hides where they lay were not worth a penny, for it was the Dictator's policy that there should be no commerce.

The improvement in manufactures, however, such as it was, has been adduced by the apologists of Francia as a proof of the wisdom of his policy. In the same way it could be proved that the wisest policy for any nation is to shut up the men in prisons, and put them to work at mechanical trades, as it is found that criminals so placed do learn to be tolerable artisans. In fact, the best mechanics in Paraguay at that time were the state prisoners; men who for dreary years were kept in prison, generally for having so much intelligence as to be objects of suspicion. Some of these unhappy men were allowed to beguile their time by making small fancy articles, such as required few tools; and some even made boots, shoes, saddles, bridles, and other horse-trappings. These men, thus shut up for many years, would naturally learn to do well what they chose to do, as they were allowed to enjoy the fruits of their labor in so far as to assist in their own support, and thus lighten the burden of their families.

The closing of the ports also compelled many of the more wealthy citizens to depend on the home production for many of those luxuries of the table which they had been accustomed to import. Hence more attention than formerly was given to the cultivation of cotton, — which it had before been found more profitable to import already manufactured, — and of those fruits of which sweetmeats were made, to the culture of the sugar-cane, and to the manufacture of the rum, or *caña*, of the country. The grape, however, was neglected, and has been to this time; and though the soil and climate are well adapted to it, yet it has never been cultivated, except to be eaten as fresh fruit. No wine of any consequence has ever been made in the country.

The character of the Paraguayan people was naturally so docile, that only by general and intense personal suffering could they be provoked to turn on their oppressor. Francia understood their peaceable disposition, and he was aware that so long as the masses of the people did not lack for food they would not be dangerous, unless they were incited to resistance by men of military prestige and superior capacity. All such it was his early care to put out of the way, and he took especial pains that the lower classes should never be driven to those excesses to which hunger and want will excite the most quiet and docile. The soil was naturally so fertile that scarcely any labor was required to make it produce all the sugar-cane, tobacco, mandioca, and Indian corn that the inhabitants required for their own consumption; and as nothing was allowed to be exported, there was no inducement for them to cultivate anything more than sufficed for their own necessities. The cattle, that ever since the time of Cabeza de Vaca had been multiplying at an astonishing ratio of increase, were so numerous as to be of scarcely any value after the closing of the ports put an end to the export of hides and tallow. Hence the people in the country lived in lazy abundance, and grew indolent, vicious, and immoral, as any people would under such circumstances. In the towns the lower classes, the lazy, thriftless, and dissolute, were encouraged in their gross and idle habits by the Dictator's policy compelling the rich estancieros to send their cattle to the public slaughter-houses to be butchered, and then distributed gratuitously to the vicious and abandoned. This class naturally soon learned to regard Francia as a benefactor; and the fact that the meat they consumed had been robbed from the better class of citizens caused them to regard all such persons as their natural enemies, to be accused to the Dictator in case they resisted their insolence and extortion. This was more particularly the case with the soldiers, who, if they were scrupulous and exact when on duty, knew that there was scarcely any excess in which they might not indulge with impunity at all other times.

The compulsory gift of cattle to feed the poor, however, was

but a trifling hardship in itself, as the herds had become so numerous that the increase was greater than the consumption. Besides, a large portion of what was required, both for the food of the soldiers and for gratuitous distribution, was taken from the estates that, as a part of the machinery of the conspiracy, had been confiscated when the owners were executed. But it was a more serious matter when the Dictator ordered all the cattle in several of the populous districts of the state to be indiscriminately slaughtered. At one time a kind of tick, called there the garrapata, had become so numerous, and so infested the cattle, as to cause very great loss and annoyance. The indolent owners took little or no pains to destroy them in the embryo state, or to separate cattle that were covered with them from ranging with the herds. Francia's remedy was like that of the physician who cut off the patient's head to prevent him from dying of a fever. He ordered the herds of cattle among which the garrapata had appeared to be all killed off without exception, and the owners were compelled to see these orders executed. Sometimes these herds contained as many as two or three thousand head, and the work of slaughter was a labor of weeks. But the Dictator had commanded, and the unhappy estanciero knew that anything like hesitation in obeying would be followed by imprisonment and death.

But the garrapatas were not exterminated, notwithstanding the sweeping measure of Francia. They have continued from that day to this to infest the cattle and other animals, but the people find no difficulty in so far destroying them that they are regarded as of trifling consequence.

These forced improvements in agriculture and in mechanic arts are all that the reign of Francia has to show of domestic benefit derived from his rule; and these were purchased at a price far beyond their value, and only followed incidentally from acts of the grossest tyranny. But anything to vary the current or relieve the "running shriek," anything in the history of those dark times that is not a story of blood or torture, is a relief. Henceforth, until the event of death destroys the illusion that had come to possess the people of Paraguay

that Francia was the fiend incarnate, gifted with supernatural powers, this history can be little more than the chronicles and details of his atrocities.

Not only were the people compelled for their own convenience and comfort to learn to some extent the use of tools, and to manufacture certain articles which they had before been accustomed to import, but they were obliged by the Dictator to make the clothes with which his soldiers were clad, and also to make the saddles, bridles, and other trappings for the horses of his cavalry. For a man in the government employ to botch his work, though he had never been taught any trade, was a crime, in the eyes of Francia, against the government; and in one instance a shoemaker who had been ordered to make some belts, which, either from ignorance or clumsiness, he had made badly, or at least not according to the fancy of Francia, was subjected to a reprimand which, in that instance, seems to have served to make him, if not more skilful, at least more careful, for the future. Being called to the door of the Government House by the sentinel, the Dictator ordered the delinquent to be taken to the gallows across the way, where he was to walk beneath it three times, and the admonition given him that if his next belts were not better made he should be hung thereon. He was accordingly passed and repassed under the gibbet, and the next belts that he made so well suited the Dictator that he was approved by him for his greater skill, and made belt-maker-general for the army. Whether this implied that his labor or his remuneration was increased is not mentioned either by Rengger or Robertson, both of whom mention the circumstance. This act is commented upon with much satisfaction by Carlyle, as showing great wisdom on the part of his hero, and as a most excellent way of quickening the intellects and improving the handicraft of unskilful laborers. Even Rengger, whose work appears to all who have had any personal knowledge of the reign of terror as altogether too favorable to Francia, and to be written in an apologetic spirit rather than otherwise, in mitigation of

the judgment against his cruelties, commends this act as having had a good effect in stimulating artisans and all other laborers, inciting them to greater care and skill. Indeed, whatever the Dictator did, having in any respect a good result, notwithstanding the suffering and the expense of life or property it may have cost, is largely credited by this author to the tyrant, while the reviewer rings many changes upon it as evidence of his wisdom and his beneficent rule. According to this reasoning, it would be a most blessed thing if some Francia might obtain absolute control of the government of Australia, New Zealand, or other British province, and rigidly prohibit all communication with the outer world. No doubt certain kinds of native industry would be stimulated, but no doubt, also, the mind and spirit of the people would be dwarfed and stunted, until they might passively submit to become mere machines, without ambition or hope ever to emerge from their misery and degradation.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Scarcity of Data for a History of Francia's Times. — Capricious Character of his Government. — His Jealousy of all Persons of Intelligence. — He gives a Levee. — Unnatural Conduct towards his Father. — Treatment of his Natural Children. — Religious Belief. — Banishment of Mendez. — The Prisons. — The Chamber of Truth. — Tevego a Place of Exile. — Executions. — Persecution of the Spaniards. — Forced Contributions. — Marriage discountenanced; forbidden except with Negroes. — Francia makes himself the Head of the Church. — Question of his Insanity. — His Motives in closing the Ports and excluding Foreigners.

FROM this time till the death of the Dictator, there is little to be said that can properly be called history; no living, moving diorama in which individual men occupy the foreground, each acting the part to which his talents, his education, or his ambition, lead him. It is only a dark level, a gloomy stationary scene; and the only figures that appear on it, save only the sombre Dictator, whose presence clouds it all, are the victims whose clanking chains we shall see and whose death-groans we shall hear. The country was reduced so entirely to the will of one man, that, having no foreign policy, no connections abroad, no change within, and no other incidents of interest than the arrest and execution of suspected or obnoxious persons, the country had no history except the cruelties of Francia. For all the rest it was the same one day, one week, month, or year as another. There was neither social intercourse nor domestic confidence. Nor did it seem that a change would ever come. The tyrant lived much beyond the allotted age of man, and to the last evinced the same inflexible love of persecution and the same pleasure in causing fear and despair. None knew who were safe or who in danger. They only knew that about the same number of victims would be taken each year, some to be

shot, but the greater part to lie in prison till the death of the Dictator or of themselves should set them free. This work from this time to the close of the dictatorship might properly be called "The Diversions of Francia," but the reader is here warned it will be but heavy diversion to him, a story of continuous horrors, and for all purposes of the historic progress of the country may as well be omitted.

Indeed, it is scarcely possible to give anything like a connected or chronological account of the cruelties of the Dictator during the last fourteen years of his life. No records of anything, so far as I have been able to ascertain, were kept; there was no printing-press in the country, and the ports were so closely shut and guarded, lest the darkness and ignorance of the outer world should break in to obscure the light which glowed around El Supremo, and blind the people to the blessings they enjoyed, that scarcely anything in regard to those gloomy years was ever published in any other part of the world. During Francia's lifetime no person could have ventured, even if so disposed, to keep such a thing as a journal of passing events without the greatest danger to himself; and after his death the succeeding government discountenanced all unfavorable allusions to him, and therefore no one, when the circumstances of the times were fresh in people's memories, ever made a connected relation of the events of Francia's reign. Hence nothing is now to be learned but from the recollections of people living at the time; and as full forty years have passed since many of the tragic incidents occurred which I have to relate, it is impossible to obtain anything like accuracy of dates. At the commencement of the late war, there were many people still living who had a vivid recollection of the circumstances of the arrest and imprisonment or execution of their friends; but such things were so common, and were kept up through so many years during which there was nothing to distinguish one year from another, that those who remembered well the events had often very vague ideas of the dates of their occurrence.

Nearly all that is or can be known of them, with the ex-

ception of the brief reminiscences of Rengger and Robertson, is derived orally from persons who were living at the time. These people are now nearly all dead, though less than thirty years have passed since the decease of Francia. From the oldest and most intelligent of them I endeavored to collect such reminiscences of their youth as they could give me, and from notes taken thus I shall endeavor to make out such an account of the events as they were able to give; but as the acts of Francia could generally be traced to no motive, and there was seldom any antecedent event to give warning of his most severe measures, my informants could only tell me of the occurrences, not pretending to give the dates within two or three years. After the Dictator had fairly got the machinery of his authority in order, people took little note of time or of the year; and probably, at his death, not one quarter part of the inhabitants knew how long he had been in power, or in what year of the century they were living. To show intelligence above the ordinary level was dangerous; and to evince any disposition to inquire into the acts of Francia, or any curiosity to learn what events were then transpiring, either in or out of Paraguay, was fatal; and had there been in all Paraguay a person disposed to make a record of what was going on around him, he could not without great danger, in the general distrust that prevailed, have committed the first item to paper. Husbands were afraid of their wives, wives of their husbands, brother was afraid of brother, and all were afraid of the prying eyes of their servants and slaves. As Carlyle says, "One desiderates some biography of Francia by a native." But how was a native to gather the materials of a biography? Francia destroyed, not only his own principal records, but took good care that no one else should make or preserve any. And therefore, if I give an account of the treatment of some of the prominent people of Paraguay, especially those who had attained some position, influence, or reputation previous to his accession to power, the narrative will be as connected as anything that can be formed from the materials that now exist.

When Francia was first elected Dictator, partly from vanity and partly with the desire to show himself to the people with the trappings of authority, and to remind them that he was the central figure of the country, to whom the obsequious attentions that had formerly been paid to the governors of the Spanish *régime* were all to be directed, he so far unbent from his habitual reserve and cynicism as to hold a public levee, which all the principal persons of the capital were permitted to attend. On this occasion, dressed out in a fantastic manner, he showed the delight and self-conceit of a boy at sight of the bright buttons on his first suit of jacket and trousers. Anything of this kind, however, was repugnant to his character; and ever afterwards, as throughout his previous life, unless during a short period when he was laying his plans for gaining power, he evinced too great contempt for everybody to put himself to the inconvenience of another reception. Ever since his return from the University of Cordova, he affected to despise everybody in Paraguay. After being dismissed from the College of Asuncion he lived for a time with his father at Yaguaron, of which the old man was the *géfe*, or chief of police. There the future Dictator lived the life of a recluse, shut up in a room by himself, and holding scarcely any intercourse with his own family or any one else. He made no visits, but passed the whole time at his own house in a kind of twilight, with the door slightly ajar, but sufficiently open to admit the light for him to read. He took no interest in the amusements of the place, had no social intercourse, and did not go abroad, except occasionally he would go out partridge shooting. The people of the village took it for granted that a man who lived thus shut up, with no companions but his books, must be a prodigy of learning and wisdom. His father, however, thought that this was done more from affectation than any love of knowledge, and used to say that "his son Gaspar was either a great philosopher or a great fool."

The son, however, could not long live at peace with the father, and Gaspar left the family abode at Yaguaron and took

up his residence at Ibirai, a league and a half from the capital, and from that time his family were to him as other people. The ties of consanguinity, if they had ever existed, were entirely severed; and though his father afterwards made some overtures of reconciliation, they were treated with contempt by Francia. He was as indifferent to the welfare and happiness of his brothers, sisters, and parents as to that of his natural children, whom he permitted to follow the fortunes of their low and abandoned mothers, and make a precarious living in menial occupations, dependent on charity or on the offer and refuse of the market which was thrown to the dogs and the beggars. On his death-bed, the elder Francia, or França, made a last effort at reconciliation with his son, for he feared to enter the unseen world bearing with him the unrevoked curse of his unnatural child. He therefore sent to beg that he would visit him in his last moments. Francia declined doing so, and another message was sent to him more urgent and piteous, stating that his father feared he might not enter the gates of paradise unless the two should be reconciled. To this dying request Francia replied, that, if his father could not enter heaven without his forgiveness, he might enter the abode of the damned, for he would not go near him. The accuracy of this anecdote of Francia's implacable resentment has been questioned by those who would make a hero of him. The tradition of it, however, was familiar to many during my residence in Paraguay, and there, among those who knew his character and his acts, no one had any more doubt of its authenticity than of the murder of Yegros, Velasco, or Cabañas. It may be said, perhaps, in extenuation of this unnatural act of Francia, that he did not attach the same importance to death-bed confessions, or regard the efficacy of extreme unction, as did most Paraguayans. He was an avowed infidel, a disciple of Voltaire and Volney, and his scanty library was composed mainly of infidel works.

He was not, however, possessed of one arm of power which has since been used with terrible effect. The priests he treated with contumely and harshness, making no distinc-

tion between them and others, except that, as they had more influence, he persecuted them with greater severity. But he did not resort to the plan practised by his successors of extorting from them the secrets of the confessional, or compel them to disclose to him what they had extorted in the hour of death. This expedient for a more perfect system of espionage was not unimproved, however, by his successors. The elder Lopez treated the priests with more respect, and sustained them as an arm of the civil power, and encouraged the people to confess to them, and directed the fathers to impress it upon all, that only through full confession could they ever escape the doom of eternal misery. The younger Lopez, as we shall see in the proper place, reaped the fruit of the seed thus sown by the father. He particularly imposed it as a duty upon all the priests to question the dying in regard to their feelings towards him and his government, and if they knew or had ever heard of any other person's giving expression to any feelings unfriendly to him, or reflecting upon his actions. In this way, as we shall see, the innermost thoughts of the whole people were made apparent to Lopez; so that his country became literally a Dionysian Gallery, and not only the expressions, but the thoughts, of all were sure to reach him.

Not long after the occurrence of his only levee, however, Francia took a more effectual mode to impress upon the people, and especially the native Spaniards, a sense of their helplessness and of his own power. At this time Francia kept a secretary by the name of Martinez, who was dignified with the title of Prime Minister, or Secretary of State,—a pompous, ignorant fellow, combining these two qualities, so often united in similar persons, servility to superiors and insolence to dependants and inferiors. By Francia's order he summoned all the old Spaniards to appear in front of his house, but for what purpose they were not at the time informed. In obedience to the summons, they all appeared at the hour designated, which was in the hottest part of the day. When all were assembled, the Secretary of State appeared on the veranda in front of them, arrayed in a

fantastic dress, and surveyed the unfortunate men before him, who stood hat in hand, exposed to the scorching rays of the sun, anxiously awaiting what he might have to say. After smoking his cigar, sipping his maté, and surveying with evident satisfaction the faces of those before him, he began to address them, calling them a lot of brutes and beasts who deserved to be hanged, to be shot, to be treated like dogs. He told them that they were the natural enemies of the Paraguayan natives, and that they were conspirators, rebels, enemies of his Excellency the Dictator, and that they had been engaged in intrigues and treason, and were greatly beholden to the Dictator that they had not all been destroyed. This harangue, which was intended to be as insulting and humiliating as words could make it to the native Spaniards, served to convince them, in the august presence of his Excellency at the levee had not already done so, that they had a master over them with whom it would be dangerous to trifle; that they were all marked victims of his tyranny.

To add to the other terrors of the rule of Francia was its complete mystery. Every one was in constant fear, for the reason that no one could tell what offence had been committed by those who were arrested, imprisoned, or executed. People the most cautious and the most inoffensive were liable at any time to be taken without any notice or suspicion of the reason therefor. They would be sent into exile or taken to prison; and in the latter case, if they were not executed, their families would only know that they still lived by the fact that they were permitted to send them their meals. An instance mentioned by Robertson will serve to illustrate this practice.

A man by the name of Mendez, from Montevideo, lived in Paraguay with his family, consisting of a wife and three children, for some years before the revolution. He was a shop-keeper, and by close attention to his business was so successful that his wife, a very handsome, sprightly woman, was able to appear in the society of Asuncion in a style to which the sim-

ple natives were not accustomed, and the house came to be regarded as a favorite resort for foreigners and persons accustomed to those social observances with which the Paraguayans were unfamiliar. Mendez was a man who took no part in politics, and could have done nothing to provoke the enmity of Francia. He would, however, furnish a striking example, and accordingly one evening, when he was holding a little levee, or *tertulia*, in his house, a messenger from the Dictator appeared at his door and called him out to tell him that he and his family were banished a distance of some two or three hundred miles into the forests of the interior. The sufferings which he and his family underwent before they arrived there were, as described by Robertson, of the most terrible character. But these things were so common in Paraguay during the time of the Dictator, that there is no particular reason for describing this case in preference to those of others; though this was at the commencement of the dictatorship, and when Francia had scarcely begun to show his true character. So much was he dreaded, that, so soon as any one was found to have incurred his displeasure, all his neighbors and friends were compelled from fear of their lives to forsake him, to leave him to his fate. Says Robertson: "From the moment that Mendez' banishment became known, his house, his family, and himself were all deserted as if a mortal and contagious disease were in the dwelling. Not a soul in all Paraguay but was terrified to go near the banished man, dreading a participation in his doom. His business had been pretty extensive; none now dared to act as his agent, recover his debts, or take charge of his property; no one would pay him; no one would purchase, at any price, anything he had. He could not, on any terms, get a single person to charter him a vessel that might carry himself and family to the port nearest to his place of banishment. The mark of Cain seemed suddenly to be branded on his forehead. All men fled from him as from the plague; in the midst of a populous city he was at once abandoned to the solitude of the desert."*

* "There was an old Spaniard who lived next door to me, and whom I had

The prisons of Paraguay are, and always have been, of the most noisome description, suited to the character of the government. In Francia's time, says Rengger, there were two classes of them :—

“The first were rather regarded as houses of detention, or to keep prisoners in safety before they had been condemned, or while they were waiting for their cases to be considered. This prison was one hundred feet long, with an L of the house projecting. It had only one story, divided into eight rooms, that enclosed a large yard, or *patio*. In each room were thirty or forty prisoners, who not all being able to sleep on the ground, some of them suspended their hammocks above the others. What must forty persons suffer, shut up twelve hours in the twenty-four in a little room without a window or any other breathing-place, in a country where three quarters of the year the heat rises to from 23° to 28° Reaumer, and under a roof that the sun heats all the day up to above 50°. Thus it is that the sweat of the prisoner runs from one hammock to another until it falls upon the ground. In the yard of the prison were little cabins, which served to shelter those individuals detained on suspi-

known from my first arrival in Paraguay. He went by the sobriquet of ‘El Pelado,’ ‘the bald man.’ His real name was Milleres. He was an inveterate enemy of the creoles, and a great bigot. . . . He was a man of a fiery, irritable temper ; but still he was a man under the check of practical prudence, and being a mere shop-keeper, from whom most people kept aloof because of his forbidding manners, he was, perhaps, of all men in Asuncion, the least formidable to the Dictator. . . . When Francia proceeded to annihilate and debase the monastic orders, he converted into barracks some of their monasteries. This so exasperated the poor Pelado, especially as his hopes at the time were raised to a great pitch of excitement by a false report of a Russian squadron being on its way to Paraguay, that he gave loose to the following remark : ‘The Franciscans have gone to-day ; but who can tell that Francia's turn may not come to-morrow?’ By some busy and malicious tongue this short but fatal speech was conveyed to the ears of the Dictator. He summoned the Pelado to his presence, and addressed him in these terribly emphatic words : ‘As to when it may be my turn to go I am not aware ; but this I know, *that you shall go before me.*’ Next morning the Pelado was brought to the *banquillo* placed not far from Francia's window ; and the Dictator delivered with his own hands, to three soldiers, the three ball cartridges with which the unfortunate man was to be shot. The aim was not effectual, and the executioners were ordered to despatch him with their bayonets. On the whole of this scene of barbarity and blood Francia looked from his window, being not distant more than thirty yards from the place of slaughter.” — ROBERTSON, *Reign of Terror*.

cion and those condemned for slight crimes. Some of the prisoners in the yards were sent out during the daytime to labor on the public works, and could thus have some exercise. In these cases they were chained together, two and two, or they had only the fetters, that consists of a heavy ring of iron upon the foot, whilst the greater part of the other prisoners carried another kind of fetters, whose weight was often more than twenty-five pounds, notwithstanding which it permitted them to travel. The state gave a little food and some clothes to those prisoners who were occupied on the public works ; the others were maintained at their own cost, or by charity that two or three of them daily went out to seek through the city, accompanied by a soldier, or that some people sent to the prison, either for charity or in fulfilment of some promise. In these prisons were seen the Paraguayan, the Indian, the mulatto, the white, and the negro, the master and the slave ; all classes and ages confined together ; the innocent and the guilty, the condemned and the simply accused, the footpad of the roads, the assassin, and the betrayer, and many times were they tied together by a chain. But what fills the complement of this picture was the demoralization always increasing of the greater part of the prisoners, and the fierce joy, the ferocious delight, that they manifested at the arrival of a new victim. The female prisoners, fortunately very few, dwelt in a room and in a part of the yard fenced off from the larger one, where they could communicate more or less with the men. The women who from some cause had fallen into disgrace with the Dictator were there mixed with prostitutes and criminals, and exposed to every insult from the prisoners. These women dragged their fetters the same as the men, and not even pregnancy was sufficient to ameliorate their condition."

The jailer of this prison was a man named Gomez, of whose efforts to alleviate the sufferings of the prisoners Renger speaks in the highest terms. He says of him, that, before being assigned to this duty, he himself had suffered many years in the same prison, where he had been shut up many years as a prisoner of state ; that, after he had been given his liberty by the Dictator, he was assigned to the post of jailer, which he was obliged to accept.

"The prisons of state consist of small cells, without windows, and

in damp holes, where it is impossible to set the foot except in the mud. These prisons appear to be designed for objects of the vengeance of the Dictator, some suffering there a solitary seclusion, while others are shut up two, and even four, in each cell ; all wear fetters, and are not permitted to communicate with each other, a sentinel being always in sight. By day the door is open, but at sunset it is closely shut, and it is not permitted them to have light, nor to occupy themselves in anything, so that an unfortunate prisoner, an acquaintance of mine, having succeeded in taming some mice in his prison, the sentinel hunted and killed them. The beard, hair, and nails grow long, but they have no permission or means to cut them. Their families are not permitted to send them anything to eat more than twice a day, and this must consist of the food that is considered the most cheap and common, such as beef and mandioca root. The soldiers to whom the food is delivered at the door of the prison turn it over with their bayonets to see if it has any papers or instruments. Many times they keep it for themselves, or throw it upon the ground. When any of the prisoners are sick, no kind of assistance is given to them except in their last moments, and even then it can only be done by day ; by night the door is shut, leaving the unhappy victim abandoned to his sufferings. Not even to the last agony is he relieved of his chains. The total number of prisoners at our departure from Paraguay was at least five hundred, a tenth part of whom, at least, were of that class."

In addition to the prisons before described, Francia had another, which he denominated "The Chamber of Truth," and it was here that his victims who were suspected of having knowledge of anything which he was not already possessed of were tortured. Into this dark chamber the accused were taken and questioned in regard to whatever had been suspected by Francia ; and if, as was generally the case, they knew nothing in regard to the matter, they were then beaten until their memories should be quickened to such admission as Francia desired to obtain, or until they expired under the repeated application of the torture. He had not learned the refinement of the art as some fifty years later, in a more enlightened age, it was practised by Lopez. But Francia differed from his successor in this, that he only flogged and

starved his victims for a purpose, and not for the simple pleasure of inflicting misery for the delight which it afforded him. If he conceived the idea that a person was concealing anything which he wished to know, he resorted to torture as the readiest means to make him divulge it. But the suffering and agony were to him a matter of perfect indifference. For an accused person to confess, however, was only to secure him a more speedy termination of his sufferings. When Francia had obtained from him by this means all that he desired, his next step was to order him to be shot or hung.

To the other punishments which Francia visited upon the unhappy Paraguayans, that of exile was added. His system was in no respect confined to the capital. It was as rigorously enforced in the remotest parts of the state as in Asuncion and vicinity. Hence a mere decree or order from the Dictator for a person or family to retire into any remote part was easily enforced. And if, for any reason, Francia wished to remove persons from the city, and did not care either to execute them or hold them as prisoners, he had only to decree their banishment and assign them the place to which they must retire. He had, however, a place selected, especially for criminals of a low class; and he therefore established a sort of criminal colony at a place called Tevego, one hundred leagues northward from Asuncion. It is now called San Salvador. The spot is low and unhealthy, and was then exposed to attacks of the Indians, and the soil was of that sandy character capable of producing but little, so that the colonists were constantly exposed to inundations and starvation. A guard of soldiers was kept there to prevent them from escaping; and there, exposed to the malaria of the marshes, without the comforts of civilization, the poor wretches soon succumbed, and it was only by recruits sent from other parts that the colony was kept up. The abandoned character of the people, however, rendered it in some respects a place which it was desirable for Francia to have at hand, as whenever a person of respectability was sent there to end his days, it was a stigma and a disgrace

which execution by torture or by shooting could never attach. The number of people who, during Francia's reign of nearly thirty years, were sent into this exile is not known, and never will be, but it is certain that there were a great many. The colony was kept up for more than twenty-five years; and as the exiles were supposed to perish within two or three years after their entrance into this abode of misery, their number from first to last may be reckoned by thousands.

His executions were attended by circumstances of peculiar horror. He always superintended them himself, and if he did not experience the same delight in witnessing the miseries of his victims and hearing his torturers' accounts of their contortions, shrieks, and agonies as did his successor, Lopez, he had equal delight in contemplating the ghastly fear that he inspired among their relatives and friends. The Government House, where he spent most of his time, meditating upon the deeds of terror either done or to be done, was situate in the Plaza, fronting a fine lawn or plot of ground extending towards the bank of the river. His window commanded a view of this plaza, on the other side of which stood an orange-tree. Beneath this tree — "the tree is living yet" — was placed a stool or bench called the *banquillo*, on which the doomed man was seated for execution. Francia himself acted as chief executioner. He was so parsimonious of his ammunition (or perhaps it was from sheer cruelty) that he would allow but three cartridges for the despatch of one victim. These he would give with his own hand to as many soldiers, who, having taken their posts at a convenient distance from the *banquillo*, at the word discharge their pieces, Francia viewing the scene either from the corridor or window of his house. But as he was too economical of his ammunition to waste it for the purpose of saving from prolonged misery the objects of his vengeance, and his soldiers, knowing little of the use of fire-arms, sometimes but slightly wounded the man they were to kill, they would afterwards despatch their victim with their bayonets, while the Dictator would look on, indifferent to everything except to satisfy himself that the

man was finally dead. It was not sufficient, however, for him to see the victims butchered; they were always left for the whole day to lie before his window, that he might feast his eyes on the sight, sharing his joys with the vultures that were gathering about, anticipating a less brutal repast than the Dictator had gorged himself upon. There they must lie through the heat of the day, to be seen by all who were compelled to pass in that vicinity,—few others would pass,—and when night fell the friends of the family might take them away and hide them from the further vengeance or desecration of either the Dictator or the vultures.

To obtain the arms and ammunition which Francia required, it was more convenient for him to send away money to purchase them than the productions of the country, inasmuch as it was easier to get gold and silver out of the country than the yerba and tobacco, which, being more bulky, were in consequence more liable to fall into the hands of the freebooters on the banks of the river below. It was, therefore, very unfortunate for a man to be thought rich, or to have money about him, for in Francia's eyes it was as grave an offence to be rich as to be a Spaniard. When, therefore, he had determined to make a forced contribution from any person whom he supposed either had money or could obtain it, he would send a soldier to notify him that El Supremo commanded his presence at the Government House. Such a command was invariably followed by instant obedience, and the person thus called, with fear and trembling, would accompany the soldier to the dingy room of the Dictator, where, being admitted, he would stand humbly to receive his sentence, probably not having the least suspicion of what offence he was to be accused. Standing in front of the haughty Dictator, with his arms extended towards the ground, he would meekly await his sentence. The Dictator, if he had determined to extort money from him, would begin after this manner, "You villain! you are an enemy to my government." To which the man, not daring to raise his eyes, would probably reply, "I have never said a word against

your government." "But you have heard others speak against it, and you did not denounce them." "Your Excellency, I do not remember to have ever heard any one speak against you or your government." "You don't, villain! I will make you remember. Bring me five thousand dollars within three days, or you go to the banquillo." "Your Excellency, I have not five thousand dollars, and know not how to obtain it." "Away to prison." The poor, trembling wretch would then be marched off to the public prison, where he could communicate with his family and friends and inform them that unless within three days he could raise the money for his ransom his life would be the forfeit. Sometimes they would be able to raise the money; and then the offender would generally be let out, though frequently it happened that, notwithstanding the money was paid by his friends, he was left to rot and die, or perhaps was finally executed by the order of the Supremo.

On one occasion, before the ports were entirely closed to commerce, Francia being desirous of raising a considerable sum of money, brought three of the most wealthy and respectable merchants in town, Aramburu, Garmendia, and Recalde, before him, and accused them of having sent, or attempted to send, money out of the country. Each protested in turn that he had done nothing of the kind. Francia, however, would not listen to their denials, but told them that they were his enemies, and enemies of the government, and ordered them, under penalty of death, to bring him from sixteen to thirty thousand dollars each within a stipulated time. They were all sent to prison, to remain until the money should be forthcoming. Aramburu was to give thirty thousand dollars; and being a man of very large property for that country, and having been engaged in merchandising, he had so large a portion of this sum at his command, that, with the aid of his friends, before the fatal day arrived, the whole thirty thousand dollars was deposited with the Dictator. Recalde was also able, with the assistance of friends, to raise the amount required. Garmendia, however, could not collect or

raise the sixteen thousand dollars which he had been condemned to pay. His wife, upon hearing of his imprisonment and the amount necessary to save him, had exerted herself, with many of her friends and relatives, to obtain the money, and succeeded in getting together the larger half of it, which she took to the Government House and left there, begging for more time to raise the balance. Francia took the money and kept it, but the deficit was never made up, for, when the allotted time expired, Garmendia was taken from the prison to the banquillo and there shot, and left lying beneath the fatal orange-tree for the buzzards and the Dictator to look upon until the night should come, and his friends and family might take away his remains for burial.

In most cases, however, Francia did not condescend to allege any offence against his victims. They were fined, imprisoned, banished, or shot, nobody knew why or dared to ask his neighbor. There was gloom over all the country, so dense that never was heard the shout of laughter, never were meetings of young or old for amusement or conversation. The shadow of Francia's presence was over all like a pall, and though men lived, labored, and raised their children, all were in a state of chronic terror such as perhaps never existed elsewhere than in Paraguay before or since.

Hypocrisy is said to be the homage which vice pays to virtue. Such homage, however, was never rendered by Francia. He made no pretensions to virtue. Like the Arab, he scorned to be the slave of his word, and people who endeavored to observe the forms and appearances of a correct and moral life were, for that very cause, the more obnoxious to him. The affected superiority of the Spaniards over the creoles had doubtless often excited his gorge and contempt long before he became the head of the government; and it was certainly calculated to inspire anything but admiration for the native Spaniards, when a poor adventurer from Spain, who might have been a cobbler or a tinker in his own country, considered that he was doing honor to any part of America in which he might take up his residence. But this did not excite the jeal-

ousy of Francia so much as the sight of well-to-do people, who, from the very fact that they were moral and respectable, commanded influence and respect. He had a double motive, therefore, for forbidding all marriages of Spaniards with any other than negroes or mulattoes.

For the priests he had an aversion even stronger than for the Spaniards or the intelligent, respectable, and wealthy creoles. Their pretended sanctity, under cloak of which they imposed on the superstitious young daughters of mothers and fathers who feared their displeasure, gave the cynical Dictator reason to despise them. But it was not because of their lazy, dissolute lives that he hated them. In spite of their gross licentiousness they had great influence, and especially among the lower classes, where Francia was resolved to be all powerful. A church government like that existing in Paraguay, that exercised authority independent of the civil power, being, as it was, of a secret and inquisitorial character, was inconsistent with his absolute rule, and he made short work of bishop, priests, and church property. He would tolerate nobody who acknowledged any authority independent of himself, and, after the example of Henry VIII., he made himself the head of the Church within his own dominions. The Convent of San Francisco was taken for barracks, and the bishop was badgered by the Dictator until he became insane, when he was superseded, and a vicar-general appointed to administer the spiritual affairs under Francia's direction. Religious processions in the street were suppressed, and the assembling in the churches at night was forbidden, lest people might take such opportunity to engage in dangerous conspiracies. Thus, in the early part of his career, did he labor to destroy every influence that might in any way militate against his absolute will. He had indeed destroyed all opposition, at least so far that no one dared to speak a word against his most arbitrary acts before his three years' time as Dictator expired. Having thus become absolute, it was very easy for him, through the Congress which he called, to have himself declared perpetual Dictator.

It appears that so long as the Robertsons or Rengger and

Longchamp were in the country, the Dictator occasionally invited them to visit him. They could tell him something of events transpiring in the outer world, of which he was lamentably ignorant; and up to the time that the Robertsons left they occasionally received letters and newspapers from abroad, the contents of which Francia was naturally desirous of knowing. He was particularly anxious to know what the rest of the world was saying about him and his government. He in this respect resembled that African prince who was seated beneath a palm-tree, clad in a red, ragged, cast-off monkey-jacket, without pantaloons, with an old glazed cap on, and the hilt of a broken sword beside him, and two of his subjects, almost nude, standing by to serve him, when, as some French officers from a war vessel in the offing passed by, he inquired of them if there was much talk about him in France. So Francia was curious to know if the world was mainly concerned in discussing his transcendent merits. Of all the eminent men, he seemed to think that Napoleon was most like himself, and accordingly regarded him as most worthy of his admiration. Perhaps the author of "Heroes and Hero Worship," who seems to have about the same admiration for one as for the other, may see the same resemblance between these two heroes.

It has often been alleged, in extenuation of Francia's conduct, that he was more or less insane, but never yet lived a man whose acts were all more consistent with his general character. There was too much method in his madness, the same line of conduct was too long sustained, to leave a doubt in regard to his sanity. There were no aberrations in his general course, no spasmodic acts of clemency or consideration, nothing, in fact, to show that every word and deed of his life was not the result of a deliberate purpose. That the purpose was bad, selfish, cruel, argues nothing against his sanity; and his extreme consistency with himself, through all the long years of his power, proves conclusively that his mind was always obedient to his will. His vanity was the controlling principle of his character. He delighted to see and feel

himself absolute, and to have all around him crouch and tremble as before a superior being. To offend this vanity would incite him to torture the offender; but in other instances, and as the general rule of his actions, he shot, imprisoned, or banished his people for the deliberate purpose of causing himself to be feared. It has been sometimes alleged in evidence of his mental aberration, that at some periods, especially when the wind was from the north, he was much more morose and vindictive than at other times. As it is the experience of all, not only in Paraguay but throughout the regions of the Plata, that the warm humid winds from the regions of the equator always produce a feeling of lassitude and depression of spirits that undergo an instant change when the wind veers and the cool breezes from the south set in, it is probable that Francia's evil passions were more demonstrative during the time that the weathercock pointed to the north. Other people were also less amiable, but they were not charged with insanity on that account, and it would be as silly to do it as to question the soundness of a person's mind who happened to be under the very common mental depression arising from indigestion. No, Francia was not the man to become insane. His mind was too narrow for any tumult or confusion of ideas, his thoughts too selfish to deviate from one channel.

His object in closing the ports and destroying the whole commerce of the country was in keeping with the other dark aspects of his character. If the river were left open and free to navigation, and foreigners could come and go, the world would learn of his horrid practices, and his people would also learn that there was sunshine in the sky, though the dark clouds of his power had involved their own land in darkness. He therefore, immediately after getting the reins of government into his own hands, began by putting such restrictions on trade and such difficulties in the way of commerce that no more vessels ventured into Paraguayan waters, and most of those already there were not permitted to leave the country. Nearly all of them remained in the river during his long and dreary dictatorship, rotted, and fell to pieces. Previ-

ously the trade of Paraguay with Buenos Aires had, for the number of people in the country, become very large. The wood of Paraguay was of immense value for very many purposes, as it has a finer grain and harder texture, and is more durable, than any other wood so easily attainable in any other part of the world. Francia forbade its exportation for the same reason that he had prevented the export of the other productions of the country, that its sale for export would necessitate communication with the other provinces. Tobacco, hides, and the yerba maté, were at first, however, allowed to be exported in a few instances, and in return for them foreign merchandise was admitted under the same restrictions which had existed before the revolution. But the coming and going of the small vessels that for many years had carried on this business were incompatible with the rule of the Dictator. If foreign vessels entered Paraguay, and the subjects of foreign countries commanded and navigated them, their governments would demand for them security and protection; and as most of these vessels carried the English or French flag, Francia could not venture to provoke hostilities by dealing with them as with his own subjects. If he permitted foreigners to enter the country for the purposes of trade, he must treat them as human beings, or their governments might declare him a common enemy of mankind; and as he had no fleet or navy, they might easily send a force against him that would soon put an end to his authority. He therefore determined to keep foreigners entirely out of the country. This was not done, however, according to any fixed plan, nor was there ever any general law promulgated of which the foreign owners of vessels detained in Paraguay could complain. The mercantile class in Asuncion, and the owners of vessels in the river, were mostly Spaniards, though their vessels were obliged to sail under the flags of other nations. Whatever outrage, therefore, Francia might commit against them or their vessels, the Spanish government was powerless to give them any assistance or protection, for at that time Buenos Aires was at war with Spain, and though directly interested

in having free trade with Paraguay, Buenos Aires became the defender and auxiliary of Francia in his work of destroying the commerce of the river. It was impossible for any of these merchants or ship-owners who had accumulated property to leave Paraguay after the reign of Francia had fairly commenced. The Dictator not only wanted to destroy the commerce, but he wished to ruin those who had been engaged in it. This he accomplished by fines for alleged offences, for payment of which there was no other alternative than death. But he had another way to ruin them, which was more in accordance with his dark and sinuous policy. For months he would allow no vessel to load or leave the country, and the accumulated hides, tobacco, and yerba would remain at large expense in the hands of the merchants, until deteriorated in quality, or perhaps ruined; and then an order might be issued permitting them to load the vessel and depart. But when the cargo had been taken on board, and the vessels were ready to start, out would come another order for them to discharge everything; until finally there was no business, no trade. The vessels lay moored in the river until they rotted and fell to pieces, and Paraguay was shut out from the world as effectually as if it had been surrounded by a wall of fire. For his own purposes he nevertheless found it necessary to keep up a connection with the outer world. He wanted instruments to enforce his tyranny; arms and ammunition, iron for fetters, and a few tools, were indispensable. To obtain these he occasionally made an exception, and particularly in the case of the Robertson brothers, who were allowed to carry on a small river trade at an immense profit until they were driven from the country in 1815.

CHAPTER XIX.

The Yegros Conspiracy. — Its Counterpart. — The Chamber of Torture. — Execution of the Alleged Conspirators. — Espionage. — Francia turns Land Surveyor. — The City laid Prostrate. — Needless Destruction of Property. — Reconstruction. — Francia's Treatment of Old Spaniards. — General Velasco. — Francia's Letter in Reply to Rengger.

THE most interesting work that could be written on Paraguay, could all the facts be ascertained, would be a complete account of the several conspiracies that have been invented by the different dictators. From all that is known of them, or from all the existing evidence, it is the belief of the most intelligent Paraguayans yet alive, or that were living a year or two ago, that none of them ever had any existence except in the mind of the supreme head of the government. With the exception of that first revolution, instigated by Francia and instantly suppressed in accordance with his previous plan, there never was any pretence of more than one conspiracy during the Dictator's reign. The story of this is to the effect, that about the year 1818 a person by the name of Valta Vargas was sent by the government of Buenos Aires into Paraguay, in order to stir up a revolution; that he was arrested soon after entering the country and made a prisoner, though Francia was unable to connect him with any suspicious circumstance. Other parties, however, were observed by the spies and the police to behave in a very mysterious manner, and it was ascertained that they were in the habit of meeting at the house of a certain individual who was suspected of being unfriendly to the Dictator. This conspiracy, like all the other Paraguayan conspiracies, seems to have been going on for a long time, as much as a year having passed, after the arrival of Valta Vargas, before anything definite or

positive was known in regard to it. The conspirators embraced all the principal men left in the country, including Francia's colleague during the consulship, General Yegros. The plans of the conspiracy, after so long a time in maturing, had advanced so far that a concert of action had been agreed upon by which the Dictator was to be attacked in the streets and summarily despatched. One of the conspirators, however, previous to taking part in the affair, which might involve himself in personal danger, confessed to a priest, and the priest in turn informed Francia of the plan.

"That night," says Robertson, "the groans of the state dungeons were augmented by the wailings of more than fifty of the best inhabitants of Asuncion. Every member of the former Junta was arrested, and every friend and relation he had. Their property was confiscated, and the house in which the conspirators had held their meetings was razed. The blacksmiths could not forge chains fast enough; the rigor and privations of a system of imprisonment already sufficiently callous were augmented; all that demoniacal ingenuity could devise, or fear, hatred, and jealousy wrought to a pitch of frenzy could invent, was had recourse to; the cup of bitterness held up to the prisoners was drained to the dregs; terror and consternation were spread among those who escaped the dungeon. The Dictator felt his arm strengthened by the detection of the plot, while, at the same time, it offered to him a plausible pretext for the multiplication of every precaution which jealousy could suggest and every cruelty which revenge could devise. One motive, and only one, prevented his doing instant execution upon the conspirators. *He was still afraid.* Connected as they were with every family of distinction in Paraguay, he feared to draw down upon him the odium or to raise the rebellion that might, and probably would, be consequent on the wholesale slaughter of his enemies. He left them, therefore, to languish in the state dungeons, unshaved, unshorn, unwashed, badly fed, wretchedly clothed, without communication with a human being, with their nails unpared and their bodies fetid from filth, till death, as he paid his frequent visits, was received, even by the greatest lover of life, as a welcome guest."

This extract from Robertson might be applied with equal

propriety to another conspiracy, of a similar character but more formidable dimensions, that was alleged to have been formed fifty years later. The latter conspiracy resembled the former in almost every particular. In the opinion of the older Paraguayans with whom the author became acquainted, there never was, in the first instance, any conspiracy whatever. It was a device of Francia's to furnish a pretext or excuse for putting the more influential and respectable men of the country out of the way. There is not a word of proof to the contrary. All the evidence that exists in regard to the matter at this time is that Francia arrested, imprisoned, and executed these people, and that through his spies and informers he announced that they had been detected in a conspiracy. Francia's word, therefore, is all the evidence that now exists to sustain the accusation that he then made; and the only proof that exists of the later conspiracy is the word of one more mendacious and cruel than Francia. It is said that Francia became more cruel, distrustful, and suspicious after the detection of this conspiracy than before; but this can be accounted for from the fact, that, knowing it to be a false accusation, and that the idea of the conspiracy originated in his own perverted mind, he had created a degree of enmity and hatred in the minds of the people which was before unknown to them, and which might lead to more desperate measures than they would otherwise venture to attempt. Having invented a conspiracy and then throttled it, he may have afterwards suspected that something like what he had pretended to discover might exist in reality. As he passed through the streets, he feared an assassin at every corner; and therefore, to guard against the danger of suddenly coming into close proximity with a band of assassins, he caused every hedge and bush, and even the houses behind which men meditating evil might conceal themselves when he passed by, to be levelled with the ground. The existence of so many persons of note, though prisoners and in fetters, was a source of anxiety to the Dictator, for the reason that he did not care to put them to death lest it should provoke an uprising

of the people ; for supreme as he was, he feared his shadow and dared not trust to his own power, and, so long as they were living, they would be a source of more or less danger. The overthrow of Artigas, however, and his flight to Paraguay, where he threw himself at the feet of the Dictator, served to remove one of the principal dangers with which Francia had been threatened for a long time. The successor and vanquisher of Artigas, however, Ramirez, attempted to hold some correspondence with the conspirators that Francia already had loaded down with fetters in his dungeon ; and a letter from this gaucho chief addressed to General Yegros, the president of the first Junta, is said to have fallen into the hands of Francia. That any such letter was ever sent by Ramirez, or, if it were, that Yegros had ever done anything to invite it or to encourage Ramirez in his designs against Francia, no evidence exists, and it is believed that Francia's pretext that he had discovered such a letter was but a part of his original plan ; that, having marked his victims for destruction, he desired to have some pretext, after they had been in prison for a long time, for putting them to death ; and they were all successively taken to the Chamber of Truth and tortured until some of them expired, and some not only confessed to their participation in the conspiracy, but implicated others, so that after this mode of eliciting truth got fairly under way, each day brought in new accessions to the band of conspirators. How closely this proceeding of Francia was imitated years after will appear in its proper place. The closing scene is thus described by Robertson :—

“Three demons alone were accessory to the inquisitorial investigations of the Chamber of Torture, — Francia himself, a legal functionary, and a registrar. No one but these ever knew the results of the examinations. The result was only revealed to the public by the corpses of the prisoners as day after day they perished on the banquillo, glutted the eyes of the despot, tempted to voracity the birds of prey, and, after exposure to them for a whole day, were conducted in the evening, often mangled, by their despairing relations, to a dark and silent grave. Poor Don Fulgencio Yegros was

first shot and then bayoneted ; Don Fernando de la Mora followed in the same way ; Galvan, Yturbide, and fifty others, all went in succession. Then came the turn of Don Pedro Juan Cavallero, the second member of the original Junta, and the most beloved by the troops of all the officers in Paraguay. The sentinels came into his cell in the morning to drag him forth to the banquillo, but he had eluded their clutches and given defiance to further tyranny. He had managed to strangle himself during the night, and on the morning destined for his execution was found a ghostly corpse under an epitaph which, in these words, he had written in charcoal upon the wall of the dungeon : *' I know that suicide is contrary to the laws of God and of man, but the tyrant of Paraguay shall never exult in having spilled my blood.'*

According to the ideas of most men, it would be no crime to conspire against such a government as that of Francia's. On the contrary, it would be considered meritorious, and that people who would submit to the rule of such a despot without attempting to throw it off deserved all that they received. But in Paraguay, from the time of Francia's election as Dictator until the downfall of the younger Lopez, a conspiracy of five persons was a thing impossible. People who have not lived in Paraguay can have no idea how thorough was the system of espionage, or in what dread every man lived of all who were around him. It was dangerous for one man to introduce the subject of politics to his nearest relation or most intimate friend. Whoever might listen to it would be instantly suspected of being a spy of the Dictator, and he would dare to hear nothing of the kind ; the man might be his most intimate friend, and on all other matters save the government the two might be on the most confidential terms. But it was known to be the special will of Francia that every person who heard the question of his government criticised or discussed should immediately report it, and that, if he failed to do so, he would be himself considered a criminal and a traitor. Therefore, whenever a man might hear anything of that kind, —and the same is true not only of Francia's time but throughout the reign of the two Lopezes, —he would consider himself already an accused person, and that he was in

the power of the man who had been talking to him about the government. He had listened to criticisms of the Dictator's policy, and by not having reported the fact he had made himself obnoxious to his vengeance should it ever be discovered. Therefore it was that it came to this, — there were no two persons in Paraguay sufficiently intimate to discuss the character of the acts of the chief magistrate. If they were to do so, it would be a race between the two to see which should denounce the other first. Hence it was that from first to last a conspiracy of Paraguayans was a thing entirely beyond the limits of possibility, and so does every man say who ever resided in that country for as long a period as one short year. The older inhabitants of Paraguay who were living three years ago did not believe in what was called the Yegros conspiracy. They had no evidence, of course, either way; but from their knowledge of the country they knew a conspiracy was impossible, and there was no evidence that it ever existed, except the word of Francia. And of the subsequent conspiracies that have been alleged the same may be said; there is no evidence that they had any existence, except the word of the Dictator or President who accused obnoxious persons as an excuse for their execution.

The Dictator, besides fancying himself to resemble Napoleon as a warrior, considered that he ought also to resemble him in his public improvements; and his labors in that line are so extraordinary, that they serve to illustrate, not only his character, but his capacity.

The city of Asuncion, as originally built, had no regularity of plan. The site had primarily been selected for a military post, from the fact that the hill to the south had a bluff from which both the neighboring country and the river up and down could be overlooked; and the paths and trails used first by the Indians, and afterwards by the soldiers, came in time to be the streets of the town. Hence they were crooked and irregular, though adapted to the natural configuration of the ground, which, being uneven and broken, could not be laid out into a city with streets crossing each other at right angles

without destroying the natural beauty and many of the natural advantages of the place. On these streets were a considerable number of good houses, some of which are yet standing. They were built usually of adobes, or of adobes faced with bricks on both sides, and the walls were sometimes as much as three feet in thickness. The architecture was somewhat after the old Moorish style, being one story in height, with large yards, or *patios*, in the centre, and having wide corridors, or piazzas, upon the street, with heavy pillars to support them, and with other and similar corridors within, surrounding the patios. There was very little uniformity, however, either in the streets or buildings, and Francia conceived the idea of rearranging the plan of the whole town. He, therefore, without any regard to the natural topography of the country or the convenience of the inhabitants, determined to lay out the town in regular squares. Without consulting any one, or making any preliminary surveys, he set forth with a force of chain-bearers, masons, and clerks, to correct the plan of his capital. He carried with him his terrible theodolite, which was calculated to impress the people, who might otherwise doubt his infallibility or his wisdom in what he was to do, that he had been inspired by superior power to the course he was pursuing. Taking his position at what he supposed to be the most convenient starting-point or landmark, he planted his theodolite, took a direct line to the northwest, and ordered everything to be cleared away, whether houses, trees, fences or hills, to make way for a street forty feet wide. The manner and result of these strange proceedings is thus described by Robertson :—

“His plan was to lay out the city in capacious streets, intersecting each other at right angles, and in straight lines, in a direction of due northwest and southeast. Three new squares were to be built on sites now covered with houses, and one square was to be altered and enlarged. Salient angles were to be lopped off, narrow streets were to be made wide, lanes were to be abolished, orange-trees were to be hewn down, fences were to be exterminated, for huts there was to be no commiseration ; while babbling springs were to

be choked, and gurgling rills to be dammed. Against brooks and stagnant waters a war of extermination was declared, and the sandy surface of Asuncion was to be overlaid by granite brought from many leagues' distance. Down went the theodolite, and down for its management came the Supremo from his horse. The very first line marked out in the direction of northwest swept off a dozen houses all standing obtrusively in the way. The next line in the transverse direction called for the annihilation of a dozen buildings more. These two first measurements a little staggered the land surveyor; but his one invariable appeal to himself was, 'Am I not El Supremo?' Soon were his scrupulous objections to his own original plans silenced. 'The houses *must* come down,' said he to himself; and he proceeded on his way without misgiving and without remorse. His first afternoon's work devoted eighty tenements to destruction; and another week's use of the theodolite and chain marked out a hundred more habitations for immediate demolition.

"So far was the land surveyor's conscience from being moved by a contemplation of the misery which such a step must entail upon the inhabitants of the devoted dwellings, that he looked upon every one of them as enemies to the amelioration of the city, and as obstructing and thwarting his plans for its improvement. With his usual impetuosity and haste, he issued orders to every one of the owners of the obnoxious houses 'to quit,' and not only so, but to be themselves the demolishers of their own dwellings, free of all expense to the state. One poor man applied to know 'what remuneration he was to have'; and the Dictator's answer was, 'A lodgement, gratis, in the public prison.' Another asked where he was to go, and the Supremo's answer was, 'To a state dungeon.' Both culprits were forthwith lodged in their respective new residences; and their houses were levelled to the ground.

"The surveying department, or rather the surveyor-general, after devoting upwards of five hundred houses to demolition, sent the inmates to substitute for them huts in the woods, and left every inhabitant of Asuncion unequivocally to infer that if his house interfered with the lines of northwest and southeast, especially if any objections were made to the proposed plans, that he (the objecting tenant or owner) must be prepared at once for ejection and for banishment. Consequently no further remonstrance was made; and the levelling theodolite, under the scientific hands and

unscrupulous conscience of the Supremo, proceeded on its angular and rectilinear process of destruction.

“The mathematical science of the Dictator was so scanty, that, before he could fix the *true* lines in which the new houses of the projected city were to run, he was obliged to demolish a great many buildings which the result of his final admeasurement showed him might as well have been left standing, inasmuch as they would not have interfered with the contemplated symmetry of the embryo capital of Paraguay. The result was that the first demolitions of brick and mortar were adopted as mere preliminary steps to pave the way for a more accurate mensuration and a more complete destruction.

“The streets of Asuncion were not only streets of sand, but were often formed into ravines by heavy rains, and in all cases rendered by these, and by numerous springs and brooks, of a very unequal surface. In order to remedy this obvious defect in the thoroughfares, our engineering, architectural land surveyor caused all the rubbish and *débris* of the demolished houses to be cast into the gaps and chasms and ravines of the *old* streets, so as to approximate them to the level on which he had determined that the houses of the new city should be built. Little hillocks which stood in the way of this levelling process were cut down, and little valleys which offered an obstruction to it were choked with rubbish. At length the site of the intended city was made as level as the engineer deemed it possible to make it; and to work went all hands to raise the superstructures which were to embellish it. Four hundred wretched prisoners in chains were set to work as bricklayers, masons, and carpenters; the carts, horses, asses, and mules of every laboring man were pressed into the service; no pay was ever awarded to them; the Dictator observed that they ought to be proud of serving the state gratuitously, since he condescended personally to superintend for them the erection of a city destined to be the most beautiful and important in the New World.

“Onward pressed the Dictator in his great undertaking, scattering the population of Asuncion, pulling down their houses about their ears, sending them to seek for shelter where they might best find it, obliging many of the more substantial inhabitants to build houses in substitution of those which he had made them demolish, and on spots selected according to his fancy. Slowly, however,

even with all the Dictator's potency, did the work of reconstruction proceed ; for though he was master of many Paraguayan slaves, even the Congress had not been able to confer upon him the power of contending with the elements, of changing the course of nature, or of evoking at his nod the waters from the dry land. Besides, in his anxiety to rear a superb superstructure, he overlooked the essential point of laying a solid foundation. A tropical storm of one night often swept away the works on which five hundred men had been engaged for a month. As the streets were not paved, the torrents of rain swamped and undermined all the rubbish that had been lavished upon them. The old cataracts, chasms, and ravines were reopened ; the springs which the mighty engineer had choked in one place burst forth in another ; the houses were no longer level with the streets ; the windows of some of them were choked with mud and sand forced up against the walls by the impetuosity of the roaring torrents ; and the foundations of others were laid bare by the sweeping storms by which they were inundated and undermined.

“ Many of the smothered streams found vent in the very heart of the rising edifices, and, seeking a level, spouted forth with irresistible impetus, till reaching the elevation of the mortar-built walls, back fell the water to its mother earth. The *jets d'eau* were beautiful, not finer than some of those at Versailles ; but water having a tendency, where there is nothing but newly laid bricks and mortar to resist it, to make awkward inroads, the mortar was attenuated, the bricks were loosened, and the next day exhibited to the Dictator, as he rode along with his plumb-line, theodolite, and squares, so many chinks and apertures as to convince him that the half-constructed edifice must come down. In some cases he set his men to the work of demolition ; in others, nature saved him this trouble ; so that, between the development of the destructive organ of the Dictator, in the elements, and above all in the contumacious springs, the city of Asuncion was no sooner half built than it was laid wholly prostrate. Nodding and tottering to its fall stood every edifice ; the backs of many of the old houses were turned upon the new streets, as if in contempt of the Dictator's operations ; crumbling to the ground came one day half a dozen structures ; crash the next came half a dozen more ; and all-persevering as was the besotted architect, yet, after five years' labor, not one fourth of his edifices had attained the security afforded by a roof ; whole streets were laid off with stakes

of dry reeds, not marking where a house *had been*, but where houses *were to be*; the town presented the appearance of having sustained a lengthened bombardment; and though by degrees, after his five years of frustrated plans and disappointed hopes, Francia succeeded in having some tolerably good houses erected, yet of the mass and his whole undertaking it may be safely asserted that there never was, nor is ever likely to be, so remarkable, and especially so literal, a fulfilment of the latter part of a striking parable: 'He shall be likened unto a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand; and the rain descended, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell: and great was the fall thereof.'"

Of the old Spanish residents in Paraguay at the time of the revolution none escaped persecution, and few, if any, survived the Dictator. Many of them were arrested, tortured, and executed, as being members of the first conspiracy. Those who were not included in this general accusation were for other reasons, unknown to themselves, subjected to the same or similar treatment. In 1821, a year after the tragedy of the pretended conspiracy had ended, all the Spaniards in Asuncion were commanded to present themselves in front of the Dictator's house; here a series of grave accusations against them was read. They were charged, not only with being unfriendly to the government of Francia, but with being engaged in designs against his government. To these accusations they had nothing to say, for they were permitted to make no reply. They stood, however, some three hundred in number, from early in the morning until about sunset, afraid to move, not knowing what might be the next order of El Supremo. In the evening they were all taken to prison, and there they remained for weeks and months, and no further reason was ever given for their imprisonment, nor had they any intimation of what was to be their fate. Of course, those of them who had been engaged in business were financially ruined, and their families, in many instances, reduced to absolute poverty, and yet no one dared venture to bespeak pity or pardon of the Dictator.

It is unnecessary perhaps to cite other instances of the

practices of Francia. No one of them is exceptional; his policy and his conduct were uniform, — to arrest, imprison, torture, and destroy all of his people who had intelligence enough to command respect or influence. It is the same dreary level. His career is irradiated by no acts of clemency, of kindness, or of wisdom. He neither evinced ability in improving the condition of the country or of the people, nor in any way showed any capacity except that of a remorseless destroyer. From his efforts to improve the city we are able to judge of his scientific attainments and his practical sense, but we have little by which we may judge of his literary merits. No state papers of any importance were left by him. The records of his own times and deeds he was careful to destroy, and we are only to judge of his capacity and talents from his acts. On one occasion, however, he was provoked to put forth a letter in defence of himself and in reply to the accusations made against him in Rengger's book. This was the weakest act in his whole government, as it revealed completely the capacity of the man. Had he never allowed such letter to appear, it might have been imagined that a man who could control an entire people so absolutely as did Francia the Paraguayan nation must have been possessed of remarkable talents. This letter, however, must dispel any such illusion as that, for there are few criminals of the lower class arraigned before the criminal courts of our large cities who, if given time and opportunity, could not make a better defence than this which Francia makes of himself. As it is the only paper which we are able to produce from him, it is here given nearly entire.* Rengger's

* *Notes made in Paraguay by the Dictator Francia on the Volume of John Rengger.*

“The Swiss John Rengger came to Paraguay with his companion and countryman, Marcelino Longchamp, to establish himself as a physician. It was not long before Rengger leagued himself closely and seditiously with the old Spaniards, and with the Frenchman Saguier, a notorious spy of the royalists, and who established himself here as a so-called botanist. It was shrewdly suspected that they had both been banished from Europe. Here Rengger occupied himself with the poisoning of such American patients as he could lay hold of;

book, it should be borne in mind, was severely criticised by Robertson, and by Somellera, and, in fact, by nearly everybody else who from personal experience knew the facts in regard to Francia and his reign of terror. Rengger himself, and his companion Longchamp, were treated better by Francia than any other foreigners who were in Paraguay at the same time with themselves. They complained of nothing personal,

and, among others, no sooner had the treasurer Decoud swallowed the deleterious beverage than he fell into mortal agony, while the wretch of a physician from that moment abandoned his patient, nor would return to see him, in spite of repeated solicitation to this effect.

"During the three months in which Rengger attended the barracks of the regiment of men of color, he despatched more than twenty of them, and was on this account sent about his business, when at once the mortality ceased. No wonder that the fellow (*el Bribon*) avoids in his volume all allusions to this barbarous massacre. He knew well he should not find his account in making that public.

"Himself bitterly inimical to the cause of America, Rengger did all in his power to seduce others into his views. He persuaded the Saxon, Gustavus Leman, an ally and correspondent of the patriots, to desert them, and take part with the old Spaniards, on the allegation that he would receive better treatment at their hands than at those of the Americans.

"The Dictator, at length, in order to avoid the necessity of sending this wretch to the scaffold, — this assassin, this poisoner, this seducer and intriguer with factious enemies, — refused to grant the request which he made, that the government would allow him to remain in Paraguay in the exercise of his medical vocation. His principal object, however, in desiring to remain, was not this, but that he might marry the daughter of the rich old Spaniard Antonio Recalde. Of that lady the poor doctor was desperately enamored; but see if in his book he says anything of the rejection of his addresses, and consequent discomfiture of his marriage plans. The object of such omission is clear; it was to lull suspicion as to his mendacity in the fresh piece of iniquity of which he has been guilty in attempting to pass off as history a tissue of abominable falsehoods: and in doing this, and stamping himself as an unblushing liar, he has done exactly what was wanted to complete his character. So odious in Paraguay had this barbarous atheist made himself, so well had he established his character for perverseness, that the Paraguayans, in mockery and derision, gave him no other name than that of 'John Rengo.'* Some people who were walking on the banks of the river, and saw him embark, called aloud also, 'Adieu, pill-doctor! Adieu, purger! Adieu, poisoner!'

"Chafed and enraged not less from being unable to effect his marriage, on account of the government's prohibition, than from being banished the country and mocked by the patriots, the malicious Rengger left Paraguay like a dog with an old kettle tied to its tail. This is the man, who, coming into the country and

* A bad pun upon Mons. Rengger's name, and signifying "John the Limper," or "Lame Man."

and Rengger, in his narrative, gives Francia credit for ability and good motives, in many instances, when the others alleged that he was not entitled to it. He believed in the Yegros conspiracy. He also gave Francia credit for the improvements in the manufacturing arts which his system of non-intercourse compelled the Paraguayan people to adopt. He also gives Francia the credit of having stimulated or com-

cloaking over his secret mission, has published a pretended historical essay, of which the object evidently is to undermine the reputation of the Dictator; but the raving contemptible volume ought rather to have been styled an *Essay of Lies*. It may, without exaggeration, be affirmed that, as regards Paraguay and its government, it contains not a word of truth.

“Even in those parts in which there is some foundation of reality, everything is changed, disfigured, distorted. All is dressed up with fictions, and evidently meant to lower the character of the Dictator. Things the best known and the best authenticated are, with malice the most perceptible, and disingenuousness the most culpable, slurred over or kept out of view, simply because they do not dovetail into Rengger’s plan. There is ample evidence on the face of the book that it is made up of disfigured accounts, slanderous tales, impostures, and stories, not only accommodated to the tastes of Europeans, but invented by them in revenge for the frustration of their repeated conspiracies, machinations, and plots. Take, for example, the mad-brained, or, rather, ridiculous fiction of the Marquis of Guarani, Envoy to Spain; and the hidden schemes by which they thought to lay prostrate the Dictator, with whom they are at rancorous variance, because he is a firm and decided patriot and viewed by them as an insuperable stumbling-block in the way of their particular theories and plans. Rengger, as being accredited with them for every species of iniquity, has lent a helping hand to increase the catalogue of such stories; and that by means of his fresh lies, fictions, and misrepresentations, and of the pure inventions of his own fantastic imagination.

“He has given himself up, without a blush, to the infamy of acting the mendacious and calumnious impostor; and this because of his engagements with the Europeans, of his declared aversion to the patriots, of his desire to revenge himself for the denial of his application to the government, and of the contempt and mockery which he suffered in consequence of the frustration of his connubial plans.

“These were likewise the causes which impelled his impudence to the pitch of inventing sayings and of forging conversations of the Dictator, which never took place. We are in no ignorance, nowadays, of the objects and implacable malice of such men. The single object of these rascals, devoid of soul, is to disburden themselves of vile passions; and for this purpose they avail themselves of sinister machinations and intrigues. It is a vain, and even a risible, effort in this ungrateful vagabond and low calumniator to speak about that of which he understands nothing.

“Rengger, foreseeing the charge of falsehood which would be brought against

pelled the Paraguayan people to improved modes of agriculture. These things, however, are repudiated and derided by all who knew the real motives that actuated him. Notwithstanding, however, that Rengger was generally blamed for representing the character of Francia as less dark and cruel than it really was, the Dictator thus repays his forbearance and moderation.

him, hastens in the Preface of his *Essay of Lies* to adduce as a witness of the truth of his impostures the person of the name of Longchamp, already mentioned. But this man is nothing more nor less than the countryman of the other, and took up his miserable abode with him in a hut, as his gaucho companion, and as an accomplice in all his iniquities.

“The malignity of this calumniator has not been confined to Paraguay; it has extended to the patriots of other states. After his departure from hence, two letters of his were intercepted which he wrote from Buenos Aires on the 22d of September, 1825, — one to the wife of the Recalde already mentioned, and the other to her daughter Angelica. There are some curious things revealed in them. To the mother he writes in these studied terms: ‘In Buenos Aires I do not feel at home. The Porteños have adopted the bad qualities of all the European nations, without one of their virtues. The city is like a house in ruins, which they have painted outside like whited sepulchres, while within all is hollowness and decay.’

“Who knows but that in Buenos Aires he flattered and gratified many by abusing the Paraguayans at the very moment when he was writing to Paraguay in vituperation of the Porteños and of their city?

“These short notes shall suffice to give an idea of the character and depravity of this infamous impostor and villanous man, who, emerging from the mountains and crags of Switzerland, actuated by an innate perversity of disposition, and desirous of making a figure, and of giving to himself an adventitious importance, dares, with insolent brutality, to interfere with the government of Paraguay!

“If it were necessary, it would be easy to show in detail the impostures and falsehoods which pervade his whole volume, for the enlargement of which he has after all been obliged to have recourse to impertinences and despicable frivolities, all the progeny of his own perverted brain. But the best answer to malevolence, to its abandoned authors, to scoundrels, and to traitors, is that of contempt.”

CHAPTER XX.

The Urdapilleta Family.—Father and Son condemned to Death.—Saved by the Death of the Dictator.—The Schoolmaster Escalada's Testimony.—His Contempt for Francia's Scientific and Literary Attainments.—Francia's Treatment of his Brothers, Sisters, and Natural Children.—The Different Versions of the Yegros Conspiracy.—Devised by Francia as a Pretext for Killing off all the Leading Men.—The Example imitated by the First Lopez and improved upon by the Second.—The People not permitted to know Anything, except that Certain Persons have been arrested and executed, and their Property confiscated.—The Observance of Legal Forms.—The Confiscation of Cabañas's Estate.—Iturbe.—The Arrest and Suicide of General Caballero.—Francia's System perfected by Lopez.

THE singular and, as it would seem, providential escape of the Urdapilletas from the death to which Francia had condemned them is probably the only instance in the history of the Dictator's reign in which his orders were not executed. Captain Pascual Urdapilleta was a Spanish officer of artillery at the time of the revolution in Buenos Aires, and had taken part in the defence of that place and Montevideo against the English, after which he went to Paraguay, where he married and had a family. At the commencement of the late war, his two sons, Andres and José Vicente, were still living. They both belonged to the upper class of society, and were, at the time, from fifty to sixty years of age; both were men of fine appearance, and, for Paraguayans, men of much intelligence. Though their father was a Spaniard, and therefore very obnoxious to Francia, he had been permitted to live, and had not been seriously molested until the year 1828, twelve years before the death of the Dictator. About this time the father and his son Vicente had the misfortune to get hold of an old musket, which they were examining or handling, when it was accidentally discharged and wounded

a mulatto slave belonging to the father. The matter, however, was hushed up by the connivance of a Dr. Vidal and the juez of the district until the mulatto died, and then the facts of the case coming to the knowledge of the Dictator, the father and son, together with the physician and the judge, were arrested and detained in the public prison until the death of the Dictator. They were not confined as prisoners of state, but were in the open prison allotted for lesser criminals, or for those who were simply held for trial. The family was allowed to supply them with food, with some books, and with clothing sufficient to cover them. In the daytime they were permitted to occupy themselves in some industry on their own account. This privilege they improved by spinning cotton supplied by their families into thread, and weaving it into the ponchos and hammocks of the country, in making straw hats and stockings, horn spoons, and bridles and fancy trappings for horses. In fact, the prison was a vast workshop, somewhat similar to the public prisons of many of the States in which the convicts are compelled to labor. There was this difference, however, that they were not in solitary confinement, as in each cell there were many persons, and conversation was permitted among them. Moreover, the labor they performed was all voluntary, and on their own account. In this place the persons held for trial were kept until it should suit the good pleasure of the Dictator to pronounce judgment upon them. Few who once entered the walls, however, ever went forth again, except to execution, to the state prisons, or to the Chamber of Truth; but they were nearly all detained many years before Francia troubled himself about them any further.

Notwithstanding he had destroyed, in the early part of his dictatorship, all whom he considered in any wise dangerous, he seemed to think that he must keep up his pastime of making arrests and executions, lest people should become oblivious of his presence and power. It was to guard against this that he kept up the practice of arresting and executing at such irregular periods as his caprice might dictate. The Urdapil-

letas had already been twelve years in prison when Francia gave the order for them to be taken out and executed. This order was given one day just as a heavy tempest was commencing, and before it could be executed the storm came on with a fury and violence unknown in our higher latitudes. The thunder and lightning were of the most terrific character, and the rain came down in such quantities that the streets were filled with torrents of water, so that it was with extreme difficulty a foot-passenger could get across the streets, and utterly impossible for a cart to pass through them. This storm was exceptional even for that country, and it seemed as though the elements had at last conspired to put an end to the Dictator and save his remaining victims from his fury. The water ran down through the streets with such force that it broke through in many places into the houses, and even came rushing into the government hospital, where Francia was at that time, inundating the floor, so that the mighty Dictator himself had his feet wet, and, in consequence, took a severe cold. The storm continued in the afternoon and evening, so that the order for the execution of the Urdapilletas could not be carried out. The officer to whom the charge had been intrusted, not having obeyed his orders, did not on the following morning attempt, without further instructions, to execute them. They were to be shot, and when prisoners were thus put out of the way they were taken to the banquillo, where Francia could witness their execution from his window. But Francia was prostrate, and no additional command was issued; and the officer who had received the order to superintend the execution waited with anxiety, doubtless expecting that when the next command should be given it would be to some other official, and that he himself would be included with the Urdapilletas in the next sacrifice. Francia, however, never rallied sufficiently to put in force any more of his unfulfilled plans. And thus, as it were by the interposition of Heaven, the Urdapilletas were saved.

It may be said, however, that the younger Urdapilleta, José Vicente, was reserved for a worse fate than that for

which he had been intended by Francia. During the time of his long imprisonment, having been permitted to receive books from his family, he had become much addicted to reading, and the habit was continued until he was again arrested, twenty-five years after. This man's name will be found to figure in another alleged conspiracy, more extensive and more sweeping in its character than any devised by Francia. Something of his career during the twenty-five years between his first and second imprisonment may here be given. His house, during the latter part of my residence in Paraguay, was but a short distance from mine. He was a shopkeeper and had an interesting family, consisting of a wife and three or four very pretty daughters. He was understood to be, for a Paraguayan, in easy circumstances; and as I frequently passed his door, I almost invariably found him with a book in his hand. His reading was confined almost entirely to the literature of former times, as very few modern books, and scarcely any periodical of recent date, were to be had in Paraguay. His large reading enabled him to converse on some topics with a great deal of intelligence and judgment.

Unfortunately for him, he became acquainted with the ill-fated Dr. Carreras at the time of his first visit to Paraguay. In the absence of men of learning in the country, those who had education and general knowledge sufficient to write tolerable Spanish were, at different periods, forced into some government position. In some such position was Urdapilleta at the commencement of the late war, and when called upon to make out some official document or statement he applied to his friend Carreras to assist him. Carreras readily prepared the paper, evincing a perfect knowledge of the subject, and expressed it in terse and forcible language. When this was offered to Lopez, he imagined, or affected to imagine, that it was the production of Urdapilleta himself; and thereupon he was made Chief-Justice of Paraguay, having, and pretending to have, no more knowledge of law, or even the forms of law, than any other shopkeeper in the town. The

fate of his successor, Don Bernardo Ortellado, was in some respects more tragic than that of Señor Urdapilleta. For him was reserved the task of being the judicial instrument for the execution of his predecessor and of his colleagues in the government, and afterwards to suffer the same tortures and horrible death that at the dictum of his master, he had pronounced against some of the best and some of the worst men in Paraguay. Urdapilleta lived very quietly, attended all the festivals given in honor of his Excellency the Marshal President, always made speeches in his favor, and was liberal in his contributions for the costly presents which the people were constantly making to Lopez, and which they were obliged to declare in the public assemblages were spontaneous, though they knew that refusal or reluctance to make such voluntary offerings would be at the peril of their lives. He knew well the character of Lopez and the situation of the country, and therefore, like all Paraguayans, he never spoke of anything of a political nature unless it was in a public way, when he would indulge in patriotic outbursts against the Brazilians and in favor of the great Lopez. As I was not intimate with him, he never ventured to speak with me except on the most commonplace topics, such as the weather, his health, or that of his family; but invariably, if I asked him if there was any news, the reply was, "None." Had he known anything, he would not have dared to mention it, unless it had previously been published in the *Semanario*, in which case he knew I should have been informed of it as soon as he. But for all this, at the time when Lopez had made all his preparations for the subsequent conspiracy, and had determined to sacrifice all the best men in the country, Urdapilleta was included among them. He, as well as his brother Andres, was taken in irons to headquarters, and there subjected to all the horrible tortures which Lopez had imitated or invented for his victims. He was flogged, starved, and put in the *cepo uruguayana*, until, when about to die, he was taken out and mercifully shot, and this ended the last but one of the chief-justices of Paraguay.

As neither the Robertsons nor Rengger and Longchamp could give any account of the occurrences in Paraguay, subsequent to the departure of the latter in 1824, except from rumors which they were never able to verify, it was an object with me to make the acquaintance of such of the older men in the country as, having the most intelligence, could give the most information of the later years of the dictatorship. Among these was Juan Pedro Escalada, a native of Buenos Aires, who came to Paraguay when a child, and at the time of the revolution was about twenty years of age. His employment from that time to the commencement of the late war was that of a teacher, and he was allowed to pursue his calling and receive pupils during the whole time of Francia's reign, notwithstanding that in his youth he had been a sort of favorite of Governor Velasco, and enjoyed his friendship until his arrest. In fact, he was so much a favorite of the Ex-Governor that he used to apply to him for assistance in solving algebraic and geometrical problems while he was yet a student. He had a most excellent opinion of the abilities and kindness of Velasco, and regarded him, not only as a wise and excellent governor, but as a man of superior scientific attainments, while he regarded Francia as a charlatan, a pedant, and a pretender. He ridiculed his practice of looking at the stars through his famous theodolite, for he said Francia knew nothing of astronomy, and his star-gazing was only practised to impress the people with superstitious awe and a belief in his supernatural power. His account of the family of Francia differed somewhat from that of Robertson and Rengger, though it agreed with them in saying that he had no natural affection either for his brothers or sisters, of whom there were two of each. His elder brother, Pedro, was given the position of administrator of the large Indian village of Ita, some thirty miles to the south of Asuncion. Like his brother the Dictator, Don Pedro was eccentric in his habits, though in all other respects entirely unlike him. He was a corpulent, good-natured man, regarded as of very little capacity, and utterly without ambition. To be the chief man among the Indians, to live a

life of indolence, and at the festivals to appear among them with the trappings of authority, satisfied his highest desires. As he never cared to leave his post of administrator, or in any way took any interest in affairs beyond the precincts of his own limited authority, it is hard to conceive how he provoked the wrath of his implacable brother. Such, however, was the case, and he was arrested and thrown into prison, and there left to expire. Robertson speaks of him as having been subject to fits of insanity of a harmless character. This, however, Escalada denies, and thinks it far more probable that, having married the daughter of the chief of Yaguaron who had succeeded to the position of the elder França, and who for some reason had incurred the enmity of the Dictator, his brother had been made to atone vicariously for the sins of his father-in-law. Of the other brother of Francia, Don Juan José, nothing was known by Escalada, except that he lived near Ibitimi, some twenty-five leagues from Asuncion, and, strange to say, died there without the assistance of his brother the Dictator. The sisters of Francia were treated with as little consideration by him as were his brothers. The elder married a man by the name of Marecos, in Villa Rica, and had several children. One of these children was executed by Francia. Another married José del Rosario Miranda, the adopted son of Cabaños, who had figured so conspicuously in the revolution. Miranda was long imprisoned by Francia, but was not executed. The other sister of Francia, Petrona, was married to a tinterillo by the name of Galvan, who was imprisoned by the Dictator. This sister was permitted by the Dictator to live in the family mansion, and to teach school. She survived her brother some ten years, and was well known to many people of my acquaintance. She resembled her brother to some extent, as she was extremely severe to her scholars, and very capricious and arbitrary in her treatment of them. To her Francia intrusted the making of his cigars, as he had not sufficient confidence in anybody else to smoke one made by other hands than hers; and yet so constant was his fear of being poisoned, he never ventured to light a cigar,

even though made by her, that he had not first unrolled to see that it contained nothing but the harmless tobacco. Dr. Francia, according to Escalada, had several illegitimate children, the most of whom he declined to recognize in any way, though it was well known that they were his. One of his children, for some reason, inherited his property near the Trinidad. This property, however, was taken by the Lopez family. The woman married a man by the name of Cañete, and the two were servants of General Barrios, who married the eldest daughter of Carlos Antonio Lopez. Although the man held the position of *capataz* on the fine estancia of General Barrios, yet they were, in reality, no better than slaves.

Escalada also had the honor of being the first teacher of Francisco Solano Lopez, and under him the future President studied arithmetic, grammar, and a little Latin. When questioned as to the aptitude and abilities of this pupil, Escalada declined to speak except in terms that left it to be inferred that, if he was not a dunce, he was not a desirable pupil to have in his school. The teacher evidently took no credit to himself for having aided in developing a character like that of Lopez.

The "Yegros conspiracy," as it was called, was alleged to have been discovered in 1818, or forty-seven years before the commencement of the late war; and after such a lapse of time little was known about it by persons still living, except what had been given out by Francia at the time, or promulgated among the people by his authority. The dread and fear of the Dictator was so general that no one would dare question his neighbor in regard to the facts, or express a doubt about the guilt of the persons accused of participation in it. Yet, from the facts that were patent to all, it was clearly evident that the version of Francia was false in many respects, if not entirely fictitious. While so many arrests of the principal men in the country were being made, as in the later conspiracy of the second Lopez, people supposed that something of a dangerous character had been

discovered; but in both instances they had no means of ascertaining the truth, and could only draw their inferences from the acts of the government. Hence, in the absence of any other evidence than the words and deeds of Francia, the people who, forty years later, ventured in confidence to speak about it, had different versions of the affair to give. One of the most intelligent men in Paraguay during the writer's residence there was an old Frenchman by the name of Charles Dupin. His version of the "conspiracy" is somewhat different from Robertson's, and particularly in regard to its discovery. As, after it was once suspected, all the parties implicated were immediately thrown into prison, and could never communicate with any one outside previous to their execution, nothing is known of what they confessed or admitted, and no one of those accused was permitted to escape and give any explanation of the affair. If there were a conspiracy, Francia was careful to destroy all the proofs of it, unless it were the confessions made under the torture, and of these, as far as is known, no records were ever kept. The account of M. Dupin, as received verbally from him, and which he said he received some two or three years afterwards, was that a certain Spaniard had noticed a suspicious gathering of persons at the house of a man named Rivarola, which stood on the corner of Calles Comercio and Encarnacion.* He did not concern himself particularly about these meetings, however, till one night he was summoned into the house, where he found the conspirators assembled. They then informed him of the plan, and told him he must keep it a secret on pain of death if he divulged it. Alarmed at the possession of such a dreadful secret, the poor man resolved to reveal it to Francia; and that he might not be detected going near him by the conspirators he blacked his face, and, thus disguised, went by night to the Dictator and told him of the whole plot. Francia told him to continue his attend-

* This house has now another tragic interest, as it subsequently came into the possession of Saturnino Bedoya, who was tortured to death by his brother-in-law, the second Lopez, on the charge of being engaged in another conspiracy.

ance at the house and report all he saw. When Francia had thus learned all their plans, he suddenly arrested every person engaged in the plot, for form's sake including the Spaniard who divulged it, though he was soon after released. Strangely enough, the conspiracy embraced every man in the country having a leading influence, including all those who had distinguished themselves in the war against Belgrano, among whom were Velasco, Yegros, Gamarra, Caballero, and many others, all of whom, with the exception of those who died in prison or committed suicide, were afterwards shot together. The less important persons were executed at subsequent periods, in groups of from two or three to eight persons.

Such was the account of this conspiracy, so far as Dupin could remember the vague rumors that he had heard of it during the forty years succeeding. Yet he could make nothing of them, as he knew that during the whole year or more that the conspiracy was maturing it was impossible, as during all those forty years afterwards, for as many as four persons to hold two secret meetings in Asuncion without its being known to the government. That under such a government people engaged in a conspiracy should court detection by frequent meetings continued through a twelvemonth is too absurd for belief; yet in Paraguay, as in other countries, history repeats itself, and nearly fifty years afterwards another conspiracy of a like character to this, but much more extensive, was discovered by a worse than Francia, but of which no one but himself knew, and which the parties engaged in it were for a still longer period engaged in concocting.

Two other versions of the same plot were given by Don José Vicente Urdapilleta, the unfortunate victim of both Francia and Lopez, having been kept a prisoner for twelve years by the former and tortured and executed by the latter. His story was that the originators of the plot were two brothers named Montiel. One of these, José Joaquin, was a sergeant of Francia's guard in the hospital; and their plan was betrayed

by a relative named Caballero. This sergeant was understood to be a great favorite of the Dictator, and to enjoy very much of his confidence ; and his plan was to take advantage of this circumstance, and, as if acting under orders, remove all who might interfere with his enterprise to distant parts, and then with his fellow-conspirators fall upon the Dictator and kill him. This plot would seem to be entirely distinct from the other, yet it was doubtless a part of the same, as the two Montiels were executed with Yegros and his companions.

Still another version entirely different from all the others was extant, and this is the one mentioned by Robertson. According to this account the betrayer of the plot was a Paraguayan named Lisardo Bogarin, who, just as it was to be carried into effect, revealed it all to the confessor, Padre Atanacio, who sent him with his story to the Dictator. The head-quarters of the conspirators, according to this version, were in another house from that mentioned by Dupin ; but the fact that this house was ordered to be destroyed by Francia, while the other was left standing, would indicate that the latter version was the one approved by the Dictator. Probably there was as much truth in one as in the other, and the discrepancies in the accounts given by the Paraguayans so many years after arose from the fact that at the time of the occurrence it was all shrouded in mystery, and so fearful was the reign of terror which prevailed that no one dared to ask a question or express an opinion in regard to the affair during the lifetime of the Dictator, and hence these different versions were but the surmises of different people, that long years after took the forms here given. The only facts the survivors were certain of were that all the leading men in the country were arrested and put to death on the pretext that they had been detected in a conspiracy against the Dictator ; and this is believed to be all the evidence in the matter that now exists.

Subsequent to the Dictator's death it was never permitted to question the justice or propriety of his acts. Probably his successor might have thrown some light on the conspiracy, and shown the whole thing to have been but a device of Fran-

cia for ridding himself of all persons obnoxious to him from their influence or respectability. But he was as tenacious of absolute power as was the Dictator, and would not permit any statements or opinions to circulate among the people implying that the government could err. Besides, it was an exercise of statecraft that he found it convenient to imitate, and in his time he originated similar conspiracies on a smaller scale, under cover of which he put out of the way obnoxious people whom he could not prove anything against; and it was not convenient that the people should question the justice or wisdom of his conduct, any more than they had that of Francia.

During the first years of Francia's power he pretended to observe the forms of justice, and not to ruin people at his arbitrary will, but according to the laws of the country. This practice was continued by his successors, and the forms of a secret trial were always observed, and confessions of guilt were always obtained, unless the accused expired under the means employed to compel them to speak as the government desired. What the object was in obtaining such confessions it is hard to surmise, for in most cases they were known to be false, and it was only the false confessions that were wanted; and it is hard to divine any motive in extorting them, unless it was to have them preserved in the government archives for the use of future historians, that they might show to the world that only the confessedly guilty had been condemned.

The legal proceedings instituted by Francia in order to possess himself of the estate of Don Manuel Atanacio Cabañas will serve to illustrate the regard that Francia had during the early part of his reign for legal forms. Cabañas was an officer of high rank in the war against Belgrano, and greatly distinguished himself. He was chief in command at the important battle of Tacuari, and afterwards took a prominent part in the revolution; and after the independence was secured he retired to his estancia, situate in the Cordilleras, some thirty leagues from Asuncion. Fortunately for himself, he died before Francia had invented his conspiracy, as being a man of large means and great influence he was eminently

eligible for a conspirator, and if condemned and executed as one his estate would be confiscated. Having died too soon for that, Francia, according to M. Dupin, adopted the following process of legal confiscation of his estate.

The commandante of the troops at Asuncion at the time Somellera carried into effect his plan of revolution was Vicente Iturbe. His co-operation had been essential to the success of the plot ; and when Francia became the controlling spirit of the Junta, he received his orders from him and seconded him in his arbitrary acts. To reward him Francia sent him as his commandante to the villa of San Pedro, some thirty leagues above Asuncion. Afterwards, having for some reason determined to ruin him, and to make him useful in his fall, he sent a copy of a letter to Artigas to him, with orders for him to sign it. The bearer of this letter from Francia to Iturbe was a man by the name of Aldecoa, who, having obeyed his orders, was soon after arrested and taken with his mulatto slave, who had accompanied him on his visit to Iturbe, to the Chamber of Truth. Here he was met by Francia's secretary, Patiño, and the question was asked him, who had given him that letter? Aldecoa promptly replied that it was his Excellency the supreme Dictator. "That cannot be," said Patiño ; "think again. Was it not Don Manuel Cabañas?" "No, señor," said Aldecoa. A hundred lashes were then administered to both him and his servant to quicken their memories ; and so well were they laid on that the mulatto died under the infliction, and Aldecoa, on being again interrogated, replied that the letter had been given him by Cabañas. On this he was instantly released, and a decree was issued denouncing Cabañas as a traitor and his estate consequently confiscated. Iturbe, to whom the letter was sent by Francia, was also arrested and thrown into prison, where he lingered for twenty years, and was finally shot in 1838.

Among the others accused of being parties to this conspiracy was the former Governor, General Velasco. This man, as we have before seen, had won the regard of the entire Paraguayan people, natives and foreigners. His administration,

succeeding one of the worst under the colonial rule, had been marked by justice and liberality. He was a man of excellent presence, of fine appearance, and of courtly, affable, engaging manners. It was the general complaint that the Spanish officials who were sent to Paraguay abused their power to enrich themselves, but this was never said of Velasco. His habits being inexpensive, he had just sufficient means to keep up the appearance of gentility in the most limited and economical way. He was a man, besides, of such classical and scientific attainments as in the eyes of the better educated people to be a reproach to the charlatanism and pretensions of Francia. When the small remnants of his property which he had about him at the time of his retirement from public life were consumed, the native Spaniards, from respect for and regard to his character and services, continued to make such contributions for his support as would not wound his self-respect nor create any feeling of dependence. His only servant, that he had brought with him from Spain, regarded his old master with such veneration and love that he insisted on serving him long after the General had told him he had no means of remunerating him for his services. The faithful domestic, however, refused to leave him, and with his own little earnings, if necessary, he eked out the supplies for his master's table without his knowing whence they came. Velasco had acquiesced in the revolution as a wise and necessary measure, and after that, when he was no longer Governor, he abjured politics entirely, and lived isolated and retired. But neither the respect entertained for him by the people of Paraguay, his past services, his venerable hairs, his quiet life, nor his amiable character, could save him from the vengeance of Francia. Both he and his servant were arrested and thrown into prison, and the unfortunate Governor was left to linger there, neglected, sick, and half starved, until at last death relieved him from his sufferings.* His faithful servant sur-

* Robertson says that Velasco died in prison. Escalada, the schoolmaster, however, informed me that he was released before he died, but that his sufferings had been so great, while a prisoner, that he perished immediately afterwards.

vived him but one day. Thus perished one after another, in the same miserable way, all, or nearly all, the better class of both Spaniards and Paraguayans.

These traditions that have been preserved of the accusations against all the leading men living in Paraguay at the time of Francia's accession to power are necessarily of doubtful authenticity, from the fact that everything was done in secret, and people dared not make inquiries to ascertain the truth; but as the persons most obnoxious to Francia were generally men of wealth and respectability and of family influence, it was but natural that when they were killed, and their property confiscated, their ruined families would treasure up all the incidents that could be gathered from the soldiers, police, and others who were compelled to execute his orders, and that, in spite of all the Dictator could do, many incidents should become known that he would have preferred should never be divulged; but in the first years of his power it was far more difficult to keep every unpleasant fact hidden than it afterwards became. The people had not learned the necessity of absolute silence on all they saw, as they did afterwards. In time, however, after it had been for a generation or more the practice of incarcerating every one who gave currency to an unwelcome truth, the people learned that their safety lay in discussing or alluding only to such subjects of a political nature as had been treated of in the official organ. In the time of the younger Lopez, had words like those inscribed on the walls of his prison by Caballero been discovered by a policeman, he would have instantly reported the circumstance to the government and been warned that if it ever became known it would be through him. The obnoxious words would then be obliterated, and the unfortunate depository of the secret for some other alleged offence would be put out of the way. No disclosure of anything of this kind was ever made in the time of the second Lopez. The system of Francia had by this time become too well perfected for any such leaks.

CHAPTER XXI.

Last Years of the Dictator. — His Death and Funeral Ceremonies. — Superstition of the People. — His Tomb broken open and his Remains carried off. — A God of Evil. — Terror inspired by his Name. — His Character.

UNTIL that terrible tempest, which saved the doomed Urdapilletas while it hastened the death of Francia, there was no mitigation of his terrible rule. Though all the leading men in the country whom he had reason to fear from their talents, wealth, or influence had been destroyed, he did not remit the practice of the early years of his dictatorship of arresting, imprisoning, and killing. It had become a habit with him, and the Paraguayans with whom I became acquainted all spoke of his latter days as those when his power was most remorselessly exercised. The prisons at his death were all full, as they had been for twenty-five years. The annual percentage of deaths among the prisoners was very large, but what it was can never be known. The treatment to which they were subjected could not have been otherwise than fatal to a large proportion of those who were subjected to it. As there were nearly seven hundred confined in them at the time of his death (and that was about the average during the long period of his power), the number who died at his hands, either in prison, from torture, or at the banquillo, must have been several thousand. As many more, though generally of an inferior class, were sent to their long account through the purgatory of exile at Tevego, or other places of a like character. People had come long before his death to look upon their condition as their normal state, to feel that they were under a spell, and that there was no escape for them so long as the Dictator might live. Many had come to regard him almost as a god;

as his life was prolonged so much beyond the ordinary period allotted to man, even the hope that death would remove him had nearly ceased to exist. When it was first announced that the Dictator was dead, they could hardly believe it; they feared it was a device of his to entice them into some expressions of relief or joy, for which they would yet be compelled to answer before El Supremo. Of the manner of his death little is known, or ever can be, beyond the fact that after the tempest that flooded his room his orders were not executed. The native physician who was summoned to attend him was living till within a year or two. His name was Estagarribia. He was an eccentric, reserved man, and though I made several attempts, through other persons, to learn something from him of the last days of Francia, he would communicate nothing. This man doubtless perished with the hundreds of thousands of others sacrificed to the ambition and cruelty of Francia's imitator, the younger Lopez. What, therefore, were the last thoughts or words of a man so strange and remarkable for his evil deeds as was the first Dictator of Paraguay will never be known. But it is certain that his last public acts were in character with the man and his whole career. The machinery of his government was kept in motion, however, by his chief secretary, Patiño, through whom his orders, when not given verbally by himself, were transmitted to his subordinates. The directions for the funeral services were given by this man, and the remains of the Dictator were deposited with awful solemnity in the tomb in the church of the Encarnacion; and, strange as it may appear, a priest was found to preach his funeral sermon. This priest, Manuel Antonio Perez, it would appear, shared the fears of the common people lest the mighty Dictator should appear in the flesh again to assert his authority. He did not and could not allude to the pious and Christian character of Francia, as it was known that Francia was not only a scoffer at religion, but had done everything in his power to bring the Church and the priests into contempt; and had he ventured on any such bold eulogium, he might have

dreaded lest the Dictator should start from his tomb and order him to the banquillo. But he confined himself to speaking of the Dictator as a great ruler, one who had preserved the country from anarchy at home and had repelled invasion from abroad, who had straightened the streets of the city, and saved his people from numberless evils. It may be alleged in excuse for this profane, if not blasphemous, eulogium of the Dictator, that it was delivered to a people, many of whom had come to regard the subject of it as a god, and that, if he had ventured to speak of him as he was, a cry of horror would have gone up from the crowd. But if the priest Perez did not extol the piety and religious character of Francia, or assign him a place in the abodes of the blessed, it certainly is to be placed to his credit.

But though dead and buried, many people yet feared his speedy resurrection, — that he would appear among them to punish them for any failure in showing respect for his remains or his memory, and the poorer and more ignorant people would gather at the church and worship at his tomb. This was not continued, however, very long; for some months after his death, on opening the church, it was found that the monument over the remains of Francia had been overturned, the tomb opened, and the dust and bones of the Dictator had disappeared. Still, this did not dispel the illusion that he was a god, but it caused those who had before thought him so to consider him rather as a god of evil, and the people no longer assembled to offer their prayers to him. The terror which his name inspired, however, was so general, that for many years it could not be mentioned in the presence of a Paraguayan without causing fear and alarm. In fact, among the natives his name was seldom or never mentioned, and if they found it necessary to speak of some event or circumstance connected with him, they called him "El Difunto," or made use of some indirect way of alluding to him. The word "Francia" had an unwelcome sound to everybody. So complete and long continued had been the dread and awe of the dreadful Dictator, that the people who had lived during his

reign always evinced such fear and consternation when speaking of him or the events of his time that their children born after he was dead grew up with the impression that he was an ogre or a demon ; and twenty-five years after his death, if a stranger ventured to mention his name or to make any inquiries in regard to his time or his acts, the whole household would be instantly hushed, all would look about to see lest some suspicious person might overhear, the doors would be closed, and the people would intimate by their acts and their appealing looks their wish that the subject should be dropped.

Francia's character is to be judged only by his acts. He had no confidences, and left no records or memoranda of his plans or theories for the government of his people. So far as is known, he was under no illusion that his government either promoted the general happiness at the time, or would have that effect in the future. The happiness of the people did not seem to be a motive with him. His ambition was rather to create that universal fear and abject perpetual dread which rendered the life of all around him dark, hopeless, miserable. The rejoicing of others enraged him, and innocent amusements showed forgetfulness of his power, and he would not tolerate them. He had not the ordinary motives that influence other men, and in this was so different that many who suffered from his tyranny doubted whether he belonged to the human family. The ordinary motives of other men give us no clew to his character, as he was not influenced by them. Hence by his acts alone is he to be judged.

The plea of insanity that has been so often advanced as an explanation of his unnatural conduct cannot be admitted, for the reason that all the parts of his life were consistent with each other and with the same general character. There were never in his whole career any outbreaks of tenderness, any displays of affection, any sympathy with the human race. His cruelties, his cynicism, the apparent want of motive for many of his most pitiless and wanton deeds, all indicate a mind always under control and consistent with itself, and differing from other minds only in that it had no sympathy with

human nature. His acts show that he was inhuman, not insane.

Of his early career scarcely anything is known ; and as a student at the University of Cordova, all that we can learn is that he in no way distinguished himself. On returning to his own country, his morose and overbearing temper soon arrayed everybody with whom he came in contact in opposition to him, so that he lived ever after as a misanthrope and recluse. He had no desire for the love of any human being, nor yet of any pet animal. His love and admiration were all centred on himself, and so completely was he lost in the consciousness of his own greatness that he could not contemplate a superior being. His vanity and egotism made him an infidel, and when he commanded his unhappy subjects to call him the Supremo, their obedience and helplessness sustained him in the assumption. With the desires and appetites of other men he had as little in common as with their affections and sympathies. His beardless face was the index of a character never stirred by love or passion towards any of the other sex, and his indifference to the grosser pleasures of eating and drinking closed up the last avenue through which all other tyrants known in history have realized one feeling in common with their subjects. To his nearest relatives he was as merciless as to the worst criminal, sending his curse to his dying father, and subjecting his harmless, inoffensive brother to torture and execution. His natural children were to him of as utter indifference as were the dogs that contended with them for the offal of the butchers' shambles.

Such was his character as a private citizen, and his after life, when he had become the absolute ruler of an ignorant, amiable, unambitious people, was in keeping with it. His narrow mind was never intoxicated by his elevation to power, for he evinced the same feelings and the same indifference to the happiness and the misery of others afterwards as before. Constitutionally timid and distrustful, he first, on attaining authority, turned his eyes towards those who would be most likely to profit by his overthrow ; and these he regarded as

his natural enemies, and as a pretext for their taking off he invented the conspiracy system that has been so often used by his successors. The consciousness that he had put to death so many thousands of innocent people was accompanied by the conviction that he was universally feared and hated. He therefore inferred that nearly every person in the country desired his death, and he saw in every one an enemy who would gladly take his life if he could get an opportunity. Hence his orders were to his guards to strike down any person to be seen in the streets when he was passing through them, for his first thought was that he might be an assassin laying in wait to murder him. In time this frame of mind became habitual to him, and he lived in perpetual dread, his only pleasure being found in the fear and misery he could inflict on others. To secure the fidelity of the very few that approached his person, he granted them almost unlimited license, as the more obnoxious they were to the people the more interest they had in preserving his life and his power. But even these were so distrusted that he was always on his guard whenever one of them came near him, and ready to shoot or strike him dead at the first suspicious motion. His dread of assassination was such that it haunted him perpetually for many years, and half his time seemed to be spent in devising plans to defeat the imaginary conspirators. His several places of residence were kept up, that he might change from one to the other, seldom sleeping for two nights in succession under the same roof, and never returning to one of them by the same road he had gone, thus thinking to defeat any band of conspirators who might be lying in wait for him. To circumvent them he was constantly studying to be in places where his coming could not have been foreseen, and no body of assassins be waiting to waylay or entrap him.

But the most remarkable thing in the character of the man is that he could endure a life such as he led so long. That a human being could exist through so many long years, shut up in its own self-inflicted prison, through which no ray of hu-

man sympathy could penetrate to the congealed heart within, and on looking out from its hiding-place could only behold wretches whom it had made miserable, and all of whom regarded it with hate enhanced by fear, is a psychological phenomenon such as the world has perhaps never seen before nor since ; nor is it at all strange that the simple, superstitious and kind-hearted Paraguayans should regard a person so differently constituted from themselves as a being of a different order, and that "his death alone should prove to them that he was a human being."

"The evil that men do lives after them." The terrible system of Francia continued when he was no more. The people had for a whole generation been held in such abject terror that at his death they were spell-bound and helpless, so completely divested of all sense or feeling of self-reliance as to become the passive, resistless victims of a weaker and a worse than Francia. It was his to destroy all who had given proof of intelligence, patriotism, or ability ; to sow the seeds of entire submission and unquestioning obedience ; but to reap the fruit, to sacrifice, as it were, the entire people, irrespective of sex or age or rank, to reduce the country to a desert waste, and to raise a tomb for himself on the whitening bones of the entire Paraguayan nation, was left to his disciple and imitator, FRANCISCO SOLANO LOPEZ.

CHAPTER XXII.

Condition of the Country after the Death of Francia. — Policarpo Patiño. — The Junta. — Imprisonment and Death of Patiño. — The Triumvirate. — Carlos Antonio Lopez. — Congress convoked. — Lopez and Alonso made Consuls. — Antecedents of Lopez. — Reforms in the Government. — Francisco Solano Lopez. — Education. — Crude Laws. — Gradual Extinction of Slavery. — Removal of Commercial Restrictions. — The Consulship abolished and Lopez elected President, 1844, for three Years. — Independence of Paraguay. — Foreign Emigration encouraged. — Alliance with Corrientes. — Edward A. Hopkins. — United States and Paraguay Navigation Company.

THUS closed the gloomy career of the Dictator, a man remarkable indeed, but remarkable only for the absence of every human feeling or affection. Without talent, without learning, and without a friend, for twenty-nine years he held absolute sway over a people naturally brave and generous, till the lights of intellect and hope became dim and obscure in their minds. From a joyous, careless, confiding, and happy people, much addicted to amusement and hospitality, they became sullen, distrustful, and treacherous. Says the author of *Six Years' Residence in Paraguay*: "The imagination of a Paraguayan saw an informer in every person that approached, and the first thing he thought of was to keep closely mute, in order to preserve his sad and uncertain existence. The greater part of the youth, without occupation, without harmless diversion, without means of instructing themselves, wishing to employ their leisure and find excitement, gave themselves up to games of chance and licentious pleasures, wasting thus their health and scanty fortunes." The people of Paraguay had morally and intellectually deteriorated during the rule of Francia. They had grown poorer and more ignorant, less frank and hospitable, and less fit for self-government whenever death should relieve them of the presence

of the Dictator. If it be a true test by which to judge of the merits of an administration, that under it the people have learned self-government, then was Francia's the worst, unless that of the Jesuits be excepted, of which history makes mention. He had made it his pleasure and business to put out the lights of intelligence as much as possible, by killing off all the men possessing more than ordinary capacity or education. He made no provision for the administration of the government in case of his death, and it would seem as though he contemplated with grim delight the helpless anarchy in which those people would be left whom it had suited his purpose not to destroy.

When it was known that the Dictator was dead, the people could with difficulty realize it. At first they feared to speak of it to one another. Was it not a trick of his to give out that he was dead, and if any one dared to say a word against him to send him to the prison or to the banquillo? And even if he were dead, they feared he still had power to do them harm. Had not men been flogged, imprisoned, and shot for opinions that they had never dared express; and if he had power to read the stars, and divine men's thoughts while in the flesh, could he not still reach them with his malign influence? Their condition might be compared to a cargo of prisoners of different nations and languages, who could not understand each other, confined in a ship's hold with the light of heaven shut out, all dreading shipwreck, but all cast at length on a beautiful fertile island. What confusion and anarchy might be anticipated before anything like order or confidence could be created! That results did not follow as had been predicted, and that there was no outbreak nor violence, proves only that the spirit of the people had been so completely crushed they dared not harbor even resentment. Natural feelings and anticipations had been found too dear a luxury to be cherished, for they had cost the lives of hundreds and thousands. Besides, the people had for nearly thirty years been so powerless, there had been such complete silence imposed upon them, that there could be no union, no harmony

of action, even among a few. They must learn gradually that they had the power before they could try to exercise it.

The secretary of Francia, Policarpo Patiño, had been so long the servile tool through whom his orders had been transmitted, that he imagined he might carry on the government himself in the manner of his master. To prove himself an apt scholar, he caused several persons to be arrested immediately after the Dictator's death, among whom were the old Frenchmen Dupin and Saguié. To wield the power that Francia had wielded, however, it was indispensable that he should have the support and co-operation of the military chiefs in charge of the government barracks. As Patiño was to them, as to everybody else, nothing but a hated instrument used by Francia, and as in the lifetime of the latter there could have been no correspondence between them, it could not but happen that there should soon be disagreement. Patiño, however, to conciliate them, having as yet the machinery of the government in his hands, called together the four officers in command of the four respective bodies of troops stationed in the capital, together with an alcalde, Manuel Antonio Ortiz, in order that they might go through the form of establishing a government; Patiño being resolved all the while to keep the real power in his own hands, and to use the commandantes only as agents to install himself in the seat left vacant by his master. He therefore formed a Junta composed of these five officers and himself, reserving to himself the post of secretary. His plan, however, sadly miscarried. The Junta selected by himself put him in prison within a few days after Francia's death, where, conscious of the odium he had excited and that the mighty Dictator could no longer protect him, he hanged himself in his cell.

The others of the military chiefs, not satisfied that the authority should be left entirely in the hands of the five, determined that a Congress should be called. Not knowing what else to do, the Junta named one of themselves, Ortiz, as general military commander, to preserve the public order until a Congress could be convoked. But with no one in the

country who knew how to take the preliminary steps towards forming a government, the Junta was perplexed, and, not knowing what to do, only busied themselves in listening to the petitions of those whose friends were in prison. The dungeons were still full of Francia's victims, and no one assumed the authority to set them free. About three months after the Dictator's death, on the 23d of January, 1841, the people having become tired of this inaction of the Junta, it was displaced by a movement of the troops in the San Francisco barracks, headed by two sergeants, Ramon Duré and one Campos. But the people seemed to have an idea that only a general Congress could give them a government that would be respected; and when the first Junta was dissolved, a triumvirate was announced in place of it, whose business it was at once to call a Congress. This triumvirate consisted of three citizens, who, not knowing what to do, did nothing. In the mean while there was one man busily at work laying his plans for the succession,—a man as ignorant of laws and forms of government as the rest, but possessed of cunning, shrewdness, avarice, and ambition. This was Carlos Antonio Lopez. He was at that time about forty-seven years of age, and though destined to play an important part in the subsequent history of Paraguay he was then little known. Indeed, during the long reign of terror, no one in the country was permitted to have any prominence except the Dictator. To be prominent by reason of wealth was dangerous, to be so by reason of talents was fatal. But when the Dictator was no more, then was the time for those to show their talents who before, like Junius Brutus, had feigned not to possess them. Lopez had been cunning enough not to provoke the Dictator's jealousy by anything more than very slight exhibitions of capacity. It is true that two years before his death he had been banished to Rosario for having shown too much astuteness in a legal paper he had drawn up which fell under the eye of Francia. But he accepted the exile without a murmur, and kept strictly quiet till the Dictator's death, when he returned to his home near the city. From there he witnessed the attempts of the people of the capital to form a govern-

ment, and saw that the sceptre of Francia could be easily seized and wielded by the first strong hand that would resolutely grasp it. But he had no prestige as a civilian, and was not a military man. He therefore arranged his plans with the commandante-general of the national arms, Mariano Roque Alonso; and then by exciting discontent among the people at the inaction of the triumvirate it was superseded, and the authority and force to improve it remained in the hands of Alonso, with Lopez as his secretary. A general Congress of three hundred members was at once called, and on the 12th of March, thirty-three days after the overthrow of the triumvirate, it assembled in the capital. Of course, scarcely a member of it had any definite idea of what was to be done. They could only vote for or against the projects submitted by the military commander. The crude plan of a fundamental law drawn up by Lopez was submitted and adopted on the first day of the session; and the second day after, two consuls were elected for the term of three years, who were to exercise jointly the executive authority. The consuls, of course, were those who had called the Congress together, Carlos Antonio Lopez and Mariano Roque Alonso.

Alonso appears to have been a well-intentioned, harmless man, who had been selected by Lopez as the prime mover in establishing a government, for the reason that from his position as military chief under Francia he had control of the national arms and forces. Of Lopez and his antecedents it is now necessary to speak more at length.

He was born near the Recoleta, at a distance of a little more than a league from Asuncion, about the year 1787. The family was one of the lowest in the country, and was considered to be, not only of base blood, but, before the hand of Francia had destroyed all respect for the forms of morality, of disreputable origin. Under the old Spanish *régime* there lived in Asuncion a man by the name of Juan Bautista Goyez. He was a man of some education, but of profligate character. When past middle age, and after Francia became Dictator, he was employed by him as a clerk or accountant of his

treasury, a position which he held for many years. He was never married, but lived with a mulatto woman, by whom he had one child that he acknowledged and treated as his own. When grown to womanhood this child married a poor journeyman tailor of mixed Spanish and Guarani blood, by the name of Cirilo Lopez. Her worldly prospects were so much better than his as to overcome the repugnance which is cherished to this day by the Paraguayans to amalgamation with the negroes. They were accordingly married, and by the aid of his wife's fortune he was enabled to purchase a piece of land near the Recoleta and build a house on it, large and commodious for that country. He continued, however, to follow his occupation of tailor, either as journeyman or master, being mainly dependent upon the work of his hands for the support of his family. This family in due course of time consisted of six sons and two daughters, of which Carlos Antonio was destined to be the President of the future Republic. The schools of the capital at that time, though better than they ever have been since, were very defective, the object of the clerical teachers being to inculcate the dogmas and superstitions of the Church, and also that all matters of authority, both secular and ecclesiastic, should be left in the hands of the priests. Young Carlos, having mastered the rudiments of the Spanish language, was sent to the College of Asuncion, where he received such education as the monks and priests could give him. He improved his opportunities so well, that, after the conclusion of the course, he was named as Professor of Theology in the same college, and also filled the chair of Philosophy. But, like Francia, Lopez was more inclined to the law than to theology, and like him he gave up the instruction of youth in sacred things and took up the practice of the law; but as he never was outside of Paraguay, he had no other knowledge of it than he could pick up in a country where a regularly educated law graduate had never existed. He gained, however, sufficient knowledge of the forms and principles of law to be as competent as any in the capital; and being possessed of great

natural cunning he obtained considerable practice, and enjoyed the reputation of being zealous and faithful in the interests of his clients. He was still a young man when Francia came into power, and soon saw the dangers attending the practice of law, and also that there could be little practice in a country where one mind was absolute and judged everything by sheer caprice. Lopez saw his danger in time to avert it. Before he had done anything to provoke the Dictator's resentment or awaken his suspicions, he quietly withdrew to the family residence at the Recoleta, and lived as retired as possible, knowing and seeing as few of his neighbors as possible.

There was living at this time, in one of the districts to the northeast of Asuncion, a rich estanciero by the name of Lazaro Rojas. He had numerous estancias in different sections, and on each of them were large herds of cattle and horses. Like many others of the older families, he had lived in a kind of rude splendor, his house containing silver plate enough to set off a royal palace. A part of this property he had received with his wife, who at the time of his marriage was a widow by the name of Carillo. At the time of this marriage the widow had but one child, a daughter named Juana. It appears that Don Lazaro had an eye for the person of the daughter as well as for the estate of the mother. The result was that he found, after a time, that it would be convenient to have the young woman married off; and in casting about for a suitable match for his step-daughter, he selected Carlos Antonio Lopez as the most eligible person, inasmuch as he was a man of intelligence above the average, and, having some negro blood to boast of, the union would not be a violation of that law which Francia had promulgated, forbidding all marriages of those claiming Spanish blood except with negroes. The marriage was therefore permitted, and, the first fruit, not of, but after, the union, was Francisco Salano Lopez. The putative father always recognized the child as his own, and it was only known to a few Paraguayans that he was not so. Some of the older inhabit-

ants of the vicinity, however, knew all the circumstances, and after a long residence among them I obtained so much of their confidence that they dared to reveal the facts to me. But among themselves they would no more have whispered such a thing than have plotted a conspiracy. My informants are all dead ere this, most of them killed by the illegitimate son of Lozaro Rajas and Juana Carillo. With his wife, Carlos Antonio received a considerable portion in lands; and on the death of Rojas, many years after, his whole fortune was bequeathed to Francisco Solano, the unnatural child, whose career was to be marked with cruelties and crimes that spared neither age nor sex nor ties of kindred nor friendship, who at last, after imbruing his hands in the blood of all his near relatives, including brothers and sisters, spared not the mother who bore him.

After his marriage, Lopez passed a great part of his time in superintending the estancia he had received with his wife, seldom visiting the capital, and whenever he did so despatching his business and leaving as soon as possible. Necessarily he read little during these years of enforced silence and seclusion, for he had few books, and it was not possible to get more. To the inhabitants of Paraguay their country was the whole world, and for twenty-five years they knew absolutely nothing of what was transpiring beyond the confines of the Dictator's dominions. Under the old Spanish rule the doctrine of the divine right of kings was recognized and inculcated, and, before the modern ideas of republicanism, of the inherent right in the people to choose their own form of government, had reached Paraguay, it was shut out from all communication with the world; and when the Dictator died, no one in the country had any knowledge of any other government than his and the routine and forms introduced by the Spanish governors. They had therefore to rely almost entirely on intuition and common sense to extricate themselves from their anomalous position, and there is no doubt that Lopez well understood the character of the people, and under the circumstances managed affairs with moderation

and wisdom. Francia being dead, all authority was paralyzed. There was no one to command, and none to obey. The task was to make a government that would be respected before anarchy or license should render it impossible.

It was six months after the death of the Dictator before the election of the two consuls. In that time nothing had been done to ameliorate the condition of the people, except that they were no longer in fear of his terrible power, and the arrests and executions for unknown causes had ceased. But the prisoners were still in prison and in fetters to the number of more than seven hundred, some of whom had been there for more than twenty years. One of the first acts of the consular government was to set all who were not proven criminals at liberty. This act was an indication that a new order of things had been commenced, and never, probably, was more complete and universal joy felt by an entire community than that which pervaded Asuncion when this decree was made. From five to six per cent of the entire population, and these nearly all taken from the best families, were in prison; and when the doors were opened and the fetters knocked off, it was a sight such as was perhaps never before witnessed, to see the families and friends of the long-immured prisoners flying to the embrace of friends and kindred whom they had not hoped ever more to greet in this world. Some of them, during their long imprisonment, had fallen into hopeless idiocy, and knew not their kindred who had come to welcome them. The man of middle age, who had been long before consigned to a cell, came forth decrepit and old, perhaps to find all his relatives dead, and all his property taken and disposed of by the Dictator.

To carry out his destructive measures, Francia had been obliged to have many subordinates to execute his orders. Those who were forced to this ungrateful task were not friends of his, and generally it was fear for their own safety that induced them to show neither mercy nor favor. Nevertheless there was a deep feeling of resentment against those who had only executed their master's instructions, and people who had

seen their houses razed, their cattle killed by thousands, their relatives imprisoned and executed, were disposed to seek redress and vengeance at the expense of the Dictator's agents. It was therefore a difficult work to smooth down asperities between those who had had their property destroyed and those who had been forced to destroy it. The consuls, however, appear to have acted wisely, justly, and cautiously; confiscated lands and houses were restored to the families of those who had been executed, and such small returns as the state could pay were made to those who had been ruined by fines and imprisonment. It was the policy of the consuls to have the transition gradual, that the people should feel their improved condition before they had begun to cherish any hope of a great or radical change. In Francia's time the towns were filled with his soldiers and spies, who reported everything to him, and any criminal caught in the act would be condemned to death, imprisonment, or nothing, just as the whim of the moment took him. The consuls, however, soon arranged a police system which, though crude and imperfect, was a great improvement on the caprice of the Dictator. A judicial system was also established, and judges appointed of different grades, and their respective powers were defined. As there had been no courts, laws, or lawyers in the country, it may be supposed these first tribunals had an original way of proceeding; but as the judges were selected from the more substantial and respected citizens that Francia had suffered to survive, they could award justice in the simple cases brought before them, even if they had to improvise a law for the occasion. During the twenty-nine years of Francia's reign, education had been neglected, and at his death the most profound ignorance prevailed. Some few females in the capital, like the Dictator's sister, had taught children the elementary branches; but as there was no college or seminary for teaching anything beyond these, the Spanish language was all the while giving place to the Guarani, so that children whose fathers had been liberally educated in Spain grew up hardly able to speak, much less to read or write, in any dialect.

The people, ignorant as they were, had sense enough to be aware of their ignorance; and the very first act of the Congress, even before choosing the consuls, was to pass a law for the founding of a state College. The consuls also took early measures to establish primary schools, not only in the capital, but throughout the country. It was necessarily slow work. The darkness of nearly thirty years had left few capable of teaching even the elementary branches. Nevertheless the work began, and in time the clouds began to lift, not so much at first by reason of any education that could be acquired as from the opening of the ports and the admission of foreigners, whose presence and conversation proved to them — what they were before scarcely conscious of — that there was a world outside of the limits of Paraguay.

It is amusing to read of the first acts of this makeshift government. In their ignorance of all forms, and their desire to do what other nations did, they committed many ludicrous acts. In time these errors and absurdities were discovered, — often from the ridicule they excited among their neighbors. This caused greater caution afterwards, and doubtless had a great effect in causing Lopez, in his subsequent career, to be very punctilious on all matters of ceremony, as fast as he learned what was expected and exacted by other potentates.

The condition of the soldiery in the more remote parts of the country during the time of Francia was most miserable. Young men were taken from their homes and sent to remote and unhealthy points, and there kept under the most severe treatment for years, being allowed nothing for their service but a single ration of beef per day. The length of service was unlimited, and a soldier once taken and despatched to the frontier could never hope to return until the earth was rid of the Dictator. How it was that he was able to retain them on the southern frontier, where it was possible to escape, is almost inconceivable. But such was the dread of his terrible power, and so fearful were the tortures inflicted, and so possessed were they of the belief that everything was known, even to their thoughts, by the star-gazer, that they remained faithful

at their posts till relieved by death. This condition of things was very soon changed by the consuls. It was no longer the object or policy of the government to keep foreigners out of the country, or make a close prison of it for everybody within its limits, and most of the soldiers were recalled and discharged, and, where necessary, others were sent to replace them.

In the capital the soldiers under Francia were allowed every license, if they only closely followed his orders while on duty. On parade they must be clean and sober, and go through all their evolutions with precision, as sentinels they must be vigilant and inquisitive; but off duty they might get as drunk as they pleased, might insult any private citizen with impunity, might outrage any woman that they fancied, and there was no redress, — for seldom, if ever, was a soldier punished by Francia for any outrage on private persons. But the government of the consuls at once put a stop to all this. The miserable instruments that had been employed by Francia to degrade and insult the most respectable of the inhabitants seemed to disappear with the Dictator. They instinctively recognized the fact that their "occupation was gone," and were soon lost to sight. In this way the acts of vengeance and retaliation that must have taken place had they remained among the people familiar with their atrocities failed to occur.

The difficulties under which the new government labored will appear more striking by reading some of its crude laws than from any other evidence that can now be produced. One of its first acts was to provide for the instruction of youth in several branches not taught in the primary schools. So a law was decreed by the two consuls for what was fancifully called a Literary Academy. A professor of Latin and another of philosophy were decreed, and an old priest, who knew little of Latin and nothing at all of philosophy, was intrusted with the duty of organizing the institution. Soon after, however, the arrival of two Jesuit priests from Buenos Aires, whose lives had been dedicated to the education of youth, enabled the government to give more form and come-

liness to their Literary Academy. These priests appear to have entered on their work with zeal and judgment. But they did not stay long, and whether it was because the consuls feared that this would be but an entering wedge for the re-establishment of Jesuit influence, or whether the ideas of the government were so absurd in regard to what a Literary Academy ought to be, does not appear. Perhaps the two causes combined to secure their departure. The latter will appear sufficient, however, if we observe the very original and curious features of the organic law. In this the government appears to be head schoolmaster. It declares there shall be a professorship of Latin and another of the Spanish language and *belles-lettres*; another of "rational philosophy in the didactic method; that is, logic, metaphysics, ethics, general and particular, physics, general and particular." There was also to be a professorship of dogmatic theology "in the didactic method"; another of moral theology in the same method. Besides this, it defines minutely the duties of the professors, who were also assigned the hours of instruction to be given in each branch. A translation of the duties of the first professorship will serve to show the general character of the whole five.

"Latin shall be taught from seven o'clock in the morning until nine; afterwards, half an hour of recreation. At two and a half in winter and at two and three quarters in summer, in the afternoon, shall begin the teaching of Latin for two continuous hours. On Saturday mornings, lessons will be given on the elements of the Christian religion for one hour after the ordinary task, instead of recreation." The other four professorships have each their duties assigned them in similar detail, all teaching about the same branches; and the whole would appear to be copied from the rules of some ancient Spanish schoolmaster, and repeatedly divided and subdivided to make it appear that the Literary Academy had as many learned professors as had colleges of learning in other countries.*

* When the Jesuits went away, there was but one man in the whole country capable of teaching anything beyond such elementary branches as reading, spell-

Not only are the duties of the professors thus definitely prescribed by the organic law of the Academy in statute form, but rules for the conduct and deportment of the students are given at such length as would confound the monitors of a normal school. Even the parents are commanded to attend to it that their children come well washed and combed and dressed,—the latter of which was easily complied with, as a boy of twelve or fourteen was considered in full dress with nothing more than a loose shirt, and girls of ten or twelve generally dispensed with that, being perfectly content with nothing but their rosaries. Then there is incorporated into the law rules of study and deportment to be committed to memory, and, in fact, all the details of conduct for both teachers and pupils from the rising to the setting of the sun.

This law for the establishment of a literary institution was doubtless intended to be drawn with a skill and literary perfection corresponding with the exalted nature of the subject. The law, however, declaratory of the regulations to be observed in regard to the public cemetery and the burial of the dead, if less dignified in phraseology, is none the less curious and minute in its details. The following extracts taken from this law will show how, in this state of pupilage, the new government made some very singular enactments:—

“The undertakers and grave-diggers shall be paid each five dollars per month, the hearse-driver five dollars, and the peon that takes care of the mules twenty reals. No person shall ride in the dead-carts except the corpse that is carried, and, therefore, nobody shall get up and ride behind.

“The graves shall always be of the same depth, that is, six hands deep and seven feet long; and the bodies that have coffins shall be lowered with two cords, one at each end.”

Among the thirty-nine similar provisions of this law there is, writing, and arithmetic. And this one most competent of all, Don Juan Pedro Escalada, who, if not executed by the second Lopez, is probably living yet, and from whom I have received much information in regard to those times, was only a private teacher, and never had the honor of a chair in the Literary Academy.

is this moral reflection interjected as one of the articles: "It is against Christian piety to bury people with irreverent actions, or drag them in hides, or throw them into the grave without consideration, or in a position contrary to the practice of the Church."

But crude and undigested as were these laws, — for as yet there was no constitution, and there was no more formality in a decree upon the most important questions of state policy than in one fixing the salary of a peon, — there was one act promulgated very early in the time of the consular government, so wise and just as to redeem the faults and defects of all the others, — a law that stands forth as a rebuke to the leading statesmen of the United States at the time, many of whom were laboring to strengthen and perpetuate that "sum of all villanies" which this government, composed of two ignorant, unlettered consuls, from a mere instinctive sense of sound policy and natural justice, were seeking to abate and finally destroy. This law provided for the gradual extinction of slavery; though in its provisions it is cumbered with ludicrous details, yet had this law been passed in the United States at the same time, it would, before leading to civil war, have rendered slavery extinct, and saved the nation from the Great Rebellion.

This law was first promulgated November 24, 1842, and was to take effect on the 1st of June following. It provided that all children of slaves born after that time should be free, the males at twenty-five and the females at twenty-four years of age. The result proposed was to make all the children of slaves born after the law was published absolutely free at the end of the year 1867. These were not styled slaves, but *libertos*, or freedmen. The slaves in the mean while were constantly diminishing in number, as no more were born after that date to perpetual bondage, and the last vestige of slavery must cease with the lives of those slaves who had been born previous to the year 1843. This law may seem too slow in its operations to suit the ideas of the present age. We have seen the institution of slavery, which was so firmly rooted that

it seemed impossible to destroy it, entirely cut up and its four millions of bondmen set at liberty within the space of four short years. Yet, slow as it was, the influence of such a law practically abolished the system long before all had been made free through its direct operation. The law respecting the treatment of the *libertos*, or freedmen, which was but a counterpart of the one providing for the gradual abolition of slavery, was so liberal that there was little difference between a slave and a peon or other laboring person. A slave who was not well treated, or who disliked his master, might go to a justice of the peace and make a complaint, and the latter was bound to find him a new master, and the former must be satisfied to receive only such price for his services as the hirer was willing to pay. A slave was no more subject to corporal punishment than any other person of low condition. In fact, during all my residence in Paraguay, I never heard of the castigation of a slave unless it was administered by a government employee. The operations of this law, however, were brought to a sudden termination during the late war, as Lopez, to recruit his army, made no distinction between slaves and their masters. All were alike taken for soldiers; all alike were sent to the field of battle, and, with very few exceptions, all perished, either on the battle-field, in prison, or from disease, hardship, or exposure in the camp.

During the time of the consulate there was an effort made to obtain the recognition by Buenos Aires of Paraguay as an independent republic; but Rosas, the Dictator and tyrant of that country, then in the zenith of his power, refused such recognition, and it was not till 1856 that it was granted.

A protracted and angry correspondence took place between Rosas and the consular government, and the former, not being able to make a warlike attack on Paraguay by reason of being at war with Corrientes, shut up his ports to all Paraguayan commerce, so that the country still continued practically closed to the rest of the world until that sanguinary and cowardly tyrant was driven from power and from the country he had long afflicted.

The consular government having been chosen for but three years, a new Congress was called on the 12th of March, 1844. To this Congress the government presented a report of its proceedings, all of which were approved. And ever since, though professing to have a constitution and published laws, it has been the invariable custom for the government to make such decrees and do such acts as may please it, and when a Congress is convoked to submit a report of what has been done, which the Congress duly ratifies and approves without a word of debate.

During the time of the consular government, Lopez, in imitation of Francia nearly thirty years before, managed to hold the entire power in his own hands. His colleague Alonso, though a well-meaning man and of fair intelligence for that country, had neither the cunning nor the ambition that distinguished Lopez. The latter, like Francia, while Secretary of the Junta, had no sooner tasted the luxury of power than he commenced to lay his plans to make himself absolute, and the measures that had resulted so favorably to the Dictator he resolved to imitate. The older people could remember that Francia had appeared to derive his authority from a Congress, and the impression yet remained that only a Congress could invest with due authority the head of the government.

Lopez, therefore, before the expiration of the consulship, had ordered a Congress to be called, taking good care that it should be composed entirely of members who were favorable to him and his plans. This it was not hard to do, as up to that time all his acts had been marked with moderation and humanity; and, besides, all ambition had been so effectually extinguished among the people that no one else cared to question or dispute his claims.

On the assembling of this Congress, Lopez submitted his plan for a change in the form of government. A dictatorship, by that name, was too odious to be repeated, and a law was therefore proposed to establish a government republican in form, and with a President as chief magistrate. This law was passed without debate or dissent, and thus Carlos Antonio

Lopez, then about fifty-one years of age, was unanimously declared President of Paraguay for ten years. It may be here remarked, that this Congress, like all others which were called during the reign of the Lopezes, was unanimous in everything. A dissenting voice was never heard in one of them. A minority vote was never reported in one of those august assemblages. The work for which the Congress was convened having been done, it was dismissed, to be called together again, or rather a new Congress to be called, when it might suit the President's purposes, or when the ten years should expire and he should desire a re-election. In the organic law there is no provision for the assembling of a Congress except when the President shall call it; so that, the Congress that had elected Lopez being dissolved, the new President was as absolute as ever had been the old Dictator.

But his policy and conduct at first were very different from those of his predecessor. Instead of shutting up the ports, he was anxious to cultivate friendly relations with other nations, and to have free commerce with the rest of the world. Though unable to obtain from Rosas the recognition of Paraguay as a sovereign independent state, he succeeded in getting the commercial restrictions removed as early as the 27th of March of the year of his election, and in June following the independence of Paraguay was acknowledged by Bolivia. In 1852 it was acknowledged by the Argentine Confederation, to which the Province of Buenos Aires did not then belong. In 1853 it was recognized as an independent power by England, France, Sardinia, and the United States, though with the latter, for reasons to be hereafter explained, the treaty was not ratified till six years later.

The first newspaper, the *Paraguayo Independiente*, was issued in April, 1845. It was a government organ, and was intended not so much as a newspaper as to make known the official decrees, and to give the President, who seemed to have an exalted opinion of his own abilities as a writer, an opportunity to display his talents, abuse his enemies, and commend himself. Two other laws first promulgated about this time gave

unmistakable evidence of the President's desire to cultivate friendly relations with other nations, and to induce foreign immigration. One of these provided that whoever should introduce any new invention should have the exclusive use of it for five years, and the same exclusive privilege was granted to whomsoever should introduce any new industry into the country. The other was that in all things foreigners resident in the country should enjoy all the rights, privileges, and immunities of natives. They should not be subject to military duty, should not be molested for their religious opinions, and their property of all kinds was to be respected and inviolable, both in times of peace and in times of war; but should war occur with any other nation, the citizens of such nation resident in the country could continue unmolested in their business so long as they respected the laws. This law was liberal in its terms, but how from the first it was a dead letter, and how it was always violated whenever it suited the caprice or interest of the President to violate it, will appear frequently hereafter. In the enforcement of any law of Paraguay there was never any such thing as reciprocity between the subject and the sovereign. The former was expected to obey the laws, but the latter always did just as he pleased, and set aside laws under which foreigners had acquired vested rights at his own good pleasure.

The war between Rosas and the Correntinos continued, and as it was the avowed purpose of Rosas, after he should bring Corrientes into subjection, to attempt the same with Paraguay, President Lopez entered into an alliance offensive and defensive against the Dictator. Active measures were now taken to increase and organize the army, and in the month of December war was publicly proclaimed against Rosas.

Lopez, more wise than Francia, and yet as eager for absolute power, instead of arraying whatever was left of a religious element in the country against him by persecution of the priests, sought to make the church a support to himself. He was intensely avaricious, and already was using his influence and position as President to enrich himself and his family.

His brother, Basilio Lopez, was made, at the request of the President, Bishop of Paraguay, as thus the influence, patronage, and perquisites of the office would all be secured to the family; beside which the position of bishop was, in the popular estimation, so important, that its possession by any other person might imply a division of power, and it was the determination of Lopez to be, like his predecessor, absolute in both temporal and spiritual things. The extent to which he afterwards carried this practice of nepotism, especially towards his children, was perhaps never equalled. In this he showed that he had human affections, in which respect he differed from Francia and from the younger Lopez, who tortured and executed all alike with entire impartiality.

But the event most important in its consequences on the future of Paraguay that occurred during the year 1845 was the arrival of a young American in Asuncion as a sort of special agent of the United States government. His name was Edward A. Hopkins. He had been a midshipman in the navy, but having, for reasons of his own, resigned and left the service, the government of the United States, in accordance with its general policy of giving early recognition to all South American republics that had thrown off the Spanish allegiance, had selected Mr. Hopkins as its special agent to proceed to Paraguay and express its felicitations that a republican form of government had succeeded the colonial period and the dictatorship, and to inquire into the general condition of the country, with the object, on the part of the American government, of recognizing Paraguay as an independent power whenever the proper time should arrive. The person selected was very young for a task of this kind. He was a man of extraordinary energy and fair intelligence, but without that moderation and judgment that might have been expected in an older person. He was not only enthusiastic in whatever he undertook, but had the faculty of inspiring others with faith in his schemes and enterprises; unhappily, however, he was of so arrogant and overbearing a disposition that no one could long act with him in any enterprise, so that, though

successful in this and in his subsequent career as the initiator and promoter of important and useful works, his withdrawal from them was essential to their ultimate success. But he had not that great fault of most of his countrymen of being embarrassed and hampered by excessive modesty. To this may be added that he was a man of fine appearance, of herculean strength and iron endurance. He was also a fine musician, and could sing a song or play the guitar in a way that astonished the simple Paraguayans. He could tire out the strongest gaucho in a gallop over the pampas, and was possessed of considerable miscellaneous information, with an imagination at all times ready to help out where facts were wanting, and a volubility that could deluge with assertions whoever opposed him in controversy. Such a man was the first government agent ever sent into Paraguay by the United States; and had the whole country been searched, not another could have been found better calculated to impress on the isolated Paraguayans the fact that the outside barbarians were not so much, physically and mentally, their inferiors as they had supposed.

That the modesty of Hopkins was not so excessive as to embarrass him will appear from his first official communication with the government of Paraguay. In this, although authorized by the government only to investigate and report with a view to recognition, he tells President Lopez that the next Congress of the United States will acknowledge the independence of Paraguay, and he also informs him that he is authorized to offer the mediation of the United States in the war pending between Paraguay and Buenos Aires.

The appearance of a messenger from the great republic, bringing such promises of recognition and sympathy, appeared to Lopez like a special providence for his especial benefit. What cared he then for the ephemeral governments of his neighbors, that were always fighting among themselves, always exposed to, if not engaged in, revolutions? Had not the great Colossus of Republicanism learned of his wisdom and the greatness of his country? and would he not strike hands with his "great

and good friend" the President of the United States, as Francia had proposed to do with England, when there should be but two nations of the first class in all the world, Paraguay and North America? — for that the United States and North America are not one and the same no Paraguayan could ever yet understand. What cared he, then, for his neighbors? Hopkins assured him that by concessions to American citizens he could induce men of capital and enterprise to come to Paraguay, who would introduce steamers and factories of various kinds, and the wealth of the country would vastly and rapidly increase with the development of its resources, and Carlos Antonio, instead of being at the head of a petty republic scarcely known to nineteen twentieths of the civilized world, would be the chief magistrate of a great and flourishing empire that would make his name resound throughout the world and would add millions to his private fortune. López listened, well pleased, to all of Hopkins's flatteries, and thought him a marvellously proper man. He gave him his confidence and asked his advice, and bade him go forward with all his plans, and rely on him for assistance and protection.

Hopkins, finding himself in such favor, at once set to work to take advantage of the offers of his friend, Carlos Antonio. He told him that he had wealthy connections in his own country who would introduce many and important improvements into Paraguay; that a company could be formed with a capital of three hundred thousand dollars, and the aggregate wealth of its members would be not less than ten million dollars. If it so pleased his Excellency he would return to the United States, and have the company take immediate steps to realize their great project. The President, cunning and Jesuitical as he was, was completely dazzled with the representations of Hopkins. He saw in the future himself as a great sovereign, famed the world over for his wisdom, and, which was more, he saw the prospect of increased wealth to himself, and this was the impelling motive of his life. Hopkins told him of the great advantages to result from the introduction of improved agricultural implements, like cast-iron ploughs, cultivators,

harrows, corn-shellors, cotton-gins ; so that Paraguay, instead of being dotted all over with mud houses, each with its little patch of indian corn, cotton, tobacco, mandioca, and sugar-cane, would have great plantations finely improved, and steamers and sailing vessels would in a few years be coming daily to Asuncion to bring the needed manufactures from other countries, and bear away millions of the wealth that the improved culture of the land would produce.

President Lopez having, as we have seen, passed the best part of his life shut out from the world, experienced great difficulty in getting his government into anything like working order. Though he desired to be absolute, he yet wished to have the forms and departments of an organized government to be administered in its details and branches by subordinate officials. But we have already seen how jumbled together were the provisions of his laws, as in the organic law of the Literary Academy it is decreed what clothes the pupils shall wear, what hours shall be devoted to this or that branch, and when they shall have religious exercises instead of recreation ; we have also seen that in the law for the establishment of a public cemetery it is provided that, in going to that cemetery, no one shall ride in the dead-cart but the corpse, nor shall any one be allowed to get up and ride behind. From such absurdities and incongruities Hopkins could warn his friend, and could assist him in the work of general organization. Lopez, finding him very useful, treated him with great kindness and attention, and an affection grew up between them as great as that between David and Jonathan or Damon and Pythias. Lopez promised Hopkins everything, and Hopkins, in his turn, wrote glowing accounts of Paraguay to be published in the newspapers of the United States, setting forth the wonderful fertility of the soil, the salubrity of the climate, the vast wealth in the gums, woods, dye-stuffs, medicinal plants, tobacco, cotton, and sugar-cane of the country, and also of the great wisdom, liberality, and good disposition towards foreigners, especially Americans, of its most excellent President, Carlos Antonio Lopez. The government of the United States, however, did not approve all

that Hopkins had done in promising recognition of Paraguayan independence and offering mediation between Paraguay and Buenos Aires, and revoked his commission. Though Lopez could not understand the cause of the delay of the former, he was not aware that the promise of Hopkins was made without authority, and it is not probable that the agent ever told him of his reprimand and recall. To carry into effect the great plans that the two had projected, it was concluded that Hopkins should return to the United States and at once set to work to complete the organization of his company, and return with the implements and skilled workmen that were to effect an industrial revolution in Paraguay. To give him more authority, Lopez thought it would be well for him to take a sort of consular commission from him. But he knew nothing of official forms, and Hopkins was obliged even to write out his own passport.

Thus armed with promises Hopkins returned to the United States. But before he left he had been in correspondence with an eminent American citizen, since Governor of his State and United States Senator, in relation to an enterprise of profit and speculation in South America. This gentleman in his youth had travelled much in South America, and had seen the marked contrast between the natural resources and the development of the countries of the Plata ; and it occurred to him that there was a fine field for a profitable business that would yield large fortunes to the promoters, and be of incalculable service to the people of the country. The whole valley of the Plata was in a state of incredible backwardness in all matters of modern improvement and discovery. That noble river, navigable for steamers for a distance of twenty-five hundred miles above tide-water, having towns and cities of considerable size at that distance from the sea, was as yet innocent of steam navigation. The people were almost as primitive in their habits as they had been two hundred years before. The soil was so productive that very little labor sufficed to supply the wants of nature, and people knew little of luxury or of artificial wants. Whatever they had in

the way of furniture or clothing was of the rudest and crudest sort, and yet, from lack of tools and skill, was made with infinite labor. The cotton was first separated by hand from the seeds, then it was picked apart and made soft and workable by the same method, then it was spun with no other utensil than a wooden spindle twirled in the fingers, and then it was woven in looms of a construction that even Lucretia would have regarded as old-fashioned. The only plough used was of wood, of a model as old as the Pyramids; and for household utensils they had little more than home-made clay pottery, with one knife for a family and a horn spoon for each individual. Yet these same people had the lingering traditions of gorgeous luxury inherited from their cavalier ancestors, and all that was required to redeem them from their state of semi-barbarism was to establish a free and easy communication with the rest of the world. They had mines of wealth in their woods alone, in their medicinal plants and gums, in their yerba maté, their dyestuffs, their hides and tallow; yet, remote as they were from all civilized countries, all these availed them but little, and they passed lives of helpless ignorance and indolence. The plan of Hopkins, though like all schemes of private enterprise founded on a love of gain, was, nevertheless, a plan for redemption from semi-barbarism to civilization. President Lopez was sagacious enough to see the great advantages that would result to his country and people from the introduction of such new industries as Hopkins proposed to establish; but at first he did not consider that their successful working would be incompatible with a government like his, that the presence of a colony of intelligent and enterprising Americans would soon dispel the illusion of his people as regarded himself, and that his absolute authority would not be tolerated. He desired to let in light so far as to enable his people to make improvements in agriculture and the mechanic arts, but he never considered that if they went thus far they would soon take an inconvenient interest in the state politics.

On returning to the United States, Hopkins was enabled

to show that the schemes of his distinguished friend were exactly in accordance with the views and aims of the very person who could do most towards their realization. Lopez had promised everything,—a monopoly of steam navigation for many years, full protection in executing his plans, and exclusive privileges for all new industries he might introduce. Over and above this, he represented that Don Carlos Antonio was a marvel of intelligence and liberality. A company was then easily formed, and a charter granted by the Legislature of Rhode Island under the title of the United States and Paraguay Navigation Company, composed of men of substantial wealth and character; in fact, made up of the most respectable and influential men of the State of Rhode Island, and the president of which was the individual before referred to who had originated the scheme. A steamer was purchased, her name changed to the *El Paraguay*, and one or two other vessels chartered, and all were freighted with such things as might be most useful. The cargo was well selected, and consisted of steam-engines, horse-powers, cotton-gins, mill-stones, saw-mills, ploughs, hoes, shovels, scythes, ox-yokes, sugar-boilers, blacksmith's tools, and many other articles, such as are most needed in a new country. In addition to the machinery and tools, engineers and experienced workmen in all the new arts and industries that they proposed to introduce accompanied the expedition. The most profitable crop for exportation in Paraguay is tobacco; but owing to a lack of care and skill in curing it, it commanded but a low price in the market, and in its manufactured state it was quite unsalable. This company therefore took with them several persons who had been engaged in Cuba in curing tobacco, and were familiar with all the processes of improving its flavor, and also in making the best quality of cigars. Thus freighted with the implements for a great enterprise, the *El Paraguay* sailed from New York the 21st of March, 1853. But she was destined never to reach Paraguay. She experienced a succession of gales, so that by the time she arrived off the coast of Brazil she was obliged to put into

Maranham, where she was condemned and she and her cargo sold. This was a loss to the company estimated at many times the intrinsic value of the vessel and cargo. It not only entailed heavy expense in addition to the direct loss, but it embarrassed and delayed the enterprise, so that it did not get into fair working condition for a long time, and not till Lopez had had time to realize that such a company as this might prove a very Trojan horse within his dominions. The shipments sent by other vessels were of little value except as supplemental to what was sent in the *El Paraguay*. Nevertheless the agent of the company, with the men employed, went forward and began operations as best they could, sending back to have duplicated those articles of the most pressing necessity. The company regarded the direct loss of the property as insignificant compared with the franchises promised by Lopez. With the privileges that would enure under them, and the law giving monopolies for the term of five years to whoever should introduce new industries, they saw that if good faith were observed by all parties the undertaking must be immensely profitable and give fortunes to the stockholders.



CARLOS ANTONIO LOPEZ.

CHAPTER XXIII.

The United States and Paraguay Steam Navigation Company. — Difficulties with Lopez. — Expedition of Lieutenant Thomas J. Page to the Plata. — Opposition of Lopez to the American Company. — Insults and Annoyances. — The Enterprise broken up. — Lieutenant Page succeeds in extricating the Company from the Power of Lopez. — Treaty between the United States and Paraguay. — The Water Witch sent to explore the Waters of the Parana. — Fort Itapiru. — The Water Witch fired upon. — Eagerness of Page to avenge the Insult to the Flag. — Commodore Salter refuses to take any Action in the Matter. — Duties of Naval Officers.

LOPEZ had been so greatly elated at the magnificent projects of Hopkins, that he not only promised him most extraordinary privileges and monopolies, but even lent him money to the amount of ten thousand dollars to assist him in returning to the United States and organizing his plans. He had expected that the company would commence operations on an extensive scale, and was evidently disappointed when, owing to the loss of the steamer *El Paraguay* and the delays incident to this misfortune, the company was able to commence only in a very small way. Notwithstanding this, however, when the company began its operations, he manifested an interest in its success, and showed a disposition to conform to the promises which he had made previous to the return of Hopkins to the United States. The point selected for the head-quarters of the company was a place called San Antonio, about eight miles below Asuncion. A tract of land was here purchased from the owner with the approval and consent of Lopez; and in spite of the disasters which the company had incurred on the voyage everything seemed to open prosperously, and the company were for a time in high hopes of a successful career. They had erected and set in operation a saw-mill, and commenced the manufacture of cigars of a

superior quality to what had ever been known before in Paraguay. The company had taken with them several experienced cigar-makers from Cuba, and as the tobacco of the country was of a superior quality, though the rude manner in which it had previously been cured had given it a very low price in the market, they anticipated a very large revenue from this source. Lopez had engaged to permit the employment of as many natives as they needed, and the skilled Cubans immediately set to work to teach their employees how to convert their hitherto nearly valueless raw material into cigars that would bring a good price in any part of the world. Lopez saw, however, that the company were working rather in their own interest than in his, and soon became uneasy at the presence of such a company ; and Hopkins, who had returned from the United States with a commission as consul for Paraguay, did not try to conciliate him, either by deferring to his wishes in small things or by making him a partner in the prospective profits of the company. It was soon evident to all that Lopez had changed his mind in regard to the whole project, and that the company were regarded by him with fear and aversion. This was at first apparent from the changed manner of the native people. Under his system of government he could easily convey to all of his subjects the fact that any persons had fallen into disfavor, and that it was safe to treat them with disrespect and discourtesy and to have nothing to do with them. It required no official decree or public announcement for him to make known his desires. If an official who was understood to be high in his confidence was known to be rude to any foreigner, all were aware that he acted by authority, and that it would be prudent for them to imitate his example. Nevertheless, nothing of a serious nature occurred, until one day, as the brother of Mr. Hopkins happened to be riding out in company with the wife of the French consul, he met, at a short distance from the capital, a native Paraguayan driving before him a small herd of cattle. The cattle at the sight of the lady and her attendant turned back, or ran into the bushes and woods near the road. The

Paraguayan in charge of them, who was, of course, well aware that the Americans were no longer in favor, showed great anger, and, riding up to young Hopkins, drew his sword and beat him with it over the head and shoulders. When Consul Hopkins learned of this outrage he was very indignant, and hurried into the presence of Lopez, and, without observing those forms and ceremonies in which the Spanish-Americans are always very punctilious, recounted in an angry and energetic manner the insult and indignity to which his brother had been subjected, and demanded the punishment of the soldier. During all the time that Lopez had been at the head of the government he had never before been addressed except in the most obsequious and respectful terms; and when he saw the stalwart American before him, in top-boots and spurs, with his hat on and whip in hand, violently gesticulating and demanding satisfaction, he was both alarmed and angry. He, however, complied with the request, and said the man should be punished, and that he would order the infliction upon him of three hundred blows. This did not satisfy Hopkins, who demanded not only that the man should be punished, but that the official newspaper should publicly announce it, that others might learn from his fate what they were to expect if any further indignities or offences were given to members of the company. The old man refused to accede to this demand, and as soon as he could recover from his fright he commenced a series of annoyances and outrages that rendered the property of the company valueless, and left the members of it exposed and helpless. His people were privately forbidden to labor for the company or traffic with them, and in some instances the company's property was taken by him and in others it was destroyed. The land which had been bought by the company, to the purchase of which no objection had been made at the time of the bargain, was declared to have been illegally sold, and that there were claims upon it by others than the former owner, so that the deed of purchase was null and void. This pretence of illegality was clearly trumped up for no other object

than as an excuse for ejecting the company from their rightful possessions. But the company had no means of redress. Lopez had determined to drive them from the country and break up the enterprise, and as he was responsible to no power in the world but his own arbitrary will, it was hopeless, at this stage, for the company to contend with him. His action towards them, however, was somewhat embarrassed by the fact that an American man-of-war was in the river; and though this vessel had not been built for warlike purposes, and as a war vessel was of very little account, it was nevertheless capable, with its small armament, of destroying his capital.

Some time before this, as early as 1852, Lieutenant Thomas J. Page, an officer of the American navy, who was possessed of a commendable spirit of enterprise and adventure, and a man of considerable scientific knowledge, had so far interested the United States in the affairs of the Plata as to induce the government to send out an expedition to explore that river and its tributaries, and report upon their navigability and of the field which they offered for commerce with the United States. It was a scientific expedition in which all commercial countries were more or less interested, as previous to that time the character of the upper waters of the Plata was almost entirely unknown. Lieutenant Page was commissioned also to negotiate a treaty of commerce and navigation, either by himself or in conjunction with our ministers to Brazil and the Argentine Confederation. The vessel detailed by the government for this expedition was the steamer *Water Witch*. She left the United States in the early part of the year 1853, and proceeding first to Brazil, Lieutenant Page there made known to the Brazilian government the object of the expedition, which was to explore the tributaries of the Plata, especially the waters of the Upper Paraguay, that had their rise in the Brazilian province of Matto Grosso. At first permission was granted to him to ascend only to a point called Albuquerque, which is but a short distance from the Paraguayan frontier; but after a great deal of diplomacy, prevarication, and delay, characteristic of the Brazilian government, permission was finally

given to explore any of the tributaries of the Paraguay River. After leaving Rio, the Water Witch proceeded to Montevideo and Buenos Aires, and thence on its voyage of exploration and discovery up the river to Asuncion, where it arrived in October, 1853. Lieutenant Page, on making known to President Lopez the object of the Water Witch in ascending the Paraguay, was received by him with unusual courtesy and attention, for at that time the Rhode Island company had not commenced operations in the country and Lopez was particularly well affected towards Americans. Having made all the preparations necessary for the continuation of his voyage, and having built a small steamer to explore the smaller tributaries of the river and obtained the promise of assistance from Lopez in securing a supply of fuel and any assistance that might be required from the people farther up the river, he continued his voyage up beyond the limits of Paraguay to the town of Coimbra, in the Brazilian province of Matto Grosso. Not having at that time received permission from the Brazilian government to go higher, he was obliged to turn back at this point, and found, greatly to his mortification, that the habitual delay of the Brazilians in granting him permission to go higher up had defeated to a great extent the object of his expedition, though he found, when too late for it to be available, that the desired permission had been given. Returning down the river to Asuncion, he ascertained that the disposition of President Lopez towards himself, his expedition, and all Americans, had undergone an important change. Some members of the Rhode Island company, with their agent, Mr. Hopkins, had arrived since the time of his first arrival there and his return from the Upper Paraguay, and had commenced operations, though the difficulties between the company and Lopez had not yet commenced. The President affected great displeasure because the Water Witch had ascended beyond the frontiers of Paraguay, alleging that having permitted an American steamer to do so, he would next be called upon by Brazil to permit the same privilege to her vessels, which might lead to difficulties and complications with that government. The

wrath of Lopez, however, was so far appeased, that he permitted Lieutenant Page to complete the little steamer for the exploration of the Pilcomayo and the Bermejo, both of which streams have their head-waters far to the west of the Andes, and find their way through the Gran Chaco until they unite with the Paraguay, the former near Asuncion and the latter near its confluence with the Parana. Lieutenant Page improved his time and opportunities most efficiently. He made charts of the different rivers and obtained a great variety of information, all of which he held at the service, not only of his own government, but of Paraguay and the whole civilized world. Having an adequate force of assistants, well instructed in botany, mineralogy, and zoölogy, he collected specimens of many rare plants and birds, and of the animals peculiar to the country ; and up to the time when Lopez saw fit to interrupt his explorations his expedition had been one of the most successful and creditable to the United States that had ever been despatched from their shores. While engaged in his explorations, being absent in the interior of the country, he learned of the difficulties which had occurred between Consul Hopkins and President Lopez. He returned immediately, and learned that the hostility of Lopez to the company, which had long been repressed, had finally reached its climax with the assault of the Paraguayan soldier upon the brother of the consul. Hopkins had complained of this outrage, and demanded that the soldier should be summarily punished and the reason for it be publicly announced in the official organ. What followed is thus described by Lieutenant Page :—

“ President Lopez took exception to the language in which the complaint was made. A paper war ensued ; crimination followed recrimination. The consular *exequatur* was revoked, and the wrath of the chief magistrate extended to the members of the American company of which Hopkins was the agent. They had been permitted to occupy the cuartel of San Antonio ; had improved the grounds, purchased some adjoining lands, erected a saw-mill, and established a cigar-factory. They were now forced to give up the

cuartel ; the controversy waxed hotter and hotter ; decrees, or *bandos*, intended to embarrass their operations, were issued, and at last the cigar-factory was closed, thereby virtually closing the business of the company in Paraguay. I give a few of the *bandos*, which, though applied to all foreigners, were at this time intended for the special embarrassment of the Americans :—

“ 1. No servant shall engage in the service of a foreigner without a written agreement or notification given and approved by the government as to the amount of wages.

“ 2. All meetings of foreigners, except for the ostensible purpose of visiting and innocent diversion, are forbidden, by day and by night.

“ 3. All foreigners must take out a license to engage in any commercial or industrial pursuit.’

“The last article was reasonable ; but the company, though going on for a year, had not before been required to take out a license ; and when Mr. Hopkins made an application for it, in the character of ‘general agent,’ having paid sixteen dollars for the stamped paper, it was refused on the ground of his being ‘general agent.’ This title was objectionable to the government, and would not be recognized. He must apply as ‘agent,’ without the ‘general.’

“I am to this day mystified by this phase of the difficulty. There was but one general in Paraguay, the son and heir of the President ; but by what process of reasoning the title of the ‘general agent’ reflected upon the head of the military arm I am unable to say ; neither do I see why it should not have been relinquished. There are other petty annoyances, seemingly of a general bearing, but in fact aimed at the American company.

“Affairs had reached this crisis when I arrived at Asuncion, and found Mr. Hopkins determined, by reason of the course of the government, to leave the country, with the members of the company and such of their effects as could conveniently be removed.”

Lieutenant Page called on President Lopez with the object of arranging the difficulties which had arisen, and in reply Lopez complained of the indignity which Hopkins had offered to him in the interview which took place after the outrage committed by the soldier on his brother, and said that for that reason he had withdrawn his *exequatur*. He said Hopkins was personally obnoxious to him, but that the other mem-

bers of the company would enjoy full protection in conducting the business, and that they should be protected from all further insult or injury. It was evident, nevertheless, to Hopkins, who had lived long in the country and knew how absolute Lopez was in everything, that he had determined to break up the company. In fact it was already broken up, as Lopez had violated all the contracts or arrangements which he had previously made with it. He therefore determined to abandon the enterprise and to look to his own government to exact such redress and restitution as the laws of nations might demand. Without the aid of the *Water Witch*, however, neither he nor his companions could leave the country, for none of the small sailing vessels in the river would dare to take them away without the permission of Lopez, as the owners knew that to attempt to do so would call upon them the displeasure of the government, which was then directed to Hopkins and his company. Lieutenant Page continues:—

“I replied, ‘I will see the President, and if no arrangement can be made for your leaving the country by a trading vessel, I will receive the members of the company and their effects on board the *Water Witch*, and convey them to Corrientes,’—this being the point at which he wished to establish them.

“I called again at the Government House, stated again the apprehensions of Mr. Hopkins, and suggested that he should allow the captain of the port to procure a vessel which would at once set at rest the fears of any shipmaster as to the consequences of receiving the Americans. He said, ‘This shall be done.’ ‘Now, sir,’ I asked, ‘what forms must be complied with to enable the company to leave Paraguay with their property?’ He replied, ‘They will simply be required to procure passports, and a “permit” from the custom-house for the shipment of their effects and merchandise, all of which they are at liberty to take with them, paying the export duty on such articles as are the product of the country.’ They had about eight hundred arrobas of superior tobacco.

“A vessel was engaged, passports obtained, and I concluded that all was satisfactorily arranged for the departure of the company, when one of its members came on board the *Water Witch* and complained of fresh insults by the chief of police.

“ Again I called on the President. It was my last interview with his Excellency. I reminded him of the assurances he had given me as to the personal treatment of the members of the company, and stated the new complaint, informing him at the same time, in decided but courteous language, *that my duty obliged me to watch over the rights of American citizens wherever I should meet them abroad.*”

The chief of police being examined, the President informed him of the charges made against him, which, as he doubtless had been previously advised to do, he positively denied. And it appeared that the last difficulty had arisen from a cause such as perhaps never before in the history of the world engaged the attention of the head of a great nation. The company, in gathering together such of their effects as they wished to take away, had left a small tin sign on the building which they had occupied, and Lopez demanded that they should take it away with them and give a receipt for it, lest the claim should be made that their property had been withheld. Lieutenant Page quickly solved this difficulty by saying that he would send one of his boat's crew to carry away the obnoxious sign, and thus this important state difficulty was arranged. He continues: —

“ I had scarcely got on board the *Water Witch*, congratulating myself that the difficulties were over, when another note was received from Mr. Hopkins. On applying for a ‘permit’ to ship the goods, it had been refused until he should surrender the papers, deeds, etc., which secured to the company certain lands purchased and paid for.

“ Before taking any further steps I sent my clerk to ascertain from the collector if I must understand that he refused a ‘permit’ for the despatch of the company's merchandise on the grounds mentioned. He returned with a reply in the affirmative.

“ I had been long enough in the country to know that the collector would not dare to take such a step without instructions from the President. It was in direct violation of every promise his Excellency had given me, and I saw clearly that the moment had arrived when my action in this difficulty should be a matter of record. I addressed a note to the Minister of Foreign Relations, stating the

facts of the case, repeating the assurances of the President, and telling him what would be my course for the relief of the members of this company if they were not allowed to depart by the usual mode of conveyance."

In endeavoring to extricate Hopkins and his company from their difficult and dangerous position, Page soon found himself as obnoxious to Lopez as they were. He was requested to send a translation of the notes which he addressed to the government, to which he properly replied that he would do nothing of the kind, and he adds :—

"Failing to coerce me into this measure, — the sole object of which was to exhibit to the people of Paraguay his authority over a foreign officer, — my notes were returned the following day, with one from the Minister of Foreign Relations, Mr. José Falcon, informing me that the President did not read English, and desiring that I would translate them into Spanish, when they would receive proper attention.

"I replied to Mr. Falcon, stating that the contemptuous treatment of my official communications, addressed in courteous language, was a thing unprecedented in this age of civilization ; that it deprived me of the means of arriving at the intentions of the government relative to the departure of the Americans, and forced upon me the inference that my request had been refused, thus making it an imperative duty to remove them in the *Water Witch*. At the same time I informed the captain of the port that I should receive them and their effects on board, and leave Asuncion at a certain hour."

Lopez, to save the appearance of having been bullied, instantly had the permits issued, though he pretended that he had not understood the contents of the notes which demanded them. The Americans, however, were already on board, or going on board, the steamer, before the permission for their departure had been made known to them.

The following, describing the appearance of Asuncion at this time, will show, not only how absolute was the authority of Lopez, but how silently he could make known and enforce his orders throughout the town :—

“Before getting under way, having occasion to pass through a good portion of the town, I observed that it presented an unusual appearance; not a soul was abroad. Asuncion was not at *siesta*, for it was not the hour; moreover, heads were peering through half-opened doors, showing that curiosity was stronger than fear or sleep. Something was wrong, and the people were anxious to know what difficulties were brewing with the ‘supreme government.’

“The plaza, usually the gayest and noisiest place imaginable, was deserted. I missed the picturesque groups of market women, with their white cotton mantas, seated upon the ground, encircled by fruits, vegetables, and an eager crowd of buyers. Not a man, cart, or horse was to be seen, except a few conveying the effects of the American company to the beach. What was feared? The following explanation was made:—

“Last night at midnight the President called a consultation of his advisers, at which your letter was considered. The wise-heads thought they saw in it another ‘Graytown affair.’ His Excellency thought, as heavy bodies move slowly, it would be well to be prepared; so he sent for a machinist to examine his carriage, and see that all was in good *running* condition. Orders were issued that no one should appear in the plaza or streets after eleven o’clock this morning, and not a horse or cart, except those engaged in transporting the goods of the American company, was to be seen.

“The submission of the people to the present grinding system is only simulated. They are not insensible to their thralldom, and the President really feared that if you fired at the Government House the people might avail themselves of the opportunity to rise and change the order of things, and he was prepared to run.”

In this way the Rhode Island company, with their obnoxious agent, were enabled to escape from the power of Lopez, their enterprise having been broken up, and their property seized and rendered valueless or virtually confiscated. The Water Witch was prevented from continuing her explorations, and the object in sending out the expedition was to a great extent defeated.

In the treaty which had been previously made between the United States and Paraguay, by an inadvertency the United States of America was called the United States of North

America. The error was detected in Washington, and before the treaty could be passed upon by the Senate and ratifications exchanged, it was returned, that the mistake might be rectified; and when Page, after leaving Paraguay, had arrived at Corrientes, he met a messenger from the United States with the treaty duly corrected in order to exchange ratifications. The bearer of this treaty, Mr. R. C. Buckley, also brought letters from the Secretary of State, William L. Marcy, to Lieutenant Page, instructing him to propose the exchange. The treaties between Paraguay and France, England and Sardinia, which had been negotiated at the same time with that of the United States, had been ratified long before, and doubtless that of the United States would have been but for this error of description. As soon as the *Water Witch* left Paraguay, Lopez issued a decree prohibiting the entrance of all vessels of war into the Paraguayan waters. This decree, though general in its terms, was specially intended to prevent Lieutenant Page from returning to continue his explorations of the upper waters, either of the Parana or the Paraguay, or any of those streams that have their source in Bolivia. As the *Water Witch* was technically a war vessel, Lieutenant Page could not return to Asuncion on board of her for the purpose of exchanging the ratifications of the treaty; and he therefore despatched two of his officers with a note to Lopez, or his Minister of Foreign Relations, advising him that he had been commissioned to exchange ratifications, and desiring to know when and where he should meet the person duly authorized to act on the part of Paraguay. This note was returned with an insolent and insulting reply, complaining that it was not accompanied by a translation. Subsequently the United States sent a special commissioner, Colonel Fitzpatrick, to Paraguay, to effect an exchange of ratifications, but Lopez would have nothing more to do with the Americans, and the commission of Colonel Fitzpatrick failed to reconcile him.

The *Water Witch*, having extricated the unfortunate company from the hands of Lopez, proceeded to Buenos Aires in

order to obtain supplies for the purpose of exploring the waters of the Parana, over which Lopez had no legal control. The commander of the expedition now decided to divide his forces, and proceed himself, with a part of his crew, to the exploration of the river Salado. On returning, the Water Witch was despatched by Lieutenant Page, under command of Lieutenant Jeffers, to ascend again to the confluence of the Paraguay and Parana, thence to ascend the latter river as far as the island of Apipé, a distance of over a hundred miles from the confluence of the two rivers. The object in sending the Water Witch to this point was, besides a general survey of the river and its banks, to ascertain how far it was navigable. As that part of the Parana which Lieutenant Jeffers intended to explore flowed between Paraguay and the province of Corrientes, Lopez made no pretension of controlling it, and it was not anticipated that he would interfere in any way with the voyage of the Water Witch. In fact, it was the opinion of Lieutenant Page that he had left Lopez and his country behind him, and would be no more troubled by them. The Water Witch accordingly again commenced her ascent of the river, and, having reached the confluence of the Parana and Paraguay, continued her course towards Apipé. About two leagues from the extreme southern point of Paraguay stood the small fort of Itapiru. This fort stood upon a rock or point of land that jutted into the stream, so as to give it a commanding position; just above it was a small island, and the main or deeper channel of the river was towards the right bank, and between the island and the Paraguayan shore. As the pilot of the steamer was ignorant of where the main channel was, he undertook to pass to the south of the island, and next to the Corrientes side. The vessel, however, struck a sand-bar and could not go on, when she was backed off, and the attempt was made for her to pass through the other or principal channel. Says Page:—

“When the Water Witch was within close shot, two or three blank cartridges were fired from the fort, followed by a *shot*. At what part of the vessel it was aimed I can only judge from Presi-

dent Lopez's despatch to our State Department, where he magnanimously says it was directed so as to 'pass ahead.' If so, it struck wide of the mark, and was unfortunately effective; for it passed through the after port, cut away the wheel, and killed the helmsman. Lieutenant Jeffers had disregarded the blank cartridges, and up to this time had withheld his fire. Indeed, his means of defence, with three howitzers, — one twenty-four-pounder and two twelve-pounders, — were small against a brick or stone fort. But when this shot came he returned it as rapidly as the reduced number of officers and crew and the disabled condition of the helm would admit. The accuracy of the fire was seen in cutting away the flagstaff, and in the shrapnel grazing the low wall, — for the guns were mounted *en barbette*. We learned afterwards that several Paraguayans were killed; some reports said eleven, others fifteen. The Water Witch was struck ten times, but the first was the only shot that did any execution, though we learned that the firing from the fort was directed by a person formerly of the French navy, who had entered the service of Paraguay."

Page was already on his way down the river towards the mouth of the Salado, when, to his great surprise, he saw the Water Witch coming after him, and great was his astonishment when he learned that the vessel had been fired into while it was in waters over which Lopez had neither jurisdiction nor rightful control. It seemed as though Lopez, in his arrogance and isolation, had intended to commit so gross an insult against the flag of the United States as to provoke war against him. Commander Page was indignant. The flag of his country — alas that it should be said! the flag he himself afterwards betrayed, and endeavored to disgrace and humble — had been insulted, and he was eager to avenge it so promptly that it should ever after be respected in those waters. The United States had an idle squadron on the South Atlantic Coast, and he hastened to communicate with the commander of it, Commodore W. D. Salter, and inform him of the insult the flag had received from President Lopez, and to request him to send one of his large vessels immediately to Paraguay, and demand such redress, apology, and satisfaction as so gross an insult merited. The two large war vessels of the squadron,

the Germantown and the Savannah, were at Rio de Janeiro at this time ; and Lieutenant Page despatched an officer to that place to represent the condition of affairs to Commodore Salter, and by personal appeal support his application for a large vessel to proceed immediately to Paraguay. Commodore Salter, however, did not see that any occasion had arisen for such action. He seemed to have adopted the ideas which have long been prevalent in the American navy, that in time of peace our ships of war are sent to foreign stations for the convenience and pleasure of the chief officers of the squadrons ; that they were to respect no representations from any source except the Navy Department, and, whatever insult may be offered to the flag, they are not to resent it without specific and direct orders from the Secretary of the Navy ; that the flag officer of the squadron is to take no responsibility upon himself, but to make his flag-ship a pleasure yacht, and do no service further than to exhibit the vessel to the eyes of foreign nations, and the uniforms of the officers in the streets, courts, and saloons of the cities which they visit. This attack upon the Water Witch was as gross an insult, and as direct a violation of the flag of the United States and the laws of nations, as can well be imagined ; yet the commander of our squadron could see nothing serious in it, or nothing that required him to vary or interrupt the course of his voyage of pleasure. Lieutenant Page demonstrated the fact that there would be no difficulty in taking the Germantown up the river at that time, and of so frightening Lopez that he would have consented to any terms, both in regard to the outrage on the Water Witch and the wrongs of the Rhode Island company, if by so doing he could have persuaded her to depart from the country, and leave him in peace to tyrannize over and rob his own people. It was all in vain, however. The spirit and feeling which at a later period have been manifested in a more lamentable manner by high officers of the navy, that the Navy Department is established and supported by the government, but owes no corresponding duties to it ; that it is an *imperium in imperio*, so independent as to have nothing more to do than

maintain its discipline and secure promotion for its officers, and is under no obligations to render assistance to the other branches of the government at times when the national character and the honor of the flag are at stake, — so thoroughly possessed the commander of this squadron at the time, that he did not seem to realize how such an outrage as that committed by President Lopez on the *Water Witch* was a matter of sufficient importance to require any action from him.

CHAPTER XXIV.

The United States Government takes up the Cause of the Rhode Island Company. — An Expedition with a Special Commissioner sent to Paraguay to demand Indemnity. — Urquiza obtains a Copy of the Secret Instructions and visits Lopez. — Arrival of Commissioner Bowlin in Paraguay. — Negotiations. — A Convention formed. — The Expedition returns to the United States. — The Commissioners meet in Washington. — Result of the Arbitration. — Chagrin of President Buchanan at the Decision. — His Message to Congress.

THE Rhode Island company having been driven out of Paraguay in defiance of all right or semblance of law, they appealed to the United States to compel Lopez to make compensation for the injury that they had suffered at his hands; and the Secretary of State, William L. Marcy, on investigation of the circumstances of the case, officially declared in favor of their right to indemnity. Of this our government never had any doubt, and the only question with it was as to the amount of damages to which the company was entitled. But before any demonstrations of force were made, a special commissioner was sent out, with instructions to present to the Paraguayan government a claim for indemnification for the losses which had been sustained. The commissioner, Mr. Fitzpatrick, was also instructed to exchange ratifications of the treaty which had been made some two years before, but which had not been ratified by reason of the verbal error to which allusion has already been made. But the commissioner was repelled with rudeness by Lopez, who refused to exchange the ratifications, and also refused to admit his liability to the company or make any compensation in damages. Mr. Marcy assumed as a fact not to be questioned or discussed, that injustice had been done to the company, for which that government was accountable; and

when Congress met in December, 1857, the President, in his message, declared that a demand should be made for redress, and recommended that if it were not granted the Executive should have authority to employ force. Congress, by decided majorities, adopted the recommendation of the President, and passed an act authorizing him to use force if necessary to obtain justice from Lopez. An expedition, consisting of twenty-three vessels, was accordingly fitted out and sent to the Plata, with instructions to obtain redress, — forcibly, if necessary. It was badly arranged in its details, and was made needlessly expensive. It has been charged that the controlling members of the administration had other objects in view in fitting out this expedition besides vindicating the flag and obtaining redress for the company. Certain it is that the same high officials who approved of the expedition were soon after found fighting against the flag which had been so outraged by Lopez that the national honor required satisfaction. And it is equally certain that the sailing of this expedition was made a pretext for withdrawing from the forts and arsenals of the North all the munitions of war, thus leaving them unprovided with arms whenever the plans for the Great Rebellion should be matured. The Secretary of State, General Cass, however, had no such ulterior views. He had sufficient respect for the national credit to encumber the expedition with instructions that, if followed out, would vindicate the flag and teach other nations that the American government was prepared to defend the rights of its citizens in whatever part of the world they might be. He maintained, that, by sending an expedition to demand reparation for damages, the government assumed there was no question in regard to the wrong inflicted and the just liability of the wrong-doer, and that Paraguay must either pay the damage or feel the strong hand of a strong power in actual war. But it was not the policy of Davis, Floyd, and Toucey to begin a war even with so weak a power as Paraguay. The country was so remote that perhaps this great expedition would be unable to conquer it; and, once engaged in it, there would be no way but to go on, and

perhaps a larger force might be required, so that before the business was concluded the government might find itself with a large naval force and a greatly increased regular army. This would render the expedition worse than nothing. The President, without entering into their views, was only wax in their hands. But it was not so with the Secretary of State. If the expedition were to sail, it must go under such circumstances that it could not prove a ridiculous failure and bring disgrace on the President, Secretary of State, and the whole country. As the success of an expedition of this kind would depend very much on the tact and ability of the diplomatic agent who was to accompany it, common sense would have dictated that a shrewd, experienced diplomatist should be selected for the position. The commissioner, however, appointed by President Buchanan, was the Hon. James B. Bowlin of Missouri, — a gentleman who had served several terms in Congress, but whose experience as a stump orator in the West was not of the kind to render him a formidable antagonist to one brought up in the schools of the Jesuits. The secretary to the mission was Mr. Samuel Ward of New York, whose appointment was approved by the company, as he was a relative of some of the leading members of it and friendly to them all. They did not then think that he would ever betray them.

The instructions of General Cass to Commissioner Bowlin were strong, clear, and explicit. These instructions, necessarily secret, were to the effect that the expedition would proceed to the Plata, and the commissioner and his secretary, leaving the fleet at some convenient point, were to proceed with only one or two vessels to Asuncion, and there represent to President Lopez the demands of the United States government, and endeavor to make a pacific arrangement of the matter in question. The company claimed that they had suffered injury to the amount of \$1,000,000 from the unlawful acts of President Lopez. The Secretary of State, however, considered that they had overestimated their prospective profits, and, in his instructions to Commissioner Bowlin, told him he was to insist on

\$ 500,000 as the minimum he could accept as compensation. "And if, therefore," says the Secretary, "the government of Paraguay should consent to the payment of the sum of \$ 500,000, in full discharge of the entire claim of the company, you will not refuse to make the adjustment for that account." This was the first condition imposed by the instructions of General Cass. If President Lopez would pay half a million in hard money, then Commissioner Bowlin was authorized to accept it; but if Lopez would not listen to the conditions, then the fleet was to be employed to bring him to terms. And if they must fight before he would make compensation, then they were to exact, not only the half-million for the company, but another half-million towards paying the expenses of the expedition. The question of liability was treated as a foregone conclusion by General Cass, as he was a statesman of too much experience to countenance an expedition that was to cost the country millions of dollars, unless the question of the justice and rightfulness of the claims were already established, and the consequent liability of the other party. To send such an expedition eight thousand miles to ascertain that it had no business to go at all, as there were no wrongs to redress, was too gross an absurdity, and therefore General Cass made it an indispensable preliminary that the liability of Paraguay to make compensation should be acknowledged. But if the sum of \$ 500,000 was deemed excessive by Lopez, and he would submit to an impartial investigation of the damages sustained by the company, and abide the result of an arbitration, and pay whatever a joint commission might declare to have been the losses sustained by the company through his acts, then Commissioner Bowlin was instructed to assent to such mode of adjustment. This he could do only on condition that Lopez acknowledged the liability of his government to the company. If Lopez would not acknowledge the liability, waiving all questions of right, and would not pay the \$ 500,000, then the commissioner was to call on Commodore Shubrick to obtain double that amount by force. Thus fortified with

instructions, it was the purpose of the government, or at least of the Secretary of State, that the fleet should proceed to the Plata ; that the commissioner, with Commodore Shu-
brick and Secretary Ward, should ascend to Asuncion with only one or two vessels, and then endeavor to effect an adjustment without resorting to force.

The news of the extensive preparations made by the United States had reached Lopez long before the arrival of the expedition. The country was at that time almost defenceless. The only fortifications on the river were at Humaita and Asuncion, and at that time they were not sufficient to endanger a single steamer of the squadron, had they all tried to pass at full speed. Lopez was in a great fright, while the hopes of the people of Paraguay were greatly elated by the prospect of a war which they hoped would result in a change of government. Some even went so far as to intimate that Lopez was not autocrat of all the world, and that he was about to receive a lesson. Words then spoken were afterwards remembered, as we shall see by and by.

The most influential man at that time in these regions was the President of the Argentine Confederation, General J. J. Urquiza. This man, who from poverty and obscurity, by a life of fraud, rapacity, and robbery, had obtained possession of the better, if not the larger, part of the province of Entre Rios, so that he always had a large army under his control, had been at one time the ally and supporter of Rosas in his infamous and blood-thirsty career. Believing himself, after a time, to be sufficiently strong to dethrone his chief, he made war upon him, the result of which was that Rosas was driven from power and into exile, and Urquiza became the head of the government. The province of Buenos Aires did not long submit to his rule, and he in time was driven out and obliged to retire to his own province, where he raised another army, and this time made war on Buenos Aires, not to liberate it from one tyrant, but to subject it to another, — himself. In this, however, he had not been successful, and afterwards was obliged to content himself with being virtually, if

not nominally, the head of the Confederation, with Buenos Aires no longer a member of it. Urquiza looked with distrust on the approaching armada, for if real war were to be begun by the Yankees, the result would most likely be disastrous to his ill-gotten and ill-used power. He at once opened communication with Lopez to avert the impending catastrophe, and as soon as the fleet arrived at Montevideo, he set the necessary means in operation to ascertain what were the secret instructions of Commissioner Bowlin. It is enough to say that a copy of the instructions was given to young Don Eduardo Guido* to translate for the use of Urquiza. No sooner was the latter possessed of these instructions than he saw that if Lopez were assured of their tenor and purport there would be no danger of a collision. He therefore immediately took a special steamer, and, hurrying to Paraguay, advised Lopez to haggle for the least amount possible; not to deny liability, but finally, if he could not induce the expedition to depart without too large a payment, to await the offer of arbitration which he knew that Bowlin must make before proceeding to extremities; to avoid a collision at every sacrifice, and if an arbitration only could avert it, to trust to duplicity and corruption to secure a favorable result.

Lopez took the advice of his friend, and when the commissioner arrived treated him with respectful courtesy, but denied that anything was rightfully due the Rhode Island company. He indulged in gross abuse and vituperation of Hopkins, and claimed to have done everything in accordance with the laws of the country. Bowlin, however, told him that he had not come to discuss the merits of the case. His instructions were to demand \$500,000 as the minimum that he could accept. Lopez refused to give it, but said that though nothing was justly due the company, he would, in order to get rid of the expedition, give them \$260,000. He thought it would be better and safer to pay this amount than to run the risk of an arbitration. Had he not been previously advised of Bowlin's instructions, he doubtless would have paid the full

* These facts were given to me by Guido himself.

sum demanded, or even double that amount, sooner than go to war. But owing to treachery he had the cards already in his hands, and knew that in refusing to pay it he was in no danger of being attacked. Consequently, he refused the payment of the half-million demanded, and when the arbitration was offered he accepted it. Commissioner Bowlin, in offering to submit the case to arbitration, considered that the only point to be passed upon was that of the amount of loss incurred by the company; and that question he engaged to refer to a mixed commission of two persons, — one of whom should be appointed by President Lopez, and the other by the President of the United States. In case of the disagreement of the two commissioners, they were to select a third, who should act as umpire. A convention was therefore ratified in form, by which it was agreed by the two parties that the two commissioners should meet in Washington, and after a full presentation of the case in all its bearings they should decide and adjudge the amount of the losses sustained by the company. The words of the convention were as follows : —

“ARTICLE I. The government of the Republic of Paraguay binds itself for the responsibility in favor of the United States and Paraguay Navigation Company which may result from the decree of commissioners, who, it is agreed, shall be appointed as follows : —

“The two high contracting parties, appreciating the difficulty of agreeing upon the amount of reclamations to which the said company may be entitled, and being convinced that a commission is the only equitable and honorable method by which the two countries can arrive at a perfect understanding thereof, hereby covenant to adjust them accordingly by a loyal commission. To determine the amount of said reclamations, it is therefore agreed to constitute such a commission, whose decision shall be binding,” etc.

Two commissioners were to be appointed under the terms of this convention, one by President Lopez and the other by the President of the United States; and according to the terms of the convention they were to meet in the city of Washington to investigate, adjust, and determine the amount

of the claims of the above-mentioned company. The convention having been duly signed by Commissioner Bowlin on the part of the United States, and by Nicholas Vasquez on the part of Paraguay, Commissioner Bowlin and his secretary bade adieu to President Lopez and returned to Montevideo.

It was now clear that no warlike demonstrations were to be made in the river, and General Urquiza was so pleased with his success in obtaining the secret instructions, and by means of them having circumvented the United States government, that he received the commissioner with profuse demonstrations of respect and hospitality, and in testimony of his gratitude or obligations he presented him with a diamond snuff-box of the value of \$ 5,000. With this trophy the fleet, the commissioner, and his secretary returned to the United States ; and the commissioner reported to the government that the expedition had been eminently successful, and that an arbitration had been obtained according to the conditions of his instructions.

The commissioner on the part of President Lopez was Don José Berges, a man of much acuteness, and, for a Paraguayan, of superior attainments. Berges, though appointed as commissioner and sworn to act with impartiality, was, nevertheless, the agent or advocate of Lopez. If inclined to be otherwise, and disposed to consider all the questions at issue with the impartiality of a judge, he knew very well that if he let slip any opportunity for advancing the interests of the cause of his chief he could never venture to return to Paraguay without incurring the penalty of imprisonment and probable death. He knew also that all his property, of which he had considerable, would be instantly confiscated by Lopez, and therefore he must act rather as the attorney of Paraguay than as an impartial arbiter between that country and the Rhode Island company. Under these circumstances it would have been legitimate and proper for President Buchanan to have appointed some one known to be favorable to the interests of the company, as, according to the terms of the convention, if the two commissioners could not agree, they were

to choose a third person to act as umpire between them. In this way, and in this way only, could a fair and just decision be expected. President Buchanan, however, with an obtuseness or perversity which characterized his whole administration, selected a man — the Hon. Cave Johnson of Kentucky — whose prejudices were strongly against everything that originated in New England ; and it might have been foreseen, that, though he intended to act justly and honorably, his feelings would be adverse to the company. The commission accordingly met in Washington, and though it had been expressly stipulated in the convention that they were only to decide upon the amount of claims for which Lopez was liable to the company, the attorney for Paraguay, in opening the case, took the ground that the whole question of liability was before them, and that he had a right to go into the origin of the alleged wrongs committed against the company, and to show that Lopez had done nothing from the beginning but what, according to the laws of his own country, he had a right to do ; and that therefore, if the Rhode Island company had suffered through the operation of those laws, it was their misfortune, for which the government of Paraguay was in no wise liable.

The counsel for the company protested against this, but instead of refusing to appear before the commission, or to prosecute their case unless that which had been stipulated in the convention was admitted by the commissioners, they contented themselves with objecting to this assumption of the opposite party, and entered into a discussion of the entire merits of the case. The American commissioner, not understanding the Spanish language, was dependent for all the information he had in regard to the laws of Paraguay, the customs of the country, and the operations of Lopez's government, on the secretary of the board, who was the same Mr. Samuel Ward that had gone out as secretary and interpreter to Commissioner Bowlin, and of whom the company complained then, as they have ever since, that for some reason unknown to them he was too well affected towards Lopez to be

impartial. The result of the arbitration was as might have been foreseen. The commissioners decided on the 13th of August, 1860, that having examined the whole case, and conferred and deliberated upon it, and listened to the arguments on both sides, the company had neither proved nor established any right against the government of Paraguay by reason of the losses they had incurred, and that the said government was not responsible for any pecuniary loss or indemnity in the premises.

Lopez had now apparently succeeded, not only in destroying and seizing the property of the American company and in driving the members of it from his territory, but this commission had decided that he did nothing more than he was legally and justly entitled to do. In this matter he had clearly circumvented and outwitted all his enemies. Commissioner Berges had succeeded so well in serving the cause of his chief that he ventured to return to Paraguay; but notwithstanding the decision had been so entirely in conformity with the interests and desires of Lopez, when he reached Montevideo he for a time hesitated whether it would be safe for him to return. He knew the inexorable, tyrannical character of the master whom he served, and for some time hesitated whether it would be safe for him to risk himself again in the power of Lopez. His very success might endanger his liberty or his life, as he knew full well Lopez arrogated to himself the credit of everything favorable either to him or the country. As by this time the Paraguayan people were well aware that an important question had been in negotiation of which he had had the management abroad, Lopez would feel it incumbent upon himself to do something which should humble and disgrace him on his return, so as to remind the people that he, and he alone, was the source and fountain of all power, to whom all credit and all honor were to be given.

When the decision of this commission was made known to President Buchanan, he was greatly astonished and mortified. The commissioner appointed by him had decided a case that had never been referred to him; and more than this, he had

said that the President had put the country to an expense of nearly three million dollars without first knowing whether he had any just cause of action. The United States, according to this decision, had precipitately incurred an immense expense on insufficient and incorrect information, and the President had been the instrument through whom this great folly had been committed. Mr. Buchanan accordingly sent a message to Congress, setting forth that the commissioners who had been selected to arbitrate on the Paraguay difficulty had not decided the question that had been referred to them, they had only decided a matter which the United States could not consistently with its dignity submit to arbitration; they had decided, in effect, that the United States never had any case against Paraguay, and the question of the amount of damages sustained by the American company had been left untouched. The President therefore expressed the opinion that the whole matter was left open as it was before the expedition had been despatched. Millions had been lost to the Treasury, and the only satisfaction which the company or the United States had, was that the commissioner had received a diamond-mounted snuff-box, and the case stood just as it was before the government had expended a dollar in the prosecution of it.

CHAPTER XXV.

The Family of Carlos Antonio Lopez. — Paraguay and Corrientes make Common Cause against Buenos Aires. — The Paraguayan Army. — The Alliance abandoned. — Lopez's Appearance in Public. — Dissolute Character of his Sons. — Pancha Garmendia. — Lopez invents a Conspiracy. — James Canstatt, an Englishman, included among the Conspirators. — Interference of Consul Henderson. — Energetic Action of the English Government — Lopez as a Mediator between the Province of Buenos Aires and President Urquiza. — F. S. Lopez as an Ambassador of Peace — Attempt of the English Gunboats to make a Prisoner of Lopez. — A Hostage for Canstatt. — The Tacuari blockaded till Canstatt is liberated. — Lopez forced to make Restitution to Canstatt. — Re-establishes Friendly Relations with England. — Execution of the Brotners Decoud. — Libertinism and Vengeance.

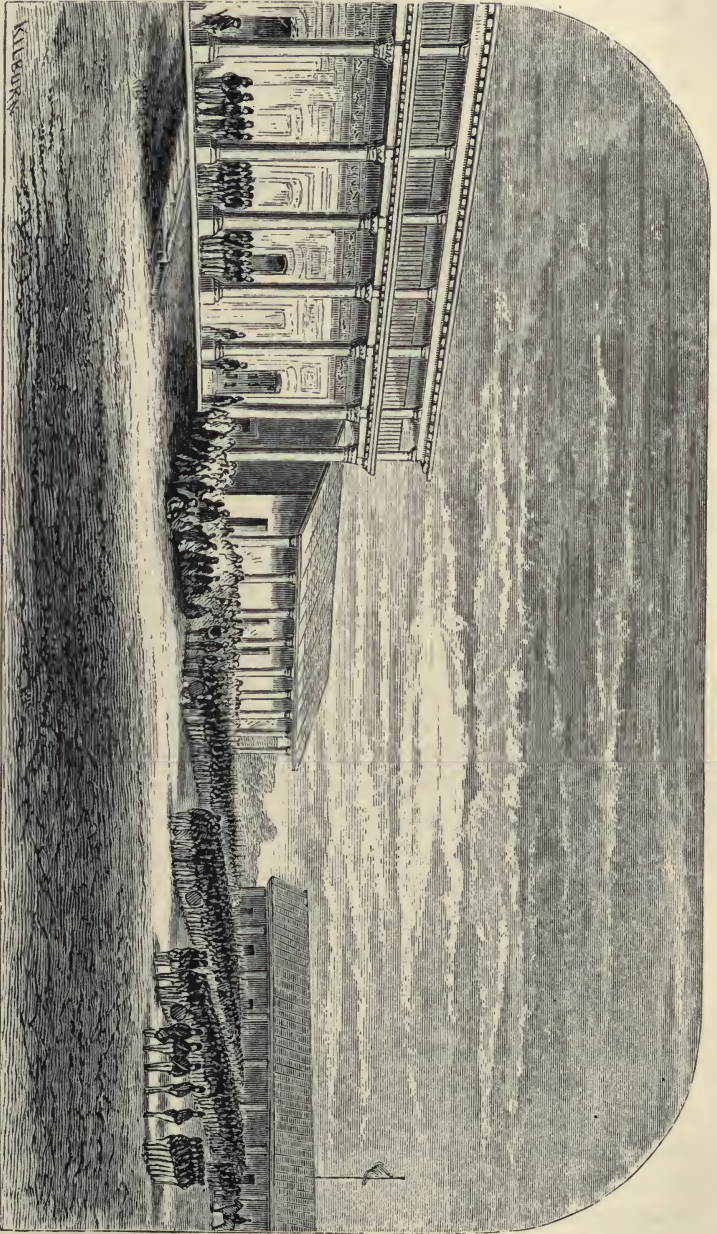
THE worldly circumstances of Carlos Antonio Lopez were entirely changed and greatly improved by his marriage with the step-daughter of Don Lazaro Rojas. The family, however, continued to reside at the Lopez homestead after the marriage, and in the course of the next dozen years Doña Juana bore to her husband four children, besides Francisco Solano, the son of Rojas. They consisted of two sons and two daughters, and were born in the following order: Inocencia, Venancio, Rafaela, and Benigno. In their childhood they were sent to the school of Don Juan Pedro Escalada, and by him were taught the rudiments of the Spanish language. During Francia's time they were on an equality with their neighbors, as any assumption of superiority or wealth would have brought down upon the whole of them the attention and persecution of the Dictator. In the year 1837, however, Lopez had drawn up some legal paper for a neighbor who had a case pending before one of Francia's tribunals. This paper, falling under the eyes of Francia, excited in his mind the apprehension that the author of it knew too much to be a safe subject so near the capital, and he therefore banished him to an estancia

belonging to his wife, near the town of Rosario. Here he remained until the death of the Dictator, when he returned to his former residence, and his sons were again sent to the school of Señor Escalada, where Francisco Solano commenced the study of Latin. According to Escalada, however, he showed little aptitude or inclination for study, and in no respect distinguished himself from the generality of his pupils. Soon after Lopez became the head of the government his two elder sons were devoted to the army; and when at the age of seventeen, Francisco Solano was made brigadier-general, and his brother Venancio, then about thirteen, was promoted to the rank of major.

Lopez, during the first years of his authority, experienced great difficulty in keeping open communication between Paraguay and the outer world. Rosas, the avowed enemy of Lopez, refused to acknowledge the independence of Paraguay, and treated it rather as a dependency than as a distinct, separate nation. In a decree issued by him on the 1st of August, 1844, he declared that the navigation of the river was only open to Argentine vessels, so that whatever commerce Paraguay might have with other nations was at all times subject to be interrupted or destroyed by Rosas. At this time the province of Corrientes was in open opposition to the authority of the Dictator of Buenos Aires, and Lopez, who believed that it was the purpose of Rosas sooner or later to destroy Paraguayan independence and annex the country to the Argentine Confederation, made common cause with Corrientes, and on the 4th of December, 1845, declared war against Buenos Aires. His army was meanwhile under the command of the young Don Francisco Solano, though the entire military discipline was under men of more experience, those who during the time of Francia had learned something of the routine and order necessary for a camp life. The army was but poorly armed and badly organized, and yet in August, 1846, it was sent across the river to Corrientes, to assist the Governor of that province in his struggle against Rosas; but it engaged in no action, as it was impossible for the Paraguayan army to act in

concert with any other. The Governor of Corrientes, Madariaga, could not move in harmony with an ally who arrogated to himself the same power over the troops of another nation that he exercised over his own implicit, unquestioned, enslaved troops. The alliance was therefore abandoned, and young Lopez retired with his troops to Paraguay without having heard the sound of a cannon or the whistling of a bullet. He had learned, however, during his brief military career, to be charmed with the routine of military life, the deference paid to the commander-in-chief, and the exercise of absolute power; besides, he had learned that it involved no personal danger. The liberty and license allowed to the young General and his brothers after this time by their parents appears incomprehensible. The deference which was exacted from all the people towards the Lopez family exceeded anything known in the despotic countries of Europe; the three sons, when they appeared abroad, being always treated like princes of the blood, to whom any appearance of disrespect would be construed as an insult to the government. In many things Lopez sought to imitate Francia. He did not, indeed, forbid the people to appear in the streets whenever he might be passing through them, nor did he forbid their assembling for purposes of festivity or amusement; but whenever he or any of his family were passing through the streets, all were required to stop and remain in a reverent position, hat in hand and head bowed, until he had passed; and on all occasions of public assemblages it was taken as an indication of disloyalty and hostility to the government unless the occasion was improved by one or more of the assembly to indulge in the most fulsome praises of Lopez and his government, and of expressions of gratitude for the great liberty and prosperity which they enjoyed.

In his style of dress, on all public occasions, he made himself as ridiculous as did his predecessor. Though he had no military rank or title, and regarded himself in no respect as a military man, when he went out in his carriage (as for a long time before his death, owing to his immense obesity, he never went on horseback) he was dressed in a uniform as fantastic



Copied from Du Grady.

CARLOS ANTONIO LOPEZ REVIEWING HIS TROOPS.

From a Photograph.



as that of Francia when he led his legions over the hills around Asuncion. The appearance of the old man as he rode through the streets in his low carriage, with his cocked hat and blue coat with enormous epaulets, holding his sword by the hilt, would have led one to suppose that some harmless, demented buffoon was playing king for the diversion of the rabble in the streets. He was always attended by a numerous guard, all well mounted, and generally composed of large, fine-looking men, so that his squat, uncourtly figure appeared more ridiculous from the contrast.

His sons, however, were left almost entirely to their own sweet will. All were afraid of them, and had they been neither better nor worse than most young men from fifteen to twenty-five years of age, it was but natural that their lives would be most scandalous and dissolute. Such, indeed, was the case. Francisco Solano was a licensed ravisher, and his brother Venancio was in this respect no better than he. The eldest, having even at that time visions of power and authority, was more guarded in appearances; but Venancio, who was of a coarser and more stolid character, was the terror of those families that, not belonging to the upper class, had yet some regard for decency and the reputation of their daughters. Whatever either of them might do, there was no remedy for the wronged and injured. No one ever dared to appeal to Lopez against one of his sons, or complain of any outrage that had been committed by either of them. Very early in his career as the head of the government, Lopez gave great pecuniary privileges to each of his sons and daughters. The land which had never been sold to individuals, and which belonged to the state, was parcelled out to them at nominal prices; and they were allowed, all of them, to call upon the people of their respective neighborhoods to furnish any amount of labor that might be required for the cultivation of their estancias or for the erection of buildings. They were also allowed to participate in the government monopolies, to collect the yerba maté in the interior and to send it abroad without paying the duties to which others were liable.

They also could possess themselves of any property which they coveted belonging to individuals, as the fear of them was so great that it was seldom a private individual dared to refuse an offer from one of the royal family.

In consequence of these privileges all of the children became enormously wealthy. All of them had numerous estancias, from two to ten or fifteen leagues square. Each of the sons had a fine house in town in which he lived in open concubinage, besides having the same arrangements at his different estancias whenever he chose to visit them. In fact, the lives which the young Lopezes were permitted to lead without any restraint by the government were such as in any other country would have caused their assassination a thousand times. In Paraguay, however, they were secure; and each pursued his own inclinations, regardless alike of broken hearts and ruined families. The only instance known where resistance was made to the lewd and lawless designs of either of the Lopez sons had so melancholy a result that no one ever ventured to repeat it. Among the victims of Francia the name of the merchant Garmendia has been mentioned. This man had been ordered by the Dictator to pay into the public treasury the sum of \$ 12,000, and was thrown into prison until that sum should be raised. His wife made every exertion to collect the amount from her relatives and friends, but with all she could do she could only raise \$ 8,000. This she took to Francia, and begged that he would remit the balance of the penalty or give her further time to collect the amount that was lacking. Francia took the \$ 8,000, but Garmendia was sent to the banquillo and there executed. This unfortunate man at the time of his death left a young child, a little girl, who was about the age of the eldest of the Lopez boys. Her name was Francisca, or, as she was generally called, Pancha. She was a most beautiful child, of fair complexion, elegant figure, and possessed of great vivacity and intelligence. Her father's property having been all taken by Francia, she and her mother were left dependent, and lived with one of the sisters of the Barrios family. Early in his

career of profligacy, young Francisco had fixed his eyes upon her and marked her for his victim. She, however, from the first, conceived an aversion to him, and would never listen to any of his proposals. He therefore resorted to the persecution of her two brothers, and they were subjected to every indignity that he could invent, and compelled to leave the capital and live as exiles in the interior. This was permitted by the old man, who seemed to care nothing for what his sons might do, provided they accumulated property and did not interfere with his authority. On one occasion the sister, hearing that one of her brothers had been sentenced to some severe punishment, took a companion with her and ventured into the presence of her admirer. On seeing her enter, he appeared at first to be greatly pleased, and saluted her with great courtesy; but when she made known the object of her visit he answered very roughly, and told her to be gone. She retired in tears, but had not reached her house before she was overtaken by one of his staff and told to go back, but to return alone. She did not obey the order, and young Garmendia was left to his fate. Subsequently, this modern Tarquin made an arrangement with the brother of the lady with whom she was living to be permitted to enter her room at night when she was alone, and no one else was in the house to whom she could appeal for protection. But, greatly to his surprise, Lopez did not find in Pancha another Lucretia. She turned upon him like an enraged tigress, and drove him with indignation and blows from the room. From that time she was no longer pursued by him, except as a victim of his malignity. After that she had several eligible offers of marriage, one of which she was very desirous of accepting; but her lovers were all put out of the way, and she was always exposed to such petty annoyances and insults by the acknowledged mistresses of Lopez, that she seldom ventured out of doors, but lived a life of seclusion and retirement. She was always spoken of with the greatest respect and esteem by all Paraguayans, and was invariably mentioned as the most beautiful woman in Paraguay; and yet, during my long resi-

dence in the country, though I attended many balls, festivals, and assemblages, I never got a view of her except from the window of her house, which was to her literally a prison. Her sufferings and tragic death at the hands of her relentless persecutor will be related hereafter.

The American squadron had no sooner left the river, and the danger that had threatened the authority of Lopez from that quarter been averted, than he sought to reinstate himself as the absolute despot he had been before his power was menaced from abroad. When it was known that the great Republic was bearing down upon him with a large squadron, the people within his dominions, and especially the foreigners, began to conceive a hope that better times were coming, and that the system of government which they had so long endured in shame and silence was near its end. They hoped that the day was near when a man might talk with his neighbor of the common events of life, without having everything reported to head-quarters and exposing him to be imprisoned, sent off as a common soldier, or executed. It is probable that some of these hopes found expression in words, though of that no other evidence exists except the fact, that, as soon as the danger from the Americans had passed, a large number of persons were arrested and thrown into prison. They were nearly all Paraguayans belonging to the best families; but there was one of them who was the son of an Englishman, though born in Montevideo. His name was James Canstatt. What offence had been committed by any of them was never known, as nothing was ever proved against one of them. Lopez, however, desired to show to the people that he was as absolute as ever; and as the persons arrested had probably rendered themselves obnoxious by some trifling acts or expressions that could not be tortured into crimes, they were all accused of conspiracy. They were kept in solitary confinement and in fetters for a long time, and subjected to inquisitorial examinations. Fortunately for Canstatt, the English government then had a consul at Asuncion, who interfered in his behalf. This consul, Mr. C. A. Henderson, claimed Can-

statt as a British subject, and insisted that he should be tried according to the laws and usages of civilized nations; he should have the benefit of counsel and be confronted with his accusers. But Lopez would not listen to such a proposition. An innovation of this kind would be fatal to Paraguayan republicanism. The system of Francia would not admit of open trial, or that accused parties should be permitted to defend themselves or disprove the charges against them. It was enough for the government to allege that a party was guilty, and it was taken as an insult if any one doubted the truth of the allegation. Mr. Henderson, however, would not accept the accusation of Lopez as proof of guilt, and reported the facts to the British government. He was sustained in the position he had taken, and instructed to insist on such a trial for Canstatt as it was the right of all accused persons to demand among civilized nations. Lopez would not yield, however; for were he to give a fair and open trial to Canstatt his case must break down, and his charge of a conspiracy would be proved to be a miserable invention of his own. Henderson therefore broke up his consulate and withdrew from Paraguay.

In the mean while Lopez proceeded with the trial of Canstatt according to his own fashion. He was subjected to very harsh treatment and examined at great length. He was questioned in regard to a thousand insignificant acts, and the answers he made were taken down, not as he made them, but as his inquisitors desired them to stand. Then, after each examination, he was forced to sign his name to the statements that had been made for him. But instead of affixing his name immediately below the last answer, he was compelled to have a large blank space between that and his signature, so that if anything were added afterwards, in the same handwriting and without his knowledge, it would all alike appear to be his own confession. Having predoomed Canstatt before his arrest, the trial had no other object than the manufacturing of testimony; and the result, of course, was that he was condemned and sentenced to be shot. Twelve others were condemned, as his fellow-conspirators, to suffer the same penalty.

Lopez was greatly embarrassed by the white elephant he had caught when he laid his hands on Canstatt. Had he supposed that the English government would have claimed him, he would never have included him among his conspirators. But having done so, he could not let him go without incurring the obloquy and odium that would follow his release, when he well knew he would expose the manner in which his confessions had been extorted from him, and would deny that there had been any conspiracy whatever. He could not torture, for he might afterwards be forced to give him up, and then he would subsequently be brought to account by England for his barbarity. He would therefore hold him prisoner till he could see whether or not the English government would follow up the case, and, if it did not, he might conveniently die in prison. But Consul Henderson, who had lived several years in Paraguay, had learned the character of Lopez so well that he knew if any lukewarmness were shown in the matter Canstatt's life would be the forfeit. In fact, Lopez had become by this time furious against Canstatt, against Henderson, and against the English government. The *Semanario* had indulged for many months in abuse of them all, had denounced Canstatt as a conspirator who had been detected in a plot to assassinate Lopez and overthrow his blessed government, and had declared, in defiant language, that the laws of the Republic should be enforced and the rights of Paraguay defended at every hazard.

But while Canstatt was still lingering in prison, other events were transpiring in the Plata which were availed of by the British government to effect his release. For a long time the attitude of the province of Buenos Aires towards the Argentine Confederation had been unsatisfactory, and ever threatening war. The existing relations were such as could not long continue without open war; and it was the interest of all that the old questions of dispute between Urquiza on the one hand and the government of Buenos Aires on the other should be buried, and that the single province containing the great city of the valley, and more important than all the

others, should be reunited to the Confederation. In this crisis (1859) of affairs, it occurred to Lopez that he would offer his mediation. He therefore sketched a plan for the arrangement of the questions at issue, and despatched Francisco Solano, the general-in-chief of his armies, as mediating ambassador. The offer was timely and was well received by all parties, and a convention was formed according to which Buenos Aires was again incorporated with the Confederation, for which happy result due credit was given to the two Lopezes.

Young Lopez was then quite a hero in Buenos Aires, and like a conqueror covered with laurels he proposed to start on his return to Paraguay. All this while, however, poor Canstatt was in prison, and the elder Lopez had given no intimation that he would ever leave it except for execution. Situate as was Paraguay in the middle of a continent, her autocrat was confident that England would never go to the expense of millions, as the United States had done, to force him to terms. He refused to abide by the laws of nations, and defied England and the whole world, assuming that he had a right to seize the citizen of any nation, imprison and execute him, on his own allegation that he had committed a crime, and without producing any proof of the fact. It was useless, then, to treat with Lopez, with any view of saving Canstatt, as with the head of a civilized nation, notwithstanding that England had some six years before acknowledged Paraguay as one of the family of nations. The English government was then represented at Montevideo by Hon. Edward Thornton, as Chargé d'Affaires, and Admiral Lushington was in command of her Majesty's South Atlantic squadron. The conduct of this admiral was in striking contrast to that of an American admiral in the same waters some years later. He knew that a man claiming to be a British subject was held a prisoner by a cruel despot who was bent on taking his life in defiance of all law or justice, and that only by extreme measures of doubtful legality could he be rescued from the tyrant's power. He therefore determined,

if possible, to seize young Lopez and hold him as a hostage for the safe delivery of Canstatt.

Accordingly, when the elated young diplomat took passage on his own war steamer, the Tacuari, to return home, he found two English gunboats, the Buzzard and the Grappler, with steam up, at a little distance in the harbor, evidently waiting to intercept him. The Tacuari, however, moved out a short distance; but as, from the blundering movements of the gunboats and from a blank shot fired by one of them, it was clear that it was their intention to capture the Tacuari, she put back into the harbor and dropped anchor again. One of the gunboats took up her position alongside of her, and constituted herself a guard over her.

This act of war in the very harbor of Buenos Aires was indisputably in defiance of the law of nations, not only towards Paraguay, but also towards the Argentine Confederation. Lopez, greatly crestfallen, went on shore, expecting that Buenos Aires would resent this act of war in contempt of its sovereignty. But the people and government were well pleased at the course of the English admiral, only regretting that his subordinates had so badly managed their business that they had not waited until the Tacuari had got beyond the Argentine jurisdiction, and then captured her and made a prisoner of Lopez. Though the mediation of Paraguay had been accepted, yet the existence of such a government as that of Lopez in such dangerous proximity had long been regarded as an obstacle in the way of opening up and developing the upper sections of the Valley of the Plata. The large standing army that Lopez always maintained also rendered him a dangerous neighbor, as at any moment he might precipitate a force into the Argentine territory and commit extensive ravages before an army adequate to resist him could be collected. Hence, though the detention of the Tacuari was illegal, and insulting to Buenos Aires, yet the people acquiesced in it, hoping that the task of humiliating and disarming the isolated barbarian would devolve on Great Britain.

Lopez, finding that the English gunboats were permitted,

undisturbed by the Argentine authorities, to hold the Tacuari blockaded in the harbor of Buenos Aires, chagrined and mortified, started to return by land to Paraguay. The Tacuari was held as security for the life of Canstatt. The Paraguayan despot had been overreached at his own game. In his isolation and fancied security he imagined he could defy the laws of nations and treat the citizens of all other nations as he was accustomed to treat his own people. But the English government said by its acts, "If the laws of nations are not to be respected, let each avail itself of its natural rights and obtain satisfaction how and when it can."

When President Lopez learned of the means resorted to by England in behalf of Canstatt he was greatly enraged, and doubtless deeply regretted that he had ever started his device of a conspiracy. He must make up his mind to release Canstatt or else to lose the Tacuari, which with her armament had cost him at least \$150,000. The loss of the Tacuari would not mend the matter, however. The English government by this time had taken up Canstatt's case in earnest, and if he were not released would undoubtedly follow up the detention of the Tacuari by sending an expedition into Paraguay, the result of which would probably be his own overthrow, and the expulsion of his family from Paraguay. He therefore, after having poured forth in his *Semanario* column after column of abuse of England and Englishmen, and protesting that the Republic would never yield to the insolent *gringo*, opened negotiations, and released Canstatt on the understanding that the Tacuari should be permitted to return to Paraguay.

The English government, however, was not satisfied with the bare release of Canstatt. He had been arrested when quietly pursuing his business as a merchant, and the government of Paraguay had failed to prove anything against him. The charge that he had been engaged in a conspiracy, with nothing but Lopez's assertion to sustain it, was not entertained for a moment. Canstatt, when at liberty, denied all knowledge of any such plot, and gave the full particulars of

the manner of his examination, and how he had been forced to sign statements he had never made, and to leave blank spaces over his name to be filled in with other confessions of which he knew nothing. These papers, however, that he had signed, were never produced against him by the Paraguayan government; and the object in making them is to be explained only on the supposition that the examinations were made with the intention of killing him, and then to produce them, if necessary, in proof of his guilt, if ever called on by the English government to justify the act. But as Lopez could prove nothing in justification of his arrest of Canstatt, the destruction of his business, and the confiscation of his goods, the English government insisted that he must be indemnified for the losses he had sustained. Lopez, however, demurred to this, and sought by every means to re-establish friendly relations with Great Britain, leaving that question in abeyance. He sent a diplomatic agent duly accredited to the Court of St. James to renew diplomatic relations. But Lord Russell refused to receive him or have any relations with him until restitution had been made, not in England, but in Paraguay, to Canstatt. The agent of Lopez submitted his case to eminent English authorities on international law, among others to the distinguished writer, Dr. Robert Phillimore. The question submitted, however, was not one that touched the merits of the case at all. Stripped of its verbiage and special pleading, it was simply this: If the government of Paraguay discovers a plot to overthrow it and to assassinate its chief magistrate, and arrests the conspirators, among whom is an Englishman, and after a trial according to the laws and usages of the country they are condemned to death, can the English government rightfully claim different treatment for the Englishman than is adjudged to the Paraguayans? and if the President should in his clemency remit the punishment of death, and set him at liberty, can his government rightfully claim indemnification for him?

To the question put in this form the answer must obviously be in the negative, and such was the response of Dr. Philli-

more. But Lord Russell was uncivil enough to discredit the whole story of the conspiracy, and to virtually say that the pretence that there had been any was an impudent fraud on the part of Lopez. Finding, therefore, that England would not recede from her position, and that he must always remain under a menace of war from that dreaded power, he finally invited negotiations for an adjustment, and the English Minister in Buenos Aires, Mr. Thornton, again went to Paraguay, and a settlement of all the pending difficulties was effected. Lopez agreed to pay the amount demanded as indemnification for Canstatt, but begged so piteously that no allusion should be made to that matter in the treaty that Mr. Thornton consented to omit it. To his own people, therefore, Lopez appeared to have come out triumphant from the Canstatt difficulty, and in the *Semanario* he boasted that the English government had conceded all that Paraguay had ever claimed.

This settlement of the long-pending difficulty was not definite or binding until ratified by the English government, and the terms granted by Mr. Thornton were not wholly satisfactory to Lord Russell, who insisted on their modification. Mr. William Doria, who, during the absence of Minister Thornton, held the position of her Britannic Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires in Buenos Aires, was accordingly sent to Asuncion to effect such modifications as Lord Russell regarded as indispensable. Before his arrival, however, the elder Lopez had died, and the younger was not at that time disposed to reopen a question which he had hoped had been already settled. He therefore, after long wrangling and prevarication, accepted the changes as proposed by Mr. Doria, the points in dispute were all arranged or waived, and the money was finally paid over to Canstatt.

Twelve persons besides Canstatt had been condemned to death by the same secret tribunal that had condemned him. These others were all Paraguayans, and Lopez could do as he pleased with them, being responsible to nobody. Some twenty others who had been arrested at the same time with them had been released as not guilty. The discussion of the

Canstatt case by the newspapers of Buenos Aires and Montevideo had served to convince Lopez that his pretence of a conspiracy was thoroughly understood, and that the execution of the alleged conspirators would be regarded as the cold-blooded murder of innocent men ; and had he been left to his own impulses he would probably, after having kept them in prison till all excitement had passed away, have set them all at liberty. Ten of the twelve were thus released, but the other two were not so fortunate, as they were held accountable vicariously for the sins of a brother who had swindled Lopez out of a large sum of money and gone to Europe, where he could not be reached.

These two unfortunate men were brothers of the name of Decoud. They belonged to one of the most respectable families in Paraguay, and were men of good character and enterprising, industrious habits. An older brother of theirs had been selected by Lopez as his business agent in Buenos Aires, where he made sales of the yerba maté, the tobacco, hides, and other products of Paraguay, that the government or the Lopez family had to sell, besides making purchases of such commodities in the markets of Buenos Aires as were required in exchange. As Lopez kept his accounts very loosely, and seldom inquired into the acts of his agent, the latter betrayed his trust and made false returns of the moneys received. So ignorant was Lopez of his own affairs, that, before he suspected anything, Decoud had embezzled nearly a million of dollars. The President, when he learned of the breach of trust, gave no intimation to his agent that his frauds were discovered, but politely expressed great satisfaction at the manner he had managed the finances of the Republic, and invited him to revisit Paraguay, as he wished to intrust more important negotiations to his charge. Decoud, however, suspected the snare, and did not go, and soon afterwards, when a Paraguayan steamer was in the harbor, he was invited on board to dine with the captain. This invitation he also declined ; and Lopez, having seen that he was too wary to be caught, sent another agent, Don Felix Ejuisquiza, to supersede him.

But if the fraudulent agent could not be punished in person, yet Lopez could be revenged on him by persecuting his family and relatives who were in his power. Vicarious punishment was a favorite means of vengeance with him throughout his whole career, and it was carried by his successor, the younger Lopez, to a refinement of cruelty such as was never known before. Three of the brothers of the defaulting agent were accordingly arrested, and, after the prolonged mock trial, were condemned to death as conspirators. The hour was named for their execution, and one evening they were advised that they were to be shot early on the following morning. When the morning came, however, one of them was pardoned and set at liberty. The other two had offended in another way than in being brothers of the dishonest agent. One of them had in some way interfered with a business speculation of the younger Lopez, the returned diplomatist, general-in-chief of the army, and heir presumptive to the Presidency. The other had offended the heir apparent in a more sensitive point: he had crossed him in one of his brutal passions.

The license permitted to the young Lopezes by their parents, and the system of government which made everything tributary to the family, naturally encouraged them in their excesses, so that they thought they were doing honor to any other family by an illicit alliance with any member of it, even of a temporary character. Francisco Solano, as the prospective heir, was more guarded in his amours than his brothers, and prided himself on having his mistresses belong to the best families in the country. If a young woman of good family and fair person had the misfortune to attract his attention and please his fancy, he considered that he had a right to her for so long a time as might suit his pleasure. Unfortunately, soon after his return from Buenos Aires, his attention was caught by a beautiful young girl who was contracted to be married shortly after to Carlos Decoud, one of the brothers of the defaulting Paraguayan agent. She belonged to one of the best families in the country, and so much superior to that

of Lopez, that very likely the father of the President had felt himself highly honored by being permitted to make the coats and pantaloons of her grandfather. Nevertheless, young Francisco marked her as his victim, and made infamous proposals to her. But she turned from him with scorn and loathing, as had previously the beautiful Pancha Garmendia, though not in so demonstrative a manner. Lopez saw in Carlos Decoud a rival, one who stood between him and his right, and he resolved on his revenge. Decoud was included among the conspirators, and with Canstatt, his two brothers, and one other, was condemned to death. After the rescue of Canstatt, and the whole plot of the conspiracy had been discovered to be but a clumsy trick of Lopez, it was believed that the President would not execute any of the condemned, for, with all his faults, Carlos Antonio Lopez was not, for a Spanish-American, naturally sanguinary. Two of the Decouds, however, had given personal offence to Francisco Solano, and were both shot, and it was the belief of all who dared even to speak on the matter, that it was only at the instigation of the young man that the old President had ordered the execution. The young woman who had thus become the unconscious instrument of her lover's death, it is needless to say, did not become the mistress of his murderer.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Francisco Solano Lopez sent Ambassador to Europe. — Mrs. Lynch. — Colony of French Agriculturists introduced into Paraguay. — Hardships and Sufferings. — Attempt to desert. — Isolation of Paraguay. — The Gran Chaco. — Barbarous Treatment of the French Colonists. — Efforts of the French Consul in their Behalf. — Action taken by the French Government. — They are finally allowed to leave the Country. — The French Claims. — Lopez increases his Army. — Relations with Brazil. — The Brazilian Squadron. — Negotiations. — Treaty concluded. — Line of Steamers established between Rio and Cuyuba. — Measures taken by Lopez to increase his Revenue. — Yerba Maté. — Customs. — Internal Revenue. — Incomes of the Lopez Family. — Government Lands. — Influence of Lopez's Government upon the Industry of the People.

THE independence of Paraguay having been acknowledged, and treaties of friendship, commerce, and navigation having been formed with France, England, Sardinia, and the United States, President Lopez thought the time had come when he should send an ambassador to Europe to represent him at the different courts. For this duty he selected the young general, Francisco Solano, then about twenty-four years of age. The young diplomatist was accordingly despatched on his mission with an outfit and an escort such as in modern times has seldom, if ever, accompanied a simple ambassador to any court. His suite consisted of some forty persons. His secretary was Juan Andres Gelly, who, though a native Paraguayan, had been abroad on different occasions as a sort of special agent of the government, and in this way had had considerable experience in diplomatic affairs, and was, in fact, the minister, as young Lopez, though nominally the head of the embassy, had yet to learn everything that regarded diplomatic usages and duties. The other members of the escort consisted of military and naval officers of different grades, his brother Benigno, and a large following of servants. Para-

guay had at that time no navy of any importance and no steamers, and the ambassador was obliged, therefore, to cross the Atlantic as ambassadors of England, France, the United States, and other countries usually do, in the humble capacity of passenger on board a merchant steamer. But besides the large retinue which the young minister took with him to give importance to his mission, he had ample means provided to support the style and equipage becoming a general, ambassador, and prince of the blood. The old man put to his credit in England and France a sum of money sufficient to maintain him and his suite in a style such as no other ambassador at Paris or London could pretend to rival.

On arriving at Paris, young Lopez left the details of all business to his secretary, gave loose rein to his naturally licentious propensities, and plunged into the vices of that gay capital. With an unlimited bank account and with the free use which he made of it, it was but natural that he should secure a certain following of those sharp and needy adventurers who are ever ready to attach themselves to any persons who will entertain them liberally, in return for which they magnify their importance and minister to their vanity and vices. Coming in such state and making such a display of wealth, it was not difficult to create the impression that he must represent a country of immense resources; and, as little was known of Paraguay, it was thought, by some persons of influence and official position, that immense commercial advantages were to result from the cultivation of intimate relations with the newly opened country. Young Lopez was accordingly presented to the Emperor, and was also, in accordance with general usage, honored with a private audience. In England, however, where he spent his money with equal profusion as in France, and made the same semi-barbarous display, he was not so successful in impressing upon the government either the importance of himself or his mission. In fact, he was greatly enraged at the little consideration he received there, and an incident which occurred soon after he had presented his credentials greatly aggravated his wrath.

He had expected to be formally presented to the Queen, and Lord Palmerston had fixed the day when he would make the introduction. Some other matters, however, of more importance in the eyes of the Premier having intervened so as to make it inconvenient to present him at the time agreed upon, the presentation was deferred to another occasion. Lopez was greatly indignant at this seeming disrespect and want of courtesy, and therefore her Majesty was compelled to forego the honor of an introduction to the Paraguayan ambassador. The slight was never forgotten by Lopez, and though he afterwards had many Englishmen in his employment, always had a great antipathy to them and their country. He had been sent by his father, however, to accomplish certain purposes, and among other things he was to obtain two steamers for the Paraguayan service, and make arrangements for the manufacture and shipment of arms and munitions of war, and for the manufacture of the machinery necessary for the establishment of an arsenal in Paraguay. He accordingly purchased the steamer called the Rio Blanco, which was sent out to Paraguay under command of an English captain by the name of Morris ; and arranged for the purchase of another steamer of a superior quality, which was to be ready to cross the Atlantic whenever he should himself wish to return home. In the mean while Lopez spent most of his time in Paris, where he became familiar with the worst phases of Parisian society. Among the members of his suite was a young man by the name of Brizuela, who, mingling in the questionable society that his chief most frequented, had made the acquaintance of a woman of abandoned character, belonging to what is there called the *demi-monde*. This woman, whose maiden name was Lynch, was born in Cork, Ireland ; and her family, while she was yet a child, had moved to France, where she married a surgeon in the French army by the name of Quatrefaghts. Her character was such, however, that she soon separated from her husband, and at the time of the advent of Lopez in Paris she belonged to that class of public women so numerous in Paris, always on the watch for strangers with

long purses and vicious habits. This woman having made the acquaintance of Brizuela, and learned from him of the circumstances under which he had come to France, and the magnificence and princely munificence of his chief, contrived to make his acquaintance. Brizuela boasting to his patron of the conquest he had achieved, Lopez, who had not forgotten his Paraguayan habit of supervising and inquiring into the conduct of those who were about him, was anxious to meet with the lady whose charms were so vaunted by his subordinate, and on meeting her he was greatly infatuated with her appearance ; so much so, that he made an arrangement with Brizuela in some respects similar to that which his father, Lazaro Rojas, had made with the elder Lopez. In both cases the woman was to be transferred for valuable money considerations. Madam Lynch was thenceforward the favorite mistress, counsellor, and friend of Lopez. She accompanied him in his travels to different parts of Europe, and went with him to the Crimea, visiting the camps of the allies then engaged in war against the Czar. When Lopez was about to return to Paraguay, Madam Lynch was desirous of accompanying him ; but being doubtful how the old man would receive him if accompanied by such an encumbrance, it was decided between them that she should remain behind and allow him to precede her, and first learn whether he had fallen from grace during his absence or still retained the confidence of the old man, so that he might venture to introduce such an improvement into the country.

Young Lopez, before leaving Europe, also conceived the project of introducing a colony of French agriculturists into Paraguay ; and for that purpose, while in Bordeaux, made a contract with a merchant there to send some five hundred emigrants to Paraguay, stipulating that the government of Paraguay should give to each family, on its arrival, a house, and as much land in a healthy part of the country as it could well cultivate, besides the provisions necessary to support it for eight months ; and that the colony should pay nothing for ten years, and should be free from all military service, only

being liable to serve in the national guard when the security of the colony might demand it. The colonists in return bound themselves to cultivate this land as their own property until they had reimbursed the government of Paraguay from the productions of their harvests for the expense it had incurred. It was a condition of the contract that these colonists should be Roman Catholics, and born in the province of Gascony, whose idiom closely resembles the Spanish. The contractor, whose only object was to secure the commission for each colonist, paid little regard to the character of the individuals whom he selected, and picked up any persons who offered that were in destitute circumstances, without regard to their fitness for the life to which they would be subjected in Paraguay. They were neither farmers nor mechanics, but were generally servants, petty tradesmen, barbers, valets, *chevaliers d'industrie*, and, in fact, composed of that needy class which in a city like Bordeaux, having no fixed or reliable employment, would be the first to offer themselves for any expedition that promised subsistence. They were not advised of the character of the country to which they were going, nor of the kind of government to which they would be subjected; they were only told that it was a fine, fertile section, where the climate was warm, and nature so prolific that but little labor would suffice to supply all their wants, and that the terms under which they were to enter Paraguay were such that they all, within a few years, would be independent owners of houses and lands, and surrounded by every comfort and luxury. The colony thus selected contained some very estimable people, besides many who could not be regarded as a valuable acquisition to any community. Their passage to Paraguay was paid by Lopez, but they were provided with the worst accommodations while at sea, and experienced great sufferings before they reached their destination.

On arriving at Asuncion, instead of finding their troubles at an end they learned that they had just begun. They had anticipated that on their arrival each family would be assigned to its house, with its bit of land and provisions

for their subsistence until they could raise more for their own use. They were all taken to a place some four leagues above Asuncion and thrust ashore on the right bank of the river, on territory to which both Bolivia and the Argentine Republic laid claim as well as Lopez. The provisions provided for them were totally insufficient and of very bad quality, and they were subjected to a military discipline under the republican government such as they had never witnessed or heard of in the empire of France. They were also exposed to the incursions of the Indians of the Chaco. They, however, set themselves to work to build houses and cultivate the lands; but they found that the land, though sufficiently productive, was of that hard, clayey character which rendered it very difficult to cultivate, and which the first year yielded scarcely anything in return for their labors. The colonists were treated precisely as so many slaves, having no rights whatever which the government regarded. Special regulations were drawn up according to which they were to be governed, and a person was appointed to rule over them under the title of justice of the peace and purveyor to the colony. The emigrants were greatly exasperated at finding they had been imposed upon, and that the treatment they received was utterly at variance with the terms of the agent at Bordeaux. So disappointed were they when they found themselves thus situated, and that to all their complaints the justice-purveyor only returned contemptuous answers, accompanied with threats of what worse they might expect if they did not cease from their complaints, five of the emigrants attempted to desert. The military guard, which was kept constantly on watch over their actions, soon missed the fugitives and pursued them; but they were not overtaken and were never heard of more, whence the presumption is that they all perished from starvation in the wilderness or at the hands of the savages.

And here it seems necessary to explain something of the isolation to which the government of Paraguay has been able to subject its inhabitants for so many years without the possibility of their escaping from its all-searching des-

potism. It should be borne in mind that on the west and right bank of the river, for nearly the whole distance from Asuncion to many leagues below the confluence of the Parana and the Paraguay, is a dense, unbroken forest; that this vast extent of territory, which is called the Gran Chaco, is composed of immense marshes filled with the rankest vegetation, that forms an almost impervious jungle, and through which it is impossible to pass except in large bodies, that carry with them the necessary implements for cutting away the vines and bushes, and for making the rafts necessary to pass over the numerous streams and lagoons that they are sure to meet on their way. During Francia's long reign, attempts were made by several parties to leave the country through this vast forest, but no one, so far as is known, ever succeeded; no one who made the desperate attempt, unless caught by Francia's soldiers, was ever heard of again.

It was not known, at the colony, whether the deserters from the French colony had escaped or not; but as they were not caught and brought back it was thought possible that they had succeeded in getting through to Corrientes, and on the 28th of August, 1855, twenty others also attempted to desert. They were pursued so actively by the guard, however, that they were overtaken, captured, brought back and put in irons, and were afterwards condemned by a Presidential decree to several months' imprisonment; to be turned out of the colony and deprived of the concession of land which was to become their property after cultivation; and after this term of imprisonment should expire, they were to be located separately in different parts of the interior. By the same decree it was declared that any future attempts to abscond, or the mere fact of being on the line of outposts, would be punishable by death, as would also the crime of advising any of the emigrants to desert. The French consul then at Asuncion, Count de Brayer, protested against this barbarous Draconian decree, but without effect. In the mean while Lopez made no attempt to improve the condition of the colonists, who were now in a state of extreme suffering, but

thought to cause them to cease from complaints by increased vigor, and by subjecting them to more aggravating and intolerable hardships. In fact, their condition became so insupportable that, notwithstanding the fate of the last deserters, on the 24th of October following seven others also attempted to desert, two of whom were living with another Frenchman by the name of Dorignac and a woman called Anna Prat. These two persons were arrested, put in irons, and threatened with death by Colonel Barrios, the son-in-law of the President, if they did not reveal the way the fugitives had taken. They both answered that they knew nothing about it, and for their contemptuous conduct they were both most brutally beaten. Dorignac was flogged until nearly dead to make him disclose, but as deserters and fugitives seldom tell even their friends what road they are to take, poor Dorignac could have given no information had he been disposed to; and Barrios,—whose character from the time he first attracted public notice by being taken into the Lopez family until he was made to expire under the same treatment, received at the hands of young Lopez, that he had inflicted with so much alacrity on many others, rendered him a fit person for such services,—finding that flogging would not make him reveal, ordered his head to be plunged into a bucket of water and held there until he was nearly drowned. This was repeated several times until the man was nearly dead. But Dorignac did not reveal anything, for the very good reason, if he had no better one, that he had nothing to reveal. The French consul, whom Lopez could not prevent from visiting the colonists, learning from them of the atrocities to which they had been subjected, complained officially to the government of the treatment to which his countrymen were subjected. Lopez, however, audaciously denied all the charges, though they were as notoriously true, and known to be so by everybody else, as that he was President of Paraguay. The last fugitives, however, had not succeeded in their attempt to escape. Five of the seven were captured, and according to the report of the soldiers sent in pursuit of them, the two others, who had hidden in trees,

and refused to come down when summoned, had been shot. This was the report which was promulgated by the guard immediately on their return; but Lopez, fearing that such a report would be construed to his prejudice if it were not denied, caused it to be announced that the two deserters who were not returned had escaped, and the soldiers who had first described the manner of their death in one way dutifully modified their first statements, and declared that they were false, and that the missing Frenchmen had got away.

From that moment vexations of every sort were accumulated on the unfortunate emigrants to such an extent that the colony was brought to a state of desperation bordering on insurrection. On the 26th of December the President went to visit the colony. He assembled the colonists and expressed his satisfaction at the amount of labor they had performed, and ascribed the scanty harvests to the unfavorable season. He expressed his regret that any of the colonists should be, as he had heard some were, dissatisfied, and said that the government of Paraguay never wished to detain people against their will, and that if they were desirous of leaving they had only to give their names to the justice of the peace. The next day three hundred and thirty-nine individuals had given their names, and very shortly after all the rest, with the exception of one family of four persons, who had been in the country at the time of the foundation of the colony, and one female servant. No proof could be more conclusive of the bad faith of the Paraguayan government, and the hardships to which the colonists were subjected, than the unanimity with which they desired to leave the country. Though they had come to one of the finest regions on which the sun shines, and brought with them their household gods, intending there to spend their days, so infamous and barbarous had been the treatment they had received, they all were not only willing, but eager, to leave the country, destitute and helpless, provided they could set foot beyond the limits of Paraguay and where the power of Lopez did not extend. Finding the colonists so

unanimous, the President on the 29th of December issued a decree by which all the applicants were ordered to leave the country within a week, which order was so far modified as to grant them fifty days to reimburse the government for their passage-money and the advances made to them, according to the contract, in provisions, tools, seeds, and other articles which they had received. In the first days of January they were all driven from the colony, and the poor wretches, about four hundred in number, were landed at Asuncion, where, without provisions, and having no means of earning anything, they must inevitably have starved but for the assistance rendered them by the French consul, Count de Brayer. On the expiration of the fifty days given the colonists to reimburse the government, none of them were able to do so; and on the 23d of February, 1856, another decree appeared, condemning the debtors to forced labor in the mines, brick-yards, and other public works of the state, until full payment should be made. But Count de Brayer protested so earnestly and energetically against thus reducing French subjects to slavery that the decree was never put in force. The French government, on learning of the treatment which the first colonists received, prohibited the departure of any other emigrants to Paraguay, and in a despatch to Count de Brayer, to be communicated to the government of Paraguay, expressed its painful surprise that such harsh measures had been committed against French subjects, and its decided opinion that the colonists were under no pecuniary obligations to the government of Paraguay. In consequence of this action by the French government, President Lopez, by a decree of the 13th of June, 1856, renounced all claims against the French colonists and ordered them to leave the country. The emigrants were therefore provided by the consul with passes to Buenos Aires, and, as opportunity occurred, all, with the exception of some half-dozen, departed.

The experience of these colonists was enough to convince the French government that the less it had to do with Paraguay, so long as it remained under the Lopez rule, the better

it would be ; and Count de Brayer leaving Asuncion about this time on account of ill health, the consulate was allowed to remain vacant for about two years. Lopez, however, was very anxious that his government should be recognized by the great powers of Europe, and that they should not only acknowledge the independence of Paraguay, but should send diplomatic and consular agents to his country, as they did to all other countries having any pretensions to civilization, or any importance, political or commercial ; and having expressed a desire to satisfy the claims of the French government respecting the affairs of the colony, another consul, Count de Brosard, was sent in place of M. de Brayer. His first official act was to make a claim against Lopez for repayment of all expenses to which the French government had been put to rescue its subjects from his power, and to this Lopez was obliged to add the humiliating concessior. of ten thousand francs to the martyr Dorignac, who had become entirely idiotic from the prolonged tortures to which he had been exposed. In this case, however, as in the Canstatt affair, when Lopez was obliged to make compensation to the injured party for the wrongs he had done him, no mention was made of the circumstance in the convention or agreement that was to be made public. In both cases Lopez consented to pay the money on condition that neither government should ever publish the terms to which he had yielded. He was thus enabled, without exposing his mendacity to his people, to assert that in all things he had carried his point, and that the governments both of France and England had been forced to acknowledge the justice of Paraguay, and to apologize to him for ever having doubted it.

Lopez having had this experience, both with the Americans and with the French, became very suspicious of all foreigners ; and the few who went there to do business generally found themselves so much embarrassed by his official regulations and by hindrances put in their way that few cared to remain. He was obliged, however, to tolerate the presence of foreigners as artisans, engineers, and physicians, as he found the

latter were indispensable to the life and health of his troops, and without the former he could not establish his shops for the manufacture of many articles which, with his enforced labor, it was much cheaper for him to manufacture than to purchase and import.

Having driven out the American company and the French colony, Lopez was left to pursue his peculiar administration of affairs with no one to question his justice or criticise his policy. He was as absolute at that time as ever Francia had been, and during the time that the obnoxious strangers were in the country he had not only revived to its full extent the system of espionage of Francia, but even improved upon it. He had quarrelled with the American, French, and English consuls, and all of them had left the country, firmly convinced that Paraguay was a country to be shunned by their fellow-countrymen. The Portuguese and Brazilian consuls, however, remained there; but as they had been a long time in the country, and fully understood the character of the people and of their ruler, and besides had few duties to perform, they were careful in no way to interfere with the government or complain when their fellow-countrymen were maltreated.

During the later years Lopez had been largely increasing his army, and had introduced a large quantity of arms, besides a vast amount of gunpowder, which were stored in the capital. His position towards Brazil had always been one of disagreement, as there had been from long before his time a question of boundaries between the two countries. During the whole of Francia's reign, and up to the year 1855, Paraguay, having had control of the river from Tres Bocas to its northern frontiers, had permitted no vessel of any nationality to ascend the river to the Brazilian province of Matto Grosso. This province, which is half as large as Europe, was almost inaccessible except by the river. To reach it by land from any point on the coast, it was necessary to pass through such dense forests and cross so many streams as to render it a labor of several months; yet as there had been, from long before

Francia's time, a number of settlements there, and as the country was believed to be rich in mines, and capable of supporting a large population that would add much to the strength and wealth of the empire, Brazil was not disposed to submit to the pretensions of Lopez in prohibiting all communication by way of the river with the province. Lopez, however, was inexorable, and would concede nothing either to threats or diplomacy, until in 1855 the Emperor sent a squadron, consisting of eleven war vessels and eight transports, to exact what was clearly and indisputably a right. The conduct of the Brazilians on this occasion was in keeping with that displayed by them a dozen years later in the great war. There were no fortifications then on the banks of the river below Asuncion, and the entire squadron might have proceeded at once to Asuncion and dictated any terms to Lopez that the Brazilian envoy might have desired. Lopez had not yet the nucleus of a navy, yet when he found the Brazilians were coming he had nothing to oppose them but the guard, consisting of twenty-eight men, at Cerrito, a post on the right bank of the river, some ten leagues below the since celebrated fortress of Humaita ; but the officer in command, though utterly without means to enforce his orders, forbade the higher ascent of the river by more than one of the Brazilian steamers. The minister acceded to this demand, and, leaving the rest of the squadron at Tres Bocas, ascended in the admiral's ship to Asuncion. Lopez soon learned that, of the things which the Brazilians had come for, fighting was not one of them, and was careful to treat both minister and admiral in such a way that neither of them would change his mind. He temporized with them, and induced them to defer a settlement of the questions to another time, so that the expedition returned to Brazil having effected nothing. Lopez now saw that it would not do to expose himself longer to an invasion by the river without having some means to prevent it, and he therefore commenced fortifying at Humaita, a point admirably adapted, from the winding course of the river and the

topographical configuration of the country, to impede the ascent of a hostile fleet.

When it was known in Rio how completely Lopez had deceived and hoodwinked their minister, the feeling of indignation against both was intense ; and another and a stronger expedition, with a different minister, and an admiral not averse to fighting, was about to be fitted out to enforce what the former expedition had been sent to do. But Lopez, who had his paid spies in Rio, was soon advised of the danger which was threatening, and, without waiting for official notification from the Brazilian government that it would no longer submit to his impositions, he despatched a minister to Rio with instructions to renew negotiations. The minister despatched on this embassy was Don José Berges, and a treaty was there made in which the privilege was conceded to Brazil of access by the river to her northwestern province, while the questions of boundaries were left in abeyance. The Brazilians now believed that they had obtained by diplomacy what they had failed to get by threats and a display of force. It was almost a barren triumph, however, for although vessels could go and come from the upper waters of the Paraguay to Buenos Aires or Rio, they were subjected, while passing through the Paraguayan waters, to such annoyances, delays, and vexations as to make the treaty appear to be only a delusion. The Brazilian government, however, was not disposed to have the spirit of the treaty defeated by treachery, or to be cut off from its distant province by a series of petty annoyances, none of which were of sufficient importance to justify a declaration of war. It therefore despatched its ablest diplomat and most unscrupulous statesman, Counsellor Paranhos, to make a new treaty, and one which should clearly specify the rights of each party. Paranhos was far too astute to be overreached by Lopez, and by impressing upon the old man the conviction that he must concede to the Brazilians the privilege of communicating with their own province without interference from him, or else be prepared for a war with the Empire, he succeeded in forming a treaty so clear and precise in its terms that it could not be

misconstrued. This treaty having been ratified, the government of Brazil, in order to encourage emigration into Matto Grosso, granted a subsidy to a steam-navigation company, which was to make eight round trips a year from Rio to Cuyuba, a distance of nearly four thousand miles. This service was performed in three different steamers; one from Rio to Montevideo, there to connect with a river steamer to Curumbà, and then with another steamer of lighter draught to Cuyuba. This line being established, continued in operation without molestation some five years; and the first act of the war which was to be so expensive to Brazil and so fatal to Paraguay was the seizure of a steam-packet of this line, the Marquis d'Olinda, in October, 1865.

The importation of so much machinery, and so many arms and munitions of war, with the employment of many foreign artisans, greatly increased the expenses of the government above what they had been in the time of Francia, or in the early days of Lopez's rule. To increase his revenue, therefore, he resorted to numerous measures, which, judicious in themselves, were, as conducted by him, acts of unmitigated tyranny. The revenue previously had been derived mostly from the sale of yerba maté and the export of tobacco and hides. The yerba business was entirely a government monopoly; but as it was an article used only by a limited number of people in the adjoining countries of South America, the amount to be realized from it could not be increased above a million and a half or two millions of dollars a year. The demand for this article had greatly diminished during the time of the dispute with Brazil, as large quantities of it had previous to this been consumed in the Brazilian provinces. Lopez, in order to spite the Brazilians, and as if to bring them to his terms by such a petty device, forbade the export of yerba maté from the country; and the result was that thousands of people who, since the death of Francia, had begun to regard it as a necessity, and to consume it in large quantities, not being able to obtain it longer, learned to live without it, and to make use of tea, coffee, and cocoa in its stead; and

afterwards, when the difficulties with Brazil were arranged, and the yerba maté was again allowed to be exported, the number of people who used it was greatly reduced. To a great extent they had lost their taste for it, and the demand for the article was never again so large as it had been.

To increase the amount of general exports of tobacco and hides, Lopez engaged in the protective system so thoroughly as to order the people regarding the number of roods or acres which they should cultivate. He paid little regard to those productions which would all be consumed in the country, but for those that could be exported he issued orders as to the number of rows that should be planted by each individual. He also increased the export duty on everything that was sent out of the country, and the taxes which in one way and another he extorted from the people amounted to more than one third of their entire productions. In the first place, the diezmo, or one tenth of all that was raised by everybody in the country, was taken as the property of the government, another tax of twenty per cent of the value was exacted at the time of export, and the taxes for inspection, for wharfage, and for the stamped paper, amounted in the aggregate to so much that before an article left Paraguay it had paid thirty-six per cent of its value to the government. In addition to this a tax of twenty-five per cent was required on all importations, and after this the amount collected for stamped paper, and for fees of various kinds, was such that all people doing business were compelled to pay to the government officials from ten to fifteen per cent in addition to the direct tax on their goods.

The revenue, therefore, which the government derived was, considering the population of the country and the general poverty of the people, enormous; though the sum realized was greatly reduced by reason of the reductions made in behalf of the different members of the Lopez family. All of these had special privileges, and were exempt from internal taxes and export and import duties. The old man and his wife were constantly adding to their landed estates and

making improvements upon them, while the three sons and two daughters were each imitating their thrifty example, so that at least twenty-five per cent of all collected from the Paraguayan people during the latter years of the Presidency of the elder Lopez went, directly and indirectly, to enrich the Lopez family. Besides the revenues thus taken from the people, the government had what was derived from the lands of the state, as notwithstanding so many of the finest estancias in the country had, through favor of the President, become the property of his children, there were many very fine tracts of land that were still said to belong to the state, and over them was always placed some agent of the government, generally an officer of the army, either a lieutenant or an ensign, who had the care of them. The peons, or laborers, of all the neighboring estancias were subject to the orders of this official; and he could demand of their masters at any time to send them all to work on the government estates, and they had no alternative but to obey. They must send, if so required, their men, their oxen, and their horses to labor without any compensation; and the government official, or *capitaz*, was held to the strictest accountability for the government property, and compelled to furnish from the lands under his charge whatever the government might require. The people, therefore, who lived near these government estancias, found it for their interest always to pretend to the greatest poverty, as thus they would escape contributions to the state. The better and more wealthy class of the people were compelled to furnish most of the laborers and most of the oxen, and whenever the government required cattle or horses to put upon the government estancias, it compelled the neighboring people to provide them. Thus the people were afraid to show any signs of prosperity or abundance; they were afraid to make good houses, or to show any signs of wealth or prosperity, for any such display was sure to bring upon them greater exactions from the government. In fact, every man felt that he had nothing he could really call his own; he had nothing but what the government might take from him at any time,

whether it was oxen for the government estancias or sons for the army. The people under this government saw that thrift and industry added little or nothing to their own comfort, as it all went to the state or to enrich the Lopez family ; they saw that their true interest was to raise just what was required for their families, so that they should not suffer for the absolute necessities of life, but beyond that they had no aspirations, or, if they had, they dared not show them.

CHAPTER XXVII.

The Question between the United States and Paraguay at the Inauguration of President Lincoln. — A Resident Commissioner appointed to Paraguay. — He is accompanied by an Agent of the Rhode Island Company. — Lieutenant William H. Macomb. — Arrival in Asuncion, November 14, 1861. — Lopez refuses to reopen the Question of the Rhode Island Company. — His Grudging Civility towards the Commissioner. — Physical Aspects of Paraguay. — The Parana and Paraguay Rivers. — Early Settlements. — The Tres Bocas. — Gran Chaco. — Cerrito. — Humaita. — The Vermejo. — Villa del Pilar. — The Tebicuari. — Villa Franca. — Villeta. — San Antonio. — Lambare. — Asuncion. — Arsenal. — Custom-House. — San Pedro. — Concepcion. — San Salvador. — Description of a Paraguayan Town. — The General Configuration of the Country. — The Forests. — Dwellings. — Productions. — Characteristics of the People. — The Future Paraguayan Race. — The Natural Wealth of the Country. — The Fruits. — The Climate. — Diseases brought in the Train of War. — Sufferings of the People.

IN the convention made between Paraguay and the United States, by the terms of which the amount of the claims of the Rhode Island company was to be submitted to arbitration, it was also stipulated that the decision to which the commissioners might come should be announced by the two governments in presidential proclamations. President Buchanan, however, being of the opinion that the commissioners had decided another question than the one referred to them, did not issue any such proclamation, but sent a message to Congress setting forth these facts; and thus the matter stood at the time President Lincoln was inaugurated. The new administration, taking the same view as the preceding one, determined to send a resident commissioner to Paraguay, with instructions to notify President Lopez that the decision of the commissioners had been irregular and did not conclude anything, and that as it was on a question not submitted to them it was not binding upon the United States, and therefore the

whole question was left open for further negotiation. The writer of these volumes was appointed to this office, and accordingly left the United States on the 27th of July, 1861, and proceeded to the mouth of the Plata, where he took passage up the river on the United States gunboat Pulaski. This vessel was under the command of Lieutenant William H. Maccomb, one of the most promising and energetic officers in the American service. He realized that it was the duty of a naval commander, not only to implicitly obey the orders of the Secretary of the Navy, but, even without waiting for instructions from him, to render any assistance in his power to the agents and representatives of the United States in other branches of the government to facilitate them in the discharge of their duties in a manner comporting with the character of the government and the dignity of their offices. On the 14th of November, 1861, the Pulaski reached Asuncion; and the new commissioner having presented his credentials and been formally received, the vessel returned to the mouth of the river. The Rhode Island company, having been advised of the nature of the instructions which the government had given to the commissioner, took it for granted that Lopez would not force the American government to the extremity of sending another expedition, but would rather make such compensation to the company as would induce them not to further prosecute their claims. They therefore supposing that the United States government was committed to secure them justice, sent an agent with authority on their behalf to conclude an arrangement of the question. Lopez, however, being well aware of the difficulties in which Mr. Lincoln's administration was placed, saw that it was in no condition, and would not be for a considerable time, to send another expedition against Paraguay. The civil war having commenced, the result of which he believed would be the destruction of the Union, he assumed a defiant attitude, and refused to reopen the question or entertain any proposition to discuss it. It was a rule with him, not only never to fight, but never to yield till the last moment, and he then saw that the last moment

had not come ; that he could put off the day of settlement, and believed that if at last he must yield, he could do so on as favorable terms afterwards as at that time. The agent therefore returned empty-handed to the United States, and the commissioner, having advised his government of Lopez's refusal to reopen the question of the Rhode Island company, remained to await further instructions. Lopez seemed to regard his remaining there as a constant threat, and though he was careful to commit no act of which the commissioner might complain, he was as churlish and uncivil as he could be without danger of aggravating his already delicate relations with the United States. He carried this so far that at one time the commissioner intimated to him that unless he changed his course he would be compelled to leave the country, go to Buenos Aires, and there wait until his government could be informed of his incivility and rudeness. Anything of this kind, however, Lopez was very anxious to avoid, and hastily made amends, asserting that it was through a mistake or misunderstanding of his Minister of Foreign Affairs. After this he was coolly civil in all things, though the people, being aware that he looked with disfavor on the commissioner, considered it the safest course for them to keep as much aloof from him as possible without committing any acts of rudeness or incivility.

The rivers Parana and Paraguay both have their rise in the mountains of Brazil that form the divide between the valleys of the Amazon and the Plata. The sources of the Parana are among the Cordilleras of Goyaz, about 18° south latitude, where the many tributaries uniting, the river is called Parana. Its course is at first southerly, and then, bearing to the west for a while, it again assumes its former direction until it reaches nearly to the southern extremity of Paraguay, when, taking a southwesterly course, it keeps on until its confluence with the Paraguay at $27^{\circ} 18'$ south latitude. The Paraguay, rising more to the west, in the province of Matto Grosso, has its source in the same range of mountains. The general direction of the Paraguay is very nearly due south, and its course from the

northern frontier of Paraguay until near its confluence with the Parana is nearly parallel with that river, and the country known as Paraguay is situated between these two streams. The Parana being much more difficult and dangerous for navigation, and being off the general line of direction by which the early adventurers into these regions hoped to establish a line of communication with Peru, the first settlements of the country were made upon the banks of the Paraguay. The seat of government also being on this river, numerous towns and villages were founded in its vicinity; and hence the western part of the territory soon contained a numerous population subject to the government at Asuncion, while the eastern section, or that nearer to the Parana, was neglected, and the greater part of it has remained until this day an unbroken wilderness, uninhabited except by a few roving and miserable Indians. To obtain a general idea of the physical aspects of the western or more cultivated and populous part of the state, that part which before the late war was inhabited by a numerous population in a state of semi-civilization, the traveller in ascending the river first approaches the Tres Bocas (*Three Mouths*), so called from the fact that two islands are so situated in the river that it unites with the Parana through three channels. Below this point he has found the Parana very wide, and so full of islands, that, in some places, he must have been at a loss to tell where the channel of the river was, and must have been impressed with the feeling that it really could be no river, but an immense sea or lake, dotted with little islands just high enough above the level of the stream to permit the growth of verdure so rich and luxuriant as to form apparently an impenetrable jungle; and approaching the Tres Bocas he would observe that while the river which comes in from the eastward, the Parana, preserved many of the characteristics which it had below that point, the Paraguay was confined within narrow limits, and very soon after commencing its ascent above the confluence he would observe it to be restricted to well-defined banks. On the opposite side of the river is the dense Gran Chaco, stretching hundreds of miles

to the west; and at this point the land is so nearly on a level with the river, that when the water is high it seems to be but one great swamp, in which the rank vines and creeping parasites are so intertwined among the larger trees that only by immense labor can they be penetrated. The extreme southern point of Paraguay, below which the three rivers mingle their waters, is a spit of hard land, opposite which to the west is the Chaco, and to the south the province of Corrientes. Just above this southern extremity of Paraguay, and a little distance inland, there are immense swamps as well as impassable jungles, and this is the general character of the country for a distance of some forty miles. There are, here and there, small tracts of hard ground sufficiently elevated to be above high water even when the rivers are highest; and they are generally surrounded, on three sides at least, by swamps and lagoons, which are so broad and deep and difficult to pass that an army which should attempt it in the face of an enemy must be exposed for hours to a merciless cannonade. Ascending the Paraguay from the Tres Bocas, at a distance of about two leagues the land on the Chaco side becomes slightly more elevated and firmer, and here for many years previous to the war was established the guard-house of the Paraguayan government called Cerrito. Here was always maintained a force of some twenty or thirty men in the time of the elder Lopez, to prevent any vessels ascending above there without his permission, and also to prevent the flight of any unfortunate persons who might seek to escape from their prison by way of the river. Continuing the voyage above Cerrito, the Gran Chaco will be found very much as it was below there, and the Paraguayan bank appears to be but a continuous marsh or swamp, producing only the weeds, swamp-grass, and bamboos which are peculiar to low places in those latitudes. Ascending higher, however, it will be seen that the river makes a sudden bend, and as we turn the lower point of it, it will be observed that the left bank of the river is elevated several feet above the level of the river, and the land is hard and dry, denuded of trees or brushwood. Here was the fortress

of Humaita, of which a description will hereafter be given. Passing above this point about four leagues, we come to the mouth of another river, the Vermejo, which unites with the Paraguay. Taking its rise at the foot of the Andes, it flows for an immense distance through the Gran Chaco, and finally here joins the Paraguay. This river takes its name, Vermejo,—the word signifying red,—from the color of the water, as, like the Red River of Arkansas and Louisiana, it is greatly discolored by earthy particles which it gathers from the soil over and through which it flows. The next point of any importance is Villa del Pilar, formerly called Ñeembucú. This, for a long time, was the only port in Paraguay to which vessels from below were allowed to come. During the long period of isolation in which Francia held Paraguay, occasionally a vessel would be permitted to come to this port with a cargo of goods, a manifest of which would be sent forward to the Dictator at Asuncion, when he would select such articles as he wished to purchase and name the prices which he would pay in the produce of the country. Towards the latter part of his reign, however, this trifling traffic ceased, after which the people of Paraguay were entirely dependent on what was produced within the country for every article of necessity or comfort.

About ten leagues above Pilar the river Tebicuari, that, rising in the central or northern section of the state, flows southwesterly through the most fertile and populous part of the country, here falls into the Paraguay. This river is free from rapids or falls for a considerable distance, and is navigable for small steamers for more than a hundred miles. The next town, situate at a distance of about seven leagues above the mouth of the Tebicuari, is Villa Franca; and four leagues above this is Villa Oliva, after which there is no town of any importance before reaching Asuncion, except the village of Villeta, situated at a distance of about twenty-five leagues above Villa Oliva. Between this and the capital, however, is the district, or partido, of San Antonio, situated some three leagues from Asuncion. This is the place where

the American company undertook to establish their works, and from which they were driven with violence by the President of Paraguay. About half-way between San Antonio and Asuncion is the hill called Lambaré. This hill is of basaltic origin and of conical form, and though of an elevation of only three hundred and twelve feet, yet, standing as it does in the midst of a country nearly level, it may be seen at a long distance, and gives the impression of a mountain many times larger and higher. Above Lambaré the river makes a bend to the east as we ascend, but following the channel in approaching Asuncion we pass under a high bluff, immediately after which we find ourselves in a deep basin of still water almost directly in front of the town, and the first objects liable to arrest attention are the large arsenal on the right hand and the custom-house on the left, — the latter of which, having been erected according to the new ideas of architecture of the elder Lopez, stands on a slant so steep that one would suppose he had intended, when completed, to launch it like a ship into the river, and move it to some other part of his dominions. Directly opposite Asuncion are a few buildings and a brickyard belonging to some of the members of the Lopez family; and beyond that and the huts necessary for the occupation of the laborers employed in making brick and in taking care of the cattle of the state, a few hundred of whom are thus occupied, on that side of the river the whole country appears uninhabited until arriving at Villa Occidental, or New Bordeaux, the place in which the unfortunate French colony were confined until they obtained their deliverance and were permitted to leave the country. Farther on are other towns near the bank of the river, of more or less importance, the principal of which are San Pedro, which stands some distance back on the Jejuy; Concepcion, a larger town, some forty leagues higher up; and beyond that the town now called San Salvador, which in Francia's time was called Tevego, and was the place to which so many unfortunate Paraguayans were exiled during the time of the Dictator. The different towns passed in the ascent of the river are, with the exception of the capital, very

like in appearance, and those throughout the country were very like them. The site of a Paraguayan town was generally on an open plain, and the founders had usually exercised good taste in selecting the spot. The central point of the village was the church. This was generally a rudely built structure of adobes, having a tower and a bell. Around the church, at a distance of about sixty yards in all directions, was a smooth-cropped and open lawn, and beyond this on each side was a row of houses. These houses in many of the towns were built of mud or adobes, and had thatched roofs; though in others near the capital, and especially along the bank of the river, many of them were built of brick, with tile roofs to them. These houses about the capillas were owned mostly by the better class of farmers living in the vicinity, who did not reside in them, but were compelled by the government to have a house in the town and keep it in order, and in which frequently some poor dependants would reside. In nearly all the capillas the best houses belonged to the government, and were reserved for the chief of police, or *gefé*, and the judge, or *juez*, who, though not often living in them, were obliged to be in attendance at their offices a given number of hours daily, and were held responsible for the good conduct and decorum of the people, and for their fidelity to the government.

Ascending the river from Tres Bocas, as the lakes and lagoons are left behind the country becomes more and more interesting; and approaching Villa Oliva, Villetta, and San Antonio the general appearance is most charming and attractive. The rude adobe houses, with their thick walls, thatched roofs, and deep corridors, have an air of refreshing coolness, and the dense orange-groves that stand near, with awnings of grape-vines, and the luxurious vegetation, the abounding fruit, with the general appearance of indolence and unthriftiness among the people, give one the idea that this must be a suburb to the Castle of Indolence, and that the whole life of the people is but one dream of lazy idleness and harmless delights. The general configuration of the most densely popu-

lated parts of Paraguay has been compared by some one to a chess-board, on which every dark spot was a gentle hill, and every white spot a plain or valley ; the hills cropped with the various woods of Paraguay, — which for mechanical uses are the best in the world, — with medicinal herbs of numerous kinds, balsam, juniper, gum-elastic, indigo, and almost every plant or herb of value produced in the tropics ; while the plains, through which course unfailing streams of water, have an abundance of grass of a finer, richer, and more nutritious quality than is known elsewhere in the world. The comparison to a chess-board would be a good one if we suppose that after the hills and valleys were placed in their regular order, some convulsion of nature occurred that had so far deranged this order that they had partially run into each other, and the courses of the waters had at the same time been opened, so that the streams had found their way from one plain to another, until they were finally discharged into the great rivers of the country. The wooded hills stand in their primeval grandeur ; for, owing to the policy which the government has pursued ever since colonial times, practically forbidding the export of timber, the forests are now the same to all appearance as when Sebastian Cabot first cast his eye upon them. Just in the selvage or on the borders of the woods, next to the plains, the inhabitants have their dwelling-houses, and a description of one will in its main features serve for a description of four fifths of them all. The house is usually made of adobes and thatched, and having two or three rooms, the largest of which is perhaps fifteen by twenty feet. This is the dining and sitting room, while the others serve for sleeping-rooms. Besides this main house there will probably be several smaller hovels for the occupation of the slaves, or peons, besides the cook-house. Invariably there is an abundance of orange-trees surrounding the house, and generally there is near by a rude mill for grinding the sugar-cane ; also a sugar-house, or shed, under which one or two boilers are set for the purpose of boiling the juice of the cane down to sirup at the time of the harvest. The gathered maize is suspended

or stacked in the husk near the house, elevated from the ground, so that it cannot be destroyed by the mice or other vermin. As there were no mills in the country for grinding the corn, it was reduced to meal by pounding in wooden mortars. These mortars were made from a log of the lepacho-tree, generally about eighteen inches in diameter and three feet high. One end being hollowed out, the corn was thrown in, and then the peons or slave women would gather round with their pestles, and, striking in, would beat a kind of dull music till the corn was sufficiently pulverized. As every house of the better sort had a large retinue of slaves and peons of both sexes, there were always a large number of children of all ages running about, and usually in a state of nudity. These peons were generally of mixed Spanish, Indian, and negro blood, the Indian largely predominating over the other two.



SLAVES AND PEONS.

A stable is a thing unknown, as it is seldom needed. In front or in the rear of the house is a cultivated field, seldom of more than two or three acres in extent, and yet in this field will be raised all that the family has to consume for the year. There will be a patch of Indian corn, another of sugarcane, another of cotton, another of mandioca, and another of

tobacco ; but the whole aggregate would seldom exceed two acres in extent, and on the produce thus raised the family would mainly subsist for a year. The cattle which belonged to the different occupants grazed in common on the plains in front, and each family would have a sufficient number of cows to supply it with all the milk required. They would have likewise a number of chickens ; and as the cattle were very cheap, beef was always to be had at the market of the *capilla* at a very low price.

About the only article that was counted a luxury by the Paraguayans was the *yerba maté*, and it was for the purchase of this, more than any other, that they parted with anything that they had raised on their little patches. The tobacco which they grew was always in demand, and would command money in *Asuncion* ; and it was from the money realized from this crop principally that the inhabitants purchased the much-coveted *maté*. Something also was required for the purchase of imported muslins, handkerchiefs, and shawls by the women, and for some articles of clothing worn by the men ; but the amount of clothing worn was so very little that the cost of it was very light. The tastes of the people were so simple, so primitive, that they were almost totally ignorant of what other people would call luxury. The women had a great love of jewelry ; and poor as a woman might be, it was seldom but that in the course of years she would manage to acquire a quantity of beads and ear-rings, finger-rings, and gold-mounted combs, to the value of several ounces, sometimes to the amount of several hundred dollars. As this jewelry was invariably in fine gold, the government having carefully watched the goldsmiths, and prevented them, under heavy penalties, from manufacturing their wares of gold that was inferior to the average ounce in circulation, the amount of gold in the country before the war, for a population of such general poverty, must have been enormous. The food was always of the simplest kind, and seldom or never did the natives have any article upon the table except what had been produced upon the place. A *puchero*, or stew, of beef or chicken, with rice, sufficed for the principal

dish ; a bit of the boiled mandioca was laid beside each plate, and also a bit of corn bread, or *chipa*, and after this came a *dulce*, or sweetmeat, as a dessert. When the meal was concluded, a gourd of water would be passed round to each person at the table, and with a large draught the meal would be concluded. This, with slight changes, would be about the average meal of a family from one year's end to another, for dinner and supper. Tea and coffee were scarcely known to them, and wine was only used at public festivals, — never in their own houses. Their wants were so few and so easily supplied that there was little inducement to hard labor, and it seldom happened that such a thing as absolute want was known. For three fourths of the year, at least, the oranges were so plentiful and cheap that in the country they could be had for the asking ; and they formed an important article of food, the oranges of Paraguay being so rich and sweet that while they are abundant no one ever suffers from hunger. With oranges, a little yerba maté, a bit of *asado*, or broiled beef, or of boiled mandioca root, a Paraguayan would be perfectly contented ; and if permitted to lie for three quarters of the time in his hammock and thrum his guitar, he would regard himself at the height of earthly bliss.

The Paraguayan people having been so nearly exterminated by the war, it may be presumed that the next generation will be of a very different character from the last. It is not likely, however, that it will be at all improved. Of those left when the war terminated, nine tenths were females ; and it will probably be found, that, after the troops of the allies left the country, many thousand deserters and low camp-followers, nearly all of them of negro or of mixed Indian and negro blood, will remain there to prey on the unhappy remnants of the Paraguayan people and become the progenitors of the next generation.

It may be presumed that, as the country is naturally so healthy and prolific, it will receive a considerable emigration from Europe. This may counteract to some extent the evil influence of the worthless dregs left from the allied armies. The emigrants will find thousands of abandoned ranches to which there are no claimants, and can secure to

themselves large tracts of excellent land for almost nothing. But laborers will be scarce and difficult to obtain, and the country, if it is ever to arise from its prostration, must depend for its prosperity on the more substantial and staple articles, like the native tea, tobacco, cotton, corn, sugar, hides, and timber, rather than on any of those trifling productions that, though existing there, can never be exported in sufficient quantities to be of any considerable importance to the general prosperity. Travellers who visit such out-of-the-way places as Paraguay, and learn that fruits, resins, and herbs of medicinal value grow there spontaneously, are prone to magnify the resources of the country, and to represent that only science and industry are required to convert them into a source of perennial wealth. But a little observation would show that the same labor employed in raising tobacco or sugar-cane as would be given to collecting the sarsaparilla or balsam, or in manufacturing the dulces, would in the first case give more than double returns. To make the collection of rare gums and plants such as are used in medicine at all profitable, the business must be done in a small way, and even then the labor employed is that of the natives, who expect scarcely any recompense. But all that Paraguay can ever yield of such products can never be sufficient to reward the emigrant or business adventurer for diverging from the ordinary pursuits of agriculture or the regular channels of commerce.

As in the old colonial period the exports from the country were limited almost entirely to the yerba maté, timber, tobacco, and hides, so it will be in the future. The wealth in the forests of timber, however, must in time be immense. Owing to the non-intercourse policy of Francia and the jealousy of Lopez, the forests of noble trees yet remain in their primitive splendor. The woods are generally of a peculiar quality, and resemble nothing known in North America. The quebracho, lepacho, and urunday all grow to a size as large as the hemlock or yellow birch of New England, being straight and free from limbs some fifty, sixty, or seventy feet from the ground. They are of very fine texture, and so heavy as to

sink in water like iron. They are exceedingly hard to cut and work, and take a beautiful polish. But the greatest value of the wood consists in its durability. No kind of exposure seems to affect it. Sills of houses that have been exposed on one side to the sun and rain, on another to the ground, and on the other two to varying dampness and darkness, still appear to be as sound as when first put in their places, three hundred years ago. For railroad ties they must be superior to anything else known, as while larger and holding to the earth more firmly than iron, they are certainly durable enough, and hereafter will be far less costly.

The fruits of Paraguay are, with the exception of the orange, of little account. The oranges, however, grow in great abundance, and are equal, if not superior, to those produced in any other part of the world. Though not so large as those of Bahia, they are equally sweet, and of a finer, richer flavor. The wild or bitter orange grows in great profusion in many of the forests, and in time it may be found profitable to collect and convert them into marmalade and other sweetmeats, or dulces, but as yet they have never had any value. The guava and the pomegranate are also produced in great abundance. The latter is regarded as of small value, and the former is seldom eaten except when preserved with sirup or sugar. In this form it is one of the favorite dulces of the country. There are numerous other wild fruits of the country that the Paraguayans manufacture into most palatable sweets. The raw fruit generally has a peculiar flavor that is not agreeable to foreigners.

Pineapples and bananas are also grown occasionally. The former are much smaller than those of Brazil, and the latter are in no respect superior.

Paraguay, although it lies in a low latitude, with nearly half of its territory within the tropics, is probably as healthy a country as any in the world. In the summer time it is extremely warm, and to a stranger accustomed to higher latitudes the heat is frequently oppressive. The changes of temperature are, within the limit of some twenty degrees, very

sudden, though they are seldom such as to endanger the health. During summer the mercury will frequently stand for several days at 92° to 98° Fahrenheit, but I have never known it to go above 100°. The nights are almost as warm as the days, and when the weather continues for a week or two without change, a person not acclimated feels it to be very oppressive and debilitating, and has a great disinclination to labor or exercise. During these periods the winds are from the north, and have a depressing effect, not only on the physical system, but on the spirits. So long as the wind holds in the same direction it grows hotter daily, until it culminates in a tempest or thunder-storm. The wind then veers to the south, and after a violent shower, sometimes lengthening into a storm, it clears off, and the air is cool and invigorating. But each day afterwards is warmer than the preceding until the same point is reached again, when another shower follows, succeeded by a cooler atmosphere.

In the winter time the nights are always cool, though it is very rare that from twelve to two of a fair day the rays of the sun are not so strong as to cause people to seek the shade. The evenings and nights are frequently so cool that a fire is desirable; but such a thing as a fireplace is not known in the country, and among the poorer classes, who have but little clothing, there is always a great deal of suffering during the winter months. This was particularly the case with the soldiers in the army, who, besides being poorly fed and scarcely clothed at all, had no shelter from the storms, and were obliged to sleep on the damp ground.

The war brought with it pestilence and famine. Before that there had never been any epidemic in the country, or any diseases incident to the climate or soil. Fever and ague was indeed known there, but it was very rare. Cholera and yellow fever had never penetrated so far into the interior, and of the other diseases to which mankind is exposed there was no one which was not equally common in all the neighboring countries. Among the lower classes the morals were so low that they had become very generally contaminated with diseases

caused by vicious indulgences, but it was the opinion of medical men that this was less fatal among the Paraguayans than among Europeans. A person whose whole system was corrupted would still appear to enjoy perfect health. When such persons, however, were wounded in battle, they scarcely ever recovered.

The first disease that made any serious inroads on the army was the measles. It had been so long since this troublesome, but seldom dangerous, disorder had visited the country, that nearly the whole army was liable to take it; and when it got into the camp at Itapiru, so many were prostrated at once, and so inadequate were the means for taking care of the convalescents, that for very want of care and proper shelter and attention many thousands died, and the whole army was in such a condition, that, had the enemy moved upon the camp, scarcely a show of resistance could have been made.

Afterwards the cholera invaded, not only the camp, but the principal towns throughout the state. In Asunción there were few houses that it did not visit; and as there were scarcely any medicines in the country, and no doctors to administer them if there had been, nearly every case proved fatal.

But the most troublesome complaint both in and out of the army was the chills and fever, or *chuchu*. This disease, that had previously been of so rare occurrence, was in almost every family. The usual remedies for it were not to be had at any price; and as many of the people affected by it had neither the proper food to sustain their strength nor the clothing necessary to keep up the heat of the body, it caused immense misery, and in thousands of cases proved fatal.

The war had brought all those evils in its train. They were but incidents, however, to the final catastrophe. Those who perished then escaped the worse fate of tens upon tens of thousands who afterwards died of starvation in the wilderness.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Personal Experiences and Adventures. — Society in Asuncion. — Hospitality of the Paraguayans. — The Club Balls and Banquets. — New Fashions. — The Casal Family. — Wealth and Extravagance without Comfort. — José Mauricio Casal. — His Sons and Daughters. — News from Home. — Domestic Arrangements. — Food of the Country People. — Amusements. — Dancing. — Harvest of the Sugar-Cane. — Ballads and Music.

THAT the reader may have a more definite idea of the character and domestic habits of the Paraguayan people, I will give a brief sketch of personal experience and intercourse with them during the first three years of my residence in the country. I arrived there in November, 1861; and as the old question of the Rhode Island company was still hanging in suspense over the head of the President, Carlos Antonio Lopez, I was not received, either by government or people, with much cordiality. However, this mattered little to me, as I then talked little Spanish and no Guarani, and at that time there was a considerable number of intelligent foreigners in Asuncion, who were disposed to welcome the arrival of a foreign minister, or indeed of any stranger having fair intelligence, as an important acquisition to their little society. Lopez had been fortunate in securing the services of not only capable, but very superior, men for directors of his public works. The chief engineer and superintendent of his arsenal, Mr. Whytehead, was thoroughly competent in all the branches of his department, and of extensive general information; and the chief engineer of the railroad, George Paddison, was a man of very extensive reading and of very liberal, cosmopolitan views. There were also several English physicians, all well educated and skilled in their professions; besides which there were several civil engineers, a naval constructor, a

few merchants, and others, that formed a circle sufficiently numerous to render it of little importance to me whether the Paraguayans were ordered to cultivate or to avoid my society. There were also several consuls there, some of whom had families, and all of whom were courteous and intelligent gentlemen. The American consul, however, who had no salary, and was dependent on the fees of the office for compensation, left within a few months after my arrival, as the fees were so small that the office was an expense, rather than a benefit, to him. The French consul, M. Izarie, also left soon after the American. His wife was the accomplished daughter of an American long resident at Buenos Aires, and, having lived for a considerable time in the United States, regarded herself more as an American than a Porteña, and was a gallant champion of the Union against the English, who at that time had a strange liking for slavery and the Rebels.

The native people of Paraguay, though inclined to hospitality, have a peculiar way of manifesting it. In Asuncion they appear to be aware that their ways are different from those of people from other countries, and will expose them to criticism, and perhaps ridicule, if they attempt to entertain strangers as guests or invite them to their tables. Therefore they never do so. During my long residence there I never knew a foreigner to be invited to dine or sup with a native family in Asuncion. Neither the President nor any of his ministers ever entertained in any manner; and of the foreigners in the country, so few were in a condition to do so, that it is no exaggeration to say, that though the American legation was maintained in a style that in most countries would be considered as none too liberal for a private gentleman, yet it offered more hospitality to strangers visiting the country than all the rest of Paraguay.

The "National Club" at Asuncion was made to do duty in various ways. The building belonged to the government, and had a large hall, well fitted up, in which most of the public banquets and balls were held. It was supported by a tax on the members, who were mostly business men in the town, both

natives and foreigners. The better class of natives had no option but to belong to it and pay their assessments, and a reluctance to do so on the part of a foreign merchant would be set down to his prejudice by the government. The banquets were always on a liberal scale, and the tables showed that the caterers who furnished them had learned their art in other countries than Paraguay. The balls were also given in a style to surprise one who had only seen the people in their own homes. The young ladies seemed to have an instinctive good taste, and their cheap lawns and laces were always so well matched and tastefully worn, that, at a little distance, the wearers appeared to be not only elegantly, but richly dressed.

Though the dresses of the young ladies were but cheap imitations of richer stuffs, the balls were a hard tax on many families. On the national anniversary days—such, for instance, as that of Paraguayan independence or the birthday of the President—it was an offence to the government for people invited to the balls not to attend. The printed invitations that were sent around specified what grand event was to be celebrated; and if it were anything personal to the reigning family, then it was a patriotic duty for all to be present. During the week of the President's birthday a ball would be given nearly every night; and after the younger Lopez became President, the joy and happiness of the people must have been doubled or trebled if the festivities celebrated were an indication of their joy. In 1864, the balls of various kinds began on the 24th of July, the birthday of the President, and it was not before September that all classes of people had ceased to celebrate the natal day of a man who was to be their almost universal destroyer. The introduction, by the future President, of his Parisian courtesan, was followed by a marked change in the style of the official balls. Before that, the young ladies would attend, dressed in their best, but they were not compelled to obtain purposely for such occasions ornaments or dresses beyond their means. If they went barefoot, as many of them belonging to respectable families did, no one took

affront at it, for it had not been many years since the daughters of his Excellency had discarded the *tupoi*, and taken to wearing stays and moroccas. But the new queen of fashion set an example of extravagance that the more wealthy tried to imitate ; and they, in turn, dragged their poorer neighbors along the same road of folly. It was no longer proper to appear in the same dress at two balls. Poor as many of the families were, the young ladies must not only go, but they must observe the new order of things, that required the observance of a custom which, being the rule at the courts of Europe, the court of Paraguay could not ignore. Very likely the expense to which this rule subjected them obliged them to scrimp themselves in many other things, and they may have had little to eat for days before but oranges and mandioca ; yet the state balls must be worthy of a court, and any shortcomings would, sooner or later, be followed by severe penalties.

The young ladies always went to the balls and other festivals attended by their mothers or by some elderly relatives to act as duennas ; but the latter never entered the dancing-hall. They sat in the adjoining anteroom gossiping, taking maté, and smoking. When the supper-hour arrived, however, the old ladies took precedence at the table, and all the younger people of both sexes showed them great deference and respect. The watchful eye of the mother was never withdrawn till after the supper and dance were concluded, and she had seen her daughters safely at home and the doors locked against their partners of the evening. It was assumed and taken for granted there, as in most Spanish countries, that young women, if left to themselves, will go astray. No confidence whatever was ever placed in them by their parents ; and owing to this, rather than from any natural perverseness or disposition to wanton, stray lambs were very plentiful in the country. The parents thought they did all in their power to prevent them from wandering by keeping watch over them ; but as they took little pains to make moral impressions upon them or cultivate in them a sense of their own responsibility, they were too apt to show by their conduct that they needed watching. If there were several daughters,

it was regarded as a great misfortune for one of them to go astray, and yet she was never disowned or cast out upon the world.

Soon after my arrival in Paraguay I took a new and commodious house, situate but a short distance from the Church de la Encarnacion. Adjoining my premises stood a poor adobe ranche, inhabited by a family of the poorer sort. They, nevertheless, had visitors from the country apparently of a better class than themselves. I soon made their acquaintance, and was invited to visit them in the country. They lived about six leagues from the capital, and about a mile from the village, or capilla, of Limpio. My first visit to their home gave me a better impression of the character of the Paraguayan people than I had before held, but subsequent acquaintance convinced me that this family was in many respects exceptional and superior to any other with which I became acquainted while in Paraguay. The father's name was José Mauricio Casal. He was at that time above seventy years of age, a widower, with two sons and five daughters, — one of the latter being married, and living with her husband and children on one of the old man's estancias near Caapucu, a town some thirty leagues to the south of Limpio. The father of Don Mauricio had been one of the richest estancieros in the country under the old Spanish *régime*, being possessed of as many as eight very large estancias. These estancias varied in size, being from three to eight leagues square, each of them numbering their cattle by thousands. He was the nephew of General Gamarra, one of the most distinguished officers in the war against Belgrano. Like many of the rich old Spanish families in South America, that of Don Mauricio had indulged in the most profuse extravagance in articles of luxury, while, following the universal custom of the Paraguayan people, they lived in a very primitive style, not even knowing the want of many things regarded as indispensable in more civilized countries. The silver plate which the house contained was to be estimated by hundreds of pounds, if not by the ton. The richest silks, brocades, and damasks wrought with gold and silver threads were bought and stored away, while the necessary

furniture and fixtures of the house would, perhaps, not all be of the value of one hundred dollars.

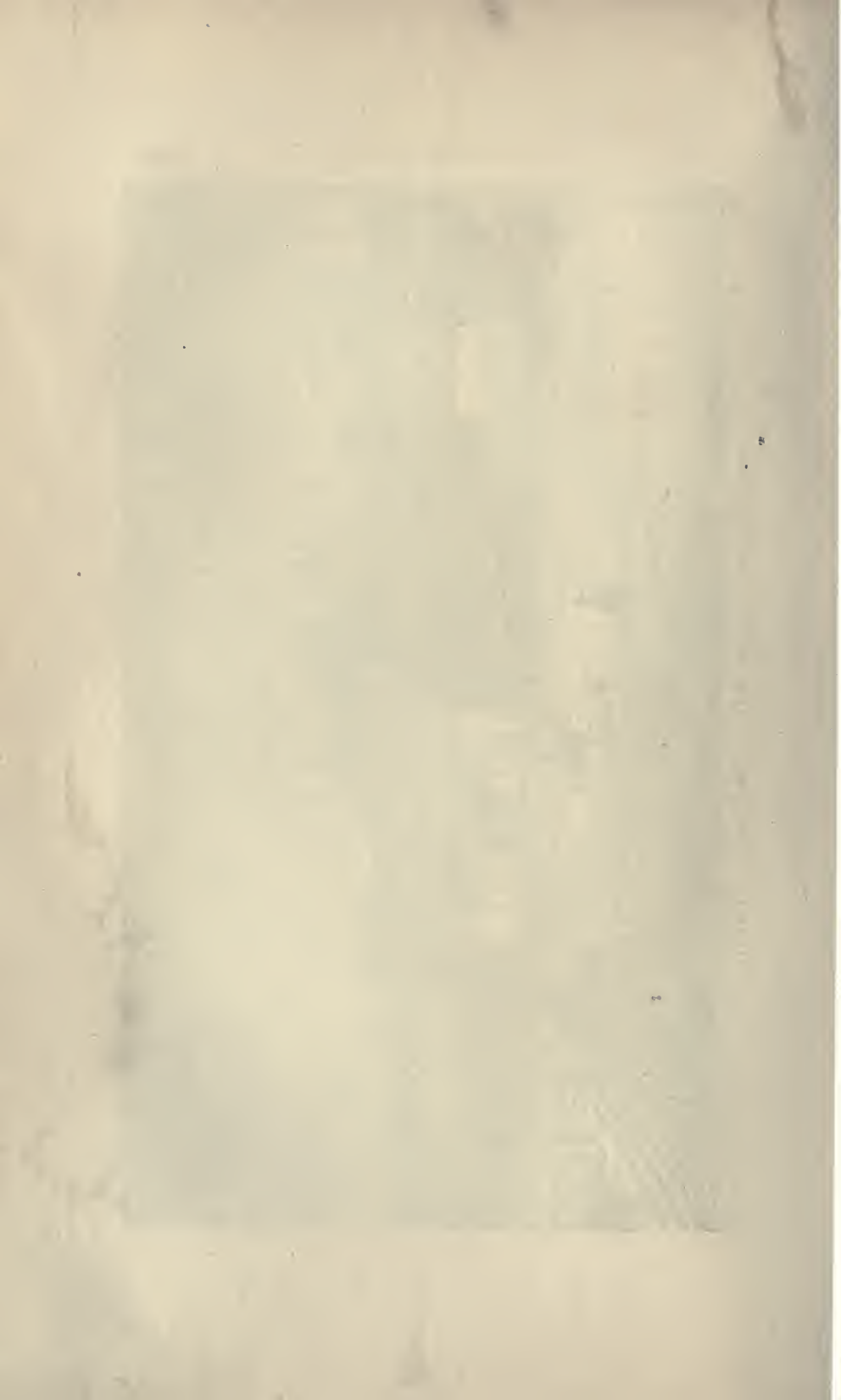
It was in the early days of Francia's reign that Don Mauricio became heir to this large estate. Judging by the number of dependants upon him in his old age, whose claims to kinship he allowed, he was not distinguished for propriety in his younger days. One of these was the old woman, my next-door neighbor in Asuncion. During the long period of Francia's power, Don Mauricio managed so as to avoid the fate of nearly all of his class in the country, and survived the Dictator. He never provoked the enmity or suspicion of Francia, but, on the contrary, so ingratiated himself with him by his liberal donations of cattle and horses to the state, that about fifteen years before his death he got permission to marry. His wife, like himself, was of pure Spanish blood, and both of them were of sufficient intelligence to know that Paraguay was but a prison, and to realize that it was relapsing, under the rule of Francia, to its primitive barbarism. As their children grew up, their mother cherished the hope of seeing them, after the rule of the Dictator had passed away, fit to appear in civilized society, and not only utterly forbade the use of the Indian dialect in her family, but taught her older children to read and write.

But when the reign of Lopez commenced, the affairs of Señor Casal seemed no longer to prosper. He became involved in litigation with his brother-in-law, Argaña; and one estancia after another was sacrificed to the tribunals of Lopez, and the best of them soon after worked into the hands of that family. His silver plate went next by instalments, and it all went in the same direction. The last relics of it, consisting of eight arrobas, or nearly two hundred pounds, was sold but a short time before my arrival in Paraguay to Don Venancio, the second son of the President.

The old homestead estancia had been sadly shorn in its dimensions at the time I first saw it. It had once extended for two or three leagues to the south and west, taking in a large plain, or rather opening, — beyond which was a rolling



RESIDENCE OF DON MAURICIO CASAL, LIMPIO.



plain, overlooking the surrounding country to the east, but descending on the other side to the broad river Paraguay, and beyond this, as far as the eye could reach, nothing could be seen but the dense dark forest of the Gran Chaco. All had once been the property of Don Mauricio, but as it was the finest spot for miles around for a country residence, it had been coveted by the Lopez family, and had been given as a dowry to the ill-fated Doña Inocencia, the daughter of the President and wife of Colonel Vicente Barrios. The other estancias of the old man had also, all but two, passed from his possession. Of these the largest was near Caapucu, in charge of his son-in-law; and the other, near Oliva, was left neglected, for he had not the capital to stock and take care of it, and, besides, he had found that the state took all that a man could raise, save only a bare subsistence. That he could easily make on what remained of the homestead. His two sons were the only Paraguayans that did not seem to be enervated by the climate and disposed to loiter in idleness, passing the day in smoking cigars, playing the guitar, in love-making and dancing in the evening, that I ever met. They, on the contrary, seemed to think it a duty to redeem by industry the fortunes of the family. On reaching manhood, they had therefore set to work to build a brickery near the homestead, and had just got it in good working order when the war commenced, and both were taken for soldiers. Though they boasted the pure blood of Spain, they worked among their peons like day laborers, and were just beginning to realize large returns for their enterprise when everything was paralyzed by the preparations for war.

The old man was proud of his sons and daughters. He had been a gay Lothario in his youth, and shared the Spanish American idea that the only safety for young girls was in constant watchfulness. Their mother being dead, he had taken this task on himself, and never had they been as prone to go astray as he gave them credit for, could they have avoided his watchful care. I was always received with the greatest kindness and hospitality, and would sometimes take my gun

and dog along with me to hunt for partridges in the plains, or ducks and pigeons in the lagoons and fields, and would stay for one, two, or three days at a time. The semi-monthly steamer for Buenos Aires left regularly about two days before the incoming one was due ; and, having despatched my mail, I was naturally in a great state of impatience and anxiety for the next news from town. As an almost invariable rule, a Reuter telegram would come by way of Lisbon to the Plata, giving as the latest news a report of a reverse or disaster to the national arms ; and during the time that the friends of the Rebels at the North were boldly asserting their purpose of arming to prevent loyal troops from marching against the Southerners, who only wanted to be left alone, and were raising mobs to oppose the conscription, and threatening to transfer the scenes of war from the South to the North, they were indeed anxious days for the American in foreign lands, who knew not if, when the war should be over, he would have a country to return to or not. The two or three days, therefore, between the departure of one steamer and the arrival of the next, were days of intense anxiety ; and usually, as soon as the first was started, I would jump on my horse and gallop out to Don Mauricio's, and spend a day or two roving about with my gun, or sipping maté, smoking cigars, eating oranges, and talking bad Spanish with him and his pretty daughters. The experience of one day there may serve to illustrate the life of the better class of Paraguayans in the interior before the war.

As early in the morning as the first streaks of light were to be seen the old man would be out, and ere sunrise his example would be followed by the whole household. The fire would be lighted in the kitchen, and if the weather were cool the slaves and peons would huddle about it until they got their morning cup of maté, after which the women servants would milk the cows and the women of the family would put the house in order. The peons would some of them drive up and yoke the oxen to plough the field, or, as the season might be, to plant the seeds of the tobacco, cotton, sugar-cane, and

maize, or to harvest the crop. The sons, with their peons, would go to the brickery and commence the day's labor. Breakfast was a thing unknown; but as soon as the water could be made to boil in the kitchen the maté was served to all, and if there were guests in the house who were laggard in rising they were served in bed. Then followed the inevitable and almost perpetual cigar. Smoking is a universal habit, and is as common with the women as the men. Children learn to smoke, among the lower class, as soon as they can walk, and before they quit the breast. During the forenoon I would saunter about the premises, or go out to shoot birds, and a little before noon the dinner would be ready. The dishes were always about the same at every meal, and though prepared in a different way from what I had ever seen before, they were always relishing and palatable. The *asado*, or roast beef, was the most invariable course. It was prepared by cutting the meat in strips, through which wooden spits were run, and then stuck into the ground near the fire until they were thoroughly cooked. The *puchero*, or stew, was also a favorite dish, and was prepared by cutting up the beef or the chicken, and stewing it with rice and some leaves of a kind of cabbage that gave it an excellent flavor. Eggs and beefsteak were a frequent course.

Potatoes are not raised in the country. The mandioca, however, is a very good substitute. This is a root something like the sweet potato, but more nutritious. It grows usually to the length of from six to ten inches, and is from an inch and a half to two inches thick, and covered with a thick rind, or skin, that readily peels off. It is eaten boiled or roasted. When boiled it has very little taste, and unless cooked soon after it is ripe it does not become soft or boil to pieces, but remains heavy and sodden. A fine flour is made from this root, which is prepared in the same manner that starch is made from the potato. It is from a variety of the mandioca that the tapioca of Brazil, with which all are familiar, is manufactured. The flour, as prepared by the Paraguayans, is used for making the *chipa*, or bread of the country ;

though no cereal enters into its composition, and it is not, properly speaking, bread, it is an excellent substitute for it. It is made by mixing the flour with pulverized cheese and lard or suet, and then baked. When well made and fresh it is delicious, though, probably owing to the cheese it contains, somewhat indigestible. It soon hardens, however, and becomes stale and unpalatable. A cheaper and coarser kind of *chipa* is made by using pounded corn meal instead of the mandioca flour; and these are the nearest like bread of anything known to the Paraguayan people. Wheat is not raised in the country, and the flour that was imported before the war was nearly all consumed by foreigners.

After the midday meal, and sitting long enough for digestion to commence and to smoke a cigar, the house would be closed, the sun and light shut out, and every person about the premises, from Don Mauricio to the naked little *chiquitos* of the peons, would take a siesta for a couple of hours. After siesta the maté was again served, and the labors of the peons would be resumed and continued till nightfall. Strolling musicians were common, who wandered about from house to house, being always welcome, as they asked for nothing but their food in return for their music. A harpist, a guitarist, and a fiddler would often appear at Don Mauricio's when I was there, and on such occasions a dance in the evening was the invariable custom. The Paraguayan young ladies dance with exceeding grace. They are accustomed to it from early childhood; and those of the better class never indulge in any of those rude and boisterous dances in which strength and endurance are the qualities most in requisition. On the contrary, there is among them a natural grace and ease of motion, which all strangers who have been among them have remarked and admired. Politeness and grace of manners is natural to them, and to any attention or courtesy they respond with charming frankness and propriety.

The time of harvest of the sugar-cane was always a gay season in Paraguay as long as there was cane to harvest or people to gather it in. At nearly every house was a rude

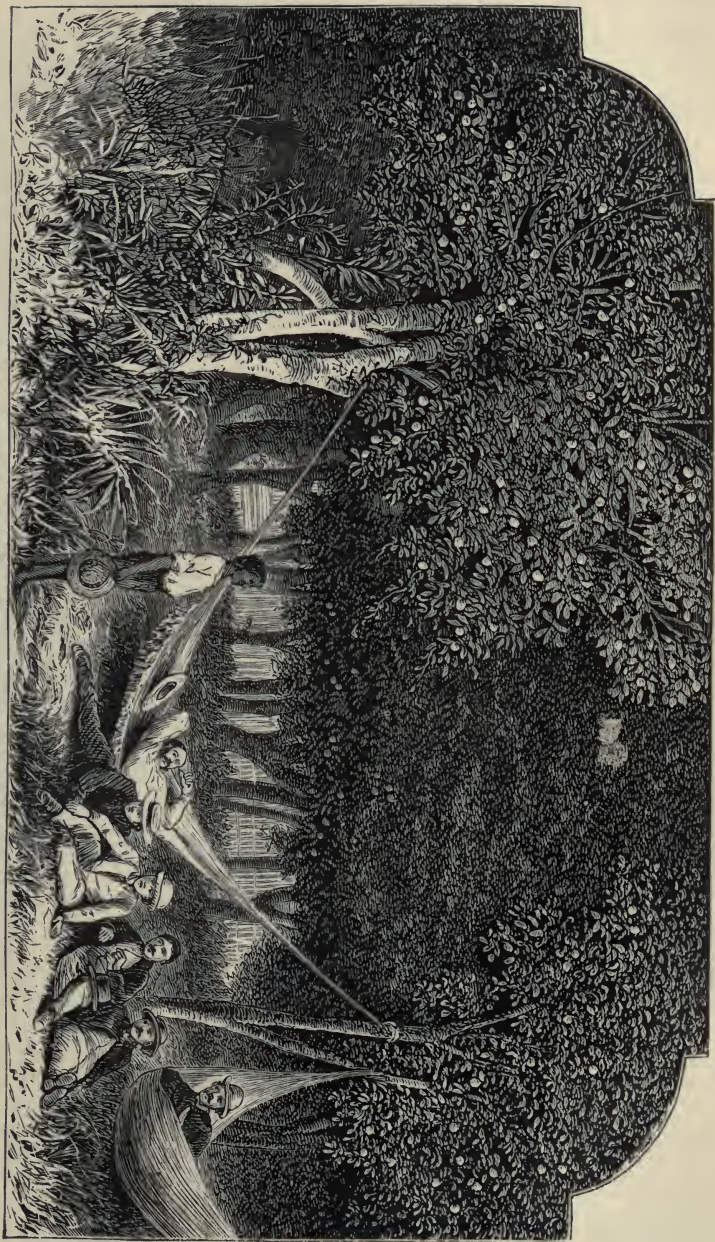
mill, built very much after the style of an old-fashioned cider-mill, for grinding the cane. Close by stood the sugar-house for boiling down the juice. The boilers were set at one side of the room, so as to leave a large open space for dancing. The fires once lighted, they were kept up continuously ; and during the long night, while some were engaged in watching the boilers and cooling the bubbling sirup, the others would be dancing till the morning broke. The troubadours would vary the monotony of their instruments by singing some of the old Spanish ballads, in which the young ladies would sometimes join. The younger daughters of Don Mauricio had most sweet voices, though of small compass ; and the simple music they essayed always had a most sad and plaintive sound. This seems to be the case with all Spanish ballad singing ; but in Paraguay the sweet and plaintive voices seemed to be attuned to a most melancholy refrain, and the low, soft strains seemed to be the sighs of sadness and despair, and I fancied I could hear in it the story of the national enslavement. How is it that the songs and airs of Scotland have such a bold, inspiring tone, while those of Ireland are so sad and plaintive ? Is it because the Scotch have always maintained their independence and self-respect, and breathed out in their ballads liberty and defiance ? And are those of the neighboring isle so different, because the Irish have so long been an oppressed and enslaved people, and their misery and despair has found expression in the wail of music ? However this may be, it struck me that those airs, songs, and ballads of Spain that were most sad and plaintive were those that among the Paraguayans had struck the key-note of the popular heart, and thus unconsciously, as it were, to themselves, did they give expression to thoughts and feelings that for generations they dared not express in any other way.

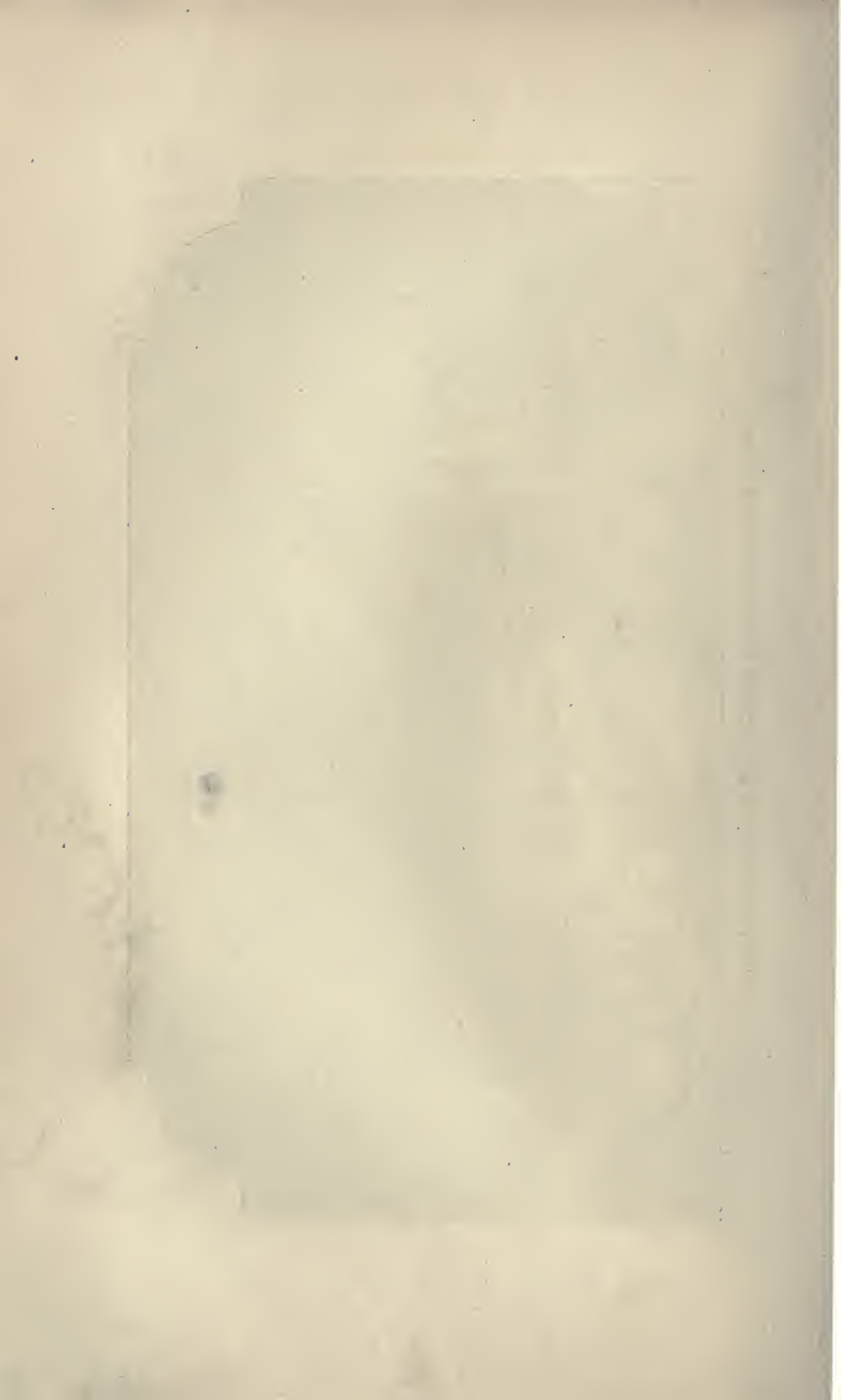
CHAPTER XXIX.

The Yerba Maté. — A French Savant. — Visit to the Yerbales. — Capiatá. — The Hospitable Cura. — Itaguá: Nicholas Troya and Alexandro Cavallero. — Pirayu. — Paraguari. — The Grotto of St. Thomas. — The Fernandez Family. — Ibitimi. — The Tebicuari. — Villa Rica. — Caaguazu. — The Gefé and the Club. — The Yerbales. — Collecting and curing the Yerba. — Life at the Yerbales. — Subsequent Fate of all who showed Attention and Hospitality.

OF the productions peculiar to the soil of Paraguay, the tea (*ilex paraguayensis*), or yerba maté, as it is usually called, is the most important. So far as is known, it grows nowhere in the world but in the northern or northeastern part of that country. An article of an inferior quality grows in some parts of Brazil and in the Argentine district of Misiones; but though it passes under the same generic name as that of Paraguay, and has some of its peculiar qualities, it has little of the flavor or aroma of the Paraguayan article, and is never used when the other can be had. As the grapes from which some of the most delicate and expensive wines are made will only grow to perfection in certain small districts, or as only some parts of Cuba will produce the tobacco from which the finest Havana cigars are manufactured, so is the yerba maté of the best quality only to be found in that part of Paraguay to the north of Asuncion and at the distance of from twenty-five to fifty leagues inland from the river. Here, however, it grows in great abundance; but as all the country producing it belongs to the state, it was during all the time of the Lopezes a government monopoly, and only so much of it was allowed to be gathered each year as would meet the demand at a high price. It yielded an enormous profit to the government, which allowed less than one fourth of its market value in Buenos Aires to the favored individual who was permitted to gather and cure it.

AN ORANGE-GROVE.—RESTING BY THE WAYSIDE.





In the month of March, 1863, a Frenchman professing to be a *savant*, or scientific explorer, arrived in Asuncion. He called himself a doctor, Dr. S——, and expressed a great desire to travel through the country for purely scientific objects. It was believed, however, after his departure, that he was a political emissary of the Emperor Napoleon, and that his real object was to learn and report the political and social condition of the country. About that time the Emperor, being under the delusion that monarchy could be re-established in several Spanish American countries, was engaged in making his unfortunate experiment to that end in Mexico. The presence of his emissaries was suspected in the mushroom republics of Central America, and such evidence of their machinations was furnished to certain members of our Congress that a call was made on the Secretary of State for any information he might have in regard to the matter. The Secretary, Mr. Seward, replied, that the Department was fully advised by our ministers of what they knew and what they suspected, but that the information given was of a confidential nature which ought not to be made public. There were many indications that the countries of the Plata were receiving the special attention of the Emperor, all of which was duly reported to the State Department.

This *savant* proposed to visit the yerbales; and as I had long contemplated such an excursion, and had often talked with my friend Don Domingo Parodi, an Italian apothecary of high scientific attainments and a gentleman in the best sense of the term, we concluded to accompany Dr. S——. We accordingly started from Asuncion at about seven o'clock in the morning of the 28th of March. The Frenchman evidently thought he was going on a long and hazardous expedition, for he took with him seven mules and three peons. Parodi and myself had but one peon each, and no other animals than the horses we rode. The incidents of the journey to the yerbales I will quote from my journal.

“At eleven o'clock we reached the capilla of Capiatá and stopped at the house of the cura, with whom Parodi was acquainted. Dis-

tance, five leagues. We commenced a repast on the bread, sardines, and canned oysters we had brought with us, but the priest had bestirred himself so actively that we had hardly commenced when he invited us to join him at his table, which was copiously supplied with asado, chipa, mandioca, and milk, on which we feasted with keen relish. Then the padre conducted us to a room in which were stretched three nice clean hammocks, and we took a two hours' siesta. A woman in the house is sick, and the two doctors have prescribed for her. The good padre looks hearty, and as if he lacked for nothing. In form and color he looks as though he took a great deal of aguadiente, and on some occasion had swallowed a keg that had got crosswise inside of him ; so that at a front view he looks tall and spare, but sideways appears bulged out like a demijohn. But he treated us well, and he has my best wishes for his present and future welfare."

I never saw the man afterwards to speak to him, and my good wishes as thus expressed were not realized, as he was some five years afterwards arrested, tortured, and shot as a traitor. As I go on quoting from my journal, it will be found that nearly every one I met on this excursion had a similar fate to this good priest.

"At 4 P. M. we set forth again, and, moving at a slow amble, we reached Itagua in about two hours, where we put up with an Italian by the name of Nicolas Troya, who entertained us with great hospitality. Don Nicolas is married to a Paraguayan, and has two pretty children, one of which, a little girl five years old, is partially paralyzed in one side of her body, but is still playful and happy. We called on the judge, or juez, Don Alexandro Cavallero, who is a relative of my friends, the Casals, in Limpio. He is a man of large wealth for this country, and is supposed to be high in the confidence of the government, as he has held his present office for fifteen years."

Don Alexandro was removed from his office about a year after this ; and in the general conscription of the next February, he and all his slaves and peons were taken as common soldiers, and sent to Cerro Leon. Two or three months afterwards, seeing one of his old servants suffering from the cold,

he gave him money to buy a poncho. Unfortunately, the poncho thus bought had been stolen, and Don Alexandro was arrested and *flogged to death*. This took place before the war had begun. The fate of our host, Don Nicolas, may be learned from the following extract from the official register of General Resquin, captured at Lopez's head-quarters some five years later :—

“ The following accused traitors were executed on the same day,” [August 22]: “ Francisco Rodriguez Larreta, James Manlove, William Stark, Nicolas Troya, José Vicente Urdapilleta,” [thirty-two names in this list are here omitted,] “ except Nicolas Troya, who died before execution.”

“ *March 29th.*— We started about sunrise, after taking a Paraguayan breakfast, — that is, a sip of maté. Our road lay through a beautiful country, now over wooded hills and now through the open valleys. We reached Pirayu about ten o'clock, and put up with my old friend Concha, a fat, jolly old Paraguayan, who seems to be so delighted whenever foreigners call upon him, he cannot do enough to show his gratitude for the honor they do him. As he had not anticipated our coming, he had no time to prepare such a feast as he desired to set before us ; but with the keen appetite we had acquired from the ride, and from having taken nothing but the morning maté since the night before, we found the beefsteak and eggs, with fresh *chipa*, amply sufficient. After siesta and a cup of maté, we again started, and pursued our way through the beautiful valley towards Paraguari.”

Our host, Señor Concha, was also taken for a soldier within a year from this time, but, more fortunate than Don Nicolas of the night before, he died soon afterwards.

“ We reached Paraguari at dusk, and put up with a couple of Frenchmen, who kept a shop there, and were engaged in the manufacture of caña. Their names are Clugny, and they are brothers of the school-teacher at the capital. They entertained us the best they could, and yet the Paraguayan hospitality always seems to me to be more gracious and cordial than that of any foreigners.”

These Clugnys are now all dead. Two died natural deaths, and the third was arrested as a conspirator and shared the

fate of all the Frenchmen who were in Paraguay at that time.

“This town of Paraguari is situate about forty miles from Asuncion, and is said to be the coolest place for a summer residence in Paraguay. The range of hills to the east of the valley by which we approached it here terminates abruptly with the cerro of San Tomas, a bold precipitous mountain, that, rising gradually at first, afterwards shoots up vertically on the side next us for some three hundred feet to the summit. In this mountain is the celebrated grotto where St. Thomas left his cross when he visited America some hundreds of years before Columbus was born. To this day this cave is occasionally visited by the good saint for whom the mountain is named. At least our servants tell us so, and also that his cross is transferred miraculously to other parts of the country, where it is shown to work miracles and confound doubters, and then returns, without the aid of human hands, to the sacred grotto.

“*March 30th.* — It was all still and calm when we left Paraguari half an hour after sunrise ; but when the first breath of air moves up or down the valley, it will all be compressed in the narrow pass where the town stands, and ere nine o'clock a strong breeze will be sweeping through.

“At a league from the capilla we passed the estancia of the Fernandez family, one of the richest and proudest in the country. It was at this place that Captain Page, of the *Water Witch*, received such a cold welcome as to lead him to make a note of it, and complain of the lack of hospitality. But it has no such character here. We should have pushed on to it last night, except for the fact that we were all strangers ; and, knowing they would accept no recompense for their trouble, we thought it would be an imposition on generosity and good-nature for so large a cavalcade to quarter itself upon them without warning. Before noon we met a friend and countryman of Parodi on his way to the capital from his residence in Ibitimi, at which place we were intending to stop for the night. He insisted on returning to entertain us at his house. We reached there before sunset, and fared sumptuously, as usual.

“*March 31st.* — We started about the usual hour. This part of the country is very charming to the eye. At about 9 A. M. we passed the estancia of the Herreros family. It is one of the finest in the country. One of the sons is a lieutenant in the navy, and was edu-

cated in Europe, and is a great favorite with the President. At eleven o'clock we reached the banks of the Tebicuari, which we crossed in canoes, swimming our horses. The river here is about five feet deep and forty yards wide. On the left bank we found a small straggling village of miserable huts, at the best of which we obtained some maize for our horses, and took our siesta under the shade of the orange-trees. The patron gave us a *puchero* of stewed chicken and some milk. At two o'clock we started again and reached Villa Rica before sunset, and were made most welcome by Don Manuel Madruga, the brother of the Portuguese consul in Asuncion. A new house, which is but just finished, he has provided with beds, chairs, and tables for our use, and is almost oppressive with his excess of hospitality.

"*April 1st.* — This is one of the largest and best built towns in Paraguay, and we propose to stay here a day or two to give the *savant* a chance to pursue his scientific investigations. He seems a queer man for such service, as he knows nothing of botany or geology, and is dependent on Parodi, who is well versed in both, to tell him how to describe and classify any plant or tree that strikes him as peculiar, or to give the geological formation of the country. Don Manuel is married to a Paraguayan, and has but one child, a son about sixteen, — a very handsome and intelligent youth that he wants to send abroad to be educated.

"*April 2d.* — We learn that the yerbales are about twenty-one leagues to the northwest of us. Those nearest this place are of limited extent, and an Italian by the name of Queirolo, who lives in this place, has the privilege of working them. They are situate about seven leagues beyond the capilla of Caaguaza, where Señor Queirolo is now making preparations to commence work in a few days. This being Passion Week, the religious Paraguayans will not labor. A Porteño merchant here by the name of Quintanilla invited us in the afternoon to go and see some native people about two leagues out and near the monté. As at almost every house we have stopped we have found one or more sick persons, the doctors are always welcome. Here the *patron* was an old man, who said there were lots of monkeys in the woods near by. We rode down to look for them, and soon saw several. Dr. S—— shot a large one, called here a mono, which was brought home to be skinned; the skin to be stuffed and the carcass

to be cooked. Some of the party said they saw a large boa constrictor moving along on the ground. I was not near, and saw nothing of it. The doctor *fit* it by running away.

“*April 3d, Thursday.* — We have spent the day wandering about the town, conversing with many people. We were intending to start for the yerbales this afternoon, but the capataz was so late with the animals, we have concluded to start early to-morrow morning. The native people here, some of whom seem to be very respectable and well-to-do, are rather reserved towards us all. They are civil, but show a distrust, as if they either thought we were spies, or that attention and hospitality towards us might bring them into trouble. Señor Quintanilla and the son of Quierolo, a youth of eighteen, propose to join us in the trip to the yerbales.

“*April 4th.* — We got an early start this morning, and by daylight were at least three leagues from Villa Rica. It then began to rain, and we sought shelter under the roof of an old native who lived near the road. He had just got his fire started, and treated us to maté, which was very grateful to us, as the morning was cold, and the rain had overtaken us some time before we reached his hospitable, though humble abode. The rain held up about nine o'clock, and we again set forth. Before starting, however, the old man gave us some milk, which we ate with some bread of our own, the doctor eating a piece of roast monkey. He said it was good, and I took his word for it. After starting again we pursued our journey till near 12 M., when we entered a wooded country, and our road lay over high hills and through deep ravines. Yet even here there is nothing grand or picturesque about the country. The trees that line the road are many of them very large and would be of great value in other countries. We reached Caaguazu about 6 P. M., having rode fifteen leagues during the day. Señor Quierolo has a house and shop here, and has received us with great cordiality. He tells us his men will not begin work in the yerbales till next week, so we must manage to while away a couple of days here.

“*April 5th.* — The *gefé* of the partido, waiving the ceremony of the first call, came early this morning in full uniform to pay his respects to the guests of Señor Quierolo. He is a large man, enormously fat, and was profuse in his offers of attention and service. The capilla is situate in the midst of a beautiful lawn, and that is all there is beautiful in sight. It is a poor miserable place of about

eight hundred people, and not a family in it pretending to respectability. We have been looking for game in the adjoining woods, but have seen nothing but two monkeys, that at sight of us fled into the forest, jumping from tree to tree much faster than we could follow through the tangled underbrush below. In the evening the gefé got up a ball in our honor, in what is called the "Club." Judging from the building, the aristocracy of Caaguazu are not so extravagant in their habits as the denizens of Pall Mall and Fifth Avenue. The dancing-hall of this Club is nothing but an open shanty with a thatched roof and clay floor. The dancers were all barefoot, and not a comely face among them. The room being open on one side, the tallow-dips flared so as to give but a dim, uncertain light, yet the gefé seemed to take great pride in thus showing off the refinement of his people. The music consisted of two or three rude guitars, or banjos, a cracked fiddle, a tambourine, and a triangle. The refreshments consisted of a bottle of *caña*, or native rum, that was passed from mouth to mouth, and which, though it had a villanous smell, must have been good, judging from the frequency with which the old gefé applied it to his lips and passed it round. The musicians had an eye to profit as well as pleasure, for not long after we had taken our seats beside the magistrate to view the gorgeous mazes of the dance I heard them improvising a song in my honor. The import of it was that *el señor ministro norte americano* had come to honor the ball of the Caaguazu Club, and that they were proud and grateful to him for his condescension. No sooner was the song finished than the tambourine was passed towards me. I asked Parodi for advice, and he told me to give them two dollars. Having obtained it, they improvised another song in honor of the French doctor, for which his two dollars was immediately forthcoming. Parodi's turn came next, and though he protested to us he had not merited the honor they had done him, as he was an old resident of the country, he paid his two dollars, after which we left the gay circle, leaving the old gefé too far gone to observe our departure.

"*April 6th.*— The day has been as unprofitable as yesterday, but the religious scruples of these people will not permit them to labor during Passion Week. Another ball was given at the Club in our honor, but, the novelty having worn off, we did not go.

"*April 7th.*— As the men will begin work to-morrow, we set off this morning for the scenes of the yerba harvest. Señor Quierolo and

the *gefé* both accompanied us. The latter is so fat and unwieldy that no horse he had could carry him faster than a walk. We had but seven leagues to go, half of which was through a heavy rolling country, and the rest through a dense forest. At about 3 P. M. we reached the camp of the yerbal. It was a damp, cold day, and the place had a dismal look. An opening had been made in the forest on a hard, level spot, and a low thatched house erected for the use of the *patron*. It contained the stores required for the use of the peons, and had a large bin, about six feet by twelve, and four feet deep, nearly full of yerba that had been cured previously. Around this principal house were several miserable huts that served as dwellings for the laborers, and near by was the place where the process of curing the yerba leaves was performed.

“*April 8th.*—This morning the work of collecting the yerba commenced, the process of curing which is as follows: A dry, level place is selected, and a circular spot some twenty-five feet in diameter made perfectly smooth and hard, and a layer of damp clay spread over it and stamped down till it becomes a hard and smooth floor. Within this space a large number of small trees are set into the ground in a circle of about eighteen feet in diameter. The tops of these trees are then bent over and interwoven into each other so that an oval roof is formed. Then commencing some three feet from the ground, long withs are woven in longitudinally, with the upright poles forming a sort of open basket-work to the top. The peons next go in search of the yerba, which they collect and bring to the camp. They take with them a sort of basket made of thongs of raw hide, that they adjust on their shoulders and neck in such a manner that they carry enormous loads.

“Provided with this and a hatchet, the swarthy native plunges into the wood to look for the yerba. That most coveted is the bush from six to ten feet high, which he cuts down, and then, chipping off all the branches and leaves, whips them into his basket. It is the medium-sized shrub that is most sought. Sometimes the bush grows to a tree of twenty-five feet or more, but these are left unmolested when the smaller shrub can be found. So soon as the peon collects as much as he can carry, he returns to the camp, and the branches, having the leaves still on them, are passed quickly through the blaze of a hot fire, and then the leaves are stripped off and thrown upon the ground. When a sufficient quantity has been gathered in this way,

the leaves are all taken up and worked into the wicker-work of the oval structure before described. They are worked in with great care and so as to be of uniform thickness over the whole surface. When this is finished the floor beneath is swept out, and a pile of wood, that has been long before cut and seasoned, is placed underneath and a fire kindled. The heat soon becomes very great, and much care is taken that it reaches all parts overhead alike, so that



CURING THE YERBA.

none of the yerba is scorched and none that is not completely dried. To cure it thoroughly, every particle of moisture must be driven away; and as there are always more or less stems of the wood of considerable thickness, it is not considered safe to withdraw the fire till it has been in full flame for some thirty-six hours. When the roasting process is finished, the fire and ashes are drawn out, the floor carefully swept, and the now cured yerba is shaken to the ground. It is then gathered up and placed under cover, ready for packing.

“The packing process is not the least singular of the yerba-cur-

ing operations. First the green hide of a large ox is taken, and a strip about five feet by two and a half taken and sewed up with thongs from the same hide in the form of a square pillow-case. It is then attached to strong stakes driven into the ground, and a quantity of the yerba is put into it when a couple of stout peons proceed to press it down with heavy sticks of wood in the form of hand-spikes. It is a very slow process, as the yerba is beaten and hammered in till the mauls, though pointed at the end, can hardly make an indentation. When as much has been forced in by this operation as possibly can be, the open side is brought together and laced up with the thongs of green hide, and then it is left to harden in the sun. What with the close packing and the contraction of the hide by exposure to the sun, it becomes almost as hard as a rock. The bales, called here *tercios*, usually weigh from 150 to 200 pounds each.

“The yerba, in the process of curing and packing, is reduced to a fine powder. It is called the yerba maté from the way it is invariably used. The maté is a small gourd, holding, usually, less than a gill. When the gourd is growing it can, by great care and attention, be made to have a long and curiously twisted stem. A hole an inch in diameter is then made in one side of it, and it is used thus, or is mounted with silver or gold according to the caprice or means of the owner. The maté is always taken with the *bombilla*, which is a silver or tin tube, having a bulb at one end punctured with small holes. This bulb serves as a strainer to prevent the fine particles of the yerba from passing into the mouth.

“To prepare a maté, the cup or gourd is taken with the *bombilla* already inserted, and is filled about two thirds full of the yerba. Boiling-hot water is then poured in, and the *bombilla* is taken between the lips, and is made to do the duty of a straw in a sherry-cobbler or at the bung-hole of a barrel of cider. The hot water may be renewed to the same yerba for three or four times before all its strength is extracted. Taken in this fashion, it is very strong, and is not agreeable to persons unaccustomed to use it. But to Paraguayans it is the one indispensable luxury. Wine, spirits, and even tobacco, they can live without, and they are simple and temperate in their eating; but the yerba they will have if they can get it. With the old people it is indeed “the cup that cheers, but not inebriates,” and the means resorted to to obtain it are often as in-

genious as were ever employed by a veteran tippler to obtain his morning dram.

“Having witnessed with our own eyes the curing process of the yerba, we were glad to get away from the comfortless camp. Our accommodations had been none of the best, and the fare was not inviting. Our party consisted of seven persons besides our servants, and our host could give his guests but one course, and that was served in primitive style. It was always the same, and consisted of *choclo*, or beef and maize stewed together in a large pot, that was placed in the middle of the group, who were seated on dried hides around it. Two or three of the most honored guests were provided with plates and horn spoons, but the others all helped themselves direct from the steaming vessel in the centre. The old *gefé* was the impersonation of good-nature, and as he sat by the caldron of steaming *choclo* at supper, his face illumed by the light of the blazing fire, holding the bottle of *caña* to his mouth, he looked the very picture of animal enjoyment.

“On our return we tarried but one night at Caaguazu, and the next day found our way back to Villa Rica. Here my companions, Dr. S—— and Señor Parodi left me and came back to Asuncion. I wished to see more of the country around Villa Rica and to return by a different road from that we went. A few days, however, satisfied my curiosity, and, bidding my good friends the *Madrugas adios*, I turned my face towards the capital, which I was more pleased to reach than I had been to leave.”

I will here anticipate the chronological order of events by relating in this place the subsequent fate of all the persons whose names I have mentioned in this narrative. Queroli was so fortunate as to die a natural death early in the war. His son was taken for a soldier, and perished either in the camp or on the battle-field. Of his wife and younger children I have no information, but have little doubt that they are all dead,—that they perished from want and exposure. Young *Madruga* was shot through the heart while on picket duty in 1867, and the fate of his father is thus noted in *Resquin's* register of prisoners under his charge: “July 15th. Died, the accused traitor Manuel *Madruga*, a Portuguese.” Several others are mentioned as having died on the same day. Generally those

whose names are thus entered on the list expired under the torture, though many died from starvation and exposure, or the diseases resulting from their cruel treatment.

Quintanilla, who accompanied us to the yerbales, was arrested early in the war for the crime of being a Porteño, and kept a close prisoner for many months at Humaita. He was afterwards set at liberty for a while, but subsequently arrested again, and kept a prisoner till, by a catastrophe unforeseen by Lopez, he was taken prisoner, and thus escaped.

The Italian who entertained us so hospitably at Ibitimi was made prisoner in the general harvest of foreigners, and was honored with a place among the conspirators, and consequently his property was taken by Lopez, and he was tortured and executed.

Of the brothers Clugny, with whom we put up at Paraguari, one died before the war began, and the other was declared a conspirator when the great swoop on all persons in the country supposed to have money was made. He had accumulated considerable property during the three first years of the war, and as he had converted it to a large extent into coin, he was accused of being, not only a conspirator, but of having robbed the public treasury. His money, as a matter of course, was seized, and he was executed. Concha, our good-natured host at Pirayu, died. Troya and Cavallero of Itagua were killed, one for being a conspirator, and the other for buying a poncho that had been stolen; and the priest at Capiata had the fate of thousands of others, all of whom were just as innocent and just as guilty as he.

CHAPTER XXX.

The Elder Lopez not naturally of a Sanguinary Disposition. — Treatment of Foreign Diplomats. — His Peculiar Etiquette. — Disputes with the Pope. — He retains the Church Property. — Bishops of Paraguay. — The Constitution. — Ignorance and Indifference of the People in Political Affairs. — All Power with the Executive. — The Subserviency of Congress. — How chosen. — Lopez, in Imitation of Rosas, declines a Re-election. — An Awkward Failure.

THE current of internal affairs during the long reign of Carlos Antonio Lopez had little to disturb it. When he had once obtained absolute power, he governed with a firm hand, closely watching for any signs of disaffection and promptly suppressing them. He was averse to taking life, and it is doubtful if a man ever reigned before with such absolute authority and for so long a period without condemning more persons to death than he did during his twenty-one years of power. The execution of the brothers Decoud is the worst, if not the only, instance in which he took life on the pretext that the sufferers were political offenders. But those conversant with the facts ascribed his severity in this case to the influence of the young general, who, at an early period of his life, evinced a tiger's thirst for blood. One instance of a summary execution was remembered against the old man, that was rather an evidence of his bad temper, which was known to be violent and ungovernable, rather than of a disposition deliberately cruel. A merchant in Asuncion, having some goods in the custom-house which he wished to withdraw, went to the stamped-paper office and took out a permit, paying therefor, as he supposed, the amount of the duty. On reaching the custom-house he was told that the sum paid was not sufficient for the tax on his goods, and therefore his stamped paper was worthless. Enraged at the loss, he tore

up the paper and went away to his own house. This insult to the government in tearing up a piece of paper bearing its stamp upon it and trampling it under his feet was immediately, as a matter of course, reported to Lopez, and the man was instantly arrested, and executed by shooting the same afternoon.*

To the common people of the country the disputes with other governments were of very little importance. When they heard that the American expedition was coming, many hoped a better day was at hand, and that the system which had then endured for more than forty years, and which made them, not only slaves, but dumb slaves, was to be broken up. It is possible that some persons were so unguarded as to let a sigh to that effect escape them, and that this caused Lopez to invent the conspiracy which might have proved "as good a plot as ever was laid," and as successful as the "Yegros conspiracy," got up by Francia forty years before, had he not unfortunately included the Englishman, Canstatt, among its members. Of the wrangles and quarrels, however, which the President was having almost continually with foreign ministers who came to treat with him, unsupported by any military or naval force, the people knew nothing except what was told them in the *Semanario*. In this hebdomadal the old President gave free vent to his spite against all who had offended him. Though nothing appeared in it which was not either written or approved by him, it purported to be edited by some one else, so that his modesty was not offended by the fulsome praises of himself, and he was not responsible for the gross abuse of other governments and their representatives.

His treatment of the different diplomatic agents who came to treat with him was peculiar to himself. He seemed to think that diplomacy consisted in rudeness, discourtesy, and fraud. He was exceedingly jealous lest he should not be treated with the same respect and deference as were exacted

* The facts in this case are substantially as I have related them, and as they were told to me by several persons cognizant of them. But as I made no note, at the time, of the details of the affair, it is probable they are somewhat different from the version as given here.

at royal courts in approaching the sovereign, and his punctiliousness on this point, led to some incidents of a ludicrous character. Until a few years before his death he persisted in wearing his hat whenever he gave a reception to any foreign minister. This boorishness was resented by a certain English Minister, and he said that it was disrespectful to the Queen of England thus to treat her representative. But Lopez said it mattered not whether he wore a crown or a hat; he was the head of a government whose sovereignty and independence were acknowledged by the family of nations, and that as at official receptions the Queen of England wore her crown, he had a right on similar occasions to wear his hat. The Minister, however, ingeniously rebuked the cacique President. Having arranged for an interview in which he was to present his secretary and some officers of the gunboat that had taken him to Asuncion, they all went in company, and, as usual, found the old President seated at his table with his big bell-crowned hat on his head. Entering the room uncovered, and bowing as they advanced, the Minister introduced the others, one after another, when, seeing that the old man still kept his hat on, he turned to his companions and said: "The President is right; the air is a little fresh here, 't is better to keep your hats on"; and suiting the action to the word he put on his own hat, and the rest followed his example and remained so till the interview was concluded. Finding that persistency in his own ideas of etiquette might lead to serious embarrassment, and that he could not dictate rules of courtesy to foreign ambassadors, he gave up the point on the hat question, and afterwards received official agents of other countries in a more civilized manner.

As we have already seen, Francia, soon after he had succeeded in making himself absolute, took possession of all the church property and turned the priests adrift. In closing the ports to the ingress of foreigners, he made no exception in favor of papal nuncios or agents, but confiscated to his own use everything that belonged to the church. He appointed a creature of his own, with the title of Apostolic Vicar, to be

the head of the church in Paraguay, and to whom all the priests were to be subject and make their reports. The latter were so persecuted, however, that they scarcely ventured to exercise any of their functions, except to receive death-bed confessions and administer extreme unction. Lopez, however, found that he could put the priests to a better use, and that he could make them auxiliaries to his power. He re-established them in the different partidos, and in many cases gave them civil authority in addition to their spiritual functions. But in everything they were required to report to him, and the secrets of the confessional all came to his knowledge as fully as the returns of the custom-house or the diezmo.

He also wished to renew relations with the Pope, that had been entirely suspended during Francia's time. While he was yet consul he made overtures of reconciliation, and asked for the appointment of a bishop, recommending his own brother, Basilio Lopez, for that office. The request was granted, so that he had both the civil and spiritual authority at command.

Basilio Lopez, the bishop, was an eccentric, good-natured priest, without ambition and without avarice, the two qualities that were the guiding principles of Carlos Antonio. He lived in extreme poverty, and gave away nearly all his income in charity. He ridiculed the pretensions of his brother to royal honors and dignities. As bishop he had no authority or power beyond what was conceded by the President, with whose arbitrary rule he never pretended to interfere. He died in 1859, when the Pope was requested to appoint another Bishop of Paraguay. But the Holy See required that an account of the property belonging to the church, that had been withheld for nearly fifty years, should be rendered to him, and restitution made to the church. He also claimed the right of sending a bishop not a Paraguayan, who was to be responsible to him, rather than to the President of Paraguay. Lopez would not listen for a moment to either of these propositions. He would not restore the property, nor would he have a bishop thrust upon him who was not first recommended by

himself. He was resolved to be the head of the Church within his own dominions. The Pope threatened to cut off not only Lopez, but all his people, from the body of the true Church, and leave them all to share the fate of the heretic and unconverted. Such threats had no terrors for Lopez, and in a long letter which he addressed to the Pontiff he reviewed the peculiar situation of affairs both temporal and spiritual in Paraguay, and set forth that a divided authority was not compatible with the maintenance of peace and order, and that therefore he should not yield to the demands of his Holiness. If therefore, he added, the Holy Father should shut the gates of Heaven against him and his people, and forevermore refuse to unlock them, he hoped and believed that the good Father and Creator of all would find some other way by which they, his loving and dutiful children, might enter into the abodes of the blessed.

The Pope, finding he could do nothing with such a refractory disciple, finally appointed the person recommended by Lopez for bishop. This was an old priest by the name of Juan Gregorio Urbieta, who was very aged and very infirm. The papal bull authorizing his ordination was received in the latter part of the year 1860.

In giving the history of a republic, it would naturally be supposed that near the close of each constitutional term of office a period of political discussion and excitement would occur. But nothing of that kind was ever known in Paraguay. The people were not allowed to interfere in, or even to talk of, such matters. The Constitution imposed no limits on the power of the President, except that at the first election his term should be for ten years. His own will was his only law. This instrument, prepared by Lopez himself in 1844, and duly ratified by the same Congress that elected him, had some of the provisions of a republican constitution. It provided that the Congress should have the power of making and interpreting the laws, while the execution of them should reside with the President. But practically it left the nomination of the members entirely to the President. All the military

and naval forces of the country were declared to be absolutely at his disposal. "He could appoint and remove civil, military, and political employees"; "he could nominate business agents and diplomatic envoys"; "he could exercise the patronage of the churches, the livings, and ecclesiastical persons according to the laws; he could name the bishops and the members of the ecclesiastical senate"; "he could celebrate concordats with the Holy Apostolic See; concede or refuse his approval to the decrees of the council or any ecclesiastical constitution; give or deny the exequatur to the pontifical bulls or briefs, without which requisite nobody should enforce them"; he was to be final judge in appealed causes; "he could augment or diminish the salaries of the public employees." "He could appoint such ministers and secretaries as he pleased, and they were to have the salary he chose to allow them. No minister could give any order without the approbation of the President."

This remarkable Constitution showed a great deal of the Jesuitical cunning characteristic of the first President, as under it, and without violating any of its provisions, he could rule as absolutely as Francia had ever done. It was free from some of the crudities of the first decrees that he promulgated as the organic law of the country, but it gave the whole power to himself. Though it provided that the deputies to Congress should be elected, all the judges and police chiefs who had charge of the elections in the different partidos were appointed by himself, and they sent only such as they knew would be acceptable to him. An instance to the contrary was never known.

The people knew they had no voice in the choice of these deputies, and therefore took no interest in the elections. They only knew that each five years certain men were ordered to the capital, and there something called a Congress was held. Their duties were very simple, and were quickly discharged. As soon as they had organized, Lopez would send in a report of his transactions during the intervening time since the last Congress. Some member known to be in his confidence

would move that all his acts be ratified and approved, and the motion was always carried unanimously, without question or debate. Having gone through with this form, the Congress would be declared closed, and the members would return to their homes.

The first term of the Presidency expired in 1854, and a Congress was convoked in the usual manner to ratify his acts and elect him again. But this time, for some reason of his own, he chose to be elected for three years instead of the constitutional term of ten. At the end of that time another Congress was called, when he declined to be a candidate. He had probably taken the hint of declining, and then being forced to accept by the tears and entreaties of the people, from his old enemy Rosas.

For several years before his fall, the tyrant of Buenos Aires, as his term of office was about to expire, would announce that he was tired of public life and sighed for rest and retirement. The people knew but too well what this announcement meant. They took it as a notice that they must all go and beg him not to abandon them to anarchy and ruin, but still extend over them his protecting and paternal care. Therefore every native of sufficient importance to have his absence noted would, on a given day, proceed to his country residence, a league and a half from town, and implore him with tears and protestations of love to remain with them and save them from their own wicked passions for another year. Such an appeal would be too much for the tender heart of Rosas. He would consent to serve one year more, and the people would return to their homes, each man feeling sure that, had he failed to take part in that humiliating scene, he would have had Rosas's mazorcas at his throat within forty-eight hours. The pitiful spectacle, however, served the purpose of Rosas. He had his hirelings in Europe, whose business it was to manipulate the press and deceive the world as to his true character. People in distant parts could not understand how it was, that, if Rosas was the monster that some represented him to be, the whole population should join in such a procession. But

when Rosas fell the veil was suddenly lifted. The spell was broken the instant it was known that the hated tyrant had been driven from the country. A universal scream and shout of joy went up from every heart, and the very men who a few months before begged him not to desert them, now, as soon as the spell was broken, wildly sought to destroy everything that reminded them of their former degradation.

People who have never lived in South America cannot understand how, among reasoning, intelligent beings, such things can be. It is hard to give an explanation or account for them. Yet the facts are so; and it will be found that a more terrible spell held the entire people of Paraguay for two generations, and that as a flock of sheep driven by a storm will, heedless of what is before them, rush into a stream where they will all drown, so the Paraguayan nation all yielded, unresisting, to the remorseless tyrant, seemingly having no power to break the charm that intralled them.

The difficulties that Lopez had had with the English, French, and American governments had caused it to be generally known that he was a tyrant and his government an unmitigated despotism, and it was probably with a view of counteracting this impression that he resorted to the stale trick of Rosas. But he managed the affair in so bungling a manner, his scheme was a laughable failure. When he sent the message to Congress, saying that he declined a re-election, he neglected to take the precaution of telling any confidential friend that he did not mean it, and the members, taken by surprise, believed him to be in earnest. Taking it for granted that the old man intended Francisco Solano for his successor, one member proposed him as a candidate, and he had actually been unanimously elected when the old man learned that his stupid Congress had taken him at his word. He instantly despatched a messenger to announce that he had reconsidered his resolution to decline, and would consent to serve another term of seven years. The election that had just taken place was therefore passed over as informal and void, and Carlos Antonio was again proclaimed elected President of the Republic.

CHAPTER XXXI.

F. S. Lopez in Europe. — Armies moving to the Crimea. — His Visions of Military Glory. — He inaugurates a New Policy for Paraguay. — Warlike Preparations. — Steam Vessels. — Military Arsenal. — Railroad. — Great Increase of the Army. — Death of Carlos Antonio Lopez. — Francisco Solano assumes the Control of the Government. — Character of Carlos Antonio Lopez. — Condition of Paraguay under his Rule. — Government Exactions. — Internal Improvements. — Public Morals. — Education. — Foreign Relations. — Condition of Paraguay as compared with Argentine Provinces.

THE visit of the younger Lopez to Europe had the natural effect of convincing him that Paraguay was not all the world, nor even an important part of it. Educated and indulged as he had been in his youth, and accustomed all his life to have his will over all with whom he came in contact, and to hear his country spoken of as the pivot of civilization and greatness, he learned, when he went abroad, that in the opinion of the people whom he met, his country, instead of being the principal subject of intrigue and interest among foreign governments, was scarcely known beyond the regions of the Plata. It was to him a most humiliating thought, that, great as he was in Paraguay, he was nobody in Europe, and he could not conceal his chagrin that he was not received and treated as the heir apparent of an important empire; and for years after, when speaking of his European tour, he would allude in bitterness of soul to the fact, that, go where he would, the people whom he met did not know where Paraguay was.

Unfortunately, his visit was made during the time of the Crimean War; and having made the campaign of Corrientes, and, according to the *Semanario* established his fame as one of the greatest warriors of modern times, he wondered why he was not consulted by the allied generals. But as they had

never heard of the campaign of Corrientes, and only knew of Paraguay as they knew of Patagonia or Sitka, he could only look on at the reviews as a spectator. The sight of great armies in their gay uniforms appealed to the half-Indian nature of the travelling diplomat; and as he found that the heaviest battalions command the greatest attention and respect from the multitude, he returned home with the fixed purpose of making a figure as a military character, and causing it to be known to the world that there was such a country as Paraguay. He had seen that the commanders-in-chief were not expected to take the posts of danger. Their spurs, it was true, had been won by courage and daring, but he was at the head of the Paraguayan army, though he had never seen an enemy or heard the whistling of a bullet. He had entered the ship's cabin through the window, and never seen the forecastle. It was for him to be a great hero without seeing danger, exposure, or fatigue. He returned home after disporting himself for two years in Europe, swelling with these ideas. He had been mortified that he who was so important a character in Paraguay, and in Europe scattered his money with unheard-of profusion, could never cross his stumpy legs beneath an English gentleman's table; but he would return and make a name that should command respect and admiration. The one strong quality of fixity of purpose he possessed to a degree that trespassed on stupidity, and on his return his whole thoughts were turned on making Paraguay a military power.

During the time of Francia the military had never consisted of more than five thousand men, but under the system of the Dictator these were sufficient to overawe the whole country. The number had been much increased by the elder Lopez, and after the return of Francisco Solano the whole policy of the government seemed to be directed to increasing the war power of the nation. The difficulty with Brazil and the American question had arisen at a time when Paraguay was well-nigh powerless for resistance. By duplicity and fraud the impending dangers from these sources had been averted for

the time. The policy of the elder Lopez was peace, and he was prepared to make any concession rather than provoke any strong nation to war. But the threats of Brazil and the United States inclined the elder to listen to the counsels of the younger that Paraguay should be put in a state of defence. As we have seen, the fortifications at Humaita had been hurriedly constructed at a time when the Brazilian squadron had been waiting for further instructions, and it would seem that afterwards Francisco Solano had it pretty much his own way in regard to the military disposition of the country. One of the first requisites for effecting his purposes was to obtain a fleet of steam vessels. During his tour in Europe young Lopez had purchased the Tacuari, a fast steamer of light draught, and the Rio Blanco was purchased and sent out while he was yet there. But it would evidently be too expensive to place the country on a war footing, if all the materials for land and naval armament were to come from abroad. Accordingly, before leaving England, young Lopez made arrangements for commencing a military arsenal in Asuncion. He engaged with the established house of J. and A. Blyth, Limehouse, London, machinists and builders, to furnish whatever might be required in their line and to act as general agents, and engaged as director of the establishment and chief engineer for the government Mr. William K. Whythead, a man of great professional capacity, but who, like most who entered the service of Paraguay, found it a veritable wolf's den whence there were no returning footsteps. Engineers for subordinate branches were brought out from England, and also a master shipbuilder. A couple of light-draught steamers were built to run between Buenos Aires and Asuncion, and all arrangements were perfected by which any amount of arms and ammunition could be introduced into Paraguay, and no one of the neighboring governments be any the wiser for it. At a later period—in 1859—a railroad was commenced, which was projected to run from the capital to Villa Rica, a distance of about one hundred miles to the eastward, and through the most productive and thickly populated

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part of the country. It was already completed and in running order for about half the distance — as far as the town of Paraguari — at the commencement of the war. Whether the construction of this road was a part of the war programme of young Lopez or not, it is nevertheless certain that it was of incalculable service in bringing supplies from the interior ; and if the road was begun as a war measure, the fact does credit to the sagacity of the projector. The influence of the younger man with the elder was all directed to increasing the military strength of the country. The standing army was gradually augmented, and at the time of the old man's death was more than double that of the United States before the great Rebellion, or about twenty-five thousand men. Indeed, there had not been a time for the ten years preceding the death of the elder Lopez but that a stranger would imagine, from the number of troops to be seen in the streets of the capital, that he was in some fortress, or at least in a town that for the time was the seat of a military encampment. In effect, martial law prevailed as absolutely as ever it did in a camp. The forms of law were but a device to impose on foreigners, but with the natives it was never necessary to pretend to any forms of legality. The old President, unwieldy and fat, in cocked hat and gorgeous in gold lace, went forth to drive in his carriage, accompanied by a large escort in uniform, and all his orders were obeyed with military promptness and precision. The young expectant went out to ride on horseback with a still larger escort ; and at the doors of each of their houses stood orderlies and lieutenants, cap in hand, ready to mount their waiting horses and dash off as though an enemy were approaching the town.

But it was not all show and parade. The soldiers were all the while being severely drilled, and the people becoming more and more accustomed to a rule entirely military. The war material in the country was being quietly increased at a rate that the neighboring powers would have forcibly objected to had they known anything about it. But all was permitted to go on without interference until the death of Carlos Antonio.

On the accession of the younger Lopez to power, his first measures were of a political character ; as we have seen, his first acts were marked with a cruelty that would have appalled his father. His object appears to have been to crush out all hope of anything like a constitutional government, in which some people had been indulging during the latter part of the reign of Don Carlos. He wished to inspire such dread and awe of his person, that all the resources of the country should be absolutely at his disposal, and that his will should be supreme and absolute over the life and property of every individual.

While thus engaged in drawing tighter the ligaments of despotism, he was busily occupied, not only in importing war material from abroad, but in manufacturing it at home. By this time the arsenal was in excellent order for turning out various kinds of work, including steam-engines, cannon of various calibres, and shot and shell to fit them. An iron-mine some thirty leagues to the southeast of the capital, which had been previously opened and worked on a small scale, was put in active operation with a largely increased force. At the same time munitions of war of various kinds were being largely imported. What was the amount of gunpowder introduced into the country during the three or four years before the commencement of the war there is no means of accurately estimating, but it must have been enormous, for it sufficed, with that captured at Coimbra, for a war of more than five years' duration, in which the country lost nearly all its population.

The preparations for war on so grand a scale were commenced when there was no immediate question pending between Paraguay and any other country, nor was there then any more probability of an attack being made upon her than there had been at any time for twenty years. They had all evidently been made with the deliberate purpose of provoking a war, that Francisco Solano Lopez might make a figure as a military character.

The extensive warlike preparations that were being made

during the last few years of the life of Carlos Antonio Lopez were universally attributed to the influence exercised over him by Francisco Solano. The old man, though during all his reign having a large standing army, always professed a great disinclination for war. Though he bore himself insolently in dealing with other nations, he always yielded rather than incur the dangers that might follow in the train of hostilities once commenced. But he had allowed the young man to have his way in increasing the army and accumulating arms that could have been intended only for an offensive war. He was, moreover, in failing health, and during the last years of his life was a great sufferer from a complication of diseases. His complaints were of a chronic character, from which no person at his age ever recovers. He was aware of his approaching dissolution, and had prepared an instrument providing for the succession. What the purport of this paper was will probably never be known, as no one now survives who ever saw it, and from the moment of the old man's death his successor had the custody of all his papers. An impression, however, gained currency among those who had been most intimate with the old President and his wife, that a different instrument, one providing for a temporary triumvirate, had been left by the deceased, and for which the document that was published, naming Francisco Solano as Vice-President, was substituted. His last sickness was very painful, though to the last he held the power absolutely in his own hands, and only relinquished it with his dying breath. As the hour of dissolution approached he was surrounded by his entire family and two English physicians, Drs. Stewart and Barton. The sorrow manifested by his wife and all his own children was undoubtedly sincere and profound; for, however tyrannical he had been as a ruler over the people, he had certainly never neglected the interests of his family. On the contrary, his worst acts had been committed that he might enrich his wife and children at the expense of his other subjects. They also had more reason than any others to regret his death, for they knew better than anybody else the character of the

man who was next to rule, and had greater reason to fear the change. The dying man, like his predecessor Francia, had always been a scoffer at religion, though observing its outward forms, and held the Pope as his natural enemy. His family, however, were anxious to have him reconciled to the Church, and just before he expired he received extreme unction, which the priest, Padre Maiz, was hardly able to complete before he had drawn his last breath. He expired on the evening of September 10, 1862, his son Benigno supporting him in his arms, while Francisco Solano stood at a little distance watching for the last breath; and when Dr. Stewart, seeing that the spirit had fled, turned from the bedside, he said to him, "Is he dead?" The doctor replying in the affirmative, Francisco instantly hastened to the closet where the old man had kept his private and most important papers, took possession of them, and assumed control of the household and of the government. Orders were issued the next morning for the funeral and burial of the deceased President; and on the following day he was taken to the Church of the Trinidad, which he had himself erected years before, and in which a vault had been constructed, by his directions, to receive his remains. Orders were given for the whole population of Asuncion to attend his funeral, and they were implicitly obeyed. To judge from the concourse of people who went from the capital to the Trinidad, a distance of about a league and a half, the loss of the old President was greatly deplored. They were soon to have reason to feel real grief instead of that which on this occasion they manifested under orders.

The period during which Carlos Antonio Lopez was at the head of the government of Paraguay was the most prosperous that the people of that country have known since they achieved their independence. He was a man of a great deal of astuteness and cunning, an indefatigable worker, and of good administrative talent. He came into power as the successor of a despotism such as the world had never known before, and his ideas of government were those which he had

learned from the Jesuits and from Francia. Isolated as he had been during the days of his younger manhood, cut off from all intercourse with men of liberal and advanced ideas, and without books, he had no knowledge of any other mode of government than that of an absolute despotism. He had found, early in his public career, that to govern absolutely he must know of all that was going on, and to do this he must keep up a system of espionage similar to that employed by his predecessor. He was not naturally either blood-thirsty or cruel, but he was intensely selfish and greedy for wealth. It was for money that he contracted a matrimonial alliance that would in most countries have made him the derision of all people pretending to respectability ; and like Micipsa, he preferred Jugurtha to his own legitimate children. He trusted and honored the son of Rojas above his own children, because of the estates that, by adopting him, he had brought into the family.

During the time of his reign, the country in some respects made considerable advancement. Yet the common people of the interior were not so well off as they had been in the time of Francia. The governmental exactions during his time had increased fourfold above what they were under the dictatorship, and the people found that it was unsafe to show any signs of prosperity, and that to avoid contributions to the state they should have nothing accumulated above what was indispensable for a bare subsistence. He, however, opened the ports of the country to commerce and navigation, though under such restrictions as were very annoying to all engaged in business. He had built an arsenal, and had brought into the country a large number of skilled artisans ; he established a ship-yard, built a number of sailing vessels and several steamers, and commenced the construction of a railroad from the capital to the central part of the state. The morals of the country, however, rather deteriorated than improved during his time. His three sons, who were regarded politically and socially as at the head of society, all lived in open profligacy ; hence it could hardly be disreputable in

others to follow their example. The old man seemed to disapprove of marriage, as he not only permitted but encouraged his sons in their dissolute careers, and he would not listen to the marriage of either of his daughters until the elder had gone astray. He had made some efforts towards the education of the people, but they were so badly directed that at the time of his death not one fourth of the number were able to read and write that there were in the time of Governor Velasco. The language of the country people still continued to be the Guarani; and though parents were required to send their children to school, the teachers were generally so ignorant that the pupils learned little or nothing. If a teacher could read and write Spanish, though but indifferently, he was considered competent for an instructor, and the children would be taught their letters without knowing a word of anything but Guarani; they were also taught to read and spell without knowing the meaning of a single word. The result of all this was, that, at the time of the death of the elder Lopez, few of the people were able to speak, much less to read or write, any written language, and the most of those who could were aged persons who had been taught in the schools that existed before the time of Francia. Since then nearly fifty years had passed, and in that time the mass of the people had relapsed into greater ignorance and barbarism.

In his dealings with other nations Lopez had shown a great deal of ability, and an utter disregard for truth and common honesty. The great defect of his character was an utter disregard of truth, and a want of respect for it in others. He would make the most audacious misstatements, knowing not only that they were false, but that the parties to whom he made them likewise knew them to be false. He had no shame in lying, but he had a policy in it, and this was to magnify himself in the eyes of his own people. He cared little what people beyond the limits of Paraguay might say of his mendacity, of his treachery, or of his bad faith; but he did care that his official papers should set forth such statements of fact as he desired, and that his people should believe them. During his

own time the system pursued by him had been successful. If in his intercourse with other nations he had not always outwitted or swindled them, he at least had brought upon himself no armed hostilities and no public humiliation. That this policy would not have served him much longer in this age of progress, when commerce is pushing its wares into all the more remote corners of the earth, is apparent ; but it availed so long as he lived, and he seemed to care little for what might come after him. He had contrived, during his long term of power, to get the ill-will of every government with which he had had anything to do, and had never manifested any desire to conciliate them, or to make the friendship of some in case he should be assailed by others. In fact, he was a sort of common enemy ; and holding the position he did, where he could not be attacked except at enormous expense by any government that he might offend, he magnified himself in the eyes of his own people by the insults which he offered to his neighbors. The aggregate wealth of the country during his time had not only diminished, but property was so differently distributed that the generality of the people were made sensible of a poverty they had never felt before. Under the reign of the Dictator the cattle were so plenty that the poorest need not suffer for beef, and very little labor was necessary to produce all the corn, mandioca, tobacco, cotton, and sugar-cane required to supply their simple wants. But Lopez, in partially opening the country to commerce, had first consulted the interests of himself and family, and regarded all improvements in the condition of the people as of secondary importance. He sought by every means possible to monopolize every branch of profitable trade and every new industry for his own benefit ; and the best agricultural tracts of the whole state were either held by him, under the fiction that they belonged to the government, or became the property of his children. The common people had discovered that there were luxuries in the world they had never thought of in Francia's time ; and now they had learned of their existence, they found them beyond their reach.

Though the wants of the people had increased, their means of purchase had not ; and yet, for all the tyranny to which they were subjected, and all the evils which in many ways they experienced from the government of the elder Lopez, it may be questioned whether he was not a benefactor to the country. It is true, that, for the small population of the country, he had kept up an immense army, which the people had been obliged to support, he had taxed them without justice and without mercy, and had extorted immense wealth from other people to enrich his own family ; yet the country had been all the while at peace, he had kept out the gaucho banditti of the Argentine Confederation, and had introduced some of the arts of peace to which his neighbors had no pretensions. If we institute a comparison between Paraguay and the neighboring province of Corrientes, or any of the states of the Argentine Confederation during the time of Carlos Antonio Lopez, we shall find that the condition of the former was in many respects far preferable to the latter. In Paraguay there was always security for life and property against anything and everything except the government ; in Corrientes there was no security, either against the government or the gauchos, who were ever ready to indulge in a rebellion, or to follow any leader that would promise revolution, plunder, and immunity for crime. Notwithstanding this, there was to the peaceable citizen, to the man disposed to attend to his own business, a freedom and a feeling of independence that were utterly unknown in Paraguay. In Corrientes a man could speak of the affairs of the government, could approve or condemn, could transact business without being under the surveillance of spies or informers, could hold social intercourse with his neighbors, and no one would question his right to do so ; he could leave whenever he wished, and return when he pleased ; he could send his children abroad to be educated, or have them taught in the schools of the town. But in Paraguay he could enjoy none of these privileges. Everything that he did was sure to be made known to the government. He could not discuss the political condition of affairs, or even allude to them ; he could not leave

the country without the permission of Lopez ; and at any time it was in the power of the government to ruin him financially, of which he could never complain without danger of greater evils. Hence it was, that, notwithstanding the gauchos and the revolutions, the instability and insecurity in Corrientes and the other Argentine provinces, people from abroad would go there and engage in business, preferring all the dangers and evils to which they might there be exposed to the enforced silence and slavery of Paraguay.

CHAPTER XXXII.

The Constitution of Paraguay. — Francisco Solano Lopez secures his own Election. — His Treatment of the Friends of the Deceased President. — The Meeting of the Congress. — The Mode of Business and the Debates. — Discussion between Varela and Vasquez. — Fate of Varela. — Padre Maiz and other Priests. — Arrest, Torture, and Death of Chief-Justice Lescano. — Another Conspiracy alleged to have been discovered. — Treatment of the Accused.

THAT somewhat mythical instrument called the Constitution of Paraguay, which few people have ever seen, and a copy or sight of which could not be obtained for many years by any person in the country except Lopez, confers on the President the power of appointing a Vice-President whenever he may choose so to do ; and it provides, moreover, that in case of the death, resignation, or disability of the President, the Vice-President shall act in that capacity until a Congress can be convened and a new president chosen.

Francisco Solano having, on the death of his reputed father, seized all his papers, nothing is known of the provision the deceased President had made for the future, beyond what may be inferred from the acts of his successor. Immediately after the old man's death, Francisco Solano caused it to be announced that he had himself been named Vice-President, and soon after he issued a proclamation for the assembling of a Congress. His next public acts were to cause the arrest of those persons who had enjoyed most of the confidence of, and had most influence with, the late President. Among these were the Chief-Justice of Paraguay, Lescano, and Padre Maiz, both of whom had been the counsellors of the deceased President, and the latter had been the trusted confessor of Francisco Solano's mother and the rest of the family. A

number of priests besides Padre Maiz were arrested about the same time, and there was a large increase of the military force stationed in and near the capital. The guards around Lopez's house and the patrols of the streets were doubled, trebled, or quadrupled in number ; and though nothing was known by the general public of the reason for these precautionary measures, there was an impression among the foreigners that something of an important character had been discovered by young Lopez on his getting the entire power into his own hands. The judges, police chiefs, and curas in various districts outside the capital, who had enjoyed more of the respect and confidence of the late President than was pleasing to his successor, were displaced, and men on whom he could entirely rely were substituted for them. The curas, however, who were then removed, were mostly thrown into prison, while those sent to replace them had, in addition to their spiritual duties, the task assigned to them of serving as spies to ascertain if there was any disposition on the part of the chiefs or the judges, or indeed of any others, to elect anybody as president other than Francisco Solano Lopez. The most extreme care was taken to make sure that no one should be selected for the Congress who was not favorable to his election, and well aware of the danger of expressing any doubt or hesitation in the matter. The people of the different districts were not to be consulted at all ; in fact, they never had been from the first Congress called by Francia. The judge, the chief, and the cura were to meet together on a certain day at the office of one of their number, and then and there name the member of Congress for that district, and usually one of their number was selected, and the one that Lopez had privately intimated to them was his choice. The members named from the capital were generally those citizens who were most intelligent, and would give respectability and character to the general body. Some of those, however, who were first selected, had their names struck from the list afterwards by Lopez, with orders to substitute others, they having ventured to discuss with their neighbors the propriety of certain changes in

the organic law of the country. One man, in particular, by the name of Manuel Rojas, a man of large wealth and of more general information than was often possessed by a Paraguayan, had ventured to express an opinion that, as there was to be a new Congress, and a new president elected, it would be a favorable time for the adoption of a constitution such as would define the powers of the Executive, and could not be superseded or disregarded at his pleasure or caprice. This man's name was immediately struck from the list of Congressmen, and he fell into disgrace; and though not arrested for some time after, he could never regain the lost favor of Lopez, and finally perished, as a common soldier, in the trenches.

The members of Congress thus selected assembled in Asuncion; and on the 16th of October, 1862, the Congress was formally opened in the Government House, or *cabildo*. The Vice-President presided over their deliberations. A large military force was kept in readiness for any emergency, and the public parades, which were made in front of the Government House, served the double purpose of displaying the perfection of the drill and discipline, and of warning the members against any act that might cause their arms to be turned against themselves. The Congress being opened and the message of the President read to them, and the object of their being called together having been announced, Don Nicolas Vasquez, who had been at one time the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and was perhaps the best-informed man on political matters in Paraguay, in a highly flattering and eulogistic speech proposed the name of Francisco Solano Lopez as the choice of the people of Paraguay for the Presidency. But in spite of the care that Lopez had taken to have no one in the Congress who would make any embarrassing suggestions or ask any impertinent questions, one man ventured to suggest the propriety of having a constitution adopted for Paraguay. Lopez, who in all his preliminary arrangements had manifested great fear lest questions might be started that would lead to discussion, and knew if the members were permitted

to state their grievances the result of the Congress might be very different from what he desired, instantly arose and said to the convention that he would allow no such insult to the memory of his father as was contained in that suggestion; and the member, in his ignorance and simplicity, sunk back into his seat. Notwithstanding his discomfiture, a member by the name of Varela, a man of large wealth for Paraguay, — indeed, by far the richest man in the country except the different members of the Lopez family, — rose to his feet, and after expressing the greatest admiration for the talents and patriotism of the Vice-President, and alluding to the debt of gratitude which all Paraguayans owed to him, said he was still in doubt whether he was eligible to the Presidency. Though disposed to support him for that office as the most fit and proper man for the position, he was embarrassed by the fact that the constitution of the country provided that the Presidency should never become the property or heritage of any family, and that as Francisco Solano Lopez was the son of the late President, he did not see how he could, with due regard to that instrument, approve of his election. He would, however, be greatly pleased to hear the views of other persons, and if this objection were removed he should support the person whose name had been presented with the greatest pleasure. Vasquez replied to him, stating that although the Constitution did have that provision, nevertheless it was not the meaning of it that the people or the Congress should be thereby fettered or restricted in their choice, the true meaning of the clause being, that no President should ever transmit his power to any member of his family by will or official decree, but that the Congress might elect whomsoever it pleased; the article in the Constitution was not intended to restrict or limit the people in their choice, it was only to prohibit the head of the government from transmitting his power in defiance of the will of the people. Varela, in reply, said that the speech of Vasquez had removed all doubt in his mind in regard to the constitutional provision, and that therefore, without any hesitation, he should vote for the election of Lopez. No further

discussion was had, and Lopez was declared to be elected President of the Republic of Paraguay for a period of ten years, and the booming of cannon soon announced the glad tidings to the people of Asuncion. The Congress was then dissolved, and the members, with the exception of Varela, returned to their homes. Though no account of the proceedings was ever published, and the meeting had been secret, yet it was soon after known by several persons who were not members of the Congress that Varela had hinted an objection in regard to the eligibility of Lopez, and at first it was supposed that the discussion was but a farce which had been previously arranged, by order of Lopez, between Varela and Vasquez; that the former was to start the discussion and the latter to refute his objections so clearly and forcibly that all the others, if they entertained any doubt, might be convinced, and it would hence appear that the members had had the subject before them and voted understandingly upon it. This idea, however, was soon after dispelled, when it was known that, on the adjournment of Congress, Varela was immediately arrested, his property confiscated, and himself thrown into prison, from which he never went forth alive. How long he lived, or when he died, or under what circumstances, was never made public.

Lopez, being now duly installed as President, proceeded to the trial of those persons whom he had caused to be arrested immediately after taking the reins of power. Padre Maiz and Chief-Justice Lescano were subjected to a military trial. Maiz had usually been regarded by the people of Paraguay as a man of great purity of life, and was by far the best educated of all the priests in Paraguay. He was at the head of the theological college at which candidates for orders received their education, and the offence charged against him at the time of his removal from that position and his arrest was that he had taught his pupils some heretical doctrines. He was placed in solitary confinement and treated with great brutality, and for three years subjected to a series of the most cruel tortures and indignities. Being about the age of Lopez, in their youth they had been schoolmates together, and Maiz being in appear-

ance and natural abilities the superior of the two, he had even at that early period provoked the jealousy and enmity of him who now had it in his power to obtain satisfaction. The chief of the tribunal that investigated the charges against him was Colonel Wenceslao Robles, the military officer next in rank to Lopez himself, and though the proceedings of the trial were secret, it was given out as by authority that the prisoner had confessed to a multiplicity of crimes; that, while it had been supposed that his conduct had been extremely pure, and that he had always observed that sanctity and chastity which the rules of his order enjoined upon all its members, his life had really been one of the deepest hypocrisy and lewdness. These reports, though put in circulation as it were semi-officially, were nevertheless discredited by the better class of the people in Asuncion. They could have believed such stories of any other priest in the country, but of Padre Maiz they had never heard anything inconsistent with the life of a saint.

Chief-Justice Lescano was subjected to similar treatment to that inflicted on Padre Maiz, but from his age he did not long survive his fall and disgrace. He was a man of about sixty years of age, of large frame and full habit, of very dark complexion, showing that he was more Guarani than Spanish. He had been selected for the position of chief-justice for nothing but the personal regard of the elder Lopez, for he was an ignorant man, having no knowledge of law and very little of anything else. He had lived all his life in the interior, until summoned to the capital to take this office, and had no ambition whatever, except to pass his days on his estancia with his family, living in rude plenty as the most important and influential man of his own *partido*. What offence he had committed against the new President will probably never be known. He was thrown into prison immediately after his accession to power, loaded with heavy fetters, supplied with the coarsest kind of food, with a sentinel over him all the time, and probably ignorant of the cause of his disgrace. After being confined for several weeks in a dark and damp room, he was taken, with his fetters still

on him, through the streets and across the plaza to another prison, near the President's house. He, however, was spared the mortification of being seen by many people in this humiliating plight, as he was removed from one prison to the other at siesta time, when few people were abroad to witness his disgrace. He was accompanied by a guard of soldiers with drawn swords, and forced to make his way on foot with his heavy fetters, consisting of iron rings on his ankles, with a bar between them so heavy that it was with extreme difficulty that the old man could make any progress. After reaching his new quarters he was subjected to such cruel treatment that he rapidly sunk under it; and as it was evident he could not long survive, he was sent to the hospital, and, a few days after, expired. Among the lowest class of the people a report got into circulation that he had been poisoned, which coming to the ears of the President he caused a post-mortem examination to be made by two English physicians, who certified in an official report that he had died from natural causes. As soon as his death was made known to the chief of police, he sent for the wife of the deceased and told her she was then at liberty to go and visit her husband; that he was then free, and she might go to the hospital and take care of him. Delighted with the unexpected news she hurried thither only to find that her husband was laid out for the post-mortem examination. The man so honored by the late President was sent to his last resting-place in a rough cart, accompanied only by a single slave. None of his near relatives were permitted to give him a decent burial, and none of his other friends in the capital could venture to show any respect to his memory without exposing themselves to a like fate.

It was also announced that a conspiracy had been discovered. In fact, Lopez told several individuals (foreigners) that such was the case, and that Padre Maiz and his brother Benigno were the principal instigators of it. He said each had long been scheming to have himself elected to the Presidency whenever the office should become vacant, that each had a considerable number of delegates in the Congress, who

were secretly in their favor, and that only a day or two before the Congress met did he learn of the dangers that surrounded him. He said he had early suspected Padre Maiz, and had taken measures to circumvent his plans; but it was only a few hours before the session opened that he became aware of the treachery of his brother Benigno. He said that the heart of one of the persons in his brother's interest had failed him about thirty-six hours before the Congress met, and he had come to him and confessed the whole plot of his younger brother, and he then ascertained that the number of those who were pledged to the support of Benigno would have been sufficient, with those whom he knew to be in the interest of Maiz, to have defeated his own election. He professed to have been greatly surprised, grieved, and mortified when he first learned of the perfidy of his brother, for whom he pretended such affection that he could not proceed against him as he did against Maiz and some others. He was, however, banished into the interior, and ordered to remain upon one of his estancias, and was not permitted to leave it for several months, and then only at the solicitation of his mother. Maiz, however, was kept about three years in prison. After the war began he was taken to head-quarters, where after a while he succeeded in making his peace with Lopez, and subsequently became his chief inquisitor, and had the satisfaction of repaying Lopez for his treatment of him by being made the instrument of destruction of nearly every one of the friends who surrounded him at the time of his own incarceration.

It may also be stated here, that Benigno and Robles were both afterwards executed by order of Lopez; the former was first tortured by his unnatural brother until death would soon have relieved him from his power had he not been executed.

CHAPTER XX XIII.

Revolution in the Banda Oriental. — Venancio Flores. — Juan F. Giro elected President. — Treachery and Violence. — Machinations of Paranhos. — Flores made Minister of War. — Flight of Giro. — The Triumvirate. — Flores as President. — His Overthrow. — Don Luis Lamas. — War between Buenos Aires and the Argentine Confederation. — Bartolome Mitre. — Battles of Cepeda and Pavon. — Rebellion of Cesar Diaz. — Antonio de las Carreras. — Bernardo P. Berro elected President. — The Flores Invasion. — Florencio Varela. — “La Tribuna” of Buenos Aires. — Progress of the Revolution. — Flores sustained by Outlaws and Brazilians.

BEFORE proceeding further with the course of events in Paraguay, it is necessary to turn aside and consider the political situation of affairs in the three countries that afterwards became parties to the Triple Alliance. The immediate occasion taken by Lopez to interfere in the political questions of the lower countries of the Plata having been the revolution in the Oriental Republic, a brief sketch of the origin and progress of that revolution will here be given.

The leader of the small band of gauchos that in 1863 invaded the Banda Oriental with the avowed object of overthrowing the established government was one Venancio Flores. He had been long known as a leader of gauchos, or *caudillo*. He was of mixed blood, the Indian predominating over the Spanish. Inferior in natural parts to Artigas, he was nevertheless distinguished for all the bad qualities of that famous freebooter. Of iron frame and tireless activity, the wild life of the gaucho was, in his opinion, the perfection of human happiness. Crafty, cruel, and ignorant, all his tastes and instincts found free indulgence as a leader of banditti. The luxuries and comforts of civilized life were things which he could not appreciate.

In the course of his career as a gaucho leader, whose voca-

tion was revolution and whose subsistence was the plunder of the estancieros, now making a foray into one section, now skulking for his life in another, he naturally acquired an intimate knowledge of the topography of the country, and knew every path, trail, and crossing throughout its whole extent. In his youth he distinguished himself as a leader of the gauchos, and during the nine years' siege of Montevideo, which was maintained by Rosas and Oribe, Flores attained the rank of colonel. He belonged to the inside or colorado party, as it was called, but achieved no marked distinction. Of regular warfare he was entirely ignorant, and as he had no education and no marked abilities of any kind save as a guerilla leader, he held a subordinate position until Rosas had fallen and the long siege was raised. The party to which he belonged previous to the siege had come into power by a revolution, and the partisans of the ejected government had, under General Oribe, made the great error of calling in the aid of Rosas, in order to regain their power. They formed then, as they have ever since, much the most numerous and respectable part of the population, and but for allying themselves with a cause so odious as that of Rosas, would doubtless soon have regained their ascendancy. But the despotism of that unnatural tyrant was so sanguinary and so obnoxious to foreign nations, that the English and French governments were both induced to give countenance and support to the revolutionary colorados, and in this way, and by the assistance thus rendered, they were able to defend themselves for the long period of nine years. With the fall of Rosas all foreign intervention ceased, matters soon resumed their normal state, and the blancos again came into power. The colorado party contained more of the gaucho element than the other, or blanco, party; and yet, after the nine years' siege, though it had been finally successful, it was now in a hopeless minority.

The first election that took place after the fall of Rosas and Oribe resulted in the choice of Juan Francisco Giro as President. He was elected with little opposition, for though known

as a blanco, he was regarded as a man of good character and of liberal principles. The election of Giro as President in a manner which clearly showed him to be the choice of a majority promised to put an end to the miseries of the Orientales. But the gaucho element among the colorados preferred anything rather than peace and the enforcement of the laws. There was no complaint of the administration that it was of a partisan character, or that the colorados were persecuted under it. On the contrary, its policy had been to harmonize the discordant elements by forming a cabinet of a mixed character,—even going so far as to make General Cesar Diaz, the future revolutionist, the Minister of War,—and by ignoring as far as possible old party feuds. The election and inauguration took place on the 1st of March, 1852. All seemed to promise well, and the country appeared to be entering on a course of peace and consequent prosperity. But this condition of affairs did not accord at all with the gaucho ideas of some of the colorado chieftains, and the 18th of July, 1853, was the occasion of a formidable outbreak. This day is the anniversary of Oriental independence, and is always observed as a holiday and national jubilee. The various military companies, as usual, took part in the festival, and on the morning of that day a stranger would have imagined, on seeing the different bodies of troops, some composed chiefly of blancos, others entirely of colorados, uniting to celebrate in perfect harmony the common independence, that the era of good feeling had indeed arrived.

Though the day opened thus auspiciously, some of the colorado leaders took advantage of it to effect a revolution which in all its aspects was eminently characteristic of the Spanish-Indian character. The troops of the line that had formerly been colorados, and who were mostly negroes, or of mixed negro and Indian blood, were in the morning secretly served with ball-cartridges, for what purpose they were not then advised. They were marching through one street at the same time that a body of the National Guards, composed mainly of young men of the best families in Montevideo, was passing

through another. The colorado leaders arranged to have their troops drawn up in a line on the main plaza of the town at a time when the National Guards should pass by with their music playing and banners flying. When directly in front of them, the troops of the line, who by this time had learned that something desperate was expected of them, received the signal to fire. A ruthless massacre followed. The National Guards, taken by surprise, with their arms not loaded, and having no ball-cartridges, could make little resistance, and what they did make was at great disadvantage. The only resource left to those who had not been killed or wounded was to fly. As many as thirty-eight of the young blancos, who had turned out in the morning for a holiday, lay dead on the plaza or in the streets.

As was to be expected from his character and antecedents, Flores was one of the instigators of this treacherous plot. The city was for the time at the mercy of him and his fellow-conspirators, and they followed up the advantage gained by other acts of violence and terror intended to strike dismay into the blancos and prevent them from rallying to the support of the government. President Giro at the first outbreak undertook to quell the disturbance, but he soon discovered that the slaughter of the men was not the work of an excited, purposeless mob, but that it had been instigated by leading colorados for political objects. Giro was an amiable man, and enjoyed the respect of all people and parties to a rare degree, but it was that respect which is awarded to honesty and good intentions, and not that which firmness and energy command. Instead of treating the authors of this outbreak as ruffians and traitors, and calling upon the people to sustain him, he began to temporize with them and treat with them for terms. The whole people, not only in Montevideo, but throughout the entire Republic, were shocked and disgusted at the conduct of the gaucho leaders. Even the colorados, the few respectable people among them, were tired of war and wanted peace. At this time an envoy of Brazil, like a night-bird of ill-omen, was hovering nigh, watching the occasion again to embroil the beautiful Banda Oriental in war. This envoy, whose

hand may be seen in almost every bad thing that has been attempted by Brazil for the last twenty years,—and the number is very large,—was then in Montevideo as minister. He was a man of great talent and address, one who combined in himself the tact of Talleyrand and the principles of Machiavelli. With Judas-like affection for Giro, he counselled him to treat with the colorados. The President weakly yielded to his advice, and made conditions with the authors of the massacre, that, instead of being executed as traitors and murderers, they should be admitted into his counsels and have the most important and influential positions under his administration. Afterwards it was found that the whole plot for the massacre and revolution had been the work of the Brazilian envoy, though at the time Giro suspected nothing. Indeed, the bland face and amiable manners of José Maria de Silva Paranhos were enough to disarm men far more astute than Giro of suspicion or distrust. Irresolute and distracted by insidious counsels, he began to parley with the chiefs of the revolution. He asked what were their demands; and they, having nothing to allege against his government, made some jumbling pretence about the necessity of constitutional guaranties,—which guaranties were that the chief offices of trust and power should be conferred on themselves.

Giro yielded to their terms, and Flores was named Minister of War, after which he showed his regard for constitutional guaranties and established authority by conduct so arbitrary and violent, that the President, in fear of his life, fled on board of one of the neutral war vessels in the harbor. Giro feared another riot, in which event he was well aware that his War Minister would take good care to make him the recipient of a vagrant bullet. The threats of Flores having thus accomplished their object, the Minister of War declared the Giro government to have terminated with the flight of the President. He then assumed to himself provisional powers as the executive head, and organized a government to suit himself. This was a triumvirate composed of himself and two old partisan generals, Lavalleja and Ribera, both of them so advanced

in years as to be nothing but lay-figures in his plan of administration. In fact, they both died soon after having this doubtful honor conferred upon them, and Flores was then left free from any encumbrances so long as his military forces sufficed to repress the dissatisfied blancos. But he saw that he could not hold his position without some pretence of right. He therefore convoked a body of his partisans, and, calling it a Congress, bade them choose him President, and they duteously obeyed. He then took the title of President of the Oriental Republic of the Uruguay.

But it was not in the nature of things that an illiterate gaucho should long be tolerated as the President of a people so advanced and so well informed in the principles of constitutional government as were the Orientales at that time. Montevideo, which is to the country as Paris to France, is eminently a commercial and cosmopolitan city, and its interests were too important to be intrusted to such a semi-savage as Flores. Many members of his own party soon became disgusted at the spectacle which their chief presented, and in 1855, the year after his pretended election to the Presidency, they made a demonstration against him and overthrew his government, and, in place of Flores, declared Don Luis Lamas provisional President.

Flores, after his overthrow, fled to Entre Rios, and threw himself on the hospitality of General Urquiza. The latter gave him shelter and protection, but Flores soon passed over to Buenos Aires, then a province by itself, independent of the Argentine Confederation. It had been so since the fall of Rosas in 1852. To all intents and purposes it was an independent state, though not formally recognized as such by foreign nations. The Governor was in fact the sovereign executive head of the nation, and his office was more important than the Presidency of the Confederation.

Flores, soon after crossing over to Buenos Aires, was employed by the government there to chastise the pampas Indians on the frontier, who at the time were very troublesome, making frequent raids into the more advanced settlements,

and driving off in large numbers the cattle and horses of the inhabitants. He was exactly fitted for this service, and successfully accomplished the work he was sent to perform.

Afterwards, in 1859, when war broke out between Buenos Aires and the Confederation, Flores offered his services to the former, though his old friend and benefactor, Urquiza, was President of the latter, and commander-in-chief of its armies. The Buenos Airean forces were under the command of a young general distinguished at the time as a soldier, but distinguished rather as a scholar, historian, and orator than for any military successes. This was Bartolome Mitre, author of the History of Belgrano. This brief campaign resulted disastrously to the Buenos Airean troops, who suffered an irretrievable defeat at the battle of Cepeda, a place within the limits of their own province, and near the line of the frontier that separated it from the province of Santa Fé. By the fortune of war, Buenos Aires now, instead of dictating the terms of union with the Confederation, as was its purpose in taking up arms, was a supplicant for peace and union on the best conditions that could be obtained. The conditions conceded by the victors were just and liberal, but Buenos Aires, which in disputes with the provinces had always arrogated to itself the lion's share, was not long satisfied with them. The terms made by the sick lion would not content him when he had recovered his strength, and it was not long before an occasion was found for breaking the compact agreed upon after the unfortunate affair of Cepeda. A revolution in one of the interior provinces, San Juan, was made the occasion for a demonstration against the central government. By this time General Mitre had risen to be Governor of Buenos Aires. The people of that city and province were restive and discontented under the peace of Cepeda. The capital had been established at Parana, and the provincial towns above Buenos Aires had the right to import directly from foreign countries, under a system of differential duties, in such vessels as did not touch at Buenos Aires. Thus the principal *entrepôt* of the river was liable to lose its long-abused privilege of taking toll on all foreign

merchandise introduced into the interior. A rupture, therefore, was inevitable. The then President of the Confederation, Dr. Santiago Derqui, had been put forward as the candidate of Urquiza, of whom he had been the principal minister; but having obtained the power, he was not the pliant instrument in the hands of his chief that the latter had expected to find him. Urquiza, therefore, encouraged a conflict with Buenos Aires, not doubting that he should be at the head of the military of the provinces, and that, having successfully dispersed the Porteños, he could easily dispose of President Derqui, and again put himself at the head of the entire country as President of all the provinces, including Buenos Aires. But fortune, which had hitherto greatly favored the famous gaucho of Entre Rios, now jilted him. The two armies came face to face on the opposite banks of a small river called the Pavon. The Porteños were commanded by General Mitre. The immediate command of the cavalry, however, was given to General Flores. The forces of Urquiza were about equal in number to those of Mitre, and his cavalry were under the command of a famous desperado and cut-throat named Saá. The two cavalry commanders were well pitted against each other, both men of personal courage, and both of that peculiar ferocity only found in the mixed Spanish and Indian races which delights in the amusement of cutting throats.

This battle of Pavon could hardly be called a battle at all. Neither party seemed to have any stomach for the fight, and, as far as the cavalry were concerned, there seemed to be a rivalry as to which should first run away. The main body of each fled simultaneously before crossing lances, though Flores kept in hand a sufficient number to render important service at the critical moment, and convert defeat into victory. The infantry of Urquiza, however, behaved better, and apparently the day was won, when he, at the moment the Porteños were giving ground, took fright and ran away, and was soon followed by the whole army, except the cavalry that had got the start of him in the flight. Both armies considered themselves at that moment defeated, and Mitre was on the point of ordering a retreat

when he learned that Urquiza and all his army had fled. He therefore ordered an immediate march on Rosario, which place he entered as a conqueror. It was thus that the victory of Pavon, by the aid of Flores, was won by General Mitre; and the battle was not only the turning-point in his own fortunes, but in the history of South America.

The defeat of Pavon and the flight and disgrace of Urquiza, the only man having influence and prestige enough to make resistance to the pretensions of Buenos Aires with any hope of success, left the Porteños complete masters of the situation. A convention was soon after called, at which all the provinces were represented. President Derqui having fled, his office was vacant, and it was proposed to make Mitre acting President till a general election could be held. The question of the capital was the only one on which the convention was divided. All acknowledged Mitre as having both capacity and prestige equal to the occasion, but many of the provincial delegates objected to Buenos Aires as the seat of the federal government. Mitre, however, quickly cut this knot of dispute by peremptorily refusing to accept the provisional Presidency unless Buenos Aires were made the capital. He was then Governor of the latter, and said he preferred to remain so to accepting the Presidency of the whole Confederation, if by so doing he must follow the government to some provincial town. The delegates had no alternative but to give him his own terms, and the convention passed a resolution establishing Buenos Aires as the capital for five years. The next year, 1862, in the month of October, a presidential election was held. Mitre was the only candidate, and he was accordingly unanimously elected for the constitutional term of six years.

In the mean while, Flores, after the battle of Pavon, was living a fugitive from his own country, and debarred his favorite pastime of stealing horses or ravaging the country. To support himself he entered the service of a rich estanciero, who had large tracts of land on the frontier, and whose flocks were exposed to the raids of the neighboring Indians.

But the life of a cattle-tender could not long content a person so restless and ambitious as Flores. His own country, the Banda Oriental, had, since his absence, enjoyed a degree of prosperity never known before. The people had so far forgot their partisan animosities, that the blancos and colorados, in May, 1856, united to elect Don Gabriel Antonio Pereira as President, notwithstanding he was of colorado antecedents and during the long siege of Montevideo had belonged to the inside party. But he was considered a moderate and just man, and his counsellors and ministers were nearly all taken from the blanco party. Thus there seemed at last a prospect that old party antipathies might pass into oblivion, and that the powers of the government might be directed to developing the resources of the country, rather than to avenging past transgressions. The President had been elected in such a manner that no one questioned that he was the choice of the majority, and the country soon assumed a condition of peace and quiet entirely unprecedented. Emigrants began to pour in in large numbers, and capital, as it could be invested to great advantage, flowed in freely. The material wealth of the country began to increase at a rate almost without parallel. With the Spanish-American the itch for revolution is a chronic disease, and at this time, notwithstanding the great prosperity that the country was enjoying as the result of peace and good government, a wild and foolish attempt was made to effect another revolution. It had, perhaps, less justification and excuse than any revolution ever attempted before or since. The head-quarters of the revolutionists was in Buenos Aires, where public meetings were held to raise money and enlist men for the invasion of the Banda Oriental, though the government professed to be at peace with its neighbor and to frown on all attempts at invasion of a friendly country. But the Governor, Don Valentin Alsina, was notoriously in sympathy with the filibusters, and winked at their open violations of law while he encouraged their more secret proceedings. At length, when all was supposed to be ripe for the revolution, Flores set out with a small force of gauchos to

wait the course of events and make a diversion in the northern part of the country ; and soon after a vessel belonging to or chartered by the Buenos Airean government, with arms and ammunition taken from the public arsenal at Buenos Aires, with such a force of men as by fraud and force could be pressed aboard, was despatched to Montevideo to effect a landing and set up a standard of rebellion.

The person in command of this party was the ex-Minister of War, General Cesar Diaz. He was a turbulent demagogue, of military experience sufficient to render him a dangerous subject, and therefore, to keep him quiet, he had been sent to Buenos Aires in the capacity of consul-general for the Banda Oriental. Here he fell in with outlaws and other traitors, and began his machinations to subvert the government he was sworn to support. His treason becoming known, he was removed from his post as consul, when he threw off all pretensions of loyalty, and began openly to denounce as a hideous tyranny the government to which his country was subjected. With the connivance of the government of Buenos Aires, backed up by arms and ammunition publicly loaned to him from the national arsenal, he set forth on his ill-starred expedition. He reached Montevideo and effected a landing without opposition on the side of the river opposite the town. The government was in a fright and quandary. The ministers resigned, and everything bade fair for the capture of the town by the invaders. At this time President Pereira called into his councils another class of men, one of whom was a young lawyer named Antonio de las Carreras, then but twenty-eight years of age. He was a violent partisan, a man of great energy, and, for his years, of great influence, and was perhaps the only man in the country equal to the emergency. He was asked to take the direction of the departments of government and of foreign affairs. He refused to accept the position except on condition that he should be unfettered by any superior authority. The President yielded to his terms, and the fate of the rebellion was sealed. With marvellous energy he caused to be organized a

force far outnumbering the invaders, and all who, since their landing, had joined their standard. These troops, under command of General Medina, were sent after Diaz, with orders to despatch him and his followers as nothing more nor less than outlaws and robbers. Diaz, surprised at the energy of the government, fell back, and retreated to the Rio Negro. Here his little force, now dwindled down to some four hundred men, was surrounded at a place called Quinteros, and compelled to surrender at discretion. Medina promised no terms, and indeed, had he done so, he would have exceeded his authority, for his orders were to pursue them as outlaws, robbers, and traitors. Nevertheless, after the surrender he hesitated to execute his instructions without direct orders from the government. These orders were promptly sent to him. He was commanded to summarily execute all the leaders and such notorious criminals as had taken refuge in his ranks. Diaz and eight others of the political traitors were accordingly shot, besides fourteen of the well-known gaucho murderers.* This energetic action on the part of Carreras had its intended effect. The revolutionary spirit was quelled. For the first time in the history of the Plata the promoters of

* The execution of these prisoners taken at Quinteros has been the subject of a great deal of controversy in the Plata, and many versions of the affair have been published by those who justified and those who condemned it. By the latter it has been called a cruel, unnecessary massacre, and the number of persons executed has been often stated to have been some two or three hundred. My own account of the affair was derived from Dr. Carreras himself, with whom I afterwards became intimately acquainted, and whom I found to be a most reliable and courteous gentleman. He was a very violent partisan, but he always justified his action in the Quinteros affair, as it has generally been justified by his own party. It is certain that the spirit of revolution which had been so rife in these countries as to render anything like permanent prosperity impossible received a severe check from this act. But whether it was wise and just or not, it rendered Carreras the most odious and unpopular man among the colorados, gauchos, and revolutionists in the state; and when afterwards he was again called into the government to put down a greater rebellion, he was denounced as an assassin, and every opprobrious epithet was applied to him by the colorado party in Montevideo and their sympathizers in Buenos Aires. His terrible death, however, years later, at the hands of Lopez, seemed to disarm even his worst enemies, for not one of them could have desired for him so cruel a fate as he finally suffered.

a revolution thoroughly unjustifiable, and set on foot solely to serve the ambitious and selfish purposes of treacherous neighbors and gaucho chieftains, had been summarily dealt with. Instead of being bought off, as on previous occasions, and promised honors and offices if they would lay down their arms, the leaders were shot, as they deserved to be. The revolution-makers saw their occupation was gone. Men of peace saw a new prospect opening, and that they were not so liable to be robbed and murdered every time a poverty-stricken gaucho thought to better his fortunes by attempting a revolution. The spirit of the chronic revolutionists was broken, the caudillos had received such a check that for years none of them ventured to get up another rebellion, and the country enjoyed peace and prosperity until 1863, when the same Flores, who unfortunately did not share the fate of his fellow-traitor Diaz, began a revolution that was to involve the whole valley of the Plata in a general war.

After the suppression of the Diaz-Flores invasion, the country continued in a state of quiet and prosperity until the end of President Pereira's constitutional term of office. The state being at peace, the blanco party, as a matter of course, elected their candidate, Don Bernardo P. Berro, as the successor of Pereira. Though a blanco, the new President was very little of a partisan, and probably as little obnoxious to the colorados as any man in the country not of their own party. There was little or no opposition to his election, and no one pretended to question that he was the constitutional President for the prescribed term of four years. The administration of President Berro was extremely fortunate for the material interests of the country. The Diaz revolution having proved so disastrous to its leaders, the spirit of gauchoism seemed in a great measure subdued. Emigrants in great numbers came in with capital and bought land, and the sheep, cattle, and horses multiplied prodigiously. The interest realized on investments was enormous, and, extravagant as it may seem, it is not too much to say that the aggregate capital of the country more than doubled within the period of six years from 1858 to 1863 inclusive.

But to this general aspect of affairs in the Republic of Uruguay an exception is to be made in regard to that part of the country bordering on Brazil. For a long time affairs on this frontier had been in a most unsettled and turbulent state. An insignificant stream called the Cuaraim separates the two countries for a part of the distance, and during the time of the long siege of Montevideo many Brazilians crossed over into Uruguayan territory, where they bought lands and established and stocked estancias. The country along this frontier is the finest grazing section in all South America, and would be a source of great wealth to Uruguay if it could be controlled by the Montevidean government. But the Brazilians there were so numerous and wealthy, consisting of at least fifty thousand persons, or one sixth of the entire population of the country, that they defied the laws, and being beyond the jurisdiction of their own government they were almost independent of any restraint. Between them and the natives of the country there existed not only the intense antipathy which prevails between the two races, but the feuds and collisions between parties had been so frequent that they had come to regard each other as natural enemies. The Brazilian intruders, whenever they were molested in their attempts to run off their cattle without the payment of the export duty, or were interfered with in any of their unlawful proceedings, appealed to their own government for redress ; and it was both the policy and practice of Brazil to encourage them in their encroachments by listening to their appeals and promising to exact indemnity from Uruguay. Both Brazil and Buenos Aires had long coveted the Banda Oriental, and the policy of each had long been to make it an integral part of its own territory. Thus this little tract of country, the finest in South America, became an apple of discord, jealously watched by its two powerful neighbors.

Though under the strongest treaty stipulations to respect its independence, they seemed to be ever watching for an occasion to violate it, and each of them was bent on annexing it to its own possessions. The party in sympathy with

the colorados of Montevideo was the more numerous and powerful in Buenos Aires. The administration of President Mitre notoriously sympathized with the outlaws and traitors, whose crimes rendered their residence in their own country incompatible with the public safety. Flores, restless and uneasy, was tired of his life of cattle-tender, or *capataz*; and, leaving the care of his flocks and herds, he came to Buenos Aires to try his fortune again as traitor and invader of his native land. He had great personal claims on President Mitre. He had rendered important services at the battle of Pavon, which was the turning-point of Mitre's fortunes and had made him President of the Argentine Republic. The more influential newspapers in Buenos Aires openly encouraged him to proceed, and called on the people of Buenos Aires to come forward and aid in raising both men and money for the army of the “liberator,” who was to redeem the suffering people of the Banda Oriental from the grinding tyranny of Berro. The leading newspaper, *La Tribuna*, frantically called on the rich to give their money and the poor to give their services in the great cause of Oriental liberty. The conductors of this paper were natives of Montevideo and intensely partisan. They were the sons of Don Florencio Varela, a man of great talent and influence in his time, who had fled from Buenos Aires to escape the knives of Rosas's organized assassins, and, during the siege of Montevideo rendered great service to the inside party. Being sent on a diplomatic mission to Europe, it was through his influence that France and England were induced to take sides with the besieged. Rosas's favorite mode of getting rid of persons obnoxious to him was to send out his *mazorcas* to quietly assassinate them. That was the end of the affair; for as everybody knew by whose orders these things were done, nobody dared, except in very rare cases, to make comment or inquiry. But Varela was beyond the reach of the mazorcas. Rosas therefore ordered his general, Oribe, to find some other means to put him out of the way. Oribe obeyed, and sent a wretch by the name of Cabrera to do his bloody work. This

hired murderer succeeded in getting within the lines of the besieged and executed his terrible commission. Naturally the sons of this man were intense in their hatred of Rosas, and of Oribe, and of the blancos who called in the aid of such allies, and, forgetful of all questions of right or justice or international law, they advocated, in their paper, doctrines in justification of this Flores invasion that would disgrace the King of Dahomey or the Emperor of Abyssinia. Their journal did not advocate open and manly war against the Banda Oriental, for it was impossible to devise a pretext for that ; but it took the ground that the minority of any country, when they could not get what they wanted under the established forms of law, were justified in making a rebellion and overturning the government by force of arms. If outnumbered and outvoted, they were under no obligations to submit. This was the very spirit of gauchoism, and as an evidence how strong this element still is, even in Buenos Aires, no stronger proof is necessary than that such anarchical, detestable doctrines were so popular that the government had no power to resist it. Meetings were publicly called and openly held, for the purpose of obtaining material aid for Flores. In a free country and under a constitutional government the right to assemble thus is admitted. The Fenians exercised it in their foolish appeals in behalf of the Irish republic, and the English exercised it when they assembled to furnish aid and comfort to another republic whose corner-stone was to be human slavery. But until some overt act on the high seas or within the territory of the menaced country was committed, no violation of international law could be alleged. The government of Montevideo, however, complained of these demonstrations as showing an unfriendly spirit, and alleged that they were not only tolerated, but encouraged, by the government of Buenos Aires.

There was very little response, however, by the people of the Banda Oriental to these "liberators" who were coming to free them from a government under which they were enjoying a degree of prosperity before unknown ; and among those who approved of the invasion there were scarcely any

who cared to venture their own safety on an expedition so hazardous, if not hopeless. The government of Montevideo was distracted in its counsels, and taking no effective steps to throttle the invasion should it be attempted. Of this Flores was well aware. He knew, if he could effect a landing with a small force, he could easily escape should he see any such energetic proceedings on the part of the government as were taken at the time of Diaz's invasion. But if indecision and apathy prevailed, he could gradually gather to his standard the loose, floating, gaucho population that takes to marauding as naturally as the young partridge takes to the woods. With such recruits, if not too numerous, he could easily keep himself out of the way of any regular troops sent in pursuit of him. The country was then in a very different condition from that which obtained when Diaz made his invasion. The estancias, with their herds of horses, cattle, and sheep, were much more numerous ; and, if pursued, his followers could, after every day's flight, supply themselves with fresh horses and the needed provisions at the expense of the estancieros, whereas any regular troops must move with such means as they could legally obtain.

With this prospect before him, Flores, on the 16th of April, 1863, embarked in a whale-boat at Buenos Aires, with only three attendants, for the Banda Oriental. He landed without opposition at a point on the Uruguay called Rincon de las Gallinas, and raised his standard. The government heard of his invasion and knew of the small force that attended him, but it took no measures adequate to the circumstances. Carreras was not in the Cabinet, and his calls on the government for more active measures had not only been disregarded, but his censures of its apathy had caused his counsels to be treated with contempt. Berro, whose administration had been marked by such wonderful general prosperity, was averse to such measures as had proved so successful against Diaz. His term of office had nearly expired, and he was anxious to tide over the constitutional limit of his Presidency without engaging in anything like active war. He also had his choice for the suc-

cession, though he was himself ineligible for a second term. The crisis required that some man of military experience and energetic character should be placed at the head of military affairs ; but the only two men answering to these conditions would, it was well known, so soon crush out the rebellion that whichever of them was called to the position would most likely be afterwards elected to the Presidency. These two were General Lucas Moreno and Colonel Leandro Gomez. Berro hesitated and did nothing. Old General Medina, then an octogenarian, was called upon to organize the army ; but while he was considering how to do it, Flores was actively ranging the country, stealing horses and recruiting gauchos. He found none of the respectable people, however, not even the colorados, to welcome him. He accordingly made his way across the country to the Brazilian frontier, where he knew that many of the traditional enemies of his country would, for reasons of their own, and which will appear hereafter, espouse his cause. As he passed through the country he scattered his proclamations, calling on the people to rise and throw off the tyranny under which they groaned. But no person of any influence responded to the call, until he reached the Brazilian frontier, where he found a mixed crowd of Brazilians and Oriental outlaws ready to join him. They had already been collected together by a noted Brazilian chieftain, who had previously been in communication with Flores, and had assembled his forces to be prepared to join him at the opportune moment. This ally of Flores, General David Canavarro, had long been known as one of the most dangerous and influential enemies to the independence of the Oriental Republic within the Brazilian Empire. But this mattered little to Flores and his colorado sympathizers, who all professed to be the peculiar champions of the national independence.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Policy of Brazil and Buenos Aires respecting Paraguay and Uruguay. — Correspondence between Lopez and Mitre. — Lopez's Preparations for War. — The Province of Rio Grande. — Smuggling Expeditions. — Invasion of Flores. — His Mode of Warfare. — Weakness and Vacillation of President Berro. — Don Antanacio C. Aguirre Acting President. — Don Felipe Netto's Efforts to involve Brazil in a War with the Oriental Republic. — José Antonio Saraiva. — Brazil sends Commissioners to Montevideo. — Imperial Designs of President Lopez. — He is disappointed in his Matrimonial Designs. — He assumes to be the Champion of Republicanism.

THE favor shown to Flores by both the government and the people of Buenos Aires had been regarded from the first with jealous interest by Paraguay, or rather by President Lopez, who, so far as any expression of opinion was allowed, was both government and people. Paraguay and Uruguay were two little republics between the Argentine Republic and the Brazilian Empire, the latter having twenty-five and the former six times the extent of territory of them both put together. It was the traditional policy of Buenos Aires to make itself the capital and emporium of all the territory of the Plata and its confluents that had been originally settled by the Spaniards. It was with this idea that the war of Belgrano had been commenced in 1810; and although through the long gloom and isolation of Francia's reign, and during the twenty years of the despotism of the elder Lopez, there was no organized effort to conquer or annex it, yet the feeling was still general, that, from its geographical position and its kindred population, it ought to be one of the provinces of the Argentine Republic. For the possession of Uruguay there had been long and bitter struggles. It was coveted by both Brazil and Buenos Aires. Brazil had intrigued and made war in alliance with the renegade Flores to get possession of it; and Buenos

Aires had years before sent one of its war vessels with Diaz and his recruits to make the revolution that came to so disastrous an end at Quinteros. Both countries were watching the opportunity to seize on the little Republic, and each was watching the other. The only mode in which annexation could be effected must be with the ostensible assent of the people of the country, for other nations could not be expected to look on passively and see it subjected by force to a foreign yoke. The only feasible plan was to employ some renegade or traitor to get up a revolution, and, while professing neutrality, to give such material support as to make it successful, and that he should afterwards, when he had had time to go through the forms of an election that should give a color of legitimacy to his authority, make over the country to his employers, while yet he held the knife at the throats of the people. This appeared to be the plan of Diaz and Alsina, and the antecedents of Flores were such as to leave no doubt that he would be as willing to sell his country to Buenos Aires as he had formerly been to sell it and himself to Brazil.

In making his previous revolution, Flores had been able to make terms and to be received as a member of the government which he had sought to overthrow. On this later occasion, finding that he had not met with the reception he expected, and that with his bands of outlaws he could never hope to conquer the country, an effort was made to bring about an arrangement between him and the government through the mediation of the English, Brazilian, and Argentine ministers. This attempt was abortive, and could hardly have been made in good faith on the part of Brazil and the Argentine Republic, as they both had designs of their own on the Banda Oriental, and both were seeking to make use of Flores as their instrument. The former had declared that it would remain neutral, and the Oriental government, trusting to these professions, did not doubt that it could put down the Flores rebellion. For this reason, and because it did not wish to recognize in Flores anything more or less than an outlaw, robber, and murderer, the proposed mediation was scarcely entertained.

Not without reason the Paraguayan government looked with great interest on the issue of the Flores invasion; for if successful, or if in any way the independence of the Oriental Republic were overthrown, Paraguayan despotism would have but a precarious existence. The government of Montevideo, at the first mutterings of the impending storm, had foreseen that the interests of Lopez were involved with its own. It had sent as its minister resident at Asuncion Dr. Octavio Lapido, one of its most trusted and promising young men, with instructions to represent to the government of Paraguay the common danger, and propose, in confidence, that a secret alliance should be made between the two countries against the Argentine Republic, as at that time the most imminent danger to them both was apprehended from that quarter. Lopez, however, demurred to the alliance, and put Lapido off with promises of assistance whenever the Oriental independence should appear to be in danger. But in the month of September, 1863, and during the residence of Lapido at Asuncion, Lopez sent a note to President Mitre, demanding explanations concerning the violations of neutrality notoriously committed, not only with the sanction, but with the approval and assistance, of his government. Mitre denied any responsibility for acts committed by irresponsible parties against the Oriental Republic, alleging that his government had observed the strictest neutrality in all things. This answer was far from satisfactory, as it neither acknowledged past faults nor promised greater circumspection in the future. The reply of Lopez to this was the last of the personal and ostensibly friendly correspondence that had been carried on for some time between the two Presidents. This correspondence is a curious specimen of diplomatic writing, in which, under the forms of official etiquette, both parties try to conceal their real feelings towards each other. Lopez looked upon Mitre as the prominent figure of the countries of the Plata, as the shadow or curtain that prevented the light of his own greatness from shining forth and illuminating the world; while Mitre regarded his brother President as a semi-savage, whose tyranny

was a disgrace, not only to South America, but to the human race. Yet in their personal correspondence they billed and cooed as gently as sucking doves. This, however, could not continue with the warlike attitude that both parties were assuming. In the last letter of Lopez, he intimated that thenceforth considerations of friendship would no longer avail, but that Paraguay would be governed in the future solely by its own judgment and sense of interest.

This menace was followed by the general conscription of February, 1864, throughout Paraguay. There was already a standing army in the country of some twenty thousand men, and this recruitment increased the number to nearly sixty thousand. A camp was formed at a place called Cerro Leon, ten leagues from the capital, and situate at the base of a range of hills and near the line of the railroad. The recruits were immediately subjected to severe training, and there was every indication that real war was intended. The materials for a telegraphic line and a competent staff of engineers and operators were ordered from Europe; several additional physicians for the army were also engaged by the Paraguayan agent in London, all of whom reached Asuncion about the middle of the year (1864).

But a new danger was now threatening the Oriental independence. Hitherto Brazil had taken no part either for or against Flores, and all the military preparations and demonstrations of Paraguay had been with a view of confronting the ambitious designs of the Argentine government. Now, however, as the Berro government was gradually getting its military forces together, and it was becoming evident, that, without more aid from abroad than could be derived through the connivance and secret assistance of Buenos Aires, the revolution could have no hope of success, there were heard the first threatening sounds from the north.

We have already seen how the Brazilians of the province of Rio Grande had been for years encroaching on the territory of the Banda Oriental. Many estancieros from this province had entered this fine grazing region belonging to

the latter, and by purchase or occupation gained possession of large tracts, on which they had vast herds of cattle, sheep, and horses. Being beyond the jurisdiction of their own country, they, of course, paid no taxes to it; and the export duty on their stock they contrived to evade by attempting revolutions or minor disturbances, under which they would run off their cattle scot free. These intruders had some of them acquired immense wealth, and desired a continuation of their immunities, which they could not expect to enjoy long if the rebellion were put down and the peace that had prevailed under Pereira and Berro were re-established. Among those Brazilians having the largest possessions in this fertile region were General Netto, General Marquess (afterwards Baron Porte Alegre), General Osorio (afterwards Baron Herval), and Colonels Saldanha and Illa. These men had all been conspicuous in the attempted revolution in 1837 of the province of Rio Grande, the most southern province of Brazil, and one of the most valuable and important of the Empire in its resources. They had joined in this movement in the belief that their province was strong enough to establish its independence and found a nation to be called the Republic of Piratiny. The Empire was then in a weak and inefficient condition, and was scarcely able to make an effort to put down the rebellion; and a state of affairs which they called war dragged on for ten years, when the government was able to make such terms with the leading revolutionists that they returned to their allegiance. The favorite Brazilian weapon, gold, was successfully employed. The leaders of the rebellion were left in peace to pursue their depredations in the Banda Oriental.

This border section being so fine a district for grazing, the Montevidean government sought to derive a revenue from it by an export duty on cattle.

Against this the Brazilian government would not complain, but the people who were affected by it found a way, in most cases, to avoid its payment. Whenever it was desirable to send over a large number, it was an easy matter to get up a

feigned rebellion or insurrection, that would engage the attention of all the Oriental officials, and in the smoke run off all the cattle that they wished to export. The parties engaged in these smuggling expeditions were often attacked by the revenue officers, who were sometimes supported by a considerable military force. This systematic evasion of taxes was a dangerous business, and in the course of years a good many of the smugglers were, at different times, killed or made prisoners. The Brazilians, however, had the impudence to demand reparation for the injuries received by their countrymen; and the claims of this sort that had accumulated during some fifteen years were finally alleged as a justification for uniting with Flores and making war on the Banda Oriental. Even kidnappers, who had attempted to steal and carry off free negroes and sell them into slavery in Brazil, if caught and punished had their cause espoused by the government, and reclamations made for the injustice they had sustained. Doubtless there was much violence and wrong-doing on both sides, but there is little doubt that the Brazilians were the principal offenders; and if the accounts for wrongs and injuries had been justly investigated, a large balance would have been found due to Uruguay.

This state of open defiance and contempt of the laws of the Montevidean government had endured many years; for during the long siege, and for years after, Brazilian interlopers were little molested by any pretended authority of the Uruguayans. But with the peace and prosperity that succeeded the expulsion of Flores after his first revolution the nation and government waxed strong, and the lands bordering on the frontiers, and next to those occupied or owned by the Brazilians, became valuable, and the great smugglers saw that they were liable to lose their long-enjoyed immunities. Hence anything that threatened war to the Banda Oriental was hailed by these Brazilians as likely to give them a longer lease of their abuses. A civil war would be to them the most welcome, as while that lasted they would be unmolested by either party, and, while the substance of the native people

was being wasted, the Brazilian influence would be constantly growing stronger.

The chief reliance of Flores, therefore, in making his invasion, was on the hereditary enemies of his country. Besides the forces that had been collected by Canavarro, he was also able to count on other reinforcements which a gaucho chieftain, General Nicanor Caceres, had raised on the opposite side of the river Uruguay, in the Argentine province of Corrientes. With such patriots as these, not one seventh of whom were natives of the country they were to liberate, Flores, or, as he was called by his followers and the newspapers that supported his cause, the "Liberator," set out on a second march, or rather gallop, through the country. His forces now began to increase quite rapidly, as little knots of gauchos from more remote parts had by this time heard of his adventure and come to join him. The first encounters with any government troops took place in the month of June, 1863, and resulted favorably to the invaders. Their success gave them prestige, and many of those Brazilians dwelling within the territory who had at first kept aloof, fearing lest it might prove another Quinteros affair, came forward in large numbers to join the standard of the "Liberator."

Thus was the little Republic, that during a few years of peace had attained to such prosperity, launched on the sea of civil war. As yet both Brazil and the Argentine Republic, though giving both moral and material support to Flores, professed the strictest neutrality. This wicked connivance and breach of national faith was to cost them hundreds of thousands of lives and hundreds of millions of dollars, and to Brazil was to prove her financial ruin, if not her national dismemberment.

It is beyond the scope of this work to follow the fortunes of Flores after his first successes against the government troops. His mode of warfare was the one best adapted to harass and ruin the country, and at the same time to advance his own interests. The estancieros and other peaceable citizens, who were satisfied with the government as it was and

had been for years, and who deeply deplored the invasion, were afraid to take sides against him, as they knew full well that a suspicion of that would expose them to be robbed and murdered by any of his marauding gangs. This was the experience of such as had ever been prominent as blancos. The army of Flores, consisting of the worst materials the earth could produce, scoured the country, stealing horses, cattle, and sheep as they were needed, wantonly slaughtering the herds of those they considered as unfriendly, but robbing friend or foe with great impartiality whenever their necessities required. In fact, it could not strictly be called war that he prosecuted; it was in robbery and assassination on a large scale, purposely carried on to ruin and exhaust the country, and not as the leader of an army making war against another army, that he employed his troops. Finding fresh relays of horses at every estancia, his men were always well mounted; and they scoured the country from one end to the other, falling like a tempest alike on the large estancias and the unpretending hamlets, and on any small bodies of national troops that had been detached from the main army to learn the whereabouts of the "Liberator." A great many skirmishes of more or less importance took place between the opposing forces; but Flores always avoided anything like a pitched battle, nor did he venture to attack any town of importance. The whole native population was so unanimously against him, that the people of any large town would have defended it until government troops could come to its relief. His warfare was against the rural districts. Five times he approached near Montevideo, never venturing to attack the town; and fleeing away before the government, that showed all the while a criminal sluggishness, could collect sufficient force to give him battle, he would be off, with all his forces, on another devastating raid through the country. The little skirmishes were magnified by the newspapers of Buenos Aires and Montevideo into as many great battles, and, of course, great victories; but the newspapers, according to their partisan bias, in every case disagreed as to which party had gained the victory.

The public sentiment of Buenos Aires, from the first favorable to Flores, grew enthusiastic as the revolution proceeded and promised ruin to the neighboring Republic. Two or three newspapers openly justified the invasion, and the *Tribuna* frantically appealed to the people to come forward with material aid for the "Liberator." Recruiting for his army was openly carried on; and public meetings were held, in which the people were called upon to make war on a country against which the government had not declared it. The government, to the shame of President Mitre, connived at and approved all these proceedings. It secretly instigated a kind of warfare against a weak neighbor, towards whom it professed peace and friendship in a way that no other word will characterize so well as "sneaking." Men and arms were embarked at Buenos Aires without any attempt on the part of the authorities to interfere. On the contrary, the arms which these recruits bore were, many of them, taken from the national arsenal; and on one occasion an open boat, filled with these liberators ready armed for service, was taken in tow by an Argentine national steamer.

Such neutrality as this called forth strong protests from the Oriental government; but unfortunately the only strong thing it did was to protest. Its internal administration was weak and vacillating. Berro, who had guided the ship of state very well while the waters were calm, became not only confused and imbecile, but stubborn and perverse, when the sea became rough. He would not call into the civil service men of energy like Carreras, nor men of military prestige and capacity like Lucas Moreno or Leandro Gomez. He feared lest they should gain military prestige, and neither of them was his choice for the succession to the Presidency. He would not believe the rebellion was so formidable that it could not be put down without any serious interruption of the political programme which he and his friends had formed for the future. Old General Medina, then past eighty-five years of age, was continued as the commanding-general of the army; and the result was that nothing effectual was done to recruit

a force such as at that time could crush out the rebellion. As yet the army of Flores was weak in comparison with the forces that the government might have put into the field. But the rebellion was allowed, nevertheless, to drag along until the end of Berro's term, in March, 1864. Medina had indeed been changed for General Servando Gomez, who, if not quite as old, was even more inefficient.

Berro's term having expired, the duties of the Presidency devolved on the President of the Senate, Don Atanacio C. Aguirre. No election of a successor had taken place, as according to the Constitution of the state no presidential election can take place during the time of civil war. Aguirre had not the capacity of Berro, nor did he possess in any high degree the public confidence. But he was free from the prejudices of his predecessor, and was not in the interest of the same parties, who, for their own selfish ends, had counselled a course of action that exposed the country to destruction. His situation was one of great difficulty, and one requiring a high order of executive ability, for a danger more pressing than the abused and treacherous neutrality of Buenos Aires now loomed upon the horizon of the devoted little Republic. Brazil, that at the commencement of the rebellion had declared it would remain neutral, now threatened to interfere. The border men on both sides of the dividing line between Uruguay and the province of Rio Grande, who had carried on for years their traffic in the territory of the former in defiance of all law, now demanded that the imperial government should declare war against the little state whose power they had so long defied. Without waiting to be accused, they turned accusers, and in the Chambers of the Brazilian Parliament they proclaimed the wrongs they had suffered. The person of most wealth and influence in Rio Grande, and the one having most pecuniary interest in the overthrow of the Oriental independence, was General Felipe Netto, who had once led a rebellion with the object of detaching the province of Rio Grande from the Empire and setting up an independent republic. A large part of his fortune, which

consisted of millions, had been gained in supplying the army of General Oribe with cattle during his nine years' siege of Montevideo. But though Oribe was the king stork that Rosas had sent as his deputy to the Banda Oriental, ostensibly to rehabilitate the blancos in the government, yet when this party had succeeded to power, after the fall of both Rosas and Oribe, the aggrieved Netto had his budget of wrongs done to him by the blancos to complain of. In the Lower Chamber of the Brazilian Parliament, his representative, Felipe Nery, a native of Montevideo, but of Portuguese ancestry, came forward with a series of grave charges and accusations against La Republica Oriental del Uruguay. The wrongs endured by his countrymen who had crossed over into the Banda Oriental to kidnap free negroes or smuggle cattle were depicted as national outrages, and he called on the Brazilian government to demand instant redress of grievances. At the same time, Netto was ready with arguments stronger than those used by his representative. He took apartments in Rio de Janeiro, and lived in a style entirely eclipsing royalty or anything ever before seen in the Empire, and entertained the members of the Chambers in a style of more profusion than elegance, but gorgeously extravagant. His banquets were the marvel of the newspapers, and his liberality in all things toward the congressional deputies was beyond praise, — far beyond. Gold, as I have said before, and as I shall have occasion to prove repeatedly hereafter, is the great motive-power on which Brazil always counts for success. Netto knew his country and his countrymen, and what between Nery's eloquence and his own money a majority of the Lower House was converted to his views, and a committee was named to proceed to Montevideo and demand immediate satisfaction for the wrongs endured by Brazilians at the hands of the Oriental people and government.

It should be noted that these claims for damages were few of them of recent origin. The most of them had been held in abeyance for many years, and the country under the Pereira and Berro administrations was fast arriving at a condition in

which it could easily liquidate all just claims against it. The only hope that they would ever be paid consisted in the probability that the peace would continue. But Netto and the other complainants neither hoped for nor expected peace. He was the veritable wolf who had been worried by the lamb. He wanted a cause for a quarrel, and the unpaid claims were made the pretext for it, even though aware that by promoting a war the holders of just claims would have far less chance of ever obtaining their dues.

Netto had been preparing for war before he succeeded in forcing his measures through the Congress. His troops were already organized to the number of one thousand or more, and they were hovering over the frontier and ready to pounce on the Banda Oriental as soon as he should give the word. That he was resolved to do, sooner or later, and the Congress and the Emperor knew it. He was too powerful a subject to be controlled; and if he could not make war by and with the consent of the imperial government, it was well known he would do it on his own account, and that he would be supported in it by nearly the whole province of Rio Grande. Netto, it was also known, had never relinquished his ideas of twenty years before, of forming the province into an independent republic, and nearly all the men of wealth and influence in the province were equally weak in their loyalty to the throne. Once in arms and without authority of law, it was not likely that the leaders would be satisfied with a simple invasion of the Banda Oriental. They would doubtless soon after raise the standard of rebellion and again set up their republic. War, therefore, of some kind, was at the door; but whether the imperial arms should be directed against such Brazilian subjects as might choose to rebel, or against the inoffending and already afflicted Banda Oriental, was the question to be decided. The Emperor deprecated war of any kind, and especially deprecated such a war as the Congress, instigated by Netto, was trying to force upon him. But he at length reluctantly and weakly yielded, and this fatal step precipitated the Empire into a war which cost it at least six times the number of able-bodied men that

existed in the whole province of Rio Grande, and five hundred millions of dollars.

The committee appointed for this work were two of the most eminent statesmen in the Empire. The senior member was the Counsellor José Antonio Saraiva, a man of great experience, having often held the positions of most importance and responsibility under the government. The junior commissioner, Dr. Taveres Bastos, was yet a young man, but one whose antecedents and services should have excused him from a task so calculated to bring reproach to the nation. His various measures for internal improvements, his projects of extending the national commerce, all of which evinced careful study and enlarged statesmanship, had called attention to him as the rising man of the country. But the measure which reflects most honor on his career was one which called down upon him the enmity and opposition of the rich and aristocratic classes. Before the great Rebellion in the United States he had proposed a plan for the gradual extinction of African slavery, and had urged the measure with great earnestness and persistence, taking the high moral ground that slavery was a crime against God, man, and nature, and must in the end bring ruin and desolation on the country. This man, however, who was then but twenty-five years of age, and whom all looked upon with respect as the man of most promise among the younger statesmen, was nominated on this committee to perform a work that brigands might well shrink from.

The instructions given to this committee were not made public, and the two commissioners proceeded to Montevideo ostensibly only as a committee of inquiry. The people there supposed that they were coming to investigate the question of claims and counter-claims ; and as they believed that the balance, on an honest examination, would be largely in their favor, their arrival was hailed with great satisfaction. The newspapers were filled with long articles written in the belief that the time to obtain redress of grievances from Brazil had at last arrived.

Great, therefore, was the surprise and indignation of the

people of Montevideo when they learned that the commissioners, instead of coming to examine, arrange, and adjust all the pending questions, had made a demand for the immediate recognition of claims amounting in the total to fourteen millions of dollars! The whole population of the country, after deducting the Brazilians on the frontier, who did not pay taxes to the Montevidean government, did not at that time exceed three hundred and fifty thousand souls. To meet this demand of Brazil, therefore, would require a tax of more than forty-three dollars on every man, woman, and child in the entire Republic.

It was in this discreditable manner that Brazil became involved in the civil war of the Banda Oriental. The government at Rio de Janeiro allowed itself to be controlled by the turbulent feudal lords of Rio Grande, and to become the ally of a rebel against a weak neighbor with whom it had no just cause of war, and at a time when to take advantage of her weakness and internal dissensions was both cowardly and dishonorable. By this act it gave a pretext for the interference of Paraguay in the affairs of the Banda Oriental, and put itself morally in the wrong in the eyes of all the other nations of the world. By her own wrongful acts Brazil had first become involved in the cause of Flores; and when Lopez, in utter contempt of the laws and usages of civilized nations, commenced war against her after the manner of the barbarian and savage, few people made the distinction between the two issues, and the generality believed that in her wrongful and treacherous course towards Uruguay she had begun the war against Paraguay.

It is not unlikely, however, that Brazil would soon have been forced into a war with Paraguay had she not interfered in this discreditable manner with the affairs of the Banda Oriental. Other events were transpiring which greatly incensed President Lopez against the Emperor. It had been the dream of Lopez from his youth to change the form of the Paraguayan government, on his accession to power, from that of a republic to an empire; and on his voyage to Europe he had stopped at

Rio, where he had been treated with great consideration by Don Pedro II., and after his return to his own country he made advances to his Imperial Majesty to ascertain if he could count on his support and assistance in taking such a step. It will probably never be known how far he was encouraged in this ambitious idea by the Emperor, as it is unlikely that the latter will admit that he has ever had any secret negotiations with a man capable of such atrocities as Lopez was guilty of in his subsequent career. The fact, however, that Lopez, immediately on his accession to power, began, in minor things, to imitate the forms and customs of royalty, and in some of the more remote districts of Paraguay to have his name hailed as Francisco Primero, instead of Excellentissimo Presidente, leads to the inference that his imperial designs were not disapproved by the Emperor. In fact, Lopez, on one occasion, distinctly stated to the writer of this work that the Emperor of Brazil had urged him to make the change. He said, moreover, that so far as his own people were concerned, he could do it without any difficulty, but that such was not his purpose or plan. And on another occasion he stated that "the Emperor of Brazil would find that he had made a great mistake when he ventured to come in contact with or thwart the plans of Francisco Solano Lopez." It was his ambition, not only to found an empire, but to establish a dynasty; and to do this he saw that he must not only have the support and approval of the Emperor of Brazil and the heads of other monarchical governments, but they must so cordially support him as to encourage a matrimonial alliance with some princess of royal blood. In fact, his whole scheme depended on the good-will and approval of the Emperor; for unless he would agree to recognize him as Emperor of Paraguay, he could not expect any of the European powers to do so. The elder Lopez had always regarded the Brazilians, their government, and the Emperor, with the greatest aversion and contempt. In speaking of them to third parties, his almost invariable rule was to call them *macacos* (monkeys); and he carried his enmity so far, that, at the time of his death, there was not in all Para-

guay a single Brazilian except the consul. The young President, however, on his advent to power, did not seem to share in this aversion to his neighbors, but, on the contrary, always spoke of them with respect; and while indulging through his official organ in the most unstinted abuse of his Argentine neighbors, he allowed nothing to appear in it inimical or disrespectful towards Brazil. As imperialism has but a precarious hold in America, he naturally thought that the only empire would be strengthened in its position by having another established to make common cause with it against republicanism; and thinking Pedro II. would so regard it, he hoped for his cordial and earnest support in all his plans. The Emperor had two daughters then approaching marriageable age, and if he was disposed to aid him in his imperial designs, the most effectual way for him to do so was to offer him the hand of his second daughter, the Princess Isabella, to be his empress and share his throne. But the Emperor, who, if he had encouraged Lopez in his imperial aspirations, had probably done so with the hope that such a step would prove to be his ultimate destruction, had long regarded the existence of a government like that which obtained in Paraguay as an evil, and as an obstacle and perpetual hindrance to the development and progress of South America, and would never understand the allusions made by Lopez as to the manner in which he could best serve him. Had there been no other objection to the alliance, it was enough that he knew the character of Lopez. He knew him to be licentious, dissolute, and cruel; for as in his youth it had been probable that he would succeed to a position in which it was important for the governments of the neighboring countries to know his disposition and character, he had taken pains to inform himself of them, and had learned that, while he had cultivated the forms and usages of society so as to have the manners of a gentleman, he was at heart a jealous tyrant, with the savage instincts of the gaucho. The Emperor was also well aware that Lopez had for years lived with a favorite who had great influence over him, and who was as ambitious, as false, and as cruel as himself; that

by her he had had many children, and that for them alone had he ever shown any affection ; and that any person whom for state or ambitious purposes he might take to share his throne would hold but the second place in his regard, and be in reality but the servant and captive of his mistress.

While Lopez was recruiting his army and making such extensive preparations for war, as was generally supposed, against the Argentine Republic, in which he had believed he would have the sympathy, if not the active support, of the Emperor, who, he hoped, was to be his father-in-law, all his hopes were suddenly dashed by learning, through the newspapers, that his Majesty, who had never officially responded to his advances, but had rather encouraged his warlike preparations against the Argentines, had contracted alliances for both his daughters with European princes. This information reached him about the time that General Netto was urging the imperial government to the invasion of the Banda Oriental, and great were his wrath and anger at finding that the Emperor had been encouraging him with vague intimations of support in his ambitious designs, rather as an Indian cacique than as the head of an independent nation. It was not until this time, to judge from his acts and from the tone of his paper, that he had ever contemplated hostilities with Brazil ; and the attitude of the Emperor towards the Republic of Uruguay had not disturbed him, as he supposed he might contract an alliance with the imperial family that would unite in a common cause the interests of the two empires. But as soon as he found the Emperor had designs entirely independent of him, from that moment he assumed to be the champion of republicanism against the ambitious projects of empire entertained by Brazil ; and his newspaper, the *Semanario*, from that moment began to assail the policy and conduct of the Brazilian government, and ceased to a great extent its attacks on President Mitre and the Argentine Confederation.

CHAPTER XXXV.

Intervention of Brazil in the Affairs of Uruguay. — Correspondence between Saraiva and the Oriental Minister for Foreign Affairs. — Don Cesar Sauvan Vianna de Lima. — Hon. Edward Thornton. — Don José Vasquez Sagastume. — Lopez declines to form an Alliance with Uruguay. — Violation of Confidence. — Official Receptions. — Lopez assumes the Character of Arbiter. — The English in Paraguay. — Case of William Atherton. — Advice of the English Minister. — Carlos and Fernando Saguier.

THE Emperor of Brazil had little anticipated the effect which his rejection of the overtures of Lopez towards a more intimate alliance would have upon him ; and when he yielded to the demands of his Rio Grande subjects that he should espouse the cause of Flores and make war on the Banda Oriental, he supposed that, by acceding to their wishes, nothing more would follow than that the lawful government of that Republic would be overturned and another substituted, the head of which would not be inimical to himself. Flores was known to be already in the interest and confidence of President Mitre, and if, through the aid of Buenos Aires alone, he were to overturn the existing government and set up another, with himself as President, the country might become a province of the Argentine Republic. It may have been that it was to avert this result that he acceded to the demands of Netto and his followers, as the alleged grievances of which his government complained had little or no foundation either in justice or fact.

The correspondence that took place between his minister, Saraiva, and the Oriental Minister for Foreign Affairs, Don Juan J. Herrera, is perhaps without parallel in diplomatic history. The insolent assurance on one side was so coolly and effectively met by facts incontrovertible and notorious on the other, fixing the burden of the wrongs on the Brazilians, that

the question of right was made palpable to all who read it; and had the Montevidean government had the sagacity to despatch a competent representative to Europe and the United States to press on the attention of different governments the merits of the controversy, the pretensions of Brazil must have been condemned and rebuked. It was but a repetition of the old story of the wolf and the lamb, except that the wolf did not attack the lamb at a time when it was being harried by dogs.

The Brazilian government, at the dictation of Netto, had determined to avail itself of the distresses of its neighbor to make war upon Uruguay at the very moment when the Flores invasion had assumed such formidable proportions as to threaten the existence of the legal government. It was the bully's time to strike. Herrera answered the arrogant note of Saraiva with dignity, against his claims alleging counter-claims of greater magnitude and as well sustained by proofs. He at the same time declared that his government had the best disposition to satisfy all just demands, while it would expect the same justice from the government of his Imperial Majesty. It was known that the pretensions of Brazil had been put forward at this time only as a pretext of intervention in behalf of Flores, as the military preparations for his assistance had already been made by raising troops to send to his aid,—a fact which Saraiva, with an effrontery almost sublime, admits in his first note to Herrera. He says that, "in order to hinder the passage of reinforcements through the southern frontier of the province of Rio Grande to General Flores, and to make them respect the territory of the Empire, the imperial government has resolved to increase its force stationed on that frontier." No one doubted that this force was intended to be launched into the Banda Oriental to aid Flores as soon as the terms proposed by Saraiva should be rejected, and which it was known and intended by the instigators of the war would be rejected.

The government of Uruguay, from the commencement of the Flores rebellion, had nourished a hope of assistance from Lopez; and notwithstanding he had rejected the alliance pro-

posed by Dr. Lapido, it sent some months afterwards, in May, 1864, another minister, Don José Vasquez Sagastume, to reside at Asuncion, and bring about some sort of an arrangement under which Uruguay and Paraguay might be united in the common cause. The Minister was accompanied by Francisco Rodriguez Larreta as secretary, — a young man of fine attainments belonging to an excellent family in Montevideo, and whose melancholy fate will be narrated at length in a subsequent chapter. The Oriental government had previously rejected all overtures of reconciliation with Flores, — both those made by Lopez the preceding year, and those offered by the ministers of England, Brazil, and Buenos Aires. Previous to the menace of Brazil to interfere in behalf of Flores, the Oriental government had felt no apprehension that the Emperor could be provoked to take the part of such a notorious outlaw.

The demands of Saraiva, however, opened their eyes to the dangers that beset them, and then they hastened to make terms with Paraguay, and, if possible, form an alliance offensive and defensive against Brazil. This, however, Lopez refused to do. In an arrogant note addressed by his Minister for Foreign Affairs, José Berges, to the Oriental minister resident in Asuncion, he reviewed the situation at great length, complaining of the course hitherto pursued by the Oriental government. In this note, though the two governments were professedly aiming to adopt some means of common defence, Lopez did not scruple to make use of the confidential communications of the former Oriental minister, Dr. Lapido, and immediately afterward publish them in the *Semanario*.* Whether this was done to prove his own superior astuteness, or to show that he was not to be bound by the ordinary principles that are supposed to obtain between governments in matters confidential, does not appear from the note itself. At the time of the publication of this note in the *Semanario*, the government

* "El Dr. Lapido presento confidencialmente á este Ministerio una carta particular que le dirigia el Señor Berro Presidente de esa Republica y aventuró despues la idea de la oportunidad y necesidad de que la Escuadra paraguaya en combinacion con la Oriental se apoderasen de la Isla de Martin Garcia."
— *Note of Minister José Berges, August 30, 1864.*

of Paraguay was figuring prominently in the politics of South America. Lopez had avowed that his object in interfering in the affairs of the neighboring countries was to maintain the balance of power, and prevent the larger states from absorbing the smaller ones. His assumption of the character of arbiter, whose dictum other nations must respect, caused great mirth and ridicule, at the time, in both Rio de Janeiro and Buenos Aires. But Paraguay, small as it was, and insignificant as it was commercially, had a standing army, well drilled and well armed, larger than all the neighboring states, and it could become a formidable enemy or a powerful ally. No one of the neighboring countries wished to quarrel with it; for besides having a large army, it had such advantages of position that it could inflict much injury on its enemies at little risk or damage to itself. For a civilized and strong power to make war on Paraguay would be like the attempts of the man to shear the wolf, — the wolf might, indeed, be shorn, and be damaged in the operation, but the fleece was sure not to pay the shearer.

The Brazilian government at this juncture took measures to conciliate Paraguay by sending Don Cesar Sauvan Vianna de Lima, as minister duly accredited, to reside at Asuncion. Brazil had latterly been represented at Paraguay only by *Chargés d'Affaires*. Lopez, it was well known, was ambitious to have his government recognized as of such importance by other nations as to merit, and require, diplomatic agents of a high rank. It little comported with his swelling greatness that Paraguay should be treated by the leading powers like Congo or Madagascar. A minister resident was therefore sent, at this crisis of affairs, to both flatter and placate the man who had set himself up as the preserver of the equilibrium of nations.

The appointment for this important office—the most important, as events proved, that the imperial government ever had it in its power to bestow—was not fortunate. Señor Vianna de Lima was an accomplished gentleman and an experienced diplomatist; but nearly all his diplomatic career had been passed in Europe. His last residence there had been in

Turin as the Brazilian *Chargé*, and his promotion from *Chargé* at Turin to Minister at Asuncion must have caused him feelings of mingled disgust and satisfaction. He accepted the situation, however, in the line of his career ; and to give the more appearance of a friendly disposition and of intention to remain, he was accompanied by his entire family and with all the outfit that it might be supposed would be required for a long residence. But he regarded the time to be passed as so many months or years of exile. Brazil was a great empire, and its agents were highly respected at the different courts of Europe. But Paraguay was an insignificant little state, scarcely known beyond South America. Its existence, even, as a separate state, was regarded by his government as an evil that should be abated on the first opportunity. It had been long tolerated, because it had not hitherto been quite convenient to extinguish it. With opinions of this kind, which, though entertained by his government, it was not diplomatic to manifest, Señor Vianna de Lima entered Paraguay.

He was not received graciously by Lopez. On the contrary, an incident occurred on the day of his formal reception that tended to excite both anger and contempt. Petty despotisms are always very punctilious on those matters of form and etiquette that in great states scarcely excite a thought. They fear that any non-observance of a mere formality is intended as a slight that would not be practised towards a great power ; and they stand on their rights and dignity in trivial matters with a pertinacity of form often inconvenient to themselves and always offensive to others. Another minister had arrived at the same time with Vianna de Lima. This was the Hon. Edward Thornton, her Britannic Majesty's minister plenipotentiary. He had been several times before in Paraguay on the business of her Majesty's government, but now he came to present his credentials as minister. He had resided for some time in that capacity in Buenos Aires, and had spent nearly twenty years of his diplomatic life in Spanish American countries. Neither he nor Vianna de Lima were likely, therefore, to omit any form or point of etiquette ; and if they were

not well informed on those matters, they did not go to Paraguay to be instructed. After their arrival they both formally announced the fact to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and requested an audience with the President to present their credentials. The day and hour for the reception of each was named, the English Minister taking precedence as being of the higher grade. They were advised, that, at the appointed hour, the state carriage would be sent to convey them to the Palace. Mr. Thornton and his secretary of legation were accordingly in readiness, dressed in full uniform, when the coach arrived ; but great was their surprise, when they attempted to enter it, on being told that the carriage was only for the minister, and that the secretary could not go in it. This was an unexpected predicament. Mr. Thornton had seen many diplomatic receptions before, and it had always been an object to have as many of the countrymen of the minister holding any official rank—such as consuls, naval officers, and even prominent citizens—in the train as possible ; and generally several carriages were provided to convey them all, both to give *éclat* to the affair and to indicate the good disposition of the government. But here he was refused the company of his secretary of legation, and so, “lone and lorn,” he entered the coach and was driven to the Palace, where he formally presented his credentials with the ordinary platitudes of congratulations, in which he said that he was deputed to express the deep interest felt by the Queen in the welfare and prosperity of Paraguay. To this President Lopez replied, saying that he was pleased to know that her Majesty was so deeply interested in *his* welfare. Perhaps he was thinking of recognition into royal circles of the Lopez dynasty, and of the time when he should call the Queen *my sister*. The Brazilian Minister, being advised that the state coach was not to be contaminated by bearing in it any person of lesser rank than a minister, did not expose himself to be taught the same lesson that had been so unceremoniously administered to Mr. Thornton, but went alone, without offering to take his secretary of legation.

This act, insignificant in itself, was not so in its results. It confirmed Vianna de Lima in his impressions that he had fallen among semi-barbarians, and could only be excused by Mr. Thornton on the ground of ignorance. This, however, the Paraguayan government never confessed. To the personal demand made afterwards to the President for an explanation of the affront, the usual excuse was given, — that the officer in charge had mistaken his orders. During my long residence in Paraguay, the government, from jealousy and excessive punctiliousness, made many similar errors, that, being seen afterwards, made it appear ridiculous, but it was always the fault of some official who had not understood his duty ; and this though everybody knew that there was no official, civil or military, in the country who dared do the most trifling act without express authority.

But Mr. Thornton had more serious questions than those of form or etiquette to settle with President Lopez on this occasion, and the latter was not disposed in the least to conciliate him. On his previous visits to Paraguay he had had to deal with the elder Lopez, who had treated him with respect, and with whom he had arranged the long-standing difficulty of the Canstatt affair. At that time his feelings towards Paraguay were most friendly and cordial, and his position was such as to give his representations in regard to the condition of Paraguay great weight with the English government. The successor, however, was so conscious of his own great powers, that he felt he might defy everybody ; and his treatment of certain English subjects, at this time, was such that the Minister could not disregard it. A case had arisen, just before Mr. Thornton's arrival, in which the rights of an Englishman had been most grossly infringed, and the newly accredited minister must either obtain redress or advise his government that his countrymen had no rights there that were respected, and that it was utter folly to maintain diplomatic relations with a power that had no regard for the laws of nations. The person whose affairs had thus complicated the situation was a merchant by the name of William Atherton. He had brought

considerable property into the country about a year before, which he had embarked in business as a general dealer. This man had entered into a negotiation with a couple of Paraguayan subjects, who had been wise enough, on seeing the tyrannical and destructive policy that the new President had adopted, to get out of the country before their purpose of keeping away from it was suspected. The persons referred to were the brothers Carlos and Fernando Saguier. The elder of these, Carlos, was a man of education and fine business talents, and in the time of the elder Lopez had been much consulted in business matters, and had received many favors from him in the way of privileges for collecting and exporting the yerba maté, and for any other business that he chose to embark in. The old man had generally monopolized every branch of trade or commerce that promised large profits to his own family. But Saguier was courtier and man of the world enough to get exceptions made in his favor; and as he had travelled abroad a good deal, his opinions in business matters were often consulted. He had been in his youth the most intimate companion of the young Francisco Solano, who, notwithstanding his arrogance and sense of superiority to all around him, felt that he must have some one to treat with as a companion. In appearance, education, and natural gifts, however, the courtier was far superior to the prince; and when the latter succeeded to power, the former knew enough of the character of the young sovereign to be aware that any offence would be pardoned sooner than superior ability. The strange conduct of the new President in seizing and throwing into prison so many of the richest, most respectable, and influential men in the country immediately after his accession naturally caused Saguier to fear lest his own turn might come next; but he kept as secluded as possible, and quietly attended to his business, not even going near the much-dreaded tyrant. Some time had passed after the inauguration, when he received an invitation to visit his Excellency the President. Of course he lost no time in reporting himself in the anteroom.

In the interview which followed, the President reproached

his old companion and schoolmate for keeping so much aloof, telling him that though he was now the head of the government, he desired that their old relations of intimacy and confidence should continue, as then, more than ever, he needed his counsel and advice. Saguier replied that he desired those relations should still exist, and that if his opinions were asked he should tell them frankly, approve when he could, and condemn when he must. "Certainly," replied Lopez; "speak freely your opinions, and tell me what you think of the present state of affairs, and of my government thus far." "There are some things I do not understand the reasons for, and, not understanding, I cannot approve." "How is that?" said Lopez; "what is it you do not approve?" "I do not understand why so many of the best men in the country have been thrown into prison; and it appears to me that the policy begun by your Excellency, if followed up, will not only prove disastrous to the country, but unfortunate for your own fame and reputation." "How, sir!" said Lopez, turning fiercely upon him; "do you not know that I can put you in the calaboose in three minutes, where you will no more insult me by your insolence?" "I am aware of your power," replied Saguier, "but as you asked my opinion, it was my duty to you as an old friend to tell you my honest convictions." "Very well, I need none of your advice." The interview closed, and Saguier was allowed to return to his own house "a sadder and a wiser man." He now realized to the full his own situation and that of the country, and at once made his plans for escape.

But to get away from Paraguay without the consent of the government was, and had been for fifty years, next to an impossibility. He must play the courtier and sycophant till he had reinstated himself in the good graces of his Excellency. This it was not easy to do, as he had previously offended the favorite mistress, who was supposed to be the only person having any influence over Lopez. The manner in which he had incurred the anger of this Jezebel is worthy of record, as showing the state of morals that obtained at the time.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

The Funeral of Carlos A. Lopez. — Rivalry of his Sons' Mistresses. — A Fancy-Dress Ball. — The Saguier escape from Paraguay. — Treatment of Atherton. — The People forced to appear happy and devoted to Lopez. — Frauds on English Employees. — Paraguay repudiated by the English Government. — The French Consul, Laurent Cochelet.

AT the death of the late President, his remains were taken to be interred in the church of La Trinidad, some four miles from the capital. There was a great funeral procession, as a matter of course, and the railroad train was put in requisition to convey people to the station, situate some quarter of a mile from the church. The immediate family went in carriages; but as carriages were scarce in Asuncion, those not in requisition for the family were employed to convey the near relatives to and from the station. After the ceremonies, and while people were leaving the church, Carlos Saguier, as master of ceremonies, escorted the Lady President and her daughters to their carriage, and was making himself useful in every way. As it happened, a vacant carriage stood near, — in fact, the carriage of the favorite. She was not at hand, and as fate would have it the mistress of her paramour's brother Venancio stood there ready to go. Saguier, without reflection, told her to get into the coach, and ordered the postilion to drive to the station and return. But scarcely had the carriage started when the favorite appeared, with her children by her side, her face covered "to hide the tears she did not shed." No sooner did she catch a glimpse of the carriage moving away with her despised sister-in-law — or, more properly, sister-out-of-law — than she forgot her grief, and turned furiously on Saguier to know why she had been thus insulted. Saguier protested the best intentions, and said he had sup-

posed the carriage would return before she would require it, and did not know that it was purposely for her. Scornfully telling him he lied, she moved off indignantly on foot for the station, and for the first time that day she then wept real tears, and would not be comforted.

But in time he managed to placate the wrath of the offended mistress, and was called by her to consult on matters of display and ceremony. A fancy-dress ball being given a few months after, he was obsequious in his attentions and assiduous in his services. This ball, like most balls in Asuncion, was strictly an official affair. People were invited to attend, but the invitation among the natives was equivalent to a command. The imported favorite was the leader of fashion, and had the almost unlimited direction of all such matters; and the custom of having a new dress for each ball, which when a grisette of Paris she had observed, she enforced in Asuncion among people who would have danced much more at their ease barefoot and in the Paraguayan *tupoi*. At this fancy ball she prescribed the dress for all, — assigning the garb of a Swiss shepherdess for one, an Italian fruit-seller for another, and prescribing for each some peculiar style of costume, but arraying herself in the gorgeous style of Queen Elizabeth. Carlos Saguier, as the Doge of Venice, paid court to the Queen; and the affair passed off so well that he seemed to regain the favor which he had lost, both with the favorite and the President. He and his brother Fernando continued their business affairs ostensibly as before, though gradually contracting their operations, collecting their dues, and sending their proceeds to Buenos Aires. They had a contract with the Brazilian Navigation Company to supply the coal in the Paraguayan ports for the line of steamers running from Montevideo to Matto Grosso. This profitable contract they had held for years, of course with the consent and approval of the government, as no subject was ever allowed to transact any business that the government did not approve. As yet, up to the latter part of the year 1863, there were no indications of a rupture with Brazil, the coal contract was in full force, and the business

of the Saguers seemed to be going on as prosperously as ever. But they knew the character of the man that was over them, and they saw the ruin that was impending as clearly as Elisha foresaw the cruelties and tyranny that would be inflicted on his people by Hazael. Fernando, alleging that his business affairs required his presence in Buenos Aires, asked for a passport, — no one was allowed to leave the country without a passport, and stowaways and fugitives were unknown, — and it was granted. Before his return Carlos did the same thing, having first, in a familiar conversation, mentioned his desire to make his usual visit at carnival time to the Porteños. He, too, obtained his passport; but he had hardly escaped beyond the reach of Lopez when it appeared that the English merchant, Atherton, had purchased nearly all their personal property, including their contract with the Brazilian Navigation Company, and all the coal then on hand. The wrath of his Excellency, when he found that these men had outwitted and escaped him, was Achillean. For a person to escape from his grasp was an insult to his clemency and justice. To resign his power over an individual was like giving up his heart's blood. Throughout his whole career, if a person was once in his power he held to him with an iron grasp, as we shall cite numerous instances to prove; and even those who had incurred danger and toil to enter his country to serve him found that country was to them a very cave of Cacus, and that for them there was no egress during the lifetime of the friend they had come to serve. The appropriate motto to have placed over the entrance to Paraguay was that which Dante saw at the entrance of the Inferno, "Let him who enters here leave hope behind."

But if the Saguers had escaped him, yet Atherton was still in Paraguay. His purchase had been in accordance with the forms of law, the papers had been duly signed and witnessed, and there was no just reason why, on showing them, he should not take possession. But he was suddenly interrupted in his negotiation. One morning a large police force entered his premises and arrested him, searched every nook and corner of his house, and seized all his account-books

with every letter, bill, paper, or scrap that had a word written on it, and carried them away. These were examined minutely to find if Atherton had not in some way evaded or violated the law. He himself was afterwards examined at great length, in the expectation of finding something illegal in his conduct. An examination by Paraguayan officials, whenever they wished to make out a case against a man, was nothing more nor less than a protracted torture. In the case of Atherton, he was taken early in the morning to the office of an *escribano*, or clerk, who began by asking all sorts of irrelevant questions. Then, if an answer was not satisfactory, he was threatened with dire punishment for his contumacy, and finally the answer would be written down as the government desired it should be. The examination conducted in this manner was continued all day, the man not knowing whether he was to be sent to prison at night, taken out and shot the next morning, or again set at liberty. He was allowed nothing to eat all day, and even a glass of water was refused him by the churlish *escribano*. He was permitted to return to his house to sleep at night, but the examination was continued till his answers as written out by the *escribano* inculpated him in serious offences. The property bought from Saguier, consisting of a coal-hulk and coal, and two or three tanneries, was seized by the government; and when all was arranged to its satisfaction, and Atherton was made to appear to have committed many and gross offences, he was compelled to sign the testimony, not given by him, but as written down by the *escribano*, and certified to by him as being a true and correct report of his evidence.

It was when the affair had arrived at this stage that Mr. Thornton arrived to present his credentials as minister plenipotentiary to Paraguay. Naturally he was very indignant at such treatment of an English subject by the direct action of the government, which, if perpetrated by a great power, would be followed by a peremptory demand for reparation. His energetic protests were followed by a return of Mr. Atherton's books and papers, and he was allowed to resume his former

business. The Saguier property, however, was not restored to him. The government, though it could prove nothing against Atherton or the regularity of the purchase, had another way to effect its plan of sequestration. The Saguiers had a younger brother, Adolfo, who never having been connected with them in business, and, being an employee of the government, they had supposed he would not be implicated with them. This brother was now brought forward and forced to assert a partnership interest with the brothers, and a suit was commenced ostensibly in his behalf. The judgment was, of course, in his favor. Atherton, nevertheless, appealed to a higher court; but the government having the property tied up and secure against both him and the Saguiers delayed any further action till the death of Atherton, which took place a year or so later, after which there was no foreigner to move further in the matter.

This action of Lopez, in the case of Atherton, convinced Mr. Thornton that Paraguay was no place for his countrymen or for any foreigners. Though he had been in Paraguay several times before, he saw that in the short time the new President had been in power he had established a reign of fear and terror such as he had never seen before. The popular festivities of balls, bull-fights, races, and games were kept up during all the time he remained; and every evening there were bonfires in the plazas, around which the people gathered in large numbers, and danced till late at night to testify their joy and their love for the great Lopez, in whose honor these demonstrations were made. Yet even by a stranger it was easy to be seen that it was all forced, and that there was no real joy or hilarity among the people. Processions were sent every evening, under direction of the police, with bands of music, through the streets; and they would always stop in front of the residence of the different foreign ministers and consuls and perform some dance of the country. The object of these forced demonstrations was to show the representatives of foreign governments how happy the people were, and how devoted to Lopez. It had the contrary effect; for not even the ominous

hints of the better class of people, the prisons full of the best men in the country, or anything else, so completely proved the abject fear and slavery of the masses as these forced attempts to appear happy.

While Mr. Thornton was there, I remember that one day, at about 3 P. M., I went to call on him. He had rooms in the Club on the same street with, and very near to, Lopez's private residence. It was an oppressively warm day, slight showers and sunshine alternating with each other, and not a breath of air stirring. Yet at this hour a band of music was playing in front of the President's house, and about fifty of the lower class of men and women were trying to make it appear that they were dancing, laughing, and shouting from excess of joy. The disgust of her Majesty's Minister at such a shallow device to impose upon him was intense, and the language he used in expressing his opinion was certainly free from diplomatic generalities.

Exhibitions of this kind, and the other evidences that a reign of terror had set in which he saw, served to convince the Minister that the best advice he could give his countrymen was to leave Paraguay as soon as possible.

But, with few exceptions, they were all of them under contract with the government. They had been engaged in London by the agents of Paraguay, and all of them were dissatisfied with their treatment. The conduct of these agents, J. and A. Blyth, machinists and founders, Limehouse, was scandalous and dishonest. They would receive orders to engage a certain number of machinists, draughtsmen, engineers, physicians, or any class of men skilled in their profession whose services were needed, under contract generally for three years, at a stipulated rate of wages. By advertising in the newspapers, or in some other way, they would make known that such men were needed, and candidates for the situations would apply to them for the terms and the services required. The answer would always be that they were wanted in that modern paradise, Paraguay. But as probably not one out of ten had ever heard of such a place, and those who had

could not tell whether it was approached from the Pacific or Atlantic, they naturally desired more definite information as to the character of the country, the sort of government they would be under, and the expenses of living to which they would be subjected. The Blyths could not speak from personal knowledge, they had never been in Paraguay; but they had a witness at hand, — a convenient and swift witness, and one paid by Paraguay for the very purpose of lying and deceiving young men into a service which few would ever leave alive. This man is since dead, and as no good purpose can be subserved by fixing the stigma on his name which his offences richly merit, I withhold it. He had been employed to take out to the Plata the steamer *Rio Blanco*, which had been purchased in England in the year 1854. He remained in Paraguay some two or three years, and after his return was pensioned off as capper, or witness, for Paraguay. To him the unsuspecting victims would be referred, and the bluff, honest old seaman would invite them to dine with him. Over the dinner he would descant on the glories of Paraguay, its beautiful and healthful climate, its luscious fruits, its amiable men and lovely women, and, above all, its free and liberal government; a republic, too, where the poor young stranger found every avenue for wealth and distinction open to him, with no effete aristocracy to monopolize all the places of honor and profit. And then the expenses there were as nothing. The country was so fertile and prolific that twenty pounds a year was sufficient to support a family; and the government was liberal with strangers, especially the English, giving them houses rent free, and loading them with favors at all times. Well might he call it liberal! It was probably paying for the dinner they were eating, but it was the bait for gudgeons. In justice to this man it should be said that his treatment by the Paraguayan government was doubtless much better than that of his countrymen whom he induced to go there. But the abuse was continued so long, and so many complaints went back to him and to the Blyths from their unfortunate dupes, that he must have known he was

grossly deceiving all whom he afterwards encouraged to go there.

The contracts made with these men were for a stipulated number of pounds sterling. Nothing more was ever said to them on that score. But as soon as they reached Paraguay they found that a pound sterling was just what the government chose to consider it. A pound sterling in the other countries of the Plata is equivalent to \$4.90 silver, and a gold ounce is reckoned at sixteen Spanish dollars. In one of these three, it was immaterial which, they had expected to be paid. But on arriving at Paraguay, they, for the first time, learned that only one half of their wages was to be paid in coin, — and this in ounces at \$17.25 each, instead of the current mercantile rate of \$16. If paid in *patacones*, or silver dollars, they were reckoned at ten reals each, or one fifth more than their value, so that on the half paid in coin they were forced to submit to a reduction of from six to twenty per cent. The balance, or other half, of their wages they were obliged to receive in the Paraguayan currency, on which from the first they suffered a still greater loss. Previous to the war the price of ounces varied from twenty-one to twenty-five dollars, currency, so that the average loss on this half of their stipulated salary was about thirty per cent. After the war commenced, the paper money rapidly depreciated; and by the middle of the year 1867, ounces sold as high as eighty to eighty-five paper dollars. None of the foreign employees, however, received any part of their pay in ounces after the war was fairly commenced; and towards the latter part of it they were obliged to submit to a loss of twenty per cent on the half paid in silver, and of eighty per cent on the half paid in paper. But even this was not the worst. Those whose contracts expired seldom cared to make new ones, and they were forced by intimidation to work for the government on its own terms and take their pay all in paper.

The principal engineers of the railroad, Mr. Percy Burrell and Mr. Henry Valpy, were both treated in this way; and, strange as it may seem to those familiar with the events of

those terrible times, they both had the good fortune to be taken prisoners by the allies before Lopez had either shot them or tortured them to death, after the manner he had served nearly all the other foreigners in the country. Mr. Burrell was not only a man of much ability in his profession, but so much of an architect as to make the plans for the President's new palace, one of the finest buildings in South America. He had made a contract with the Blyths in London by which he was to receive eight hundred pounds sterling a year. At the commencement of the war he desired to quit the service and leave the country, but was not permitted to do so, and was afterwards ordered to the camp to perform service as military engineer. He complied, and made the plans of the encampment at Cerro Leon; but when requested to render similar service in front of the enemy at Itapiru he declined, and was glad to save his life and liberty by consenting to continue his services as railroad engineer for half his stipulated salary, paid all in paper. Both he and Valpy were ultimately forced to perform duty in the camp under such threats that they considered the only alternative to military service in the field would be imprisonment and fetters. There were other cases of similar hardship, but this will serve as an illustration of the way Englishmen who had made contracts in London were treated after they had reached Paraguay.

On the arrival of Mr. Thornton they complained to him of the fraud that had been practised upon them. But he could only tell them, that, having made contracts to serve a foreign government, they had forfeited all protection of their own, that they could only look for justice and protection to the country whose service they had entered; and that, if the government chose to maltreat and rob them, they had no remedy so long as their contracts lasted. But he advised them as fast as their engagements expired to leave the country, and told them if they chose to remain after that time, knowing the character of the government, it would be at their own risk. The British interests in Paraguay were not of sufficient importance to justify the English government in sending an

expedition to chastise Paraguay for maltreatment of its citizens. The United States government had done that at an expense of three millions of dollars, and the expedition that went for wool came back shorn. England was not disposed to incur any such expense, nor was she disposed to have any number of her subjects exposed to the tyranny of a government that respected no law human or divine, but was subject only to the caprice of one man. Therefore her Minister advised his countrymen to leave Paraguay, and warned them that if they remained they would be at the mercy of a cruel tyrant. He said that the English government would not send a consul to Paraguay, as that would encourage more Englishmen to go there ; and it was not its policy to encourage its subjects to enter foreign countries where it could not protect them without incurring millions of expense, and could not leave them to be persecuted without incurring general censure.

Having thus advised his countrymen to save themselves while there was yet time, the English Minister left Paraguay. He had received a personal affront, and had seen that Lopez was a savage and paid no regard to the rights of foreigners. His representations to his own government must have been in accordance with these impressions. Paraguay was represented to be like Abyssinia, and Lopez like King Theodore. A despotism so situated was an obstacle in the path of civilization. Insignificant in itself, it could impede the development and progress of all its neighbors. Its existence was a nuisance, and its extinction as a distinct nationality, or the overthrow of the reigning family, would be a benefit to its own people and to all the world besides.

At this time, however, President Lopez felt so strong in himself and his position that he thought he might defy the world. He was about to enter on a war for which he had been years preparing, while his enemies, whoever they might be, — for as yet he did not know against whom the war was to be made, — would be undisciplined and unprepared. A short campaign would establish his fame as a great warrior and the

arbiter of South America, and then he would neither ask nor need the favor or sympathy of foreign nations.

But the projects of Lopez sadly miscarried; and when, a year after, he found he had greatly miscalculated the endurance of his adversaries, and was calling for aid from abroad, he thought it very strange that England and all Christendom did not rush to his rescue. Mr. Thornton, in the mean while, had been promoted to be her Majesty's envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary to Brazil, where, instead of being snubbed at presenting his credentials, and forbidden to take his secretary with him, he had been received with unprecedented honors, and all the fine carriages that could be obtained were sent in procession to convey him and his whole suite, besides naval officers, consuls, and private citizens who chose to honor the occasion of the renewal of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

In entering upon a war that may be long and exhausting, a ruler of ordinary sense will so forelay his plans as to be on as good terms as possible with the great powers of the world. Lopez, however, pursued a course the opposite of this in regard to both England and France. He took every possible opportunity to annoy the French consul, M. Cochelet, and render his residence in Paraguay disagreeable. He would not commit any act of so gross a nature that the French government could make it a *casus belli*, but he caused it to be so well understood that the Frenchman was not in favor that scarcely anybody would visit him. The English, with one or two exceptions, dared not go near him. On one occasion Lopez called Burrell and Valpy before him, and broke forth in a furious tirade against them for their intimacy with M. Cochelet. His rage on that occasion, as described by them, was more like that of a wild beast than anything human. He raved and frothed at the mouth, accusing them of hostility to himself and friendship for his enemies. They protested that they were unconscious of any act of which he could complain. At this he launched forth still more furiously, and they supposed their hour had come. Under these circumstances they were

glad to promise to serve him for mere nominal wages, and retire from his presence and never go near the obnoxious Frenchman again.

For the consul of a great nation, perhaps no man ever had so disagreeable a position as was that of M. Cochelet. For eleven months he was without a word or line from his government or from anybody beyond the limits of Paraguay. Scarcely a soul, native or foreigner, dared come near his house ; and he and his family, in a city of some fifteen thousand people, were almost as isolated from the world as though they had been cast on a desert island. Not being prepared at that time to do violence to the consul himself, Lopez seemed to take a fiendish delight in arresting, imprisoning, and maltreating other French subjects purposely to annoy the consul. Of course, when the latter got an opportunity to send away his despatches he represented Lopez as he had found him ; so that during the whole war the French Foreign Office could not but regard him as the common enemy of civilized nations, and give all the sympathy and moral support that a neutral nation might do to the powers allied against him.

Mr. Thornton's despatches to his government were of a similar character. He advised Earl Russell that to the despotism of Carlos A. Lopez had succeeded one that was indescribably worse ; that the new President had already developed into a tyrant so vain, arrogant, and cruel that there was no misery, suffering, or humiliation to which all within his power were not exposed. Thus Lopez before the war began, and as if to show his contempt for the great powers, went out of his way to insult their representatives. He afterwards wondered why, when he was reduced to desperate straits, they did not come to his rescue ; but it was no wonder to Minister Thornton or to Consul Cochelet.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Banda Oriental. — The Demands of Brazil. — Gauchoism in the Ascendant. — Leandro Gomez. — Carreras sent to Paraguay. — Lopez declines an Alliance with the Banda Oriental, but protests against the Occupation of Oriental Territory by the Brazilian Forces. — Carreras constituted the Government. — Operations of the Brazilian Squadron. — Bombastic Circular of the Admiral. — Seizure of the Marques de Olinda, and Treatment of those on Board. — The Brazilian Minister. — Efforts in his Behalf. — Interview with the President. — Discussion of the Military Situation. — Privileges of Foreign Ministers. — Official Correspondence.

WHILE the events related in the last chapter were transpiring in Paraguay, the correspondence between the governments of Rio de Janeiro and Montevideo was approaching a conclusion. To the answer of the Oriental Minister for Foreign Relations, Don Juan J. Herrera, in which he had set up counter-claims to those made by the Brazilian commissioners, and proposed an amicable adjustment of all, the reply of the Brazilians was tantamount to this: We want our claims paid now, but yours can stand over, and unless you accede to our terms we will blockade your ports and take possession of your territory. This was the substance, expressed in diplomatic phraseology, that, unless the long-pending demands were immediately satisfied, the government of his Imperial Majesty would proceed at once to make reprisals. This note, to the credit of the little Republic, was returned unanswered, as insulting and disrespectful. The senior member of the commission, Señor Saraiva, thereupon withdrew from Montevideo and went to Buenos Aires, and presented his credentials as envoy extraordinary. So notorious and well understood was it that the Buenos Airean government was in collusion with Flores, that the announcement of this fact was universally received as a proclamation that Herod and Pilate

had shaken hands and made an alliance with the unrepentant thief. From thenceforth the legitimate or blanco government, that before the Flores invasion had no opposition, and represented nearly all the wealth and respectability and four fifths of the population, was doomed. Gauchoism was again in the ascendant.

The threat of reprisals made by Saraiva previous to his departure for Buenos Aires to concert measures of aggression with that *neutral* power was carried into effect in September, 1864, by the attempt of a Brazilian gunboat to capture the Oriental steamer Villa del Salto. The effort was not successful, for by this time the Montevidean government so far realized its desperate situation as to forget the petty jealousies existing between rival factions, and call into the service its ablest men. Leandro Gomez, a man in whom all had recognized a reserved or latent power that had so clearly marked him as a natural leader as to cause him to be looked upon by all the aspirants for the Presidency—and their name was legion—as the only obstacle in their way, had at last been called upon to take command of the national forces. He was a man without military education or experience, but with a natural valor and capacity that supplied all defects,—a man whose career was too short to fill a prominent place in history, but “the deep damnation of his taking off” makes a blot on the ink-dyed page of Brazilian colorado treachery. He was then stationed at Paysandu, with a force of some eight hundred men. The Brazilian squadron had already besieged Montevideo, and its gunboats were plying up and down the river, with orders to seize any Oriental vessel that might be encountered. The steamer Villa del Salto was lying in the port of the town of the same name. Gomez sent an order for it to proceed to Paysandu. It started out into the stream, and the commander, who is accused of having been corrupted by the Brazilians, purposely kept his course on the right or Argentine bank of the river, so that the vessel was within the Argentine jurisdiction at the time. But whether or not this was done by previous agreement, it is cer-

tain that the first act of hostility on the part of Brazil took place in Argentine territory, that was at the time professing the strictest neutrality. This violation of its territory, however, was never complained of by the Argentine government. Its acquiescence in the act, on the contrary, was taken as evidence of complicity with Brazil, and Paranhos paraded the fact in the Brazilian Chambers as a justification of his own conduct. The steamer returned to the port of Villa del Salto, where, by order of Gomez, she was destroyed, to prevent her from falling into the hands of the Brazilians.

But a more important step had been taken by the Oriental government than the calling of Leandro Gomez into the military service. In July, 1864, it had despatched Antonio de las Carreras to Paraguay on a special mission. This fact being known, it was evident there was to be no more child's play or petty jealousies to distract the attention of the government or waste its resources. Carreras was extremely unpopular with the colorado party and its sympathizers on account of his part in the Quinteros affair. It was true that his energy had crushed out almost instantly the Diaz rebellion, and put revolutions out of fashion, so that no other was attempted for seven years afterwards, and the country, instead of being cursed again with civil war, enjoyed, until the time of the Flores invasion, a degree of prosperity unexampled in South American history. If he was to be readmitted into the councils of the government, it was very certain that Flores and his gauchos would have some hard fighting to do, instead of the diversions of freebooters. This, it was said at the time, had the effect to hasten the action of the Brazilian commissioners, Saraiva and Bastos, to commence reprisals, hoping that Flores, with the assistance of the Brazilian troops, would be able to drive out the legitimate government before Carreras could bring any effective resistance against them.

Carreras, on being called into the councils, offered to proceed at once to Paraguay, and if President Lopez could be induced to take up arms in defence of the Oriental inde-

pendence, he would then return to take the entire management of home affairs. But he would be the government, and not subject to any cabinet councils or superior dictation. On the 28th of August he returned from his mission, and was immediately made Minister of Foreign Relations, Minister of Finance, and Minister of War and Marine. He had not been able to draw Paraguay into an alliance, though he took with him assurances that Lopez would resist the encroachments of Brazil and had seen that he was preparing for war, and was determined to make war on somebody, and show the world that it still had a great warrior, though Napoleon was dead. Soon after his departure, therefore, the Minister for Foreign Relations, José Berges, addressed a note, in accordance with the programme previously agreed upon, to the Oriental Minister resident, Vasquez Sagastume, in which the alliance previously proposed was declined. But though declining an alliance, Paraguay would by independent action endeavor to maintain the equilibrium of the Plata, and thus reach the same general result.

On the same day, August 30, 1864, Señor Berges addressed a note to Vianna de Lima, the Brazilian Minister. This note was in the form of a protest, in which, referring to the ultimatum of Commissioner Saraiva, threatening reprisals and occupation of the Oriental territory in case his demands were not satisfied, it was ambiguously stated that Paraguay would regard such a proceeding as a just cause of war. As very much depends on the construction put on this note in forming a judgment on the events that followed, a literal extract and translation of the material part of it are here given:—

‘His Excellency, the President of the Republic, has ordered the undersigned to declare to your Excellency, as the representative of his Majesty the Emperor of Brazil, that the government of the Republic of Paraguay will regard any occupation of the Oriental territory by Imperial forces, for the reasons alleged in the *ultimatum* of the 4th instant, which was addressed to the Oriental government by the Emperor’s minister plenipotentiary charged with a special mission near that government, as infringing the equilibrium of the

states of the Plata, which concerns the Republic of Paraguay as a guaranty of its security, peace, and prosperity ; and that it protests against such an act in the most solemn manner, disclaiming from the present time all responsibility for the ulterior consequences of the present declaration."*

This was understood by the Brazilian government, as by everybody else, to be but a strong protest, and was taken as an intimation that Paraguay might declare war in case that Brazil carried her threat of reprisals and occupation of the Banda Oriental into execution. No one, however, understood it as a declaration of war, nor as an intimation that without further notice hostilities would be commenced, if Brazil should begin war against the Republic of the Uruguay. The alliance with the latter had been declined by President Lopez, and therefore an invasion of its territory could not be regarded as an act of war against Paraguay. It was not considered, even in Paraguay, that war with Brazil would commence without further notice ; and there is good reason for believing that Lopez himself did not intend it at the time, and it is certain that he had information of the hostile proceedings of Brazil against Uruguay for some days before he did any act indicating that war had begun. A short time previously he had sent a note to the Argentine government of similar import and tenor to the protest of the 30th of August. Yet the Argentines had not desisted from their course by reason of this threat of Lopez, but they continued to do just what he protested against, and yet he did not follow up his protest by any overt act of war against the Argentine Republic. It was not war

* " S. E. el Sr. Presidente de la Republica ha ordenado al abajo firmado declarar á V. E. como Representante de S. M. el Emperador del Brasil ; que el Gobierno de la Republica del Paraguay considerará cualquiera ocupacion del territorio Oriental por fuerzas imperiales por los motivos consignados en el *ultimatum* del 4 de este mes, intimado al Gobierno Oriental por el Ministro Plenipotenciario del Emperador en mision especial cerca de aquel Gobierno, como atentatorio al equilibrio de los Estados del Plata que interesa á la Republica como garantia de su seguridad, paz y prosperidad, que protesta de la manera mas solemne contra tal acto, descargándose desde luego de toda la responsibilidad de las ulteriores de la presente declaracion."

then which followed, and no one could suppose that so different a construction would be put on the two protests so exactly alike in character. The attempt to capture the Villa del Salto took place on the 26th of August, 1864, and the Brazilian troops entered the Oriental state as early as the 16th of October. Of both of these acts President Lopez was promptly informed. But he made no intimation that war had already commenced, not even to the Oriental Minister, with whom he was in almost daily consultation. Had the war been commenced by Brazil, as was afterwards alleged, by acts of overt hostility against Uruguay, then it was clearly the duty of the government to notify the Brazilian Minister of the fact, and send him his passports. But that was not done, and there was no intention of doing anything of the kind, as it had not at that time occurred to any one, not even to Lopez, that Brazil had begun war on Paraguay.

To the protest of the 30th of August, Vianna de Lima made an immediate reply, — a reply evincing his confidence in the capacity of his own government at will to wipe Paraguay out of existence. He declared that his government would not for any consideration be diverted from its purpose of securing indemnification from the Republic of Uruguay.

It was about six weeks after the interchange of these notes that the Brazilian troops entered the Oriental territory and commenced what were called reprisals. The Brazilian government, however, declared it was not making war. It had only taken this course to collect its debts. Soon after taking this step, that certainly looked like an act of war though called by another name, the Brazilian government sent a large squadron to Montevideo to establish a blockade such as was never heard of or imagined before. The object of this was to blockade vessels bearing the national flag of the port, and leave all other flags free. A regular blockade could only exist during time of war, and therefore it was given out, that, without making war, Oriental vessels might be captured as reprisals. The Oriental vessels had previously been employed, to a greater or less extent, in conveying troops and munitions

of war to different points on the river Uruguay, where they were required. To put a stop to this, the Brazilian admiral established his new kind of blockade. As the troops and arms carried by these vessels had always been employed against Flores and his gang, this lawless proceeding was evidently for his benefit, and was generally so understood. Yet there had been no declaration of war, and Brazil, like the Argentine Republic, professed to observe the strictest neutrality in the Oriental strife. It afterwards occurred to the stupid admiral, who enjoyed the title of the Baron de Tamandaré, but whose proper title would be the "Genius of Imbecility," that neutral vessels, as well as those bearing the white and blue stripes, might be employed by the Oriental government in conveying munitions of war. He therefore addressed a circular letter to the different foreign ministers in Montevideo, advising them of the kind of blockade he had established, and requesting them to give the necessary orders to all vessels under their respective flags, that they should not receive aboard either troops or munitions of war, and thus maintain the perfect neutrality incumbent on them at that juncture. But in case they did not observe that perfect neutrality, then, he said, he would be obliged to exercise over them a constant vigilance and seize whatever he found aboard contraband of war.

To this arrogant and foolish circular the ministers all immediately responded with wonderful unanimity. They all protested that there could be no such thing as neutrality, as there were no recognized belligerents. There had been no declaration of war on the part of Brazil, and therefore all commerce, whether of warlike stores and arms or general merchandise, was alike legitimate, and would be protected by their respective governments. The English *Chargé d'Affaires*, William G. Lettsom, expressed the general import of the replies of all in the following terms: "There are no belligerents in the contest now going on, inasmuch as the military chief who has thought proper to raise the standard of rebellion against the government of his country cannot be regarded by me in the character of a belligerent. He is

simply a rebel; and, there being no belligerents, there are no neutrals."

After this unanimous response to his bombastic circular, the gallant admiral subsided, and made no more threats of searching neutral vessels in time of peace. He was, however, left in command of the squadron for more than two years, during which time it absolutely did nothing but disgrace itself, and spend millions on millions of money. The scintillations of his genius for doing nothing will be found to illuminate greatly the period when he was in authority.

The first overt act of hostility on the part of Brazil took place on the 26th of August, four days before the date of the Paraguayan protest. This fact was known in Asuncion by the 12th of September, if not earlier. No notice, however, was given to the Brazilian Minister that war had commenced. On the contrary, when he was asked for explanations in regard to it, he replied he had none to give, as he had no official information in regard to the matter. On the 14th of October, the invasion of the Banda Oriental by the Brazilian troops took place. This was known in Asuncion a few days later, but no one there thought of war as being at hand, nor did President Lopez at that time consider that the friendly relations with Brazil had been broken off. Vianna de Lima continued to reside at Asuncion, and held occasional interviews with the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and was treated in all things as though there had been no interruption of former relations. The Paraguayan packet steamers came and went as usual, passing the Brazilian gunboats in the river, whose commanders never suspected that they were the vessels of an enemy.

Thus affairs stood on the 9th of November, 1864, when the Brazilian packet steamer *Marques de Olinda* arrived at Humaita on its way, as usual, to Matto Grosso. This steamer belonged to a company that was subsidized by the government to make eight round trips a year between Rio de Janeiro and the upper waters of the Paraguay. The service was performed by an ocean packet from Rio to Montevideo, from Mon-

tevideo to Corumba in the province of Matto Grosso by the Marques de Olinda, and from Corumba to Cuyuba, a distance of some six hundred miles, in steamers of lighter draught. It had started on its regular trip, and nothing of danger was suspected, as two months had passed since the publication of the protest of the 30th of August, and no steps had been taken by Paraguay to indicate that it was at war with Brazil. On the contrary, the letters of the Brazilian Minister in Asuncion to his colleague in Buenos Aires, written after the news of the occupation of the Oriental territory by the imperial troops had reached Paraguay, made no allusion to any change in his relations with the government of Paraguay. And when the steamer reached the fortifications at Humaita she made her customary salute to the fort, which was returned as ever before, and the steamer proceeded on her way to Asuncion, where she arrived early on the morning of the 11th of November. Suspecting nothing, she brought the letters of all who chose to send their correspondence by her instead of waiting for the Paraguayan packet. The letters were promptly delivered without suspicion, the necessary coal and provisions were taken aboard, and about one o'clock the same day the steamer started again on her voyage.

Here it becomes necessary to allude to what had been transpiring elsewhere. We have seen that in the month of the preceding August Dr. Carreras had left Paraguay, bearing assurances from President Lopez that he would take a part in the war that was impending over the Republic of the Uruguay. He had a large army well organized and armed, and he had promised to employ it against those who were seeking to overthrow the Oriental independence. Returning with such assurances, Carreras was constituted *the government* of Montevideo, the three most important departments being all confided to his hands. Yet for some time Lopez made no sign. He had indeed put forth the protest of the 30th of August, but it was followed by no decided action. He had months before made a similar protest against the Argentine Republic, but he did nothing afterwards ; and perhaps, on this

occasion, he was only seeking to frighten by the terror of proclamations, instead of venturing into actual war. The minister resident at Asuncion, Vasquez Sagastume, was a man of most courtly manners and persuasive eloquence. His object, and that of Carreras, was to draw Lopez into some act of overt hostility so that he would be compelled to bring his large forces into the field, and thus draw off the attention of the enemies of the Oriental Republic. They cared little how he commenced his operations if he would only begin, as they owed neither respect nor good-will to the Brazilians or Argentines, who had both been making a dishonest and treacherous warfare on the legitimate government of their country, in defiance of every principle of morality and good faith. Sagastume knew the weakness of Lopez, and knew that no flattery was too gross for his ears. He told him that he was a great warrior, as had been established when he was but a boy in the campaign of Corrientes, where, though his enemies said no fighting had been done by his troops, and he had not been near enough to a battle-field to hear the whistling of a bullet, yet had his masterly dispositions so confounded the enemy that they were glad to make terms. And then with his army all armed and disciplined he could throw a large force into Brazilian territory, take possession of several important towns, and so distract and harass the Empire that his Majesty would be glad to treat for peace on any terms that the conqueror might demand. Then what a name and fame he would have!

Yet all these flattering illusions were as nothing to those that Lopez cherished in his own mind. In convivial and unguarded moments he sometimes showed that he entertained projects so vast, fanciful, and ridiculous that the reverie at Alnaschar was in comparison but a reasonable calculation. But he was not yet ready to begin his grand enterprise. He had heard of the revolution in naval warfare caused by the monitors and iron-clads of the United States, and he knew that neither Brazil nor the Argentine Republic had any vessels of the kind, nor had they bespoken any. His plan was

therefore to obtain one, two, or three of these invulnerable steamers before his designs were suspected by his neighbors. For this purpose he ordered his Congress to authorize a loan of \$ 25,000,000, which he believed could be negotiated in Europe on such terms as would supply the funds necessary for such a fleet. Once provided with vessels of this class, then his way was clear. He would sweep down like Napoleon from the Alps on unprotected Buenos Aires and Montevideo. He would have the valley of the Plata at his feet, and then, while all the world trembled at the terror of his name, he would sweep round to Rio de Janeiro and dictate to it terms of surrender; and then, while the Yankees were paralyzed at his audacity, he would enter the harbor of New York and demand satisfaction for the insult and wrongs suffered by his country in the affair of the Water Witch.

But affairs seemed to be culminating in the Banda Oriental, and that in contempt of his protest and his promise to preserve the equilibrium. He wanted time, if not time sufficient to make his loan and build or buy iron-clads, at least till a large quantity of arms already ordered, and many of them on the way, should be safe above Humaita. The Oriental government, impatient of delay, sent several agents in a semi-official capacity to urge immediate action, and to see and report if Lopez was really preparing for war. Among these was a colonel in the Oriental army, named Laguna, and a man by the name of Juan J. Soto, who formerly having been a merchant in Asuncion had known Lopez intimately, and had ever since kept up a correspondence with him. The former, it will be seen, remained too long, and to his great sorrow. Soto, however, returned and reported the attitude of Lopez as doubtful and undecided. But he soon devised a way to make him break cover.

The Marques de Olinda was to start on her regular trip for Matto Grosso, and it was reported that the Brazilian war steamer Amazonas was to accompany her. It was surmised that the two were to take up a large quantity of arms, and it was known that an eminent military engineer and a new

Governor or President for the province of Matto Grosso were to go up at the same time. It was also known that a valuable cargo would be taken, besides a large sum of money. Soto, being informed of all this, wrote to President Lopez, giving him a full account of all he had learned, and advised him by all means to seize the steamers. The letter he sent by the Marques de Olinda, whose capture he advised. The intention of sending the Amazonas was for some reason abandoned, and the Marques de Olinda started alone, and nothing occurred to her till after she had left Asuncion on the 11th of November.

President Lopez was at the time in the encampment at Cerro Leon, thirty-five miles from the capital. The correspondence brought by the steamer was taken out to him in the morning, and until he received it the state was at peace. In the afternoon, however, some hours after the Marques had left the port, an order was sent in, as fast as the engine detached from the train could bring it, for the Paraguayan steamer Tacuari to pursue the Marques de Olinda and order her to return to Asuncion, and if she did not comply to capture her by force. As soon as the fires could be lighted the Tacuari started, and being a faster vessel than the other, and crowding on all the steam she could make, she overtook the Marques the next day before she had passed the Paraguayan frontier; and the next night the two were anchored side by side in the harbor of Asuncion, and communication between all persons on board and the shore was strictly prohibited.

On learning, through common report, of these facts, the Brazilian Minister immediately addressed a note to the government, asking explanations; and the next day, the 14th, received an answer, together with another note dated two days earlier, in which the Foreign Minister, Berges, formally declares that the friendly relations hitherto existing between Brazil and Paraguay had, by the conduct of the former in its invasion of the Oriental Republic, been broken. This note evidently was not written till after the taking of the Marques de Olinda, and at the time of its date Paraguay did not consider itself at war.

The seizure of the steamer was an afterthought, and the note to Vianna de Lima, dated two days before it was written or delivered to him, was only a stupid and characteristic attempt to give a form of regularity to a most atrocious and unlawful proceeding. The new President of Matto Grosso was kept a close prisoner, and so was the military engineer and the commander and crew of the steamer. Not one of them was destined to see his friends or country again. Thus ensnared, they were to rot in prison. The Minister was not allowed to hold any communication with them. After a few days' detention on board the vessel, they were all, with the exception of the engineers, who were Englishmen, and some other passengers who were foreigners, transferred to some barracks near the bank of the river, and a few weeks after were sent into the interior, since when little more is known of them than that for a long time they were held close prisoners and given Paraguayan treatment, under which they dragged out some a shorter and some a longer period of misery, till they all died of starvation and torture.

To give the further appearance of regularity to the seizure of the Marques de Olinda, an admiralty court was improvised to decide on the legality of her capture. The proceedings of this admiralty court have never been published; and of the members who composed it, it is safe to say not a single one had the least idea before then what an admiralty court was. The accused party was not represented; neither officers, crew, nor passengers were allowed to be present or to give their testimony, nor was it ever known, except to the government, who composed the court. All that is known is, that what purported to be the judgment of a court, signed by Don Andres Gill, the chief-justice of Paraguay, condemning the vessel as a prize of war, was published in the *Semanario*. By the organic law of Paraguay, all cases whatever are subject to appeal to the President, so that the farce of a trial is but a roundabout way of recording his opinion or determination. In this case it is very sure that every step taken was according to his direct orders, and that if any member of

the court had offered an opinion questioning the legality of the proceeding, he would have passed the next night in prison heavily loaded with fetters.

The seizure of the Marques de Olinda in the manner and under the circumstances in which she was taken was not so much a crime on the part of Lopez as a mistake. It was the commencement of a war in a manner so unexpected and so insulting that it left no middle ground for treaty or for arranging terms of peace. From that moment Brazil could never treat with Lopez without incurring the contempt and derision of the whole world. Brazil was a great empire, the largest in extent, with one exception, in the world. It had a population of some nine or ten millions, or more than ten times as many as Paraguay; and yet the latter had, without notice or previous declaration of war, seized a Brazilian steamer, made prisoners of her passengers and crew, and then defiantly waited for the Brazilians to come and get satisfaction. Brazil had large provinces, half as large as Europe, to the north of Paraguay, that were scarcely accessible except by the route that the Marques de Olinda was pursuing at the time she was captured. Lopez, without previous notice, had seized this steamer, in violation of all rules of modern warfare, and insisted he had a right to do so. If he had such right, then he would have the right to do it again, and Brazil would be virtually cut off from her northwestern provinces, for another steamer would never venture within his grasp. If he had no right to do it, he had shown he was not amenable to the laws of nations, and therefore was a common enemy. Besides, the defiant attitude he had taken rendered it certain that any offers of compromise or arrangement would have been met with insult, and that in his arrogance he would have demanded terms to which Brazil could not possibly accede. For a great power like Brazil to have proposed to treat under such circumstances would have shown such conscious weakness as would have endangered the integrity of the nation.

There had been, as we have previously seen, elements of insubordination and discontent for many years threatening

the rupture of the Empire. But this indignity to the flag served to hush all discord, and the sentiment was universal that no terms should be made with the author of it. A proposal to arrange the affair through mediation or by any peaceable means would have been met by a general storm of indignation, — a storm that would in all probability have left the Empire a wreck from which would have arisen several republics of the South American type. The life of the Empire was at stake ; and so, throughout the whole war that followed, the Brazilian government felt and acknowledged it must make an end of Lopez, or else see the nation dismembered.

Lopez had thus, by his seizure of the steamer, commenced a war with a nation apparently ten times as strong as his own, the end of which must be his own destruction or that of the Brazilian Empire. There was no middle ground on which terms of peace could be made, leaving him still in power. It was a crime thus to seize an innocent merchant vessel and make prisoners of her passengers and crew ; and it was a blunder to stake all on the hazard of the die when the odds were so greatly against him.

Immediately on the seizure of the Marques de Olinda, orders were given that no vessel should leave the port, and that no person who might reveal the news should be permitted to pass the frontier. A confidential agent of the government, however, was sent to notify the Paraguayan agent in Buenos Aires of what had occurred, that he might take the necessary precautions in regard to any vessels in the river having arms or merchandise for Paraguay. This messenger also carried the money taken from the Marques de Olinda, two hundred thousand dollars in Brazilian currency, at that time at par. This money it was intended should have an additional signature to it before passing into circulation, and, had the news of its capture by Lopez reached Buenos Aires before the money itself, notice would have been given cautioning the public that all money wanting such signature would not be redeemed. But several days passed after the agent of Paraguay received the money before a word was known by the public of the im-

portant events that had transpired up river. During this time the bills had all passed into the hands of unsuspecting third parties, and were redeemed by the bank without question.

The unexpected seizure of the steamer and the harsh treatment of all on board of her naturally caused not only indignation, but alarm, to the Minister, Vianna de Lima. On receiving the letter of Señor Berges advising him that the friendly relations of the two governments had ceased, he immediately sent a note protesting against the detention of the Marques de Olinda, and asking passports for himself, family, and suite, that he might leave the country on the said steamer. The passports were sent the same day, but nothing was said of the means by which the Minister was to depart. The ports were closed, and for him and his family to leave the country in any way, except by the river, was next to impossible.

In this extremity, as his own relations with the government had ceased, the Minister must apply to the representative of another nation to interpose in his behalf and obtain such means of conveyance from the country as were consistent with the dignity of his position and the comfort and health of his family. And here the course of the narrative compels me to intrude the part that, as dean or senior member of the diplomatic body, I had to act in aid of the nonplussed Minister.

The President was still at Cerro Leon, and, hoping to arrange the affair without any formal correspondence, I sought an interview with the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Berges. I found him guarded and non-committal, and from the fact that he suggested it would be well for me to confer personally with the President on the matter I inferred he had not been instructed for such a contingency. The next morning, therefore, I took the train and went out to the camp. It was situate in a beautiful place, at the foot of two considerable hills, that, uniting bases with a third in the rear, made a watershed of sufficient extent to afford a copious stream of water, that, after supplying the troops, was collected into an artificial pond or reservoir that gave them all opportunities for bathing. The camp was located on an inclined plain that was of

sufficient extent both for barracks and for field exercises. As I always found, before and since, whenever I had the honor to visit his Excellency, there was a funereal silence prevailing all around ; no rude play, no light jesting among the soldiers, no listlessness, no shouts, laughter, or even smiles, but all with a serious, sad, anxious look, as if afraid of some dire and immediate calamity.

Directly on my arrival at the camp I was shown into the presence of his Excellency. After the usual commonplaces, I told him of the object of my visit, and expressed my surprise at the course of his government in detaining the Marques de Olinda, — for, up to that time, I could not believe he would be so foolhardy as to refuse to let her go. I told him that such a proceeding in time of peace was unprecedented in modern times ; and that, as there had been no declaration of war, and the Brazilians had not suspected such action, there could be no justification of such a proceeding. He replied that war already existed, and therefore he was justified in seizing the Marques de Olinda and making prisoners of her officers and crew, and all others aboard of her who were in the service of the Brazilian government. I dissented entirely from his views, and told him that beginning the war in that way would compel Brazil to make a more energetic war upon him than it would or could have done, had he commenced after giving due notice. He said he had intimated what would be his course in the protest of the 30th of August. “But,” said I, “that was not a declaration of war, nor even a declaration that there would be war ; and the party most concerned, the Brazilians, never understood that war with Paraguay would necessarily follow a disregard of that protest.” Certainly, he said, Brazil could not have put the same construction on the protest as he had done, else it would not have sent the steamer above Humaita. He then went on with more candor than discretion to say that the situation of Paraguay was such that only by a war could the attention and respect of the world be secured to her. Isolated as she was, and scarcely known beyond the South American states, so would she remain till by

her feats of arms she could compel other nations to treat her with more consideration. Paraguay was a small power, he admitted, in comparison with Brazil; but she had advantages of position that gave her an equality of strength with any of her neighbors. Every soldier that Brazil might send against Paraguay must be brought thousand of miles and at great expense, whereas the Paraguayan troops were on their own territory, and their services would cost comparatively nothing. Besides they would be already fortified and intrenched before the Brazilians could arrive in any considerable numbers, and then, having shown the world their strength, and demonstrated to Brazil that they were not to be conquered except at ruinous cost and sacrifice, the Imperial government would be glad to treat for peace on terms highly advantageous to Paraguay; the old questions of boundaries would then be settled, and Paraguay would afterwards be recognized as a nation whose friendship was to be sought. The war could not last but a few months, for Brazil was not in a condition to engage in a long struggle, and, after the shedding of blood enough to show that Paraguay had the force necessary to protect herself, it would be easy to make peace.

I combated these ideas by saying that Brazil would not send a small force to Paraguay; that the government of the Emperor was well aware of his advantages of position and the number of his troops, and that he had no standing army sufficient to venture it near Paraguay until it was at least doubled or trebled in number; that Brazil being a very large and sparsely settled country, it would take six months at least before it could raise, equip, and call together an army large enough to send against Paraguay; that the troops would probably be sent by way of the ocean and the river, and that undoubtedly the Brazilian navy would be reinforced with iron-clads and monitors as soon as money could effect it, and I was greatly mistaken if any considerable force were ready to attack Paraguay in less than a year. But my reasoning, though but the plainest common sense, had no effect. He was bent on war, and he could not realize

that, beginning it in that way, Brazil never could, never would, and never ought to treat with him.

I then said, that, supposing war was indeed begun, what was to be done with the Minister. His rights and immunities were not affected by it, and he was entitled to leave the country as freely as he had entered it. Lopez said that he had got his passports, and might leave as soon as he pleased. But how was he to get away? No vessel was allowed to leave the port. True, he said, the ports were temporarily closed, but he was not bound to open them for the departure of an enemy's ambassador when it might work great loss to the country. He could go by land if he liked, and if he did n't he could stay till the river was again free. I told him the idea that the Minister, his wife, sister, three children, secretary of legation, and servants could go by land was preposterous. The distance from Asuncion to Corrientes, the first town beyond the confines of Paraguay, was about two hundred and fifty miles. The roads were very bad, crossed by innumerable streams, some of which were scarcely fordable, while there were many broad *esteros*, or marshes, so that the route was, in that season of high water, difficult and wearisome, even for men accustomed to exposure and the saddle. To refuse them all other means of leaving the country except by land was therefore tantamount to a flat refusal for them to leave the country at all. He said that was their misfortune, but no fault of his; and I then began to realize that he probably intended to keep them all in the country as prisoners or hostages. I then said, that, whatever fault he might have to find with the Brazilian government or with its minister to Paraguay, he could have none against the passengers or crew of the steamer. Of course, they could not have had any idea that there was war existing, or else they would never have ventured into the country; and as their detention could not be of any service to Paraguay, but a source of care and expense rather, it was not only just, but expedient, that they should be allowed to depart. He was, however, disinclined to discuss that question then, and said it would receive due consideration after the

case of the Minister was disposed of. Regarding that, I said, there was no occasion for any discussion, for, as dean of the diplomatic body, I was obliged to insist on the rights of legation ; that I considered the Brazilian Minister had an unquestionable right to leave the country without any unnecessary delay ; and that his detention would be an infringement of the immunities to which all duly accredited diplomatic persons were entitled, and if such a violation of the established laws, recognized by the governments of all civilized nations as binding and sacred, might be practised towards one minister, it might be towards all ; therefore, in this case, it would be my duty, if the Brazilian Minister and his suite were not speedily provided with means for leaving the country, to protest, and I certainly should protest, against the act as unlawful ; and then, if my protest were disregarded, I must ask for my own passports.

It was this threat, as I have always supposed, that secured the escape of Vianna de Lima and his family ; for though the President had no reason to care anything for me personally, yet he did care to have an American minister in the country, for the only minister besides myself then left there was the Oriental, Sagastume, whose government was already tottering to its fall. His Excellency, however, showed no signs of yielding, and at the time I considered that my term of diplomatic service was near its close. Had he remained firm in the purpose that he then entertained of keeping them as prisoners in Paraguay, there was but one course for me to pursue : first, to protest against the act ; and, next, to demand my passports, and leave the country if I could.

Our conversation lasted for two or three hours, and at the close it seemed as though it was Lopez's intention to detain the Minister and his family in the country. But having told him that such a course would be followed by a demand for my own passports, I took leave of him for a short time to call on the Surgeon-General, Dr. William Stewart, having first accepted his invitation to return and dine with him at a later hour.

The dinner is worthy of description, if for nothing else

for the number of courses. Everything was cooked in Paraguayan fashion. Soups, stews, forced meats, asado, vermicelli in a pottage with eggs, rice in the same way, and a variety of dishes I have never seen elsewhere than in Paraguay, were brought on, one after another, till it seemed that the dinner would not end until somebody died of repletion. To the credit of the President's stomach, it must be admitted that no dish was dishonored by his neglect. He partook of all with apparently a keen, if not a discriminating relish.

At the dinner were present two others who had the honor of generally dining at the same table with the President. These were Dr. Stewart and General Wenceslao Robles. The fortunes and fate of them both will be alluded to in their proper place.

After the dinner, at which the wine was not spared, we fell to discussing again the question that had brought me to the camp. By this time it seemed the President had reconsidered his previous resolution ; at least, he assumed a more moderate tone. He said that it was of the first importance that the news of what had occurred should not pass the frontiers of Paraguay until several vessels, including the packet steamer Paraguayri had passed Humaita, or were safely beyond the reach of any Brazilian gunboats. That difficulty, I observed, would be obviated by the Minister, who, doubtless, would give all necessary assurances, in behalf of his government, that no advantage should be taken of any information that might be conveyed by the vessel taking him out of the country, and that the said vessel should be allowed to return to Paraguay without let or hindrance on the part of any Brazilian gunboat. To this it was objected, that, after what had occurred, Brazil might not consider herself bound to respect the pledge given by her minister. To meet this difficulty, I suggested that, however little inclined it might be to respect a promise made to Paraguay, it would be slow to break one made to a government much stronger than itself, and that I did not doubt Vianna de Lima would, in the name of his government, pledge himself in terms as strong as language could make them, both to Brazil and to the United States, to observe the

condition, that in no form or manner would the former take advantage of any information that might be carried by the steamer that went to take him away.

After an infinite amount of quibbling and prevarication, at length we agreed to arrange the affair on this basis: I was to return to the capital and address a formal note to the Minister for Foreign Relations, which he was to answer, setting forth the difficulties and dangers in the way; and then I was to write again, sending Vianna de Lima's guaranty to Paraguay, and a copy of the one to me, that the terms agreed on should be strictly observed by all Brazilian authorities. With this understanding I returned the same night to the capital, and the next morning, having first seen Vianna de Lima, who assented to the terms I had agreed upon,—and would have gladly assented to harder ones to secure his egress from the country,—I addressed a note, on the 17th of November, to Señor Berges. The Minister, however, went to Cerro Leon the next day; and from what followed it would seem that the President had repented of his after-dinner concessions. On the 19th I received an answer to mine of the 17th, but it in no respect conformed to what had been agreed upon between the President and myself. After reciting the events that had occurred by which the two countries had been brought into hostilities, the Foreign Secretary says that the ports have for urgent reasons been temporarily closed, but that it is probable they will soon be opened again, so that the Brazilian Minister may leave by way of the river, but that, if he is in too great haste to await that time, he is at liberty to leave by land whenever he likes. From this I inferred that it was the intention of the President to recede from the verbal promise he had given me, and I therefore resolved to make it a question of fact, veracity, and good faith between us, and then, if he should deny my statements or refuse to execute his promise, I should have no course left but to demand my passports.

In my next note, therefore, I alluded to the circumstances of my interview with the President, and stated that Señor Vianna de Lima was prepared to give all the assurances for the safe

return of the steamer, and that no advantage should be taken of any information conveyed by it. This intimation that I waited for the President to fulfil his promise greatly annoyed him, and the next note to me was carping and captious. It was evident that the President still hesitated whether to allow the Brazilians to depart or to detain them in the country. At length, however, a steamer was promised, and, as agreed upon, the Minister gave a pledge in the name of his government, in clear and precise language, both to Paraguay and the United States, that the conditions agreed upon should be observed. Still Lopez was not satisfied, and in the next note of his Foreign Secretary he said that he had supposed I was to give a similar pledge on the part of the United States. To this I replied I never promised anything of the kind. I had no authority to pledge my government to a course that would involve it in war and make it an ally of Paraguay in case Brazil did not observe the compact made by her minister. It would be for the President of the United States, with the approbation of Congress, to decide on the course it would adopt towards Brazil for any breach of contract or violation of faith. The powers of ministers did not go quite so far as to permit them to involve governments in war without their knowledge or consent.

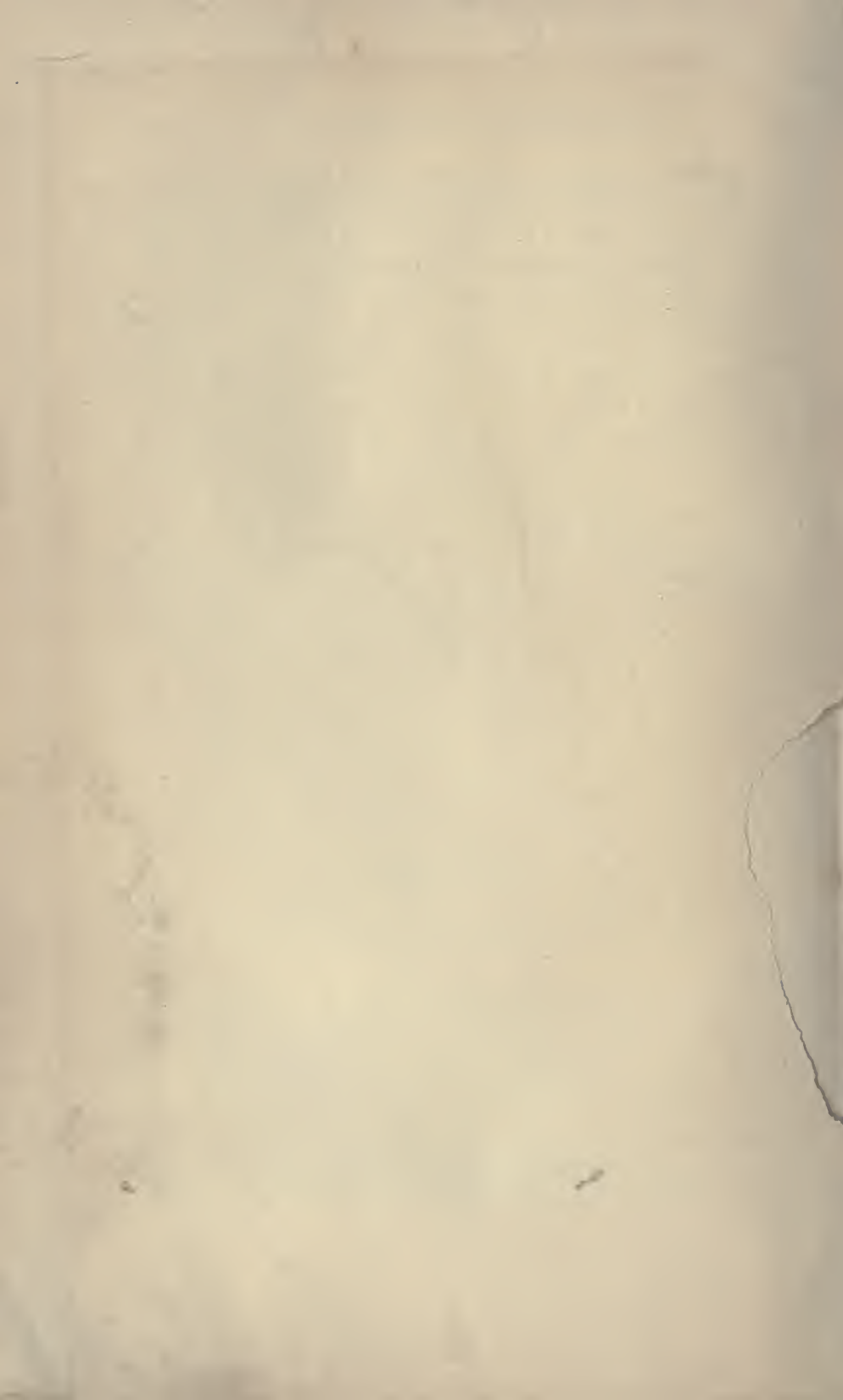
This was construed to be an intimation that they did not know anything about the duties of foreign ministers, and, I learned indirectly, gave great offence, as from the time of Francia any suggestion that wisdom would not die with the head of the existing government was always a mortal affront. But as they had shown their ignorance by asking me to do an act that they ought to have known would have exceeded my powers, they wisely concluded to say no more on that subject, but try and catch me tripping on something else. The only occasion that offered was this: the Paraguayan packet steamer that arrived after the seizure of the *Marques de Olinda* had brought, all unconscious of danger, a special bearer of despatches for the Brazilian legation. He arrived after the Minister had received his passports, and, of course, wished to leave with him. I ac-

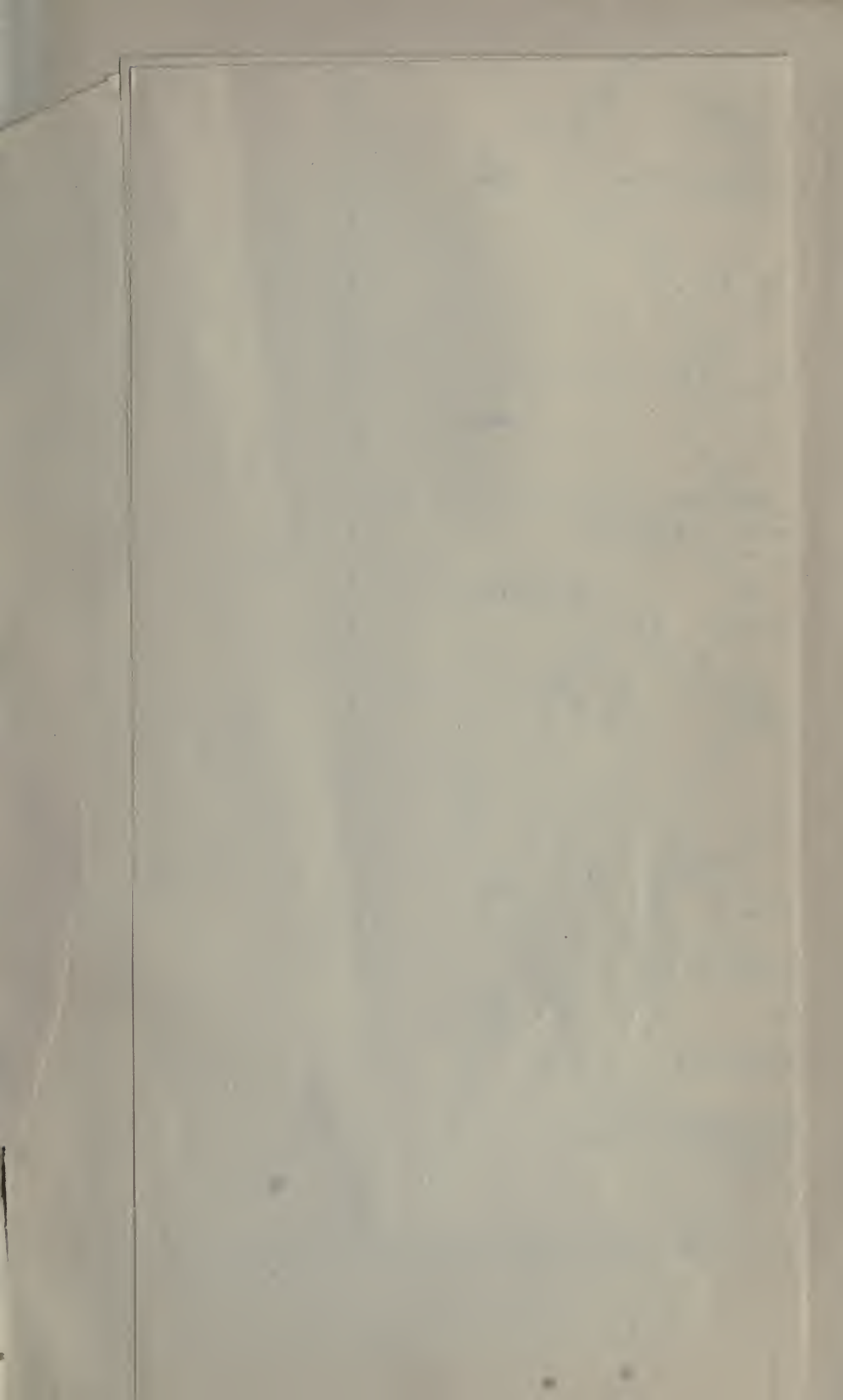
cordingly wrote a brief note to Señor Berges, advising him of the arrival of this bearer of despatches, and asking for a passport for him as a member of the legation who was entitled to the same privileges and immunities as the Minister. At this stage the deliberation was long and hesitating. Could they not reply to my note that it was disrespectful and insulting to the government? What right had I to tell them that a bearer of despatches had any peculiar rights? Did n't they know it before? and was it not insolent in me to tell them so, and thus assume that I knew more about such affairs than they did? After mature deliberation, however, they concluded that, much as they wanted to detain Vianna de Lima and his family, they had better let him go than have a rupture with me; and at last, after going through an infinite amount of circumlocution, and making a still longer delay, a little steamer was put in readiness, and on the last day of the month, three weeks after the taking of the Marques de Olinda, to my great delight, I saw them all on board. Until almost the last moment I had feared that some excuse or pretext for detaining them would be found; and though I then did not so fully realize the danger they were in as I had reason to afterwards, I may yet say I have seldom passed the same length of time in such anxiety. In the very limited amount of good society in Asuncion, we had welcomed these people as a great accession to the little circle; and though I have not often seen a family in which all the members were so agreeable, intelligent, and interesting, I may say I had never at that time heard sound so sweet as that made by the departing paddles of the little Parana that carried them away.

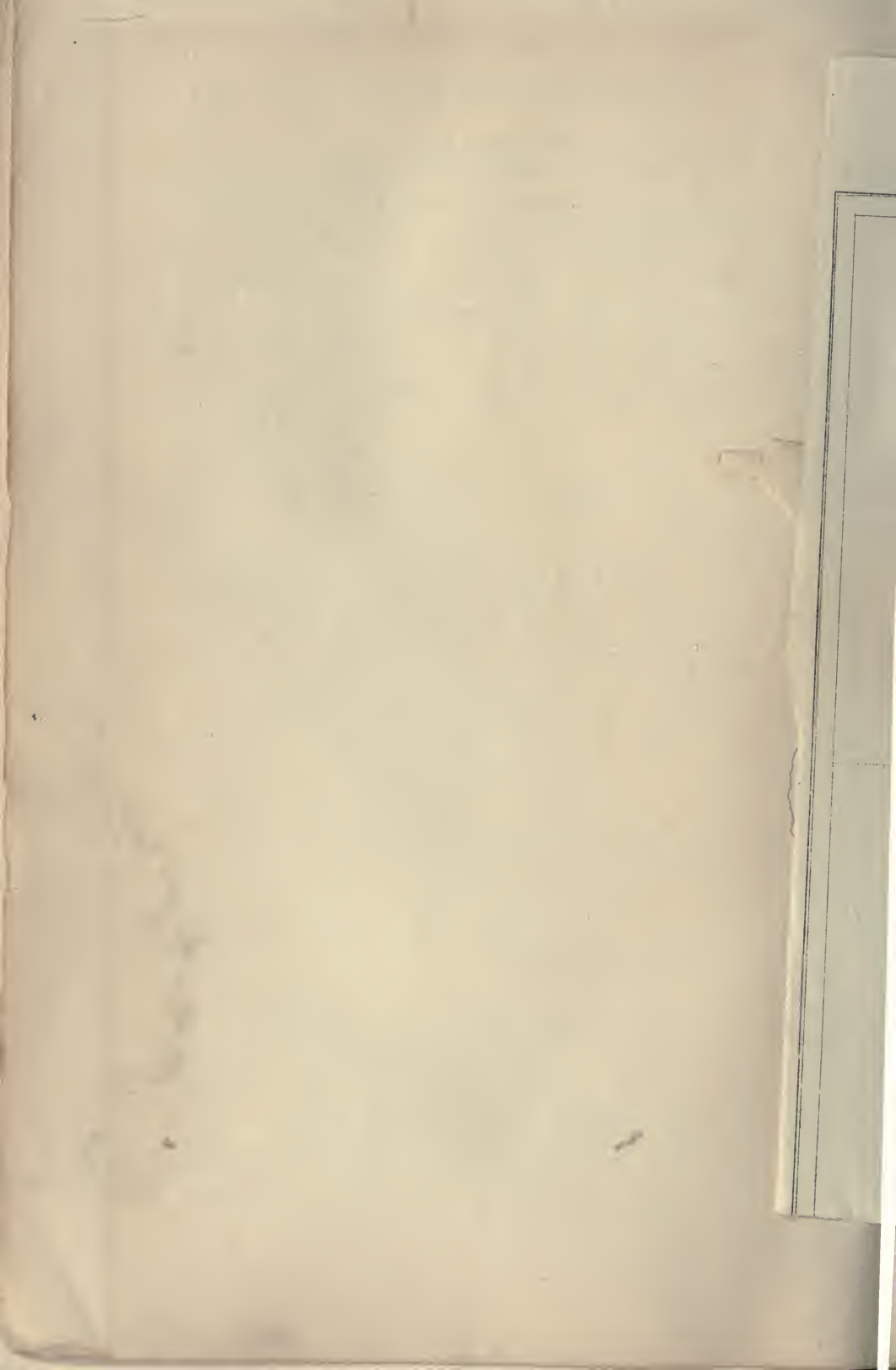
The despatches sent by the Brazilian government, which were considered so important that a special messenger had come to deliver them, were, of course, too late to be of any service. Señor Vianna de Lima, by answering the protest of the 30th of August so hastily, and without waiting for further instructions, had given the provocation of the violent and unlawful seizure of the Marques de Olinda. Had he awaited the arrival of further orders from home, it is probable

the Marques would not have been seized at the time she was, and if war had followed afterwards it would have been commenced in a manner that would not have rendered impossible a subsequent arrangement of terms of peace. So far was the Emperor of Brazil from meditating war with Paraguay, or suspecting it already existed, that the bearer of despatches, whose arrival came near to being so fatal to the Minister, had come to bring the official letters of the Emperor to his "great and good friend," President Lopez, announcing the contract of marriage of his two daughters with European princes. It was because he had foreseen that, in disregard of his own overtures, such letters would be received, he had begun the war; and before they reached Paraguay he had provoked a death-struggle in which he or the Emperor must fall, never to rise again.

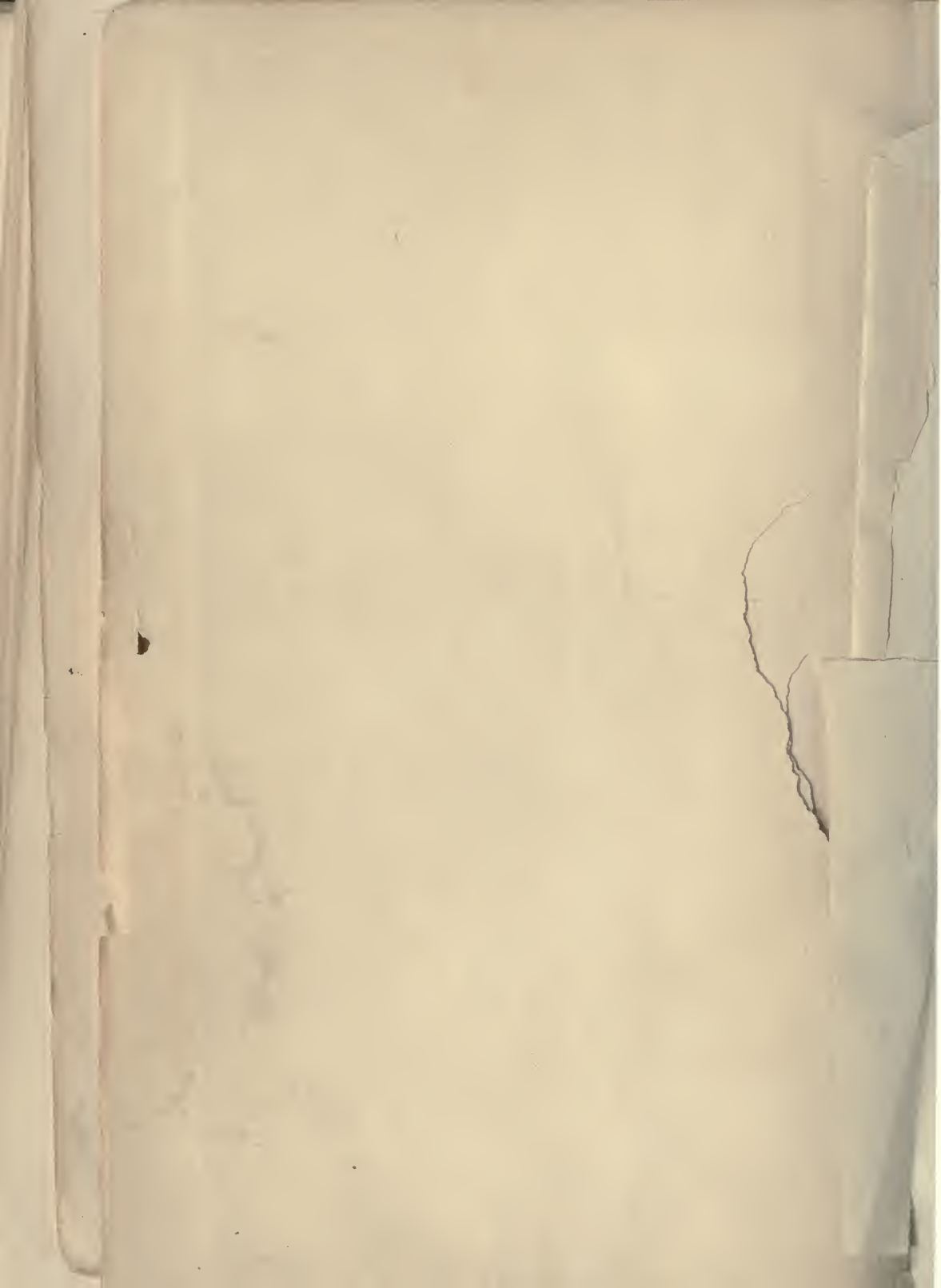
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R. Yaguarey

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Rio Ypau

San Pedro

R. Bermejo

Cordillera Paraguaya

Villa Rica

R. Triguay

Pilar

Hamaita

S. Teresa

Eucarnacion

Corrientes Riachuelo

Candelaria Missions

River Uruguay

Bella Vista

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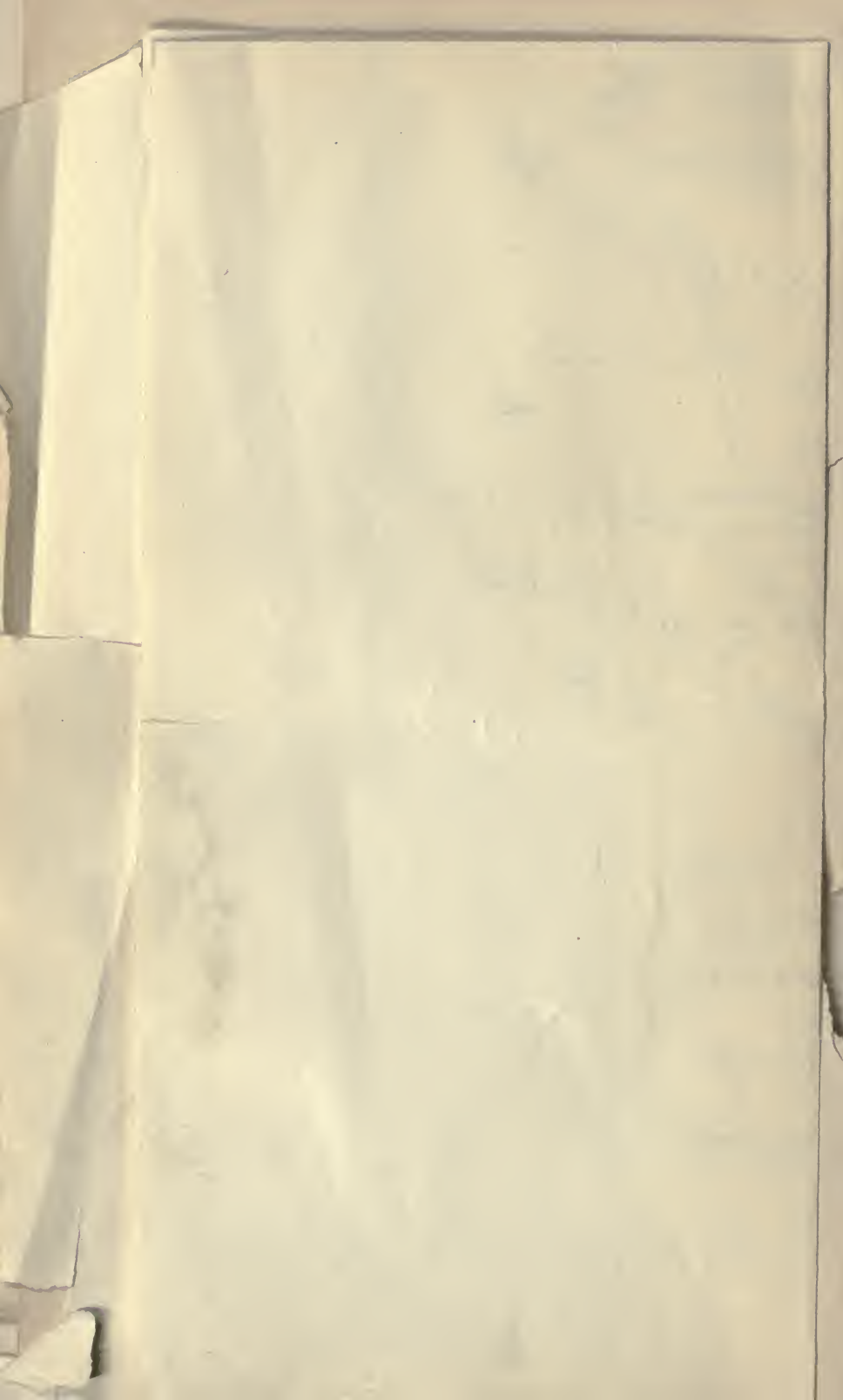
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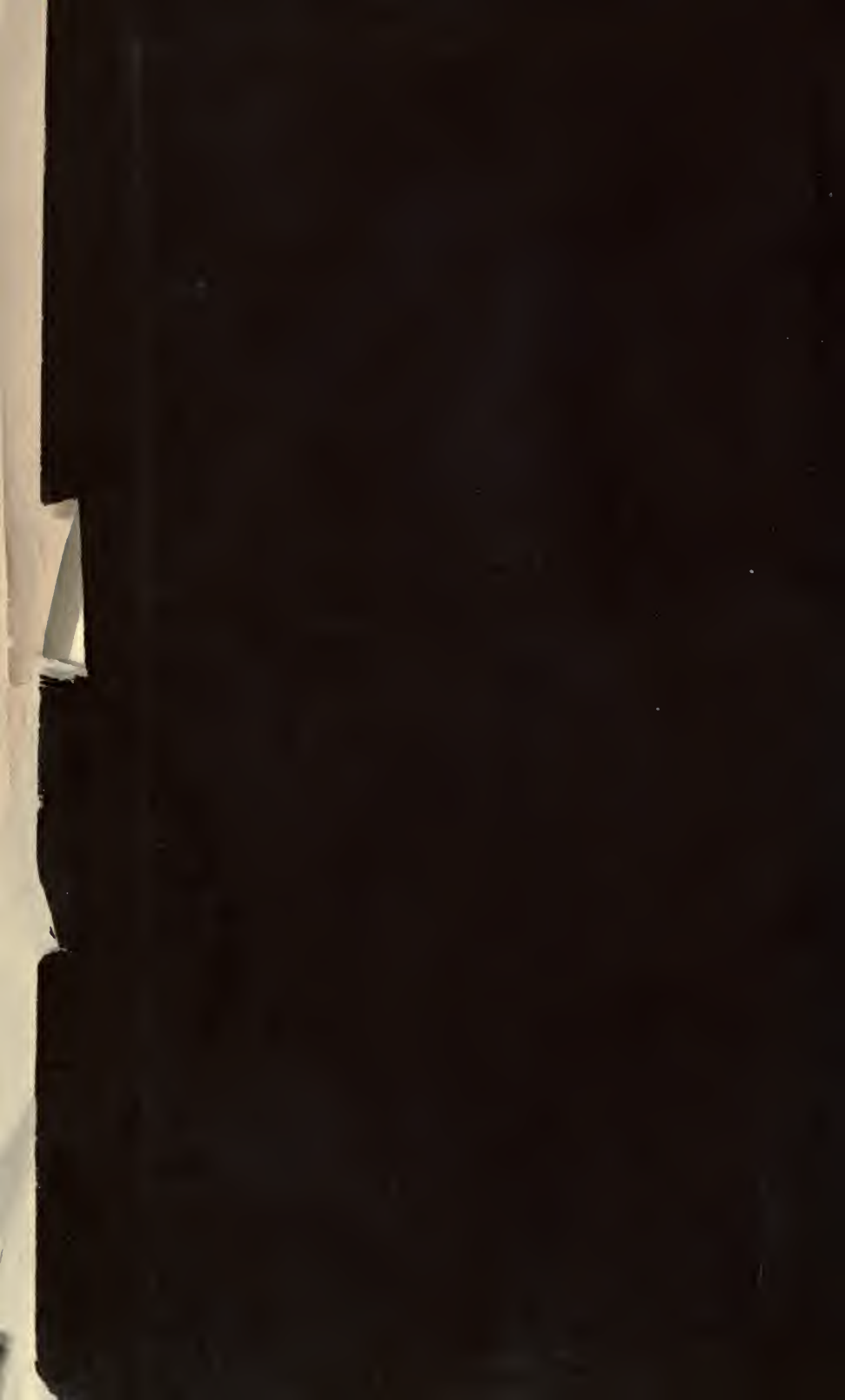
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River Plate





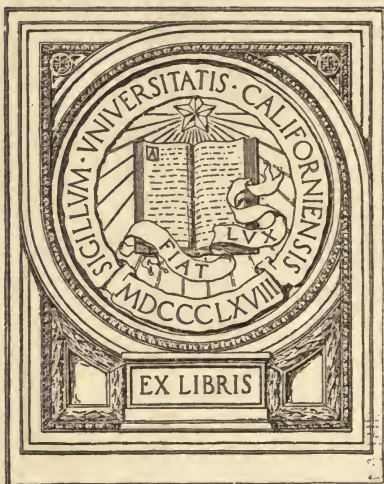
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A large, highly stylized handwritten signature in black ink. The signature is written in a cursive style with many loops and flourishes, particularly in the lower half. It appears to read 'Francisco Solano Lopez'.

(From a Photograph taken in 1859)
FRANCISCO SOLANO LOPEZ.

THE
HISTORY OF PARAGUAY,

WITH

Notes of Personal Observations,

AND

REMINISCENCES OF DIPLOMACY UNDER
DIFFICULTIES.

BY

CHARLES A. WASHBURN,

COMMISSIONER AND MINISTER RESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES AT ASUNCION
FROM 1861 TO 1868.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

Personal. — I receive Leave of Absence. — Interview with the President. — The Passengers and Crew of the Marques de Olinda. — Lopez's War Policy. — Expedition to Matto Grosso. — Capture of Fort Coimbra. — Capture and Sack of Corumba. — Massacre of the Prisoners. — Interview with the President. — I take my Departure from Paraguay 1

CHAPTER II.

Buenos Aires declines an Alliance with Brazil. — Seizure of two Argentine War Steamers. — Don Ramon Capdevila. — Siege of Paisandu. — Death of Leandro Gomez. — Spanish American Ideas of National Honor and National Neutrality. — Capitulation of Montevideo. — The Oriental Legation in Paraguay. — Correspondence between Lopez and Urquiza. — Colonel Coriolano Marquez. — Capture of Corrientes by General Robles. — Provisional Government established. — Excitement in Buenos Aires. — Speech of President Mitre. — The Triple Alliance. — The Campaign in Corrientes. — Duplicity of Urquiza. — Colonel George Thompson 12

CHAPTER III.

Popular Demonstrations in Support of the Government. — The Press of Paraguay. — The *Paraguay Independiente*. — The *Eco del Paraguay*. — The *Semanario*. — Inordinate Vanity of Lopez. — Sources of Information. — The Postmaster-General of Paraguay. — Antipathy of the Paraguayans to the Brazilians. — The Paraguayan *versus* the Brazilian Soldiers. — Matto Grosso. — Mitre refuses to permit the Paraguayans to pass through the Misiones. — Brazil vainly seeks an Alliance with Buenos Aires against Lopez. — Buenos Aires determines to remain Neutral. — General Urquiza's Intrigues with Lopez and Mitre. — Congress convoked. — Charges against the Argentine Government. — Lopez made Marshal. — The Order of Merit 28

CHAPTER IV.

Birth and early Education of F. S. Lopez. — He enters the Army. — Brigadier-General. — Personal Appearance and Habits. — His Cowardice. —

His House of Shelter. — His Fright at a Distant Shell. — No Respect for old Friends or former Mistresses. — The Fate of Pancha Garmendia. — Carlos Antonio Lopez's Improvement on Francia's System of Espionage. — Ignorance and Superstition. — Juan Gregorio Urbieta, Bishop of Paraguay. — His Successor, Manuel Antonio Palacios. — Character of Palacios. — The Catechism of San Alberto. — The Divine Right of Kings and Magistrates. — Letter from Palacios to Lopez. — The Padre, Fidel Maiz. — His Talents and Popularity. — Arrest, Imprisonment, and Torture. — His Reconciliation with Lopez. — His Profane Confession. — His final Escape 46

CHAPTER V.

Departure of the Paraguayan Fleet from Asuncion. — Arrival at Humaitá. — The English Engineer, John Watts. — Admiral Mesa. — The Battle of Riachuelo. — Confusion. — The Pilot of the Amazonas. — Defeat of the Paraguayans. — Rewards of Merit 64

CHAPTER VI.

Inaction of the Brazilians. — Results of the Battle of Riachuelo. — The Campaign in Corrientes. — General Robles suspected of Treason. — Espionage. — Colonel Alén. — Arrest, Imprisonment, and Execution of General Robles and Others. — The Campaign in Rio Grande. — Capture of San Borja by Estigarribia. — Battle of Arroyo Mbutuy. — Movements of the Allied Forces. — Critical Situation of Duarte. — Destruction of his Army. — Estigarribia summoned to surrender. — Negotiations. — Capitulation of Estigarribia. — His Character. — Treatment of the Prisoners. — Character of Robles. — Interview with the Marques de Caxias. — Reception of the News at Asuncion. — Disappointment and Rage of Lopez. — Public Meetings. — Evacuation of Corrientes. — Removing the Spoils. — The Brazilian Fleet. — Review of the Campaign. 74

CHAPTER VII.

A new Palace commenced. — Colonel Francisco Fernandez. — Lopez disappointed in his Efforts to form a Royal Alliance. — Madam Lynch. — Colonel Wisner. — Character of Lopez. — Public Amusements. — Balls. — *Peinetas de oro*. — Jewelry. — Sortija. — Bull-Fights. — Their Influence upon the People. — Celebrating the Anniversary of the President's Birthday. — A Step towards Imperialism. — Changes in Matters of Etiquette and Deportment. — The Clothes Question. — General Illumination. — Triumphal Arches. — Mottoes. — Fulsome Praises of Lopez. — Demonstration by the Ladies. — Magnificent Displays. — Reception of the President. — Patriotic Speeches. — The President's Reply. — Government Officials Present. — Their Subsequent Fate 93

CHAPTER VIII.

Discussion with Lopez. — Return from the United States. — Rear-Admiral S. W. Godon. — First Visit to General Mitre. — A Repulse from Admiral Tamandaré. — Mitre's Subterfuges. — A Perplexing Dilemma. — The Allies invade Paraguay. — The Brazilian Special Envoy. — His Attempts at Bribery. — Protest against further Delay. — Instructions from Washington 113

CHAPTER IX.

Threatened Rupture with the United States. — Further Delays. — Strange Conduct of Admiral Godon. — Later Instructions. — The Shamokin finally ordered to Paraguay. — Firmness and Gallantry of Captain Pierce Crosby. — Tamandaré blusters and yields. — Arrival at Curupaiti. — Joy of the Paraguayans. — The French Consul, M. Cochelet. — Don Luis Jara. — The American Legation Premises in Asuncion 126

CHAPTER X.

Reception at Asuncion. — General Anxiety. — Englishmen in Prison. — J. J. Acuña. — G. F. Masterman: his Arrest, Trial, and Imprisonment. — His Dungeon. — Treatment of Prisoners. — Ramon Capdevila. — Intercession for Masterman. — His Release. — Life in Asuncion. — Captain Simon Fianza. — The Casals 141

CHAPTER XI.

A Visit to Lopez's Head-Quarters. — Description of Humaitá. — The Encampment at Paso Pucu. — Dr. Stewart, the Surgeon-General. — Other English Officers. — Their Warnings and Forebodings. — Interviews with Lopez. — His Opinion of Brazilian Soldiers. — Release of Americans from Prison. — Obsequiousness of Lopez's Officers. — Admiral Tamandaré. — Brazilian Artillery Practice. — An American Claim allowed by Lopez. — Arrest of Don Luis Jara. — Picking a Money-Box. — Alleged Paraguayan Victories. — Prospect of American Mediation 156

CHAPTER XII.

Impressment of all Paraguayans into Military Service. — Battle of Estero Bellaco. — Brazilian Chivalry. — Denunciations against Deserters. — Story of Doña Carmelita Cordal. — She publicly renounces her Husband. — Her Confidential Explanations. — Universal Hypocrisy of Paraguayans. — Enforced Contributions. — Dr. Tristan Roca. — Levies upon Foreigners. — Testimonials to Lopez. — The Album, the Flag, and the Sword. — The Women offer all their Jewels. — Their Patriotic Speeches.

— Lopez accepts only a Part. — The Women volunteer as Soldiers. — A Tragical Farce 167

CHAPTER XIII.

An Offer of Mediation. — Voyage to Head-Quarters. — Conversation with Benigno Lopez. — Interviews with the Marshal. — Exchange of Messages with Caxias. — Lopez's Hopes and Fears. — The Passage through the Lines. — Rudeness of Pancho Lynch. — Reception by Caxias. — His Reply to the Offer of Mediation. — Discussion of the Chances of the War. — The Polish Officer's Map. — Return to Paso Pucu. — A Breakfast with Lopez. — Anger of the Marshal. — Extract from my Diary. — Final Interview with Lopez. — He announces a Memorable Resolution. — He will never surrender. — His Place in History secure 179

CHAPTER XIV.

Another Visit to Paso Pucu. — Arrival of Despatches. — Letter from General Asboth. — He is insulted by Admiral Godon. — Note to Caxias. — Patriotic Offerings by the Paraguayans. — Grand National Testimonial to Marshal Lopez. — Public Meetings and Addresses. — Specimen of the Adulation of the Masses. — Discourse of Adelina Lopez. — English Offer of Mediation. — Mr. Gould's Propositions. — Bad Faith of Lopez. — His Reasons for breaking off Negotiations. — French and English Gunboats pass the Blockade. — Folly of the Naval Officers. — They become Tools of Lopez. — Departure of Consul Cochelet. — Lopez's Hatred of him. — He is detained at Humaitá, and exposed to the Fire of the Allies . . . 196

CHAPTER XV.

The Mother and Sisters of Lopez. — Their Fears. — Conversations with Prominent Paraguayans. — Their Reserve. — Venancio Lopez. — The *Semanario*. — Benigno Lopez. — His Character and Opinions. — The Quinta de Trinidad — Passage of Humaitá. — James Manlove. — His Capture by the Paraguayans. — His Treatment by Lopez. — His Character and Antecedents. — What the Birds told Berges — The Beginning of the End. — Our Hopes of Deliverance. — Asuncion evacuated. — Property deposited in the American Legation. — A Meeting of the Consuls. — They resolve to leave 210

CHAPTER XVI.

The City of Asuncion. — Its Appearance and Characteristics. — Scenes in the Market-Place. — The Government at the Time of the Evacuation. — Vice-President Sanchez. — Anecdotes of his Career. — Minister Berges. — His Visit to the United States. — His Shrewdness. — Venancio Lopez. —

Colonel Francisco Fernandez. — Major Gomez. — Benigno Lopez. — Extracts from Diary. — A Council held at Asuncion. — Deliberations on the Situation. — It is resolved to resist the Ironclads. — Consequences of this Council. — Its Members incur Suspicion and Persecution. — Their Fate 226

CHAPTER XVII.

New Members of the American Legation. — Dr. Carreras and Señor Rodriguez. — They become my Guests. — Madam Lynch sends her Valua- bles. — Dispersion of the Paraguayan Residents. — The English Engi- neers. — Bombardment of the Fort. — Flight of the Ironclads. — Our Servant Basilio. — Watts and Manlove. — They get into Difficulty. — Scene at the Police-Office. — Strategy of Lopez. — Attack on the Iron- clads. — Its Failure 236

CHAPTER XVIII.

Routine of Life at the Legation. — Captain Fidanza. — Fears entertained by Lopez's Mother. — Her Isolation. — She asks for Protection. — Don Sa- turnino Bedoya. — His Imprisonment. — Lopez's Flight from Paso Pucu. — Passage of the Army through the Chaco. — Colonel Martinez. — Mas- sacre of Prisoners. — Extracts from my Diary. — The Vice-President and Berges called below. — Inertness of the Allies. — Colonel Paulino Alén. — The Allies occupy Paso Pucu. — They closely invest Humaitá. — Colo- nel Alén escapes to Lopez. — His Fate. — Martinez evacuates Humaitá. — He capitulates in the Chaco 253

CHAPTER XIX.

Colonel Martinez accused of Treason. — His Wife arrested and tortured. — Her Sufferings and Execution. — Extract from a Despatch sent to Wash- ington. — Difficulty of Transmitting Correspondence. — French De- spatches by Flag of Truce. — Signs of an Impending Crisis 268

CHAPTER XX.

Petty Annoyances become Frequent. — Our Fears of Impending Troubles. — Political Views of Dr. Carreras. — Brilliant Qualities and Attainments of Rodriguez. — Hope entertained by Natives and Foreigners of Protection under the American Flag. — The Mother and Sisters of Lopez share this Hope. — Letters received by an American Gunboat addressed to Car- reras and Vasconcellos. — Their Contents. — News of the Assassination of Flores. — Another Visit to Lopez's Head-Quarters. — Dr. Carreras becomes Heir to a Fortune in Bolivia. — Lopez refuses him Permission to leave the Country. — Altered Aspect of Affairs at Head-Quarters. —

Frigidity of Lopez. — Conversations with Drs. Stewart and Fox. — Be-
doya and Benigno Lopez are Prisoners. — A Card-Party given by Madam
Lynch. — Her Duplicity. — Return to Asuncion 276

CHAPTER XXI.

Correspondence with Commander Kirkland. — Numerous Arrests. — Vic-
tories reported in the *Semanario*. — Difficulty of obtaining Provisions. —
A Period of Anxiety. — Our English Guests. — Arrest of Captain Fidanza
and of many Foreigners. — The Portuguese Consul, Leite Pereira. — His
Exequatur is withdrawn. — He takes Refuge in the American Legation.
— Consultations on his Case. — His Surrender is demanded and refused.
— Note to Benitez 289

CHAPTER XXII.

Benitez's Note of July 11, 1868. — The Beginning of the End. — The Eng-
lish leave the Legation. — Leite Pereira surrenders himself. — Pickets
are placed around the Legation. — Carreras and Rodriguez are demanded.
— Mysterious Charges against them. — Anxious Consultations. — Ad-
mirable Conduct of Rodriguez. — They finally give themselves up. —
Note to Benitez in their Behalf. — Rights of Legation insisted on. — The
Saddest Moment in this History. — Lopez demands the Surrender of
Bliss and Masterman. — They are accused of High Crimes and Misdeme-
anors. — The Demand refused and Passports called for. — Rapid Suc-
cession of Notes. — Fresh Charges against Bliss and Masterman. — Offer
to send them out of the Country. — Treatment of the English. — Sweep-
ing Arrests at Luque. — A Brazilian Spy about the Legation. — Thomas
Carter. — The Prisoners taken to the Army 301

CHAPTER XXIII.

Visit from the Italian Consul — Particulars of the Arrests at Luque. —
Masterman writes his Vindication. — Papers of Mr. Bliss. — Their Prepa-
rations for Arrest. — Artifices to conceal our Manuscripts. — Colton's
Atlas. — We learn of many Executions. — Visit from Madam Lynch. —
She announces the Discovery of a great Conspiracy. — She vouches for
Lopez's Kindness of Heart. — Her Threats. — That Ominous Knock. —
Benitez gives Particulars of an Intended Outbreak to take Place July 24.
— He charges Mr. Bliss with a Design to assassinate Lopez. — Extract
from his Note. — The Dangers thickening 320

CHAPTER XXIV.

A more Ominous Letter. — The Purposes of Lopez become more Evident. —
Visit to Berges. — Bliss and Masterman declared not entitled to Legation

Privileges. — Threats to take them by Force. — Uncertainties and Doubts. — Was there a Conspiracy? — Speculations. — Colonel Marquez and other Refugees. — Official Receptions. — Correspondence with Benitez. — Benitez visits the Legation. — An Excited Discussion. — He threatens Strong Measures. — Arrest of Bliss and Masterman hourly expected. — Life in the Legation 333

CHAPTER XXV.

Correspondence with Benitez. — Berge's Imaginary Papers again demanded. — Threats. — The Object of Benitez's Visit. — Accusations of Berge. — Commander Kirkland accused of forwarding Letters from Caxias. — Notice that Bliss and Masterman will be taken. — Passports. — Theory of Berge's Declaration. — Its Evident Falsehoods. — Carreras's Declaration. — Its Inexplicable Mixture of Truth and Falsehoods. — John F. Gowland. — The *Semanario*. — Its Sanguinary Contents. — Its Denunciations of Traitors. — The President's Birthday celebrated at the New Capital. — The Women denounce their Husbands, Brothers, and Sons. — Great Enthusiasm. — The Peace not disturbed in the General Joy . . . 350

CHAPTER XXVI.

Lopez's Opinion of American Admirals. — Benitez's Letters inexplicable. — Publication of the Correspondence. — Berge in the Double Character of Traitor and Patriot. — Letter from Berge and Reply thereto. — The Status of Bliss and Masterman. — Rights of Legation. — Solitude of Asuncion. — Houses sealed up. — Fate of their Owners. — Fernandez and Sanabria. — A Long Silence. — Arrest of Benitez. — His Character. — Madam Lynch withdraws her Treasures from the Legation. — Effects of Protracted Anxiety. — Death the Least of the Terrors. — Lopez and Lynch have their Plans matured. — The American Minister and Wife to be subjected to the same Treatment as the Brothers and Sisters of Lopez. — Details of the Plan. — Causes of Lopez's Antipathy. — His Indecent Exhibitions of himself. — Testimony of Dr. William Stewart . . . 367

CHAPTER XXVII.

The Transactions at Head-Quarters unknown in Asuncion. — Arrest of General Barrios. — His Character. — Indications that Lopez believed in a Conspiracy. — Other Indications that it was all previously planned by himself. — Forging Fetters. — Lopez's Conduct inexplicable. — General Bruguez's Fall, Arrest, and Execution. — What was it for? — Barrios attempts Suicide. — His Wife, Lopez's Sister, horribly flogged — Insanity and Execution of Barrios. — Affected Piety of Lopez. — Why did no one rebel or resist? — His Constant Fear of Assassination. — Anecdote from Thompson's Book. — Madam Lynch increases his Natural Cow-

ardice. — Her Selfishness. — She causes many to be arrested and tortured. — The other Intimates of Lopez. — Their Fate. — Madam Lynch in Danger. — Brazilian Chivalry. — The "Conspiracy." — No other Proof than that of Tortured Witnesses 389

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Silence and Anxiety. — Reflections of Persons in Time of Danger. — Indications that Lopez's Plans are deranged. — Luis Caminos. — Lopez retires unmolested from San Fernando. — The French Chancellor accused. — Robbery of the National Treasury. — Lopez's Object. — Letter from Captain Kirkland. — The Delay explained. — Long Letter of Accusations from Caminos. — Passports promised to all but Bliss, Masterman, and Baltazar 404

CHAPTER XXIX.

The Situation of the Wasp. — The Wild Beast in his Cage. — Anxious Conferences. — Unanimity in the Plan of Escape. — Money, etc., left in the Legation. — Some of the English withdraw theirs. — Dispute with Caminos in regard to Property left in the Legation. — Not allowed to take any Property but my own aboard the Paraguayan Steamer. — Further Delays. — Indications that Lopez still intends to keep us Prisoners. — Danger in taking away Masterman's Property. — My Baggage opened and examined. — A Fruitless Search. — Another Letter from Kirkland. — Mrs. Leite Pereira. — Antonio Jara. — The Legation Premises left in Charge of the Italian Consul. — Basilio. — Parting Interview. — Departure from the Legation. — Arrest of Bliss, Masterman, and Baltazar. — Fears of the Consuls for their own Safety. — Mr. Hunter and the Money of the English. — The Paraguayan Steamer. — The Wasp 419

CHAPTER XXX.

The Officers of the Wasp. — Interview between Kirkland and Lopez. — Lopez threatens to detain the American Minister. — Kirkland warns him of the Consequences. — Lopez frightened. — The Correspondence detained by Caxias. — Discourtesy and Dishonesty of Caxias. — Parting Visit of Kirkland to Lopez. — Messages to Lopez. — Letters from Mr. Bliss and Mr. Masterman. — A Parthian Arrow. — Masterman; Account of his Arrest, Torture, and Imprisonment. — Lopez's Protestations to Commander Kirkland. — Condition of Carreras, Fianza, and other Prisoners . . . 435

CHAPTER XXXI.

Final Departure. — Corrientes. — Duties of Neutrals. — Excitement at Buenos Aires. — The *Semanario*. — Published Correspondence. — Letter

to the English Minister. — Hostility of the Allies. — The Wasp sent to the Seat of War. — Refused a Passage through the Blockade. — Return to Montevideo. — General J. Watson Webb. — His Energetic Action. — He demands his Passports. — The Objections withdrawn. — The Wasp returns to Paraguay. — Her Arrival a Surprise to Lopez. — His Plans deranged. — Indignation of the Allies. — Gaucho Ideas of the Duties of a Neutral Minister. — The American Navy: the System and the Practices under it. — Despotism of the Admiral. — Rear-Admiral Charles H. Davis. — His Fleet-Captain, Francis M. Ramsey. — Difference of Opinion between the Admiral and General Webb. — Insulting Letter from the Admiral. — He shows his Independence by delaying the Departure of the Squadron 458

CHAPTER XXXII.

The Commercial Interests of Paraguay. — Policy of the United States in Regard to the Republics of South America. — M. T. McMahon appointed United States Minister to Paraguay. — Conflict of Testimony. — Admiral Davis's Excuses for Delay. — Extract from General Webb's Testimony. — Davis and McMahon. — Indorsement of Commander Kirkland. — His Letter to Admiral Davis 475

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Investigation of Paraguayan Affairs by Congress. — Its Object. — The Course taken by the Naval Department. — Extracts from the Report of the Congressional Committee. — Admiral Godon censured. — Extracts from the Testimony of Captain Clark H. Wells. — Interview with Admiral Davis and General McMahon. — The Admiral's Forgetfulness. — He determines to demand the Release of Bliss and Masterman. — Extract from a Letter to McMahon. — His Subsequent Course. — Antecedents of McMahon. — Return to the United States. — Naval Courtesy. — Captain Ramsey 486

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Delay of Admiral Davis in going to the Rescue of Bliss and Masterman. — The Paraguayan Tribunal. — Examination of Mr. Bliss. — Specimen of his Testimony, as taken down by the Tribunal. — Torture. — Political Prisoners. — The Narrative of Mr. Masterman. — His Fellow-Prisoners, Dr. Carreras, Don Benigno Lopez, and others. — The *Cepo Uruguayana*. — Its Origin. — Mr. Taylor's Experience in it. — Other Victims. — Sufferings and Privations of the Prisoners. — The President's Sisters. — His Mother 497

CHAPTER XXXV.

The Depositions of Bliss and Masterman. — Contradictions. — A Conspiracy to overthrow Republicanism in South America. — Lopez's Mode of eliciting the Truth. — Measures adopted by Bliss and Masterman to gain Time. — Bliss becomes my Biographer. — Youthful Infirmities. — Kleptomania. — College Life. — Favorite Books. — Experience as a Lawyer, Doctor, and in other Capacities. — Removal to California. — Novelist, Editor, Poet. — Appointed Minister to Paraguay. — Magnanimity of Lopez. — My Ingratitude. — The Paid Agent of the Brazilians. — Pretended Extracts from my Forthcoming Book. — Parallel between Lopez and Rehoboam. — My Opinion of Lopez and the Principal Characters among the Allies. — Character of the Book. — Robinson Crusoe and Gulliver outdone. — Circumstances under which it was written. — Remarkable Memory of the Author. — His Style. — He endeavors to excite the Superstitious Fears of Lopez. — The Letter "B." — Previous Relations with Mr. Bliss. — Want of Taste and Delicacy shown in the Book. — Extenuating Circumstances. — The Writer accomplishes his Object. — Indignation of the Naval Officers 514

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Arrival of the Wasp. — Admiral Davis's Letter to Lopez. — The New American Minister. — The Release of Bliss and Masterman demanded. — Lopez boasts that he has the Naval Officers on his Side. — Interviews between Davis and Lopez. — Bliss and Masterman regarded as Criminals. — Lopez's Opinion of Davis. — Davis sends two of his Officers to verify the Declarations of Bliss and Masterman before the Tribunal. — Extracts from the Testimony taken during the Paraguayan Investigation. — Joy of Bliss and Masterman on learning that their Deliverance was at Hand. — Lopez's sudden Turn of Affection for Bliss. — The Incomprehensible Character of Lopez 536

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Arrival of Bliss and Masterman on Board the Wasp. — Their Reception. — They exchange one Prison for another. — Comparing Notes. — McMahon refuses Bliss an Interview. — The American Naval System. — The first Version of the Affair sent to the United States. — Dr. Marius Duvall. — Arrival of Bliss and Masterman in the United States. — They memorialize Congress 549

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

McMahon presents his Credentials. — His Reception by Lopez. — Mutual Sympathy. — He becomes the Confidant of Madam Lynch. — Lopez

makes his Will. — McMahon constituted Custodian and Trustee. — The Blockade broken. — The British Secretary of Legation in Buenos Aires visits Paraguay. — Lopez abandons the Tebicuari and falls back to Angostura. — Battle of Pikysry. — Defeat of the Paraguayans. — Massacre of Prisoners. — Departure of McMahon for Pirébeui. — Sufferings and Misery of the Paraguayan Women and Children. — Lopez's Cabinet Ministers. — Furious Bombardment by the Allies. — Bravery of the Paraguayan Troops. — Cowardly Flight of Lopez. — Lopez's System of Vicarious Punishments. — Dr. Stewart. — Treatment of his Family by Lopez. — Inaction of the Brazilians. — Lopez allowed to fortify himself at the Pass of Ascurra. — Capitulation of Colonel Thompson 556

CHAPTER XXXIX.

The Count d'Eu takes Command of the Brazilian Army. — Lopez at the Pass of Ascurra. — The Paraguayan Women and Children driven before the Army. — Their Condition one of Appalling Wretchedness. — General McMahon at Pirébeui. — He is recalled. — His Departure from Paraguay. — Reception in Buenos Aires. — Burlesque Procession. — He endeavors to interest the United States in Behalf of Lopez. — Closing Events of the War. — Statement of General Resquin. — Capture of Pirébeui by the Brazilians. — Retreat of the Paraguayan Army. — More Conspiracies. — Execution of the Alleged Conspirators. — The Mother, Sisters, and Brother of Lopez accused of conspiring against him. — Execution of Venancio Lopez. — Statement of Doña Inocencia . . . 573

CHAPTER XL.

Lopez's System of Warfare no longer practicable. — His Army melts away. — His Encampment on the Banks of the Aquidaban. — A Surprise. — Flight of Lopez. — Capture and Death of his Ministers and Principal Officers. — The Pursuit of Lopez. — His Death. — Flight and Capture of Madam Lynch. — Death of Pancho Lynch. — The Rescue of Lopez's Mother and Sisters. — Return to Asuncion. — Ruined Condition of the City. — The Havocs of the War. — Nine Tenths of the Population destroyed. — Desire of the Paraguayan Women to wreak their Vengeance on Madam Lynch. — She is protected from their Fury by the Brazilians. — Her Property sequestrated. — The Fugitives in Asuncion. — Their Wretched Condition. — The Provisional Government. — Efforts to relieve the General Distress. 583

CHAPTER XLI.

The Surviving Companions of Lopez unable to explain his Conduct. — He left no Evidence against his Victims. — His most trusted Officers alarmed for their own Safety. — Bewildered by a Phantom. — His

Charge against Don Benigno.—Lopez, dying, left no Friend to mourn him.—His Name universally accursed.—The Character of Lopez not to be judged by any Human Standard.—A Mental and Moral Deformity.—Likeness and Unlikeness to Francia.—His Treatment of his Family.—The Curse of Solomon.—The Future of Paraguay.—The Immigration needed.—Advantages which the Country offers.—The Present Government.—Conclusion. 600

APPENDIX.

Correspondence between Rear-Admiral Davis and President Lopez. . . . 609

INDEX 615

HISTORY OF PARAGUAY.

VOL. II.

PARAGUAY.

CHAPTER I.

Personal. — I receive Leave of Absence. — Interview with the President. — The Passengers and Crew of the Marques de Olinda. — Lopez's War Policy. — Expedition to Matto Grosso. — Capture of Fort Coimbra. — Capture and Sack of Corumba. — Massacre of the Prisoners. — Interview with the President. — I take my Departure from Paraguay.

IN commencing this work a strange story was promised to the reader. However imperfectly it has been told, I believe the promise has thus far been fulfilled. But the strangest and darkest part is yet to come, and, to give anything like a full and connected narrative of the closing acts of the long tragedy, the work must be made up to a large extent of personal reminiscences. Therefore no apology is made for the free use of the first person, or for the introduction of those matters personal to myself which are necessary to a full narrative of the events as they occurred. For any value that this work may have, I must depend from this time to the conclusion on my testimony as a witness, rather than on any arrangement or collocation of evidence gathered from other sources, and which is open to others. I prefer to incur the risk of being charged with egotism, and with giving my own affairs an undue prominence, rather than to weaken the narrative by any circumlocution or affected modesty. I was so situated and compelled to take so prominent a part in the events which I have to relate, that without vanity I may quote as applicable to myself the familiar words of Æneas: —

“ Quæque ipse miserrima vidi,
Et quorum pars magna fui.”

Having resided for several years in Paraguay previous to the war, I became familiar with the habits and character of the people. I had seen, that, from causes which I have already traced, a race had been developed in which the last spark of personal liberty had been extinguished, and which knew no exceptions to the rule of implicit, unquestioning obedience to constituted authority. A whole nation thus helpless and incapable of self-assertion I had seen led by a despotic ruler into an unnecessary war, which was only to end when the Paraguayans as a people should no longer exist. More than this, I had seen that when the author of these calamities was about to be overtaken by the consequences of his own folly and ambition, he had endeavored to be revenged on mankind by destroying every human being that was in his power, and, under Providence, I had been the means of thwarting his plans to such an extent that some persons escaped, who were capable of bearing witness to his enormities. I had been destined by him for the fate that he intended for all, and his conduct towards me had shown such a combination of every bad quality in the same individual, such depravity and low cunning, such delight in cruelty, such effrontery in falsehood, that without a plain and succinct narrative of events as they occurred no one would believe nature capable of producing a character so depraved. I had seen many of my best friends seized and carried off to be starved, tortured, and executed for no crime whatever, and an attempt made to blast their names, after they were dead, by false accusations. It is my duty, therefore, to vindicate them, and in doing so to expose, not only the character of their destroyer, but the infamy of his apologists and abettors. Lopez, the cause of all this sacrifice and misery, has gone to his final account, his soul stained with the blood of seven hundred thousand of his own people, the victims of his ambition and cruelty. His defenders, who, knowing his character, encouraged him to prolong the hopeless contest, and who shared, and still hold, the spoils of his murdered victims, should have their names pilloried in history, that in

after times, when the world shall wonder how such a wretch was ever permitted to live, they shall be condemned to share his execrable immortality.

Such a calamity as the destruction of a nation and the extermination of an entire race should not be allowed to pass unnoticed into oblivion. There survive but few witnesses who can or will make public what they know of the long tragedy; and perhaps none but myself will ever attempt to publish the story of what they have seen, heard, and suffered. Of these few who escaped, nearly all were either in prison for a long time, or kept under such surveillance around the army head-quarters that they knew little of what was transpiring in the country except what passed under their own eyes. My means of observation were also very imperfect, owing to the constant efforts of Lopez to prevent communication between his camp and the capital, and to the inextricable mystery in which I found myself involved. I can, however, give my own experience, and in time, perhaps, some one else may be able to produce a connected narrative from the various fragmentary statements of the different witnesses.

Soon after the seizure of the Marques de Olinda, and while the question whether or not the Brazilian Minister, Cesar Sauvan Vianna de Lima, would be permitted to leave the country was still in doubt, I received from the Department of State the leave of absence which I had asked for some months before. I said nothing of this, however, until after my unfortunate colleague was safely out of the country, and the steamer which was sent to carry him away had returned to Paraguay. I knew that if I asked for passports to leave immediately after I had secured the safety of the Brazilian Minister, and before the steamer that carried him away had returned, that Lopez would suspect there was collusion between us, — that we had played him a trick, and that his steamer would be seized as a prize of war by the first Brazilian gunboat it might encounter; and also that other vessels in the river destined for Paraguay with valuable cargoes, composed largely

of munitions of war, would likewise be captured. I therefore remained quiet until I found that all the pledges given by Vianna de Lima had been faithfully respected by his government. About a week, however, after the return of the Parana, and while waiting to learn if all the other vessels had arrived unmolested, I took occasion to visit the President. Alas, how had I fallen from grace! Instead of the bland and courteous manner which he had always before assumed in private interviews, he had a dark and forbidding scowl, and his eyes had a sort of liquid, inflamed, fiendish look such as I had never before seen in the head of a human being, — I have seen something like it in wild beasts that have been goaded to madness by their tormentors, — and his whole appearance at that time gave me an impression of his character which has since been fearfully confirmed by his acts. My ostensible business with him at that time was to bring to his attention the project of the Collins Telegraph Company to extend their lines to all the principal towns and cities of South America. He heard my statement of the project, answered scarcely a word, and as soon as I had concluded broke forth in a furious tirade in regard to the officious part I had taken in behalf of the Brazilian Minister. I reminded him, that, if he had any complaints to make against me for the part I had taken, the proper way for them to be made would be officially through the Minister for Foreign Affairs. No, he abruptly said, he did not wish the correspondence reopened, but he wanted to express his opinions to me verbally. He said that I had already gone out of my way, exceeded my duties as the minister of a neutral nation, and shown myself to be no friend to Paraguay. I had taken advantage of the interview he had *condescended* to grant me, and brought into my official notes that which he had not spoken as official or binding, but as mere suggestions to be followed out or not, as might afterwards suit his purposes. But, not satisfied with this, I had in the correspondence made use of several sharp and objectionable phrases. I replied I had only followed the strict but plain line of duty ; and that no stranger, no neutral

or impartial person who was familiar with the English language, could find anything to object to either in the course I had pursued or the language I had employed. To this he replied, striking his breast in a theatrical manner: "It matters not what other people and other nations may say or think of the matter; it is what I say. I am to decide these questions." I then turned upon him and said, that, in my opinion, I had most reason to complain. Though I had come in as the friend of both parties to arrange a troublesome question, and had endeavored to so manage it that no Paraguayan interest could in any way be prejudiced, yet I had been treated all through with distrust and suspicion; the most commonplace expressions and sentences had been carped at and complained of; and throughout I had been regarded as an enemy trying to overreach the Paraguayan government. After several more passages not distinguished for amiability, I took my leave, unable to conceive how I had given such terrible offence. Could it be because the Brazilian Minister had escaped from his hands?

But the cause of his perturbation was soon apparent. Thinking that he had displayed wonderful astuteness and statesmanship in the correspondence between his minister and myself, he published it in the *Semanario*. In the same number he had a fulsome editorial in praise of himself, — of course written at his own dictation, — for his great magnanimity, courtesy, and strict observance of the laws of nations. When the *Semanario*, however, containing this correspondence reached Buenos Aires, the newspapers there did not at all concur with him in their estimate of his conduct or his sagacity as displayed in the letters of his minister. On the contrary, they uniformly condemned his mode of beginning the war and the detention of the Minister as being the acts of a semi-savage. They accused him of an intention to keep Vianna de Lima as a prisoner in Paraguay, and said he had only been bullied out of it by fear of the United States. But whatever was the cause of his anger with me, I resolved that, as soon as circumstances would permit, I would avail

myself of my leave of absence, and ask my passports, and that I would see him no more before my departure.

I was soon forced, however, to abandon the idea that I would not again see the man on whose will depended the life and death of every man in the country. The Brazilian consul, Señor Amarro José dos Santos Barboza, came to me a few days after in great affliction and excitement, telling me that all the passengers and crew of the Marques de Olinda, who since her capture had been kept as close prisoners in the government barracks, were to be sent away into the interior of the country, where he feared they would be exposed to severe hardships. He begged me to go and see the President, and request that they might be allowed to live in his house as prisoners, giving their parole not to leave it or go outside except with permission. I told the consul that the President had, in my last interview with him, shown himself to be so angry with me for the part I had already taken in behalf of his countrymen, it was very doubtful whether any further interference on my part would not do more harm than good. He begged me, however, to go; and I was obliged to dissemble the resentment I felt at the President's rudeness on the last occasion, and make the intercession.

To my surprise his Excellency was now all smiles and *condescension*. I told him I had come at the instance of the Brazilian consul, Amarro Barboza, to request that the passengers and crew of the Marques de Olinda might be permitted to *live* in his house, — giving their parole not to leave it, — and not be sent into the interior. But I added, as my own suggestion, that it would be far better for him and for Paraguay that he should allow them to leave the country altogether; that if they were kept as prisoners, Brazil would be obliged to make war to the bitter end. She could not, and would not, treat for peace if they were detained. The taking of the steamer was an affair that might be peaceably adjudicated, but not so the detention of her passengers and crew. But he did not see it in the same light. He said they would not be allowed to depart until the final settlement of all the questions at issue.

But he added, that, as they did not enter the country as enemies, they would not be treated as such. They would be sent into the interior to the district of San Joaquin, some thirty leagues from the capital, where, if they kept quiet, they would be allowed to live without molestation; they might hunt, or ride, or divert themselves in any way that they saw fit. He said, moreover, that in carrying on war he should conduct it in a way that would put to shame all his neighbors; that he knew the warfare of South America had always been barbarous, savage, and sanguinary. But he was resolved to put to shame the practice of killing and maltreating prisoners, and should strictly observe and be bound by the rules of war as held and practised by the most civilized nations. He was to be the pink of South American chivalry, the Chevalier Bayard of modern times. Prisoners should not only be protected in their lives, but should have good treatment. The gaucho system of robbing, sacking, and cutting throats would be entirely prohibited in his army; and whatever might be the result, the world should say that Francisco Solano Lopez conducted his military operations on principles humane and honorable. I expressed my gratification at this, and told him that, following this course, he would have a great name in history, and that adherence to the practice would of itself entitle him to the respect of all foreign nations; that most of the military leaders of South America, it was well known, had so tarnished their names with cruelties practised on prisoners that the character of the Spanish American people was generally regarded as sanguinary and semi-savage, and that by pursuing a course marked by humanity and justice towards his enemies he might acquire an illustrious name. He smiled approvingly, and said that he was resolved upon it. True, I had some doubts whether he would do all that he had promised, as I had never seen him practise either magnanimity or justice towards any one who had offended him; nevertheless, if encouraged to that course, he might treat his prisoners better than he otherwise would.

I now told him that I had received leave of absence from

X
my post several weeks previously, and had only deferred my departure till all questions were settled growing out of the departure of Vianna de Lima. He expressed regret that I should go away just then, as there would be important negotiations to arrange within a short time. The war would be over in three or four months at the furthest, and, as foreign ministers might be called in to arrange the terms of peace, it would be well that there might be one of them, at least, who had lived in Paraguay and was familiar with the character and condition of the people, and not unduly prejudiced in favor of their enemies. He seemed to think that all the representatives of foreign governments in Buenos Aires, Montevideo, and Rio Janeiro were entirely enlisted in favor of Brazil, and that Mr. Thornton, the English Minister, had a feeling of strong enmity to him. I told him that probably I should return long before the first step would be taken by any party looking towards peace. I should very likely be back in six months, and in that time Brazil would not be ready to begin the war. A government having so vast a territory as Brazil, with a sparsely settled population, could not in less than ten or twelve months collect, arm, and discipline a force that it would venture near the large and well-drilled army of Paraguay. Beside, it must create a navy, and this would take a year at least. In my opinion, Brazil would begin the war with the determination of conquering Paraguay, if not destroying it as an independent nation.

This reasoning of mine the President thought preposterous. Brazil would be glad enough to treat whenever it suited him to listen to her proposals, and he was not disposed to prolong the war needlessly, or for any selfish or ambitious purpose. But the interests of Paraguay required that she should show to the world that she had sufficient strength and material resources to command respect. I told him we would see who was right and who was wrong; to which, with some asperity, he responded: "Yes, we shall see; *si, veremos.*"

The war had indeed commenced before this interview with active operations against the province of Matto Grosso. The

people in that remote district had no knowledge of what had been transpiring elsewhere for the last two months. Their sole dependence for information from abroad was the packet steamer *Marques de Olinda*. They knew she had not arrived when due, yet her delay might be accounted for in so many ways that it occasioned no alarm. But while they had been awaiting the packet's arrival, Lopez was preparing a surprise for them. He had taken five of his best steamers with two gunboats in tow, each with a sixty-eight-pounder on board. On each of the steamers he had placed several cannon of lighter calibre, but adapted to the size of the vessels. Some five thousand of the best troops were then taken on board, and the expedition, under command of General Vicente Barrios, brother-in-law of the President, on the 14th of December started on her voyage of conquest. On the 26th the expedition came in sight of Fort Coimbra, situate on the right bank of the river, nearly two hundred leagues from Asuncion, and twenty from the frontiers claimed by Paraguay. This fort was considered to be very strong, and so it would have been in the hands of any other people than the Brazilians. Barrios sent a summons to the commander to surrender. The reply sent back was of a character to indicate that the fort would never be surrendered while there was a man left to defend it. Barrios then began to bombard with his sixty-eight-pounders, which, being of much heavier calibre and longer range than any guns of the fort, could have easily silenced them without the loss of a man. He, however, made an assault that was repulsed with much loss, and the next day sent a detachment to occupy an eminence that commanded the fort. The next night the fort was evacuated, and the force, consisting of less than two hundred men, left on the little steamer *Anhambay*, that was lying just above and out of range of the guns of the Paraguayans. When the latter entered the fort, they found an immense quantity of ammunition, including powder enough to last the whole Paraguayan army for at least a year of active war. The cannon, thirty-seven in number, were all taken, and a Brazilian flag and two of

the steamers were despatched below to give an account of the great victory achieved by five thousand men over two hundred. On their arrival at Asuncion some three hundred people paraded through the streets, bearing the captured flag, and shouting vivas to the great Lopez and his army of heroes. Among the shouts, however, were mingled other cries, like "Death to the Brazilians!" "Death to the Porteños!"

The expedition, after the capture of Coimbra, moved on to Alberquerque, a small settlement a few leagues above. This place was taken without resistance, and the party went on to Corumbá, the principal town in that part of Brazil, though containing only about two thousand inhabitants. The news of the taking of Coimbra had already reached there when the expedition arrived to find the town abandoned. The inhabitants had fled, with the exception of a few foreigners. The town was sacked, the foreigners were carried prisoners to Asuncion, and several Brazilians who fell into the hands of the Paraguayans were pierced to death with lances on the allegation that they were spies. The ears of many of the slain were cut off and carried as trophies to Asuncion; and of the prisoners taken, not one ever left Paraguay alive. In fact, the whole conduct of the Paraguayans, in regard to the lives and property of the unhappy people who had been surprised by them, was entirely contrary to what President Lopez had told me with great complacency it would be a day or two before.

A few days after the departure of the expedition from Asuncion, a little English steamer, the *Ranger*, reached Paraguay, bound for Matto Grosso. As the government had announced, in commencing the war, that the navigation of the river would be left free to all nations except Brazil, it was allowed, after several days' detention, and a search and scrutiny that left no piece of merchandise untouched, to proceed to its destination. It returned to Asuncion soon after, and on the 16th of January, 1865, I availed myself of the kindness of its commander, Captain Harrison, to take my departure from Paraguay.

I was doubting in my own mind whether I should ever

return ; but were I to come back at all, I supposed I should not be absent for more than six or seven months. Unforeseen events, however, determined me to go again to South America ; but instead of reaching my post in the course of six or eight weeks after leaving the United States, it was, owing to circumstances that will be fully related hereafter, fourteen months after leaving New York before I again set foot in Paraguay.

CHAPTER II.

Buenos Aires declines an Alliance with Brazil. — Seizure of Two Argentine War Steamers. — Don Ramon Capdevila. — Siege of Paisandu. — Death of Leandro Gomez. — Spanish American Ideas of National Honor and National Neutrality. — Capitulation of Montevideo. — The Oriental Legation in Paraguay. — Correspondence between Lopez and Urquiza. — Colonel Coriolano Marquez. — Capture of Corrientes by General Robles. — Provisional Government established. — Excitement in Buenos Aires. — Speech of President Mitre. — The Triple Alliance. — The Campaign in Corrientes. — Duplicity of Urquiza. — Colonel George Thompson.

FROM the time of the seizure of the Marques de Olinda, in October, 1864, until the meeting of the Congress in the following March, scarcely any communication had been allowed between Paraguay and the country below, and after the Congress met it was strictly and jealously prohibited.

The project of a sudden invasion of Corrientes had been discussed in the Congress; and as the member who proposed it, Don Andres Gill, was known to have intimate relations with Lopez, it was understood that this would be one of the first acts of hostility after war had been declared. It was not anticipated, however, by any one in Buenos Aires, nor in Corrientes, that Lopez, having commenced war with Brazil in a manner that would call forth all the resources of the Empire to attack him, would also provoke the hostility of the Argentines. If there was to be war between the two countries, the true policy of the Argentine Republic was to remain at peace; and as the troops and munitions of war must nearly all be conveyed by way of the river, it was supposed that a rich harvest would be reaped by the merchants of Montevideo, Buenos Aires, and the ports upon the river, at the expense of the belligerents. The Brazilian government was very desirous to engage the Argentine Republic to make common

cause with it against Lopez. Councillor Paranhos was sent specially from Rio de Janeiro to Buenos Aires to effect, if possible, an alliance between the two powers. He foreseeing that in a war carried on between his country and Paraguay it would be very difficult to send all the troops and supplies by way of the river to attack Paraguay, and that it was of the first importance to have a base on Argentine territory, endeavored to draw President Mitre into an alliance with the Emperor. He desired the moral support of the Argentine Republic in the war, and was ready to stipulate that all the expense, both in men and money, should be borne by Brazil. Mitre, however, refused to listen to any such proposition; he said the policy of his country was peace, and peace he would maintain if possible. The attitude taken by President Mitre at this time was almost universally approved by the Argentine people. Though they generally regarded Lopez as a common enemy of civilization and progress, the hereditary prejudice and antipathy against the Brazilians was such that they did not wish to make an alliance with them even against a semi-savage. The mission of Paranhos, therefore, was a complete failure, and he returned to Rio de Janeiro, where, soon after, the unexpected but grateful news came to the ears of the distinguished envoy, that on the 13th of April, 1865, Lopez had, without any previous warning to the Argentine government, sent a fleet of his steamers down the river to Corrientes, and there seized two Argentine war steamers, killed many of their crews, captured the rest, and, taking the vessels in tow, returned to Paraguay.

The capture of these vessels was attended by circumstances of greater audacity and barbarity than had been the seizure of the Marques de Olinda. It was about seven o'clock in the morning; all was peace and quiet on the river and in the town of Corrientes, and no one was expecting danger from any quarter, when steamers bearing the Paraguayan flag were seen approaching from up the river. As they came down past the town the flags of the Argentine vessels were dipped in courtesy to them, after which they came round and inside

of the Argentine vessels, whose officers so little suspected any hostile intent on their part, that the crews were not diverted from their occupations, but at the moment were taking their morning coffee in the cabin. As the Paraguayan vessels arrived alongside of the Argentines, a large number of soldiers sprang on deck, and began firing upon all who were in sight. Surprised and confounded at the suddenness of this attack, several of the crew jumped overboard and attempted to swim ashore. Few of them, however, were successful, as the Paraguayans shot at them while in the water, and scarcely any succeeded in reaching the bank and escaping. The steamers as soon as possible were taken in tow, and all who remained on board were made prisoners and carried to Paraguay, where they were placed in a common prison and made to work in fetters upon the streets. They were most miserably fed, and soon contracted diseases from which several died, and more would have done so but for the kindness and care with which they were attended to by Don Ramon Capdevila, an Argentine gentleman who had long lived in Paraguay, and who for a time ministered to their wants, trusting that when the war should be over his own government would recompense him for any outlay he might be at on their account. His interest in these unfortunate people and his kindness towards them were, however, construed by Lopez as evincing disapproval of his acts and sympathy with his own country and people. For this he was arrested, thrown into prison, and loaded with fetters, and his fellow-countrymen were left to the bare prison fare and treatment, under which some died and others lingered on until Lopez thought it more convenient to execute them than to keep them any longer: It is perhaps needless to say that Capdevila, after prolonged torture of years, and for no other offence, so far as is known, except that of feeding the hungry and clothing the naked, was finally executed; and his wife, an accomplished Argentine lady, and four young children were driven into the Cordilleras, and exposed to hardships that can scarcely be imagined, much less described.

While Lopez, during the year 1864 and the beginning of 1865, had been engaged in recruiting his army, and forcing all who were not in the ranks to pledge to him their lives and fortunes, to make it appear to the world that he was sustained by the whole Paraguayan people, events were transpiring in the Banda Oriental such as he had not anticipated, and which effectually deranged his plans. The Brazilians, in accordance with a threat that had been made by Saraiva to occupy Oriental territory in case the exorbitant demands of his government were not immediately complied with, had sent a large force into Uruguay, that united with Flores and captured the important town of Salto, on the Uruguay, on the 28th of November, and early in December commenced the siege of Paisandu, a town of some five thousand inhabitants. The land forces were supported by the Brazilian squadron, that at the same time commenced the bombardment from the river. The military operations, both by land and water, were doubtless directed by the Brazilian envoy, Paranhos, who had arrived but a short time before at Buenos Aires, clothed with almost viceregal amplitude of authority to conduct the war against Uruguay and to negotiate with the Argentine government. As yet, however, he could make no impression on President Mitre, who still refused to be drawn into a war against Paraguay, notwithstanding that, without having declared war against the Oriental Republic, he had rendered every assistance in his power to the Brazilians towards overthrowing the legal and established government of that country. Paisandu was defended nearly the whole month of December by a small garrison of about six hundred men, under the command of General Leandro Gomez and General Lucas Piriz. It was defended with a bravery and endurance that have never been excelled, and seldom equalled, in modern warfare. The gallantry with which this little band sustained for so long a time the attack of forces so many times outnumbering their own must render this siege one of the most memorable in South American history. The long resistance was stimulated by the vain hope of succor from Paraguay, as,

misled by the vague promises of Lopez to come to the rescue of the imperilled Banda Oriental, the press of Montevideo had been constantly announcing for several weeks that a strong Paraguayan force was advancing through the Misiones to the Oriental frontier. But no amount of gallantry can long prevail against overwhelming odds, and on the 2d of January, 1865, the town of Paisandu was stormed and taken, after a great part of the defenders, including General Piriz, had perished. General Leandro Gomez, when he saw that the Brazilians, with Flores and his gauchos, had got inside the town, realized that further resistance would be useless. He had just gone to his room to write a note, offering to capitulate, when it was entered by the Brazilian troops, and he surrendered himself and his staff as prisoners of war. Immediately after a small body of Flores's men, under the command of one Goyo Suarez, entered the apartment, and insisted that the distinguished prisoner should be delivered into their care, inasmuch as being an Oriental he ought properly to be regarded as the prisoner of the Oriental troops. Gomez, when he heard this demand, requested that it might be granted, stating that he could have no objection to delivering himself to his own countrymen. Suarez had no sooner got possession of the dreaded and gallant general whose bravery and skill had already rendered the siege famous throughout the country, than he ordered him to be conducted into an adjoining yard and summarily executed. His remains were then most shamefully mutilated, the body dragged out by a rope and cast ignominiously into a pit along with hundreds of his fellow-victims. This shameful murder of a man whose valor had been so distinguished as to cause the Oriental name to be honored by both Brazilians and Argentines caused a general outburst of disgust and indignation from all persons not blind to every sense of honor and good faith. To the credit of the Brazilians it should be said that they disclaimed all responsibility for the act, and denounced it as one that must naturally reflect on the cause which they had espoused. On the other hand, it should be said that there were some,

and not a few nor the most ignorant, who justified and defended the act on the ground that by killing Gomez they had done an irreparable injury to his party, as one general like him was worth ten thousand ordinary troops to his cause. It could have better spared ten thousand of its best troops than one general so valiant and tireless.

One other incident connected with this siege should be noted, as it shows how little of good faith and common honesty was observed by the Emperor of Brazil and President Mitre in their warfare upon the Oriental Republic. The Argentine government at the time of this siege still professed neutrality in the Oriental difficulties, and yet the bombs which were used by the Brazilian squadron in the bombardment of Paisandu had been furnished by President Mitre from the armories of Buenos Aires. Such are Spanish American ideas of national honor and national neutrality. ✓

Paisandu having fallen, the combined forces of Brazil and Flores laid close siege to Montevideo, after conceding seven days for the neutral portion of the population to retire. On the 15th of February, the term of office of President Aguierre expired, and the President of the Senate, Don Tomas Villalba, took the vacant post. Some of the more ardent members of the government, like Carreras and others, were disposed to resist until Montevideo should be levelled like Paisandu, but Villalba was not prepared to go to such extremities, and immediately opened negotiations with the besiegers, which resulted in the capitulation of the city on the 22d of February. On learning of the fall of Paisandu, and that Montevideo was in so desperate a situation that it must either capitulate or share the same fate, the Oriental Minister in Paraguay, Sagastume, retired, leaving his secretary, Francisco Rodriguez Larreta, in charge of the legation. Among the acts of the five days' presidency of Villalba was the recall of that legation; but as no official notice of it reached Paraguay for a long time afterwards, Rodriguez kept his flag flying and claimed to be the representative of the Oriental government for some months after, and until the Paraguayan government declined to longer

recognize his official capacity. Before his diplomatic relations had been formally closed, however, he had asked for his passports to leave the country. They were not given to him; and though afterwards he repeatedly asked for them, and notified the government of his desire to go away, he was not permitted to do so. Though coming to Paraguay in a diplomatic capacity, and according to all the rules of international law entitled to protection of his person while in the country and to full liberty to leave it without molestation or hindrance, he was detained in Paraguay, and finally, as we shall see hereafter, made a close prisoner, tortured, and executed.

The members of the Oriental government who had made themselves particularly obnoxious to their conquerors fled, on the surrender of the city, on board of the English and other men-of-war lying in the harbor, and thence were generally conveyed to Concepcion del Uruguay, the capital of Entre Rios, where they were well received, and remained for some months under the avowed protection of General Urquiza. Urquiza's attitude in this war had, up to this time, been evasive and suspicious. Lopez had long been endeavoring to engage him in some sort of a secret alliance, by which he would support him in the war which he contemplated against Mitre, as it was supposed that the Ex-President was not satisfied with the unimportant part he was playing at that time, but was anxious to be again at the head of the government of the Argentine Confederation. Urquiza, it was well known, had been engaged in a protracted correspondence with Lopez, having in view all the time his own interests, and ready to take up arms simultaneously with Lopez, provided such an act would not too much endanger his influence and authority in Entre Rios, — which province he ruled almost as absolutely as Lopez did Paraguay, notwithstanding that it was counted as one of the states of the Argentine Confederation, and was duly represented in the general Congress. What the substance of the correspondence was will probably never be divulged, though, knowing what were then the designs of Lopez, and knowing that many secret agents were passing to and fro between them,

and from another fact to be hereafter related, the general tenor of it may be divined. The last of the bearers of these letters from Urquiza to Lopez was Don José Ramirez, who visited Asuncion in January, 1865, and Major Carranza, who arrived the following March. Towards the latter part of the war they both fell under the suspicion of Lopez, for what cause is unknown, and both were subjected to long imprisonment and torture, and were finally shot. About the same time Colonel Francisco Laguna also arrived in Paraguay. He had come as commissioner on the part of the Oriental exiles then living in Concepcion del Uruguay. Another person of note, who appeared soon after, was Colonel Coriolano Marquez, who, having been one of the followers and upholders of Rosas during the days of his terrible power, naturally fled to Lopez as a person whose government he would approve and whom he would like to serve. Having, for some recent act of atrocity, been condemned to death and cast into prison, Marquez had managed to escape from his jailers, and served for a month or two in the Oriental army; but being suspected of conspiring against the government of President Aguirre, whose policy and measures were not sufficiently sanguinary to suit his gaucho nature, he abandoned him and fled to Paraguay. He was not looked upon, however, as a valuable acquisition by Lopez, though he was allowed for some three years to live unmolested in or near the capital, where his means of support was writing patriotic and fulsome eulogies of the great, the brave, the magnanimous Lopez for the illiterate but patriotic women of the country, who were ordered to appear at public festivals and pronounce discourses in praise of their brave protector, the Marshal President of Paraguay.

The capture of the Argentine steamers in the port of Corrientes on the 13th of April was followed up on the 14th — the day of the assassination of President Lincoln — by the despatch of a Paraguayan force under command of General Wenceslao Robles (the same officer who was the hero in the attack upon the Water Witch at Fort Itapiru, and subse-

quently the chief of the military tribunal which investigated the charges of conspiracy against Padre Maiz and others immediately after the election of President Lopez, in 1862), to occupy the town of Corrientes. The descent upon this unfortunate town was so sudden that no resistance was made. The telegraph having before this been completed from Asuncion to Humaita, the news was received the same day at the former place; and that night the Minister of Foreign Affairs, José Berges, embarked for Corrientes with a number of other Paraguayans to serve as assistants in administering the affairs of that province. He was accompanied also by two Correntinos then residing in Asuncion. One of these, Victor Silvero, who had been known as an intriguing politician in Corrientes, became subsequently the principal writer for the *Semanario*; and the other, Sinforiano Caceres, was a cattle-dealer, who, previous to the commencement of hostilities, had brought over large numbers of cattle for the Paraguayan army. In this business Caceres had a partnership with Mrs. Lynch, and through her influence with Lopez he was able to secure very profitable contracts.

The day after the arrival of the party at Corrientes, the people of the town were summoned to elect a provisional government in place of the one of which all the members had fled the night before the entry of the Paraguayans. The latter, with a few of the citizens who were influenced by Silvero and Caceres, held an election, the result of which was that Silvero and Caceres, with an old man by the name of Gauna, were declared to be elected as a government Junta. This Junta had no real powers, for the election was but a farce, and intended only to make it appear that whatever outrages might be committed were to be charged to a government elected by the people themselves, while all real authority was in the hands of Lopez's minister. The people of Corrientes submitted sullenly and silently to a state of affairs to which they were in no condition to make any resistance; but on the whole their rights and property were more respected than in any of the other towns that were taken by the troops of

Lopez, as the city was not sacked, and the soldiers were kept under a fair degree of restraint. Some of the prominent men, including the Spanish consul, were arrested and sent to Humaita, where, after a long imprisonment, they shared the fate of all others on whom the heavy hand of Lopez chanced to fall. Several Correntino ladies, whose husbands were known to be in the army, were likewise arrested, and, with their young children, carried as prisoners to Paraguay, where they were subjected to the most inhuman treatment till all, women and children alike, perished of want, exposure, or worse.

The news of the invasion of Corrientes, following as it did the seizure of the steamers, created among the people of Buenos Aires a most intense excitement. The people with one voice cried out for vengeance against the selfish despot of Paraguay, who, like a barbarian and savage, had commenced war without giving notice, and in a manner unknown to civilized nations. They hitherto had approved the action of President Mitre in refusing to be drawn into a war with Paraguay, but this outrage was such an insult to the national dignity that the whole nation cried out for war, and the same evening that the news of it reached Buenos Aires a great multitude of people assembled in front of President Mitre's house, all clamorous for action against Lopez. Mitre addressed the crowd in his usual eloquent, though somewhat inflated style, and told them that the government would not be wanting in energy to avenge the insult of the despot of Paraguay. "Go home," said he, "to your beds, and to-morrow meet me at the barracks. Within one week we will be on the march to Corrientes, and within three months we will be in Asuncion."

Lopez by his folly had done for Brazil what Paranhos, with all his promises, had not been able to effect. He had forced the Argentines to take up arms against him, and, if they were to make war successfully, to form an alliance against him as against a common foe.

In despair of enlisting President Mitre as an ally, Paranhos had returned to Rio, when the news of the invasion of Cor-

rientes reached Buenos Aires, and had been succeeded by Councillor Octaviano d'Almeida Rosa, who was sent as a special envoy to the Plata, to have a general superintendence of Brazilian interests in the river. But it was now easy for Octaviano to do what his more able and experienced predecessor had been unable to accomplish. The government at Montevideo, which had been established by Flores with the assistance of Brazil, was summoned to despatch a plenipotentiary to Buenos Aires to participate in the formation of an alliance of the three powers against Paraguay, and the famous secret treaty known as the "Triple Alliance" was soon after formed.

The provisions of this treaty are so curious as to merit more attention than the nature of this work will permit. The first five articles of the treaty provide that the three powers shall respectively contribute all the means at their disposal to the common cause; that the chief command and direction of the allied armies by land shall be confided to General Bartholomé Mitre, President of the Argentine Republic; that the maritime forces shall be under the command of Vice-Admiral Viscount Tamandaré; that General Flores shall have a separate, though subordinate, command of the forces, composed of a division of Argentine troops and another of Brazilian, besides the quota furnished by Uruguay; and that the Brazilian land forces shall be under the immediate orders of General Osorio, but subordinate to the commander-in-chief of the whole army, General Mitre. Each government was to furnish the arms, clothing, equipments, and all other supplies, required by its own troops. These preliminaries arranged, the treaty then stipulates that the allies will not lay down their arms until they have abolished the existing government of Paraguay, neither treat separately with Lopez nor sign any treaty of peace, truce, or armistice, or suspend the war unless by the common consent of all. The treaty then asserts that the war is not against the people of Paraguay, but against the existing government, and that the allies will permit a Paraguayan legion to be formed of the citizens of that nation who may

wish to assist in deposing Lopez from power. In this treaty the allies also bound themselves to respect the independence and sovereignty of the Republic of Paraguay ; that the Paraguayan people should be at liberty to elect their own government and give it any institutions they might desire ; and that no one of the allies would either annex it to their own territory or establish any protectorate as a consequence of the war. The treaty, moreover, stipulated that, when the existing government of Paraguay had disappeared, the allies would make such arrangements with that which might succeed it as to insure the free navigation of the rivers Parana and Paraguay, so that in future the laws of that Republic should not obstruct or prevent the direct navigation of war or merchant vessels of the allied states on their voyages to their respective territories and dominions.

Another provision of this treaty, which shows how little the allies understood the nature of the contest into which they were about to enter, or of the resources of the country whose government they had undertaken to overthrow, provided that the expenses of the war should be borne by Paraguay, and that all the damages caused to public or private property or to the persons of their citizens previous to the declaration of war, and all damages subsequently done in violation of the laws of war, should be paid for from the Paraguayan exchequer. Besides these provisions, it had others providing what should be the future boundaries of Paraguay ; the Brazilians taking to themselves all that they had ever claimed during the long controversy which had been pending from the time of the early settlement of the country. X

To the treaty containing such stipulations, and many others almost equally absurd, was appended a protocol, in which it was declared that the fortifications at Humaita should be demolished, and the construction of any others like them should never be permitted ; and that the government which might be established in Paraguay after the overthrow of Lopez should not be left in possession of any arms or munitions of war, but that whatever might be found in the country should be equally

distributed among the allies, and all trophies or booty which might be taken from the enemy should be divided between the allies and the one making the capture. The parties to this singular treaty wisely resolved that the provisions of it should be kept secret, but, like most state secrets, it became prematurely public. The Oriental plenipotentiary having given it in confidence to Mr. Lettsom, the English *Chargé d'Affaires* in Montevideo, he, in turn, sent it as a secret communication to his own government. It was then published in utter disregard of the faith and confidence under which it had been confided to Mr. Lettsom.

Immediately after the signing of the treaty by the ministers of the three powers, the Brazilian fleet, which had been lying at Montevideo, moved up the Parana to hold in check the advancing Paraguayan forces, and to prevent all communication between Paraguay and the lower countries. As soon as a force could be collected by General Mitre, General Paunero was sent with a small army to take up his station in the southern part of the province of Corrientes and watch the Paraguayans who were now marching in force from Corrientes along the bank of the river, and had reached Bella Vista, a town of some four thousand inhabitants. General Robles, on moving south from Corrientes, had with him an army of twenty-five thousand men, having left a garrison of only fifteen hundred troops and two small guns for the defence of that city. After he had left, and was engaged in ravaging the country to the southward and sacking the towns, the war-worn and scarred Argentine veteran, General Paunero, succeeded in persuading the Brazilian commander of the squadron to take on board a body of four thousand men, and convey them above the main force of Robles for the purpose of recapturing Corrientes. The squadron, consisting of eight Brazilian and two Argentine steamers, moved up the river and took position in front of the city so as to rake the streets. About two thousand of these troops were landed with two six-pounder guns, and while the fleet was bombarding the Paraguayans, they were also attacked by the

Argentine troops that had been landed, and a fierce hand-to-hand fight took place, in which it is said great courage was displayed on both sides. The Paraguayans, however, were obliged to leave the city, and made a stand on a stone bridge, half a mile to the north, where they were all the while exposed to the fire of the fleet as well as to that of the infantry.

As Colonel Thompson says in his history of the war, "the Brazilians here first showed a peculiarity in their tactics, which consists in firing whenever they have any guns to fire with, whether or not they see what they are firing at, no matter whether they kill friend or foe, or both together, — which last is generally the case." The Paraguayans were finally forced to retreat; and as Paunero had not sufficient force to hold the city in case the Paraguayans should be reinforced by Robles, he re-embarked and went down the river to join his main army. The triumvirate government of Lopez, that had retreated from the city before the battle commenced, returned as soon as Paunero and his troops had re-embarked, and re-established their government.

The attitude of General Urquiza by this time had become a very important consideration to both parties in the war. He had undoubtedly coquetted with Lopez, and encouraged him in his warlike preparations with assurances that at the proper time he would make common cause with him against Mitre. But in this Urquiza had not foreseen that Lopez would commence the war with such an outrage on Brazil as would compel the Emperor to put forth all the energies of the government for his destruction. A war against the Argentine Republic alone, or against Flores in support of the legitimate government of Montevideo, was what Urquiza had been contemplating during all the time that he was holding such friendly correspondence with Lopez; but now since the legal government of Montevideo had fallen, and Montevideo, and indeed the whole country of the Uruguay, was subject to his authority, supported as it was by the entire Brazilian army and navy, with the Argentine government in alliance with the two, Urquiza shrunk from compromising himself any further with

Lopez. On the contrary, he hastened to make peace with Mitre by giving extraordinary pledges of loyalty and devotion to the national cause ; and in proof that he was acting in good faith, he delivered unopened into his hands a package of despatches from Lopez that had just reached him. Mitre ordered the publication of the letters, and put the bearer of them in prison. Urquiza, doubtful of what might be the general result, and feeling that it was necessary for him to do something to make good his professions by acts, returned to his own province of Entre Rios, and began to collect the troops that he had promised to furnish to the national army. His whole course during the war, however, was evasive. Though he collected his army, for which he received arms and clothing from the federal government, yet he contrived to infuse into them his own spirit, so that when they were sent to join Mitre they all scattered on the route and returned to their homes. Urquiza pretended that they had done this in spite of him and against his will, and promised to have a still larger force ready for the field within a month. But his troops were of little or no service in the war. He was a bad man and a bad subject, and was ready at any time to join Lopez, could he have foreseen that such a step would have been to his advantage. He was one of those successful gauchos, who had begun his career by cutting throats and appropriating to himself the property of his victims until he had got an entire province almost wholly under his sway, and was ready to make war if by so doing he could establish himself again at the head of the federal government, and yet incur no risk of endangering his immense but ill-gotten possessions.*

It is not the purpose of this work to give anything like a history of the war. The writer had few advantages beyond people who were not near the scene of it that would enable

* Of the most conspicuous figures in the late war it is remarkable how many of them perished by violence. Netto, the feudal lord, who dragooned the Brazilian government into espousing the cause of Flores, perished, ere reaching Paraguay, at Corrientes ; Flores was assassinated in Montevideo in 1868 ; and Urquiza shared a like fate in his palace, in Entre Rios, just as the war, which he had encouraged in its first stages, had closed with the death of Lopez.

him to describe the events as they appeared to those who were in the respective camps of the belligerents. Besides, the history of the war, as it appeared from the Paraguayan side, has been written by the person most competent of all in the Paraguayan camp to give a succinct narrative of the long-protracted struggle. From this work numerous extracts will be made, but mainly in reference to the peculiar discipline of the Paraguayan camp, rather than to the military operations or the progress of the war.*

*"The War in Paraguay, with a Historical Sketch of the Country and its People, and Notes upon the Military Engineering of the War. By George Thompson, C. E., Lieutenant-Colonel of Engineers in the Paraguayan Army, Aide-de-Camp to President Lopez, Knight of the Order of Merit of Paraguay, etc." The author of this work was the principal engineer of Lopez, and under his strategical eye were the points selected for the erection of the batteries, which, under his superintendence were so formidable in repelling the attacks of the Allies, and for the defence of which Lopez had nothing to do but to send his troops and guns in accordance with the suggestions of his engineer. Though Colonel Thompson takes no particular credit to himself for the part which he took, yet his simple and plain narrative of events as they transpired, and of the labors in which he was engaged, shows very clearly that the credit for military skill which has been claimed for Lopez is nearly all due to the unpretending Englishman whose services Lopez finally requited by denouncing him as a traitor and deserter.

CHAPTER III.

Popular Demonstrations in Support of the Government. — The Press of Paraguay. — The *Paraguay Independiente*. — The *Eco del Paraguay*. — The *Semanario*. — Inordinate Vanity of Lopez. — Sources of Information. — The Postmaster-General of Paraguay. — Antipathy of the Paraguayans to the Brazilians. — The Paraguayan *versus* the Brazilian Soldiers. — Matto Grosso. — Mitre refuses to permit the Paraguayans to pass through the Misiones. — Brazil vainly seeks an Alliance with Buenos Aires against Lopez. — Buenos Aires determines to remain Neutral. — General Urquiza's Intrigues with Lopez and Mitre. — Congress convoked. — Charges against the Argentine Government. — Lopez made Marshal. — The Order of Merit.

WHILE the government had been occupied in its warlike preparations preceding the first act of overt hostility, it had not been unmindful of its interior affairs. The public that never for fifty years had dared dissent from, censure, or criticise a single act of the sovereign, whether official or private, had let every act of tyranny or oppression pass without protest and with seeming approval. But now that war was resolved upon, the people were required to make public demonstrations of loyalty and enthusiasm. The ambiguous protest of the 30th of August might mean war or peace. No one outside of Paraguay, unless it were the Oriental ambassadors, supposed that it meant the former, and the Paraguayan people had no idea whom they were to war against. They had judged from the *Semanario* that the offending power was the Argentine Republic, for up to that time there had been no recent complaint of Brazil. From this "Protest," however, it appeared that Brazil was the greater offender, and that the Paraguayan arms would be turned against the Empire. Hence it was pretended that it was in the holy cause of republicanism against the encroachments of monarchy and slavery that the war was to be

waged. The demonstrations in support of the government were made to take the form of public meetings in different parts of the country. At these meetings the people were invited to attend, but the invitation was of that kind that all knew it would be disregarded at the price of life or liberty. At such meetings, all who were competent to do it were expected to make patriotic speeches, pledging themselves to support the government to the last. Then, to fix them more irrevocably, they were invited to sign declarations in the form of addresses to the President, in which, after reciting their approval of his valiant and spirited conduct, they pledge to him "their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor." At all these ratification meetings the President was sure to have not only the *gefés* and *juezes* of the district, who had been appointed by himself to be his agents and instruments of despotism, but his secret spies to report the least expression or indication of dissent from the course he was pursuing. The people, who knew this, and knew that anything short of implicit acquiescence and assumed enthusiasm would consign them to prison, gave their names without exception. For weeks after the publication of the protest the *Semanario* was filled with the names of all the principal men of the country, — all those who had any property that was worth taking, or sufficient influence or standing to pretend to respectability. The people of the capital were first subjected to this sacrificial process. In the *Semanario* of the 17th of September, 1864, are given the names of every man who was the head of a family within the limits of the capital, and of all others above the rank of peon or slave. I append the names of seventy-eight persons who, being leading citizens of Asuncion, had the honor of heading the list.* None of them were living at

* Andres Gill, Chief-Justice; died September, 1865. José Maria Montiel, Criminal Judge; died in prison. José Falcon, Keeper of Archives; sent to the army in disgrace, with two pairs of fetters; afterwards a judge in the inquisition. Domingo Rojas Aranda, Justice of the Peace, cousin of Lopez; imprisoned, with two pairs of fetters; was released, and soon died. Saturnino Bedoya, Treasurer; married Lopez's sister; degraded to the ranks as a private soldier, accused of conspiracy, and expired in the torture. Miguel Antonio Baez, Justice of the Peace;

the end of the war, except three or four who deserted or were taken prisoners. Of the rest, nearly all were either executed by order of Lopez, or died while in prison from starvation and torture. In his official papers, those who expired under the torture are simply mentioned as having *died*.

The *Semanario* was the only paper published in Paraguay for seven years preceding the war, and of course was the government organ. The first periodical ever published in the country was called the *Paraguay Independiente*, and the first number was issued in April, 1845. It was established as an organ for the elder Lopez, and was conducted by him at the state's expense, and the leading articles were all from his pen. It continued with more or less regularity

died 1865. Silvestre Aveiro, Escribano; became major, Campaign Secretary, and chief torturer. Carlos Riveros, Chief Clerk of Interior; imprisoned, with two pairs of fetters; afterward accused of conspiracy, and shot, August 26, 1868. Miguel Haedo, became captain in the army; shot as a traitor, August 26, 1868. Miguel Berges, Justice of the Peace; received Order of Merit; died in prison in the army, July 20, 1868. Luis Caminos, became Chief Campaign Secretary and Minister of State and of War; killed with Lopez, March 1, 1870. José Maria Ibañez. Santiago Aramburu, merchant; died April, 1866. Gumesindo Benitez, editor of *Semanario*, became Secretary of State, and conducted Lopez's correspondence concerning Carreras, Bliss, and Masterman; was himself accused of conspiracy in August, loaded with the heaviest fetters, and shot with Carreras and forty-five others, on Sunday, September 27, 1868. Natalicio Talavera, army correspondent; died September, 1867. José Maria Lamas, private soldier; killed May 24, 1866. Julian Aquino, Director of Government Printing Press; shot August 9, 1868. Bernardo Ortellado, Secretary of Legation in United States in 1860; Chief-Justice, 1867; shot as a traitor, September 27, 1868. Adolfo Saguier, cousin of Lopez, artillery officer; made judge in conspiracy trials; thrown into prison, and captured by Brazilians, December, 1868. Francisco Fernandez, chief overseer of Lopez's private estate, colonel, and acting Minister of War; shot August 26, 1868. Ramon Villa, died 1867. Feliz Larrosa, Justice of the Peace; made private soldier, died in the army. Manuel M. Rivarola, Justice of the Peace, private soldier, died 1867; his daughter Dolores bayoneted, December, 1868. Pablo A. Gonzalez, Collector of Customs; shot August 26, 1868. Vicente Dentella, Inspector of Tobacco; private soldier, shot September 27, 1868. Policarpo G. Garro, Prosecuting Attorney of Criminal Court, "died in prison," July 15, 1868. José Vicente Urdapilleta, Chief-Justice; shot August 22, 1868, with one hundred and seven others. Escolastico Garcete, Justice of the Peace, "died in prison," July 25, 1868. Isidoro Recalde, died 1867. Apolinar Chirife, made common soldier; died 1867, daughters imprisoned. Fermin Bazaraz, Criminal Judge; shot August 9, 1868. Eustaquio Recalde, died in prison. Santiago Ozcariz, Justice of the Peace,

till September, 1852, when it was suspended; and the government had no organ till May, 1853, at which time the first number of the *Semanario* appeared, at first under the editorial direction of Dr. Juan Andres Gelly, who was afterwards the secretary of the younger Lopez on his diplomatic mission to Europe. He was the father of General Gelly y Obes, who subsequently figured in the war of the "Triple Alliance" against Paraguay as the Argentine Minister of War. This was published, as it name imports, weekly, and had the field to itself until 1856, when a Spanish adventurer by the name of Bermejo started another, though not a rival paper, that he called the *Eco del Paraguay*. This was started as a hebdomadal, with pretensions to a literary character; but

shot July 29, 1868. Pastor Gonzalez, died in the army. Abdon Molinas, officer of Treasury; "died in prison," August 4, 1868. Pascual Bedoya, officer of Treasury; died 1868. Sebastian Ibarra, officer of Treasury; shot August 22, 1868. Zenon Rodriguez, Fiscal of Criminal Court; died 1868. Francisco Acosta. Miguel A. Haedo, in Buenos Aires during the war. Ramon Marecos, chief of Villa Rica, poet and nephew of Francia, imprisoned and died. Indalecio Benitez, died in the army. German Serrano; became colonel, was wounded, and captured by allies, November, 1868. Cesareo Montiel, clerk in War Office; imprisoned and died. José Maria Caminos, Justice of the Peace in Recoleta; imprisoned, further fate unknown. Higinio Uriarte. José D. Candia, government clerk; died 1867. Elías Ortellado, lieutenant; shot with his brother, the last Chief-Justice, September 27, 1868. Ildelfonso Machain, merchant, lost three sons in the army, was persecuted and ruined, and died 1868. Antonio Sayas. Hilario Recalde, merchant, died in prison. Pedro P. Haedo, died 1868. Guillermo Sosa, made private soldier, imprisoned, and died. Juan C. Centurion, educated in England, confidant of Lopez, fate unknown. Nicolas A. Isasi, ecclesiastical notary; wounded May 24, 1866. Juan B. Castillo. Sinfioriano Pereira, captain; wounded repeatedly, died 1868. Andres A. Urdapilleta, shot with his brother the Chief-Justice, August 22, 1868. Jaime Garcia, deserted from Curuzú, September, 1866; mother and sisters exiled, property confiscated. Manuel Solalinde, army surgeon. Bernardo Decoud, killed in battle. Miguel A. Elorduy, major-domo of the cathedral; shot as a traitor, July 16, 1868. Juan F. Escauriza, died 1867. Juan A. Ibarra. Benigno Gonzalez, died 1867. Juan M. Villalba. Francisco de P. Bedoya, died. Manuel Perina, died 1867, in the army. José Maria Sandoval, died 1866, in the army. Juan B. Gill, taken as medical assistant, fate unknown. Bernardino Cabral, government clerk; shot August 22, 1868. Leonardo Sion, clerk in Treasury, son of Lopez's brother-in-law; shot August 23, 1868. Laureano Gomez, fate unknown. Facundo Talavera, killed in battle. José Isidoro Troche, "died in prison," July 19, 1868. Matias Sanabria, Chief of Police, and major; shot September 27, 1868.

afterwards it was issued for a few weeks as a semi-weekly, and in the end became so like the official organ, that, after an existence of about a year and a half, it ceased, and its founder was made editor of the *Semanario*. He was a man of some literary acquirements; and during the time that he occupied the tripod the articles were better written, and smacked less of fulsome adulation of the ruling power, than ever before or since. But even then it was so entirely a government organ that an editorial notice had almost as much force as an official decree. A remark in it tending to show that any individual had committed any breach of etiquette or duty was sufficient to cause other people to avoid him, and thus his business might be ruined. If there were any question of difference with another government, its columns were filled with the grossest abuse of that government and its people, so that such as happened to be resident in the country were the marks for the insolence of officials and the insults of the populace.

On the accession of the younger Lopez to the Presidency, however, the *Semanario* as it had been was not enough for his grosser appetite. The young man, though he had not, like Achilles, been reared on bears' marrow and lions' hearts, had fed so much on adulation and sycophancy that nothing else agreed with his stomach. His name and fame must figure exclusively in every page and every column. He was not like Themistocles, who complained that the honors of Miltiades would not let him sleep; but, rather, like Dionysius, he could not endure that his subjects should talk or think of anybody but himself. Bermejo, who was a Spaniard and had seen other parts of the world, could not seriously make his praises sufficiently eulogistic and fulsome to suit the inordinate vanity of his master, and therefore he was dismissed from his thankless position, that had given him but a meagre living during his years of servitude, soon after which he left the country. He was succeeded in this office by a native named Gúmesindo Benitez, — a man who afterwards united to the duties of editor those of Acting Secretary of Foreign Affairs and chief spy, until his master, having re-

solved on the general massacre of the foreigners in his power, as well as of all the more intelligent Paraguayans, caused him to be arrested and subjected to a refinement of torture unknown to the Spanish Inquisition, and afterwards shot. His part in the terrible oppressions of the people, to which he seemed to lend a willing hand, will appear from time to time as the narrative proceeds; and the extracts I shall make from the *Semanario* will give a good illustration of the perfect union of servility and tyranny in the same character. With the change of editors, the character and tone of the paper changed. Though the editorials were more loosely written, they were more abounding in praise of "the great Lopez." As the paper had few extracts and scarcely any business notices, but was made up almost entirely of original matter, the labor of writing the editorials was considerable, although the paper was issued only once a week, and on a small folio sheet of twenty-one by fourteen inches to the page. Others besides Benitez were employed to write on such subjects as were given them, but all was submitted to the revision of the President, who might thus be literally styled the chief editor of the paper. Thus all the fulsome and disgusting flattery and adulation that filled its columns was written and published by his orders; and if they were always in the same strain, extolling him as the wisest and greatest man of all time, who so well as himself knew how great he was?

Bermejo left early in 1863, and soon after it was found necessary to enlarge the paper and increase the capacity of the printing-office. New presses and type were accordingly ordered from England; a new building was erected; and in April, 1864, the new office was opened with as much formality as would be observed in our country in dedicating a cathedral. The President was to honor the occasion, and after the usual manner people were invited to attend. Having had the honor to be present, I was struck, notwithstanding I had by this time become used to such things, by the placards on the walls, all in the same strain of idolatry to the President. The different presses had their forms already set to work off

and distribute hand-bills, mottoes, and apostrophes among the crowd. From one of these we quote sufficient to show the style of the whole: "Let the press be the means of publicly conveying the sincere expression of gratitude to our illustrious President; let it do justice to its indefatigable protector, the laborious citizen who devotes his life and genius to the sacred cause of the country; let it be ready to defend with dignity the inalienable rights of Paraguay, to diffuse knowledge and morality among her children, and to crown the Republic with glory, power, and civilization. Long live the President! Long live the enlightened protector of the Paraguayan press!"

Another slip was filled with the following morsels suited to the delicate taste of the President. "No. 1. Glory to the illustrious CITIZEN CARLOS ANTONIO LOPEZ, Founder of the National Press!—No. 2. *Vive* the most Excellent Señor President of the Republic, Citizen Francisco Solano Lopez!—No. 3. *Vive* the illustrious Protector of the National Press!—No. 4. Gratitude to the Supreme Magistrate of the Republic that has deigned to honor the establishment of the National Press!—No. 5. Gratitude to the intelligent assembly that does us the honor of visiting the establishment of the National Press!—No. 6. *Vive* this day, 19th of April, memorable to the establishment of the Press of the Republic for the visit of the most excellent Señor President of the Republic, the blessing of the establishment, and the numerous company that honors it!"

This is the kind of stuff that the morbid vanity of the President craved; and as he strutted through the office, the people near him silent and subdued, looking awestruck and afraid, he evidently felt himself a god.

After the war commenced the *Semanario* was looked for with more interest than ever before; for though it contained little news, it informed people on what subjects they might converse. It might be known that something disastrous had occurred, but until the fact was promulgated in the *Semanario* it was unsafe to speak of it; and many instances occurred of

persons being arrested and thrown into prison for spreading false reports, which, however, the *Semanario* a few days later would be obliged to confirm. Nothing unfavorable was ever published in its columns unless it was of such magnitude that it could not be kept a secret; and then, if it were a repulse or defeat in battle, it was always represented as a great victory, and the explosion of a powder magazine or the loss of a steamer was only alluded to as a trifling incident, so insignificant as to call for an apology for making mention of it. Yet, as it was the only newspaper in the capital, people, in their doubt and anxiety, looked for its appearance with an impatience such as perhaps few papers in the history of the world ever excited. This interest was much increased by the great irregularity in its days of publication. Though professing at the head of its columns to be issued every Saturday, yet, during the first four years of the war, though it appeared on every other day of the week, it never was issued on a Saturday. Rarely it would be out on Sunday, often on Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday, and not unfrequently it would not appear before Friday. The delay would naturally lead to the expectation of important news; but so often was the paper, which was so eagerly looked for, filled with little else than rhapsodies on the great Lopez, that after a time people lost interest in it. They learned that it was not published to give information of the actual circumstances, but to create such a belief in the situation as the President desired should prevail.

Before the war the Paraguayan people had scarcely any other source of information than this government organ for obtaining news respecting what was going on in other parts of the world. The newspapers from Buenos Aires and Montevideo were virtually prohibited to them, and I question if there was a native of the country who was a subscriber to one of them. Foreigners resident in Asuncion subscribed for such papers, but there was never a package of them entered the country, except such as were addressed to a foreign minister or consul, without being broken open at the post-

office and read, to see if it might contain something against Paraguay or its benign government. The person to whom was assigned this ungrateful task was an old man by the name of Acuña. He was the Postmaster-General of Paraguay, and, though a native of the Argentine province of Tucuman, had come in his youth to Paraguay, where he had married into the unfortunate Machain family. Notwithstanding his being so far in the confidence of the government as to be intrusted with this office, he was a most excellent man, and was my intimate friend. His wife was one of those rare persons who spend their whole lives in acts of charity. Their unhappy fate will be related in its place.

The hereditary feeling of hatred and antipathy against the Brazilians, which had in a measure subsided during the long isolation of Paraguay, was now fanned into flame by the *Semanario*. The space in its columns not occupied by praises of Lopez as the greatest, bravest hero of all time was devoted to abuse of the Brazilians, who were always spoken of as creatures almost beneath contempt ; as *macacos* (monkeys) that would fly from the face of the great warrior of Paraguay and his valiant legions like withered leaves before the tempest. The Paraguayans, even then, seemed to be impressed with the conviction that "one Paraguayan could whip ten Brazilians," and it must be confessed that as the war went on they had little reason to change their opinion. The Paraguayans throughout the war fought with a courage never surpassed ; while the Brazilian officers, with very few exceptions, showed such cowardice, such lack of generalship, such weakness and imbecility, as could hardly be believed of any people who were not born slaves. This charge, however, cannot be justly made against the soldiers in the ranks. They were generally strong, healthy men, and with good officers would have made excellent soldiers. Nor did they lack for courage, as wherever they were ordered to go there they went ; and in those engagements in which they were thrown into confusion and so terribly cut to pieces, it was because the officers had failed to do their duty and keep their troops

in order. Many a time during the war would Lopez and his whole army have been destroyed or captured, had the Brazilian commanders followed up their first successes. But the necessary command was not given, and so time after time the golden opportunity was lost.

The expedition to Matto Grosso had been a success, so far that the lower part of the province, including the city of Corumbá, was in the hands of the Paraguayans; but to take the whole province would have required a larger force than Lopez cared to risk so far away from his own territory. The city of Cuyabá, having a population of some twenty-five thousand inhabitants, is situated so high upon the head-waters of the river Paraguay, being some two hundred leagues above the frontiers of the country, that it is only reached by steamers of light draught, and it was therefore impracticable to take the whole province at that time. To attempt it would have required most of the disposable forces, and before it could be accomplished very likely the Brazilians would attack from below. It was therefore left to a subsequent season, in order to strike a blow at a more accessible point of the Empire. Unfortunately, there is a narrow strip of country lying between the Parana and the Uruguay, which separates Paraguay from Brazil, and which belongs to the Argentine Republic. This is called the Misiones, and it was here that the Jesuits attained their greatest power and wealth. The title to it has always been in dispute between Paraguay and the Argentine government, though the Paraguayans have always exercised jurisdiction over the northern part of it, while the Argentines have held exclusive sway over the southern part. To attack Brazil in this direction, Lopez must pass his troops over territory not his own; and accordingly in February, 1865, he sent a note to the Argentine government, asking permission to send an army across this district of Misiones. Of course it could not be granted officially and formally without involving the country in the war; and of all things President Mitre desired to avoid any complication that would array his country again in arms. The last civil war had resulted in

uniting all the provinces under one government, with himself at the head of it ; and if peace could only be maintained, the whole country had a fairer prospect for advancement and prosperity than it had ever enjoyed. The Brazilian government, however, was exceedingly anxious to form an alliance with the Argentine ; and its two ablest ministers, Saraiva and Paranhos, had exhausted all their diplomacy to induce Mitre and his government to give at least their moral support to the Brazilians. They offered all they could promise to this end, proposing to furnish all the men, money, ships, and munitions of war, if they might formally and publicly claim them as allies. They evidently saw that, to carry on a war against Paraguay, in which they must send their troops and supplies by the river through a thousand miles of Argentine territory, or else pass them by land over the same Misiones that had been refused to Lopez for a like purpose, would in all probability bring on a collision, and, sooner or later, war with Buenos Aires. Therefore an alliance was sought by every means possible. President Mitre, however, was inflexible. Appealed to by both parties, he declared his purpose to remain neutral and impartial. To Lopez's absurd request he replied in terms so curt as to savor of disdain, and it seemed strange that so preposterous a proposition should ever have been made.

At this moment it was discovered that General Urquiza, the governor of the province of Entre Rios, who fills so conspicuous a place in the Argentine history, had not been idle during the impending difficulties. He had been intriguing with Mitre and Lopez, and supposed he knew their secrets. He had both fear and dislike of the Brazilians, as, like many others, he apprehended that it was the ulterior object of Brazil to make the rivers Paraguay and Parana the western boundary of the Empire. This project, if carried into effect, would of course destroy his power as absolute despot of the province of Entre Rios, and would deprive him of his enormous and ill-gotten fortune. It was by his advice that Lopez had made his application ; and assurances were given, that, if it was refused,

Urquiza would pronounce *against* Mitre. But though the request of Lopez was so laconically denied, Urquiza failed to make good his promises. In fact, it was too late for him to move without bringing on himself, not only his own government, but that of Brazil and the forces under Flores, who was already in alliance with Brazil and in possession of nearly all the defensible points of the Oriental Republic. Of course, Urquiza would not make an alliance with Paraguay with such odds against him ; and Lopez found that, after all his craft and intrigue, he was finally to be left to carry on the war alone.

There is no doubt, however, that if, instead of asking permission of Mitre to send his troops across the Misiones, he had actually done so, there would have been no other result than a long diplomatic correspondence, complaints of violation of territory, explanations, and new protests of friendship. The people of Buenos Aires were very strongly opposed to any act that might lead to war, and the same sentiments prevailed throughout all the provinces. The passage of an army of ten or twenty thousand men through a tract of country almost uninhabited would not have been regarded either by Mitre, or his government, or the people of Buenos Aires, as sufficient cause for declaring war against Paraguay ; and had Lopez sent over at that time one fourth part of his disposable force, he would have made such havoc on the western frontier of the province of Rio Grande, which was then all unprotected and exposed, as would have done infinite injury to Brazil, and perhaps have forced it to overlook the indignity and insult of the capture of the Marques de Olinda, and propose terms of peace.

This course, however, Lopez did not follow. On the contrary, he took a step that compelled Mitre and the Argentine nation to do the very thing that Saraiva and Paranhos had failed to accomplish. Not only had he begun war on Brazil in such an insulting manner that it would never treat with him, but he now resolved to do the same thing towards Buenos Aires. He determined, without previous notice, and when it was wholly unexpected, to commit an act of such gross violence and illegality as would unite the whole Argentine peo-

ple against him, and force the government into a war that could never end but with his own destruction. As we have before said, he regarded Mitre as the Mordecai in the gate,— the man whose military and civil successes were shutting out from the world the light of his own greatness, and his earlier preparations for war had been made with the idea of measuring swords with the hero of Pavon. Now he seemed to think his shield was broad enough to take the points of both Mitre and the Emperor, and that his arm was strong enough to overpower them both.

He had begun the war on Brazil of his own volition, and without the formality of consulting a national Congress. But he found by this time that the seizure of the Marques de Olin-da was universally condemned by all who were not in awe of his power. He accordingly resolved to proceed in this instance with more circumspection, and to conform to the usages of civilized nations so far as he could do this and still be absolute in everything. His plan was worthy of a Jesuit father. He called a Congress. On Sunday morning, February 26, the *Semanario* appeared before its usual time, though it was dated the 25th, containing a decree of the President dated ten days previously, summoning a Congress to assemble on the following Sunday, or March 5th. No one in the capital save the President knew anything of this decree previous to its publication, though it professed on its face to have been issued eleven days before, nor did any one suspect the object for which the Congress was to assemble. The citizens of the capital were informally notified by the police that they were to choose their deputies the same day; and they dutifully obeyed, and elected those men that were known to be Lopez's most abject creatures, and that he had previously indicated as entitled to his confidence for their patriotism, intelligence, and loyalty. Measures had already been taken for the elections in other parts to be all held the same day. Orders had been sent to the different partidos, commanding the juezes and gefés, after going through a certain form, to send such and such men to the capital to attend the

Congress that was to convene on the 5th of March. The men thus honored hurried off to Asuncion, not having the least idea of the business on which they had been called. From the more distant partidos the deputies had hardly time to reach the capital before the meeting of the Congress.

The report of the proceedings of this singular and anomalous legislative body, as published in the *Semanario*, is a most curious document, and shows most completely that no one in Paraguay, not even President Lopez, had any idea of the manner of conducting a deliberative assembly. The body was presided over by José Falcon, with the title of Vice-President, though the official report does not inform us how he attained that position, nor was he afterwards designated by that title. Every suggestion made by the different members was referred to a so-called double committee, consisting of sixteen members, though it does not appear from the report that the Congress had anything to do with the appointment of this committee. There was no voting by yeas and nays ; but as all the propositions submitted were understood to have already received the approval of Lopez, they were declared carried by acclamation, and in no case does there appear to have been a dissenting voice. The speeches made by the members had little if any reference to any business before the Congress, but were the mere rambling eulogies of the wisdom and patriotism of the President, which they had been accustomed with slight variations to pronounce for many years on all public occasions, though on this occasion they all terminated with the desire to leave the whole management of the national interests in the hands of Lopez, untrammelled by any conditions. Two propositions, however, were strenuously insisted upon by Congress, apparently against the desire of the government. These were, first, that the President should not absent himself from the limits of the Republic during the impending war ; second, that the President's salary should be raised to sixty thousand dollars per annum. Lopez appeared several times before the Congress, and protested against being denied the privilege of sharing the toils and dangers of the

camp with his patriotic legions, and refused to receive this increased salary, saying that, as they had all pledged their lives and fortunes to sustain the great cause, and as the state would require all its means to maintain its rights and chastise the insolent foe that was threatening the very existence of the Republic, he would accept no additional compensation. The members, however, knew him too well to take him at his word. The propositions in both instances had come from those who were most in his confidence, and therefore his pretending to disapprove of them they knew was but a farce, and they clamorously and loudly insisted that he should yield to their demands ; that he should not expose his valuable life to the dangers of the camp and the battle-field ; and that they should be allowed to contribute from the national fund, as a slight return for the sacrifices he made, and as an expression of gratitude for his services. To these appeals Lopez, with well-feigned reluctance, and after many expressions of thanks to the Congress for their patriotism and confidence, finally yielded. The war was to go on, and if he did not take the field thenceforward he was not to be accused of cowardice or indifference, for the Congress had forbidden his absenting himself from the country or exposing his life in the territory of the enemy.

The members had learned, previous to their being called together, of the warlike acts that had already taken place against Brazil, and had supposed that the proceedings of the Congress would have reference only to a war with that country. But in the messages of the President and of the ministers they were advised that the Argentine government had committed such outrages against the rights and dignity of Paraguay as demanded the serious attention of the government. These outrages were, first, that President Mitre had refused permission for the Paraguayan troops to pass through the Argentine territory to make war on Brazil ; second, he had been in connivance with Brazil and Flores against the independence of Uruguay ; and third, he had permitted the publication of libels and satires by Paraguayan exiles in Buenos Aires on the

character and conduct of President Lopez, and was responsible for the hostile spirit of the Argentine people to Paraguay as expressed through the columns of the newspapers. For these grave wrongs and insults war was recommended against the Argentine Republic, and was formally declared on the 18th of March, 1865. Lopez was ambitious of a higher military title than that of General or President, and for some time hesitated what one to take. Mrs. Lynch and a few others who shared his confidence advised him then and there to have himself declared Emperor, and assured him that such a step would secure to him the sympathy, if not the support, of the monarchical governments of Europe. But Lopez, foreseeing that it would array against him all the republics of South America, wisely decided to defer it till he had proved to the world his ability to sustain himself against all his neighbors, and instead of Emperor took the title of Marshal, which was conferred upon him by an act of the Congress. "The most excellent General of Division, Citizen Francisco Solano Lopez, is hereby appointed Marshal of the armies of the Republic, with all the exemptions, pre-eminences, honors, privileges, and salaries which are inherent in this supreme military grade." As nothing like the office or title of Marshal had ever been known before in Paraguay, the members of the Congress that passed this act had probably no idea what honors, privileges, or salaries were inherent to it; and it mattered little to them what they were, as they knew that no law which they could pass could make Lopez more absolute, either as civil magistrate or military ruler, than he already was. The Congress also passed a law providing for the appointment of three generals of division and six brigadiers; but only one general of division was ever appointed, and those who were promoted to be brigadiers during the five years of the war, with two exceptions, were subsequently executed by Lopez as traitors or conspirators. The other most important acts of the Congress were one approving of the declaration of war against Brazil, and one authorizing Lopez to conduct the war at his own discretion, and to

make peace whenever and under whatever conditions he might judge proper. Another act, the precursor of many like it, though less official in form, was passed, ordering the presentation of a magnificent set of jewelry and a sword of honor to the Marshal at the national expense. And, finally, an act authorizing a loan of twenty-five millions of dollars for the expenses of the war,—which loan, it may be here said, was never made, as the money was not needed for use within the limits of Paraguay, since Lopez could take everything there at his own price in the paper money of the country which he could increase at pleasure, and no serious attempts were ever made to float the loan in Europe.

A proposition made in the Congress during the last days of the session, on which no formal action was taken, will serve to show how completely the whole body was controlled by Lopez. The Minister of the Interior, Don Mariano Gonzales, announced that the President was desirous of establishing some mode of rewarding such persons as might render important services to the country, and that he proposed, therefore, the creation of an "institution of premiums." The proposition was, of course, unanimously approved, and the minister was requested to submit the project for such an institution to the Congress. No further action, however, seems to have been taken on it by that body, but after its adjournment it was officially announced that the Marshal President of the Republic was authorized to create and establish an order of merit for the object of rewarding eminent military and civil services, and that the whole matter was referred to the President himself, in the following terms: "The organization, composition, designation of grades, and other ordinances, will be established by the President of the Republic; also the President will confer the titles and decorations." On the 29th of April, 1865, the foundation of the order was officially announced. In its details it was in imitation of the French Legion of Honor, and provided that it should consist of five grades, Knight, Official, Commander, Grand Official, and Grand Cross; that they should all be for

life, and could only be forfeited after sentence of a competent tribunal, and that the President only could confer them. It provided that the decorations should be of different kinds, according to the grade conferred, and also declared who were eligible to the higher grades. For the highest, or Grand Cross, that citizen should be eligible who, by a vote of the national Congress, had been elevated to the Presidential chair, and the President should be *ex officio* chief of the order. Besides the President, no one in Paraguay was eligible to this highest grade, except the head of the church. It could not be conferred on any foreigner, except an hereditary or life sovereign. The other grades could all be conferred at the will of the President on such natives and foreigners as he might think worthy of the high honor.

The creation of this order was regarded by the foreigners in Paraguay, and was doubtless intended by Lopez, as a step towards the establishment of a monarchical government. It could not be conferred on the President of another republic, nor on any other foreigner except a sovereign for life, so that however exalted might be the name or fame of any person not an hereditary sovereign, he could never receive the Grand Cross of the Paraguayan National Order of Merit; and the object which Lopez had in limiting it to crowned heads could have been none other than that, when the war should be over, and he should have established himself as the Emperor of Paraguay, he could interchange with the different sovereigns of the world their respective orders. Had the people of the other republics of South America and of the United States at the time fully understood the ulterior object in establishing this order, it would very likely have disabused them of the idea that Lopez was carrying on war in the interest of republicanism and against monarchy, and all those aspirants for presidential honors in both South and North America would have learned that, however successful they might be in their own countries, and whatever dignities or titles they might there acquire, yet, not being sovereigns for life, they could never be eligible to the Grand Cross of Paraguay.

CHAPTER IV.

Birth and early Education of F. S. Lopez. — He enters the Army. — Brigadier-General. — Personal Appearance and Habits. — His Cowardice. — His House of Shelter. — His Fright at a Distant Shell. — No Respect for old Friends or former Mistresses. — The Fate of Pancha Garmendia. — Carlos Antonio Lopez's Improvement on Francia's System of Espionage. — Ignorance and Superstition. — Juan Gregorio Urbieta, Bishop of Paraguay. — His Successor, Manuel Antonio Palacios. — Character of Palacios. — The Catechism of San Alberto. — The Divine Right of Kings and Magistrates. — Letter from Palacios to Lopez. — The Padre, Fidel Maiz. — His Talents and Popularity. — Arrest, Imprisonment, and Torture. — His Reconciliation with Lopez. — His Profane Confession. — His final Escape.

FRANCISCO SOLANO LOPEZ was born July 24, 1826. His early years were passed at the family homestead of his mother, near the Trinidad, a league and a half from the capital. Francia being at that time in absolute authority, there were no public schools, and only those parents whose means would permit them to send their children to private teachers received any education. The Lopez children, however, all learned to read and write in their childhood ; and after Carlos Antonio was elected Consul, Francisco Solano attended the school of Juan Pedro Escalada, in the capital, for about a year. After this he received an appointment in the army, and soon after was promoted to the rank of brigadier-general, the highest grade then known in the Paraguayan military service. At the time of the campaign of Corrientes, in 1845, when he led his army across the border, he was but nineteen years of age ; and after his return he was so devoted to pleasure and the gratification of his passions that he made no attempt to supply the defects of early education. He may be said never to have read anything. His knowl-

edge of history was less than that of most New England school-boys at the age of fifteen.

He was, however, apt to learn, of quick perceptions, and must have had naturally an excellent memory. He was early taken into the counsels of the President, and the only ideas of government of both were those that had been learned from Francia. The old man had seen that the Dictator had governed absolutely through his system of espionage, and the young man, while yet a boy, learned that art to perfection. Hence his mental training was all in that direction, and having a retentive memory, he learned with great facility all the details respecting the family of every man in the country whose position or influence made him worthy of attention. By the continued exercise of these faculties from boyhood he became wonderfully expert as a spy, and managed, through his numerous agents and informers, to learn all about the private affairs of the principal people in the country.

In person he was short and stout. His height was about five feet four, and, though always inclining to corpulency, his figure in his younger days was very good. He dressed with great care and precision, and endeavored to give himself a smart and natty appearance. His hands and feet were very small, indicating his Indian origin. His complexion was dark, and gave evidence of a strong taint of Guarani blood. He was proud of his Indian descent, and used frequently to boast of it. As he could not pretend to be of pure Spanish blood, he would rather ascribe his swarthy color to a mixture with the Indian than the negro race. Hence he was as prone to talk of his Indian ancestry as ever were the descendants of Pocahontas. He also had many of the tastes peculiar to the savage. Before going to Europe he dressed grotesquely, but his costume was always expensive and elaborately finished. He wore enormous silver spurs, such as would have been the envy of a gaucho, and the trappings of his horse were so completely covered with silver as to almost form a coat of mail. After his return from abroad he adopted a more civilized costume, but always indulged in a gorgeous

display of gold lace and bright buttons. He conversed with fluency and had a good command of language, and when in good-humor his manners were courteous and agreeable. His eyes, when he was pleased, had a mild and amiable expression; but when he was enraged the pupil seemed to dilate till it included the whole iris, and the eye did not appear to be that of a human being, but rather of a wild beast goaded to madness. He had, however, a gross animal look that was repulsive when his face was in repose. His forehead was narrow and his head small, with the rear organs largely developed. He was an inveterate smoker of the strongest kind of Paraguayan cigars. His teeth were very much decayed, and so many of the front ones were gone as to render his articulation somewhat difficult and indistinct. He apparently took no pains to keep them clean, and those which remained were unwholesome in appearance, and nearly as dark as the cigar that he had almost constantly between them. His face was rather fiat, and his nose and hair indicated more of the negro than the Indian. His cheeks had a fulness that extended to the jowl, giving him a sort of bulldog expression. In his later years he grew enormously fat; so much so that few would believe that a true photograph of his figure was not a caricature. He was very irregular in his hours of eating; but when he did eat, the quantity he consumed was enormous. He was a gormand, but not an epicure. His taste was for rank and greasy food, and the dishes he preferred would have repelled a delicate taste. His drinking was in keeping with his eating. He always kept a large stock of foreign wines, liquors, and ale, but he had little discrimination in the use of them. He, however, drank enormous quantities of them all, and was altogether so gross and sensual in his habits as to be a very uncomfortable patient for his physician. His excesses were constantly bringing on ill-turns, and at last brought on a chronic infirmity that must have soon ended his days, had he not perished by a lance. Though he habitually drank largely, yet he often exceeded his own free limits, and on such occasions he was

liable to break out in the most furious abuse of all who were about him. He would then indulge in the most revolting obscenity, and would sometimes give orders for the most barbarous acts. When recovered from such debauches he would stay the execution of his orders, if they had not been already enforced. But it was so dangerous for his subordinates to hesitate in their obedience, that, when he came out of his drunken fits, it would generally be too late, the victims would be already executed.

Of the three most noted tyrants of South America, Francia, Rosas, and the second Lopez, all have been distinguished for one quality, that is, personal cowardice. Francia, as we have seen, was in such perpetual fear of his life that he kept himself constantly surrounded by a guard, and imagined that an assassin lurked behind every bush or wall or building he passed. Rosas was a notorious coward. Many instances in which he showed the most craven fear are well known to the older residents of the Plata. But the cowardly nature of Lopez was so apparent, he scarcely took pains to conceal it. He never exposed himself to the least danger, when he could possibly avoid it. He usually had his head-quarters so far in the rear that a shot from the enemy could never reach him. At Paso Pucu, however, the allies got in his rear, and so invested his entire camp that at rare intervals a stray shot or shell would fall in the vicinity. But it was very seldom anything of the kind occurred, and nobody was ever hit within many yards of his house. Nevertheless, such a thing was possible, and he therefore had another house built close adjoining the one in which he lived, surrounded on all sides with walls of earth at least twenty feet thick, and with a roof of the same material so thick that no shot or shell that might light upon it could ever penetrate deep enough to do any damage. While all was still along the enemy's lines, Lopez would bravely remain in the adjoining house; but so surely as any firing was heard in the direction of the enemy's nearest batteries, he would instantly saunter out in feigned carelessness, trying hard to disguise his fear, and slink into his hole, and not show his face

again outside until the firing had ceased. For several months before the abandonment of Paso Pucu, however, the firing from different points of the allied lines was so frequent that Lopez seldom ventured out of his cave. He ate and slept, protected by the thick walls of earth, and from within his dark abode issued his orders to his army; and at the very time that he was thus hid away from danger, he had his correspondents for the *Semanario* around him, writing the most extravagant



LOPEZ LEADING HIS LEGIONS TO BATTLE.

articles in praise of his valor, his sacrifices, and his generalship. The people of Paraguay could never pay the debt they owed him, who, while they were living in security and abundance, was daily leading his legions to battle and exposing his life to constant danger.

His utter lack of courage was known to the whole army. In his youth he had been accustomed to ride on horseback a great deal, and had learned to ride well; but after he became

older and stouter he rode but little, and always on a very tame horse and at a very moderate pace. His timidity was such that he did not dare to walk the gangway plank of a steamer unless he had a trusted officer on each side to save him from falling into the water ; and his short steps and frightened look, as I have heard them described by certain Englishmen who had seen him on such occasions, were enough to put to shame a nervous old woman of fourscore.

In the latter part of the year 1866, before the bomb-proof house at Paso Pucu had been erected, Lopez with his staff was out one morning inspecting his camp. The allies had been firing irregularly all the morning, but as Lopez was out of the range of their line of fire, and beyond the reach of their guns, no one had suspected any danger. As the party was quietly riding along, a shell that had overshot its mark fell at a distance of about three quarters of a mile from the party, and as it struck exploded. Instantly Lopez turned and galloped away at a speed he had not been accustomed to for years, and his staff, as a matter of course, followed him. They knew it would have been construed as worse than treason for them to show less fear than their chief. Unfortunately, the broad hat of the bishop was caught by the breeze created by its owner's flight, and went sailing through the air, and was left to be picked up afterwards by a soldier. This sorry exhibition of fear in the face of so many of his officers afterwards caused him great mortification ; and as so many had witnessed it that the facts could not be suppressed, he had an article published in the *Semanario*, abusing the allies roundly for their barbarous way of making war. Among civilized and gallant nations it was a point of honor never to fire in the direction of the king ; and this act of the allies in firing towards his Excellency the Marshal President was therefore unchivalric, treacherous, and cowardly.

In the gratification of his passions and in the accomplishment of his ambitious plans, he was no respecter of persons. Of those most in his confidence when the war began, and who were supposed to be his personal friends, nearly all

were subsequently tortured and put to death by his orders. Among these were Fernandez, Bishop Palacios, and Generals Barrios and Bruguez, his two most successful generals. His brother-in-law, Bedoya, was treated even worse, as he expired under the torture.



Burgos.

Lynch.

Pesoa.

MISTRESSES OF LOPEZ. — From Photographs.

His treatment of his best and at one time most trusted officers was in keeping with that of his former mistresses. The favorite before his visit to Europe, by whom he had one or two children, was a young woman by the name of Pesoa, from the Villa del Pilar. She was a sister of the wife of Polycarpo Garro, a leading merchant of Asuncion. She was, however, driven into the cordilleras, and was exposed to the most terrible hardships, and, it is supposed, perished of want and exposure. Garro, her brother-in-law, was arrested, starved, and tortured as a traitor till he expired, July 15,

1868, as appears by Resquin's diary. After the advent of Madam Lynch, though she was understood to be the favorite, yet Lopez still kept up his relations with some of his old mistresses, and was frequently adding to the number of his conquests. The latest addition to the long list, at the time of my arrival in Paraguay, in 1861, was a tall and rather fine-looking young woman, daughter of Pedro Burgos, judge of the partido of Luque. As this was during the Presidency of the elder Lopez, some of the foreigners thought it strange that a man in her father's position would permit such an arrangement. He did not object, however, and the young woman continued occasionally to visit the house of Lopez until he left for Humaita in 1865; and her father was rewarded for his acquiescence by being arrested and taken to head-quarters, where he experienced the same treatment as Garro, and died on the 17th of August, 1868. The fate of the woman is unknown to me. She may have expired like a hundred thousand others in the wilderness, or may have been one of those unhappy wretches whose sufferings had been such that, on being rescued from the power of Lopez, the very instincts of modesty had been almost destroyed.

Poor Pancha Garmendia, the daughter of one of Francia's victims, and who for her resistance to the infamous proposals of Lopez long before he became President was doomed to see her brothers sacrificed to his wrath and to bear a life of persecution and seclusion, had perhaps a worse fate than the thousands of others who starved to death. She was dragged or driven along as a prisoner in the train of Lopez, and kept alive apparently with no other motive than that she might bear the floggings that were almost daily visited on her once fair and round, but now emaciated and shrunken shoulders.

To a perfect despotism a system of close espionage is indispensable. Such a system was established by Francia that he was able to repress every symptom or sign of discontent or disaffection. But he did not carry it so far that he could tell the innermost thoughts of his subjects,—thoughts that they dared not express to their most intimate friends, or even breathe them aloud to the winds. Carlos Antonio Lopez

improved on this by adding the power of the confessional to his other enginery of power. The priests were all required to confess to him, or rather to reveal to him all the secrets that they could draw from the penitents who confessed to them. They were particularly charged to question those who confessed in regard to matters of a political nature, and learn what were their sentiments towards the government. And of the secrets thus obtained the priests dared not make a false report to Lopez; for if by other means he learned that one of them had been deceiving him, the father confessor was treated with no more consideration than a common thief.

Paraguay, from its first settlement, never departed from the "age of faith." Neither doubt nor free thinking in regard to spiritual affairs ever perplexed the people, but in all religious matters they accepted the words of the fathers as the unquestionable truth. Unfortunately, the priests were, with scarcely an exception, lazy and profligate. It was little shame to a priest to be credited with a numerous progeny among his parishioners. Yet the people were so superstitious and credulous they feared to disobey them or reserve anything which they might be required to confess. Nevertheless, from the system of vicarious punishment that was adopted, people would sometimes, to save their friends, postpone confessions that would affect their families till they believed their final hour had come; and then they feared to reserve anything. Such occasions were taken to extort from them their real sentiments towards Lopez, his family and his government, and also to learn the feelings of all those most loved whom they were to leave behind them. On information thus obtained the President would persecute in various ways such as had ever ventured to repine under his despotic rule; and so well aware were the better class of people of this power over them that they tried to repress, and refused to acknowledge to themselves, all feelings of resentment or discontent. Though they did not attribute to Lopez the supernatural gifts they had ascribed to Francia, they knew that he had a means more effective than the Dictator ever possessed for finding out, sooner or later,

their innermost thoughts. When Francisco Solano Lopez became the head of the government, he had this terrible machinery of power over the minds and thoughts of his subjects ready fitted to his hands. As subordinate to and in the confidence of Carlos Antonio, he had learned how to effectually use it.

The Bishop of Paraguay at the time of Francisco's election as President, Juan Gregorio Urbieta, was very old and infirm. He was a simple-minded, inoffensive man, who had spent a great part of his life in reading the works of the early Fathers, and never pretended to question the right of the government to render his spiritual functions entirely subordinate to the temporal authority. In his later years he had little to do except to officiate at high mass on public occasions, leaving all parochial measures to the suffragan bishop, Manuel Antonio Palacios. The latter for some time previous to the death of Carlos Antonio was the most confidential friend and adviser of the young Francisco, and continued so for several years afterwards. He was consecrated in the latter part of the year 1862 as suffragan bishop, with the right of succession as bishop when a vacancy should occur. He had been recommended to the Pope for this office by the elder Lopez at the solicitation of the younger, for no other reason, so far as was known, than that, of all the priests in Paraguay, he was the most abject and servile flatterer of the heir expectant. His education was very limited and his appearance sinister and forbidding. He was never accused of a good act, and had the credit of always advising the most sanguinary measures and the most cruel treatment of prisoners, both natives and foreigners. Yet he had considerable volubility, and on formal occasions, when his Excellency was in attendance, had the honor of preaching before him. His sermons were the baldest blasphemy, and entirely devoted to the praise of Lopez, and to instructing the people in their duties towards him. Lopez having been set over them by God as their ruler, it was their duty to devote their lives, their labors, and their fortunes to him, to count nothing a sacrifice that he might

require, as for all they did to exalt and strengthen him they would be rewarded, both in this world and in the life to come.

A few months before the death of Bishop Urbieta, a pamphlet was published as coming from him, that was intended to impress on the people similar ideas of their relations to Lopez to those which Palacios preached in his sermons. It was a modified copy of a work called the Catechism of San Alberto, Bishop of Tucuman, first published in 1784, and was intended to instruct people on the "principal obligations that the vassal owes to his king and lord." The doctrines of this catechism are such as were held by crowned heads three hundred years ago, but which no monarch of the present age would venture to avow. The king is declared to rule by Divine Right, and under no circumstances is the subject to know any other rule of action but unquestioned implicit obedience to royal authority. A bad king and a good one are to be obeyed with equal respect and deference, and the innocent man condemned to death should not only submit to his fate without a murmur, but mount the gallows and adjust the rope around his own neck with cheerfulness and alacrity.*

* "The state by its organization cannot tolerate nor leave unpunished offences, especially those which tend to annihilate religion, which has, since its happy union with the state, become its first fundamental law. . . . The prison, then, exile, forced service, the scourge, confiscation, fire, the scaffold, the knife, and death in whatever form, are penalties justly put in force against the disobedient vassal. . . .

"Q. Is the vassal obliged to accept and suffer the penalties ?

"A. Yes ; for they are just and ordained by law.

"Q. Is he bound to execute them himself ?

"A. Yes ; except the gravest or those of a capital kind.

"Q. And must he aid indirectly to execute even these ?

"A. Yes ; to show that he accepts and suffers them patiently.

"Q. What is meant by aiding indirectly ?

"A. To mount the scaffold to be hung, or bare the throat to the axe if beheaded for crime."

[In the Introduction to the Paraguayan edition, it is noted that "teachers will take pains to explain to the children that in the word *king* every supreme magistrate is comprehended." The old Bishop Urbieta adds a charge to all priests, teachers, parents, and other citizens, in which he declares that God has inspired the supreme government with the idea of reprinting this treatise.]

"Q. May the king impose laws upon his vassals ?

The inculcation of such doctrines was a part of the preparations for war and for the new empire, and was carried on *pari passu* with the importation of arms and the increase of the army. The people in their innocence and ignorance were taught to believe that anything like defection was an unpardonable sin, and that if they perished in executing the orders of Lopez they would pass at once to a state of unending bliss. Among the papers taken by the allies after the defeat of Lopez at Lomas Valentinas, in December, 1868, was found a letter written to him by the bishop, and dated at Paso de la Patria, November 24, 1865. That no one may think I have exaggerated in portraying the character of Lopez and his bishop, or in representing the base uses that were made of the confessional, I give an extract from this remarkable letter: —

“ I feel, excellent sir, great satisfaction at seeing that all my communications have been agreeable to your Excellency. The love of Christianity and true patriotism which has been developed in this

“ *A.* Yes ; for God has given him legislative power over them.

“ *Q.* Can he impose laws which shall be binding upon their consciences ?

“ *A.* Yes ; according to the saying of the Apostle : ‘ Be ye subject, not only for fear of wrath, but also through conscientious obligation.’

“ *Q.* That laws may be binding, is it necessary that they be generally known ?

“ *A.* No ; for in that case they would rarely be binding, as it is not easy for them to reach the knowledge of all.

“ *Q.* Must the promulgation of the laws be made in all the cities of the realm ?

“ *A.* It is not necessary, and it is enough if it be done at the court or another customary place.

“ *Q.* For laws to become binding, is it necessary that the people accept them ?

“ *A.* No ; for that would be to govern according to their own will rather than by that of the sovereign.

“ *Q.* When the law seems burdensome, what must the vassal do ?

“ *A.* Obey, and humbly prefer his petition.

“ *Q.* Is it a sin to murmur against or speak evil of kings and magistrates ?

“ *A.* Yes ; for God says : ‘ Thou shalt not murmur against thy Gods, nor curse the Prince of thy people.’

“ *Q.* What kind of a sin is it ?

“ *A.* A mortal one, if upon a serious subject ; or venial, if upon a light matter.

“ *Q.* Does he who speaks evil of his ministers speak evil of the king ?

“ *A.* Yes ; for they are his envoys and represent his person.

“ *Q.* Whom does he despise, who expresses contempt for the king or his ministers ?

“ *A.* He despises God, who says : ‘ He who despises you despises me.’ ”

division will, when the time comes, make all the soldiers fight with such self-abnegation and heroism as will enable us to save the country and triumph over our enemies. With the desire to excite this spirit, and with much success, we are continuing our pastoral labors with all possible care and force, omitting no measure or diligence, using the power and influence of the Holy Religion, whose representation and ministry have been confided to us by God among this chosen portion of the flock of Jesus Christ of our dear country, with the end of directing it in the path of justice, good order, and patriotism. It has been with no small difficulty, excellent sir, that we have labored with a people so unwarlike as ours ; but happily this difficulty we have now overcome and made to almost disappear by the words of evangelical truth, and by means of the confessional, in which daily we are engaged confessing hundreds of soldiers, disposing and fortifying them for the struggle, and making them to understand with the greatest clearness, that those who give their lives in the combat for their country will be recompensed and eternally rewarded by the Eternal Creator, according to those words of St. Paul, ' *Reposta est mihi corona justiciæ quam redet mihi dominus.*' All this inspires us with the strong belief, that, although the enemy may appear with a greater and more powerful array, still it will only be necessary to animate our troops, who, by their secure confidence in God, will certainly prove superior in force and valor, as says and affirms the soldier King, who was fashioned after the will of God, ' *Non timebo milla populi circumdantis me.*' "

The priest who enjoyed more of the respect and confidence of Carlos Antonio and of his wife than any other at the time of the old man's decease was the Padre Fidel Maiz. He was then at the head of the college at which the candidates for orders were educated, and it was supposed he was to be the bishop to succeed Urbieta. He was the trusted friend and confessor of the Lady President, and was considered a man of spotless character. He was the only one of all the priests in Paraguay, so far as I had any knowledge of them, who was respected for his morality. He was about the age of Francisco Solano, and was early distinguished for his application and scholarship. The old President respected him for his talents, learning, and correct deport-

ment, and the old lady for his piety. His superiority to the other youths of Paraguay provoked very early the jealousy and envy of young Lopez. His mental accomplishments, however, were not so offensive to the heir apparent as his physical advantages over him. He was tall and graceful, with a fair, open countenance, whereas Lopez was short and stout, with features that were neither handsome nor agreeable. Padre Maiz was the favorite confessor of the venerable *madres* and the young *señoritas*, and Lopez was jealous of his popularity with them.

On the death of the old President, Padre Maiz was immediately arrested, thrown into prison with heavy fetters on his ankles, and subjected to other most cruel indignities. He was kept in solitary confinement with a sentinel at his door, who threw him his coarse food as to a wild beast. The charge alleged against him, as published in the *Semanario*, was that he had taught heretical doctrines to his pupils. Many other priests were arrested about the same time, besides several of the leading citizens of Asuncion, and all thrown into prison ; and soon after it was given out by those who were understood to speak by authority, that Padre Maiz had been detected in a conspiracy to have himself elected President instead of Francisco Solano Lopez. He was subjected to a very long military trial. The tribunal before which he was arraigned was presided over by General Wenceslao Robles, and the principal prosecutor was Bishop Palacios. The proceedings were all secret, but no one doubted that Maiz was horribly tortured, as his confessions, or the reports of them that were put in circulation with the government approval, were such that nobody believed them. It was said that this priest, who had been considered so immaculate, so pure in his walk and conversation, was the greatest hypocrite and libertine in Paraguay, and that when brought before the tribunal he confessed that for many years he had been given up to debauchery, and had been the first to lead astray scores of innocent young women. The verdict of the tribunal was never made public ; but as the govern-

ment was at such pains to establish his infamy, no one supposed he would ever leave his prison alive. Yet he was permitted to live till long after the war commenced, and was afterwards taken to the army head-quarters at Paso Pucu, where he was treated with more humanity, and after a time was permitted to make confession to the President, and ask his forgiveness. What his real offence was, no one knew. The conspiracy laid to his charge was believed to be, like the conspiracies of Francia and the elder Lopez, invented as a pretext for putting obnoxious people out of the way, and the people were never informed of the heretical doctrines which he taught his pupils. Lopez had now begun to tire of the sycophancy and subserviency of Bishop Palacios. The war was not progressing favorably, and the bishop, Madam Lynch, Colonel Wisner, and others who had been most ardent in advising him to begin it, were very much out of favor.

About this time Padre Maiz was permitted to make a long written confession to the President, which was published in the *Semanario* of December 1, 1866. In this he does not confess to any specific charge, or tell what particular crime he had committed. Probably at the time of his arrest he was unconscious of having committed any; but torture such as Lopez knew how to inflict, as we shall have frequent occasion hereafter to show, could extort confession of crimes before unthought of. After the publication of this document Maiz seemed, greatly to the disgust of Palacios, to regain the favor of the President very fast. He had supplanted the bishop by his idolatrous confession, by his blasphemies that were enough to make an atheist shudder.

I make no apology for the long extracts that I give from this remarkable confession.

“EXPRESSION OF GRATITUDE.

“‘Be ye thankful.’ — *Colossians* iii. 15.

“Would that I might consign to an eternal oblivion the sad antecedents of my grave and numerous political and moral faults,

which brought upon myself the avenging action of the law and the just indignation of the offended people, so as not to renew along with their recollection the fatal ideas of so great aberrations and such shameful enormities. . . .

“But it is not possible; they are, and will be, publicly known until the latest generation. Let it be so! It is just! . . .

“Prematurely possessed by the pernicious and perverse ideas of a false and gilded liberty, which is really only license or insubordination and the unchaining of all the passions, . . . victim of those most odious principles of dissolution and detestable systems of a fictitious liberalism which amount to nothing but the ignoring or practical negation of all respect and obedience to the constituted authorities, . . . the natural effects of these things were in me very visible and alarming.

“Disordered affections, vanity, envy, evil inclinations, ambition, pride, error, and vice governed me even without my knowing it, and inclined me forcibly to irreligion, to libertinism and moral relaxation; so that my heart and my understanding remained profoundly vitiated, and, so to speak, radically perverted in the very morning of my existence.

“Unhappy wretch that I was! how could I have avoided it? It was impossible; the first guides of my spirit, — I mean those charged with my education and training, those authorized to instil into my soul the sound principles of social science, which defines for man his rights and duties, and the pure morality of the eternal Gospel, which conducts man, through the faithful fulfilment of his obligations toward God its ultimate end, to make me happy, not only in time, but in eternity, — it was precisely *they* who caused me to drink at the fountain the fatal principle or fundamental root of all my aberrations, misfortunes, and miseries, the lack of respect to the Supreme Authority, disaffection towards my country and its government, and hatred of the laws which form the basis of the political administration of the Republic, regarding them, even without knowing them, as retrograde, anti-liberal, and tyrannical.

“Who could bring me forth from such a deplorable state? How could a stop be put to those indefinable aspirations of my heart, and cut short my wild chase after the madness of the age? None but the very God of Heaven, — none but FRANCISCO SOLANO LOPEZ, who occupies His place upon earth. . . . Only He was able to call to

me with his sovereign voice, as to another Lazarus: *Come forth!* . . . only He (Lopez) has known how *not to break the bruised reed, and not to quench the smoking flax*; . . . only He has been able, finally, *to convert me from the error of my way, to save my soul from death, and cover the multitude of my transgressions.*

“Who but a FRANCISCO SOLANO LOPEZ, full of mildness and suavity, and employing with the most surprising skill all the resources of the most intimate knowledge of the human heart, — of the most consummate knowledge in all branches of science, whether religious and moral, historic and social, philosophical and juridical, canonical and civil, sacred and profane, — could cause that *where sin abounded grace should much more abound, that as sin reigned to death, so also may grace reign through justice to eternal life?* . . .

“O the grace! the ineffable grace of my pardon and liberation! How can I esteem it or even admire it sufficiently? . . . There are no examples in history, there are no images in nature, there are no colors in art, there are no figures nor flowers in rhetoric, adequate to describe and appreciate this most singular grace as it really is, and its reality can only be believed by considering the amazing magnanimity of soul, and the actions, all of them so rarely and wonderfully glorious and noble, of him who has granted that pardon.

“Let us pray continually that his precious and never-to-be-replaced existence may be spared for ages and cycles of ages. Let his immortal Name resound unceasingly from our lips; let his glorious image abide forever at the bottom of our hearts; let his august Person be the entire object of our contemplations; let us think in Him, think with Him, think by Him, let us not sleep, let us not wake, but under the sweet and vivifying influence and under the beneficent and refreshing shade of FRANCISCO SOLANO LOPEZ, who is so justly the glory, the honor, and the joy of his country, its only and entire hope.

“Full of gratitude, of respect and love, let us venerate, applaud, and exalt this prodigiously Divine Being, this Guardian Angel, this Anointed of our people whom the Lord has given us in pledge of his divine paternal protection, and of that adorable Supreme Providence which watches ever for the preservation of innocent and inoffensive nations like Paraguay, to insure their happiness.

“ Saint Bernard used to say he had no pleasure in reading or in conversation unless the name of Jesus were perpetually used ; that Jesus is honey in the mouth, melody in the ear, and joy in the heart. I do not hesitate to say as much, for my own part, concerning him who holds His place among our people. . . .

“ Ah ! FRANCISCO SOLANO LOPEZ is for me more than for any other Paraguayan a true Father and Saviour ; and for the same reason he is also for me very especially the only object of the new affections of my converted heart. May He deign to look ever propitiously upon his *prodigal son* prostrate at his feet.

“ FIDEL MAIZ.

“ ENCAMPMENT OF PASO PUCU, November 17, 1866.”

After making this confession, Padre Maiz succeeded in gradually supplanting the bishop in the esteem of the President, until at last he had the satisfaction, some two years later, of seeing the consecrated representative of the Pope led out to execution and shot like a malefactor.*

* Padre Maiz survived Lopez, having been taken prisoner in the last battle of the war in which Lopez was slain. He probably can give more information than all other persons living in regard to many things that appear mysterious and utterly inexplicable to everybody else. He may perhaps explain why Lopez killed so many of those who were, as all supposed, his most faithful and able officers. He may tell, too, why he killed his brothers, and flogged and otherwise tortured his mother and his sisters. He may also possibly be able to tell whether or not Lopez ever believed in the existence of the conspiracy which he pretended to discover, and for alleged complicity with which so many hundreds were tortured and executed.

CHAPTER V.

Departure of the Paraguayan Fleet from Asuncion. — Arrival at Humaita. — The English Engineer, John Watts. — Admiral Mesa. — The Battle of Riachuelo. — Confusion. — The Pilot of the Amazonas. — Defeat of the Paraguayans. — Rewards of Merit.

ON the 8th of June the Paraguayan fleet was ready for departure from Asuncion. The President himself was to go with it as far as Humaita, where he was to disembark, as he had caused his Congress to pass a resolution that he should not leave the country. The day was one of great excitement in the capital, and the whole population were on the bank of the river to witness the embarkation. It was known that the President was going away, and everybody knew that it would be construed into an unpardonable affront not to be present and show an interest in so great an event. The whole population was accordingly, from an instinct of danger, gathered near the river to witness the scene. It had been given out that the fleet would sail at three o'clock in the afternoon; but the morning had been taken up with a long mass in the church, and afterwards by a reception in the Palace, where all the military and civil functionaries paid their respects in turn, and so many addresses were made and answered that the hours passed by unheeded till it was nearly night. In the mean while, however, the troops that were to accompany the expedition, four thousand in number, were being embarked. This, with the facilities at hand, was a slow operation; and as most of them had friends and relations among the crowd, there was much leave-taking that still further delayed the embarkation. But as the twilight had begun to gather the President's carriage made its appearance, followed by several others in which rode the Vice-President, the government ministers, the members of the Marshal's staff, and

other noted characters. At a little distance from the mole they descended from the carriages; and the crowd falling back and opening the way, they marched in awful dignity and silence to the river, and were conveyed on board in funereal grandeur. Some slight attempts at a cheer or *viva* were made, but I never yet heard a Paraguayan attempt a cheer that he did not "back recoil, he knew not why, e'en at the sound himself had made." Like Macbeth's amen, the *viva* always seemed to stick in their throats.

It was not till eleven o'clock that the fleet started; and before this hour the people had generally stolen off to their homes, tired and disappointed. The scenic effect that had been counted on was nearly all lost from over-punctilio: a bad omen, as it showed poor management and worse calculation on the part of the Marshal President, that augured but ill for the success of the expedition.

The fleet reached Humaita at four o'clock in the afternoon of the second day. On the way down the President called the chief engineer of the steamer on which he and his staff had taken passage, — the flag-ship Tacuari, — and so far condescended as to ask his opinion regarding the best way to attack the Brazilian squadron. The engineer, an Englishman by the name of John Watts, and an intelligent man, had formerly been employed in a similar capacity in the Brazilian service, and, knowing the character of the Brazilians, replied that, in his opinion, it would be an easy matter to take their entire squadron. His plan was for the Paraguayan vessels to run down near the enemy in the night, and just at break of day, as soon as they could be fairly seen, each Paraguayan vessel should select its antagonist, and run full head upon it and board it instantly. For this each Paraguayan vessel should have three or four times as many men aboard as the steamer it was to attack, and as the enemy would be caught with banked or extinguished fires, and probably most of the men asleep, their fleet would be destroyed and themselves prisoners before they could make any resistance. The President then asked if the Brazilians were as brave as the Paraguayans. The

engineer replied that they were not ; that naturally they were great cowards ; and that the Brazilian Admiral Barroso was one of the most arrant poltroons he had ever seen. Watts had been in the Brazilian expedition against Paraguay in 1855, and had seen how that whole squadron of nineteen vessels had been stopped at Cerrito by twenty-eight men, when there were no fortifications there, and that through sheer cowardice the design of the whole expedition was defeated. Only one steamer passed up to Asuncion, and then the elder Lopez managed to outwit the Brazilian Envoy, Leal, and obtain such delay in the settlement of the pending questions, that, when Brazil thought to renew her forcible attempts at adjustment, Humaita was strongly fortified.

The plan of the engineer was simple and feasible, and if followed would doubtless have been a complete success. But it was a defect in the character of the great Lopez that he knew too much, — so much that he could never receive a hint or suggestion from anybody. His own plan and what came of it we shall soon see.

The troops were disembarked at Humaita on the 9th, and on the 10th those who were to take part in the coming action were re-embarked. They consisted of some eight hundred men besides the crews ; and nine steamers, being nearly all that Paraguay possessed, were ordered to take part in the battle. Their names were as follows : Tacuari (flag-ship), Paraguari, Iguerey, Marques de Olinda, Salto Oriental, Ipora, Peribebui, Jejui, and Ibera. The admiral of this squadron was Pedro I. Mesa, a man whose only merit was the one that would have commended him to Julius Cæsar, — he was fat. He had long been the flag-officer of the Paraguayan squadron, but he was as ignorant of naval warfare as a Guaicuru Indian. He was not only fat, but he was old and sick. He knew he was unfit for his position, and had desired to be relieved from it. But he was not allowed to retire, and was sent in command of this expedition. What his instructions were from the President is unknown, further than that they certainly were such as he attempted to follow, as he knew full well that anything short

of exact and implicit obedience could only be atoned for with his life. The plan of the battle should therefore be ascribed to President Lopez, though he never claimed it, notwithstanding his newspaper claimed a great victory.

At two o'clock on the morning of the 11th of June the fleet steamed away from Humaita, the Marques de Olinda taking the lead. With moderate haste it should have been at the Tres Bocas an hour later, but with an alacrity of slowness shown throughout the battle it did not reach there till 5 A. M. Here were in waiting six gunboats, or rather launches, each having on board a sixty-eight pounder, to be taken in tow by the steamers. It was half past six before the first boat got started again. But it had not been under way more than five minutes when the screw of one of the steamers, the Ibera, got out of gear, and all were signalled to anchor again. The engineer of the flag-ship was ordered to go on board and see what was the trouble with the disabled vessel. When half-way there, it occurred to the admiral that he wanted his own chief engineer to remain by his side, in case anything unexpected might occur. So he hailed him to return, and afterwards sent the engineer of the Igurey to report the damage. The latter accordingly went aboard the Ibera, and soon returned and reported that the screw propeller was detached from the shaft. The order was then given for the rest of the fleet to move on, leaving the Ibera behind. But so much time had been consumed by the pottering operations of the admiral, that it was half past seven in the morning before the fleet started again, so that all idea of a surprise of the enemy was abandoned. Had the Brazilians been anything else but Brazilians, they would have had pickets or spies on the lookout to give early notice of any such attack; but being such as nature and their lack of discipline had made them, they were lying idle and unprepared, till at nine o'clock in the morning the Paraguayan fleet was seen bearing down full upon them. The steam was not up on a single vessel, and for immediate action they were helpless as so many sailing vessels. The Paraguayans, thanks to their enemy's supineness, had surprised

them ; and each of the attacking steamers, having on a full head of steam, could have run directly at a Brazilian and cut her in two amidships. But the six launches in tow, with their sixty-eight-pounders, which the military genius of Paraguay had ordered to be attached as a drag to his steamers, so that no such sensible thing should be done, must be cast adrift if an attack of this kind were to be attempted. But the admiral did not dare to cast them off without orders, for he could not realize that success and a great victory would atone for disobedience. The Brazilians were anchored near the right or Chaco side of the river, in line of battle ; that is, one below the other, with the main anchor at the prow and a kedge astern, drawing the after part against the current and towards the middle of the stream, so that each steamer could give a broadside at long range to any vessel approaching from above. The fleet consisted of nine armed steamers, besides one small transport. They were generally of much heavier tonnage and had guns of much larger calibre than the Paraguayans, and for the latter to attack them except at close quarters would be either stupidity or madness. The commander of the Brazilian squadron was the same Barroso who, in 1855, had allowed his entire fleet of vessels to be stopped in the river below Humaita, at a time when that place had scarcely any fortifications and but twenty-eight men to hold them. Had he been advised that the Paraguayans were coming in time to get up steam, he would probably, as is to be inferred from his conduct in the battle, have run away with all his fleet ; but being surprised he could not do that, and as the enemy bore down towards him his vessels let drive their broadsides. Fortunately for him, the Paraguayans, instead of trying to run down his vessels, kept to the channel of the river, and labored to get below him, as if their object was to pass his squadron, and not to attack it. In doing this the Iguerey received a shot in one of her boilers that in its explosion caused the death of some twenty persons. The little Jejui also received a shot in her only boiler, and was left helpless to float down the stream. But with these slight injuries the whole fleet

passed by, and was just where it ought not to have been, that is, below the Brazilian squadron, and whence not one of them could ever return except through the fault of their adversaries. As they passed, the Paraguayans returned the fire of the Brazilians, but with little effect, as their guns were small, and, being in motion, their aim was wild.

They had passed the Brazilian squadron, and though two vessels had been disabled, one partially and the other wholly, none had been lost. They were below their enemies, and apparently entirely cut off from their own country. On the left bank of the river, just opposite to where the Brazilian fleet was anchored, the Paraguayans had previously placed a battery of flying artillery. This battery was under command of General Bruges, an officer of a different stamp from Admiral Mesa. He had seen the squadron pass with amazement, as if bent on its own destruction. He had placed his battery where it was, for the reason that he knew the Brazilian squadron, though lying in deep water near the Chaco, and at so long a distance that his guns could do them little injury, could not get into the channel below without going higher up to make a turn, and thence pass him within short range. But when he saw the whole Paraguayan fleet had gone below the Brazilians, he naturally thought that it was lost unless he could cover it or protect it with his artillery. He accordingly moved below with all possible celerity, and took a position that commanded the Riachuelo.

Riacho in Spanish means a little river, and *riachuelo* is the further diminutive, that means simply brook, or less than little river. About three leagues below Corrientes, one of these riachuelos enters the main river. Just below where it joins the main current is a bend in the river, and between the Riachuelo and the projecting angle of the bend there is formed a deep, broad basin, in which steamers of any size that can ascend so far have ample room to turn or otherwise manoeuvre. Just above this, dividing the channel, is, at low water, an island, and at high water a sand-bar. This point of the river, within the bend that forms the deep broad basin, is

called Riachuelo, and it was in or near this that nearly all the fighting took place.

After having passed the Brazilians, Admiral Mesa seemed to have no idea what he was next to do. He signalled all his steamers to stop where they were, and called on board the commanders of the *Igurey* and the *Marques de Olinda* to consult with them. He then went below with them, and might have stayed there an hour if he had not been hailed to his duty by his chief engineer, who told him that the Brazilians were getting up steam and would be down upon them shortly. The old man then said they must try and get back at night. The engineer, however, told him that would be fatal, as they could not turn where they were, and their only chance was to run for the Riachuelo, where they could turn and manœuvre so as to be in a position to damage the Brazilians, should they bear down upon them. The advice was taken, and the whole fleet moved to that point. The disabled *Jejuí* drifted of itself to the same place, and was afterwards taken in tow by another steamer.

The two fleets had thus apparently changed places. The Paraguayans, now below their enemies, were ranged so as to give battle to the Brazilians should they attempt to pass them. Barroso saw himself and his squadron between the upper and nether millstone. Why had those terrible Paraguayans gone past him, except to cut him off, capture his fleet, and take him a prisoner to share the dungeon with *Carneiro de Campos*? Evidently he was a lost man, and with a resignation commendable in some cases, if not in the present, he retired to his cabin to reflect on the mutability of human affairs. The fleet, however, having got the steam up, moved forward and turned downwards into the main channel and passed below, the battery of *Bruges* being already on its way to the Riachuelo to protect the Paraguayan squadron. The Brazilians, as they steamed down, delivered their broadsides at the Paraguayans, but with little or no effect. With one exception they all kept the outer channel, leaving the sand-bar above the Riachuelo on the left, and scudding by as if running a blockade, and not fighting a battle. Two steamers, however, attempted to pass

through the inner channel. Unfortunately, one of them, the *Jequitinhonha*, struck on the sand-bar, and was left helpless under the guns of *Bruges*, that were directly opposite. She was soon riddled and sunk. The other, the *Paranahyba*, passed the bar, but just below touched the shore; and, her stern being caught by the current, she drifted round, and, dropping down, came against the *Tacuari*, so that the two lay side by side. The Paraguayans, with instinctive courage, instantly boarded, while most of the crew of the *Paranahyba*, being under no discipline, jumped overboard. At the same time the *Marques de Olinda* came up on the other side of the *Paranahyba*, while the disabled *Jejuí* lay just below, so that with a single shot she might have disabled the rudder. But by this time the *Paranahyba* was covered with Paraguayans, and the commander of the *Jejuí* would not fire for fear of injuring his own people. There was, however, in the forward part of the *Paranahyba* a considerable number who had not jumped overboard, and who made so good a defence that the Paraguayan admiral got alarmed and attempted to go below. Descending from the bridge, he was just passing to his cabin when a ball struck him in the chest, and he fell mortally wounded. Just after this was heard the order of an officer of the *Paranahyba* to go astern. The next moment he was cut down by a Paraguayan sabre. The order, however, was obeyed, and the vessel slipped from between her adversaries. The admiral of the *Tacuari* being mortally wounded, and the next in command being dead drunk on the bridge, a lieutenant ordered her to move ahead. It was fortunate for her that she did so, for directly after the Brazilian flag-ship, the *Amazonas*, that had passed below, was seen returning at full speed, and, converting herself into a ram, was running down one steamer after another as if they were targets.

The Brazilian admiral, *Barroso*, after running the gantlet of the enemy and placing his vessel below so as to be at a disadvantage, as the Paraguayan admiral had just done, was again, like him, at a loss what to do. But two of the steamers were left behind, and it would not do to run away and abandon

them. The admiral, was too frightened to give an order. He sat in his cabin, literally paralyzed with fear and unable to speak. When appealed to by a subordinate to give orders to the fleet, he sat transfixed and speechless. The fleet, however, having got below again, turned about and came into position and steamed back among the Paraguayans. It was then that one brave man changed the fate of the day, and converted what would otherwise have been a shameful defeat into a signal victory. This was an Italian, the pilot of the Amazonas. Seeing everything going in favor of the Paraguayans and no one to give orders, he took the responsibility of acting without them. First he drove at the Paraguayri, one of the largest and best of the Paraguayan vessels. She went down like a cockle-shell before the huge Amazonas; then he drove at the Marques de Olinda; then at the Salto, and lastly at the Jejui, and each went down like ships of pasteboard. The launches, with the sixty-eight pounders, got adrift early in the action. Two of these were likewise run down by the Amazonas, and the other four fell into the hands of the Brazilians. Two of the Brazilian steamers gave chase for the Tacuari and the Igurey, the latter keeping in the rear to protect the other, that, being disabled by the loss of one boiler, could make but little headway. The pursuers could with difficulty keep in the rear of the pursued; so with true Brazilian pluck they closed their port-holes and prepared to defend themselves in case the Paraguayans should try to board them, keeping always behind, and firing their bow-chasers under such a sense of danger as did not permit them to aim near the mark. With a commendable prudence, therefore, they soon gave up the pursuit, though the commandante of the Igurey, Cabral, now flag-officer of the squadron, when arrived opposite Corrientes, came to and dropped anchor, as if to invite them to attack him. But with that better part of valor called discretion they declined to do so, and soon turned tail and returned to the vicinity of the flagship to celebrate, with Admiral Barroso, their great courage and great victory:

A great victory it was, but the whole credit is due to a subordinate of low grade, and that subordinate not a Brazilian, but a countryman of Garibaldi. Of the eight Paraguayan vessels that took part in the fight, four returned, all more or less disabled. That these were saved was due to an English engineer. This Englishman for his services received the lowest order of the Decoration of the Legion of Honor. But he was, not long after, for some slight offence, subjected to three months' imprisonment, and three years after was arrested, tortured, and shot as a traitor. The Italian pilot was rewarded by the Emperor with a present of five hundred gold ounces and the commission of lieutenant-colonel.

As an offset to this act of magnanimity and justice of the Emperor, it should be stated that his admiral, who had slunk in fear from the battle, was promoted to a higher rank in the navy, and was ennobled, being created Baron das Amazonas. It will be found hereafter, that, with scarcely an exception, whenever any officer high in position and authority in the Brazilian service disgraced his flag, his country, and himself by acts of cowardice or imbecility which in most countries would have caused him to be cashiered, if not shot, he was promoted and covered with benefits, and taken to his Majesty's bosom.

The Paraguayan admiral survived his wounds but a short time. Though he had conducted the battle very unskilfully, and shown personal fear, he had displayed less cowardice than Barroso. But had he lived his rewards would have been very different from those which his antagonist received. He would have been ignominiously shot, as Lopez himself declared, and as thousands of others were during the war, not often for cowardice, but for not doing what they had been ordered to perform. A miscarriage or failure in any enterprise could never be ascribed to the erroneous judgment or bad combination of the commander-in-chief, but the blame was always laid on the troops sent to perform it, and those who were so fortunate as to escape alive were afterwards remorsefully decimated and shot in the presence of their companions.

CHAPTER VI.

Inaction of the Brazilians. — Results of the Battle of Riachuelo. — The Campaign in Corrientes. — General Robles suspected of Treason. — Espionage. — Colonel Alén. — Arrest, Imprisonment, and Execution of General Robles and Others. — The Campaign in Rio Grande. — Capture of San Borja by Estigarribia. — Battle of Arroyo Mbutuy. — Movements of the Allied Forces. — Critical Situation of Duarte. — Destruction of his Army. — Estigarribia summoned to surrender. — Negotiations. — Capitulation of Estigarribia. — His Character. — Treatment of the Prisoners. — Character of Robles. — Interview with the Marques de Caxias. — Reception of the News at Asuncion. — Disappointment and Rage of Lopez. — Public Meetings. — Evacuation of Corrientes. — Removing the Spoils. — The Brazilian Fleet. — Review of the Campaign.

THOUGH the result of this battle was a defeat to the Paraguayans and a loss of half their fleet, yet the Brazilians failed to follow up their success, which had they done, not one of the Paraguayan vessels would ever have returned to tell the tale of the great disaster. The Brazilians in this action, as in many others that occurred during the war, neglected to improve their victory, but seemed to think that, having repulsed the enemy, they had done all that could be expected of them, and that nothing further was demanded than to rest on their laurels and wait further orders and promotions from home. A slight attempt was made, however, two days after the battle, to recover the lost steamer, which was one of the best of the squadron, the Jequitinhonha; but the battery of horse artillery that hovered along the bank of the river, near where the battle took place, succeeded in driving back the fleet, and the Jequitinhonha, the Paraguari, the Marques de Olinda, and the Salto were left where they had been sunk during the action. So supine and demoralized did the Brazilians appear to have been rendered by the battle, that they moved down the river as if afraid of another attack.

The Paraguayans, did not thus abandon what they had lost, as the Brazilians were hardly out of sight when parties were sent down from Corrientes that took out the guns and whatever else was valuable which had been left on the Jequitinhonha and their own abandoned steamers, and they also succeeded in raising the hull of the burnt Paraguari and taking it to Asuncion.

This defeat at Riachuelo was an irreparable loss to Lopez ; it completely deranged all his plans. Had it been a success, and could he have captured the entire squadron, as under the circumstances it would have been easy to do had he conducted the battle with ordinary sagacity, he would then have had the entire command of the river from Asuncion to Montevideo. The allies had at that time nothing in the river which could have withstood the fleet that he would then have had at his command, and in the panic which would have followed the disaster to the allies he could have dictated almost any terms to the defenceless Buenos-Aireans. Such were his hopes, but this battle had destroyed them all, and it would be impossible for him ever to send another squadron against the Brazilian naval forces then in the river, that were being almost daily augmented.

But the attack on the squadron was only a part of his general plan. General Robles having occupied Corrientes for a time, as we have seen, was ordered to move down the left bank of the river as far as Goya.

Here he remained until the day of the battle of Riachuelo, when he commenced a retreat up the river as far as Empedrado, twelve miles below Corrientes, where he encamped and waited until the 23d of July. While here the Brazilians managed to open a secret correspondence with him, and he had made the preliminary arrangements to betray his whole force into the hands of the allies. Lopez, however, who mistrusted everybody, had spies to watch all his principal officers. The first letters he received in which corrupt propositions were made to him he immediately forwarded to Lopez, mistrusting that it was a device to entrap him, of

which Lopez, if he was not already informed, probably soon would be. But though these letters were sent forward to Lopez, he contrived to send answers to them, in which he intimated that he was none too good to leave the service of his chief, provided he were to receive due consideration for his treason. Lopez, up to this time, had had every confidence in Robles, as for a long time he had been next in command to himself in the army, and had been his favorite officer, had presided over his tribunals, had adjudged death to hundreds or thousands of obnoxious people, and owed his position entirely to the favor of his chief. But Lopez thought it well to watch more sharply his future conduct. He therefore promoted another of his favorites, Colonel Resquin, to be brigadier-general, and sent him to Corrientes, to be next in command to Robles. The person intrusted specially with the duty of watching the two generals was Colonel Alén, whose devotion to Lopez had taken that form which was most sure to secure him favor and confidence. He was his most favored and trusted informer, and was as zealous and eager to make accusations against others as if he believed that, by exciting the suspicions of his master against all his best men so that he would destroy them, he was doing him a great service. His zeal, however, as will be seen hereafter, did not suffice to save him from a fate worse, if possible, than that which he had brought upon many innocent persons by his accusations. Of the many victims of Lopez's suspicion and cruelty, perhaps none died a more miserable, agonizing death than did this same Colonel Alén. Having been sent with special orders to keep watch over Robles, he was not able to discover anything; but Madam Lynch, who had long regarded Robles with dislike, for the reason that he had too much influence with Lopez, thereby exciting her jealousy, had some spies of her own in a menial capacity around Robles's camp, and from them she was able to learn that something mysterious was passing between the general in command and the allies. She instantly made known her suspicions to Lopez, and besought him at once to have Robles superseded, and some one else, in whom both

had more confidence, placed in command of his army. Lopez was greatly alarmed at the earnest representations made by his mistress, who was then in Asuncion, and despatched a steamer with his brother-in-law, Barrios, to relieve the suspected general.

The latter was encamped at Empedrado, about a mile from the river ; and when Barrios approached with his staff to the tent of the commanding general, the latter came out to salute him. Barrios declined to return his civility, and delivered to him a letter from Lopez, which he told him to read. It was an order from him to turn over the command of his army to Barrios, with which Robles immediately complied, and delivered his sword to Barrios, who sent him as a prisoner on board a steamer ; his papers were then seized, and the disgraced general was sent under guard to Humaita. The evidence against him was intangible, and not satisfactory to Lopez, for he was not able to make out from it whether Robles was a traitor or not. He was kept in solitary confinement for a long time at Humaita, as were all the members of his staff, saving and excepting only Colonel Alén, whose fidelity to Lopez had not then ever been questioned. A large number of the commanding officers in the camp besides the staff were also arrested and put in irons ; and in this condition they were held for some six months, Lopez being unable to assure himself whether there was any just ground for complaint against any of them. On the 8th of January, 1866, however, he decided to have Robles executed, on the charge of not having done his duty in Corrientes. He was not condemned as a traitor, as it was not desirable that the troops should know that the two most trusted commanders of the great unerring Lopez had betrayed him.

Several of the staff of Robles were executed with him ; and among these was his secretary, Captain Valiente, the half-brother of Gumesindo Benitez, who afterwards figured as the acting Minister for Foreign Affairs in the correspondence with the writer of this work, in which he endeavored to prove that the American legation was the focus

and head of a conspiracy against Lopez, and for which he received the reward which Lopez almost invariably granted to his most servile adherents,—torture and execution. Robles, dressed in full uniform, was paraded with his staff before the whole army, which was drawn up to witness the ceremony, and, the sentence being read, the fallen general, his secretary, and several others, were shot. Lopez witnessed this tragic scene from a window of his house. Most of the officers, however, who had long been in prison and in irons, were pardoned, and were restored to the positions they had held in the army. No one seemed to have any pity or sympathy for Robles, as he was a hard and cruel man, and had ever shown great alacrity in executing the commands of his unscrupulous master. He had always maintained the severest discipline in the army by inflicting the most terrible punishments for slight offences, either on officers or men. It was no uncommon thing for him to order officers of as high a grade as captain, and from the best families of Paraguay, to be unmercifully flogged in the presence of the soldiers. Nor was it an unusual thing for him to order any one who from thoughtlessness or ignorance had omitted the performance of any insignificant duty to be made a spread-eagle of, fastened to the ground, and left there, exposed to the scorching sun by day and to the winds, storms, and dews of night, for weeks and months at a time, or till they expired from their sufferings. His ambition seemed to be to please Lopez by imitating him in all things; and wherever he was in command it was his habit to send to the houses of people in the vicinity and require the presence, at his camp, of any young woman that pleased his fancy. If the order were disobeyed, he would find means to enforce it; and as he was known to be a great favorite of Lopez, no one would dare to complain of the outrage. After he was dead, people who, while he was in favor, would never have dared to breathe a word against him, spoke of him with the bitterness of hate which such cruelty was calculated to engender. Whether or not he had been guilty of treason to Lopez, they neither knew nor cared; but they were glad he had met the fate that his other crimes so richly merited.

Lopez was beginning to realize, by this time, that the people by whom he was surrounded, and who had been accustomed to flatter him on all occasions, and to profess their willingness to sacrifice everything they had in the world to save him, did not, in making these professions, express their real sentiments, and that those who were most free with their praises and protests only lacked the opportunity to betray him. The state of mind he was in about this time may be inferred from the following extract from Colonel Thompson's book :—

“Lopez was continually in great fear of being assassinated, and at night had a double cordon of sentinels round his house. This was afterwards increased to a treble one. During the daytime these were removed, and the guard was kept under a roof, next door to Lopez. People who wished to see him had to wait under this same roof. One evening I was waiting there to see Lopez, as were also several other officers, and a sergeant of the guard entered into conversation with me. After a short time there was a great stir, officers going in and out of Lopez's room, the guard relieved, and the other officers who were waiting all arrested. One of Lopez's aides-de-camp came and said to me, ‘His Excellency sends word to you to write down all the conversation you have had with the sergeant of the guard and bring it to-morrow morning.’ I went away, not expecting to be able to remember a twentieth part of the silly talk of the sergeant ; but as things looked serious, I tried, and probably remembered it all. It filled a whole sheet of paper, and was all of it somewhat in this style : ‘The sergeant asked me if Queen Victoria always wore her crown when she went out to walk. The sergeant asked me if I should wear the Paraguayan uniform when I went to England.’ It was sealed up and taken next morning to Lopez, about 7 A. M. He was not yet up, but the sergeant was already shot, and all the soldiers of the guard had received one hundred lashes each. A few months afterwards I heard that the sergeant had been convicted of conspiring with two men who had just returned from Uruguayana to murder the President, and that the two men had been found that night in the yard of Lopez's house. The sergeant's manner that evening was certainly not that of a conspirator. Lopez never said a word about it to me, nor acknowledged receipt of the written conversation, probably feeling ashamed to do so.”

At the same time that General Robles was sent with his column of men along the bank of the river to capture the different towns on the route, Colonel Antonio Estigarribia, with a column of twelve thousand men and six guns, crossing the Parana at Encarnacion, a hundred miles above Paso de la Patria, marched across the Misiones to the Uruguay with the object of invading the Brazilian province of Rio Grande. On reaching the banks of that river he divided his army into two columns, crossing over with about eight thousand of his men, and leaving twenty-five hundred on the right bank of the river, under the command of Major Duarte. The two armies then proceeded down the river on opposite sides, and, on the 10th of June, Estigarribia took possession of San Borja after a slight skirmish. On the 26th of June a part of his force, while on their march, fell in with a considerable force of the Brazilians at Arroyo Mbutuy, and a battle ensued which both parties claimed as a victory. On the 5th of August, Estigarribia with his army occupied the important Brazilian town of Uruguayana. Though the Brazilians along the frontiers of the invaded province had two or three times the number of troops under Estigarribia, they made little or no effort to impede his march, as they saw that the farther he got away from his own country the more complete and disastrous must be his ultimate overthrow. Meanwhile Duarte, with his army of twenty-five hundred men, occupied the town of Yatai, on the Argentine or opposite side of the Uruguay. The combined forces of the two armies amounted to about ten thousand men, about two thousand having been lost on the route since they had crossed the Parana. By this time the allies began to gather around them in great force, and indeed in such overwhelming numbers that it was evident that without generalship peculiarly Brazilian the whole Paraguayan army would be destroyed or taken prisoners. Six hundred men under General Flores were approaching the camp of Duarte, who sent to Estigarribia for reinforcements. He received for a reply the insulting answer that, if he was afraid, some one else should be sent to command

in his stead. Hoping that General Robles, who had been despatched in the same general direction, might be near, he also wrote to him, advising him of the desperate strait he was in. In this letter, which was captured by General Paunero, Duarte says that his orders from Lopez were to kill all the prisoners he took. This letter, it should be noted, was written early in the war, and before Lopez had been rendered desperate by the reverses that subsequently overtook him, and proves how little value is to be attached to the professions made by him before the commencement of hostilities, that he should carry on the war with the strictest regard to the laws of nations, and with such respect for the dictates of humanity, that his conduct in this war should offer a striking contrast to that which had generally been the practice of the sanguinary *caudillos*, whose exploits had disgraced almost every page of South American history.

Flores's forces had increased so rapidly that on the 17th of August they numbered more than thirteen thousand men. He at once sent a summons to Duarte to surrender, which the latter refused to do, saying, as was almost invariably said at that time by every Paraguayan, when summoned to surrender, that he had no orders to do so from "El Supremo." An attack was then ordered, and in the battle which followed the Paraguayans fought with a valor never surpassed, not even at Thermopylæ. But the superiority of numbers was so overwhelmingly against them that their valor was of no avail. They all refused to surrender, but fought until they were killed, and of the whole twenty-five hundred only between two and three hundred of those who were not engaged in the immediate contest were taken prisoners. In this battle, as in many others, it would not unfrequently occur that one Paraguayan would be surrounded by a dozen of the enemy, all calling on him to surrender, to which he would make no response, but fight on until he was killed; or if by chance he was disarmed during the unequal contest and forcibly made a prisoner, he would take the first opportunity when his hands were free to seize a musket or bludgeon of any

kind, and kill as many as possible, until he was himself knocked senseless.

In this action the allies lost a number fully equal to the whole force of the Paraguayans, so that on the average every Paraguayan had killed his man. The allies now turned their attention to Estigarribia and his larger army, who were on the other side of the river, engaged in fortifying their position. As he saw that the troops of the enemy which were gathering around him were far in excess of his own, he commenced a retreat, which had he continued he might probably have saved himself and a part of his army. But he knew the character of his master too well to venture to retreat without orders, and therefore returned to Uruguayana to await instructions or reinforcements. Meanwhile four gunboats had been sent up the river by Admiral Tamandaré, which took a position so that their guns commanded the town. The question with the allies now was, whether Estigarribia would fight, as Duarte had done, until all his men were killed. Were he to do so, they might count on a loss equal to all, or nearly all, the Paraguayan army, and the moral effect of such another Thermopylæ could not but be disastrous to the allied cause. They therefore sent a note to the Paraguayan commander, proposing that he should surrender, and promising that he and his men should be permitted to retire with all the honors of war. Estigarribia replied to this note in a long letter, declining to entertain any such proposition. The allies soon after sent him a second letter, in which they represented that their troops greatly outnumbered his, and they had such superiority of artillery that he was completely invested by land, while he was exposed to the heavy guns of the squadron which was lying near by in the river. For him to make resistance under such circumstances, when victory was impossible and defeat inevitable, would be to sacrifice his entire army to certain destruction. It has been said, that, at the time this letter was sent, another communication of a different character was also forwarded, in which Estigarribia was promised ample rewards if he would not subject the allies to the losses and

inconvenience of a battle, and that an arrangement was then made, according to which he was to answer scornfully the proposal that he should capitulate, and keep up the appearance of defiance, till the Emperor, who was then on his way, should have time to come up and be present at the surrender.

To the summons to surrender, Estigarribia replied, on the 5th of September, in a letter the terms of which are so grandiloquent and inflated as to create the impression that at the time it was sent he was already resolved on capitulation.* This letter was not written by Estigarribia, but by a priest who accompanied him to write his letters and act as chaplain. Estigarribia was a man of little ability and no education, and would never have been selected for this important command had Lopez been either a good judge of men or of the qualities essential in the commander of so desperate an enterprise. He had been known in Asuncion as belonging

* "VIVE THE REPUBLIC OF PARAGUAY!

"CAMP AT URUGUAYANA, September 5, 1865.

"The Commander-in-Chief of the Division in Operation on the River Uruguay, to the Representatives of the Vanguard of the Allied Army.

"The undersigned, Commander-in-Chief of the Paraguayan division in operation on the river Uruguay, has the honor to reply to the note which your Excellencies addressed to him on the 2d instant, proposing the basis of an arrangement.

"Before entering upon the principal part of your Excellencies' note, I may be allowed to refute, with the decency and dignity of a soldier of honor, all those statements in said note which are injurious to the supreme government of the undersigned. With the permission of your Excellencies, such statements place that note on the same level as the newspapers of Buenos Aires, which for some years have done nothing else and have had no other object than grossly and severely to blacken the government of Paraguay, throwing out at the same time rude calumnies against the people, who have replied to them by honestly laboring for their domestic happiness,—their greatest delight being in maintaining internal peace, which is the fundamental base of the preponderance of a nation.

"As your Excellencies show so much zeal in giving the Paraguayan nation its liberty, according to your own expressions, why have you not begun by freeing the unhappy negroes of Brazil, who form the greater part of its population, and who groan under the hardest and most terrible slavery to enrich and keep in idleness a few hundreds of the grandes of the Empire? Since when has a nation, which by its own spontaneous and free will elects the government which presides over its destinies, been called a nation of slaves? Doubtless, since Brazil has undertaken the affairs of the river Plata, with the decided desire of subjugating and

to the staff of Lopez, and as being one of the most ready and willing to commit any barbarity or enforce without mercy any tyrannical order that his master might command. His family was of the lowest class in Asuncion, and he had no other stake in the country, and was altogether such a man as, having nothing to lose, would be open to propositions from any source.

These brave words were not followed up by corresponding actions; for no sooner were they written than he began to stipulate for terms to himself, in case that he would surrender his whole army. But the allies, not knowing, or at least pretending not to know, what his ulterior purposes were, began to make active preparations for assaulting the place. They had four times the number of troops that he had, besides their gunboats; they had also forty-two rifled cannon of longer range than those possessed by Estigarribia, so that they could

enslaving the sister Republics of Paraguay, and perhaps even Paraguay itself, had it not counted on a patriotic and foreseeing government.

"Your Excellencies will allow me these digressions, since you have provoked them by insulting the government of my fatherland in your note.

"I am not of the same opinion with your Excellencies, that a military man of honor and a true patriot should limit himself to fight only when he has a probability of conquering.

"If your Excellencies open any History, you will learn, from the records of that great book of humanity, that the great captains whom the world still remembers with pride counted neither the number of their enemies nor the elements they disposed of, but conquered or died in the name of their country. Recollect that Leonidas, when he was keeping the Pass of Thermopylæ with three hundred Spartans, would not listen to the propositions of the King of Persia; and when a soldier told him that his enemies were so numerous that their arrows darkened the sun, he answered, "So much the better, we will fight in the shade." Like the Spartan captain, I cannot listen to the propositions made by the enemy; for I have been sent, with my companions, to fight in defence of the rights of Paraguay; and as its soldier I must answer your Excellencies when you enumerate to me the number of your forces and the amount of artillery at your disposal, 'So much the better; the smoke of the cannon shall be our shade.'

"If fortune should decree us a tomb in this city of Uruguayana, our fellow-citizens will preserve the remembrance of those Paraguayans who died fighting for the cause of their country, and who, while they lived, did not surrender to the enemy the sacred ensign of the liberty of their nation.

"God preserve your Excellencies many years!

"ANTONIO ESTIGARRIBIA."

knock down the town and destroy every Paraguayan in it without exposing themselves to any danger. It was a situation well calculated to display Brazilian courage in all its perfection, as no braver troops were ever known than they are when beyond the reach of danger. But while the allies were getting ready to make this attack, the provisions in the camp of Estigarribia were getting very low. The army had eaten up all the horned cattle, and had commenced upon the horses, and Estigarribia saw that, unless he could escape from the trap into which he had fallen, he must either surrender, or else his troops must all perish either in battle or from hunger. He therefore sent another note to General Mitre, proposing to treat for terms. Mitre, however, seeing that he had him completely in his power, did not reply to his letter, reserving that task until he should be ready for a general assault, when his answer would be a summons to an unconditional surrender. This was done on the 18th of September, the whole allied army being in position for an attack. Mitre now sent a summons to Estigarribia to surrender within four hours. The latter replied, offering to surrender on condition that the rank and file should be treated as prisoners of war; that the officers should be allowed to keep their swords and go wherever they liked, even to Paraguay; and that the Orientals in his army should be prisoners to Brazil. These terms were accepted, with the exception that the officers were to give up their swords, and might reside wherever they pleased, except that they should not return to Paraguay. The formal surrender was then made, and the whole army, consisting of nearly six thousand men (some two thousand having died from disease or want, or been killed in the occasional skirmishes that had taken place), were marched out as prisoners of war.

The treatment of these prisoners by the allies was not only a violation of all the laws of war, but was in every respect treacherous, dishonest, and disgraceful. They were drafted into the allied armies and compelled to fight against their own countrymen, brothers in arms. This act was not only a crime, but it was a great mistake. The Paraguayans, when

they left their country on this invading expedition, believed that they were going to fight an enemy who had come to make war upon their country and carry them away, to distribute their women among the soldiers and carry off the men as slaves to Brazil; and they had been trained to such implicit obedience, and were so thoroughly subject to the orders of their superiors, that with this fear before them they could be made to fight in a manner more desperate and fearless than was ever known before. It was long after they had been taken prisoners before they became disabused of the idea that they were finally to be taken to Brazil as slaves, and that they were never to see their homes, their wives and children again, unless by deserting they could make their way back to their own country. Many of them did so desert, and found their way back to the camp of Lopez, where, for a while, they were received as true men, who had been betrayed into the hands of the enemy by their commander. As they had not been long enough in the Brazilian army to lose their hatred of the Brazilians, or to become disabused of the idea that they were going to be made slaves of, they were nearly all again drafted into the army.

It is asserted that Estigarribia had, previous to his surrender, made terms with the Brazilians, by which he was to receive a very large sum of money in case he would lay down his arms without forcing the allies to the extremity of a battle. It is certain that he was treated by the Brazilians with great consideration; that he went to Rio de Janeiro, where he was treated with great distinction; and that he had the means to support himself in a style such as he had never known before. His annual salary under Lopez had not been as much as were his daily expenses in Rio de Janeiro after his surrender. No one but Lopez could blame him for having surrendered as he did, for had he held out as did Duarte his army must have shared the fate of his subordinate. Yet Lopez had been well pleased with the battle of Yatai; for he thought that, though the whole army had been destroyed, it would show the allies that the people

whom they were to encounter were resolved to perish to the last man sooner than be conquered. Should Estigarribia imitate Duarte and his army, and make as good a report of himself as they did, then the allies would hesitate long before venturing to encounter another Paraguayan army. But when the news of Estigarribia's surrender reached him, he saw that he had not only lost his army, but that he had shown a great want of generalship by sending so large a force away from his base and leaving it to be cut off and captured, and he had lost all the moral advantages that had been gained by the army of Duarte. The news of this surrender, coming so soon after the defeat at Riachuelo, rendered Lopez for a time as savage and furious as he afterwards became in his general character. He had lost a great part of his fleet that was to have swept the river and brought the cities of Montevideo, Buenos Aires, Rosario, and Parana as supplicants to his feet ; and he had lost the whole army that he had intended should carry fire and sword through the Brazilian camp, and even bring the Emperor to sue for terms. His rage on this occasion has been described as having been very undignified for the chief magistrate of a nation. Gathering all his principal officers, he broke forth in curses and maledictions of Estigarribia as a traitor, a purchased knave, whose name and memory were deserving of universal execration. He then turned upon those present, and in terms of the most bitter invective told them that they were all traitors to a great extent ; that none of them had his cause and his person so much at heart as they ought to have it ; that he should watch them more sharply than he had ever done before ; and that they might count that at the least defection, the least sign of disobedience or disinclination to carry out his orders to the fullest extent, they should feel his heavy hand upon them in such a way that they could never fear it a second time.

The wrath of Lopez against Estigarribia was greatly aggravated by the fact that he had escaped from his power, and was then rioting on the rewards of his disobedience. He had not even the poor consolation of inflicting vicarious punish-

ment on his family, for he had no family but a wife that he cared nothing about, and who was low and abandoned. Notwithstanding this, however, she both renounced and denounced him, and petitioned the government for leave to change her name, and not be longer known or called by one that her husband had made infamous. Having done this, she was allowed to remain at large, while the families of others who had deserted or proved recreant, if they had the misfortune to be respectable and possessed of property, were stripped of all they possessed and sent into exile in remote and destitute places of the interior.

In regard to the treason of Robles, Lopez was for a long time in doubt. The whole Corrientes expedition had proved a miserable disastrous failure, and, as Estigarribia had escaped, Robles must suffer for the shortcomings of both. His fidelity was suspected, and yet nothing could be proved against him. This fact Lopez confessed more than a year after, under the following circumstances. The writer of this work had just returned from the camp of the allies, where he had several interviews with their commander-in-chief, the Marques de Caxias. On these occasions the Marques was very free in boasting of his great resources and of his ability to ride over and destroy the army of Lopez whenever he should choose to do so. He evidently wished all he said to be repeated to Lopez, with the object of convincing him that he was irretrievably lost. He boasted that he knew the position of every gun in Lopez's camp and the number of troops at each point, and directed his principal engineer, a Pole, who had been in the American war on the staff of General Grant, to give me a plan of Lopez's camp, with its defences and connections, so that on showing it to Lopez he would see that Caxias was not speaking at random. He also boasted that he found no difficulty in obtaining information from within the Paraguayan lines, and said that he had numerous spies and informers there. He stated that the disastrous attack on the island near Paso de la Patria had been all arranged previously by Mitre and the Paraguayan commander, Romero, by which the lat-

ter was to be taken prisoner and all his command also taken or killed. He declared that if Robles had not been arrested for two or three days longer, he and his whole army would have been taken at as cheap a rate as had previously that of Estigarribia. It struck me at the time as very singular that the commander-in-chief of an army should speak thus openly and boastingly of the means he employed to corrupt his enemies and induce them to turn traitors. There was, however, probably, an object in it. He did not affect to tell me anything in confidence, but, on the contrary, said that I might tell Lopez everything; his object as I supposed being to impress upon him that his cause was lost, and he had better give up the contest without further bloodshed.

When I related to Lopez what Caxias had said of the treachery of Robles, I had no suspicion that he had executed him while in doubt of his guilt. But in his reply he admitted that such was the fact. He said he was greatly relieved and gratified by what I had told him, as it was the first information of a positive character he had ever received that Robles was a traitor. Caxias had, however, denied that Estigarribia was a traitor. He said that he had only surrendered under such circumstances as would have justified any military man in surrendering, and that it would have been folly, madness, and crime for him to have resisted against odds so overwhelming; that his army must have been entirely destroyed in case it had not capitulated. Lopez still refused to admit that Estigarribia was not a traitor equally guilty and base with Robles. It was his idea that it was the duty of every soldier of his army to fight with all his men until every one was killed rather than to surrender, for by doing this they could inflict injury on the allies, and thereby help his cause; and so that his cause was aided, Lopez did not consider that a general or soldier had any right whatever to consider his own life or that of his fellow-soldiers as worthy of a thought.

The news of the surrender of Estigarribia, when it reached Asuncion, caused great dismay, and public meetings were held to denounce his treachery and cowardice. But while

the escaped traitor was denounced and stigmatized by every possible epithet that could be found either in Spanish or Guarani, those who reviled him felt it incumbent upon them, or at least prudent, to praise the great strategy of Lopez, who had sent him on the expedition with a large army that must inevitably be lost if his orders were obeyed. In the *Semanario* he was likened to as many of the heroes of ancient times as the editors had ever heard of; and when the American, Mr. Bliss, suggested that the name of Cincinnatus should be added to the others, it was done, though probably not one of the readers, Paraguayans, had ever heard of Cincinnatus, and, if they had, would certainly have found it difficult to trace the similarity between him and Lopez.

After these two great disasters, Lopez saw that he could no longer maintain an aggressive war on foreign territory. If he would not have his whole forces destroyed, he must recall them within the limits of Paraguay and then fight on the defensive. He accordingly ordered the evacuation of Corrientes, and withdrew his troops. They had during the time of occupation descended along the banks of the river as far as the important town of Goya, which, with Bella Vista, Empedrado, and other places of less note, they had sacked, and had taken away everything that they could carry which would be of use to them in their own country. The chief wealth of the province of Corrientes, however, was the cattle; and General Barrios, who was in command after the arrest of Robles, deployed his army into a long line from the river, and, marching to the north, swept before him all the cattle and horses that could be found until they came to the Parana, where they were ferried over in steamers and lighters to the Paraguayan shore. While this was going on the Brazilian squadron was lying idle in the river, and doing nothing to prevent the Paraguayans from recrossing and taking all their plunder with them. The Paraguayan steamers that had not been destroyed in the battle of Riachuelo were actively employed in running up and down the river, and carrying away their artillery and the spoils which they had taken from the Correntino towns. As soon

as they had completed this work, and had evacuated first one town and then another, the Brazilian fleet followed on after them. They were careful not to pursue the game while the tracks were too fresh.

On the day that the Paraguayan army began to cross the river from Paso de la Patria to Itapiru, five Brazilian steamers came in sight of the place, and saw what was going on. The Paraguayans had two steamers to transport the entire army, and, had the Brazilians moved higher up the river, they could easily have destroyed them, and completely cut off the retreat of the Paraguayans; but when they saw what the Paraguayans were doing, instead of attacking them they turned about and ran away. The allied army was coming up by land in number vastly exceeding that of the Paraguayans on the left bank of the river, and the Brazilians had it in their power to cut off their retreat, so that they must all have fallen into the hands of their enemies; but the Brazilians, who, throughout the war, seemed to think that all the science and strategy in war was expressed in the proverb of a golden bridge for a flying enemy, did not think it expedient to destroy the only means of escape for the Paraguayans. Afterwards, when this fatal blunder was known and criticised, it was alleged that there was not sufficient depth of water for their vessels. That, however, was not the true reason. The river was at that time high enough for vessels drawing much more water than did any of this squadron. Another reason alleged, and the true one, was they did not know but that the Paraguayans had masked batteries which might injure their vessels. It was the imaginary masked battery of the Paraguayans that almost invariably prevented the Brazilians from following up a victory which they had gained. They chose rather to bear the ills of a longer war and other campaigns than the others that they knew not of in the form of possible masked batteries.

It was not till about the 1st of November, 1865, that the Paraguayans had all returned from the invasion of Corrientes. The campaign had been a disastrous one to the cause of

Lopez. Since it commenced he had lost the better part of his squadron and nearly twenty thousand men, and all he had got in return was the spoils taken from the towns he had sacked, and the cattle, more than a hundred thousand in number, which he had collected and taken across the river. These cattle were of little use to him, as, finding a poisonous plant in Paraguay to which they were unused, and which they ate, the greater part of them died in and about the Paraguayan camp, creating a state of the atmosphere so tainted as to seriously injure the health of the troops. In fact, it may be doubted whether it would not have been better for Lopez had every one of the cattle which had been collected in Corrientes been drowned in attempting to cross the river.

CHAPTER VII.

A new Palace commenced. — Colonel Francisco Fernandez. — Lopez disappointed in his Efforts to form a Royal Alliance. — Madam Lynch. — Colonel Wisner. — Character of Lopez. — Public Amusements. — Balls. — *Peinetas de oro*. — Jewelry. — Sortija. — Bull-Fights — Their Influence upon the People. — Celebrating the Anniversary of the President's Birthday. — A Step towards Imperialism. — Changes in Matters of Etiquette and Deportment. — The Clothes Question. — General Illumination. — Triumphal Arches. — Mottoes. — Fulsome Praises of Lopez. — Demonstration by the Ladies. — Magnificent Displays. — Reception of the President. — Patriotic Speeches. — The President's Reply. — Government Officials present. — Their Subsequent Fate.

WHILE Lopez was indulging in the pleasing dream that he would have an imperial bride to share his throne, he began to build a palace, intending it to be fit for a princess. He selected as a site for this noble structure a point of land between the old Palace, or Government House, and the arsenal, overlooking the river and commanding a view to the west, north, and east. Part of the ground was unoccupied, and the rest was covered with the shanties and hovels of poor people, who knew better than to complain at being driven off. Its foundation was of limestone, and the work was massive and substantial. The basement fronting the river was intended to serve as a stable, and was as full of dark rooms, winding passages, and stairways, as any old feudal castle. It had a frontage of, if I recollect aright, two hundred feet, with a deep L running back at each end, leaving an open space for a court between them. Above the basement it was built of brick and covered with stucco, so that it had the appearance of stone at a little distance. The architect and builder were both Englishmen, and the work was done in a most substantial manner, and the general appearance of the building as seen at a distance was grand and palatial. The adjoining build-

ings being all small and inferior, they served to set off this massive pile in striking relief.

X The labor on this palace was nearly all done by boys from nine to twelve years of age. The stone had been quarried at a place called Empedrado, some ten leagues above Asunción, and near the bank of the river. It was a sort of stone easily worked, and the young lads did all the labor of drilling, picking, and trimming it. To lift the large blocks, or to fix them in position, of course required the assistance of strong men; but the able-bodied men were nearly all conscripted for the army, and the master-builder, Mr. Alonzo Taylor, was obliged to depend on boys to do everything that they had the strength to perform. It was a sad sight to see the little fellows made prematurely old by the labor to which they were condemned. They were constantly watched that they should never idle away a moment; and in passing through the grounds where they wrought they appeared like worn-out slaves, in whom all hope was so utterly extinguished that they never looked up or ceased a moment from their labor. They had a starved and hungry look, for besides being so severely worked they were scantily fed. The poor little wretches were allowed only six or eight cents a day with which to buy their food. A bit of mandioca, or maiz chipa, not half so much as nature required, was all they could procure with this scanty pittance. The lads had been picked up with as little regard to the feelings, either of themselves or their parents, as has the slave-trader on the coast of Africa for the mother whose children he steals. They were taken from their homes and set to work as slaves, and continued at it till they were sent to the army to be there sacrificed.

The superintendence of this building was given to Colonel Francisco Fernandez, who was the general agent and confidential business man of Lopez in all his private affairs. He was, of all Lopez's officers and subordinates, the best liked by the foreigners. He was believed to have more of the confidence of his master than any other man in the country, and would take on himself the responsibility of granting favors or giving

orders on unimportant matters that would have cost others imprisonment and fetters, if not their lives. His was the task of keeping these boys at work, and such was his fidelity to his chief that he did not spare them. And he had his reward. He was tortured and shot. His wife and children were driven destitute into the wilderness, and where are they?

The work on the palace had not progressed far before the President's illusion of a royal alliance vanished into air. When this hope was gone, he seemed to surrender to the counsels of his Irish mistress, Madam Lynch. Her hopes and plans, that had long been held subordinate to the ambition of her paramour, now had a prospect of being realized. She purchased the houses and lots on a square adjoining the new palace, and openly talked of her purpose of building another, of almost equal magnificence, for herself. Her most trusted adviser was an old Hungarian refugee by the name of Wisner. Many years before, this man, for certain reasons, had left his own country and emigrated to Brazil. From there he passed over into Paraguay and took service under the elder Lopez as a sort of civil engineer and architect. He was said to be of noble family, and he certainly was a man of most courtly manners and of considerable attainments. At this time he was nearly sixty-five years of age, and played the courtier to Madam Lynch by agreeing with her in all her ambitious schemes, and seconding her efforts to influence the mind of Lopez. They both clearly saw and realized equally with Lopez, that for him to declare Paraguay an empire before something had been done to make the world know there was such a country would be absurd and ludicrous. Wisner then began to argue, not only with Lopez, but with every one, that war was a necessity to bring out Paraguay; that she would never be respected abroad, or have any standing as a nation, till she had demonstrated her capacity to defend her rights and chastise her enemies.

Unfortunately for Lopez, though he had many flatterers, he had no advisers. At a very early period of his life he had

been placed in authority over all who were about him, and these had soon learned that the way to favor and preferment was through adulation and flattery. Hence all flattered till he came to regard any one who might venture to express an opinion different from his own as an enemy; and when the question of war was discussed, those around him who had most of his confidence could never express a doubt as to what the issue might be without incurring his severest displeasure. Their own safety required that they should tell him he was invincible, and had only to lead his legions to battle and he would scatter his enemies like chaff before the wind; that they and the whole Paraguayan people so loved, honored, and revered him, they would all spring to arms at the first call, and deem it an honor too great for so unworthy subjects as themselves to sacrifice their lives and fortunes in following his banners. This was what he heard in private conversation; and the same ideas, with numberless changes, were the sum and substance of all the speeches pronounced in the public meetings. Every man of any influence or respectability was expected to join in and swell the chorus of praises; and if any one from inadvertence failed to do so, he was sure to get a reminder that his want of patriotism had greatly surprised his Excellency. A hint of this kind was never repeated. Anything like lukewarmness after that was sure to be punished by arrest, imprisonment, and fetters. Previous to the war such warnings were confined to Paraguayans; but subsequently nearly all the foreigners, before they were accused of the conspiracy for which they were executed, received notice that they did not, on public occasions, evince sufficient devotion to the cause of the government that protected them.

All history shows that it is not in human nature for a person to be constantly told that he is the greatest, wisest, and bravest of all mankind without in time coming to believe it. Such was the youthful experience of Lopez. While yet a boy he was placed in authority over people who had grown up under such a reign of cruel terror that they never questioned the

wisdom or the justice of any act emanating from the government. He was addressed by all, young as he was, in terms of obsequious obedience ; and it is, perhaps, not strange that in time he should regard their constant praises as his due, and himself as meriting all the attentions he received. To be constantly flattered became a necessity to him, and he came to look upon any one who failed to minister to his unnatural appetite for flattery, not only as an enemy to himself, but an enemy to the country that had all its hopes and glories centred in his person.

Considerations of this kind may indeed to some extent account for the strange perversity of his character in after life. Had he been so circumstanced in his youth as to have been brought in contact with others of his own age on terms of equality, he must have learned that, while he was superior in natural gifts to some and inferior to others, he was liable to err, and needed, like all men, to be assisted by the experience and counsels of others. Left, however, to the indulgence of a disposition naturally cruel, with no one to check or censure him, but encouraged by those around him to believe that all he did must be right, he developed into an unnatural character, in which all the evil passions known to the human race had full sway, entirely unrestrained by any sentiment of pity for human misery or respect for human life ; and even became insensible to the ties of consanguinity.

As a matter of policy it was always the custom of the first Lopez to render the people oblivious of their slavery and degradation by encouraging them to indulge in public amusements. Under Francia's reign, popular assemblages of all kinds were forbidden ; and when this restriction was removed by his successor, they thought it a great privilege, even under the closest surveillance of the police, to be permitted to meet, to dance, to race their horses, to tilt at the *sortija*, and to have public feasts and bull-fights. Several balls were accordingly given every year by authority of the government, to which only the better class of people were invited. Others of a more democratic character were given, generally in the open

air, in which all could participate. The occasions for these festivities were usually the anniversaries of the birthday of the President, the day of the patron saint of the capital, Asuncion, of the independence of the state, or of some other important event in the nation's history.

At all times of the year music was kept up at or near the barracks for several hours in the day. This custom existed in the time of the first Lopez. At three o'clock in the morning during the summer months, and four in the winter, the band would commence to play, and would keep it up for four or five hours without intermission. Towards evening the musicians were compelled to practise as many hours more. The band at the capital was very large, and the music was uniformly excellent, but the duties required of the performers on wind instruments were so severe that a great many young men were completely ruined in health by it. There was always music for any kind of a jubilee, whether it were a ball at the Club, a promenade through the streets, a serenade to Lopez or Madam Lynch, or a dance in the open air by the *peinetas de oro*.

The class of women called *peinetas de oro*, or golden combs, were of the poorer class, whose wealth consisted to a great extent in their jewelry. These women were not of the poorest class, but usually had some means of subsistence independent of menial labor, the most of them holding illicit relations with men who were engaged in business in the employ of the government. They constituted a very large part of the female community of Asuncion, and were less depraved and abandoned than women holding such relations usually are in other countries. Among their other jewels they have large old-fashioned shell combs richly mounted with fine gold elaborately worked into borders and flowers. Sometimes as much as three or four ounces of pure gold are worked up in the setting of one of these *peinetas de oro*. They were not, however, worn by the ladies of the higher class, and were never seen in the balls or other assemblages where the forms and customs of other countries were observed. This class frequently had

dances — or, as they were called, *tertulias* — at their own houses ; but in the times of rejoicing, as on national holidays, their performances were in the open air. In the later days of the Republic, balls for all classes were frequently given in the plaza in front of the Government House. On these occasions three distinct apartments would be fitted up for as many grades of people. The first would have seats around it and carpets covering the ground. In this apartment might be found the Vice-President, the Cabinet ministers, the Mayor of the Plaza and Chief of Police, and, of course, the better class of citizens with their wives and daughters. Besides these were the different mistresses of Lopez and his brothers. Next adjoining this apartment was another very like it, except that there were no carpets. This was for the *peinetas de oro*, such soldiers as had risen above the rank of a private, and artisans and others not of the class of peons. In this division, though



WATER-CARRIERS AND PEINETA DE ORO. — From a Photograph.

there were few of the female dancers that had not jewelry worth from three or four ounces to as many hundreds of dollars, yet the feet of every one were, and always had been, innocent of shoes. Men and women alike were barefoot. The next division was allotted to the poorest class, — to women who earned their subsistence by carrying water, by keeping little stands in the market, by domestic service, or in any way with little regard to decency or morality. The men that shared the dance with them were common soldiers, peons, or slaves. The three orders, however, all danced to the same music. The invitations to all were given by the police, and from them an invitation was an order. On one occasion our friends from Limpio, Anita and Conchita Casal, being in town,



ANITA AND CONCHITA CASAL.— From a Photograph.

went to view as spectators one of these out-door balls of the capital. They stood for some minutes at a distance, watch-

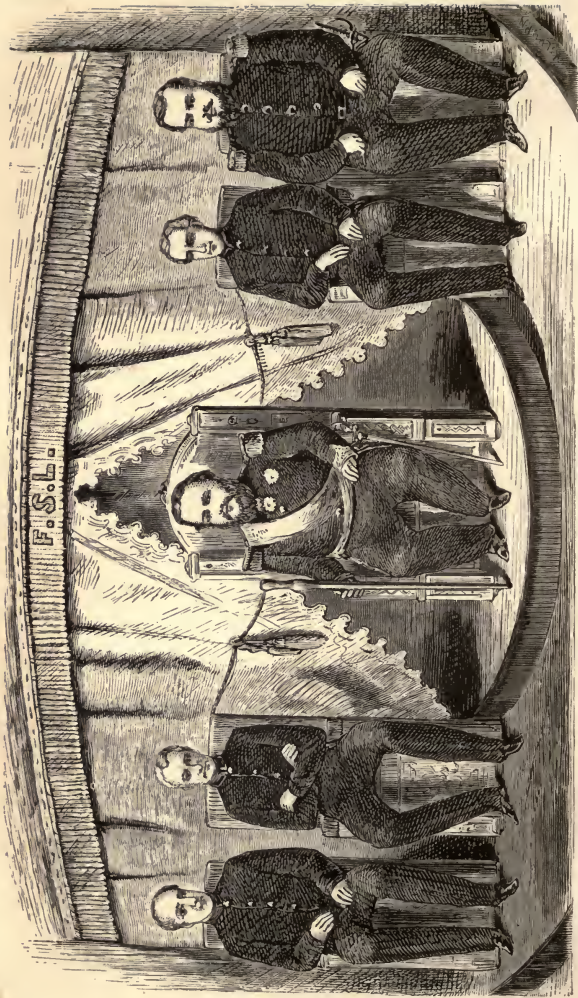
ing the scene, and hoping to escape observation. But the quick eye of a policeman observed them, and he asked them to enter the arena and join the dancers. They replied that they had not come to dance, but only to look on. "Go in and dance," said the patrol sternly, "or you go to the calaboose." This invitation was too strong to be resisted, and they went in, and with fear and trembling danced away till, seeing an opportunity to withdraw unobserved, they hied away like frightened deer.

Riding at the ring, or *sortija*, is an old Spanish amusement, and is practised in all parts of South America. Two upright posts are fixed in the ground about ten feet apart, with a cross-bar at the top some twelve feet from the ground. From this cross-bar a small ring of trifling value is loosely suspended, to become the property of him who, riding his horse at full gallop beneath it, shall carry it off on the point of his sword. There was always a band of music in attendance, that struck up a triumphant air when the feat was accomplished.

The festivities of all kinds were given on a more extensive and more expensive scale after the accession of the younger Lopez to power than they had ever been before. On the anniversary of his birthday next succeeding his election as President, the balls, bull-fights and races were kept up for a month. Just in the rear of the old palace, or *cabildo*, where had once been the channel of the river, but was now a broad level space, a circus, some sixty yards across, was built, with galleries some six feet from the ground running all around it, and commanding a view of the arena, which were divided into compartments, some of which were covered with cotton cloth to keep out the sun. A few of them were fitted up with curtains of bright and striking colors for the use of Lopez, his mistresses, his Cabinet ministers, officers and their families. The people seemed to enjoy these exhibitions and pastimes exceedingly, and turned out in vast numbers to witness them. As bull-fights, however, they were but burlesques on that barbarous amusement. The bulls, generally, were not bulls at all, but oxen, and so tame that they could hardly be provoked to rush

at the *picador*, or resent with any spirit his pricks and jibes. The multitude, however, enjoyed the sport of seeing the poor animals stabbed or goaded till some one of the *matadores*, more bold than the rest, would manage to plant his dagger in the neck just back of the horns, when the poor brute would fall quivering to the earth. At this feat a shout would go up from the crowd, the entrance-way would be opened, and a man with a lasso would ride in and drag out the helpless beast, to be skinned and dressed, and his flesh given as food for the soldiers. Had it been the object of Lopez to brutalize his people, and to render them the willing instruments of the cruel acts that marked his subsequent career, he could have devised nothing to accomplish his object more effective than this. Neither courage nor agility were required in the arena when such tame cattle were to be tortured, and it would seem that there could be no object in such displays but to accustom people, young and old, male and female, to take delight in witnessing the infliction of pain.

The first of the balls given this year (1863), on the anniversary of the President's birthday, was held in the old Government House. This, as was customary, was given in the name of the officers of the army and navy. Though given in their name, it was at the government expense, as, with two or three exceptions, not one of the officers of high grade in the country could have raised fifty dollars without pawning his clothes. They had scarcely any salary, and being almost all of them taken from the lowest class, they had no fortune of their own. Their uniforms were furnished by the state, and were rich and elegant. For them to have given the ball and banquet on this occasion would have taken all their salaries for at least a year. But the great ball of the season was to be in the Club. A step towards imperialism was to be publicly made on that occasion. The dancing-hall was refitted and refurnished, and at the upper end, where the President and his ministers were accustomed to sit, a raised semicircular platform was erected. This platform was about twenty feet across, and had an elevation of about a foot from the floor. Upon



VENANCIO LOPEZ.

BERGES.

THE THRONE.—LOPEZ AND HIS CABINET.

SANCHEZ.

GONZALES.

this was placed another of about two yards across, and raised above the main platform some ten or twelve inches, and on this was a large arm-chair gorgeously trimmed with damask and gold as a seat for the President *in esse* and the Emperor *in posse*. At each hand, on the lower platform, stood two other arm-chairs, less richly decorated, for the Vice-President and the Cabinet ministers. Above, and directly over the head of the President of the Republic, was a semicircular frame, corresponding in size with the smaller platform below, faced with purple velvet about fifteen inches wide and with deep rich fringe pendent from it. Heavy damask curtains were draped so as to fall in the rear of the ministerial chairs, while wrought in gold in the broad velvet facing of the canopy overhead were the letters F. S. L.

About this time the word had been passed to certain officials that no one was ever to sit in the presence of his Excellency when he was himself standing. A hint to that effect from an officer in uniform was sufficient to insure obedience among Paraguayans; but no official order was given to that effect, and the foreigners were not advised that for the future any such marks of homage would be required. They were left to be instructed when they should commit a breach of the new rule. Some Englishmen who had long been in the country were the first to offend. Never having been accustomed to observe, on previous occasions, whether the President was standing or sitting, they seated themselves in the lower part of the hall, not observing that the President was standing on the first step of the platform in front of the throne. They were quietly informed that it was not permitted to sit while his Excellency was standing, and before the next ball was given it was known among all the foreigners that respect for the President demanded they should never sit in his presence unless he was also sitting. Other signs of an intention to demand more abject obsequiousness than had before prevailed were also to be observed. Whenever the President was in sight, everybody was expected to be uncovered. The guard in attendance upon him was increased, and more formality in approaching

him was observed. Even then I saw that these changes in matters of etiquette and deportment were but preliminary to a change in the form of government, and I took pains to show my disapprobation of them by openly disregarding them. It may not have been diplomatic, and certainly was not courtier-like, but I took a sort of malicious pleasure, when everybody else in the room was standing, to sit in a conspicuous place, indifferent whether the President were standing or not. These offences were laid up against me, to be brought up years afterwards.

Another change in the etiquette of the court was introduced about the same time with the prohibition to sit while his Excellency was standing. At the balls, which the President honored by his presence, I observed that the dancers, in making up their sets for quadrilles, "lancers," or other square dances, formed them diagonally across the hall instead of in figures corresponding to the form of the room, as had always previously been the custom. When I asked, in my innocence and ignorance of imperial etiquette, what was the meaning of this innovation, I was told, in a whisper, that it was not proper for any one to turn his back on the President. Hence the figures were so formed that, when his Excellency was seated on the throne or standing in front of it, no one would be forced to the indecorum of standing with his back towards him.

These changes, that were understood by all to be but initial steps towards the empire, were made before the war commenced and while yet Lopez was at the capital. Two years later, on my return from the United States, I found that, under the direction of his mistress, the people were subjected to still more degrading observances. As Lopez could not be present at the public balls, a large picture of him was always placed in front of the throne, to which the same respect must be shown as to the great Lopez in person. The quadrilles must still be formed diagonally, as it was disrespectful for any one to turn his back on the picture of his Excellency. Whenever I saw this picture thus displayed as an object of reverence, if not of worship, I could not but think of Gesler

and William Tell. But the spirit of the Paraguayan people was so completely broken, that there remained no hope to them that a deliverance from their degradation could ever come from themselves.

The great ball of the 24th of July, the President's birthday, when the new throne was to be inaugurated, was announced as to be given by the citizens of Asuncion. It was intended to be the grandest affair of the kind ever known in Paraguay. It was destined, however, to be a dismal failure, and I fear that I was, unwittingly, the cause of it. To the court or official balls in Paraguay nothing in the way of a uniform or court dress had ever been required for admission. It had, however, always been the custom of the agents of foreign governments, diplomatic and consular, to attend in uniform. The invitations generally expressed on their face the object or occasion of the assemblage, and if it were to be a formal, official affair, to be attended by the President and his Cabinet, then people who had uniforms were expected to wear them. On this occasion, however, the ball was given by the citizens to testify their joy at the return of his Excellency's birthday. I therefore told my colleague (I had but one), the Oriental Minister, and the different consuls, that as I had received no notice that the ball was to be of an official character, and attended by the President or his Cabinet, I should assume the contrary, and go in citizen's dress. They all followed my example, though reluctantly, as from common report they all knew, and I knew, that it was intended to be not only official, but gorgeous and magnificent, and that his Excellency was to occupy the new throne for the first time. We accordingly all went in a body in plain evening dress. We arrived a little late, and not till after the President, having been seated on the throne for a while, had risen and was standing in front of it. Making our way through the densely packed company, we approached to make our bows, express our felicitations, and fall back to join in the dance or converse with the *señoritas*. As we approached, we could see that a scowl was on his face and that he was in a towering passion. To our salute he re-

turned but a grudging nod. The ball, which to that moment had been as lively and cheerful as usual when he was present, instantly became as sombre and chilling as a funeral. The dancers moved about in a manner as measured and solemn as though they expected the company was to be decimated for execution before morning. Our coming as we did had cast a shadow on the whole affair. The lack of a few brass buttons had ruined the ball. There was no mirth or hilarity after our arrival. The President left early, for his wrath was not modified, though some of the offenders sought to draw him into conversation ; but he would not be comforted. He had been touched in a tender point in his first open step towards monarchy, and he had no remedy. The parties who had offended him were not amenable to his power. After his Excellency had withdrawn, and the guests had partaken of the elegant banquet that had been prepared, they withdrew to their homes, anxiously expecting the developments of the next day. But the next day brought nothing new. On reflection, the President doubtless saw that he had made a silly and foolish exhibition of ill-temper, and thought the less said about the whole affair the more it would be to his credit.

A few nights afterwards another ball was given under similar circumstances. But, having been so rudely treated at the last one, we now determined to stand for our rights, and go in the same costume as when we had offended so grievously. On this occasion the President was as bland and courteous as I had ever seen him, and I took occasion to ask his Minister for Foreign Affairs, José Berges, why we of the consular and diplomatic bodies were not advised beforehand whether or not the various festivals to which we were invited were to be of an official character and attended by the President and his Cabinet. Such an important question as that he could not answer without orders, and therefore he deferred his reply till the next day, when he sent me a formal and verbose note in which, after a great deal of circumlocution, he said that in reply to my question of the previous evening he was happy to inform me that for the future he would advise me, on appli-

cation, whether or not any festival which I might be inclined to attend were to be of a formal and official character, and honored by the presence of his Excellency the President, and thus relieve me of any doubt whether I should go in uniform or not. To this I replied in substance, that it was not my business to go to him to inquire what clothes I should wear, but that it was his business, in sending out invitations, to advise their recipients of the character of the entertainment, and if that were done, I was disposed, in lesser things as well as in those of more importance, to conform to the usages and customs of the country whenever I could do so with propriety and self-respect. The reply to this was, that in future the Department of Foreign Affairs would advise the deans of the diplomatic and consular bodies whenever any festival, to which they might be invited, was to be of an official character and attended by the President and his ministers.

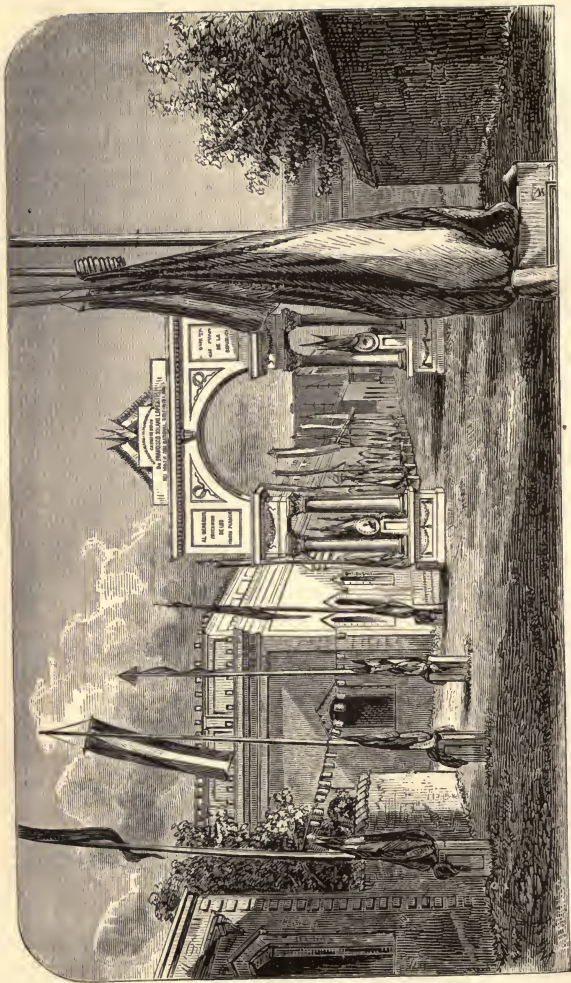
The *clothes question*, which has given rise to so much discussion between American ministers and the courts to which they have been accredited, was thus disposed of for the time in Paraguay. Lopez, however, was greatly ashamed of the whole affair. In this case he admitted himself in the wrong; the only time, probably, he ever did so in his life. He even went so far as to give another ball some time after, and to send notice to me and to the dean of the consuls that it was not to be an official affair, but that he should himself attend, though not in full uniform, and his ministers who were not military men would go in citizen's dress. He was greatly afraid that his boorishness at the first ball would be complained of by other governments. It was always his particular ambition to be thought a very pattern of deportment, and as far as possible removed from the rude manners of the gaucho or of his own Indian ancestors; and when, some months after, he learned that the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, M. Drouyn de Lhuys, had absolutely refused to grant an interview to his *Chargé d'Affaires* in Paris, Don Candido Bareiro, he was for a time greatly concerned lest the reason of it should be alleged to be his own rude treatment of the French consul

and other representatives of foreign governments. The French consul, however, when questioned on the matter by Minister Berges, replied that he had thought so little of the affair at the time of its occurrence that he had never alluded to it in his despatches to his government. .

On the occasion of the next birthday of the President, the festivities were continued so long that a stranger would have supposed that balls and bull-fights, races, and tilting at the *sortija*, were the employments to which the people devoted themselves. The joyful demonstrations commenced with a grand ball given at the new railroad station, in which a large dancing-hall had been magnificently fitted up, and they were continued in one form or another from the 24th of July till the 10th of September. As many balls were given at the Club as there were different occupations of people. The citizens of Asuncion gave one, the members of the Cabinet another, the officers of the army another, and the officers of the navy still another. The merchants of the capital gave one; the foreign employees of the government gave one, and the judges another. It was expected that the same people would attend each of these, as whoever was eligible to one was eligible to them all. As a banquet was given at each of these balls, several days must intervene between them, and the intervening nights were given up to the *peinetas de oro* and the water-carriers. Night after night a great multitude was collected in the Plaza del Gobierno; and whether tired, or hungry, or sick, they must join in the dance and keep it up at least till the small hours of the morning. They must rejoice, they must dance and sing and shout, for they were celebrating the birthday of the great Lopez.

One peculiar feature of these festivities in honor of the President's birthday was the general illumination of the principal squares of the city. For several days before they commenced, a large force was set at work to decorate the city. Triumphal arches were erected in different places. These were of light framework, and covered with white cotton cloth, on which were displayed in large letters a great number of





TRIUMPHAL ARCH.

sentiments, all eulogistic of the great Lopez. The Club also was adorned with similar texts and mottoes, and paper lanterns by the hundred were placed along the street, each one of which had on it a sentence laudatory of the great hero. The ingenuity of the people in framing so many expressions on the same barren subject was wonderful. All the great and good qualities they had ever heard applied to any and everybody else were blazoned on arch or wall or transparency. Lopez, the great man, the unequalled warrior, the father of his people, the defender of his country, the great pacificator, the promoter of national progress, the champion of independence, the guardian of liberty, the dauntless hero, and every other form of flattery and adulation, were paraded in the streets through which his Excellency was to pass. But no word of honor or approval was ever permitted to any other living person. Occasionally there would be an allusion to the services of Don Carlos Antonio Lopez, but never was the name of any of his officers, no matter how great their services and sacrifices, allowed to appear in his newspaper or in any public place. So long as they lived he was jealous of them, but when killed in battle he had nothing more to fear from them, and he would order them great funerals, at which all who were able to do so were required to pronounce funeral orations, in which the dead were to be praised and honored for having fallen in sustaining the banners of the great, the daring, the matchless Lopez.

After every grade and class of people in Asuncion had shown their loyalty and devotion to Lopez by balls, games, and festivals of various kinds, it was announced that the ladies of the capital were anxious to manifest their patriotism and celebrate the birthday of the President. This was but the precursor of many other testimonials given by the ladies of the country to Lopez. They were all managed in the same way. Madam Lynch would first suggest to the wives of two or three foreigners who were trembling for their lives that such a demonstration would probably be acceptable to his Excellency, and the poor women would at once take the hint

that they must take the initiative in the matter or evil would befall them. They would accordingly go around and notify others that they were expected to take part and contribute to the expense. None would dare refuse, and hence such a demonstration was no sooner proposed than its success was certain.

On this occasion the hall of the Club was decorated with unusual magnificence, and the street from the President's house to the Club was a perfect blaze of light. A magnificent arch covered with mottoes expressive of the genius and merits of Lopez was erected between them, and the way on each side was lined with transparencies all testifying to his greatness. The hall was closely packed with the younger people of the best families in the country, and the young ladies were more severely taxed than they had ever been before, that their toilets might correspond with the general magnificence of the occasion. At this time there chanced to be an unusual number of strangers in Asuncion, including as many as four ministers and five or six consuls, more of both than at any time before or since. The approach of his Excellency was heralded by the firing of rockets, and a brilliant display of fireworks in the Plaza; and as he entered the hall, accompanied by his ministers, a passage-way was made for him, good care being taken that it should be lined on both sides with the most beautiful young ladies in the room. Bowing his way to the upper end of the hall, he stopped when he reached the foot of the throne, and facing the crowd, a chorus of female singers commenced singing an ode in his praise. When this was concluded, one of the young ladies stepped forward bearing a crown of laurel in her hand, and pronounced a discourse eulogizing Lopez as the greatest, the bravest, and best of mankind. She was succeeded by about a dozen others, each of whom delivered the little speech that had been prepared for her, and which had beforehand been approved by Lopez. Among the young ladies thus privileged were two or three of his cast-off mistresses. When all had concluded their discourses, Lopez replied to them, expressing his surprise and gratification at

such demonstrations of patriotism and loyalty. But he did not take it as at all personal to himself. No ; he accepted it as proof that the ladies of Paraguay would sustain him in maintaining the independence, the honor, and the dignity of the country, and that thus encouraged he would go on in the task imposed upon him by the office that the people had conferred upon him.

Among the crowd in attendance on this occasion were several whose nearest and dearest relatives were at that very moment in prison ; and I well recollect the sad face of a lady who was one of the chorus, as, with a breaking heart, she repressed her tears and forced her tongue to swell the strains in praise of Lopez. Poor woman ! Her husband for some cause known only to Lopez had been thrown into prison a few weeks before and loaded with fetters, from which he had been freed by death but two days before ; but she must nevertheless attend, and join in the chant glorifying the murderer of her husband.

The speeches and singing were followed by dancing, and on this occasion, for the first and only time, Lopez took part in a quadrille. For the first dance the ladies were to choose their partners, each one being before advised whom she was to select. Of course no one could be found sufficiently elevated in character, position, and family to select the President, except his own sister. He was therefore selected for a partner by Doña Inocencia, the wife of General Barrios, while such other ladies as were supposed to approach more nearly to her lofty station were detailed to dance with the members of the Cabinet and the ministers of other countries. Madam Lynch was not permitted to enter the royal set. Until some time after this she was obliged to keep in the background on public occasions ; and though present at this ball, Lopez did not venture to insult the foreign guests by bringing her face to face with them in so public a manner. Besides the foreigners, the first set was composed of Lopez and his Vice-President, Sanchez ; his Minister for Foreign Affairs, Berge ; his Minister of Government, Gonzales ; and his brother Ve-

nancio, then Minister of War and Marine. Berges and Gonzales were old men at that time. But they were to die, as well as was Don Venancio, an ignominious and horrible death at the hands of Lopez ; and of all the females who participated in the festivities of that night, there is not probably now, six years later, one in twenty yet alive. Many were flogged and executed, others expired under torture or from drudgery and starvation in the camp, and many died of exposure, hardship, and privation in the mountains to which they had been driven by the same remorseless despot who had forced them to chant his praises and crown him with laurel while yet they had homes and a hope of deliverance from his terrible power.

CHAPTER VIII.

Discussion with Lopez. — Return from the United States. — Rear-Admiral S. W. Godon. — First Visit to General Mitre. — A Repulse from Admiral Tamandaré — Mitre's Subterfuges. — A Perplexing Dilemma. — The Allies invade Paraguay. — The Brazilian Special Envoy. — His Attempts at Bribery. — Protest against further Delay. — Instructions from Washington.

IN my last interview with President Lopez previous to my⁷ return to the United States, I argued with him to the best of my ability that it was his true policy to allow the officers and crew of the Marques de Olinda, and the new President of Matto Grosso, Carneiro de Campos, to leave the country. I endeavored* to convince him that by so doing the questions at issue between him and Brazil would be much more easy of adjustment. The seizure of the vessel would not provoke either the government or the people of Brazil to put forth the same energies in a war as would the detention of his Majesty's subjects. If the two nations were already at war, as Lopez said they were, it was not good policy for him to do any acts that should tend to unite the whole Brazilian people against him. He did not seem inclined to listen to these suggestions, and said the war was to be but a brief campaign,^x and would be all over before I should be back from the United States. I was anxious, not only that these unfortunate people should be allowed to depart, but that some mode of adjustment might be left open so that the war should not assume that character which I even then foresaw it must unless Lopez would show some respect to the laws of nations. Having seized them in a manner so barbarous and in such utter defiance of the laws of nations, it was plain that Brazil could not, without incurring the contempt of the whole civilized

world, treat with him as the head of a civilized nation, and that, cruel despot as he was, he would sacrifice the life of every Paraguayan sooner than relinquish his own power.

But we did not agree, as he felt confident that Brazil would be glad to offer terms to him as soon as he should be willing to listen to them. Accordingly I took my departure for the United States on the 16th of January, 1865; and it was my expectation, if I should return at all, to be back there in the course of seven or eight months. I did not, however, leave New York till the 6th of September of the same year, and in the ordinary way of travel I should have reached Asuncion about the middle of November. But a series of delays and annoyances occurred that were persisted in by the allies so long that it was not till a year later I again set foot in Paraguay. The history of that year will be given very briefly; and I would gladly omit it entirely, as in relating it I shall be compelled to expose the conduct of an official of high rank in the American Navy. Still, as this delay had an important bearing on the conduct of the war, and seriously affected my relations with President Lopez, it is necessary to give it as a key, or explanation, of many things that transpired subsequently.

On my way to the Plata I reached Rio de Janeiro on the 3d of October, where I learned that my predictions to President Lopez in regard to the slow progress of the war had been fulfilled. I also learned that all communication between the mouth of the river and Paraguay had ceased; and that, as no merchant vessels were permitted by the allies to ascend the river and pass within the lines of Lopez, it would be impossible for me to go to my post without the aid of an American gunboat. Fortunately, as I then thought, we had a large squadron on that station, with nothing to do but be ready on occasion to give protection to our citizens and to vindicate the national character. The squadron was under the command of Acting Rear-Admiral S. W. Godon. I conferred with him in regard to the situation in which I should probably find myself on my arrival at the river, and advised him that

without the aid of a vessel from his squadron I should not be able to reach my post. Under such circumstances his duty was clear, and so he understood it, for he advised me that he should soon proceed to the river with his squadron, and, if he found the situation as I suspected, should himself, on his arrival, detach a vessel to take me to Paraguay. This being arranged, I proceeded to Buenos Aires, where I awaited for some six weeks the arrival of the Admiral. When he did at last arrive, I found, greatly to my chagrin and to the mortification of all the Americans in the Plata, he was not disposed to help me forward to my destination. I was therefore compelled to make the effort to reach Paraguay without the aid of a national vessel. I had already lost more than two months waiting for him to redeem his promise, but he seemed insensible to the scandal and contempt that his conduct was bringing on the naval service, and I could not wait till the government could be advised of his strange perversity and send out instructions to him. I must therefore make the attempt to reach my post as best I could.

The singular conduct of the Admiral throughout this whole affair having been made the subject of a Congressional investigation, and condemned in terms of great severity in the report of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, I shall pass over the frivolous excuses that he alleged for not complying with my request, and shall only relate so much of his connection with my detention as was made use of by the allies in justification of their conduct in resisting my passage through their lines until they saw themselves on the verge of war with the United States. The history of the whole affair will serve to show the truth of the old adage of the beggar on horseback, and how, when the command of a naval squadron in distant waters is intrusted to an incompetent commander, the greatest interests of the country may be jeopardized, and the nation may be so compromised as to be compelled to declare war in vindication of rights that have been invaded with the approval and connivance of officials holding high rank in its own service.

It might not be a very dignified proceeding for a duly accredited minister of a government hitherto considered respectable to go to the head-quarters of one of the belligerents and beg permission, like a tourist or a pedler, to pass the military lines, when it was publicly known that we had on the station a large squadron, consisting of one First-Rate, serving as a pleasure-yacht for the admiral, and several light-draught gunboats, any one of which could at little expense and no inconvenience take him to his post in a manner consistent with the national dignity. But there was no alternative; I must obey orders.

Leaving my family, therefore, in Buenos Aires, I set forth on a river packet for Corrientes, which town is situate about thirty miles from where the allied armies were encamped. Thence I made my way immediately to the head-quarters of General Mitre, Commander-in-Chief of the allied forces and President of the Argentine Republic. I made known to him that my object in coming to his camp was to advise him I was on my way back to my post of official duty, to which I could return only by passing through his military lines. His reply was that, in his opinion, I had a right to pass through them, but it was not a matter for him alone to decide. Though Commander-in-Chief of the army, the passage of a foreign minister through the lines was a question to be treated by all the parties to the alliance. As soon, therefore, as he could communicate with his government at Buenos Aires he had no doubt that it would immediately secure the concurrence of the Brazilian special minister and of the government of Montevideo in his views, and that, so soon as he could learn of their joint approval, he would be enabled to tender me all the facilities for reaching Paraguay that national courtesy and comity could demand. A very brief delay only was asked for certain forms to be complied with, and, if I would consent to that, then all embarrassment would be avoided. I had no alternative but to submit, which I did the more willingly as in the time required for him to get the assent of his allies I could return for my family, and take them with me to Paraguay.

Returning to Buenos Aires I went directly to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Señor Elizalde, and stated the result of my interview with President Mitre. The Minister assented to all that his chief had said, and added that the Brazilian special envoy concurred in their views, and on my return to Corrientes every facility for reaching Paraguay would be extended to me. In conformity with these expressions he offered me a letter to President Mitre, requesting him, in the name of the allies, to grant all the means of reaching my post that he had promised.

Thus armed, I started again for Corrientes, this time with my family. The first night, the steamer in which we had taken passage run so hard and fast aground that it was found impossible to get her off again without discharging her cargo. Another steamer, coming along the next day, took us off and carried us as far as Rosario, though we were obliged to leave our baggage behind us. From Rosario we proceeded immediately to Corrientes, where, after waiting for some three weeks, our trunks and provisions at last arrived. I hurried at once to head-quarters, which had been moved to Paso de la Patria since my former visit to the camp. I took passage on an English transport for this place, where, on landing, I met the Argentine Minister of War, General Gelly y Obes. By him I was informed that Mitre had not yet moved his own quarters, but, being indisposed, had remained behind the army when it moved in near the river. He would, however, advise him of my return, and arrange it so that I could have an interview with him on the succeeding day. The next day Gelly y Obes came on board the transport to inform me that Mitre was still indisposed at his camp, and that any business I had with him could be arranged equally well with the admiral of the allied squadron, Baron Tamandaré, and he offered me his boat to take me to the flag-ship.

I accordingly went to confer with the Admiral. I was received by him with civility, but told that I positively should not pass through his squadron. He said his orders

were to permit no person whatever to pass his blockade, and he should obey instructions. He said, too, that his government had the right to issue and enforce such an order, and that while he was in Buenos Aires Admiral Godon had admitted such right. I denied that Admiral Godon had any authority in the matter, or that the opinion of a naval commander had anything to do with my detention. The Admiral then said he should take the responsibility of stopping me, and then — to quote my own words, as given in my official account of this interview to the Secretary of State — “the Admiral expressed his regret that his orders and duty imposed on him the necessity of doing what might seem to me an act of discourtesy, and said that anything that I might require I could have ; he would place a steamer at my disposal to return with me to Buenos Aires, and bring me back at my pleasure. He also said that if I wanted any money during my detention I could have it. I told him I did not want his money, nor did I want a steamer to go to Buenos Aires, but I did want to go to Paraguay, for it was there my government had ordered me. With this result — unsatisfactory, I believe, on both sides — I left the Admiral and returned to the transport steamer on which I was staying.” He added that it could make but little difference to me whether I went through his military lines or not, as he should pass Humaita with his squadron within fifteen days, after which the war would be virtually over, and the river open to Asuncion. As I left the ship the fleet band was paraded on deck, and though I doubt not it discoursed fine music, meant as a courtesy to me, I could not appreciate it. I had been insulted, and was powerless to resent the indignity, and doubt if ever the “Rogues’ March” fell more heavily on the ears of a deserter than did the national air of Brazil on mine as I turned my back on Tamandaré and his fellow-officers. But months after I was destined to hear the music of that band again and under other circumstances.

I returned again to the transport vessel, and, learning that President Mitre was encamped near the river, I found my way as soon as possible to his head-quarters. I presented to the

Commander-in-Chief the letter of his Minister of Foreign Relations, which letter, after stating that it was the duty of the allied powers to provide me with the facilities necessary to pass through the allied lines and into those of the Paraguayans, concluded by saying the Minister expects of the President "that he will be pleased to give the necessary orders, in order that the promise made by the government shall be duly fulfilled."

This letter, which on its face showed that his government was committed to withdraw all hindrance to my passage, seemed greatly to disturb and embarrass President Mitre. He said he would go at once and see Admiral Tamandaré, General Osorio, and others of the higher grade of officers, and have the order of Tamandaré so modified that I could pass through. So, ordering some horses, he gave me his large milk-white war-horse to ride, and mounting an inferior animal himself we rode to the landing, where we dismounted, he to go on board the flag-ship, and I to return to the transport. Before parting, however, he said he would advise me of the result of the interview in the course of an hour or two, so that I could return to Corrientes the same day. He did not, however, succeed in converting Tamandaré to his views, and sent me a note advising me that he could not give me an answer on that afternoon, but would, on the following day, address me a letter at Corrientes. I therefore went back to the latter place to await his answer. It came, as promised; but, as before, it was no answer to my question. He could not yet tell me whether or not I could pass through his military lines. The circumstances had changed since my first visit to his camp, and he must again refer the question to his government, to be decided in conjunction with its allies. He would at once refer the matter to them, and as soon as he could get an answer he would advise me of the result.

What then was to be done? I suspected that the allies did not intend to allow me to pass their lines under any circumstances, if they could stop me in any way short of bringing on a conflict with the United States. I knew that our

admiral was a convenient instrument in their hands, justifying them in their duplicity and encouraging them in the indignities they were putting upon a diplomatic agent of his own country. I could not turn back and return to the United States, for that would have been a concession that the allies and Admiral Godon were in the right and I in the wrong. I was eight thousand miles from home, and I had no colleague on the South Atlantic coast with whom to consult. Our ministers, both at Buenos Aires and Rio Janeiro, had returned home on leave of absence, and the only United States official of high grade in the vicinity had repudiated my pretensions and taken counsel with the allies to detain me. The people in Corrientes could not understand why the minister of a great and powerful nation should be thus hanging on in the rear of the allied army like a camp follower, and I heard of numerous discussions whether or not I was an accredited minister or an impostor. They had never heard before, nor, probably, had anybody else, of a minister so situated,—unable to get to his post, while his government had a large squadron lying idle in the vicinity.

But disagreeable and galling as was the situation, not only to myself but to the pride of every American in that part of the world, I could do nothing, and must wait till my own government should come to my relief, either by adopting the views of the admiral and the allies and recalling me, or by sending me the means of forcing the blockade.

In the mean while the allies were prosecuting the war after the Brazilian fashion. Fort Itapiru, with its two guns, situate just above Paso de la Patria, still held out defiantly, while the huge squadron of the allies lay a league or two below, bombarding at long range. At this time Lopez's entire army was just in the rear of the fort, one half of his troops at least being sick with the measles. The disease was so general and the means of taking care of the sick so scanty, that twenty thousand men, or more than a third of the Paraguayan forces, as I was afterwards informed, died there and then. The fort stood on a point of a rock jutting into the river, with deep

water on two sides of it; so that had the whole squadron advanced, firing at the fort as it moved, it would have silenced almost instantly its two pieces, and, turning the point, had the whole Paraguayan army directly exposed to its guns; and if then the transports had followed with troops, the entire army, with the exception of Lopez, his staff, and mistresses, that always kept out of danger, might have been easily captured. But instead of attacking in this way, Tamandaré kept his squadron at a safe distance, *bombarding furiously for twenty-eight days.* x

During this time the measles had run its course, and Lopez withdrew his army towards Humaita. As soon as it was seen that the Paraguayans had retired, Tamandaré, with characteristic valor, advised Mitre that he was ready to assist him to pass the troops to the Paraguayan side of the river. Mitre, who had long been chafing at the Admiral's mode of attack, at once embarked his whole force, and they all crossed the river without catching sight of a single Paraguayan. Itapiru was taken when no one was left to defend it, and it was at once published to the world that the allies had crossed the Parana in the face of the whole Paraguayan army, that with desperate valor opposed their landing and disputed the ground inch by inch till, overcome by the heroic onslaught of the Brazilians, a mere remnant escaped, with Lopez at their head, to the intrenchments at Humaita.

On my first arrival in Buenos Aires, when it was taken for granted that I should go up the river in an American gunboat, to which they did not pretend that they had any right to object, I had an interview with the Brazilian special envoy, Señor Octaviano. On this occasion he told me that it was not necessary for me to wait for an American gunboat, as, if I would accept it, a Brazilian steamer should be specially detailed to take me to Paraguay. I declined his offer for several reasons, among others alleging that if I were to go on a Brazilian vessel Lopez would suspect me of being in the interest of the allies, and would always regard me with such suspicion that any influence I might otherwise have with him would be lost. Some weeks afterwards, when I found that an American gun-

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boat would not go up, I addressed a note to the Minister, intimating to him that I should accept his offer of several weeks before, which he had repeated to me once or twice afterwards. In the mean while he had seen Admiral Godon, and was so thoroughly converted to the opinion that an American Minister had no rights in foreign countries, and might be treated with indignity without danger of offending the government, that he not only did not fulfil his promise previously made, but had not the courtesy to answer my letter.

Some months after this, in June, 1866, while I was waiting with dreary impatience in Corrientes General Mitre's answer to my repeated request, Octaviano came up to that place and established his head-quarters in the town. The war had dragged on so much longer than had been anticipated when Tamandaré offered to give me a steamer and all the money I wanted, that Octaviano seemed to think that if I could not be prevailed upon to keep quiet, serious difficulties with the United States might arise. He therefore thought to make use of the argument so often used by Brazilians, but which had been so unsuccessfully employed by Tamandaré. He came one day, — it was the 4th of July, 1866, — and, after a brief conversation on general topics, told me he was aware I was very unpleasantly situated where I was, and that, as the difficulties in my way had all been caused by the allies, it was but right that they should recompense me liberally for all the inconvenience to which through their action I was exposed. He said that his proposition was to be strictly confidential, and I might have no hesitation in accepting it, as, if our circumstances were reversed, and he was in the United States, he should not hesitate in accepting such an offer from our government. I told him I could not entertain any such proposition, but that I should respect his confidence. He had been more cautious and diplomatic than Tamandaré, who made his offer openly and without indicating in any manner that he thought there could be any insult in offering a bribe.

Our conversation being interrupted by the arrival of a

third party, Octaviano took his leave. He was then in an exceedingly infirm state of health; and as he stood in front of my door, and looked up and down the street as if debating which way to go, he seemed to me, though the envoy of a great empire, whose check would be honored for millions, to be an object of pity and unspeakable contempt.

Soon after this Octaviano returned to Buenos Aires, and when he next met Admiral Godon the two friends compared notes, and the incidents of the confidential interview were revealed. When I learned of this casually through some of the subordinate officers in the navy, I was exonerated from regarding it longer on my part as confidential. I, however, never made use of Octaviano's name in connection with the affair till the whole story was reluctantly admitted by Godon, before the Investigating Committee of Congress.*

In the mean time weeks passed away, and I received no

* "Q. Did he (Octaviano) ever allude to the offer of money made by Admiral Tamandaré?

"A. No, not by Admiral Tamandaré, but he did allude to an affair of money.

"Q. Made by whom?

"A. Not by Admiral Tamandaré.

"By Mr. Washburn:—

"Q. To me?

"A. Yes, sir. Would you like me to state anything more?

"Mr. Washburn. I am willing to have you state it.

"Admiral Godon. I will state all he did say.

"Mr. Washburn. I would like to hear it.

"Admiral Godon. I said to Mr. Octaviano that I did not see anything in that letter that he might not have answered; he said, 'What was I to offer to him? What was I to give him? He did not ask for a vessel, but simply said he left it to me to determine what to do.' I said, 'Well, why did you not offer him to go up there?' He said, 'I could not offer that, because that had been refused by General Mitre. But it left the impression upon my mind that I must do something. I could not answer the letter; I had seen Mr. Washburn before; he was in Corrientes. He complained of the expense, of the annoyance, trouble, and that the very fact of his having assisted the Minister made this thing of immense expense to him. What could I think of in regard to that? I said I will lend you any amount of money; it is a matter which you can do; I have control of it; it is there, and I can do it. Well, Mr. Washburn said no, it was not that.' He said afterwards that he felt that perhaps that was not the way he ought to do this thing. He sent a person of rank and position to offer him the money.

"Q. Did he say the money was accepted?

"A. No, sir; it was not. I said to Mr. Octaviano, 'Why, you surprise me;

notice from Mitre of the action of his government and its allies in regard to my going through to Paraguay. I wrote a letter intimating that sufficient time had passed for him to learn of their decision, and saying I impatiently awaited his answer. He replied without delay, that, for reasons unknown to him, he had received nothing on the subject from his government; but he would write again and demand immediate attention to the matter. Again weeks elapsed, and I got nothing more from Mitre; and again I went to visit him at his head-quarters, that were then on Paraguayan soil, near what was called the Estero Bellaco. Polite and courteous as ever, General Mitre protested his friendly intentions and his profound regret that his government had not replied to his repeated demand that it should, concurrently with its allies, relieve him from the responsibility of my longer detention. But a reply was now daily, even hourly, expected, and as soon as it should be received he would immediately give me notice. At any rate, I might depend on hearing from him in a very few days. With words like these, the value of which I had learned too well how to appreciate, I returned to Corrientes. There I waited again for some two weeks longer, when I received a visit from the private secretary of Mitre, who had been sent by his chief to see me and explain why it was that he had not sent me sooner the promised answer to my long-delayed demand. But the secretary brought no other message than that Mitre would give me a final answer so soon as the Brazilian special envoy, Señor Octaviano, who was already on his way back up the river, should reach his camp. If I would only hold my peace for a few days longer, all would be satisfactorily arranged. As I could not help myself, I was obliged to yield to this request, and possess myself in such patience as I could command.

did Mr. Washburn say anything?' Mr. Octaviano said no; that he would not accept it.

"*Mr. Washburn.* In my testimony the other day I said that another high official had offered me money, but I did not say who it was. I can now say that it was Minister Octaviano, because it has come up in this way." — *Testimony before Congressional Investigating Committee*, p. 105.

The Brazilian Minister soon arrived, as expected, and proceeded directly to the army head-quarters. But no answer came from Mitre ; and after waiting for some ten days, I wrote him a long letter, reciting his acts of duplicity and words of prevarication, and concluded with a protest in the following words : " It is with extreme regret that I find myself compelled to speak, after so long a delay, of my detention in this place, and to enter, as I now most earnestly do, my protest against it. I protest against the detention as a violation of the laws of nations and of all diplomatic usages and courtesies. I protest against the detention as unnecessary and unlawful in itself, and I protest against the manner in which it has been effected. If it were your purpose to thwart the wishes of my government, and prevent me from doing what it had ordered me to do, I certainly had a right to know it long before this. I protest against the repeated intimations and assurances I have from time to time received, that within a few days a final answer should be given me, when now nearly six months have passed, and such answer has not yet been received."

This protest was despatched on the 22d July, 1866, and on the 25th my long and eagerly desired instructions from the Secretary of State arrived. In terms curt and explicit, Mr. Seward expressed his surprise and indignation at the conduct of the allies. He entered into no argument to prove they were in the wrong, nor did he consent to be governed by the superior authority of Admiral Godon. On the contrary, he ordered that, after duly advising President Mitre of my official character and purposes, if a safe-conduct for myself, family, and domestics were not promptly forthcoming, I should call on Admiral Godon for a vessel and convoy from the squadron to take me through the military lines.

CHAPTER IX.

Threatened Rupture with the United States. — Further Delays. — Strange Conduct of Admiral Godon. — Later Instructions. — The Shamokin finally ordered to Paraguay. — Firmness and Gallantry of Captain Pierce Crosby. — Tamandaré blusters and yields. — Arrival at Curupaiti. — Joy of the Paraguayans. — The French Consul, M. Cochelet. — Don Luis Jara. — The American Legation Premises in Asuncion.

IT is not often, in these modern times, that nations go to war except of deliberate purpose, and when important interests are at stake; and it may be safely assumed that at no time was there any real danger of hostilities between the United States and the allies, since both parties were earnestly desirous of peace. Yet a question had arisen concerning which one or the other must humbly recede from its position; and as it was certain not to be the United States, it was only necessary that the allies should be convinced that our government was determined to enforce its demand for them to concede it. They had, however, by listening to the opinions of Admiral Godon, put themselves entirely in the wrong; and the orders of the President were to the effect that, if they did not promptly yield the disputed point, the employment of force should instantly follow a renewed refusal. Under these circumstances I had but to reply instantly to the last letter of President Mitre, renew my demand for permission to pass through his military lines, and, if again refused, to call for a gunboat and convoy, in the sending of which no discretion was left to the Admiral, and which Mitre must either have stopped by force or have subjected himself to extreme humiliation and the contempt of his whole army. I was then in a position such as no representative of the United States ever was in before. I could certainly make a figure

in the newspapers, and should appear legally and morally entirely in the right, and the government would be obliged to sustain me. But I knew that the allies had been led into their untenable position through listening to the counsels of an ignorant garrulous American admiral, and that they would concede all that I had ever asked sooner than provoke hostilities with the United States. They must first be made aware, however, that the government had not delegated its power to a naval commander, but had repudiated the doctrine advanced by Admiral Godon, that the allies had a right to prevent the minister of a neutral nation from passing through their military lines to return to his post of official duties. The question then with me was, should I obey my instructions literally, and, while Mitre still believed I should not be sustained, make a demand which I knew would be rejected, or should I wait till he should see that a persistent refusal would be followed by war with the United States. The temptation to the former course was great, and I could not doubt that I should be fully sustained in it. But I knew it was not the interest nor the desire of either the government or the people of the United States to become involved in the Paraguayan war. It would cost millions of money, and there were no material interests at stake. Besides, I had seen enough of Lopez and his system of government to realize that it would be little creditable to the United States to become in any sense his aid or ally. If from the folly of the allies the United States were to be drawn into the contest, it was evident that Lopez would come out of the war triumphant, and the people of Paraguay would be condemned to endure perhaps for another generation the terrible despotism under which they had so long suffered.

That the allies might be convinced of the determination of our government before they had so far committed themselves that they could not recede, they must see something more formidable than despatches and protests. I had therefore to return to Buenos Aires and advise the Admiral that I had been repulsed by the allies in all my efforts to reach my post, and request him to furnish the vessel and necessary convoy

from the squadron, as he had been ordered to do by the Secretary of the Navy.

On reaching Buenos Aires I learned that our government had taken the preliminary steps to actual war, having instructed our ministers at Rio and Buenos Aires, as well as myself, to return to the United States unless all hindrance to my passage through the military lines were promptly withdrawn. But I found the Admiral was still disinclined to yield the position which he had taken, that the allies were in the right and our government in the wrong. I learned that he had been strangely intimate, during his stay there, with Admiral Tamandaré and Special Minister Octaviano, both of whom had been greatly impressed with his knowledge of diplomacy and international law. He had told them that they had a perfect right to detain me, and having got him in tow they hoped to finish the war before any counter-orders could come from Washington. What Godon expected, it is hard to conjecture. He could hardly be a rear-admiral and yet so ignorant of the laws of nations and so insensible to the national honor as to suppose our government would submit to such indignities. Yet having assured his Brazilian friends that they were in the exercise of their perfect right in holding me as a camp follower in their rear, he returned in a high state of self-complacency to Rio, leaving every American in the Plata mortified and disgusted with his conduct, while all the officers of his squadron, with the exception of two or three necessary confidants, felt humiliated and disgraced at the sorry exhibition the squadron had made.

The Admiral, however, had not been long at Rio when he learned that our government was not of his opinion in regard to the conduct of the allies. On the contrary, he was advised that it was indignant at their course, and was ordered, on being applied to again, to furnish, not only a gunboat to take me through the blockade, but a convoy, should it be necessary.

Though thus rebuked by his own government, the Admiral did not yet despair of showing to his Brazilian friends that he

should do as he pleased, and they might still detain me at their pleasure. He had been ordered to send a gunboat to Paraguay whenever I should call for it, but he could easily so manage that no communication from me should reach him for a long time. So after waiting till it was nearly time to expect a letter from me to reach Rio, he set sail in his flag-ship for the port of Bahia, some five hundred miles to the north, leaving orders for his mail to be detained till his return.

After an absence of several weeks, the Admiral returned to the station at Rio, where my dreaded letter had been awaiting him for about a month. But the Brazilians were as much as ever disinclined to have me pass their lines, and our Admiral, having stood by them so long, could not acknowledge his own humiliation and abandon them now. To break up his harmonious and profitable relations would be not only unpleasant, but personally damaging. He therefore, with a courage indicating the high confidence that he enjoyed with the late Secretary of Navy, refused to obey his orders, and in reply to my request for a gunboat and convoy he said that he would not send them, as *I had not yet complied with my instructions.*

My position now was more embarrassing than ever. It was known by everybody at the mouth of the river that our government had ordered the blockade to be forced, if necessary, to carry me to Paraguay; and it was known I was still in Buenos Aires, that several light-draught war-steamers were at hand, and yet I did not leave. Godon had written me that I must again ask permission of the allies to pass their lines without a gunboat before he would send one. But the Brazilian special envoy would not even answer my letters; and General Mitre, the Commander-in-Chief, had informed me he would hold no more correspondence with me. So between the three they had me hard and fast.

Under these circumstances there was nothing for me to do but to wait and see what further action would be taken by our own government. I had written to the Secretary of State that I had been turned back a second time by Mitre, and once after I had brought a letter from his government requesting him

to provide me with the facilities for going through. I was then awaiting an answer.

It came. Our government sent instructions to General Webb at Rio, and General Asboth, who was then on his way to Buenos Aires, that unless all hindrance to my passage were promptly withdrawn they should demand their passports, close their legations, and return to the United States. The Brazilians now saw that, kind and accommodating as was Admiral Godon, and great master as he was of international law, they must allow me to pass their lines or provoke a war with the United States. General Webb, our minister at Rio, who had been absent during all the harmonious concord between the Admiral and the Brazilians, had now returned and was inexorable. The Brazilians were not prepared for war with the United States, and knew there was to be no trifling with General Webb. They therefore told him that all obstructions to my going up through their squadron should be withdrawn. But they still hoped to make use of their obliging friend awhile longer, and they succeeded. They requested Godon to wait awhile before sending his orders for a gunboat to go up the river, so that they might have time to advise their admiral to withdraw all obstructions to its passage through the blockade. He even obligingly consented to this; and so I still remained in Buenos Aires, uncertain whether or not I should see Paraguay again till several months later, or till the admiral might be exchanged for one who would obey orders. At last, however, when no more pretexts or excuses for my further detention could be raised, the Admiral sent orders to the commander of the United States steamer Shamokin, Captain Pierce Crosby, to receive me and my family on board and take us to Paraguay.

On the 24th of October, one year lacking ten days after my arrival, I embarked, and we proceeded on our voyage. The Shamokin was a large and very long double-ender of light draft, and very difficult to steer. Uncharitable people even suspected that it was the latter quality that had influenced the Admiral in detailing her for the service. At any rate, it

was generally believed that she was so unwieldy she would never reach Paraguay. There were good reasons for believing that the Admiral would have been better pleased had these predictions been fulfilled. But if such was his desire, he made a great mistake in intrusting the command of the vessel to such a man as Pierce Crosby. He had his written official instructions, and he obeyed them with alacrity and to the letter. The channel of the river being variable and tortuous, with currents and cross-currents chopping it in places into eddies and dead water, it was clear that with her ordinary steering gear it would be impossible to prevent her from running now hard and fast into a bank or on a bar, and now from turning clear round and heading down stream. Captain Crosby, however, in spite of the known wishes of his superior that he should not reach Paraguay, set his wits to work to contrive some extra steering apparatus by which, with his large crew and excellent discipline, he could with close watchfulness keep the ship under control. To the surprise of everybody the vessel never touched the ground during the voyage.

On reaching the Tres Bocas, on the evening of November 2, we came near the lower vessel of the blockading squadron, and were boarded by her commander, who inquired of Captain Crosby what he was there for. Crosby replied that he was there by order of his government, on his way to Paraguay, to convey the United States Minister, accredited to that country, to his post, and that he desired immediately to communicate with Admiral Tamandaré and advise him of his intentions. The Brazilian said that neither the Shamokin nor the Minister could pass the military lines. The orders from his government were imperative to stop everybody, and they had never been remitted towards any individual or the war vessels of any nation. Captain Crosby said his orders were as imperative to go to Paraguay, and that he had letters from General Webb and Admiral Godon which stated that the Brazilian government had engaged to withdraw all obstructions to the passing through the blockade. These facts he

wished to communicate as soon as possible to the Brazilian admiral, after which he should proceed to carry out his instructions.

The Brazilian commander said he would refer the matter to his admiral, and a small tender was immediately despatched, with Ensign Pendleton of the Shamokin, to deliver Captain Crosby's letter to Tamandaré, who was on board his flag-ship, some twenty miles higher up the river. Mr. Pendleton returned, after having delivered the letter, reaching the Shamokin about three o'clock in the morning. He reported that Tamandaré had said the same in substance as the officer who had first boarded us, — that the Shamokin could not pass the squadron; that his orders were to allow no one to pass, and no counter-orders had ever been received by him.

It thus appeared that the delay made by Admiral Godon, at the request of the Brazilians, had either been gained through a subterfuge of the latter, or had been a made-up thing between the two. They had begged him to defer sending his orders for the gunboat to go up the river until they could first send forward their orders to Admiral Tamandaré. He had complied, and yet no such orders had been sent to him. On the contrary, his only instructions were to sink any vessel that attempted to pass his blockade. Besides the verbal message, brought back by Ensign Pendleton, was another, that the Admiral would visit the Shamokin that morning at ten o'clock.

It was now clear that, if both parties obeyed orders, there must be a fight. One or the other must back down, or somebody must be hurt. I was confident that Captain Crosby would not turn back. When the morning broke I went on deck, and found I had not been mistaken. He was getting ready for action. The guns were all loaded with shot and shell, and all was made ready so that the Shamokin might give a good account of herself should the Admiral adhere to his expressed determination.

All being ready and everything removed from the decks that could give any indication of the recent preparations for

action, we awaited the arrival of Admiral Tamandaré. He came near the appointed hour, and repeated verbally what he had said the night before to Mr. Pendleton. The Shamokin could not go through. He could not permit her to do so, without a direct violation of the orders of his Majesty's government. He said, however, he had thought of a way by which all difficulties could be avoided, and I might reach my destination. He would furnish me with a Brazilian gunboat to take me, my family, and effects through the Brazilian lines, and land me at any point above that I might select. To this I replied that his proposition came too late. Eight months before I had applied to him and to General Mitre for the means of passing through to my post, and they had been refused. At that time I did not ask even what he now offered me. If he would then have allowed me a flag of truce, I would have gone on horseback or in a whale-boat; but he had told me that he would not permit me under any circumstances to pass through his lines, and I had been compelled to apply to my own government for the means to send me through, — by force if necessary. In the mean while my detention had become a matter of public notoriety, and the question had assumed a national importance. My government had decided that the action of the allies in detaining me had been discourteous and illegal, and that not only had it a right to send its ministers to those governments with which it is at peace, but to send them on men-of-war if it so chose to do. It had therefore sent orders for the Shamokin to go to Paraguay, and go it would, unless it was stopped by force. Captain Crosby also told him that his instructions were imperative to take the American Minister to Paraguay, and he should obey his orders, unless forcibly prevented. The Admiral then said that Brazil could not at that time afford to engage in a war with the United States; that if we were fully determined to go through with the Shamokin, he should be obliged to let her pass, but that he should protest against it. We told him that he might protest as much as he liked, but nevertheless we should go through. Having thus ungraciously yielded the

point, the admiral then offered us every facility for continuing the voyage. It was known that Lopez had been putting down torpedoes in some parts of the river, and it was necessary to have a Paraguayan pilot who knew where they were; he offered to send a flag of truce with an officer from the Shamokin, bearing a letter from me to Lopez, informing him of our arrival and of our need of a Paraguayan pilot, so soon as we should pass above the blockading squadron. Mr. Pendleton was accordingly despatched with such a letter, and went through to the Paraguayan head-quarters.

Lopez received the young officer courteously, although he was greatly disappointed when he found the Shamokin was coming through unmolested. He had hoped that the Brazilians would insist on their right to stop her, and would resort to force sooner than permit her to pass through the blockade. This would of course bring the United States into the contest, and make them to all intents and purposes an ally of Paraguay, and then the result of the war would be no longer doubtful. He told Mr. Pendleton that the Shamokin could not go above Curupaiti without incurring great danger from the torpedoes, some of which it would be so difficult to find that they could not all be removed without causing great delay; but that if Captain Crosby chose to take the risk of them, he was at full liberty to go to Asuncion. He would, however, upon the approach of the Shamokin above the blockade, have a pilot who had seen all the torpedoes laid down to take the Shamokin as far as Curupaiti; then, if I chose to disembark at that point, he would find a carriage for myself and family to Humaita, and carts for my luggage and provisions. From there I could go to Asuncion on a Paraguayan steamer whenever I pleased. The next day Mr. Pendleton returned; and having advised the Admiral that we were then ready to start, on the fifth day of November, at about two o'clock in the afternoon, again got under way. As we passed up the river from Tres Bocas through the blockading squadron, it seemed incredible to us that such an immense squadron of war vessels, including monitors, iron-clads, and wooden steamers, all having heavy

armaments, besides an immense number of transports, store-ships, and merchant vessels, should be required to force a passage of the river above Humaita. It was doubtless very humiliating to the Brazilians to see the Shamokin defiantly pass up through this vast squadron, after having boasted so often and so loudly that they had a right to stop her or any other neutral vessel from passing through, and would exercise it at all hazards. We passed close alongside the flag-ship of the Admiral, who had the same band of music on the deck to do us honor, as we steamed by, that he had brought out, as it seemed to me then, to insult me, when, eight months before, he had parted with me on board the same vessel, telling me that I never should pass through his blockade. Having gone above the squadron, a Paraguayan boat, with an officer and pilot, soon pushed off from the shore above and came aboard, and the pilot, taking the direction of the vessel, took us by a tortuous course under the guns of Curupaiti, where we landed the same evening. As soon as our baggage and provisions could be put on shore, the Shamokin, having fired the customary salute, which was returned by the Paraguayans, immediately withdrew and went below the blockade. The Admiral before we passed up had sent word that her remaining any considerable time in the line between the Paraguayan fortifications and the squadron might interfere with the bombardment which he might have occasion to renew soon after. That I might, after having been so long delayed in reaching my post, which had almost threatened to involve the United States in a war, advise the government of my safe arrival in Paraguay, and of the general condition of affairs there, I had requested Captain Crosby to permit Mr. Pendleton to land with me, and return by land with a flag of truce through the allied lines, taking my despatches with him. To this request he of course acceded.

The Shamokin, having succeeded in passing the blockade and landing the Minister, returned to Buenos Aires, where her gallant commander, Captain Crosby, was subjected to repeated annoyances and persecutions by the Admiral, appar-

ently for the reason that he had not taken the hint to oblige the Brazilians by running his vessel aground in the river, rather than force the blockade. Another commanding officer, Captain Clark H. Wells, of the *Kansas*, was subjected to still greater annoyance, and sent off to hunt imaginary rocks in the ocean, to punish him for his contumacy in presuming to hold relations of friendship and intimacy with persons with whom the Admiral had quarrelled. These differences in the squadron became so notorious outside of it, that the allies, who were flattering the Admiral and assuring him he was a great diplomat, must have seen that while he was playing into their hands so readily he was bringing the naval service of his own country into contempt.

On landing at Curupaiti, a great multitude of people gathered around us, all expressing the greatest joy and the warmest welcome. Among them were several of my old acquaintances. They seemed to think that the United States was coming to their rescue, as Lopez had held out the idea to them for a long time that such would be the case; and when they saw the *Shamokin* come up the river through the blockading squadron, they regarded her as a harbinger of peace. The poor wretches had hoped that the war was soon to end, and they seemed to regard me, not only as the bearer of good tidings, but as one who could deliver them from their troubles. Soon after landing, a coach arrived at Curupaiti, and carried us to Humaita, a distance of some two and a half leagues above.

The next day I busied myself in writing despatches to send back by Mr. Pendleton, and was somewhat surprised that during the day I did not receive an invitation to visit his Excellency at his head-quarters in Paso Pucu. Toward evening, however, Dr. Stewart came in to tell me that the President was very unwell, and that it might be some days before he would be able give me an interview. The steamer *Igurey* was lying then at the bank of the river, ready to take me to Asuncion whenever I wished to go, whence I could return almost any day so soon as the President should sufficiently recover

to be able to converse with me. The same evening, therefore, we embarked for the capital. During the time of our brief stay there, several of the English physicians, and a few other foreigners in the service, called to see me, and all alike expressed their great relief at my return. They intimated that matters were going very badly, and that Lopez was getting desperate, and had developed into such a blood-thirsty character that there was no safety or security for any person whatever in the country. They believed that the presence of the minister of a strong government would have a restraining influence upon him, or at least that such a person would have it in his power to advise the world of the condition of affairs in Paraguay, which no one else in the country was permitted to do.

Though I had been thus welcomed, yet the sickness of Lopez was caused, as I believe, mainly from disappointment that I had not been stopped by the Brazilians. He had learned ere this that he had made a great mistake in commencing the war as he had done, and that the allies were determined to pursue it until he was killed or driven out of the country. The alliance, much to his disappointment, had endured for nearly two years, and there were no signs of a rupture, nor was either party to it disposed to withdraw; and if they continued united and persistent, their great superiority of resources must eventually result in his overthrow. He had, therefore, nourished the idea that the Brazilians would make good their boasting words that they would never permit an American Minister or vessel to pass their blockade; and as he was pretty well convinced that the American government would never tolerate such insolence, he cherished the hope that war would result, and that thus he would be able to escape from the dilemma in which his own rashness and ambition had involved him. But when the Brazilians receded from this position, and permitted the Shamokin to pass, his illusion was dispelled, and on the day following my arrival he gave way to such hopeless despair that he fell into a state of syncope, and was at the point of death for nearly

a week. Had he died then, the world would have given him the undeserved credit of having been a patriot and a hero ; and half a million Paraguayans, that were afterwards sacrificed to his selfishness, cruelty, and ambition, would be now alive *to mourn his loss*. From this condition he gradually rallied, and in the course of three or four weeks regained his former health.

On reaching Asuncion we were received very cordially by all classes of people. In coming we had opened the door for a ray of light to penetrate from the outer world, concerning which the inhabitants there had been for more than a year entirely ignorant. Since I had been away all communication had been so completely cut off, that my good friend, the French Consul, M. Laurent Cochelet, had been eleven months without receiving a letter, paper, or any message whatever from beyond the limits of Paraguay. Mr. Cochelet had unfortunately, soon after his arrival in the country, incurred the dislike of Lopez. There were a considerable number of Frenchmen in the country, and they had from time to time complaints to make against their treatment by the local authorities. Their consul was a gentleman of refinement and education, zealous in his office ; and whenever a countryman appealed to him to obtain redress for any grievance, he was prompt to inquire into his case, and, if necessary, to demand justice. The government of Paraguay, however, had been long accustomed, even before the time of Lopez, to treat all persons, foreigners and natives alike, according to its own will, and to permit no inquiry to be made into the justice of its proceedings. M. Cochelet, therefore, was thought to be officious and meddling, and, before he had been long in the country, Lopez intimated to the French government that it would be agreeable to him if Cochelet could be withdrawn, and somebody else sent in his place. The French government replied that it had every confidence in M. Cochelet. Then Lopez denied that a consul had any right to treat with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and said that that privilege was conceded only to ministers, or to persons of diplomatic

character. To this the French government replied, that if Paraguay did not choose to treat with a consul on questions other than those purely commercial, it would withdraw M. Cochelet, and not send anybody else in his place. It was a matter of choice, either to treat with M. Cochelet or nobody. Lopez, being extremely anxious to have the leading governments of the world represented at his court, — by ministers if possible, and, if not by consuls, — would not break off all relations with France. England had no consul there, neither had Spain nor Italy, nor had any great power except France; and therefore, obnoxious as M. Cochelet was to Lopez, he tolerated his presence, notwithstanding he would look after the interests of his countrymen when Lopez wished to arrest, imprison, or rob them without giving any reasons therefor.

On reaching Asuncion my first care was to obtain a house. Fortunately, the best house in the place, not belonging to the Lopez family, was vacant. It belonged to Don Luis Jara, who was in the army, and whose partner in Buenos Aires, Don Carlos Saguier, had given me a letter to him, requesting him to tender the use of his house to me. Jara was very glad to do this, as the premises being occupied by me would be protected in case the town should be taken by the allies, and would not be liable at any time to be taken for hospital purposes by Lopez. The house was very large, and occupied nearly an entire square. It was built in the Moorish fashion, with a large yard, or patio, in the centre, with a corridor extending the whole length in front, and other corridors within extending along three sides of the patio. It was finely furnished, and two slaves of Jara had been left there by him to take care of it. All that he required of me was, that whenever he should come to the capital he should have one room set apart for his occupancy. He, however, never came to claim even this small privilege in his own house, for he died about a year after. He had never been married, but, like most Paraguayans of wealth, he had several illegitimate families; as he left no will, none of these children were heirs

to the estate, which, I suppose, according to the laws of Paraguay, escheated to the government. The description of the premises which I occupied, and the manner in which I came into their possession, are given here for reasons that will appear hereafter.

CHAPTER X.

Reception at Asuncion. — General Anxiety. — Englishmen in Prison. — J. J. Acuña. — G. F. Masterman: his Arrest, Trial, and Imprisonment. — His Dungeon. — Treatment of Prisoners. — Ramon Capdevila. — Intercession for Masterman. — His Release. — Life in Asuncion. — Captain Simon Fidanza. — The Casals.

WE reached Asuncion on the morning of November 8, 1866, fourteen months and two days having elapsed since we left New York. Our welcome, alike by former friends and by those with whom I had never been acquainted, was such as I hope never to experience again. It was sincere and earnest, but it was based on a hope that, the blockade having been once broken, the war must soon end. I had brought with me a ray of light from beyond their prison, but beyond that I knew they were deceived, and that I should have no power to aid or protect them. Yet the people, both natives and foreigners, nourished the hope that Lopez would at least respect the minister of a strong neutral nation, and that such a person among them would afford some protection from the dangers that seemed to be gathering thick and ominous all around them. It had evidently been intimated by the police to the native Paraguayans, that civility and attention would not be displeasing to the government; and the next number of the *Semanario* was abounding with its admiration of the great Republic of the North, and of its minister, who, against all the discourtesies and efforts of the allies to detain him, had finally forced their blockade. It stigmatized in bitter, though just, terms the whole conduct of the allies towards me. It ridiculed the assumption that they had a right to stop me, and taunted them with acting the bully and the coward by first insisting that they had a right to stop me, a right which they would never yield, but which they notwith-

standing did yield when they found that the government of the United States would not submit to their insulting pretensions. It also contained numerous paragraphs highly eulogistic of myself, and commending me in the strongest terms for persisting in enforcing my way, until in mortification and disgrace the allies had been forced to humble themselves, and permit the American gunboat to pass through their blockade, flaunting the American flag in derision and contempt in their faces.

The people of Asuncion took the hint from these semi-official notices that there was no danger in showing us attentions, and as soon as we were fairly domiciled, the principal people of the place called upon us, to bid us welcome, and were almost oppressive in their kindness and offers of assistance and service. Flowers, fruit, and dulces were sent to us every day by different families, and in a manner that showed the kindest feelings on the part of the donors. The hospitality of the Paraguayans, whenever the exercise of it did not expose them to danger from the government, has been remarked by nearly all travellers who have ever visited that country. But such general manifestations of it as we received were probably unprecedented in the country. After our long and anxious voyage, the many annoyances, and, I may say, humiliations, which we had experienced from the allies, it was with a great sense of relief that we found ourselves at last settled in our own house in Asuncion. Having brought a supply of provisions which were intended to be sufficient for at least a year, beyond which time I did not suppose it possible that the war could last, we lacked for nothing necessary to health or comfort; and were it not for the fact that the people around us appeared to be so anxious about the future, and that there were so many people, some of them my former intimate friends, in prison, and such a general state of anxiety, our position would have been very agreeable.

Among the prisoners in whom I took the most interest were Drs. John Fox and James Rhind, English physicians, and Mr. George F. Masterman, an English apothecary. I learned

that they had been arrested some two weeks before my arrival. The offence for which the two former were imprisoned was this. The mother of the President, Doña Juana Carillo de Lopez, having been sick for several days, a telegram was sent to her son, at head-quarters, advising him that her symptoms were worse, and requesting permission to call in these two physicians. An order was sent about seven o'clock in the evening to Dr. Rhind, to take Dr. Fox with him and go and visit the old lady. The latter, unfortunately, was not at his house, and could not be found immediately; and Dr. Rhind, knowing the danger that would result from his disobeying orders and going alone, thought he must wait until Dr. Fox should appear. In the mean while the old lady got impatient, and another telegram was sent to the President, informing him that the physicians had not come. Another order was immediately sent, commanding the immediate arrest and imprisonment of the two doctors. They were accordingly sent to prison, and confined separately in dark, damp cells, with sentinels placed over them. This was their situation at the time of my return to Paraguay.

The old Postmaster-General of Asuncion, Don Juan J. Acuña, and his wife, were also prisoners at the time of my return, and had been for several months. Senor Acuña was an old man, nearly seventy years of age. He was a native of the Argentine province of Tucuman, and had come to Paraguay in his youth, where he had married a young lady, a member of the ill-fated and long-persecuted Machain family. During my first residence in Paraguay, I was more intimate with the old gentleman than with any other Paraguayan. I visited very often at his house, and we were in the habit of playing chess together almost every day. His position as Postmaster-General was a very disagreeable one, as it devolved upon him the task of examining all the newspapers that came into the country, and seeing that no paper containing anything disrespectful to the government of Paraguay was allowed to go out of the post-office. A person in this position would naturally be disliked by foreigners and by others whose papers

he was required to detain, and it was not strange that they should regard him as a tool or spy of the government. Yet he was so obliging, and always so sociable and good-natured, that he was almost universally liked. His wife, Doña Pancha, came as near to my idea of a Christian woman as any person I have ever met. Her family had been persecuted by Francia and by the elder Lopez until it was nearly destroyed. Most of the surviving members of it were beyond the limits of Paraguay. But affliction or persecution had not chilled her heart, but rather made it more sensitive to the sufferings of others. The office of Postmaster-General of Paraguay only afforded the incumbent the small pittance of thirty dollars a month, and as the family had no fortune beyond the house they lived in, the old lady, with her servants, eked out the supplies, not only for the support of her own family, but for a large number of the infirm and destitute, by the making of *chipa* and dulces. She appeared to be always at work; and I was assured by my fair countrywoman, the wife of the French Consul, Izarié, who assisted the old lady very much in these contributions, that the number of poor dependants on this family was almost incredible.

To my surprise, on my return to Paraguay, I found the two were prisoners. What offence they had committed no one seemed to know. They were in solitary confinement in separate cells, and no one, not even their children, was permitted to visit them, or even to see them. Some two months after my return, in passing one morning through the street not far from their house, I thought I saw, on the opposite side and a little in front of me, my old friend. I stepped quickly after him, and, hailing him, he greeted me very cordially, and we walked along together for a short distance. He told me that he and his wife had both been let out of prison the day before; that the old lady was very sick indeed, and would be very glad if I would call and see her. I promised to do so, and the next day I went to the house, and was invited into the room where the poor invalid was lying upon the bed. She was a mere skeleton; her voice was gone, and she could

hardly speak in a whisper. She seemed very glad to see me, and undertook to tell me something of her sufferings. I could only make out, as she held up her bony fingers and motioned towards the prison where she had been confined, "Eight months, eight months." Those two words told the whole story. The poor old lady had been in solitary confinement, with no human face that she could look upon except a brutal soldier, for eight months, and had only been let out of prison in time to die. A day or two after that I was greatly surprised to receive a note from the old man. What temerity, thought I, for a person in his situation to send me a note. Of course the government would know all about it. However, when I read the note I thought it could not be so very dangerous, as it was simply a request that I would call down and play a game of chess with him. I went, and took with me a letter for him which had come to my care from his long-time near neighbor and our common friend, Mr. George Paddison, formerly chief engineer of the railroad. He said he would not open the letter nor read it; that his wife had been arrested for no other reason, that he knew of, than that a nephew of hers, in Buenos Aires, had written her a letter which had been intercepted by the government, and of the contents of which they knew nothing; and therefore, lest this letter might do him harm, and lest the very fact that he had received a letter unbeknown to the government might some time become known and be construed to his prejudice, he tore it up into fragments before my eyes without reading it. He said, moreover, that he had not the most remote idea, at that moment, of the reason why he had been imprisoned. He could understand why the old lady had been, as her relations were known to be among the most influential of the Paraguayans in Buenos Aires, and were using all their influence against Lopez; but for himself he could not conceive what had been the motive of his arrest. He said that his object in sending me the invitation to come and play chess with him was that he might request me not to visit his house any more. He was a marked man, and though

he would have been delighted if we could resume our former relations, yet it was too dangerous. I told him I fully appreciated his situation, and bade him adieu. Within a few days I was relieved by learning that the old lady was dead, and within a few weeks after that the old man had joined her in the unseen world. Even at that period, the best news I could receive from many of my friends was that they were dead.

The English doctors, Fox and Rhind, remained in prison about two months. They were both of them in feeble health at the time of their arrest, and, being confined in dark, damp cells, it was a wonder that they survived. They were both very sick during the term of their imprisonment, but were not permitted to hold communication with any one, not even to converse with the sentinel who was over them. They could not send to their houses for changes of clothing, or for the medicine which they felt they must have or soon die. They did not die, however, but at the end of two months' confinement were pardoned out of prison, after which Dr. Fox was called down to the army, and Dr. Rhind remained in charge of the hospitals at Asuncion. The latter never left Paraguay, but he was fortunate enough to die a natural death, instead of sharing the fate of most of the foreigners in the country at the time of his imprisonment. Masterman, however, still remained in prison. His arrest had not taken place until a few days after that of his fellow-countrymen. The offence alleged against him was, that he had endeavored to deliver some letters from England for Dr. Rhind, which had been given him for that purpose by the French consul. There being no law against it, neither Masterman nor anybody else supposed there was anything criminal in an act that was in accordance with universal custom.

The description of the prison, and the trial to which he was subjected, I give in Masterman's own words.*

* Seven Eventful Years in Paraguay: A Narrative of Personal Experience amongst the Paraguayans. By George Frederick Masterman, late Assistant Surgeon, Professor of Materia Medica, Chief Military Apothecary General Hospital, Asuncion, Paraguay. Formerly of Medical Staff of her Majesty's 82d Regiment.

“ I then, as far as the dim light of the candle allowed me, examined my dungeon. It was about twelve feet by eight, the walls of rough adobes. From a heavy column in the centre of the wall sprung two arches, and above them the roof at a considerable height, palm trunks and tiles laid in earth. The floor was of mud, full of hollows, cold and wet ; the only furniture a *cartrè*, that is, a hide stretched on a wooden frame, and a broken chair. I soon found my prison was so situated that, except in bright weather, I should live almost in darkness. The large door was wide open, but as it looked only into a long, arched passage connecting the two courtyards of the Colegio (for I was within the old Jesuit College), all the light I could get would be that reflected from the wall.

“ About ten in the morning a sergeant came in, and ordered me to follow him. I did so, and was taken to a small room in front of the building. I found there Captain Silva, an *alferez*, a sergeant, and Señor Ortellado, a notary. By the latter I was sworn on a sword, and then examined very tediously for several hours. Written questions were read to me ; my answers were taken down on loose sheets, and then copied on stamped paper. I was first asked a number of formal questions about my name, age, birthplace, religion, and so on, and then if I knew why I had been arrested. No. Did I not know that it was the first duty of a soldier to obey his superiors? Yes, certainly ; but I was not a soldier, my rank being honorary. Was I in the service of the Republic? Yes, but without a contract, and in a non-military capacity. Did I not know that it was forbidden by law to deliver letters which had not passed through the post-office? No ; I had never seen or heard of such a law, nor had I even infringed it since I had never delivered the letters. Would send them there, if permitted, and would, of course, pay the postage. He then asked me if I had the letters, and ordered me to give them up. I demurred, questioning their right to deprive me of them, as they had not shown me by what authority they were acting. Captain Silva told the sergeant to put a set of *grillos* (fettters) on the table. Taking the hint, for of course resistance was out of the question, I gave up the letters. I was then examined at great length about my private correspondence, the people I wrote to, where they lived, and so on. . . .

“ On returning to my cell, I found it had been improved by the arrival of some bedding from my quarters, with a wash-hand basin,

a water-jar, and a chair ; but it was still a most wretched place, and miserably cold.

“Near the threshold, but in the passage, stood, day and night, a sentry armed with musket and bayonet, and relieved every two hours,—a more effectual guard than bolts or bars. He stood facing me, and about eight feet from my bed ; and from nine o'clock at night until the reveille sounded the next morning, every quarter of an hour he shouted '*Sentinela alerta!*' at the top of his voice, to show that he was not sleeping. This startling cry was taken up in succession by the others, in the chain of sentries, within and without the prison, and by the time the last had finished the first began again. It was terrible ! To be thus awakened by a sudden yell, all hope of sound and peaceful sleep destroyed, and the painful consciousness that one was a prisoner perpetually forced upon the attention, was a cruel torture. Never shall I be able to efface it from my memory.

“Often have I passed the whole night pacing wearily up and down the short length of my prison, or lying with my fingers firmly pressed up my ears, lest I should fall asleep but to be awakened by that dreaded cry. For months I only slept the third night.

“To return to my examination. The next day I was called to hear the evidence read over to me from beginning to end. When it was being taken, I noticed that Captain Silva and the notary frequently left the room with the papers, and I now found why they had done so. My replies, nominally copied from the loose sheets, had been grossly distorted ; all that tended to exculpate me was omitted ; and they had inserted a fictitious confession of guilt, that I had asked pardon for my offences, and that I had stated I was willing to bear any punishment awarded me ! . . .

“Up to that time I had received no ill-treatment from him (Lopez), and thought that as an Englishman, and one who had faithfully served him many years, I should soon be set at liberty. Without a reply, Ortellado told me to sign the depositions. I declined to do so, saying that they knew they were falsified and unjust to me. He called my attention to the irons again, and at the same time assured me that if I would give him no further trouble I should be set at liberty in a few days. Seeing it was useless to resist, and dreading the severities to which I should have been exposed had I been put in irons,—deprived of bed and chair, and

with only a hide upon the ground to sit or lie upon, — I reluctantly signed the papers. . . . I gradually became accustomed to the dim light reflected from the wall of the passage, and in clear weather could see to read for several hours a day. But when the sky was overcast, and until the sun was high, I was in a gloom so deep that to any one entering from without it would have seemed total darkness. My greatest fear was that the damp would affect my health; for the mud floor was beneath the level of the courtyard, and the walls, the beams, and even my mattress on its under side, were covered with fungoid growths, green and slimy with mouldiness. The cell was miserably cold, but they would not let me have a blanket from my quarters, and I had only a tattered piece of red baize, which had long done duty as a table-cover, in place of it. . . . Next to my prison was an open corridor, where a great many *presos* were confined in chains, which all day long clanked dismally, and often in the night I heard them clash suddenly when the prisoners were startled in their sleep by the cry of the sentries. Now and then I caught sight of them through a chink in the thick boards which covered the window, and sometimes they passed to the great quadrangle through the passage in front of my door. They were of all ages, some very old men, others but boys, but all reduced to the last stage of emaciation, mere brown skin and bone. All had one pair of heavy fetters riveted on their ankles, rough with callosities and cicatrices of old wounds, several two; and one man bore on his skeleton-like legs three heavy bars, which swung backwards and forwards as he slowly shuffled along. Yet these sufferers were not half so wretched as one would have thought; they used to laugh and sing, and have clattering, staggering races in their narrow den. . . . Every week or so, one and another of them would be taken out to the patio to be flogged. These were sad days for me. I dreaded their coming, and did not recover my equanimity for many hours afterwards.

“ I think the fact of hearing, without being able to see the infliction of the punishments, made them more terrible. To hear the dull, heavy thud of the stick wielded by those stalwart, pitiless corporals, and to know that it was descending on living flesh, quivering in agony, made me faint and sick with horror. As a surgeon, I was, they told me, one of the coolest of operators, and yet these sounds used to unnerve me completely the whole day through. I

then little thought that I should one day have to suffer a worse punishment. . . . In the inner courtyard were several political prisoners, all well known to me. One, an Argentine named Capdevila, I saw pass my door several times; he had been a merchant of some wealth in Asuncion. . . . His wife bribed Mrs. Lynch to intercede for him, and he, with one or two others, was set at liberty. Pitying his countrymen who were still in captivity, he sent them food and clothes several times; but this act of charity was construed into an offence against Lopez, and he was sent to the Colegio and put in irons. About a month afterwards I saw the poor old man marched off (to the Policia, I suppose), and return with two pairs of grillos on his legs; they took away also his hide *cartrè*, and left him to lie on the bare ground. Three weeks afterwards he passed slowly and feebly, and returned some hours later with three bars. He caught sight of me as he went by, and in raising his hat stumbled and fell. He was brutally kicked until he scrambled up again. His cup of misery was not yet full; after a shorter interval he was once more marched out, and, as several hours passed away, I made sure that he had been set at liberty, but to my grief and horror he returned late at night in a far worse plight than before. He still wore three bars, and so thick and long that he staggered under their weight, and was more than half an hour crossing the patio, inch by inch, and at length he crawled by my door on his hands and knees. Yet he did not die for several months afterwards!*

“Sometimes I heard blows, but frequently the cries of the victim alone told how they were torturing him. One afternoon a poor fellow was *estacado*, horizontally crucified, just beneath my window. Never shall I forget what I endured that day in listening to his moans and occasional frantic yells and prayers for mercy, and in picturing to myself what he was suffering. After hours of such torments I would see them sometimes led, sometimes carried, back again, pale and bleeding, a piteous spectacle.”

In this wretched place, and subject to such treatment,

/ * In Resquin's diary the name of Ramon Capdevila appears in a list of forty-one who were executed as traitors on the 9th of August, 1868. His brother, Aureliano, according to the same authority, was executed on the 23d of the same month, with twenty-two others, including John Watts, the hero of Riachuelo, but for whose valor and judgment not a vessel of the Paraguayan squadron would have returned from that disastrous conflict.

Masterman was held a prisoner for eleven months. As I had been so well received by Lopez on my return, I often thought whether or not I might venture to request the liberation of these three Englishmen. Greatly to my relief, Fox and Rhind were set at liberty at the end of two months, and I was daily hoping to hear the same of Masterman. But month passed after month, and his prison doors were not opened, and many a night did I lay awake, perplexing my brain to devise some way to extricate him from his miserable prison. But what could I do? To intercede for him on the ground that he was not guilty, or that his punishment was excessive, would greatly enrage Lopez, and would probably subject Masterman to worse treatment. I knew him to be a weakling, both bodily and mentally, that his real offence could have been nothing more than some unfortunate expressions which his ungovernable and foolish tongue had let fall, but which in any other country would never have been noticed. At length, however, the occasion seemed opportune to intercede in his favor. If I could not ask his release on his own account, I could on account of my family. Mrs. Washburn was in a precarious state of health, and as the only doctor in the capital (Rhind) was unreliable, being frequently unable, from sickness, to leave his house for days together, I suggested to Minister Berges that it would be a great favor to me and Mrs. Washburn if Masterman might be set at liberty, in order to attend my family. It was a very delicate affair to manage, and I was compelled to so far put aside all questions of dignity as to solicit the influence of Madam Lynch. In any country but Paraguay, it would have been manifestly improper to ask for such intercession. But "is it lawful to do good, or to do evil? to save life or to destroy it?" Again, was it right to deceive his Excellency, and to prefer my request on the ground of a personal favor, when, in fact, my real motive was to extricate Masterman? I leave the answer to casuists.

My diplomacy was successful; he was set at liberty; and that he might be more secure, I took him into my house, and

kept him there until he was seized from my side by the soldiers of Lopez, as he started from the legation to accompany me when I was finally leaving the country. After I had secured his liberation, I soon found I had a diminutive white elephant on my hands, one that I could not send away, for that would be equivalent to sending him to torture and execution. I was obliged to tolerate him, though he had many eccentricities that were not agreeable. Yet he was skilful in his profession of pill-mixer, and had learned to be a very fair physician. My efforts to obtain his rescue a second time, in which I was also successful, will be related in the proper place.

Excepting for the miseries and troubles of other people that came to my knowledge, the time for the first few months after my return to Asuncion would have been, if not altogether agreeable, still tolerable. I had scarcely anything to do of an official character, and busied myself to a great extent in getting together the materials for the first part of this work, in which I was very much assisted by Mr. Bliss, who had already commenced, at the instance of the government, to write a history of Paraguay in Spanish, and as he had collected and arranged in their chronological order a great mass of facts, the work was comparatively easy.

Perhaps my return to Paraguay was not so welcome to any other person in the country as to the French Consul, M. Cochelet. As before said, he was greatly out of favor with the President, so much so, that the Paraguayan people, as well as the foreigners, dared not visit him or hold any communication with him. Before leaving Paraguay to return to the United States, we had lived in adjoining houses and had been extremely intimate, and my return was particularly desired by him, as then there would be one family in the country that he and his could visit whenever they chose. I had a billiard-table in my house, and scarcely a day passed until he left the country but that we played several games of billiards and of chess. We often went partridge shooting together, and our rides through those little-frequented roads which, running in all directions around Asuncion, pass over the gentle hills, and

between cultivated fields, the citron-trees on both sides emitting the most fragrant odor imaginable, and with a great variety of other trees of variegated hues, all extremely beautiful, formed the most grateful diversion during this dark and anxious period. For riding on horseback the roads were altogether the finest, the most diversified and charming, that I have ever seen in any country.

Back from Asuncion, about a league and a half from the town, is a large open plain, about two leagues wide and five or six in length, called Campo Grande. This camp was bounded on each side by gentle wooded acclivities, and at a distance



RANCHO OF THE POORER CLASS.

varying from quarter to half a mile apart were the ranchos in which the inhabitants lived. Some of these were little better than huts, but generally, though they made but an unpretending appearance, they were very comfortable habitations.

One of the best houses standing on the border of this camp was rented, soon after my arrival in the country, by an Italian named Fianza, who had been a man of considerable means in Buenos Aires, having interests in several steamers, one of which he usually commanded. About the time that the war with Brazil commenced he had come up to Paraguay with a steamer called the *Villa del Salto*. His object had been to make a sale of the vessel and cargo to Lopez, and he had nearly completed his bargain, and supposed that he should be able to leave, having made a profitable operation, when Lopez concluded to declare war against the Argentine Confederation, to take his steamer without paying for it, and declare it a prize of war. With a consideration to Fianza, however, very different from what he had shown to the officers of the *Marques de Olinda*, he allowed him to take of his own stores a considerable supply, enough, as Fianza supposed, to last him for two or three years. Finding that he was not likely to get away from the country for a long time, he took this rancho in Campo Grande, and removed his stores to that place, where he lived with profuse hospitality, welcoming all who went to visit him with the best that his house could afford. In our partridge-shooting expeditions in Campo Grande we usually dined at his house, and though we enjoyed exceedingly his generous fare, yet he seemed to enjoy in playing the host even greater pleasure than we did in partaking of his bounty. His house being about half-way on the road to Limpio, where I continued after my return from the United States to visit, as formerly, my old friend Don Mauricio, I was his frequent guest. He was exceedingly anxious to get out of the country and return to his family in Buenos Aires; and while the situation there was yet tolerable, and he was supposed to be in favor with Lopez, he said he would gladly surrender half his fortune, which was considerable, could he again set foot beyond the limits of Paraguay.

Don Mauricio had heard of my return with great satisfaction, as, but a short time before, his elder son had been sent

up, a helpless invalid, from the army to the hospital in the capital. The old man being too aged and infirm ever to leave home, and his sons, slaves, and peons having all been taken for soldiers, he sent his daughters to the capital to bid us welcome and to invite us to visit him at Limpio. They were also to look after their brother, who lay helpless and paralyzed in his lower extremities in the hospital. While in town they learned, greatly to their consternation, that he was to be sent to the encampment at Cerro Leon, where, with the fare commonly given to the sick, and the rough treatment of the Paraguayan surgeons, they feared he would not long survive. They accordingly came to me and asked if I could not intercede and get permission for him to go to his home at Limpio, where it was possible he might recover, and would certainly relieve the state of the expense of taking care of him. It was not within the rules of the diplomatic regulations for me to make any such request of the government, neither had it been within the same rules, when the other brother was conscripted as a soldier, to make it a personal request that he should be discharged, and allowed to return to his home; nevertheless, I did so, and in both instances my request was granted. I had no sooner left the country, however, than he was re-enlisted, and when I returned was a soldier at Humaita, while the other was an invalid in the hospital.

CHAPTER XI.

A Visit to Lopez's Head-Quarters. — Description of Humaita. — The Encampment at Paso Pucu. — Dr. Stewart, the Surgeon-General. — Other English Officers. — Their Warnings and Forebodings. — Interviews with Lopez. — His Opinion of Brazilian Soldiers. — Release of Americans from Prison. — Obsequiousness of Lopez's Officers. — Admiral Tamandaré. — Brazilian Artillery Practice. — An American Claim allowed by Lopez. — Arrest of Don Luis Jara. — Picking a Money-Box. — Alleged Paraguayan Victories. — Prospect of American Mediation.

ON the 20th of December, about seven weeks after my return to Asuncion, I was advised by the Minister for Foreign Relations, Don José Berges, that the President, having recovered his health, would be pleased to see me at his headquarters, and that a steamer would be at my disposal to take me to Humaita whenever it would suit my pleasure to visit his Excellency. I accordingly left the same evening, and on the morning of the second day reached Humaita, where I was furnished with a horse and guide to take me to Paso Pucu.

Of the great natural advantages of Humaita, a very correct idea may be formed by the following description by Colonel Thompson: "Humaita, is situated on a level cliff, about thirty feet above the river, on a sharp horse-shoe bend of the stream, to which it presents a concave surface, thus giving the power of concentrating the fire of all the batteries on any point in the bend. The cliff is 2,500 yards long, being bounded by a carrisal* at each end, and the village is surrounded by a trench resting at both ends on the river; at the commence-

* Carrisal is a broad sheet of water sometimes surrounded, like a lake, and sometimes on the margin of a river, full of coarse strong grass that gives it at a little distance the appearance of a plain, and which is so thick that a canoe can with difficulty be forced through it.

ment of the two carrisals this trench is 14,800 yards long, including the redans, which are placed about every 250 yards, and encloses a space of flat pasture-land 4,000 yards long and 2,000 yards wide. Going up the river from Humaita, there is no possible communication with the land before reaching Pilar, on account of the carrisals, with the exception of a cliff called Tayi, fifteen miles above Humaita, where there is a road leading to the inland high roads. The carrisal between Humaita and Tayi is more or less in the shape of a diamond, with perpendiculars respectively seven and four miles long, and is called the Potrero Obella. It is totally impassable in most parts, but there are one or two tracks by which it can be traversed. On the land side it is completely shut off by an impenetrable jungle, having only one opening, by which cattle were introduced in large quantities, and were taken out as required at the Humaita end. When the river is low, there is a path along the edge of it from Tayi to Humaita, but the Arroyo Hondo has to be crossed in canoes. Outside the trench of Humaita, the ground for some leagues is full of morasses, with thin pieces of dry land between them, more especially near San Solano and Tuyucué, but most of the ground near the trench is passable."

Below Humaita, about a league and a half, is Curupaiti, which was fortified, until after it had been passed by the Brazilian squadron, even more strongly than Humaita. At about an equal distance from the two points, situate on a fine open plain having a gentle incline, with several orange-groves that diversified the scene and gave shelter from the sun, stood the head-quarters of Lopez at Paso Pucu. On the edge of the grove was the house occupied by the President. It was made of bamboo and thatch, its roof being of the latter. There was a deep awning in front, and alongside was a long building occupied as quarters for his staff. In the rear, completely hidden by the orange-trees, was the house of Madam Lynch, and beyond that was another occupied by General Barrios and his wife. Other officers enjoying the confidence of Lopez, like Generals Resquin and Bruguez, Colo-

nel Thompson, and others, had houses near by, and all protected by the orange-grove from the sun and rain. I was assigned a house of similar structure at a little distance from the grove, very near one occupied by Dr. Stewart, the Surgeon-General of the army. This suited me very well, for our relations had long been of the most intimate and confidential kind, and I could learn more from him of the true state of affairs there than from all the other Englishmen in the country.

x Dr. Stewart had come to Paraguay as early as 1856, and soon after entered into military service as surgeon in the army, and had been promoted to the highest medical rank on account of his efficient services. He was a Scotchman by birth, had seen service in the Crimea, was a man of easy, winning manners, thoroughly informed both in the theory and the practice of medicine and surgery, and was a great acquisition to the military service of Paraguay. He had organized a system of hospitals, and had induced the government to bring out several other English physicians as assistants, so that during the war the medical branch of the service was far more efficient and better conducted than in the camp of either the Brazilians or the Argentines. Having been physician to Lopez for several years, he knew more of his character than any other foreigner in the country; and before I made my visit home in 1865, I had learned through him that the vanity and ambition of the young President were unbounded, and that no consideration for his people would ever interfere with his selfish plans.

y On reaching the encampment, I was astonished to observe the great change that had come over, not only Dr. Stewart, but the other Englishmen at head-quarters, Colonel Thompson, and the civil engineer, Mr. Valpy. Before I had left Paraguay, though they all knew Lopez was a tyrant capable of any atrocity, they had never supposed that they were themselves in any personal danger. But it was all changed now. They had seen that Lopez was resolved that, if he could not continue to rule over Paraguay, no one else should, and was bent on the destruction of the entire people. They early warned me to be very careful in my intercourse with him; that, if I

could keep in favor with him, my presence in the country might somewhat restrain his barbarities ; but that, were he to quarrel with me, it would have been infinitely better for them all had I never returned. They all of them expressed the opinion that they would never leave the country alive, and gave me the cheering information that my chance of escape was little better than theirs. Yet, strange as it may appear, when nearly everybody about the camp had either been killed in battle, died of disease, or been murdered by Lopez, these three Englishmen were all taken prisoners by the Brazilians, and are now alive to testify to the barbarities of this common enemy of mankind. With one other exception,— Colonel Wisner, the Hungarian, — all the rest, so far as I knew or can recollect them, perished before the cause of all their misery fell, pierced by a lance in the mud of the Aquidaban.

During my stay at head-quarters I had several protracted interviews with Lopez, during which we discussed the situation at considerable length. He said his situation was not so desperate as it had been previously, nothing like so desperate as it had been when his whole army was prostrate with the measles at Itapirú, while Tamandaré was bombarding for twenty-eight days, at long range, doing no harm, and only wasting his ammunition.

He said it was a mistake which many made to suppose that the Brazilian soldiers would not fight. The men were brave enough, but the officers were ignorant and incompetent. He had seen feats of valor performed by Brazilian soldiers equal to anything in his own army ; but there was such a lack of energy, such an indisposition to follow up any temporary advantage which they gained, that it was easy for him to keep them at bay for a long time. His principal hope was that the allies would quarrel among themselves and the alliance be broken up. He believed that the Brazilian exchequer could not long endure such a strain upon it as the war was causing ; that the Empire would become exhausted in its material resources before Paraguay could be overrun and conquered.

I had learned, since my return, that at the time of the cap-

ture of the Argentine steamers at Corrientes there were three Americans on board of them, and that they were prisoners then in Paraguay. I told Lopez that when these men had taken service on board of these steamers war did not exist between Paraguay and the Argentine Republic, and they had no suspicion that such would be the case; therefore, being American citizens, I thought he ought to release them, and that unless he would do so I should be obliged to call the attention of the United States government to their situation. He insisted that they were lawful prisoners; that the capture of the steamers had been in accordance with the rules of war; and that these men, being on board, were as liable to capture and detention as any others, and that by releasing them it would be an acknowledgment of the irregularity of his proceedings in seizing the steamers. I then told him that, as there were very few Americans in the country, I was anxious to do all I could to make their condition as tolerable as possible; and that, as one of these men was a cook, and another a man who might otherwise be useful to me, and it was no advantage to the government to keep them as prisoners, I should regard it as a favor that they might be so far released that I could employ them as servants, waiving for the time the question of the legality of their capture. After a great deal of hesitation and discussion, in which he said it must be clearly understood that they were not to acquire any rights as members of the legation, but were to be available as prisoners in case of an exchange, my request was granted. Unfortunately, one of the three, on being captured, had denied his nationality, and said he was an Englishman; therefore I was obliged to surrender all claims to him. Another, who had been sent to labor in the iron-mines at Ibicui, was sent to the capital to be allowed to come into my service. The third, who was a cook, was a colored man by the name of George Bowen, from the city of Washington, a very powerful, active fellow. He was released, and came to live at my house. But I soon found that, instead of getting a diminutive white elephant on my hands, as in the case of Masterman, I

had got a big black one,— a fellow who would get drunk every chance he could get, and would steal anything he could lay his hands on to give away to his numerous female friends, of whom he seemed to have almost as many as Lopez himself. When drunk, he was so quarrelsome that the other servants were afraid to remain in the house with him; and, after repeated warnings and threats, all of which were entirely unavailing, I was obliged to send him away. What became of him afterwards I never knew.

While at the camp on this occasion, I observed a degree of obsequiousness, and an appearance of terror when in the presence of his Excellency, on the part of all, foreigners and natives alike, that I had never witnessed before. When Lopez was in sight, everybody, from his chief of staff to the scullions about the camp, stood or moved uncovered. On one occasion, he asked me to take a short stroll with him, and look at some round shot and some unexploded shells of the enemy that had been picked up in his camp, and also some field-pieces which had been captured a short time before. His staff and a number of other principal officers followed close by. But whether it was as a guard to protect him if I should turn upon him and attempt to strangle him, or as an invariable habit, I am not aware. Though it was about two o'clock, P. M., and therefore the very hottest part of the day, the sun out in full force, yet every man except Lopez and myself stood cap in hand, looking with the sun beating down in full force upon their heads, several of which were quite bald. Upon another occasion,— it was Christmas day, after dinner,— I walked up to visit Colonel Thompson at his house in the orange-grove, close adjoining that of Madam Lynch. Not finding him in, I strolled around where I found the Madam, Colonel Thompson, General Resquin, General Bruguez, and several others engaged in conversation, and was invited to take a seat among them. I did so, and while sitting there conversing I suddenly saw every one around me jump up hastily and stand with a reverent air, all facing in the same direction. Casting my eyes that way, I saw the President at a distance of several

rods, strolling leisurely through the grove. For my part, I let him stroll, and kept my seat, which act of discourtesy would probably have cost the life of any other person in the group.

During all the time I was at the camp the squadron was employed after the manner that it had formerly been accustomed at Paso de la Patria, in bombarding at long range. After the retirement of the Brazilians from Itapiru and the passage of the army into Paraguayan territory, when all could see how easy it would have been for Lopez's whole army to have been captured had the Brazilian admiral possessed the capacity of an ordinary wood-sawyer, he was recalled by the Emperor, and Admiral Ignacio was appointed in his place. The treatment of Tamandaré by the Emperor after his recall was one of the most singular of the many strange episodes of the war. Though his incapacity and his inertness had cost the Empire many millions of dollars and many thousands of lives, and he had left Lopez stronger than he found him, yet on his return to Rio de Janeiro he was welcomed by the Emperor in the most complimentary terms, publicly thanked for his great and valiant services, and decorated with orders, and assured that his whole course was approved by his imperial master. The only difference between Tamandaré and his successor was that the latter was more wasteful of his ammunition. His iron-clads were brought up to within long range of Curupaiti, and there they continued, day after day and month after month, firing shot and shell into the Paraguayan lines, but scarcely ever doing the least harm. I was assured by the English doctors, that though some days the number of shot that fell within the lines was to be counted by thousands, yet the average loss to the Paraguayans, notwithstanding all this waste of war material, did not amount to two persons a day, killed or wounded. One afternoon the bombarding was very heavy, and just about an hour after it ceased in the evening I was sitting with Lopez at the door of his house, when General Diaz, who was in command at Curupaiti, came in to report the day's doings ; and when Lopez

asked him the result of that terrible bombardment we had been hearing through the afternoon, he said that all the harm it had done was to wound one old cow.]

If the allies, in pursuance of their mutual engagement not to lay down their arms until they had driven Lopez from Paraguay, were to prosecute the war in that fashion until they accomplished their object, what misery and protracted suffering must not the Paraguayan people endure !

During this visit, I also called the President's attention to the fact, that, at the time of the sack of Bella Vista, in the province of Corrientes, the stock of a merchant there who claimed to be an American citizen, and had the American flag over his premises, had been taken, and receipts had been given by the officer in command. This merchant had requested me to present his claim, and ask that it might be allowed and paid. Lopez asked me the amount of the receipts. I replied that it was between seven and eight thousand dollars in coin. With a magnificent air he replied: "It matters not whether it is seven thousand or seventy thousand, if you have the receipts you have only to present them and the money will be paid; present the case to the Minister of Foreign Affairs." Having thus secured the release of my countrymen from imprisonment and obtained an assurance of the adjustment of this claim, and having no other business there, I soon afterwards informed his Excellency that I would return to Asuncion whenever a steamer might be going up the river. To this he replied, in a manner equally magnificent, that it did not matter whether a steamer was going or not; if I desired to return, that was sufficient; a steamer would be despatched at any hour that I desired for my accommodation. I prepared to return, therefore, very well satisfied with my trip, and believed that the fears which my English friends had expressed as to the desperate measures to which Lopez might resort were not well founded. But an hour or so before I left the camp to go to Humaita, at about nine o'clock in the evening, I was somewhat staggered when Dr. Stewart came into my house in great excitement, and said his chief commissary, who was no

other than my landlord, the owner of the house I lived in, Don Luis Jara, had been arrested, taken to prison, and put in the stocks. What his crime was no one knew except Lopez, but as he had been somewhat intimate with me during my stay there, and had expressed his great satisfaction that I was occupying his fine house, and had told me that I should be welcome to it so long as I remained in the country, and to everything it contained, that he should ask no rent, but should consider himself fully compensated for the protection that, in certain contingencies, I might give it, I was afraid that, notwithstanding Lopez's great politeness and civility towards me, Don Luis had somehow got into trouble on my account.

I left the same evening for Humaita, and an incident occurred that night that I may here relate, as it served to put me on my guard for the future, as well as to show how completely the secrets of everybody were in the possession of Lopez. While the Shamokin was lying in front of Corrientes, on her way up the river to pass through the blockading squadron, a gentleman whose wife and infant child had been carried off as prisoners to Paraguay at the time that the city was evacuated by the Paraguayan troops came on board the steamer. He brought with him some thirty or forty gold ounces, which he requested me to take, and, if I had the opportunity, to send them to his wife ; and if I could not send the money, to make use of it in purchasing whatever I thought she might most need and which I might be permitted to send her. I took it, and promised to do the best I could with it. While at Asuncion I had learned from Berges that this lady was detained at a small capilla not far above Humaita, and that she was not a close prisoner. Thinking that the money would be more available if changed into silver dollars than in ounces, I took about half the amount in silver in a small tin box, intending to speak to Lopez in regard to the matter, and request that it might be forwarded to the lady. I accordingly, when in conversation with him at Paso Pucu, took up the subject, and said that I had the money with me, and if he had no objection, I would leave it to be sent to her.

He said that if I would leave it with a certain officer at Humaita, it should be forwarded. On returning to Humaita, I found, on taking the box from my trunk, that I had left the key in Asuncion. I proposed to force the lock, or to cut a hole in the side of the box, so that the money could be taken out. The officer, however, said that was unnecessary, and sent immediately and brought an expert, who picked the lock without difficulty. I then thought that, if prepared to pick locks so readily, what security was there in an official seal?

Returning to the capital, the same dreary monotony continued. The *Semanario* would frequently contain accounts of great victories. These victories were generally represented to be the sallies of small bodies of Paraguayan troops, who would attack the enemy in position, and after slaying hundreds or thousands, causing complete havoc and consternation, they would return in good order, and perhaps report the loss of two or three killed and as many wounded. But unfortunately, in spite of all precautions taken by the government to prevent the people of Asuncion from learning the facts, they would frequently hear that what the *Semanario* reported as a great victory was in fact a disastrous repulse, so that from the accounts in the *Semanario* we could judge absolutely nothing of the progress of the war.

In one of these forays some newspapers had been captured, and from them it was ascertained that the United States had offered their mediation in the war, and had sent instructions to the different ministers in Rio, Buenos Aires, and Paraguay, to make the tender of their good offices to the governments to which they were respectively accredited. I had received no official notice of this ; in fact, I had received nothing from beyond the military lines since my arrival in Paraguay. No despatches had come through, and as the allies had made so much resistance to my passage through their lines, it was possible that my correspondence was delayed in the allied camp. I therefore proposed to go through to the headquarters of the Commander-in-Chief of the allies, the Marques de Caxias, and learn what progress had been made in the pro-

posed mediation, and obtain my despatches or other mail matter, if there were anything of the kind to be found on that side of the line.

On making a suggestion of this kind to Berges, he immediately telegraphed to Lopez, and on the same day I was advised that his Excellency would give me every facility for passing through to the allied camp.

CHAPTER XII.

Impressment of all Paraguayans into Military Service. — Battle of Estero Bellaco. — Brazilian Chivalry. — Denunciations against Deserters. — Story of Doña Carmelita Cordal. — She publicly renounces her Husband. — Her Confidential Explanations. — Universal Hypocrisy of Paraguayans. — Enforced Contributions. — Dr. Tristan Roca. — Levies upon Foreigners. — Testimonials to Lopez. — The Album, the Flag, and the Sword. — The Women offer all their Jewels. — Their Patriotic Speeches. — Lopez accepts only a Part. — The Women volunteer as Soldiers. — A Tragical Farce.

THE men in Asuncion, and indeed throughout Paraguay, had been enlisted into the army previous to my return. There was not a single able-bodied man in the whole country between the ages of eighteen and sixty who was not, in some capacity or other, in the government service. The recruiting after that was from the very old and the very young, until all from eight to eighty, who were not in prison, were forced into the army. Of the better class of citizens in Asuncion with whom I had been previously acquainted, those engaged in business as merchants, and those having an income from their property sufficient for their support, had all been conscripted in the early part of the year 1866, and sent to the head-quarters as common soldiers. To serve in the ranks, they were required to cast off their shoes and the clothes of a citizen, and don the uniform of a Paraguayan soldier, — white pantaloons, a red shirt, and a soldier's cap. The battalion into which they were drafted was No. 40, and they had but just got fairly organized in the camp at the time of the battle of the 24th of May, in which Lopez received a most terrible defeat. The 25th of May being the anniversary of Argentine independence, General Mitre had resolved on that day to make a general attack along the lines of Lopez, and

the day preceding he was engaged in getting everything ready for a great battle. There was to have been a general review at one o'clock in the day, and the men had but just laid aside their arms to cook their *asado*, when the alarm was given that the Paraguayans were approaching. It was quickly seen that at several different points large bodies of men were marching from the woods, while another force was bearing down directly in front. Instantly the allied ranks were formed for action, and the greatest battle of the war then took place. The Paraguayans fought with the courage of desperation, and their shock was received with equal valor, until the advancing legions were hurled back at all points. Lopez, at a safe distance, was watching the course of the battle, and seeing that all his plans had miscarried, and that his troops were being cut to pieces, he sounded a retreat. The retreat was more disastrous than the attack, as the Argentine artillery was in such a position as to rake the only open space of ground through which they must retire. President Mitre was in command at this time, and why he did not follow up his advantage has always been a mystery. Had any of the Brazilian generals been in command, there would have been no mystery about it, for they always practised a kind of chivalry unknown in other wars, and whenever they had gained a victory, routed the enemy and driven them back in consternation, they were so extremely chivalrous that they would not pursue their advantage, until the retreating foe could have time to reorganize and prepare for another advance. In this action, Lopez had given the post of honor to the Fortieth Battalion, that is, he had placed it where there was the greatest danger, and where it was supposed he had intended that they should be killed off. Whether that was his intention or not, such was the fact, as very few ever returned alive. Two or three, however, were taken prisoners; and as soon as this fact was known they were denounced as deserters in the *Semanario*, and confiscation of their property was threatened. One of these unfortunate prisoners I had met while I was in Corrientes waiting for a gunboat. His name was Fernando Cordal. He had

been desperately wounded in the action, having received three balls in different parts of his body.

On reaching Asuncion I learned, greatly to my disgust and horror, that he had been denounced as a traitor, and that his wife, who was the daughter of Don Andres Gill, for many years the principal secretary and adviser of Carlos Antonio Lopez, had been threatened with exile and confiscation of all her property, and that to avert such a fate she had published a card denouncing her husband and anathematizing him as a traitor and deserter. I found, indeed, that all those whose near kindred had been taken prisoners or in any way had escaped from the power of the allies were obliged to denounce them and repudiate them, or else be driven, proscribed and destitute, far into the interior. Notwithstanding this renunciation of her husband, to whom she was fondly attached, Doña Carmelita was constantly in dread of being stripped of her whole fortune, which had been considerable, and sent, like many others, into the wilderness. When I reached Asuncion, I narrated what I had known of him; I told everybody that I had seen her husband in Corrientes desperately wounded; that he had received his wounds when gallantly fighting the enemy, and was finally overpowered and taken to the hospital, where he died a few days after. These facts being made known to Lopez, Doña Carmelita was allowed to remain at the capital. She was one of our nearest neighbors, and a woman of superior intelligence, very sprightly and vivacious, and from her I was able to learn a great many things in regard to the condition of affairs around us, and the real sentiments of the people towards Lopez. She used to frighten me with the stories she told me of his atrocities, which she said were known to all her acquaintances; she said that the hypocrisy among the people in their professions of devotion and loyalty was beyond belief, it was universal; and they were in such constant fear and anxiety that they would be willing to surrender everything in the world but life and health, so that the Lopez family might be driven from Paraguay. She said: "They have taken our

husbands, our fathers, and our sons; they have taken the greater part of our fortunes, and will take all if allowed to remain. They are welcome to everything, provided they will leave us simply our lives. But," said she, "Lopez is a great tiger; we all fear the last stroke of his paw. He will kill us all, if possible, in his dying gasp." When I asked her how she could denounce her husband as she did, she said that no Paraguayan would respect her the less for that, neither would her husband, if he were alive, and that the lives of herself and her three children probably were dependent upon some such humiliating act. When I asked her how she dared to talk to me in that way, when she knew so well the character of Lopez, and that if it were known she would be subjected to the most terrible fate, she replied that she knew to whom she was talking, and that if I were acquainted with all the better class of ladies in Asuncion I should find that, without exception, they entertained the same sentiments. I am thus particular in speaking of the revelations of Doña Carmelita, as it will afford a clew to many things which occurred afterwards. When the day of the general arrest, imprisonment, and torture of all the foreigners and all the better class of Paraguayans came, they were questioned in regard to each other and of what they had said of his Excellency, the good President, Marshal Lopez, and they were tortured until they would not only admit everything which had been charged against them, but would accuse others; thus with the suffering from the grillos, the straps and lashes, and the cepo uruguayana, when in their agony and weakness they could endure no longer, they sought to put an end to their woes by accusing their former companions and friends, and revealing not only all they had ever said against the Lopez family but a great deal more, and even going so far as to accuse persons with whom they had no confidences and scarcely acquaintanceship.

4 The system of enforced contributions had begun at a very early period of the war. At the meeting of the Congress which declared war against the Argentine Republic, it had

been voted that the government should bestow upon Lopez some insignia of honor, leaving it for him to decide at any time what that should be, and soon after it would be given out, in a sort of semi-official manner, that the people were to present him with some token of their regard. The initiation of any movement of this kind would usually be undertaken by the wives of certain foreigners in the country, who were on intimate terms with Madam Lynch. The two most forward in this business were the wife of Sinfioriano Cacerés, formerly partner of Madam Lynch in the importation and sale of cattle, and the wife of Dr. Tristan Roca, a refugee from Bolivia. Both these men were on all public occasions most enthusiastic defenders and eulogists of Lopez and the Paraguayan cause. Dr. Roca, who was a man of education, and had formerly been a member of the Bolivian government, was invariably present at all public meetings, and made speeches glorifying the great hero of the age. He also contributed many vigorous articles to the *Semanario*, in the same strain, and became the editor of a sort of newspaper called the *Centinela*, which was prepared expressly for the army, and was distributed about the camp for the benefit of the soldiery. The ball being once set in motion, whoever was invited to contribute was, to all intents and purposes, compelled to do so. As soon as it had become generally known that the people were to be assessed for any offering, a public meeting would be called of the ladies of Asuncion, and then a formal proposition would be made that they should all unite in contributing some testimonial of gratitude for the protection that the great Lopez had afforded them, and of admiration for his heroic services in the field, in defending his country against the invasion of a barbarous foe. As early as 1866, the government employees raised a national subscription to present him an album with solid gold covers, ornamented with precious stones, in a gold box, and with an equestrian statue of gold on it. Shortly afterwards the Paraguayan women united their offerings to present him a magnificent flag embroidered in gold, with diamonds and rubies, and a silver staff, with mount-

ings to correspond. A sash, as the insignia of the head of the National Order of Merit, on a similar scale of extravagant value, was added to the preceding testimonial. But a few weeks were allowed to the ladies after the people had been assessed for the sum requested to make this costly offer, before another proposition would be started in a similar way. At one time it was proposed to present him with a sword of honor and a crown of laurel-leaves, all in gold. The sheath was likewise to be of gold, and over this sheath was to be another, likewise of gold. Everything was to be elaborately worked by the goldsmiths of Asuncion, of which there were several very competent and skilful. Besides this, the people were being continually assessed for public demonstrations in the way of balls, at which all were expected to attend, and pronounce eulogistic discourses in praise of their great protector. These things were repeated so often, that at last they became absolutely disgusting. Some of the foreigners who kept their money and valuables in my house, whenever anything of this kind had been resolved upon would come and take away sufficient to pay their assessment ; for though called by another name, they had no hesitation in telling me that it was an assessment, and they must either pay or go to prison.

The Paraguayan women of all classes, as I have said in another place, had, considering their general poverty, an incredible amount of jewelry. It had been so from the old colonial times. But this process of extorting their wealth from them by pretended voluntary contributions was too slow for Lopez and Madam Lynch, and they resolved to lay their hands on all the jewelry in the country, and the plan of operations for accomplishing this object was eminently worthy of the parties for whose benefit it was conceived. First, it was hinted, after the usual manner, that the women of Paraguay proposed to contribute all their jewelry to the state, in order to furnish his Excellency the President the means of carrying on the war, and defending them from the barbarous enemy. A meeting was called to take the subject into consideration, at which the ladies of the capital, were to make speeches, and to ex-

press their desire to lay at the feet of their great defender all their treasures, and even to take up arms, if he would permit them, and allow them the privilege of entering the ranks as soldiers. The speeches made on these occasions were always published in the *Semanario*. They were usually written by priests, or by some of those men employed about the government offices, like Benitez, and by such strangers as were detained in the country, and who, being unable to obtain a livelihood in any other way, were glad to eke out a subsistence in this degrading work. The most prolific of these writers were the Argentine Colonel Coriolano Marquez, and Dr. Tristan Roca, of Bolivia. Almost simultaneously with this movement in the capital, a similar demonstration was made throughout the towns and districts of the interior, and from all the capillas in the country there came letters for publication in the *Semanario*, stating that the women had no sooner heard of this proposition than they had come together in great enthusiasm, and demanded that they should be permitted to join in this offering. In what manner their jewels or money could be used for the national defence did not appear, as the treasures contributed could not be sent out of the country, nor could they be used for the purchase of anything that could be brought from the exterior. Everything in the way of provisions or clothing, all that could contribute in any way to supply the army, had been ruthlessly taken from the outset, without question. Their horses and their cattle had been taken; every house had been ransacked, and the people robbed of their bedding and their clothes not in actual use; and even their kettles, in which they cooked their scanty food, were carried off to the army head-quarters. The people knew that all their contributions would go to swell the private fortunes of Lopez and his paramour, and yet they were forced to dissemble, and to feign that they contributed everything willingly, in the full belief that it was to enable the Marshal President to defend their country and drive back a dreaded and barbarous foe.

At the meeting held in Asuncion an address to the Presi-

dent was adopted, expressive of their gratitude to him, and of their desire that, while their sons, brothers, and husbands were fighting in the ranks under his gallant leadership, they might also be allowed to contribute in every way to the general cause, and requesting Lopez to permit them thus to strengthen his arms with their humble contributions. The President replied in a formal letter, which was published in the *Semanario* of the 8th of September, 1867. In this, after expressing his gratitude to the fair daughters of Paraguay for their patriotism in thus offering their treasures, he said: "The national resources, and those that the patriotism of my citizens has placed in my hands, have been until now sufficient to meet our necessities, and I expect that they will be; yet in order to put a climax to the great strife, and that we may sustain and save the country with its honor and its rights, God protecting us and the valorous legions that fight at my orders, these considerations that I am pleased to offer to the deputation of the signers have decided me to accept but a twentieth part of their patriotic offering, in order that I may issue the first national gold coin, having in this the object of exhibiting to posterity the sublime virtue with which the daughters of the country have distinguished themselves in a time of trial, rather than to seek for a circulating medium that may serve for commerce."

Agents were immediately appointed to receive the five per cent indicated by the letter of the President; and all the women of the country, rich and poor alike, were obliged to take their jewels to those agents and have them weighed, a twentieth part of their value contributed, and a full list of all the rest taken. The same thing was done in all the different districts of the entire state, so that when the whole affair was concluded Lopez had received five per cent of all the jewelry in Paraguay, and, more important than that, he then knew how to lay his hands on all the rest. During the time that this work was going on, the different districts of the interior were required to send in their delegates, two or three from each partido, to deliver the lists of those who were to participate in

the festivities of the capital and to make patriotic speeches in behalf of the ladies of their particular districts. They were detained in the capital for several weeks, and during all this time they were required to be in attendance day and evening at public meetings, at balls, or in the various ways which were dictated to them, in order that they might show their patriotism and their gratitude to the great hero, the immortal Lopez.

Great pains were taken to make it appear that the women, in offering to volunteer as soldiers, had acted of their own free will. The object in this, like that of many other of the popular demonstrations, could not have been for any effect that it could have in Paraguay, for neither Lopez nor Madam Lynch could have been so entirely ignorant of the real feelings of the people as to suppose for a moment that they were acting, either in giving up their jewels or in volunteering as soldiers, except under fear and compulsion. The only object must have been for the impression that would be created abroad by having it published to the world that even the women of Paraguay were so patriotic, so devoted to the cause which the great Lopez was defending, that they offered to give up their jewels to enable him to defend his country, and to bear arms as soldiers in the field. At the first meeting which was held by them, for which everything had been pre-arranged by Madam Lynch, after numerous speeches in which all spoke of the great sacrifices and great heroism of the father of the country, and of the many blessings that he had conferred upon them, which it would never be possible for them to repay by any services which they could render, it was proposed that a committee should be appointed to request one more signal favor from his Excellency. This was that they might be permitted to take up arms and enter the ranks as soldiers. Such a pathetic appeal was obviously too much for the tender heart of Lopez; he could not resist it, and throughout the state companies were organized. A style of uniform was prescribed for the volunteers, and officers from the army, lieutenants or ensigns who had been in the hospital and

were convalescing, were assigned to the duty of teaching them the military evolutions. The only weapon which they were instructed in the use of was the lance. Fire-arms were never put into their hands. But in the capital, and at all the different capillas of the state, the women between the ages of sixteen and forty were conscripted. In the capital, for some reason or other, those women who belonged to the upper classes, or what was called the *alta categoria*, were not called upon to volunteer. But there were no such exemptions in the interior, and the daughters of the most wealthy and respectable citizens were required, equally with the slaves and peons, to resort to the capillas, don the uniform, take the lance, and learn the drill. None of the companies thus organized were ever sent to the army as soldiers. Hundreds and thousands of them were sent as laborers, where they were required to do all kinds of menial labor, to keep the camps in order, to cut and bring wood, and even to work in the trenches.

While the Paraguayans of all classes were in these various ways demonstrating their loyalty, their patriotism and devotion to Lopez, the foreigners were not neglected. They too were also reminded that popular demonstrations of gratitude would be acceptable, and there were not wanting those who were eager to take the initiative, hoping thereby to win greater favors and higher consideration either from Lopez or Madam Lynch. In the month of December, 1866, therefore, the foreigners proposed that they would give a grand ball at the Club. The preliminary steps were taken for an entertainment which it was intended should be in all its appointments in the best style possible under the circumstances in which the country was situated. A subscription-list was circulated, and all foreigners having any social position contributed, the most of them with a liberality far beyond their ability. A list of the subscribers is appended, and it will be seen that it was signed by fifty-four persons.* Of these but one, Mr. Porter C. Bliss,

* Every one of the following list of foreigners, who, in December, 1866, signed a testimonial of gratitude to Lopez, is now dead, except Mr. Bliss ; and all but two

survived at the close of the war. All the others (with the exception of José Solis, who was killed in the last battle of the war) were executed or perished from torture, or from the exposure and hardships to which they were subjected by him in whose honor they had proposed to give this proof of their gratitude and regard.

The men being all taken for the army, all the farm labor throughout the country was performed by the women. Though nearly all the cattle and horses were taken for the service of the state, yet one or two yoke of oxen was usually left for each family, that the women might be enabled to plough the ground and plant the maize and the mandioca, which when grown was mostly taken for the use of the troops. The women were compelled to yoke the oxen and to plough the fields; the butchering at the slaughter-yards near the capital was also performed by women, and in the market-place of Asuncion none but women were to be seen, except the police, who were always present to overhear and report any remark of discontent or impatience at the hardships to which they or three (who had died previously) figure in Resquin's Diary as *traitors*, who were executed, or who *died in prison*, or as it was sometimes added, with grim sarcasm, *of a natural death* :—

Tristan Roca, Bolivian; Porter C. Bliss, American; José Solis, Spaniard; Antonio Rebaudi, Italian; Antonio Susini, Italian; Pedro Anglade, French; Ignacio de Galarraga, Spaniard; Antonio de las Carreras, Oriental; Francisco Rodriguez Larreta, Oriental; Antonio Nin y Reyes, Oriental; José M. Vilas, Spaniard; Ramon Babañoli, Italian; José Balet, French; Pedro Solari, Italian; Carlos Reiso, Italian; Pelayo Azcona, Spaniard; Francisco Vilas, Spaniard; Emilio Neumann, German; José Maria Leite Pereira, Portuguese Consul; Eugenio Matheu Aguiar, Spaniard; Gustavo Haman, German; Joaquin Romaguera, Spaniard; Lizardo Baca, Bolivian; Juan Agustin Uribe, Spaniard; Narciso Prada, Spaniard; Francisco da C. Leite Falcao, Brazilian; Hipolito Perez, Spaniard; Rafael Peña, Bolivian; Nicolas Ribera, Bolivian; Andres Dellepiane, Italian; Augustin Piaggio, Italian; Venanio Uribe, Spaniard; Martin Madrenas, Spaniard; Pedro Falca, Spaniard; Pio Pozzoli, Italian; James Manlove, American; Narciso Lasserre, French; Baldomero Ferreira, Spaniard; Federico Anavitarte, Oriental; Faustino J. Martinez, Oriental; Ignacio Ruiz, Spaniard; José T. Ramirez, Argentine; José M. Cano, Argentine; Nicolas Susini, Italian; Isidro Codina, Spaniard; Joaquin Vargas Aldado, Oriental; Teodoro Gaúna, Argentine; Pedro N. Rolon, Argentine; Federico Hoffman, German; Antonio Vasconcellos, Portuguese; Julio Veia, Italian; Simon Fidanza, Italian; Estevan Pulé, Italian; Angel Silva, Argentine.

were subjected. An expression of a wish that the war might end, if overheard, would surely send a woman to prison, several instances of which came to my knowledge. More frequently, however, such enemies to the state would be sent to the army, where they were subjected to the most revolting treatment.

CHAPTER XIII.

An Offer of Mediation. — Voyage to Head-Quarters. — Conversation with Benigno Lopez. — Interviews with the Marshal. — Exchange of Messages with Caxias. — Lopez's Hopes and Fears. — The Passage through the Lines. — Rudeness of Pancho Lynch. — Reception by Caxias. — His Reply to the Offer of Mediation. — Discussion of the Chances of the War. — The Polish Officer's Map. — Return to Paso Pucu. — A Breakfast with Lopez. — Anger of the Marshal. — Extract from my Diary. — Final Interview with Lopez. — He announces a Memorable Resolution. — He will never surrender. — His Place in History secure.

HAVING arranged with Berges to go a second time to the army head-quarters, and then to cross over to the camp of the allies, I was informed that the little steamer Olimpo would be ready to take me to Humaita on the afternoon of the 7th of March. I accordingly went aboard, where I found the President's younger brother, Don Benigno, who was going as my fellow-passenger. On our way down the river we talked at considerable length of the situation of affairs, of the prospects of Paraguay for the future, and the probable issue of the war. We were both of us very guarded, and were distrustful of each other. I took it for granted that whatever I might say to Benigno would be reported by him to his brother, and I supposed that he expected the same of me. Knowing him to be much more familiar with the country than myself, I inquired about the natural difficulties that would interfere with the advance of the allies, and we speculated as to what would probably be their next move, and, if successful, what would be the succeeding step, and what would be the result provided it were disastrous, like the battle of Curupaiti. We also talked a good deal in regard to the resources of the Brazilians, and I remember well that Benigno ✓

✓ told me that Brazil had already contracted such a debt in Europe, that her creditors could not afford to have her defeated, as if she were not to succeed, and her armies were to be conquered and driven out of Paraguay, the nation would probably repudiate the debt which they had already contracted. I remember that the creditors were compared by one of us to a man who should commence to dig a well, thinking to find water within a few feet of the surface, and who, having once begun, would be unwilling to lose the labor already performed, and so would continue digging away until he had gone twenty times deeper than he had anticipated would be necessary.) Though I had known that Benigno had formerly been on bad terms with his brother, I had supposed that harmony between them was restored; and as I had learned that at the public meetings and festivals he had made several speeches very eulogistic of his brother, and had been decorated with the Order of Merit, I supposed that he was no longer under a cloud, and would report anything that I might say with as much fidelity to his master as any of the most trusted spies. We reached Humaita on the morning of the 9th, and, being furnished with a horse and guide, I proceeded to the camp of Paso Pucu, which I reached at about eleven o'clock. I was assigned the same house in which I had lived when at the camp some two months before, and, after getting some breakfast, I had an interview with his Excellency. He seemed greatly pleased that I was going through to the camp of Caxias, and seemed to have high hopes that something greatly to his advantage would result from the proposed mediation of the United States. I anticipated, however, very little from it, and so I told him; but, as I had learned that my government had sent instructions to me, I was anxious to obtain them, and if through mediation or in any other way any avenue could be discovered through which the parties to the war could retire from it, I should do all in my power to attain that end. As the allies had made so much objection to my passing through their lines on a previous occasion, and as I did not know how near to the advanced outposts the

head-quarters of the Marques de Caxias might be, or whether I should have a personal interview with him, I prepared a letter previous to setting out to send him, in case I was subjected to any detention, or prevented from going immediately to his head-quarters. In this letter I set forth the object of my visit, stating that, not having received my correspondence for a long time, and having heard that my government had offered its mediation in the war, I was extremely anxious to learn what the probabilities were that such mediation would be accepted on the part of the allies in the same manner as I had good reason to believe it would be accepted by the government of Paraguay.

During the time that I remained at the Paraguayan head-quarters I had several interviews with Lopez, and conversed with him with considerable freedom. I also talked a great deal with those Englishmen who were living at his head-quarters, Dr. Stewart, Colonel Thompson, and Mr. Valpy, and told them all that, with what I could learn from Lopez and from themselves, I had little or no confidence in being able to effect what was expected of me; that from what I knew of the temper and determination of the allies, they would not accept the mediation of any nation; and that I greatly feared if I were to go through, and my mission should be unsuccessful, it would render the situation of us all more desperate than it had ever been. Still there was a chance that it might be otherwise, and as all were hoping for so much, I would go. Accordingly, on Monday, the 11th of March, a flag of truce was despatched to the front, with a message to the Marques de Caxias announcing that the American Minister was within the Paraguayan lines, and desirous of passing through to his head-quarters. An answer was promptly returned, stating that the Minister would be at full liberty to enter his camp, that firing would be suspended, and he might come with an escort of a whole battalion to the Paraguayan front, and no one would be injured. Lopez, when he received this answer, affected to be greatly indignant, and said: "Why should he say that a whole battalion may go as an escort to

the Paraguayan front? Of course the whole army may go if I say so. It was meant as an insult." To this I replied that I considered it in exactly the contrary sense; that the Marques de Caxias intended to say that if the American Minister wished to pass through his lines, and a whole battalion were to go as his escort, he would not open fire upon it. Lopez, however, still pretended that Caxias was meditating some trick, some fraud, and that his object was to induce him to send a force in that direction in some exposed position, and then open fire upon it. I told him that I entertained no fears of that kind, that I should be willing to go, and did not believe there would be the least danger. He then gave orders, that, if there was any firing in the vicinity of the road which we were to take, the escort should return. And it appeared to me that he was quite willing that there should be something of that kind, so that I should have occasion to make a complaint to my government that the flag of truce had not been respected, but that, when the Brazilians knew I was approaching their outposts, they deliberately fired upon me. At about two o'clock in the day, the escort that was to accompany me was ready. I was provided with a carriage and about thirty men, among whom was Colonel Thompson, who rode in the carriage with me. Among the other persons in the escort was the oldest son of Madam Lynch, who was then about fourteen years old, and went by the name of Pancho Lopez. It was a winding, difficult road through which we had to pass, and it was some two hours before we were met by the escort which had been sent by the Marques de Caxias to meet us, and accompany me to his headquarters. When the two escorts met, the officers and men in each mingled together, and fell into conversation in regard to the prospects for peace. Young Pancho Lopez, though but about fourteen years of age, was very forward in expressing his opinion, and was so insolent to some of the officers from the other side, that it would not have been strange had he received a slap in the face in return for his ill-manners. This would have been followed by a general fight, and such a catas-

trophe was averted by the presence of mind of an Oriental officer, who turned to us and told us to start along, while he alone would stay to dismiss their Paraguayan friends. Madam Lynch afterwards professed to be greatly mortified at the rudeness of her son, and the evidence of ill-breeding he had exhibited on an occasion that demanded the strictest courtesy and propriety.

Passing along through the trenches of the allies, the escort took me through the centre of their camp to the house of the Marques at Tuyuti, where I was courteously received by him. I told him, in such poor Spanish as I could command, the object of my visit to his head-quarters, and said that, as I had not been certain of an immediate personal interview with him, I had, before leaving the Paraguayan camp, prepared a letter to send to him, and that from that he would learn the object of my visit more clearly than I could explain it to him verbally, and that I would, therefore, deliver it to him. Before opening it, he asked me if I had come at the instance of Lopez, or on my own motion. I replied that I had come entirely on my own business, and had brought no proposition or message from the Commander-in-Chief of the Paraguayan army. He sent the letter to be translated, and I then asked him if any despatches or other communications had been received at his head-quarters for me, as I had heard that my government had offered its mediation between the belligerents. He said that nothing whatever had been received. I then asked him if there was any truth in the rumor, which I had heard while in Paraguay, that General Asboth, United States Minister at Buenos Aires, was coming to the seat of war. He immediately went to his desk and took out a file of letters, spread them on the table before him, and, as if intending that I should look over the part which he pointed out with his finger as he read it, and which appeared to be an official letter, he read substantially this: that the American Minister in Buenos Aires, General Alexander Asboth, having received instructions in regard to the mediation of the United States in the existing war, had proposed to go up to the seat of war and pass

through to the camp of President Lopez to confer with his colleague there, Mr. Washburn, but that they (the writers or authors of the letter) had seen the admiral of the American squadron and had confidentially arranged it with him so that the Minister at Buenos Aires could not go on the gunboat which was to be sent to carry up the despatches of the Minister in Paraguay.

Near the house of the Marques was a very nice tent of heavy pilot-cloth, elegantly finished, and provided with cots and everything necessary to make its occupant as comfortable as possible. This tent, apparently, was reserved for visitors to whom the Marques was disposed to show particular attention. I was told that it was at my disposition, and that I should be expected to take my meals with his Excellency. That evening we talked until late of various matters; but as Lopez kept all his affairs so entirely to himself, I had no information to give him in regard to his strength or resources; and had I known all about them, I could not, with propriety, have communicated anything to him. The next day a member of the Marques's staff, a Pole, whom I had previously met at Corrientes, and who had been an officer in the American war and on the staff of General Grant, brought me some newspapers. From them I learned that the offer of mediation by the United States had not been favorably received by the allies, and I was confirmed in my impression that my mission would amount to nothing. The Marques, who was out at daylight next morning inspecting his troops and his fortifications, returned about ten o'clock, and at eleven we had breakfast, after which I received a formal answer to my note which I had delivered the day before. In this reply Caxias assumed diplomatic as well as military functions. He stated, in regard to the offer of mediation by the United States, that it would never be accepted by the allies; that they had been forced into the war by the unlawful and barbarous acts of Lopez, and would never treat with him; that he must leave the country, and that when he would do so the way would be open for a speedy and honorable peace to all parties. He concluded his letter

by intimating to me that my visit was not particularly welcome, and that I need not come across the lines again, if I had no other object in view than to obtain my correspondence, as he would send to me directly anything to my address which might come into his hands. I was very busy during the day, writing despatches to the Secretary of State, and also to General Asboth at Buenos Aires, and General Webb at Rio. To all of them I complained of the strange conduct of Admiral Godon, who, it seems, not satisfied with aiding the allies in detaining me, was still in confidential relations with them, and was intriguing to defeat the plan of mediation which had been proposed by our government, and had refused to give passage on a gunboat to General Asboth at a time when the latter thought that if he could have the full co-operation of the squadron such mediation might have been accepted.

In the course of conversation with Caxias, I asked him what Lopez could do if the allies would not treat with him under any circumstances. He could not escape through their lines, nor was there any way open by which he could get out of Paraguay and go to Europe or the United States. He was completely at bay, and in that situation he would probably fight to the last, and would give the allies a great deal of trouble before he was conquered. To this the Marques replied, quoting a Portuguese proverb to this effect: "Always provide a golden bridge for a fleeing enemy"; from which I inferred that, whenever Lopez should be prepared to leave Paraguay, he would have his own terms as to the amount of money he should receive in return for so great a service. The Polish engineer had told me the same thing during the day in regard to the resources of Lopez, and I had requested him to give me a sketch of the Paraguayan encampment. He replied that he could not do so without the permission of the Commander-in-Chief, which if he could obtain, he would very gladly furnish me with the complete plan of the country, including not only the camp of Lopez, but the whole region from Curupaiti to Villa Franca.

Having learned that the proffered mediation of the United States was not to be accepted by the allies, and not finding any despatches or other correspondence for me, I determined to return to the Paraguayan camp on the following day, the second after my arrival. Having advised the Marques of my intention, he assured me that everything should be ready, and an escort and flag of truce would be ready to start at seven o'clock, A. M. It was a beautiful clear morning when we were ready to start. The Marques sent his chief of staff, with his own body-guard, consisting of some forty men, as an escort. The men were all dressed in a very rich and peculiar uniform, and were well mounted. Bidding the Marques adieu, and expressing my thanks for his courtesy, I started to re-pass the lines. While on the way I was overtaken by the Polish engineer, who gave me a tracing of the camp of Lopez, giving the position of the batteries, the troops, the head-quarters, and all the defences which it could oppose to the advance of the allies. He told me that I was at perfect liberty to make any use of it I pleased, that it had been prepared for me by permission of the Marques, and was in no respect to be considered as confidential. The inference that I drew from this was, that the Marques hoped that by showing Lopez how entirely the allies were possessed of the facts in regard to his situation, he would see that he was completely in their power, and would consider that the best thing he could do would be to make terms; and that the hint of the proverb he had quoted the day before about a golden bridge was but an intimation that, if I could hire Lopez to go away, any amount of money that might be required would be at my disposal.

We passed along by the same road which we had come over two days before, and in the same place where the two escorts had met on that occasion we encountered the advance guard of the Paraguayans. Evidently my return had not been expected so soon, as only some three or four men with horses were at the front. The officer in command of the small force was Captain Andres Maciel, one of the many afterwards executed by Lopez as traitors, as appears from Resquin's Diary.

I reached the head-quarters of Lopez at about ten o'clock in the morning, and had barely time to attend to my toilet when I received an invitation to take breakfast with him at his house. I found him at his table, where were present with him such friends as he was in the habit of treating with most consideration, among whom were the Bishop, General Barrios, General Bruguez, Dr. Stewart, Coloner Wisner, young Pancho Lopez, and one or two others. I could see that all were intensely anxious to know the result of my mission, and I wondered very much why Lopez had not sent the others away until he should learn from me what I had seen and heard. About the first question he asked me was in regard to the political condition of affairs in Buenos Aires. He had inferred from some newspapers that had been captured, or from the declarations of certain prisoners who had been tortured into making such statements as would please him, that a revolution in Buenos Aires was imminent; that General Mitre, on his return from the army, after having resigned the chief command to the Marques de Caxias, had been received with great coldness by the people of Buenos Aires; that there was a general clamor for peace; and that the feeling against a further continuance of the war was such that the alliance must very soon be given up. This delusive hope I was obliged to dispel. I told him that General Mitre had been received with acclamations by all classes of people in Buenos Aires; that nothing had occurred to change the character of the situation; and that, so far as I could see, the allies would continue the war indefinitely; nor could I learn that the Brazilians were experiencing any new difficulty in raising money abroad. He inquired particularly about the Marques de Caxias, and what sort of a man he seemed to be. I told him that he was an old man who appeared to be very active and an excellent disciplinarian; that the allied camp was in a much better condition than I had ever seen it before, though I had visited it several times. I told him that he had treated me with courtesy, and that I had taken my meals at his table; that he certainly did not maintain that Spartan simplicity in his mode of life which it

was supposed was incident to the life of a soldier, as he had an abundance of the finest mutton and beef, which must have been brought from a great distance, and also very fine fruits that must have come from Montevideo. Long afterwards I learned that what I then said in regard to the sumptuous table of the Marques caused very great offence to the Marshal; that he often used to speak of it with bitterness, and seemed to think that I had intended to reflect on the poverty of his table and the scantiness of his resources by comparing the repast before me with that which I had witnessed on the table of the Commander-in-Chief of the allied army. He did not evince, however, at that time, any displeasure at what I said; and as my remarks were intended to be rather complimentary than otherwise to the Paraguayans, who could carry on war without those luxuries, and to reflect on the Brazilian officers for giving more attention to their own comfort than to the severe duties of the soldier, I never suspected that I had given any offence, and it was not until after I had left Paraguay that I learned that my conversation on that occasion was one of the most serious charges that he ever had to make against me. I will here quote from my journal, or rather from the memoranda which I wrote immediately after I left the camp of Marshal Lopez to return to Asuncion, and while I was on board the steamer on my way up the river. The conversations which I had had with him I then thought might be of some historic value at a future time, and I accordingly wrote out from memory, within a day or two afterwards, the substance of what was said at our different interviews.

“ After a little time he sent away all the rest, and requested me to remain. I then told him that the proposed mediation had been rejected, and that so far as I could see there was no prospect whatever of peace; that the war must go on indefinitely until one or the other of the belligerent parties was utterly destroyed. I gave him the plans of his own grounds given me by the Polish engineer, which showed, as I thought, that they were well informed in regard to his situation. He

looked at the plans, and said that they were much better informed than he supposed ; there were some mistakes in it, but nevertheless they had means of obtaining information within his lines which he had not suspected. I also told him that General Osorio was to cross the Parana at Encarnacion with ten thousand troops, mostly cavalry. He replied that he had heard of that before, except that the number was only five thousand. He said that he had no fears of anything that Osorio could do at that point. He had formed a high opinion, as indeed had everybody else, of the military capacity of Osorio, and were he to join forces with Caxias at Tuyuti, he would have reason to apprehend serious difficulty ; but that if he attempted to cross the Parana near Encarnacion, and to advance towards Asuncion, he would find nothing but a desert to cross, with roads at that season almost impassable, and with many gorges, where he could be cut to pieces by a greatly inferior force. He seemed to be considerably cast down at the report I gave him of the situation of the allies, particularly at the continued popularity of Mitre, and requested me to call and see him again, as he wished to have further conversation with me. To my inquiry when it would be most convenient for me to return to the capital, he replied that one steamer, a small one, would start that afternoon, and that the next evening the Ipora, which had very good accommodations, would also start for the capital, and I could take my choice as to which steamer I would take passage on. I concluded to wait for the Ipora. I saw him again that evening but a short time when others were present, and we had no particular conversation. The next day, about three o'clock in the afternoon, I went to see him again, and we had a long private interview. He commenced discussing his situation ; said he knew it was very grave, but assumed to be confident that if the allies were to attack him he could repulse them at every point, yet he showed that he felt his chances of final success to be very slight. The odds against him were very great, and if the allies could hold together long enough, and sustain the enormous expenses to which they were subjected by the war, it

was probable that, sooner or later, they might overrun and conquer Paraguay. He then went on to express his surprise and regret that foreign governments had not come to his rescue. He said that no one of them, except the United States, had ever shown any interest in him or his cause, and the United States had not done much. It had two ministers of age and experience, one in Brazil and one in Buenos Aires, both of whom were acting in the interest of the allies, while the Minister to Paraguay was but young in diplomatic experience, and his representations did not have the weight with the government that those of his colleagues did. Besides, they were nearer home, and could communicate more frequently with the government than I could, and, by denying my representations, could circumvent anything that I might do unfavorable to the cause of the allies. He said he saw very clearly what the purpose of Caxias was in sending the plans of the Paraguayan camp to him, and that his remark of the golden bridge to a fleeing enemy was but a hint to him that there would be no difficulty in his getting out of the country with all the money he might ever need. That, he said, he should never do. He would fight to the last, and fall with his last guard. His bones must rest in his own country, and his enemies should only have the satisfaction of beholding his tomb; he would not give them the pleasure of seeing him a fugitive in Europe or elsewhere; he would sooner die than be a second Rosas. If the worst came, it was to be no surrender, but all were to fight until they were killed; that he was prepared to resort to more extreme measures than any one imagined, if necessary; it was better to fall after his whole people had been destroyed, than treat on the condition of leaving the country. Unless he should succeed and come off conqueror, there was no future for him, nor did he want to live. Whatever of glory or fame would result from the war, long protracted against odds infinitely superior, was already his, and he would never be deprived of it; his fame in history was, at any rate, secure. It was not his ambition to rank with any South American hero like San Martin, Bolivar, or Belgrano; they

were persons for whom he had no respect, nor had he any desire to be classed with men who had made such a contemptible figure in history ; but it was his ambition to have his name enrolled on the same page of history with those of Washington and Lincoln ; that he would, if necessary, crown his triumphs with an act of heroism, and perish at the head of his legions. He had labored so long for his country, and with such self-abnegation, had been sustained by his people so bravely and with such free and spontaneous will, that all these things must justify him in history, and give him a place such as no South American hero ever held. He said it was glory enough for him, while living, to have three nations making war so long against his single arm, and that the world must then be wondering at the defence he was making ; and why none of the other nations of the world, especially the United States, did not come to his aid, was to him a matter of the greatest surprise and mortification ; but that if they persisted in leaving him to fight it out without their assistance, on them would be the responsibility of the disasters and miseries that might result from the prolongation of the war."

I could hardly believe that the man was in earnest when he spoke in this way ; that he could really be such a dolt and fool as not to know that the people who were fighting under his orders were but abject slaves, and obeyed only from fear, and that there was not the least particle of free will or independence of thought tolerated in the country ; forgetting that if at that moment he were to learn of a single individual in the whole state who had ventured to advise that he should make the best attainable peace, he would order him to be shot before the next morning. It convinced me, however, that in his utter selfishness, his conceit and vanity, he would sacrifice every Paraguayan before he would consent to leave the country ; and I saw that the fate which he had resolved upon for the Paraguayan people would, unless he died in the meanwhile, certainly be theirs but for one thing. I knew that he was a coward, and I believed that, sooner or later, he would treat in time to save his own life ; that his talk about falling

at last at the head of his legions was all bombast. I knew he had never exposed himself to any danger when he could possibly avoid it, and I did not believe he ever would do so ; and in conversations which I had after that with Dr. Stewart and others, in speaking of his vaunting resolution to perish at the head of his legions, it was the unanimous opinion of all who knew him that he would do no such thing, that he would continue to expose his men in battle as long as there was a possibility of his being able to treat with the enemy on the basis of his remaining in the country and at the head of the government, but that so soon as he saw there was no hope of that, he would make the best terms he could and get out of the country with as much of the property belonging to himself and the Paraguayan people as he could take with him. We were not mistaken in our estimate of his character ; for although he never did leave the country alive, and fell at last after all his army had been destroyed, yet, as will be seen hereafter, he never exposed himself to danger when he could avoid it, and instead of falling at the head of his legions, he was finally killed while running away and trying to escape. Foreseeing as I did the thousands upon thousands of lives that would be sacrificed before he could be subdued if he adhered to the resolutions which he said he had taken, and believing also that the allies never would treat with him except on the condition that he should leave the country, I thought it my duty to express my opinions to him in regard to the course he was pursuing. I knew I was treading on dangerous ground, and that I must be very guarded in what I said, else I should so enrage him that the situation, not only of myself, but of all the foreigners in the country, would be much worse than it already was. I saw, too, that I must mix with my disapproval a great deal of personal flattery, to make it appear that, even if he were to leave the country, he could do so as a hero, and be held as such throughout the world.

I will therefore resume my journal, and relate in substance what I replied to him : " I said, in reference to this, that I was

very sorry to hear him talk so ; that if worst came to worst, and he saw he must fall, the way he proposed was not the best ; that if the result was to be the triumph of the allies and the conquest of Paraguay, it were better to look the truth in the face and act with reason, rather than attempt the romantic ; that his name was already well known in all parts of the world, and the heroic defence made by the Paraguayan people against the vastly stronger foe had given them the sympathy of the world, and if he were to treat after he found a continuance of the war could only result in the sacrifice of his people, he would be received abroad with welcome and greatly honored wherever he might go ; that it would be better, and more to his fame and credit, to save his life and the lives of thousands of others, rather than uselessly and recklessly throw them away. But no, he said there was no future for him ; he should leave no one in whom he had an interest ; save only the children I saw around him (Madam Lynch's), there was nobody else in the world that he cared anything for. Life was a mere nothing, a thing of a few years more or less. He had not lived very long, but he had lived much ; and it were better to fall at the pinnacle of honor than to live longer a fugitive, his country given up as spoil to the enemy. He spoke of the refusal of Caxias to entertain any proposition of mediation, and said that there was no alternative for him then but to fight it out to the last. I replied to him that I thought the letter of Caxias to me, in which he had said that no proposition of mediation from any source would be listened to for a moment except on condition that Lopez should leave Paraguay, was not respectful to the government that had offered it, and that I should probably answer it to that effect. This conversation lasted about an hour and a half, and, promising to consider all he had said and see him the next morning, I took my leave.

“The next day, at eleven o'clock, A. M., I went to see him again, and found him at breakfast with Don Benigno, Colonel Aguiar, and Pancho. After they had finished breakfast, he sent off the others, and we resumed conversation on the same subject that we had been engaged upon the day before. I

told him I had been thinking of all he had said, and it appeared to me the proposed course would have an effect the reverse of what he supposed on his fame. Other people, historians and literary men generally, on whose judgment the active participants in the great events of the world must depend for their future fame, would never approve the useless sacrifice of life after all was lost, but would rather condemn it, and he would thus lose whatever of fame and glory he had already achieved. He said no; he was resolved, and the extremities to which he should resort sooner than give up would be chargeable to other nations that had thus left him without support. When he began the war, he had never thought it would come to this; he had not supposed it would be so long or so desperate; but he had carried it on in a way that must give him a great name in history, and why other governments showed no interest in him was a wonder, — again giving me the left-handed compliment of having small influence, or else I would have so enlisted my government in his behalf that it would have come to his rescue. I replied that a good cause bravely fought did not the less secure the sympathy and respect of the world, if it finally yielded to greatly superior forces. What men of modern times had been received with the most enthusiasm and respect? Not the victors with laurels; not those who had triumphed, irrespective of their cause, by means of superior resources, or even superior genius and ability. Napoleon was none the less honored for having died a prisoner at St. Helena than he would have been had he conquered at Waterloo and afterwards expired in the Tuileries. And of all the heroes of later times who had been hailed with most enthusiasm by the crowds of people that had followed their chariots, those who had been most honored and most eagerly welcomed among the first nations of the world were the great soldiers in the cause of freedom, Kossuth and Garibaldi; and that he, therefore, though forced to yield and retire, might expect to receive great attention. This flattery seemed greatly to please him, but it could not move him from his resolution. He said he knew his name

was enough, go where he might, to insure him the highest honors, but he had shown from the first that he was not a man to change his mind or his purpose. Especially should the Emperor of Brazil learn that he had mistaken his man when he had provoked the hostility of Francisco Solano Lopez. He had no ambition, never had; he labored for his country, and was determined to survive or fall with it. He dwelt much on his own abnegation, and could not understand why such an example of self-sacrifice had not won to his support the other nations of the earth. But his acts would justify him, and he wanted no other advocate in the future. By his acts he stood, and they should be his monument in future ages. '*Mis hechos, mis hechos.*' Later in the day I went to see him again, and we talked for an hour. He was anxious I should inform Berges officially, that the mediation proffered by the United States had been rejected by the allies, as his army had had their hopes greatly exalted from the knowledge of the fact that the mediation of the United States had been tendered, and had expected that peace might result from my visit to their camp. At the time I had come through on the Shamokin they had been greatly disappointed, as then they had also been led to believe that peace would soon follow the forcing of the blockade. Bidding him adieu, and telling him I still cherished the hope that the war would never be carried to the extremities which he had intimated that it might be, I left Paso Pucu a little after sunset, and went to Humaita, where the Ipora was waiting with her steam up to take me on board and carry me to the capital."

CHAPTER XIV.

Another Visit to Paso Pucu.—Arrival of Despatches.—Letter from General Asboth.—He is insulted by Admiral Godon.—Note to Caxias.—Patriotic Offerings by the Paraguayans.—Grand National Testimonial to Marshal Lopez.—Public Meetings and Addresses.—Specimen of the Adulation of the Masses.—Discourse of Adelina Lopez.—English Offer of Mediation.—Mr. Gould's Propositions.—Bad Faith of Lopez.—His Reasons for breaking off Negotiations.—French and English Gunboats pass the Blockade.—Folly of the Naval Officers.—They become Tools of Lopez.—Departure of Consul Cochelet.—Lopez's Hatred of him.—He is detained at Humaita, and exposed to the Fire of the Allies.

BUT two days had elapsed after my return from the army head-quarters to Asuncion, when I received a telegram advising me that the United States gunboat *Wasp* had come up as far as Itapiru, and that her commander, W. A. Kirkland, had come through the military lines, and brought despatches for me, and would remain at head-quarters until he might receive any correspondence that I might wish to send away. At the same time I was informed that a steamer would be at my disposal to go down to Humaita on the following day. Accordingly, on the 21st, I again started for the army head-quarters, and arrived there on the morning of the 23d. Among the despatches which I received were the long-delayed instructions in regard to the proposed mediation of the United States, and also a letter from our Minister in Buenos Aires, advising me that while the offer of mediation had not in terms been refused by the allies, it had not been accepted, and that he believed the points of difference between the belligerents were not so irreconcilable but that some means might be discovered by which both parties might be induced to open negotiations for a cessation of the war. He

cherished the idea, which was long afterwards entertained by the ministers of other nations in Buenos Aires, that terms might be offered to Lopez by the allies, such as he would accept. When he learned, therefore, that a gunboat was to be sent for the purpose of taking up my despatches, he notified Admiral Godon, that, in order more fully to carry out the instructions of his government in regard to mediation, he would like a passage up the river on a national vessel. The Admiral told him that, though the gunboat was going, he must stay at home ; and the scarred, war-worn old veteran had the mortification of seeing the gunboat sail away without him, and was therefore obliged to abandon all hope that the mediation would ever be accepted. On the return of Commander Kirkland from the Paraguayan to the allied camp, I took advantage of the opportunity to send a letter to the Marques de Caxias, in reply to the one he had written me at the time I visited his camp, in which he had stated that the allies would never accept the mediation of the United States, or entertain any proposition for peace, until the terms of the Triple Alliance were complied with, and Lopez was driven from power and from the country. To this letter I replied : " The United States, in offering their mediation to bring about a cessation of hostilities between the allied powers and Paraguay, were actuated only by the most laudable desire to be of service to all parties engaged in the war, as well as to conserve in general the interests of peace, in which all the world is concerned ; but your Excellency meets the offer by stipulating a condition precedent even to considering the question of mediation. This condition is, that the President of Paraguay now in authority shall first abdicate his office and leave the country. It certainly never could have been the intention of the government of the United States to offer its mediation on any such presupposed basis. The fundamental principle of that government is, that the people of every nation have a clear and unquestionable right to that form of government which they shall select, and that all just powers emanate from the consent of the governed ; that no foreign power has a right to

impose upon a neighboring and independent country a government not selected by its people ; and as the people of Paraguay have never evinced a desire to change their form of government, or to place at the head of it any other than the present chief magistrate, the government of the United States cannot, consistently with its traditional policy, regard with favor the treaty of alliance by which the three powers bound themselves to impose other authority than the present on the people of Paraguay.

“ But the allied powers, as appears by the note of your Excellency, are resolved to prosecute the war until the present duly elected President of the Republic, Francisco Solano Lopez, may be deposed or driven from the country. This condition precedent to mediation is certainly so antagonistic to all ideas of national self-government that the undersigned believes it to be his duty to his government, that never could have contemplated such a reply to its offer of mediation, to protest against it ; and the undersigned is of the opinion that your Excellency would regard it as extraordinary were the circumstances reversed and the same demand on the part of President Lopez made a condition precedent to mediation, and he should require, as a preliminary condition, that the Emperor of Brazil should abdicate his throne and President Mitre his presidential chair. How such a reply to the offer of a neutral and friendly power would be justly regarded by the government of the United States, or by that of his Imperial Majesty the Emperor of Brazil, the undersigned leaves to the consideration of your Excellency. The position thus taken by the allies, that no mediation can be entertained until one of the parties concerned no longer has a political existence, appears to render impossible anything like a peaceful solution of the impending strife, and the war must accordingly go on until one of them, from its chief to its last squad of soldiers, is destroyed, or the other becomes worn out and exhausted. Either of these results the government of the United States would deeply deplore, and in offering its mediation its object was to avert such a catastrophe. But its good

offices being refused, and even denied a hearing, it can only await with deep interest the impending issue."

This reply, I soon afterwards learned, gave great offence, not only to the Marques de Caxias, but to all the allies; and the manner in which they evinced their displeasure was certainly not dignified, nor worthy of an alliance embracing three nations. They would have it that in forcing their blockade, and in exposing the absurd features of the Triple Alliance, I was acting in the interest of Lopez, and several months afterwards they gratified their spite by laying hold of some provisions I had ordered from Buenos Aires and detaining them for a long time in Corrientes, alleging, as an excuse for such contemptible conduct, that I did not need so much, and, besides, that my boxes contained contraband of war. These provisions were finally brought through by an English gunboat, but after that the allies took every means possible to render my longer stay in Paraguay disagreeable. Despatches, newspapers, and provisions, all alike were detained; and when at last I got out of Paraguay I found all my mail matter for nearly a year previous stored at Corrientes, and on reaching Buenos Aires I was presented with numerous bills for supplies which I had never received. Thus the allies had their revenge.

When in the camp of the Marques de Caxias, in March, 1867, he appeared so confident of his ability to overrun Paraguay and destroy Lopez and his whole army, that after my return to Asuncion I was greatly surprised that for months and months there was no movement of his army, and that he appeared to be held in check and powerless to do anything. I was convinced he had at least three times the number of troops that Lopez had, and also everything else that money could procure to render his army formidable. Still he made no sign that we could hear of at the capital. The *Semanario* frequently had accounts of skirmishes which were magnified into great victories; but beyond that we could not hear of anything whatever of a warlike nature transpiring at the front. We could see that Paraguay was becoming exhausted; that older men and younger boys were being conscripted and sent to the army; that the

women throughout the country were subjected to harder toil, compelled to labor more in the fields, to plant corn and mandioca, and to contribute more and more of the little that had been left to them of clothing, of their cattle and their horses. The popular demonstrations of gratitude to Lopez seemed each time to have a more forced and ghastly character. In September of that year, after the silversmiths had been working up the gold which had been contributed in such vast quantities to make golden book-covers, sheaths, and caskets, all to be presented to the great Lopez, it was given out that there was to be a grand ceremony in the Palace, at which the presents intended for his Excellency were to be exhibited, and addresses made by the ladies of the country, and also by the Vice-President and the Cabinet Ministers. It was intended that this meeting should be of a semi-official character, and I had the honor of receiving an invitation to be present. On a table in the centre of the room were placed the costly presents. One of them was in the form of an album, with covers of solid gold a quarter of an inch thick and contained a dedicatory address to his Excellency, written in the same adulatory style as everything else of a public nature which was permitted to be delivered in the public meetings, and purporting to be signed by many hundreds of the principal women of Paraguay. At the head of the list was the mother of the President, Doña Juana Carillo de Lopez. The Vice-President, Sanchez, Berges, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, his assistant, Benitez, and several others high in authority, were present; and a vast crowd of women, among whom were at least a dozen of the present and past mistresses of Lopez. The old Vice-President opened the proceedings by reading a very long discourse. This was succeeded by addresses read by the wife of Colonel Fernandez, by Doña Rafaela, the sister of Lopez, and many other ladies of the highest rank at the Paraguayan court. Most of them were unable to read themselves, and their addresses, which had been prepared for them, were read by the Vice-President or some other high official, or by some of their friends who

had been better educated. The address which was bound in the golden volume was read by Benitez. Forty or fifty of the leading women of the country, headed by the mother and sisters of Lopez himself, by three of his mistresses, and the mothers of two others, signed this characteristic effusion. A few paragraphs from this document will serve as a specimen of many of the same class : —

“The exalted merits of your Excellency, and your entire consecration to the interests of your country, are of such a nature, and your grand services for the Republic are of such transcendental importance, that they do not need our eulogies, our good words, or our presents. We recognize, sire, this truth ; but as your Excellency is the hero of the nation, the anchor of salvation for the country, and with it the anchor of our honor, of our rights, and of our interests, and of those of our families, and since your Excellency and the Republic of Paraguay are one and the same thing, as is proved by many eloquent testimonials, and especially by the great deeds of the present war, the daughters of Paraguay cannot fulfil the desires of their hearts unless they be permitted to offer their contingent to the defence of the national cause as a demonstration of their love and gratitude in particular towards the beloved son of their country, and who is to-day its father and savior. Deign, therefore, sire, to accept as a personal tribute the present book, in which is placed the national subscription of Paraguayan female citizens, and their patriotic sentiments, in these solemn moments of the Republic. This humble but sincere homage is but a weak proof of the very particular estimation and gratitude which we cherish towards the most excellent Marshal Lopez ; a tribute certainly unworthy of the inestimable merits of your Excellency, but which, as a moral pledge of the love and indissoluble union of the Paraguayan people with the illustrious paternal government of your Excellency, we hope will be received propitiously by the hero who sustains gloriously the principles and the vital interests of America, along with those which constitute the honor, the rights, the prosperity, the glory and felicity, of the Paraguayan people. It being the especial duty of the commission charged to present this to your Excellency to express with their own voices the national sentiments of the Paraguayan ladies as well as their own eternal thankfulness for the eminent benefits which your Excellency has conferred upon them, and their sincere prayers

for the important health and happiness of your Excellency and that of the invincible armies under your command, and following up the impulse of our hearts respecting the lofty principles which the Republic sustains in the war to the death into which it has been dragged by the Emperor of Brazil and his allies, we cannot recognize, most excellent sire, any other principle, any other banner, than that which our brothers have raised in the fields of battle, inscribed 'Independence or Death'; and the ladies of Paraguay beg of your Excellency that you will deign to give credit to our constant and invariable decision of not reserving even the sacrifice of our lives in support and defence of the country which we so much love. May God our Lord happily preserve your Excellency for many years!

"ASUNCION, CAPITAL OF THE REPUBLIC OF PARAGUAY,
24th of July, 1867."

From many hundreds of speeches which, upon this and other similar occasions, were pronounced by the Paraguayan ladies in the act of offering their jewels, we will select a few paragraphs from a single one, which was pronounced by Adelina Lopez, one of the many illegitimate daughters of the Marshal. It was not, of course, her own production, having been written for her by the Bolivian refugee, Dr. Roca, who has already been mentioned:—

"Mr. Vice-President: There is in history one deed which constitutes one of its most glorious pages. A woman, guided by her virtue and by her religious and humane sentiments, laid aside one day her richest and most valuable jewels, and, trusting in the genius of the man who pointed out to her the pathway towards one of the most precious conquests for humanity, deposited in his hands those precious jewels, in order to realize that great thought. This woman was Isabella the Catholic; this great genius was the immortal Columbus. The Paraguayan woman, sire, in this period, in these most solemn moments, when in the ocean of the political life of the country the tempest of her desolating war is roaring, has at last met with a Columbus who points out to her the happy shores whither he will bring, in all its glory, the precious ship of our native country; and the Paraguayan woman, sire, has lifted herself up with the sentiments of the duty which patriotism imposes upon her, with all the

abnegation and enthusiasm with which the national cause inspires her, to say, in the words of Isabella, to him who points out the means for the salvation of the country, 'Take these my jewels, and realize your sacred thought.' "

During the year 1867 the governments of France and England made several feeble efforts to ameliorate the condition of their subjects in Paraguay. In the month of August, an English gunboat came through the blockade, bringing the Secretary of Legation at Buenos Aires, Mr. G. Z. Gould. He remained for several weeks at the Paraguayan head-quarters, as Lopez would not permit him to go to Asuncion. His object was to inquire into the condition of his countrymen, and get permission for those to leave who desired to do so. Lopez pretended that no one wished to go away, and that all were contented where they were. Yet he would not allow him to see any of them except the three or four who were in the camp. From them he learned that all were very anxious to get away, but that it would be dangerous to say so. No one of them dared make any complaint. Even those in the camp with whom he conversed begged him not to tell Lopez that they wished to get away, as they knew he would not permit them to go, and that, as soon as the Secretary was gone, they would be made to suffer for their expressions of discontent. The gunboat was allowed, however, to take away the widows and children of three English mechanics who had died in the Paraguayan service.

While at the camp at Paso Pucu, Mr. Gould was so far imposed upon by the protestations of Lopez that he was anxious for peace, and would accept any honorable terms that might be proposed, that he undertook to initiate negotiations with the allies. Having arranged conditions with Lopez, such as he believed would be acceptable to them, he went back to their camp to submit them to the allied generals. The proposed bases were as follows :—

1st. A secret and previous understanding will assume to the allied powers the acceptance by the government of Paraguay of the proposals they are inclined to make.

2d. The independence and integrity of the Republic will be formally recognized by the allied powers.

3d. All questions relating to territories and limits in dispute before the present war will be reserved for future consideration, or submitted to the arbitration of neutral powers.

4th. The allied forces will retire from the territory of the Republic of Paraguay, and the Paraguayan troops will evacuate the positions held by them in the territory of Brazil, so soon as the conclusion of peace is assured.

5th. No indemnity for the expenses of the war will be demanded.

6th. Prisoners of war will, on one side and the other, be immediately placed at liberty.

7th. The forces of Paraguay will be disbanded, with the exception of the number necessary for the maintenance of order in the interior of the Republic.

8th. His Excellency the Marshal President, at the conclusion of peace, or the preliminaries thereof, will retire to Europe, leaving the government in the hands of his Excellency the Vice-President, who, according to the constitution of the Republic, remains in charge in similar cases.

With these proposals, which Mr. Gould says had been submitted to Lopez and approved by him, the Secretary passed over to the allied camp. The allied generals believed they would be acceptable to their respective governments, and despatched a messenger to them for authority to negotiate on such bases. Mr. Gould returned, without waiting for a definitive reply, to the Paraguayan camp, and on reporting that the terms, as approved by Lopez, had been submitted, he was told by the military secretary, Luis Caminos, who ostensibly conducted the correspondence, that the eighth article had never been assented to by Lopez, and that he had previously repudiated all and every proposition for his withdrawal from the country. Disgusted with such falsehood and duplicity, Mr. Gould withdrew from the country without condescending to answer the letter of Caminos, which was but a tissue of audacious falsehoods.

The *Semanario*, in giving an account of the attempted mediation of Mr. Gould, represented that the eighth article had been added by the allies. This was the only version of it we had in Asuncion while I remained in the country. Colonel Thompson says "that the real reason why Lopez, at this juncture, refused the terms which he had previously accepted was that, while Mr. Gould was in the allied camp offering them, he received news of a revolt in the Argentine Confederation, which he expected would force the allies to make peace with him on any terms."

Lopez, however, had other reasons for refusing any terms that would oblige him to leave the country. He knew that there were scores of men whose families and friends he had treated so atrociously that only by keeping an army between him and them could he hope for a life lease of a single month. Many of the brothers, sons, and husbands of women whom he had persecuted had sent letters to him telling him that wherever or whenever they might meet him they would kill him at sight. Indeed, as he had told me six months before, there was no future for him beyond the limits of Paraguay.

There were several neutral gunboats, French, English, and Italian, that, following in the wake of the Shamokin, which had opened a road for them, passed through the blockade to hold communication with Lopez; and it is a singular fact, ✓ that every naval officer who went through to his encampment came away a friend, apologist, and defender of the tyrant, while all who went in a diplomatic capacity afterwards represented him to their governments as a monster without parallel. Hence it was that, on the return of these gunboats, two reports invariably got into circulation in regard to the condition of affairs in Paraguay. The naval officers usually remained but a short time in the camp, and while they were there Lopez took good care that they should see nothing that he did not wish to be seen. If they were permitted to have interviews with their countrymen, it was only in the presence of others who would report all that passed; and under those circumstances the very men who would gladly have given

anything they had in the world to get away from Paraguay would not dare to express a word of discontent, or hint a wish to return to their native land. In the mean while Lopez and Madam Lynch would treat them with great attention and hospitality, and give them some trifling presents, so that they would go away impressed with the idea that Lopez and the Madam were much abused and slandered people, and on reaching Buenos Aires would report that they saw no signs of want or suffering in Paraguay, and that, among all the foreigners they had seen, not one had expressed a desire to go away. These reports being sent to Europe and the United States by the agents of Lopez at the mouth of the river, the newspapers throughout Christendom would republish them as proof that Lopez was a wise and just ruler, and all the stories of his cruelties but falsehoods invented and circulated by the allies. The naval commanders thus treated by Lopez were either English, Italian, or American; and from their readiness to become his trumpeters and champions, it would seem that they were of such cheap material that a good dinner, a ring or towel of Paraguayan manufacture, or a tercio of yerba, was sufficient to induce them to betray their trust and leave their countrymen to be tortured and executed.

The French Consul, M. Cochelet, was, for a long time, extremely concerned lest he should never be able to leave the country alive. He had repeatedly asked to be recalled by his government, but the man first sent to relieve him had been taken sick, and after a long delay at Buenos Aires was obliged to return to France. Cochelet was extremely obnoxious to Lopez, and there is little or no doubt that his fears would have been realized had the gunboat which came to take him away not arrived till a few months later. At the time of his departure there was no one in the country, so far as could be judged from appearances, that Lopez so longed to arrest, torture, and execute. Both he and his wife often expressed the opinion that Lopez meant that they should not leave the country till the war was over; and events that occurred after they left convinced every one that, had M. Cochelet been in

Paraguay six months later, his consular character would not have saved him, but that he would have shared the fate of Rodriguez, Nin y Reyes, Leite Pereira, and Vasconcellos, all of whom, at the commencement of the war or afterwards, were there in a diplomatic or consular capacity.

On the 9th of October, 1867, they were cheered by the news that a gunboat had arrived at Curupaiti to take them away, having brought another consul to take the place of M. Cochelet. We were then to lose our nearest and most intimate neighbors ; but much as they had done to relieve the sad monotony of our secluded life, we were greatly rejoiced at their good fortune. The signs and premonitions of evil were so dark and ominous that everybody was in danger, and nearly everybody in fear for his life ; and as M. Cochelet, in looking after the interests of his countrymen, had made himself more obnoxious to Lopez than any other man in the country, we feared that the French Consul would be one of the first victims. But he was allowed to depart in peace, and was succeeded by a person by the name of Cuberville, a man who at once became the apologist and flatterer of Lopez and Madam Lynch, and made use of his official character to assist them in securing the spoils which they had stolen from people whom they afterwards murdered.

The French steamer *Decidée*, that had come through the blockade, was required to fall below it again, after landing M. Cuberville, and remain there until the retiring consul should be heard from. On the 15th M. Cochelet and family embarked on a Paraguayan steamer for Humaita, and on arriving there they were assigned some rooms in a house situate in the line of the fortifications, which the Brazilians had been actually bombarding for several days previously. He immediately sent a letter to be forwarded by flag of truce through the lines to the commander of the *Decidée*. No answer was returned for nine days, and all the while the bombardment was going on, and the shot and shell were falling around the house occupied by the family that appeared to be doomed to destruction. So long a time had elapsed since they had been

thus exposed, that they had almost given way to despair. They believed that Lopez had exposed them purposely to destruction, and would keep them there till they were all killed. At last, however, a few hours after the request of the consul to be removed to a less exposed and dangerous place had been refused, their hearts were made glad by the news that the *Decidée* had returned, and they could embark the next day. The next morning some carts were provided for them to go through to the place of embarkation, and during that very day a shell fell and exploded in the centre of the room where they had been imprisoned for nine days. Colonel Alén, who had been in charge of the prisoners, and doubtless knew the motive of Lopez in exposing them in such a place, could not conceal his chagrin that this shell had not fallen a day sooner, and was overheard to so express himself.

M. Cochelet lost no time in reporting to his government that he had left many of his countrymen in prison, and that they, as well as all the other Frenchmen in Paraguay, would all be killed, if prompt measures were not taken for their rescue. But nobody outside of Paraguay would believe that Lopez was so bad as we who had been there knew him to be. The French government therefore did nothing, and the prophecy of M. Cochelet was fulfilled. Every Frenchman in Paraguay, — nearly a hundred in number, — excepting only Cuberville and the Chancellor of the Consulate, M. Libertad, was killed by Lopez.

To escape from the heat of Asuncion, which in the summer-time is excessive, and to get a change of air and a diversion from the weary monotony of the life, I began to look for a *quinta* or country-house not far from the capital, where my family might pass the hottest period of the year. A very comfortable furnished house at Limpio, near by the residence of my friend Don Mauricio Casal, was offered to us, and we were preparing to move out to it, when our intentions became known to the Lopez family, and we were offered a much finer house, with fine large airy chambers, situate on an elevated spot so as to catch the breezes from all directions. This house was

the property of Doña Rafaela, the younger sister of the President, who, after the war had commenced, was married to Saturnino Bedoya. I suspected that there was an object in this other than personal regard, and that in anticipation of the capture of the capital and surrounding country by the allies, they were looking for a place of refuge and security for such an emergency. But whatever the motive may have been, the old Lady President and Doña Rafaela treated us with great kindness; and we should have been but too happy to have saved them from the allies, had the anticipated sacking taken place, or from the unnatural cruelties of the son and brother, whom even then they feared a thousand times more than the whole allied army. Doña Rafaela had done us a great favor in offering us the use of her *quinta*, and the acquaintance we formed with her served to confirm the favorable opinion we had heard expressed of her by several Paraguayans. They had told us that she did not seem to be one of the Lopez family; that she was charitable and amiable, and with a free hand and a kind word for the needy and suffering, and had none of that grasping avarice which characterized all the rest of the family. An account of the terrible suffering and tortures she experienced at the hands of her brother will be given hereafter. But she lived to rejoice at his death, and to denounce him as a monster.

CHAPTER XV.

The Mother and Sisters of Lopez. — Their Fears. — Conversations with Prominent Paraguayans. — Their Reserve. — Venancio Lopez. — The *Semanario*. — Benigno Lopez. — His Character and Opinions. — The Quinta de Trinidad. — Passage of Humaita. — James Manlove. — His Capture by the Paraguayans. — His Treatment by Lopez. — His Character and Antecedents. — What the Birds told Berges. — The Beginning of the End. — Our Hopes of Deliverance. — Asuncion evacuated. — Property deposited in the American Legation. — A Meeting of the Consuls. — They resolve to leave.

SIX months had passed since the passage of Curupaiti, and during all that time not a ray of hope had penetrated the gloom that enshrouded the unfortunate residents of the capital. For four months we had not received a word or line of what was transpiring in the world beyond. There was no imaginable reason for this delay, and our only hope was in this, that it could not always last. During nearly all this time I had been living in the house of Doña Rafaela, the sister of the President. Often and often, as I have sat on the upper balcony of the house, with my eyes cast towards the city that lay in death-like silence before me, have I reflected that among the whole twelve or fifteen thousand persons within its limits there was not one who was not unspeakably anxious and wretched, not one who dared speak but with bated breath, and who did not regard the little liberty still left as held by a most precarious tenure, liable to be followed at any hour by dungeons and fetters. I would frequently go into town, as I still kept my house there, in which my private secretary and Mr. Masterman continued to reside. A few of the better class of citizens, the most of them in some way in the government employ, still remained in town. Among these was Don Vicente Urdapilleta, the Chief-Justice, the same

who, in his youth, had suffered twelve years' imprisonment under Francia. With these persons, if I chanced to meet them, I would usually have a few words of the most casual and unimportant character, such as to ask for the news, to speak of the weather, and, with the merest exchange of civilities, go my way. They never had anything to tell, and though always courteous and looking as though they would like to talk with me, I could see that they feared to do so; and as I knew that any conversation I might hold with them they would be obliged, for their own safety, to report to the government, I felt I was doing them a favor by limiting my remarks to the most commonplace affairs, and was always as brief with them as courtesy would permit. They had never anything to communicate; for if they knew anything they did not dare speak of it until it had been announced in the *Semanario*. I usually, however, when I went to town, called on the Minister for Foreign Relations, Don José Berges, and once or twice on Lopez's brother Venancio. The former would always endeavor to draw me out and get my opinion of the situation, but without giving me any information in return. I suspected that, directly on my leaving, he made notes of all I had said, and sent them to the President at his head-quarters. This suspicion I afterwards learned was correct. Those notes, as will be seen hereafter, received a strange explanation from the Minister, and a construction was put upon them such as he little suspected when he jotted them down. But Don Venancio never knew anything, at least never would speak of anything, that had not been licensed by its publication in the *Semanario*. Sometimes rumors would get out of defeat and disaster before the desired version could be announced in the official organ; though unless they were of such magnitude that it was impossible to prevent them from being known, they were never alluded to. But neither Berges nor Venancio could ever give me a word of information on such matters. The little information I did get generally came from the English engineers of the steamers that ran up and down between the army head-quarters and Asuncion.

But they could only tell what they knew at the peril of their lives, and with a certainty that a dungeon and fetters awaited them the moment it should be suspected that they had told me anything which the government desired should be kept secret. When, therefore, I would ask Berges in regard to the truth of the reports I had heard, he would sometimes ask me how I had heard them. I would reply that "the birds had told me." It was doubtless imprudent and unwise to hold such conversations, knowing as I did that they would be reported to Lopez. As he did not know how I had got my information, and was unable to force me to tell as he could everybody else, he may have begun to suspect that there were some secret channels of communication between me and the army, and perhaps with the outer world. But it all came through the English engineers, who generally would be able to communicate with me or with one of their own countrymen every time they came up to the capital.

Venancio, however, would never talk of anything except his health and my health and that of my family, the weather, or some such matter that could not be construed to mean anything. He appeared to be in a chronic fright. Did I speak of any event that had been mentioned in the paper, he would say, "Yes, so says the *Semanario*." But if I asked of any matter not yet officially promulgated, his answer was always the same, "*No sé nada*" (I know nothing). What the reason of this great trepidation of Venancio was, I could not surmise. I suspected he had done something that had given offence to his brother. He was in a miserable state of health, that had been caused by his early excesses. His physician, an Italian by the name of Domingo Parodi, often spoke to me of his unhappy patient. He was obliged to visit him every day, but if he asked him about anything of a public character, it was always "*No sé nada*," or "*Ast dice el Semanario*" (So the *Semanario* says). The man was in one sense a prisoner, as all his own countrymen were as afraid to visit him as he was to talk to them. Nevertheless, he nominally held a high official position, being commandant of arms, and having duties

to perform that required him to visit the arsenal, barracks, and fort at Asuncion every day that his health would permit. What had he done that he appeared even more frightened and depressed than others who were afterwards accused of being his fellow-conspirators? Probably nothing; but he knew better than they did the terrible character of his brother, who, he was even then aware, had ceased to respect his mother's gray hairs, and regarded all ties of consanguinity as matters of indifference.

The other brother of Lopez, who was the youngest of the family, had visited me once or twice when I was residing at his sister's *quinta*. He was a man of much more capacity than Venancio, and was much more communicative with me. The general tone of his conversation was despondent, and he seemed to be impressed with the conviction that Francisco would sooner or later make an end of him. Like many others, he said to me that if he could get out of Paraguay alive, he would willingly sacrifice all his property. He was sharp, shrewd, and avaricious, and was the favorite child of his mother. The Paraguayans disliked him exceedingly. In his greed for wealth, he had, in the time of his father, imposed on the common people without mercy. He would take their cattle at his own price, and they dared not complain or appeal to the government, for they all knew that his own father was the government. He was fond of gambling, but it was dangerous to win from him. Before the war many of the merchants and others having any money used to meet at the Club almost every night, and pass the evening in play. To them the appearance of Benigno was always unwelcome. They did not dare to refuse to play with him or to win his money. In either case they feared they would incur his ill-will; and knowing him to be vindictive as well as avaricious, they feared he would try to injure their business, either by prejudicing his father or brother against them, or by intimidating subordinate government officials, and inducing them to embarrass their mercantile operations. His father always allowed him extraordinary privileges in collecting and shipping

away the yerba maté, tobacco, and other products of the country without paying the duties to which others were subjected. To him, as well as to the other children of Carlos Antonio, several of the finest and largest estancias in the state had in some way fallen during his father's reign, so that at the time of the old man's death he was, for that country, enormously rich. He was, however, universally detested, and I have often heard the remark made that he was worse than his brother.



BENIGNO LOPEZ. (Executed by his brother, Dec. 27, 1868.)

One day, while we were living at the *quinta*, he called to see me, and informed me that he had received orders to proceed to head-quarters. He had previously, while we were in town, intimated to me that he might wish to leave in my care certain valuables — diamonds and jewelry, as I supposed — belonging to himself and his sister, Doña Rafaela ; but he must do so in a very clandestine manner, so that none of the

spies, who were thick as the street-corners, should suspect what he was doing, and report him to his Excellency the President. It was suggested that he could send me a box of cigars, and if within the larger box were another containing the treasures, the bearer would know nothing of it. But neither the cigars nor jewels were ever sent; and when he came to see me at the *quinta*, he told me that if the time should come when it might seem safer to leave them with me, they would be sent to me by his sister, Doña Rafaela. They never came, however. Before the threatened calamity from an invasion of the allies came upon them, a greater calamity had engulfed them all.

Our life at the *quinta* was very quiet and monotonous, though the mother and sister of Lopez did all they could to render it pleasant. When we first went to live there, they lived very near to us, in the old family mansion, near the church of La Trinidad. But they soon moved to the *quinta* of Saturnino Bedoya, the husband of Rafaela, about a league distant, on the border of what is called Campo Grande, and about five miles distant from the old homestead. The few people who came to visit us were foreigners, and they came but rarely; and as soon as the hottest season was over, we resolved to return to town. Before leaving, I went out to see the old lady and Doña Rafaela, to thank them for the use of the *quinta*, and for their many acts of kindness. I found that Don Benigno had not yet gone below, but was still with them. He spoke to me quite freely of the suspicion that his brother had in regard to him, and professed to be ignorant of the cause. I told him that he had been imprudent in talking to the French Consul, M. Cuberville, who was at best a fool, and not always sober; that he had told me of a conversation they had held together, in which he had asked Benigno who was the most suitable man to put at the head of the government in case Francisco Solano should not be able to maintain himself, and that Benigno had suggested the name of his brother-in-law, Bedoya, as the most eligible and proper person. I told him that if Cuberville had said so to me, he had probably said the same to others, and probably to Madam

Lynch. Benigno denied that he had ever said anything of the kind; that Cuberville himself had suggested something of the sort, but that for himself he had not indulged in any such calculations.

In any country but Paraguay, it would not be considered a very grave crime to speculate on what might occur in certain possible contingencies. But there it was considered high treason to entertain a thought that Lopez might be overthrown. He had announced himself in his *Semanario* as in partnership with the Almighty, and often declared to his soldiers that he had achieved such prodigies of valor and prowess only because God had inspired his mind and guided his arm. He was ever boasting that he was fighting the battles of the Lord, and the Lord was backing him up, so that his final triumph was inevitable. Therefore it was treason and heresy united to suggest or think it possible that he should not overcome all his enemies; and when it came to his ears that his brother Benigno had entertained such a thought, he had committed the unpardonable sin, his doom was sealed.

It was apparently a most fortunate thing for me that I returned to town, and resumed my residence in the Legation at the time I did. Had I not done so for two weeks later, it is most likely I should never have left Paraguay alive. I returned on the 12th of February, 1868, and on the 21st the news came that the ironclads had passed Humaita, and the order was given for the evacuation of the town.

On reaching my house in the capital, I was told by my secretary, Mr. Meincke, that the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Berges, was desirous of seeing me. I went to visit him at his *quinta*, a short distance from the capital. He wished to see me in regard to the application of an American by the name of James Manlove for permission to leave town and go into the interior, in order that he might do something to earn his living. He, as well as nearly every other American in Paraguay, had been almost entirely dependent on me for his support since my return to Paraguay in November, 1866.

This Manlove was a native of Maryland, and had been in

the Rebel army all through the war, and at its close had the rank of major. He was a man of herculean strength, six feet four in height, and had seen much service in the war, having many scars to show that he seen hard fighting. I first met him in Rio de Janeiro on my way out in 1865, and afterwards at Buenos Aires. At first he told me he was travelling for amusement merely, that he desired to make a brief visit to Paraguay, thence to cross over to Chili, and return to the United States by way of the Pacific. As he supposed that I would soon be going to Paraguay on a gunboat, he begged me to take him along with me. I told him I could do nothing in the matter, but that he must get the permission of the Admiral if he wished to go up in a national vessel. But he seemed to think that if I would request a passage for him it would be granted, while it would probably be refused if requested only by himself. He therefore thought to enlist me in his interest by telling me what his real object was in going to Paraguay. He said he had seen several of the owners of blockade-runners, and had letters from some of them, particularly one from John Frazer of Charleston, South Carolina, indorsing his character, though for prudential reasons not stating anything of the business in contemplation. His plan was to pass through to Paraguay, in order to get blank commissions from President Lopez duly executed and signed, and with them return to the United States, and start out several unemployed blockade-runners to prey on Brazilian transports and merchant vessels. He alleged that England had furnished them a beautiful precedent, and that as none of the nations of the world had treated the Alabama, Florida, and Shenandoah as pirates, they could not treat their vessels as such, if they only had regular commissions from the government of Paraguay. They would follow the example of the Alabama in all respects, having Paraguayans nominally as commanders, while the crews would be such adventurers as they could pick up.

When I learned that such were his plans, I told him that he should not have told me about them, as then I should be obliged to object to his going on a United States vessel

with me, even though the Admiral might not. But as he had told me his plans in confidence I could not expose him. I could only take good care that he did not impose on any officer or representative of the United States. I advised him that he was going on a bootless errand, that Lopez was so suspicious and distrustful that he would not adopt his plans, and that if he ever got into the country he would find it very difficult to get out of it. He said he was not afraid of that, for if he could only get there and get his commissions he would find his way back to the United States, even if he had to cross over to the Pacific coast. I did not wish him to go, partly for his own sake, but more for my own. If Lopez should listen to his proposals, it would place me in a very embarrassing position, and it would have been my duty to do all I could to thwart the plans of them both. I must then advise our government that a project was on foot for pirates of the Alabama class to leave our ports for the purpose of preying on Brazilian commerce. I knew also, that if, in spite of my efforts to prevent it, one such vessel should once get on the high seas, I should be charged, among the allies at least, with all the damage that she might do them.

Finding that he could get no assistance from me towards passing through the military lines, he started up river for the army, then encamped near Corrientes. I saw him afterwards several times at that place, and he told me he was in the Argentine camp, where he had been treated with great kindness, especially by President Mitre. He did not enlist in any capacity as an officer or soldier, though he messed with Colonel Mansilla and other officers of a high grade. His position was anomalous, as he professed a desire to serve the allies, while he would accept no commission. He had extraordinary skill as a marksman, which he showed to his hosts, and asked for a company of sharpshooters to skirt along in front of the lines and pick off Paraguayans. His request was not granted, however, and he amused himself by frequently going beyond the confines of the camp to shoot ducks. One day he failed to return, and some time after a note from him

was found attached to a bush in which he said he had been taken prisoner. No one doubted that he had sought to be captured ; and as, a few days before, he had been at Corrientes, it was published in all the papers at Buenos Aires that he had gone through at my instigation and as my agent. The allies even before that would have it that I was a friend and in the interest of Lopez, or else I should not have been so eager to get to my post.

On reaching Asuncion, some months afterwards, I found him there. He said that the night after he left the camp of President Mitre he worked his way towards the Paraguayan lines, and hid himself in the grass till daylight came, and when he saw some pickets coming in that direction he hailed them, and they came forward and took him prisoner. He was taken immediately, blindfold, to Lopez's head-quarters, and kept a close prisoner. He was questioned as to who and what he was, and what were his motives in making his way to Paraguay at such risk of his life. He stated what his plans were, as he had told them to me in Buenos Aires. His papers were taken and examined, and as there was nothing among them to show that he was supported by any responsible parties, Lopez, as usual, jumped to the conclusion that he was a spy or assassin, and his first impulse was to shoot him. He sent different persons to question him, among them his favorite inquisitor, Luis Caminos. He was very anxious to learn something about me, and why I delayed so long down the river. He told them all he knew about me, and said that I knew what his object was in coming to Paraguay. Why then had I not written ? He replied that as a minister of a nation on friendly terms with all the belligerents, I could not, and would not, take any part in his schemes. But why did I not come through ? Why was I delaying so on the other side ? He said I could not get through, that the allies would not permit me to pass their lines, and the American admiral was acting in conjunction with them to prevent my coming. Caminos then told him he was lying, that he was a spy, that he knew very well the reason why I did not go through to

Paraguay was because I had been bribed by the Brazilians to linger on the way ; they knew all about it, and if he wished to save himself he had better confess. They knew I was the enemy of Paraguay, and if he did not tell all he knew they should publish in the *Semanario* that he had come as my agent to propose an infamous scheme of piracy, which his magnanimous Excellency had scorned to entertain, and which publication would ruin me both at home and abroad. At this Manlove, who was of a most violent and ungovernable temper, got into a great rage, and said that any such statements would be infamous falsehoods, that in everything I had acted honorably towards him, towards Paraguay, and towards the allies. This conversation being carried on through an interpreter, Manlove asked the latter to tell Caminos to leave him and not come again, and to say to the President that if he wanted to question him any further to send gentlemen to talk with him, instead of such fellows as Caminos. The inquisitors left him, and he had little doubt that he would be led out to execution the next morning. The President, on this occasion, took counsel with his staff. His bishop, Palacios, who always recommended and approved the most sanguinary measures, insisted that he should be shot. So did Colonel Wisner and General Barrios. Dr. Stewart, however, professed faith in Manlove's statement, and urged that his refusal to say anything against me, even though he might be executed for it, was a proof that he was a man of veracity and honor. Besides, Stewart said, that if Manlove's story was true, and I could not pass the lines through the fault of an incompetent or corrupt admiral, the government of the United States would soon overrule the admiral, and I should ere long arrive in Paraguay. Madam Lynch inclined to the same opinion as Dr. Stewart ; and as Lopez still hoped much from the intervention of the United States, he hesitated, and Manlove, unfortunately for himself, was not then executed. He remained a prisoner, however, for several weeks at Paso Pucu, until his health began to fail, when he was allowed to go to Asuncion, and a small sum of money was given him to pay his expenses.

He was there on my arrival in November, 1866. His plans had miscarried, as I had forewarned him they would, and he could not get away, nor had he any means of supporting himself. He had been a rebel through our war, and had quarrelled with his kindred by taking the part he did. Being a Marylander, he could not allege the miserable pretence of State sovereignty and State rights as a justification for being a rebel. He had been attached to General Forrest's command, and participated in the Fort Pillow massacre (though he always denied that there was any massacre or any violation of the rules and customs of war), and had been in many desperate raids. Altogether he was, from his antecedents, one of the last men who could claim sympathy or aid from a minister of the United States. But he was an American, helpless and in want, and I supplied him with all his necessities required so long as I was permitted to do so. His violent, ungovernable temper, the worst, I think, I ever saw in any man, — a weakness which he often spoke of and lamented, — led him to quarrel with nearly every foreigner that he had any intimacy with in the country. But he was a man generally of courteous manners and of fair education, and of extensive reading and information. His defects of temper I would pass unnoticed but for his tragic end, since he might, perhaps, except for that fact, have escaped, as did Bliss and Masterman.

During his forced detention in Asuncion he made repeated efforts to engage in some business by which he could support himself, and with that view he had asked permission to go into the interior to cultivate a *chacra*. I had represented his case to Berges as one of great hardship, and said that as he had come to Paraguay to do a great service to the cause of President Lopez, he ought at least not to suffer from want or be dependent on me for his support. Berges promised to consult Lopez in regard to him, and on my return to town I found, on visiting him, that it was on his account he desired to see me. He said that, under the circumstances, the President did not deem it prudent that any of the foreigners then in the

capital should remove into the interior, but that his Excellency had advised him to furnish Major Manlove with three hundred dollars Paraguayan currency, equivalent then to about seventy-five dollars in coin, to supply his immediate necessities. A day or two after Manlove himself went to see the Minister, and the money, three hundred dollars, was given to him, and on the 19th I went myself to see Berges, as I had heard a rumor of another grand triumph of Paraguayan arms, and desired to question him about it. I did not expect to learn any news, as he never told me any unless the *Semanario* was about coming out, and he knew what it was to contain. In that case I could sometimes learn from him a few hours earlier than other people if anything of importance had occurred. On this occasion he said, in reply to my usual inquiry for the news from the army, that he knew nothing, though he suspected something important was to take place soon; and on my asking what his reasons were for so believing, he replied by using the expression I had often used to him, that "the birds had told him."

On the 18th, our friends from the country, the Casals, whom we had so often visited, came in from Limpio. One of the sisters, Anita, had been with us for some three months before, and the pretty Conchita came in with her married sister and niece to visit her. There was nothing about town to indicate that anything unusual had happened at headquarters, and on the afternoon of the 21st I went with Manlove to shoot ducks in the *lagunas*, situate about a league from town and near the *quinta* of the Lady President. We were returning just at dusk when we were met on the way by the engineers Burrell and Valpy, who told us in great confidence that the crisis was at hand, the Brazilian squadron had passed Humaita and was on its way to Asuncion. They were in great glee over the news, as they believed their long imprisonment and forced service would soon be over. I confess I shared their pleasure. If the fleet had passed Humaita, then it seemed that Lopez and his whole army were surrounded and besieged so effectually they could never escape. The

war must soon be over. Lopez was in a trap. For a long time his only means of communicating with the capital or of receiving supplies had been by the river, and the ironclads and monitors could easily cut that off. We all then entered the town, more joyous than we had been for many months, supposing that the startling news was not yet known to the public. But on reaching my house I found that everybody knew it, and that already the evacuation of the town had been ordered. People were rushing to my house in great numbers, asking me what they should do, and what I would do. I found, too, that Berges had sent me a message, requesting me to visit him at the Government House as soon as possible. I went accordingly, and he told me that four ironclads had passed Humaita, and two of them were already as high up the river as Villa Franca on the way to Asuncion; that the town was to be evacuated, declared a military point, and the capital removed to Luque; and he had sent for me to offer me any assistance in obtaining a suitable and convenient place of residence in some place beyond the city limits. I at once told him that there was no occasion for his taking that trouble, as I should not leave Asuncion. I told him that the United States Legation was for the time United States territory; that the government of Paraguay had no power or authority over me; and that if there were danger that the town might be taken by the Brazilians, that was a reason why I should remain in it. He said that it would be very dangerous to remain in town, as it would very likely be bombarded, and besides, if the people all left, it would be difficult to get the supply of food necessary for my family. My reply to this was, I should trust to my flag for protection, and if any one ventured to violate it he would find it an expensive pastime; and as for the difficulty in obtaining supplies, I would take that into consideration when it might occur. I told him also that I questioned the right of the government to compel foreigners to leave the town; for if it were taken by the enemy, their property would very likely be seized by them and appropriated; while, if they were allowed to remain and guard it,

it would undoubtedly, as it belonged to foreigners, be respected.

He insisted, however, that the right of the government to drive them into the interior was perfect; and I saw it was useless to argue the question, for, whether it was or not, the order would be put in force.

On returning to my house I found a multitude of people, foreigners and natives, all eager to know what I intended to do. I told them promptly that I should stay. Many then besought me to permit them to move into the vacant rooms of my house; but I told them that I could not do that, for my premises, though large, were not large enough to take in all who might desire to come, and besides, it would give offence to the government and render it worse for themselves. They then asked if they could be permitted to bring their trunks and most valuable effects and leave them in my care. To this I assented, and told them if they considered my house safer than their own, they were welcome to whatever security it would give, but that, as it was impossible to take any account of what they might bring at such a moment, and my own house might also not be respected, all they left in it would be at their own risk. They must, however, have them all duly marked and labelled, so that I might know to whom they belonged.

The people began to bring in their valuables the same night and pile them into my spare rooms. All was confusion and alarm. The long-threatened evil had now come. The people must flee to the mountains, for the government had so ordered. They could take little away with them, and what they might take they would be exposed to lose. For people so poor, the Paraguayans had a great deal of fine jewelry, which they regarded with a sort of idolatrous devotion. A part of this they had been forced to give up *voluntarily*, and now they were liable to lose the remainder. The poorer class, generally, took their gold beads and rings and chains with them, but those having considerable amounts of money or jewels could not be encumbered with it in their flight, and, as their only hope, came with it to the United States Legation.

Late in the evening the three consuls — the Italian, French, and Portuguese — came to my house to advise with me about the situation. The only full consul was the Italian, Lorenzo Chapperon. He had been in the country but a short time, and hardly knew what to make of the strange situation in which he found himself. The Frenchman, Cuberville, had been there longer, but was only acting consul, having been sent up by the Minister at Buenos Aires to relieve the former consul, M. Laurent Cochelet. I told them that I should remain in the city, and that, in my opinion, they ought to do the same, and look after the interests and property of their countrymen; that their presence was more needed in the capital than ever before, and it was their and my duty to remain. Leite Pereira, the Portuguese, was of my opinion; but Cuberville, who seemed to have become a mere creature of Lopez, said we ought to go with the government and had no right to disobey its orders. Besides, he said it would be very dangerous to remain. The Brazilians might bombard the place, and we were not bound to incur any such danger. His poltroonery disgusted me more than did his subserviency to Lopez, and I told him that for us to abandon our post at that time, when our presence was most needed, would be disgraceful, and that the Brazilians might come and shoot down my flag and knock down my house, but I should not leave my post. The Italian said little, though he was inclined to follow the Frenchman, while Leite Pereira was disposed to remain in the city. This conference broke up about midnight, yet, though no one but the three consuls and myself were present, the government was informed of what had transpired in it before morning, for Leite Pereira was notified, at seven o'clock the next morning, to leave the town immediately. Cuberville had acted the spy and informer, and when remonstrated with the next day by some of his countrymen for not remaining at his post to protect the property they could not protect for themselves, he replied that his skin was of more importance to him than all the French interests in Paraguay.

CHAPTER XVI.

The City of Asuncion. — Its Appearance and Characteristics. — Scenes in the Market-Place. — The Government at the Time of the Evacuation. — Vice-President Sanchez. — Anecdotes of his Career. — Minister Berges. — His Visit to the United States. — His Shrewdness. — Venancio Lopez. — Colonel Francisco Fernandez. — Major Gomez. — Benigno Lopez. — Extracts from Diary. — A Council held at Asuncion. — Deliberations on the Situation. — It is resolved to resist the Ironclads. — Consequences of this Council. — Its Members incur Suspicion and Persecution. — Their Fate.

THE city of Asuncion, at the beginning of the war, was supposed to contain from eighteen to twenty thousand inhabitants. Du Graty, a Belgian adventurer, who was employed by the elder Lopez to write a work in praise of the ruling family, and to prove that, while Paraguay was the finest country in the world, Lopez was the wisest and best ruler, gives the number in Asuncion and the immediate suburbs of Trinidad, Recoleta, and Lambaré at forty-eight thousand. This estimate exceeds the true number by at least one half, and the estimate of the same author in regard to the population of the whole state is greatly at variance with the truth. The entire population in 1857, as given by him, was 1,337,439. But Du Graty was never in Paraguay for more than two months, and in that time saw very little of the country. While there, Carlos Antonio Lopez made a contract with him to furnish the materials for a book, while Du Graty should furnish praise. The figures were all furnished by Lopez, and the principal object of the work was to convince the world that Paraguay was much richer, stronger, and more populous than was really the case. There is no reliance whatever, therefore, to be placed in Du Graty's figures, as neither Carlos nor Francisco Lopez had any regard for truth. No census of the country ever was taken, and all estimates of the population are

mere guesswork. If the government had any reliable statistics of the population, they were never given to the public, and every intelligent person in the country knew that Du Graty's figures were greatly exaggerated. It will probably never be known within one hundred thousand of the exact number, how many people were in the country at the commencement of the late war. But from the best calculation I have been able to make from the few statistics I could get, I conclude that at the death of Carlos Antonio Lopez the entire population of the state was about eight hundred thousand, and that Asuncion proper contained less than eighteen thousand souls.

The city as approached from above by the river had a very fine appearance. The Paraguay here forms a bend, and from the inner curve the land rises gently and irregularly, yet so that, for several miles up the river, nearly the whole town could be taken in at a glance. The government buildings and those which belonged to the Lopez family are distinctly in sight; and as in the *patios* of the better class of houses and among the hovels of the poor there were a great number of orange-trees, the general aspect of the city as seen at a distance was most agreeable.

When within the city, however, the appearance was very different. The streets were generally in bad condition, unpaved, and irregular. The sidewalks throughout the whole city, if joined in a line, would not exceed a mile in length; and the houses of the poorer classes, that, shaded by orange-trees, had such a quiet arcadian appearance at a distance, were found to be miserable hovels, with every appearance of discomfort.

The principal plaza, or market-place, of Asuncion was situated in the central part of the city, and of a bright, clear morning had a most interesting aspect. The meat-market, which was usually a monopoly of some member of the Lopez family, was in a large adobe building fronting this plaza; but everything else in the way of eatables was offered for sale in the open market. Carts from the country would come in at

night loaded with maize, oranges, melons, wood, and molasses, and in the morning would be ranged along on one side, and their cargoes exposed for sale. Scores of women would also come in at night driving donkeys with panniers filled with chipa, chickens, eggs, mandioca, and everything else they had to sell, and which might find a sale in the capital. The donkeys would be turned loose, and each woman would take her place in the open plaza to dispose of her stock. These women were generally ambitious to have a smart and cleanly appearance. Their soiled dresses, in which they might have walked twenty miles the night before to bring their scanty wares to market, would be exchanged for others that were white and clean. The number thus engaged every morning was usually from four to five hundred, and from sunrise till eight or nine o'clock the scene was one of the most unique and lively that can be imagined.

The government at Asuncion, previous to the passage of the ironclads and the interruption of communication, maintained the formality of a Cabinet, though no member of it ever presumed to do the least thing without the order of the President. The telegraph was always busy, and all events, from the lukewarmness of a Cabinet officer to the jest of a peon or slave, were instantly reported at head-quarters. The Vice-President, Sanchez, was nominally the President of the council when Lopez was absent. But he dared suggest nothing unless ordered by his chief, and an order from him was never to be discussed. Hence the Cabinet Ministers were only so many clerks, receiving their instructions direct from Lopez, to whose clerical duties was superadded that of being spies on each other.

Sanchez was at this time a feeble and decrepit old man of about eighty-two years of age. He had been the writing-man of the government for many years. He had a good share of Jesuitical craft, and an easy style, not wanting in dignity. He had first been in the service of Francia, and the elder Lopez made use of him to express, in language which he himself was not sufficiently educated to command, the ideas he wished to



THE PLAZA OR MARKET-PLACE OF ASUNCION.



promulgate in his state papers. The younger made him Vice-President, as he was without ambition and was too old to be a rival. He never had anything to suggest of his own volition, and hence never provoked the jealousy of either of the despots he served. The elder Lopez invariably treated him with the greatest rudeness and contempt, which he bore with the utmost humility. Official letters addressed to him he was not to open, and if handed to him by any person like a minister or consul, he would lay it aside till his departure. But if the bearer commenced discussing the subject-matter of the letter, the old man was sure to have mislaid his spectacles, but would promise to look for them immediately, and give the subject his earliest attention. As Minister for Foreign Relations, he was addressed officially by ministers from abroad as "Your Excellency," and as this was also the title by which the President was addressed, it gave great offence to the first President, who abused him because he was so called by those whom he could not control. On one occasion when an English Minister was there, Sanchez ventured very meekly to request him to address him in his official letters by some lower title than that of Excellency. The Englishman, however, told him that such was the custom and etiquette of foreign nations, and he must conform to it. Sanchez then begged him to speak to the President on the matter, and take the blame to himself. The Englishman did so, and showed the old savage that it would be disrespectful to himself to address his minister by any lower title than his Excellency.

"O well, then," testily replied the old man, "call him his Excellency, if you like; he is only a beast."

José Berges, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, of whom so much has already been said, was about sixty years of age at this time (1868). He was a man of good judgment and much astuteness, and had been selected by Carlos Antonio Lopez as his commissioner to the United States in 1856. In that capacity he had managed his case with such dexterity and success, that on his return he was retired, much to his own

satisfaction, from all public service. As a public man who had rendered an important service to the country, his presence was obnoxious to his master, and he considered himself fortunate, on his return, that he was not rewarded with imprisonment and fetters. By the time that Francisco Solano succeeded to power, however, the American question no longer engrossed public attention, and Berges's services had been forgotten, and he was then appointed minister *de los Relaciones Exteriores*. It was an honor he did not covet, but he dared not refuse it. Lopez knew he was far better qualified for the position than any other of his subjects that he could trust, and Berges was compelled to accept a position that required of him services at which his soul revolted. He knew he must be both the slave and the spy of an imperious, selfish, and brutal master, but he also knew that there was but one step from refusal to imprisonment. His position was most trying. He was compelled to treat with the representatives of foreign nations in personal interviews in which questions would arise that he could not even discuss without danger of incurring the anger of his master, and hence the reputation he acquired among them all was that he was deceitful and Jesuitical. The French Consul, M. Laurent Cochelet, ever vigilant and watchful over the interests of his countrymen, often complained of his duplicity and evasiveness, and the half-promises that he did not respect. He could not believe at that time that the Minister could converse with him only with a halter around his neck. But the sad fate that afterwards overtook him convinced the consul that he had misunderstood the character both of the unhappy minister and his terrible master.

Gumesindo Benitez, who held the position of assistant to Berges, was also the principal writer in the *Semanario*, and besides it was his business to get up patriotic speeches for the women to deliver at their spontaneous assemblies, when they offered their jewels and their lives in devotion to his Excellency, and so expert had he become in the work of adulation, he seemed to have been convinced by his own words that

Lopez was a being of a superior order. He was one of the very few who in praising Lopez seemed to believe what he said. His faith and fidelity, however, availed him no more at the last than did the hypocrisy and submission of the others. All alike were to die as traitors or conspirators.

Venancio Lopez had been Minister of War and Marine at the beginning of the war. He was some five years younger than Francisco, and, though the least intelligent, was the best liked of the three brothers. Like them he was coarse and sensual, but he was not so grasping and avaricious, and did not aspire to the honors or dangers of the government. He would have preferred a life of ease and license on one of the estancias obtained for him by his father at the expense of others. His father, however, forced him into the military service, and compelled him to reside in the capital. Soon after the accession of his brother to power he fell into disgrace, and for a while was a prisoner in his own house. What his offence was I never could learn, and it is doubtful if he himself knew any better than I did. Probably he had ventured to act on his own responsibility in some trivial matter, and his punishment was meant to remind him that he could presume on no indulgence, as in his father's lifetime, by reason of his kinship with the President, and that he, like all others, held everything, even life, at the will of his brother. After the commencement of the war he was kept at head-quarters for a long time, doing no duty, though holding the rank of colonel. Owing to his shattered health, he had been allowed to return to Asuncion several months before the ironclads passed Humaita, and at that time held the office of *comandante de las armas*.

The active commandant at the time, on whom appeared to devolve all the responsibility for enforcing the orders of Lopez, was Colonel Francisco Fernandez, of whose character and relations with Lopez as his confidential agent and business manager of his affairs a brief notice has been already given. He had acquired, partly by inheritance and partly through the favor of his master, a considerable property. He

alone, of all whom Lopez pretended to admit to his councils, was a married man. His wife was a beautiful woman of nearly pure Spanish blood, and on such intimate terms with the sisters of Lopez that she was permitted to vie with them and with the imported Jezebel in richness of attire and in wealth of jewels. By all the subordinates and government employees, Fernandez was much better liked than any one else who had the ear of Lopez; for he would listen to their complaints, and sometimes grant their requests, which no one else would dare even to report.

The Mayor de la Plaza, Juan Gomez, was next in authority to Fernandez. His duties were those of commandant or executive officer of the troops about the capital. He was a handsome, soldierly looking man, who in the army had won the approval of Lopez by his courage in fighting and his brutal treatment of his men.

The Chief of Police may also be counted as having been a member of the government, as he was the head spy, and the lower class of people were in more immediate terror of him than of any of the others. For this post, Lopez, like his father before him, always selected a man who delighted in cruelty, and who would resort to any measure to extort from servants and slaves the secrets of their masters and mistresses. At this time the office was held by Captain Matias Sanabria, a man whose fidelity in wickedness it was supposed would have saved him from the fate that afterwards befell him, as it befell hundreds of others whom he had denounced.

To the conclave of persons mentioned above, Benigno Lopez, the younger brother of the President, should be added. He held no official position, and it was known that he had long been under the suspicion of his brother, but yet none of the officials dared refuse to recognize him as a man to be consulted and treated with consideration. Whenever a member of the Lopez family went through the streets, the people had long understood it to be their duty to stand, hat in hand, till he had passed, and as no order had ever been given to make an exception in the case of Benigno, it would have been dan-

gerous even for the Vice-President to have shown him any disrespect.

Except to the above-described persons it was not known that anything of an unusual nature had occurred below, until the evening of the 21st of February. It was known by them on the 19th. On that day I called on Berges, and, as always, he told me that there was no news from the army. He said, however, that we should hear something of importance very soon. He must have known at that time that the ironclads were above Humaita. To show the utter ignorance which we were in of the real situation, I will transcribe from my journal the entry of that day:—

“ *Wednesday, February 19th.* — Went to visit the Minister, who says there is nothing new, but that something will happen very soon. He asked me to send Manlove to his office tomorrow. The Italian Consul called on us in the evening, and he says that a great battle has taken place, which resulted, as they all do, in a grand triumph. He also says that the enemy are in great force in the Chaco, and that there has been no communication by that road for eight days. Our friends Candida, Conchita, and Dolores Casal came in from Limpio.”

What orders Lopez had given to be observed in the event that the ironclads should pass above him and cut off his communication with the capital will probably never be known, as he soon after arrested, and finally executed, every one of those who could have known them. It is probable that he had not given any, taking it for granted that every man, woman, and child, if the enemy should attempt a landing at Asuncion, would turn out to repel the invaders. Anything short of that in his eyes was always treason.

We, however, who lived there, had inferred, from what we could learn of the military situation, that, as soon as the squadron should pass Humaita, the war would be over. By land Lopez was completely invested, and if communication by the river were cut off it did not seem possible that he could escape with any considerable portion of his army. It is probable that the officials in command there were of the same

opinion. When the news came, therefore, that the ironclads had passed, they thought themselves lost; and as the Vice-President had no authority in military matters, and neither Fernandez nor Venancio Lopez dared take the responsibility of any independent orders, a meeting, consisting of Sanchez, Fernandez, Berges, Benitez, and Venancio Lopez, was held to deliberate on the unexpected crisis. Had there been one of the number who had ever entertained a thought of a revolution, or of resisting the wish of Lopez, it would have been easy at this time to have left him to inevitable destruction. Had Berges, Fernandez, or Don Venancio then seized the telegraph and pretended to act by supreme orders, the whole country above the Tebicuari would have been as absolutely in his power as ever it had been in that of Lopez. But no such thought had, in all probability, ever entered the mind of a single one of them; and they were so completely spell-bound by the dreadful tyranny that had so long enthralled them, that no one, so far as any evidence now exists, or in the belief of any intelligent living person, had any other idea than to do what they supposed would be the will of Lopez if he could make it known to them. What that will was they could only infer from the threats which had been made through the *Semanario* that the allies would never enter Asuncion but to find it abandoned by its people or destroyed like a second Moscow. Yet every one of them was soon after arrested and accused of having been at that time and for months before engaged in a conspiracy to overthrow him, and all of them (save only the Vice-President) were, for their blind fidelity, tortured and executed.

The result of these deliberations, of which no one but themselves had any knowledge, was the conclusion that they must defend the town as best they could with the few hundred men they had at command. The only fortification they had to oppose to the invulnerable ironclads was a little fort standing on a small bluff nearly opposite the town and below the landing. All the available guns had long before been carried below, to strengthen the fortifications around Humaita. Some

three or four field-pieces, however, had been left as unserviceable, and a large, new cannon of a hundred and fifty pounds calibre, just finished, had never left the arsenal. With great effort this was carried to the top of the bluff before the ironclads appeared. Thus defenceless was Asuncion when the dreaded ironclads, that had been months, or rather years, getting ready for action, moved upon the exposed city.

CHAPTER XVII.

New Members of the American Legation. — Dr. Carreras and Señor Rodriguez. — They become my Guests. — Madam Lynch sends her Valuables. — Dispersion of the Paraguayan Residents. — The English Engineers. — Bombardment of the Fort. — Flight of the Ironclads. — Our Servant Basilio. — Watts and Manlove. — They get into Difficulty. — Scene at the Police-Office. — Strategy of Lopez. — Attack on the Ironclads. — Its Failure.

WHEN, afterwards, it was found that the allies, with their characteristic sluggishness and inefficiency, did not follow up their advantage, but allowed Lopez to open communications and receive supplies through the Chaco, the members of this council hastened to denounce each other to Lopez. Benitez, Gomez, and Sanabria, being first to accuse, were permitted to remain at their posts, while Sanchez and Berges were immediately called below to answer for their conduct.

This, however, could not be done for several days. In the mean while the evacuation went on. On the morning of the 22d, the people came in larger numbers to deposit their most valuable effects with me, and I saw that I must have more assistance than that of my single secretary for the labors that were crowding upon me. I therefore engaged Mr. Bliss and Major Manlove to enter into my employ and become members of the Legation. Manlove had a room in a house adjoining mine. This house had been leased by a German of the name of Carlos Ulrich, from whom I immediately rented the whole building and premises. I sent a note to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, in which I stated that finding it necessary, under the peculiar circumstances, to increase the number of persons in my service, I sent a list of all who were in my Legation and for whom I should expect Legation privileges. In this list were the names of Bliss and Manlove, though through inadvertence

that of Masterman, who had been long living in my house, was omitted.

This note I despatched on the 22d, and on the evening of the 23d I received an answer from Minister Berges, in which no exception was taken to my receiving any of the persons named into the Legation. In my note I had not specified the character or position of the different persons I had thus added to my suite. But the word *service*, as used by me, had been mistranslated, and Berges had understood from it that I had engaged them as servants; and as persons of their known standing and position in society would not be recognized by the police as servants, it would be better, to save them and me from annoyance, that they should not expose themselves on the streets, as the patrols had orders to arrest all who might remain in town. To correct this impression that I had taken Manlove and Bliss into my service in the capacity of servants, and also to correct the omission of Mr. Masterman's name, I sent another list the next day to be delivered to Minister Berges; but he had already left town. It was said he had gone out to Luque, the new capital. I endeavored to send this note after him, but no one dared to take it. The mayor of the plaza, the Chief of Police, and the conductor of the railroad, were in turn applied to the same day, but they all refused to receive it; and the next day I learned, incidentally, that Berges had gone below, and I had no notice that anybody had been named to act in his place. So the letter remained on my table for several weeks, and was only sent on the 4th of April with a note explaining why it had not been sent at the time it was written.

There was one man at this time in Paraguay, who had long before, in anticipation of the emergency that had now arisen, asked me to afford him shelter in the Legation. This was Dr. Carreras. He had made himself so obnoxious to the Brazilians, while at the head of the government of Montevideo, and had so energetically opposed the invasion of the Banda Oriental by Flores and his gaucho band, that he feared, and with reason, he would meet the fate of the hero of Pay-

sandu, Leandro Gomez, if he should fall into the hands of the allies. I told him that whenever the danger might seem near, I should have a room for him in my house. On the 22d, his friend Rodriguez, formerly *Chargé d'Affaires* of the Oriental Republic, came in from the *quinta* where they both were residing, and said that Carreras would then, if it were still agreeable to me, accept my offer of refuge. He said that for himself he would be obliged to go with the multitude into the interior, unless I could find room for him too in my house. I told him I not only had room enough, but that he would be most welcome. They accordingly both came in on the evening of the 22d, and took up their residence, as my guests, in the Legation. They were never to leave it again till they were taken off to be starved, tortured, and executed.

During the day I received a message from Madam Lynch, saying she wanted to see me. I went to her house, as requested, and found her in great tribulation. She had before intimated that the time might come when she should ask me to do her a favor. She had always seemed to have a distrust of me, which I ascribed to the fact that I had never professed that enthusiasm and admiration for Lopez that everybody else in the country was obliged to profess. And yet she saw that the time might come when she herself might desire to flee for refuge to my house, and she endeavored to keep up the appearance of friendly relations. On this occasion she questioned me of what the Brazilians would do now they had passed Humaita. I told her that they would probably keep Lopez and his army shut up where he was, and advance on Asuncion with such force as to take it, and then, by cutting off his supplies at all points, he would be obliged to capitulate or else to attack them in their intrenchments, which, with his unequal forces, could not be done successfully. The cause was lost, and she could see it as well as I. "Some natural tears she shed," and asked me if I would receive her most valuable articles into my house. I replied that I had done that for many other people, and had offered to do it for all; that if she thought her property would be

more safe there than elsewhere, she could send it, and I could answer that while there it would never be taken by the allies unless they forcibly violated the United States Legation. She was very despondent, and said that she did not know what would become of her, and seemed to be aware that she neither deserved nor could expect any mercy if she fell into the hands of the enemy. She intimated that she might, at the last moment, apply to me for shelter. Her house furniture, which was very rich and enormously expensive, would of course fall into vandal hands if the city were taken. But being an Englishwoman, she should look to that government to enforce restitution. The ambitious plans that had induced her to invest such large sums of money in furniture and adornments not to be found elsewhere except in palaces seemed to have miscarried. Two hundred thousand dollars, the price of the toil and sweat and blood of thousands of half-fed, overworked Paraguayans seemed about to fall into the hands of the hated Brazilians, and the illusion of the Lopez dynasty, with her first-born as the heir apparent to the throne of her paramour, and her other sons as royal princes, had all vanished, and she then only thought of saving her life and the lives of her children, and escaping with her ill-gotten gains to Europe.

The people were not allowed to remove to those neighboring districts where they had friends and relatives, but were obliged to go where the wretch Sanabria, the Chief of Police, ordered them to go. It was impossible to find carts or other means of conveyance for a tenth part of the people to carry away with them those things most indispensable for use in the interior. The streets outward leading from the city were therefore filled with women and children, — for no men were left to emigrate except foreigners, — bearing bundles of clothes, cooking-utensils, and such scanty food as they could lay their hands on, and which might serve them till they reached the resting-place of banishment.

It was a sad sight to witness young children and delicate women — in some cases old and infirm — trudging through

the dust, sand, and heat, towards the Trinidad, San Lorenzo, or the Recoleta, with their heavy burdens on their heads and in their arms. Ignorant and superstitious, their home attachments were none the less strong on that account. They knew they were going at the order of a power that to them had ever appeared supreme, and which must be obeyed with blind submission. Few murmurs or complaints were heard. They had learned that the least sign of restiveness or the least symptom of discontent would subject them to stripes, fetters, and imprisonment; and they silently turned their backs on their humble homes, and groped their way with suppressed tears and smothered sighs they knew not whither. Very few of them were ever to return. The most of them were to perish of hardship and cruelty when nature could endure no more. Before the order of evacuation, I had heard of numerous instances of women of the lower order being sent to prison and kept for months in the stocks, for simply expressing such a natural wish as that the war might end. But after the evacuation I was told that there were hundreds of wretches in the improvised prisons of the new capital chained to the ground for having given way to expressions of sorrow.

The English engineers at work in the arsenal were greatly elated when they heard the Brazilians had forced the passage at Humaita, and as they believed the town would be taken by the allies within a few days they were desirous of remaining, for then their imprisonment would be at an end; whereas, if they went into the interior, they would still be in Lopez's power, from which they might never escape. They therefore asked permission to occupy the rear rooms of my premises. I granted their request, but advised them to get the consent of the government before taking a step that might not be approved, and which, if not approved, would subject them to suspicion and persecution. The men went in a body, therefore, to prefer their request. It was granted; and the next day four men with their families, and two widows, each with two or three children, twenty-two persons in all, came and occupied the rooms. In all there were forty-two persons under my roof.

On the morning of the 24th it was evident from appearances that the gunboats were near. The only fort to oppose them was situate only about forty rods from my house, and in a line with the street on which it stood. From the great activity that we observed in and about the fort, it was evident that something extraordinary was anticipated. We could also see a small body of cavalry stationed back of a hill, where it could not be seen from the river, and evidently for the purpose of making an attack on any forces that might effect a landing.

The strength of the fort consisted in a large hundred-and-fifty-pounder, so badly mounted that it could not be handled, and a few little field-pieces that were utterly impotent and harmless against ironclads. The large gun was made in Paraguay, and was but just finished when the news of the passage of Humaita was received. It was hardly got into position when the ironclads appeared. The first shot passed high above the approaching vessels; and though the muzzle was depressed as much as possible, it was found that it was utterly useless without digging away the edge of the bluff on which it stood. From the roofs of the houses we could see the tops of the steamers' chimneys as they steamed up, and, when as near as they cared to venture, discharged their heavy pieces. They fired shell, whose harsh, hissing sound and explosion in the air enabled us to trace their course. We could see the Paraguayans working like beavers about their big gun. It was not discharged more than three or four times, and there were but few shots from their field-pieces. The firing of the Brazilians was very wild, and almost in every instance they fired much too high, and, as I afterwards found, very wide of the mark. From the roofs we could see the chimneys of the steamers move slowly up, and then drop down again as soon as a couple of shot had been discharged. The little fort, however, after a few shots, almost ceased firing, and we expected every moment to see the gunboats return and steam up by the fort. They could have done this without the slightest danger. The only large gun

was powerless to harm them, as it could not be depressed to touch them at long range, and the closer they came the safer they were. The shot from the little field-pieces were as harmless as paper pellets against the heavy plates of the ironclads. But after discharging some thirty shot and shell, receiving no harm to themselves, the gunboats again fell back, and did not return. We all supposed that they were waiting for other vessels to come up, and that then they would pass the fort, effect a landing, and possess the town. But hour passed after hour and day after day, and our ears were not again cheered by the sound of their cannon ; and it was only after weeks of impatience and anxiety that we learned that, after such an inglorious and cowardly exhibition of themselves, the ironclads had turned tail and run away.

They had achieved a Brazilian victory, and they returned to announce it to the world. They went down as far as Tayi, some two or three leagues above Humaita, where, under the protection of their own fortifications on the bank of the river, they came to, — the officers to be decorated and promoted for their valor, and the men to rest and recuperate after their arduous labors.

It was months before we, who were in Asuncion, could learn anything of what the allies had achieved by this approach to Asuncion or the object of it. In time, however, we learned that it had been proclaimed at Buenos Aires and Rio as a great naval victory, compared with which the battle of the Nile, of Trafalgar, Mobile, and Fort Fisher were mere petty skirmishes ; that the invincible Brazilian fleet had passed above Humaita to find a Gibraltar just below Asuncion, which had been reduced, and the fleet had passed it, and held Asuncion an easy prey at its mercy ; that Minister Berges had come off under a flag of truce to the flag-ship, and advised her commander that the capital had been evacuated by all the inhabitants, and that to bombard the place would be only a useless destruction of the property of innocent people, many of whom were foreigners ; and that with that magnanimity characteristic of a brave and chivalrous people, especially the Brazilians, they

had left everything untouched, while they reported that Asuncion had fallen, and therefore the war was virtually at an end. To this day it is generally believed in Rio Janeiro that on the 24th of February the Brazilian fleet achieved a great victory. Great pains were taken to create this impression, and the only persons to contradict it are the few members of the United States Legation who witnessed the battle and still survive.

But being as yet ignorant of the perfection to which the Brazilians had attained in the art of carrying on war without exposing themselves to danger, we could not but believe for several days that at any moment we might hear the guns of the returning vessels. We were, perhaps, selfish in our hopes, for we felt that if Asuncion were taken we should be safe beyond the reach of Lopez; but until then, or until he himself was a captive, we felt we were still exposed to his savage fury.

When we found the gunboats did not return for several days, we nourished the hope that they had gone below to assist in rendering the siege of Humaita more perfect. As we knew that it was completely surrounded on all sides by heavy trenches, so strongly fortified that Lopez could not cut his way out by land, and as the allies had now the command of the river, we thought the time had come when he must either capitulate or carry out his oft-repeated threat to perish at the head of his last legion. No one, indeed, believed he would end his inglorious career, unmarked thus far by an act of courage, by a deed of heroism. In spite of his espionage and his long reign of terror, everybody had come to know that he was as cowardly as he was cruel. But in whatever way his career might close, we took it for granted its end was near. He could not possibly have provisions enough for more than a few days, and his communications were all cut off. We saw, as we thought, that his doom was sealed, and that he would never be able to carry out his gloomy threat, that, if fall he must, it would only be when the whole Paraguayan people were exterminated. We then thought that, though nearly all the men in the country had perished during

the war, yet the larger part of the women and children would survive to defeat the sanguinary purpose of their self-styled protector.



A STREET IN ASUNCION AFTER THE EVACUATION.

It was astonishing to see the rapidity with which the capital had been evacuated. In two days after the order had been promulgated, not a soul, with two or three exceptions, save the police and military, were left in town. The exceptions were Duffield and Carter, Americans, a Brazilian named Francisco, and an Englishman some eighty years of age, who was known among his countrymen by the name of "Old William." Duffield lived just across the street, and lingered behind, taking shelter in the Legation with the English, who had come into it without either permission or remonstrance from anybody. Old William remained because he was too old and infirm to get away without assistance, and was known to have

been for a long time a helpless dependant upon me, though he lived in a house some forty rods distant from mine. Every two or three days since my last arrival in the country he had been in the habit of coming to my house and getting each time a bit of beef, a little yerba, and, if it could be spared, a little sugar, a little chipa, some salt, pepper, and occasionally a half-bottle of caña, which he would take away and live upon so long as they lasted, when he would come again to replenish his stores. With these exceptions and the United States Legation the city was entirely depopulated. On the evening of the evacuation I took a ride through the streets, and not a soul was to be seen save the numerous *rodillas* of policemen who were sauntering about or standing on the street-corners. It was a sickening sight to behold, and a forcible commentary on the beauties of a strong government.

During these anxious days, and for some time before, our little child, four months old, thus early fated to figure in events of historic interest, was dangerously sick. As usual, anxiety and watchfulness prostrated the mother, and it was clear that had I at that time gone into the interior it would have been at the risk, if not at the sacrifice, of both their lives. That was not the only consideration, however, which influenced my action. Months before, I had written to the State Department in anticipation of what had now occurred, and had said that I should not leave my post unless carried away as a prisoner. I little thought at the time how near I was to leaving it, some months later, in that character.

Our visitors from Limpio, who had shared our hopes that the day of deliverance was at hand when they heard the sound of the Brazilian cannon, soon began to grow uneasy as they found that it was delayed. They feared their remaining with us would subject their family to that vicarious punishment which Lopez was accustomed to apply to the families and friends of those whom he could not touch. They feared to remain longer, and on the 29th I mounted the pretty Conchita and the petite Dolores on horseback, and sent them home, accompanied by the ever-faithful Paraguayan servant,

Basilio. The other one, the amiable and good-natured Anita, would not leave us then while the child was so sick, and the mother worn down with care and anxiety for its life. It was always a mystery to me why Basilio and his mother, Melchora, were permitted to remain in my service. I supposed that he, as well as every other Paraguayan servant, was frequently called before the police to give a report of everything they knew that transpired in my house; but as they could never have anything to tell of any importance, and as I could not prove that they were ever interrogated, I regarded it as one of the necessities of the situation, and thought little of it. I knew Basilio desired to serve me faithfully and well, and that if he acted the spy it was because he dared not do otherwise. He had been recognized always since my return from the United States as my servant, and I knew he wished to remain with me; but had he received the first hint from head-quarters that he should leave me, he would not have dared to remain a single day. After the town had been evacuated, he was most useful as a forager. The people, except those who were foreigners, living near the capillas of Trinidad and the Recoleta, were still allowed to remain there, and there was a sort of market at each place, where generally could be had fresh beef, eggs, chickens, mandioca, and oranges. The supply for our household of more than forty persons made good loads for two horses, and every morning Basilio was sent off to bring in such needed provisions as he could find.

For several days after the evacuation, the English and Americans, who, instead of obeying the general order to retire into the interior, had come to my house, ventured to stroll about in the immediate vicinity; and this might have continued some time longer but for the imprudence of Manlove, who had not yet learned to conform to the circumstances by which he was surrounded.

During the days of the evacuation the people were eager to sell such things as chickens, ducks, and even cows, as they could not take them with them, and if left behind they would probably never see them again. I therefore enjoined Manlove

to purchase whatever might serve to maintain us in the event of a protracted siege, and of our being unable to obtain supplies from the interior. Among other things he purchased two or three cows, which he tethered in a vacant yard a few squares from my own house, where the grass was rank and abundant. On the evening of the 3d of March, ten days after the evacuation, he and Watts, the hero of the battle of Riachuelo, started on horseback to go and look after these animals. They had galloped across the Plaza Vieja, and were just turning a corner, when they encountered nine policemen. They were ordered to stop, and told that they were violating the city ordinance, which prohibited galloping through the streets. Watts replied they were only going to look after some animals, and were doing no harm, as there were no people in the streets or in the town. The police sergeant replied that they could go on, but that they must report themselves the next day to the police-office. Watts then turned back, and had Manlove done the same there would have been an end of the matter. The American, feeling indignant at being stopped, said he would go and see the Chief of Police. So he turned back, and rode to the police-office. His conduct here will show so well the temper and character of the man, that I will give the conversation that took place between him and the Chief. On entering the office he met the Chief, Sanabria, and undertook to tell him, in his imperfect Spanish, what had occurred. The Chief replied: "You were very rude to the Mayor of the Plaza. He passed your door, and you did not salute him." "Yes," replied Manlove, "I did not salute him; but the reason was, I thought it was you." "And why would you not salute me?" "Because I rank you. In my country I am a major, and you are only a captain." "Wait there by the door," said the enraged Chief, and strode off in anger to get orders as to what he should do with so contumacious a *gringo*.

On returning from a *paseo* that evening, a half-hour after this occurrence, I learned from Watts of what had taken place in the street. I knew the character of Sanabria, and

that he was one of Lopez's most trusted and willing tools ; that he was hated and feared by all, both natives and foreigners, and as Manlove did not return for an hour or more, I walked down to the police-office to look for him. I found him sitting under the corridor of the building, with at least a dozen policemen guarding him. I asked him what he was doing there. He replied the Chief had ordered him to wait there, and had gone off. I told him to mount his horse instantly, and go directly home. He started to do so, when the policemen gathered around to stop him. I said to them : " Let him alone, he belongs to me " (*Dejale, el pertenece á me*). Astonished at what to them seemed great audacity, they stood confounded, and Manlove mounted his horse and rode away ; and before Sanabria returned he was safe as any man could be within the walls of the United States Legation.

I regretted this affair, as I knew that it would be reported to Lopez, and would greatly enrage him, and that he would revenge himself in some way, not only on Manlove, but on everybody in the Legation. There had never been a time for forty years that such an insult to an officer of El Supremo would not have been followed by the speedy execution of the offender ; and I knew that if Manlove fell into the hands of the police again, he would only escape through death's door. I therefore told him if he went out again it would be at his own risk, I would not again interfere in his behalf. He was not to indulge in the luxury of his violent temper at the expense of the safety and comfort of forty others.

This affair did not have the immediate result which we all anticipated. I was obliged, however, to enter into a correspondence in regard to it, and to make explanations in behalf of Manlove which were so far accepted that the matter was dropped.

It was now evident that the passage of the Brazilian squadron above Humaita was to prove, like all the preceding victories of the allies, fruitless. Anybody but a Brazilian commander, having Lopez where he was, would have forced him and his whole army to capitulate or starve within two weeks.

But to our surprise and disgust we soon learned that the Paraguayans were soon after sending large numbers of cattle across the river into the Chaco, and passing them down the right bank to a point nearly opposite Humaita, and thence towing and swimming them across a second time, landing them safely within their own lines. In the mean time the ironclads were lying idle at Tayi. Such a tremendous victory as they had achieved was not to be repeated oftener than once in three or four months. They must wait till the news of their exploits could be announced in Rio, till the end of the war could be again proclaimed by the Emperor, and his heroic veterans congratulated and rewarded for their dash and valor.

In the mean time, while the allies were literally wasting away from inaction, Lopez was preparing for them another surprise. His own safety was ever the first consideration, and he had been contending against the Brazilians so long, he had learned that after a victory they would give him several months' quiet in which to recuperate. But though vanquished and surrounded, he still kept up the offensive. The Brazilians were rejoicing that he was cooped up with a force so small that he and his whole army, consisting as they said of a mere handful, must soon surrender. To dispel this illusion, Lopez resorted to his favorite device of sending a force on an apparently hopeless errand, by which it would be made to appear that he had more troops than he needed, and it mattered not how many he sacrificed.

On this occasion his expedient was to send a force of some four hundred men in canoes to attack the ironclads that were lying idle and exposed at Tayi. Foolhardy and stupid as this would seem to any one not familiar with Brazilian strategy, it was nearly successful the first time it was attempted.

Two of the ironclads were lying at anchor a short distance from each other, with banked fires, and Lopez had prepared a large number of canoes, in which some four hundred picked men were placed, with orders to go and capture them. An order from Lopez was to his men like a decree of fate. They

were to make the attempt without flinching, even though inevitable death awaited them. Their orders were to attack simultaneously the two vessels, and board them if possible, and get possession. It was a night attack. The canoes, filled with men armed with cutlasses and hooks, stole out from their hiding-places at a little past midnight and drifted down towards the unsuspecting enemy. All was silent and dark, and the canoes crept along unheard and unsuspected by the sentinels on deck, who were, as usual, faithfully sleeping at their posts. By some mistake or miscalculation, the force sent to attack one of the vessels reached it while the other party was still some distance from its intended prize. The Brazilians, unsuspecting of danger, were fast asleep, a large part of the crew lying on the deck of the vessel. The first symptom of alarm was a shout from the Paraguayans, as they sprang on board, and with a yell began to cut down the stupefied Brazilians. It was but the work of a few minutes to clear the deck, but the vessel had been made so as to guard against being successfully boarded. The men below, on hearing the noise above, had firmly closed and fastened the iron doors leading to the deck, so they could not be reached by the assailants. The Paraguayans were in possession of the vessel, though they could do nothing with her without forcing open the hold, and that would require considerable time. They, however, ran up the Paraguayan flag, and raised a shout of triumph. The other vessel had caught the alarm, and before the canoes that were making for her had got near, was ready to receive them. The assailants, therefore, after vainly endeavoring to board, and, losing a large part of their men, made for the other vessel, and climbing on board, all joined in the desperate effort to make an opening into the hold. In the mean time the other vessel quickly fanned her banked fires into a heat, and as soon as steam could be got up, and the anchor raised, instead of running away, as was to have been expected from the antecedents of the squadron, came to the rescue of her mate. The light that was breaking showed the deck of the huge ironclad cov-

ered with Paraguayans, and the Paraguayan flag flying at the poop. These poor victims, of course, were utterly defenceless against the heavy guns of the other vessel. Their plan had evidently miscarried, and on seeing the other gunboat approach they could have easily escaped. But Lopez had ordered them to capture the vessel, and bring it with them as a prize, and they knew the fate that awaited them if they returned without having fulfilled his order. Death to them was inevitable. If they did not perish then and there, a worse death awaited them at the hands of Lopez. The big guns of the other vessel, filled with grape and *metralla*, belched forth upon them, and soon not a soul was to be seen on the deck. Of the four hundred who had made the attack, only about twenty escaped back to the camp of Lopez. Of these, some were shot, and the rest set to work on the trenches, where they were flogged and starved till they died. No such traitors ever were allowed to participate in the glory of another battle.

This, like nearly every action of the war, was claimed as a victory by both sides. The *Semanario* boasted that the Paraguayans had captured and held for a considerable time one of the enemy's ironclads, flaunting their flag triumphantly in the face of the enemy over their prize. The Brazilians boasted, as usual, of another great victory, in which those who were locked up in the hold, and those who in their fright jumped overboard and were drowned, all alike performed prodigies of valor.

Though the affair was so disastrous in one way to Lopez, in another it had its desired effect. The desperation and wastefulness shown confounded and confused the allies, who had imagined that the Paraguayans were past further resistance. They now found that the enemy was still unconquered and audacious as ever, and took good care not to be surprised in that way again. Such a rash and unexpected assault as this could not be expected to succeed, by any possibility, except the first time it was made. Its only possible chance of success consisted in its apparent impracticability. Lulled by the sense of perfect security within their iron walls, it was possible they might be

surprised and captured, though the chances were as a hundred to one against it. After one attempt, however, it was madness to think they might be surprised a second time. Nevertheless, a second attack of the same kind was made some three or four weeks later, and with results even more disastrous than the first. The Brazilians were this time prepared, and all the attacking party, with the exception of about a dozen, were killed. Enough returned to tell the story of the hopelessness of the slaughter to which they had been exposed. Yet this did not change the plans of Lopez. A third force was sent on the same errand, when nothing but inevitable death awaited them. It was a kind of warfare that suited Lopez. His men could not desert or surrender, and the act of sending them in such numbers to hopeless slaughter would show to the enemy that he had enough and to spare; at the same time it would prove to the world how valiant they were, and how devoted to him and their country.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Routine of Life at the Legation. — Captain Fianza. — Fears entertained by Lopez's Mother. — Her Isolation. — She asks for Protection. — Don Saturnino Bedoya. — His Imprisonment. — Lopez's Flight from Paso Pucu. — Passage of the Army through the Chaco. — Colonel Martinez. — Massacre of Prisoners. — Extracts from my Diary. — The Vice-President and Berges called below. — Inertness of the Allies. — Colonel Paulino Alén. — The Allies occupy Paso Pucu. — They closely invest Humaita. — Colonel Alén escapes to Lopez. — His Fate. — Martinez evacuates Humaita. — He capitulates in the Chaco.

IT was about six weeks after the evacuation of Asuncion when we heard that Lopez, having left his stronghold at Humaita, had escaped with the larger part of his army, and was fortifying at a point some fifty miles higher up the river and just above the confluence of the Tebicuari with the Paraguay. And such was the fact. While we were indulging the hope that the war was near its end, and that a considerable part of the population would yet survive the fall of the tyrant, we learned that the imbecile wretches who but lately had him completely shut up at their mercy had allowed him to escape, while they were rejoicing over the great feat of passing Humaita and firing a few shells at Asuncion. We had fancied our own deliverance was at hand, and that the caged tiger was fast in the leash. Our indignation and contempt for the Brazilians was intense. At that time I did not anticipate any great personal danger to myself or family, but I feared that Lopez would yet have all those who, not belonging to the Legation, were still living in it. I foresaw that after a time he would be driven from the Tebicuari; and if he were forced to retire to the mountains, I knew he would not leave me nor anybody about me behind him. Often and anxiously we discussed our situation. The inaction and supineness of the

allies was a mystery to us; and to my oft-repeated question to my guests, "Why don't the allies move? why don't they follow up their advantages?" the reply was always the same, — "*Son Brasileros*" ("They are Brazilians").

And yet up to this time, and until near the middle of July, notwithstanding our anxiety and ignorance of what was going on elsewhere, and the lack of many things that we had been accustomed to regard as the very necessities of life, we were the happiest people by far in Paraguay. We could get beef, chickens, eggs, Indian corn, mandioca, and the Paraguayan tea, or yerba maté, so that we did not really suffer for anything. In fact, this was the happiest period during all our residence after my return to Paraguay. The English families in the rear were all decent and respectable people; and though, crowded in as they were with nothing to do, they had their petty bickerings, they were so happy in the belief that they were beyond the power of Lopez that they counted their minor troubles and discomforts as nothing. Carreras and Rodriguez were both highly educated and refined gentlemen, and the latter had an exuberance of spirits that made him a most agreeable companion. The mornings, from the hour of taking the early cup of maté till breakfast at eleven o'clock, were passed by us in literary avocations. Carreras and Rodriguez were engaged in the study of the English language, though the former spent much of his time writing out notes of his own times for me to use in this history; Masterman quietly pursued his scientific investigations in his own room; and Bliss was always reading anything in English, Spanish, French, or Portuguese that could add to his great stores of knowledge, that caused us all to regard him as a walking encyclopædia.

The breakfast was always followed by a few games at billiards, as fortunately I had a fine large American billiard-table in my house, and then all indulged in the luxury of a siesta. After this came another maté, and after that books and writing again, and long and anxious discussions of the situation till five or six o'clock, when I alone, or perhaps myself and wife,

would indulge in a *paseo* on horseback. The others, save only my secretary and servants, dared not venture into the streets, and would while away the time till sunset or dinner-time as best they could. After dinner we would play whist and chess till bedtime, and thus we filled up the days when nothing of an unusual character occurred outside of the Legation to divert our attention or lead us into new speculations on our darkening future.

During these days I would occasionally ride out as far as the *quinta* of the old Lady President, and sometimes would go out to that of Captain Fianza in Campo Grande, and at others would go as far as the house of my friends in Limpio, the Casal family. The latter being some six leagues from town, I would usually go out in the afternoon of one day and return on the following morning. The mother of Lopez and her younger daughter, Doña Rafaela, were always very glad to see me, and always treated me with the greatest kindness and attention. She hoped to learn from me something of the condition of her youngest son, Benigno, and of her son-in-law, the husband of Rafaela, both of whom she had heard were prisoners at the head-quarters of her merciless first-born. She said that she and her daughter were virtually prisoners within their own premises. Even her second son, Venancio, who yet remained at Asuncion, and whose country-house where he lived was within a mile of her own, was not permitted to visit them without the permission of his big brother; neither could the *practicante*, or native physician, come near her, though she were dying, without orders from her cruel and unnatural son. The native women of the neighborhood were afraid to visit her, and her own servants were unwilling spies of all her acts. Her *capataz*, or the manager of her estancia, was taken away a prisoner, for what cause she knew not; and the priest and *juex* (judge of the district) had also been carried off in irons. They were, however, well provided with everything in the way of provisions from their stores accumulated before the war. The old lady sometimes spoke of the possibility that the time might come when she

too might wish to flee to my house, though the contingency she referred to was in view of the threatened capture of the capital by the allies, for she feared that neither her sex nor her gray hairs would save her from the fury of the conquering army. She shared the fears which her son had impressed on the whole people, that if they should fall into the hands of the Brazilians they would all be massacred or carried away and sold into hopeless slavery.

I assured her that, if the time should ever come when she and her daughter might seek a refuge in my house, they should have all the protection my flag could afford. The old lady was evidently prompted to her generosity towards me to a great extent by self-interest. This is an ungracious thing to say, but truth compels it, as she was not noted for her liberality. On the contrary, she had been too thrifty, during the lifetime of her husband, to be a desirable neighbor. She not only managed her own estancias with great economy, but took advantage of the fear entertained by all of giving offence to any of her family to drive most usurious bargains. She had at times the monopoly of supplying beef to the capital; and if the supply from her own estancias were insufficient, she would purchase of others at her own price, which was not more than a half or a third of the actual value. Then, if she desired to purchase an estancia, she would get it on her own terms. She was seconded in all these doings by her husband, and the result was that many of the best estancias in the country had been wrested from their owners to enrich the Lopez family. Each one of her children had several of them, so that, at the time of Don Carlos's death, they all had princely estates. Notwithstanding this undue exercise of power, however, the old lady was generally respected. She would listen to the complaints and petitions of those who had fallen under the displeasure of the government, and often intercede in their behalf, and many persons owed to her good offices their liberation from prison or from service in the army.

But whatever was her disposition and whatever her motives in her liberality towards me, she was an object of pity

and commiseration. Her situation might be compared to that of a hen, that, having hatched out a brood of chickens, is horrified to find that one of them is a hawk and has begun devouring the others ; that he heeds not her clucking or her cries, but that he will go on killing one after another, and finally strike his ravenous beak in her own breast.

Some two months before the passage of the ironclads above Humaita, the delegation that was chosen to carry the diamond-hilted sword and gold scabbard, the golden inkstand, and books with golden covers a quarter of an inch thick, had proceeded to head-quarters to discharge their agreeable task. The delegation was composed of men who had been engaged in the civil service in various capacities. They were all men distinguished for their loyalty and patriotism, that is, those who on all public occasions were most prompt to make speeches eulogistic of the great Lopez, and to protest their resolution to shed the last drop of their blood in defence of the sacred cause of liberty, of which he was the great champion. Unfortunately, of this delegation of ardent patriots the most of them failed to come back. At the ceremony of presentation, the delegates through their chairman, Saturnino Bedoya, the brother-in-law of Lopez, expressed their gratitude to him as their saviour and defender, covering him with the most fulsome adulation, as if he were indeed a hero instead of the heartless coward they all knew him to be. To their expressions of loyalty and devotion Lopez responded, promising to lead his brave legions to renewed victories, and fall at last, if fall he must, at the head of his columns.

The ceremony over, the most of the delegates, including Bedoya and Urbietta, the literary *confrère* of Bliss in the play of the Triple Alliance, and who was fool enough actually to believe in Lopez, were arrested and loaded down with fetters. Of the twelve who went below, only three ever returned. The others were all kept in prison, and subjected to the most horrid cruelties ; and those of them who did not expire under the torture, or, as Lopez expressed it in his official papers, die a natural death, were shot, or perhaps bayoneted to save ammunition.

The flight of Lopez from Paso Pucu was characteristic of the man, as his first care was for his own safety. Previously to the passage of the squadron above Humaita, he had scarcely ventured outside of his cave for months, lest some stray shot might put an end to his valuable life. But as it now appeared doubtful whether he could long maintain himself where he was, and his cave could no longer protect him, he ignominiously ran away. Disguising himself so as not to be recognized in the night either by friend or foe, he stole out of his cave at nightfall and, accompanied by a single soldier as a guide, sneaked away in the darkness in the same way that he had skulked away from Itapiru more than a year and a half before. In this way he crept towards Humaita, whence he passed over the river to the Chaco, and from there he sent back orders for the larger part of the forces to follow him, taking with them as many of the guns as there was any possibility of their being able to drag through the swamps and thickets of the Chaco to the mouth of the Tebicuari, where he had decided to make his next stronghold. The success with which this retreat was accomplished is astonishing, considering how easy it would have been for the allies to have cut it off entirely. The only explanation of it I can give is that so often given by the poor Orientales when speaking of the stupid inaction of the enemy, — "*Son Brasileiros*" ("They are Brazilians"). It was not only necessary for the worn and wasted Paraguayans, after reaching the Chaco, to drag their guns and other munitions of war through swamps and forests that the allies had declared utterly impenetrable, but to cross at least one large river, the Bermejo, and again cross the Paraguay at San Fernando, the point selected for the new camp. All this while the allies were celebrating the great feat of the passage above Humaita, and the bells of Buenos Aires and Rio de Janeiro were rung, and bonfires were lighted, and people were bid to rejoice, for Lopez and his army were in a trap, Asuncion had been taken, and the end of the war was at hand.

Lopez, having no further use for his cave at Paso Pucu, gave orders to abandon that part of his camp, and contract

the lines to a comparatively small space immediately around Humaita, which he left in charge of two of his most trusted lieutenants, Alén and Martinez. They were both feared and disliked, as they were believed to be too willing to execute the cruel orders of their master. Martinez was more trusted than any other man whom Lopez permitted to come near him. For two years he served as his body-guard, never sleeping at the same time with his chief, but keeping watch at his door, permitting no one to enter unless it were the mistress he had summoned. His wife, a pretty, plump, laughing, and heedless young woman, had been honored beyond any other Paraguayan woman, as she was made the companion and intimate of Madam Lynch, with whom she lived when the latter was in Asuncion, or at her country-house at Patiño-cué. But notwithstanding the confidence that Lopez had in Martinez, he did not dare to trust him with an independent command. No service or proofs of fidelity could disarm Lopez of the impression that all around him were secretly his enemies. It was from this distrust that Alén was ordered to share the command with Martinez; each was to be a watch and spy on the other, and at the least sign of flagging, or the first inclination to treat or make terms with the enemy, he was to arrest him and send him before their common master. They were left but a mere handful of men to stay the advance of ten times their number. Their orders were the same that Lopez always gave out, — never under any circumstances to surrender, but to fight till the last man was killed. To do less than that, in Lopez's eyes, was treason, which would not only subject them to be punished, if they ever fell into his power again, with torture and death, but would expose their families to every indignity that the malign genius of Lopez could devise. The officers of lower grade knew full well that the most pleasing service they could do to Lopez was to act the spy on their superiors and report directly to him. The situation of these two commanders, who had not the least confidence in each other, and each of whom knew that the other was watching to report any act or expression that might imply a doubt of

the infallibility of his chief, was most trying. They were both men of reckless courage, for Lopez would have none others in high or responsible positions. Like Cromwell, he would have none under him who were not incapable of fear. He did not, however, like Cromwell, bid those who did not come up to his standard to return to their homes, but had them publicly executed.

At the time of the flight of Lopez from Paso Pucu, there was a large number of prisoners in his camp. The most of them were prisoners of war, though some were foreigners who had been so unfortunate as to be in the country at the commencement of hostilities. Others were Paraguayans, including his Vice-President, his Minister of Foreign Affairs, the bearers of the golden presents, with his brother-in-law, Bedoya, at their head, and others who had incurred the displeasure of the President of the Republic. Of the first class all were massacred, except a few of the higher grade of officers, who were reserved to be driven to his new encampment, there to be tortured, that he might feast his eyes with their miseries, and drink in the music, so sweet to his ears, of their shrieks and dying groans. They were to furnish a *bonne bouche* which he could not bear to lose.

While this scene of horrors was being enacted at headquarters, we, at Asuncion, were in complete ignorance of what was transpiring everywhere else. So far as we knew, there was no government left at either the old or the new capital. All the civil officials had gone to head-quarters. The old Vice-President and Berges had been called below to Humaita soon after the passage of the squadron above that point; and Benitez, the Assistant Secretary of Foreign Affairs, and Fernandez, the military commander at Asuncion, were summoned to San Fernando, to report to Lopez of what had transpired at Asuncion. Save that the police were as numerous and watchful as ever, we saw no signs of authority.

I will here give some brief extracts from my journal, as they will show how completely we were in the dark in respect to what was going on elsewhere.

“ *Sunday, February 23d.* — The morning broke bright and clear ; no news of the ironclads ; people very much occupied in moving out of the capital, and by midday the city appeared abandoned.

“ *Monday, February 24th.* — The day broke calm as usual, but rumors were in circulation that the ironclads were near Lambaré. At half past nine we heard firing from the battery between our house and the river, and very soon from the ironclads, that continued till near twelve, when it ceased. At 8 A. M. I sent a note to the Minister (Berges), but the bearer found the office closed, and could not find any one to whom to deliver it, nor any one who could tell him where the Minister was. From noon till nightfall silence prevailed.

“ *Tuesday, February 25th.* — Silence through the day ; I sent Basilio to the Recoleta to buy meat and vegetables. Towards evening I took a ride through the streets, and met scarcely anybody, the city appearing to be deserted. Hester has now been sick for a week.

“ *Wednesday, February 26th.* — Another day of silence, and we know nothing of what has happened since day before yesterday. The child continues sick.

“ *Thursday, February 27th.* — The little one very bad, and the mother has not slept a moment during the whole night. 'T is said that Madam Lynch, Minister Berges, Benitez, and Riveros went on board the Salto at twelve o'clock last night to go down to the Tebicuari, where they are to cross over to the Chaco, and thence to Paso Pucu.

“ *Monday, March 2d.* — Basilio went to get a passport to the Recoleta, but after waiting two hours, without being able to obtain it, returned. From the looks of the people, it seems as if matters were going very badly below.

“ *Tuesday, March 3d.* — At 7 A. M. went to the *Ministerio* to complain of the treatment of Basilio by the *Gefe*. Major Fernandez was very civil, and protested there had been no intention to molest me, and promised that a similar occurrence should not happen again. He says there is nothing new from below. Silence only. The ironclads are a little

above Humaita, doing nothing to prevent the Paraguayans from crossing the river. What fools are the Brazilians!

“Wednesday, March 4th.—The weather continues oppressive, with nothing to break the monotony. The days seem very long, but, thank God! we are now all in good health.”

Up to this time we had seen little to change our opinion that the allies would follow up their advantages and soon end the war. Why they had not done it before we could not explain. They had Lopez and his whole force at their mercy, if their commanders had possessed, not military genius, but common sense. They had an army five times as numerous as that of Lopez, and for months had him invested on every side except by the river. Thousands of men had been lying idle, absolutely dying for want of exercise, waiting for the squadron to force a passage above Humaita, and when that was effected it seemed that the last hope of Lopez would be gone.

It had been a mystery to us why these idle troops had not been put to work long before to cut a road through the Chaco to some point above Humaita. This matter had been discussed in the newspapers in Buenos Aires, but it had been declared to be impracticable, as the Chaco was but a dense forest full of marshes and swamps, intersected with deep and wide streams. It seemed to us, however, who, not being military men, were perhaps not competent to judge, that if the men who had died in the low grounds about the Tres Bocas within the past year had been set to work to make a corduroy road from Cerrito to Fort Olimpo, they could easily have done it, and one half of them been still alive.

Events of a suspicious character were going on around us. The silence that prevailed was ominous. The only two persons connected with the government with whom I ever conversed, Fernandez and Venancio Lopez, could never tell me anything. We heard of certain foreigners being arrested and sent below, but as they were not our acquaintances we had no suspicion of what offences they were accused. The twelve public-spirited patriots, with the President's brother-in-law, Saturnino Bedoya, at their head, who had gone to head-quar-

ters to bear the *voluntary* gifts of the diamond-hilted sword with gold scabbard, the patriotic addresses bound in volumes with golden covers, and other gifts into which the jewels of the poor women had been wrought, had not returned. The *Semanario*, in its account of their reception, said the President had received the sword and been deeply affected by this evidence of their devotion to their country's cause, and with that sword would lead them to victory or perish at their head. Few of the committee, however, were ever to return again to Asuncion. Bedoya was arrested for no cause that I could ever learn, except that the French Consul, Cuberville, had told Benigno, that, in case the President should abdicate, he would be the proper man for the succession. There may have been other reasons, but any one knowing Lopez would regard that as sufficient, and would not care to look further. A whispered possibility that there might be a change was high treason in Lopez's eyes; and though it was the consul who made it, yet it was enough to awaken the suspicion that the brother and brother-in-law were already providing for the succession. With this, as I believe, commenced the first idea of a conspiracy in Lopez's mind. A man, half knave, half fool, who had been but a short time in the country, made a suggestion innocent in itself, but coming to the ears of Lopez it was enough to inflame him to resolve on the destruction of every one who might profit by his fall.

At this time the government at Asuncion was to all appearance in the hands of Fernandez. Venancio was still there, but was too sick to do anything, and too frightened to venture on any act without orders. Sanabria, at Luque, was the only executive man there; and had there been any treachery meditated, it must have been at them or through them. Sanabria, however, was too universally detested to be suspected of being in the confidence of any one but his master, and all accused parties being seized by his orders, it seemed that those two were "among the faithless, faithful only found."

The Vice-President, Berges, and Benitez, were all called to head-quarters as soon as Lopez learned that they had taken

counsel together in regard to the defence of Asuncion after the passage of the ironclads, and Fernandez and Sanabria had been left only because their services were required to keep the people in subjection and order.

Both the Vice-President and Berges were held close prisoners at Paso Pucu as soon as they arrived there. Benitez was treated with more indulgence, as Lopez must show favor to some, in order to retain their services for a while longer, but they had undoubtedly all committed the same offence.

The non-return of the ironclads to effect the capture of Asuncion after their first inglorious exploit caused great uneasiness to all who had taken refuge in my house. They feared that in coming there they had incurred the displeasure of Lopez ; and had they supposed the end was so distant, they never would have taken so hazardous a step. Their disgust, therefore, grew daily more intense, as day after day passed and there was no indication that any effort was to be made to cut Lopez off from his supplies. This feeling was greatly increased when we learned that the Paraguayans were passing large numbers of cattle across to the Chaco, and thence driving them down the right bank of the river, and then passing them back into Humaita. For two years the impenetrable Chaco had kept the allies powerless on that side of the river, and yet no sooner did Lopez require a road there than he found it. The great inert mass of the allied army still sat idle, and the officers spent their time in celebrating the late great victory, by which they had got Lopez surrounded and so completely at their mercy that his capitulation was only a matter of a few days more or less. Marshal Caxias and Admiral Ignacio were too busy sending off the reports of victories and magnifying those services that were to bring them honors and promotion, to look after the prostrate enemy. The ironclads, having captured Asuncion, according to the reports of their gallant commanders, could attempt nothing more till they had orders from home. If they could keep their vessels from capture by the Paraguayans, they thought they were performing prodigies of valor. It would have been supposed they would

have moved up and down the river at those points where the cattle were carried over, and have prevented this at least, and also the escape of any considerable portion of the army of Lopez ; but they all rested, apparently in sluggish indifference to what Lopez might do.

As before mentioned, Humaita was left in command of Colonels Martinez and Alén. Of the former I have already spoken. Colonel Paulino Alén was a man in all respects superior to Martinez, was a man of tried courage, and had won the confidence of his chief by his fidelity as a spy. By the few foreigners about the camp he was regarded with the greatest aversion, as he was known to be ever trying to inspire Lopez with suspicion of them, and indeed of everybody else. He resembled Lopez in many particulars, being short and stout, with much Indian blood in him, and more of the Indian suspicion and ferocity of character. He had a better education than most Paraguayans, having been a member of Lopez's suite in Europe, and his secretary at the time of his mediation in Buenos Aires.

These two being left in command, Lopez withdrew and crossed over to the Chaco, and thence made his way to San Fernando. When assured of his safety, they destroyed his bomb-proof house, that this evidence of his cowardice should not fall into the hands of the allies. The large guns, such as could be dragged through the swamps of the Chaco, were withdrawn from their positions around Paso Pucu, and sent to San Fernando, and wooden dummies, or Quaker guns, left to keep the Brazilians in check, and all the forces left were concentrated within the inner lines of Humaita. The Brazilians as usual, however, kept up their bombardment for a long time after the place was abandoned except by a few whose business it was to light camp-fires in the deserted places.

At length, as no response was made for days, the assailants ventured nearer and nearer, till at last it was evident that they had been wasting their ammunition on empty forts and Quaker guns. Then, with characteristic valor, they entered just in time to see the few pickets escape to the inner

trenches. Another great victory was then to be celebrated. Steamers were once more to be despatched to the mouth of the river and to Rio, with the news that the brave Caxias had taken Paso Pucu, and Lopez had at last been so thoroughly routed he could never make a stand again. Humaita, however, still held out, and Lopez with the larger part of his army was fifty miles up the river, fortifying at San Fernando. He had also a considerable force strongly posted at a point called Timbo, a little above Humaita, on the right bank of the river. The allies had, however, after as many months as they should have been days, made a road through the Chaco, and cut off all communication between the two places, so that Martinez and Alén were completely surrounded. They managed to send through a courier to Lopez, advising him of their situation, and that their provisions were exhausted. He returned orders that they were to remain at their posts till six days after the supplies were all gone, and then, if no relief came, to cross over the river and cut their way through to his head-quarters. In this desperate situation Alén ventured an act of disobedience. Under the anxiety and hardships to which he had been exposed, his mind gave way, and he started for San Fernando, which, unfortunately for himself, he reached alive. He was received with such displeasure, that he instantly divined that the torture and death he had so often inflicted with alacrity on others would probably be his own doom. To escape such a fate he attempted suicide by blowing his brains out. But in this he was still more unfortunate, for he only succeeded in inflicting a ghastly, though not fatal, wound that destroyed one eye.

Martinez, supported by Captains Gill and Cabral, literally obeyed their instructions to remain in Humaita till the provisions should have been six days exhausted. Then they crossed over the river with the remnant of their forces. It is well to give here the account of this retreat as given by Lopez in his own *Semanario* of August 1, 1868:—

“Six days had passed since the commandants of Humaita had advised his Excellency that their provisions were entirely finished, but

as so unexpected an accident brought with it very serious difficulties in the matter of evacuating the post, the work — that is, the fortifications at San Fernando — went on. His Excellency, the wise and just appreciator of the singular qualities of the Paraguayan soldier, of his love of country, of his discipline, and his valor and constancy, ordered the troops and their commanders that they should eat nothing for six days, and that after that vigil they should effect the passage of the river on a given day. The commanders and the troops at Humaita did not eat, then, for six days, and after that they realized their happy passage with the most complete and admirable result.

“It is just that this heroic episode of the Paraguayan army should be noted, which, having no other example in the history of wars, comes to demonstrate the inestimable virtues of the Paraguayan soldier, and the influence that the more than magic voice, the divine voice, of Marshal Lopez exercises over them, at the same time it reveals to us and proclaims to the enemy and to the world of how much that soldier, guided by his Marshal, is capable.

“Admiration suspends its flight to detain itself over it as the point most signal to which it can ascend. And can the conquest and enslavement of a nation with such sons and such gifts be presumed? Only the barbarian can nourish it, but he may know and the world may know that it will never be possible. . . .

“Admiration and praise eternal to Marshal Lopez, that with his word only attains consummate and splendid victories over the barbarous enemy, and counts colossal pyramids of heroism. ‘Do not eat,’ he has said to the troops at Humaita, and they did not eat. ‘Pass,’ he said to them, and they passed, leaving the enemy completely nonplussed in their protracted plans of reducing it by hunger. O, this is superior to all praise, there are no words with which to make its due appreciation !”

Such were the praises of himself and of the valiant defenders of Humaita that he caused to be published in his *Semario*. His voice, more than magical, his divine voice, had inspired all ; and in proof that he was guided by a higher power, it was announced that the waters had abated at a difficult pass, as the waters of the Red Sea once retired for the Israelites to pass through, so that his devoted troops went out unharmed and in safety from their dangerous position.

CHAPTER XIX.

Colonel Martinez accused of Treason. — His Wife arrested and tortured. — Her Sufferings and Execution. — Extract from a Despatch sent to Washington. — Difficulty of Transmitting Correspondence. — Fresh Despatches by Flag of Truce. — Signs of an Impending Crisis.

IN a little time the praises bestowed so lavishly on the defenders of Humaita ceased. They had been ordered, not only to retire, but to fight their way back to the new lines of Lopez, and whoever did not do that knew full well he would be denounced as a traitor, and his family subjected to indescribable indignities and suffering. When, therefore, they found themselves in the Chaco, they made most desperate efforts to cut their way through to Lopez's head-quarters, and thus prove that they were not traitors. But their sufferings had told upon them till they had scarcely strength enough to walk, and on all sides they were confronted by three times their number. The only roads or trails were held in force by the allies, and they had only their side-arms and muskets to oppose to them. Had they been in their full health and strength, doubtless many of them would have crawled by night through the swamps and thickets, and so escaped. But in the state in which they were, they had not the strength, if they fell into a marsh, to drag themselves out. There was no possibility, apparently, that one of them could ever reach the lines of Lopez alive. They must either surrender or die. If they surrendered they would be denounced as traitors, for it was a part of the policy of Lopez that no one under any circumstances should accept quarter, and while his men had health and strength very few cared to bring the misery on their friends that such an act was sure to entail. But these

men were past hope and past resistance. Martinez was too weak to speak aloud, and his men were mere walking skeletons, falling one after another from exhaustion, never to rise again. Who will excuse Martinez? Who will excuse Gill for surrendering? It is not for me to do it. Knowing as they did the character of Lopez, they should have died in their tracks. What came of their surrender?

At the time I was in Asuncion, I had heard of the heroic defence of Humaita, and I had heard of its successful evacuation. The bells had been rung and people about the new capital had been commanded to rejoice over the great victory achieved by Martinez and his gallant men. But now came another report. It was in the winter-time, and a cold storm had been prevailing for a day or two. Some one told me with bated breath, that, the night before, two soldiers had gone to Madam Lynch's house at Patiño-cué and seized the wife of Martinez and bid her march to the capital. The distance was eight leagues, and the soldiers with frequent blows of their sabres drove her over the rough ground to Asuncion. Of course she could have no idea what offence she had committed, but she knew well the character of Lopez and that of the treacherous she-dragon with whom she had lived for months past. She had seen many others, apparently high in the favor of this abandoned harridan, sent with her approval to prison and chains; and that the same fortune had fallen to herself could not have been so surprising as if she had dwelt among people having the feelings of ordinary humanity. The poor woman was driven through the mud and over the rough roads without rest or relief till she came to the town. Her light shoes soon gave out, and her feet were cut, bruised, bleeding, and torn long ere her walk was over. Arrived at the landing-place of the capital, she was taken into a room of the arsenal and loaded with heavy iron fetters, and left for a few hours to meditate on the mutability of human affairs. She was then driven on board of a steamer and taken to head-quarters, where she was subjected to every torture that Lopez and her bosom friend, Madam Lynch, could devise. With that mock-

ery of the forms of justice that Lopez pretended so scrupulously to observe, she was brought before his tribunal of priests and torturers, and questioned in regard to the treachery of her husband. As she had not seen him for months, she could have known nothing of his recent acts, and probably was not even aware at that time of his having surrendered.

Lopez believed, or pretended to believe, that a conspiracy had been in progress for a long time, and the fact that Martinez had surrendered rather than die of starvation was proof that he was one of the conspirators, and his wife was ordered to confess that it was so, and give all the particulars of the plan and the names of the parties to it. But the poor woman knew nothing, and could not confess. She had only known her husband as one who had served his master too faithfully and carried out his orders with horrible fidelity. She was then flogged with sticks, and the flesh literally cut from her shoulders and back, and in this way encouraged to confess. What could she tell? She knew nothing. Then the *cepo uruguayana* was applied, which was never known to fail in bringing out any confession that was asked. Bliss, Taylor, Saguier, Masterman, all admit that the agony of this torture was such that they would promise to tell anything required. Their greatest difficulty was to know what to confess. They knew nothing, and yet must admit they knew much, and their stories must be such as agreed with the confessions of others. Their time of confession came long after that of poor Mrs. Martinez, and when the conspiracy story had taken such form and consistency that the inquisitors knew what they were expected to extort, and had learned how to put their questions so as to imply what answers were required. But she had nothing to guide her, and could only protest that she knew nothing.

The mother of Martinez was also brought to head-quarters and subjected to similar treatment, and afterwards executed at the same time with her son's wife. Lopez knew well enough that neither had anything to tell, but he wished to make an example of them, that his other most trusted officers might see what was in store for their wives, mothers,

and sisters in case they should ever fall into the hands of the enemy. Other indignities not to be described, and the nature of which cannot even be hinted at, were also inflicted on this favorite and friend of Madam Lynch, as if to warn them of the fate in store for their own wives and sisters should they ever come short of obedience to the orders of Lopez. They might learn from the fate of Martinez's wife and mother that they must fight until they died or were killed, or all they loved would suffer the same cruel fate.

It was a part of the policy of Lopez to husband his materials for torture. If they died under the infliction it greatly enraged him, and his inquisitors kept him well informed of the condition of the tortured. The pain and agony of others had become his principal delight ; when a victim escaped him through the gate of death, he felt it as a wrong to himself, and that he had been robbed of a source of pleasure.

The inquisitors and torturers therefore knew that they were to graduate the sufferings of the wife and mother of Martinez, so they should not die. On one day the flogging would be applied until its continuance would endanger life, and as soon as the wounds were slightly healed, the *cepo uruguayana* was repeated, until death should threaten to snatch them away, when they were left to recover sufficiently to bear a repetition of these horrid practices. The effect of the *cepo uruguayana* was such that persons subjected to it remained in a state of semi-consciousness for several days afterwards. Yet the wife of Martinez was kept alive long enough to undergo it at six different times, between whiles being flogged till her whole body was a livid mass !

Yet Lopez would not let her die. She was still kept alive ; and when, more than six months after her arrest, he saw that the dangers were thickening around him so fast that those whom he had so long held near his head-quarters to be tortured for his special delectation might escape through the chances of war, he took measures to prevent such a catastrophe by ordering her and many others to be shot.

Of the tragical events transpiring at head-quarters we at

Asuncion knew very little. We would learn from time to time of the disappearance of different people, but of their fate we could judge nothing, except from what we knew of the disposition of Lopez, and this led us to fear the worst that malignity, human or diabolical, could invent. Our forebodings, alas! as we afterwards learned, all proved true.

The long delay of the ironclads in returning to take possession of Asuncion after it had been evacuated, had caused us all the greatest uneasiness. There was no reason, so far as we could see, why it should not have been taken at any time, as we knew there were no forces there to prevent it. The strong measures taken by Lopez in driving people into the interior indicated that he would make good his threat of a year and a half before, that, if he should be forced at last to succumb, it should not be until the last Paraguayan was destroyed. Many acts of great cruelty and hardship had come to my knowledge, and I was fully convinced that Lopez was greatly displeased that I had given shelter to so many people in my Legation. The incident of Manlove's arrest and detention showed that I would be molested in any way that he might think it prudent to venture upon, and it was clear that if he were to be driven back to the interior before Asuncion was taken, he would not allow those persons in my house not belonging to the Legation to be left behind, and it was very doubtful whether he would allow me to remain. In fact, I did not believe he would, and was anticipating a dispute with him on that point, of which it was easy to foresee the issue when the might was in hands that paid no regard to the right.

In my despatch of January 13, the last I had sent to Washington, and which I had intrusted to Lopez to send through the lines, I had advised Mr. Seward of the dangers that seemed to be gathering about us, and requested my recall. But as I was well aware that all the foreigners there regarded the presence of the minister of some strong power as a protection to themselves, not only against Lopez, but against the allies, should they ever take the town, I expressed the opinion that a successor should be sent to take my place. Having

twice before asked for my recall, and my request not having been granted, on the ground that I had made my resignation conditional, and not absolute, I now wrote to the Secretary of State as follows: "You remark that the President desires that I should remain here, but say that if my resignation should be made absolute it would be accepted. From the preceding statement of the circumstances in which I am situated, I think I shall appear justified in making my resignation thus absolute; but though it be absolute and unconditional, I trust that with my recall may come a successor. I know that my presence as United States Minister, and the only minister of a neutral power here, gives a great sense of security to many people, and especially to all foreigners. My departure before the arrival of a successor would also, I am persuaded, be regarded with great regret by this government. At the same time, I think that at this crisis, when important political changes seem impending in this part of the world, this Legation should be continued; but I do not want this to be taken as a condition of my resignation. On the contrary, I now ask my recall unconditionally, and with this make my resignation absolute."

This despatch I delivered to Bergees on the 17th of January, and supposed that in the ordinary course of events I should receive my recall in May or June. But I began to have doubts lest Lopez should have detained it. I had learned that I had previously given him mortal offence in my note to Bergees, expressing regret at the reported death of President Mitre, and these despatches had been sent but a few days after that indiscretion. The engineer Valpy, who had returned from head-quarters, had informed me that Lopez was greatly enraged that I had spoken well of Mitre, and said that it was several days after my despatches were received before any flag of truce was sent to the front. I was therefore persuaded that if they had been sent they had first been opened and read; for I had already learned that Lopez knew and practised the art of opening and closing sealed packages in a manner so artistic as to defy detection.

Unfortunately, I had little more faith in the honor of the allies than I had in that of Lopez. I had experienced so much incivility and bad faith from them, that I considered it highly problematical whether or not my despatches would be forwarded, even if Lopez sent them to be delivered into their hands. But our condition was getting so disagreeable and desperate at Asuncion, that I resolved on another effort to make it known. I knew that if I evinced any discontent or uneasiness, Lopez would suspect that I wanted to get away, and would open my despatches, and, if they contained anything displeasing to him, would detain them. That would render my situation worse than before, for he considered it an unpardonable offence for any one to entertain the thought that he would not come triumphant out of the war; and if I were to express a desire to get away, he would regard it as proof that I considered his cause lost, or at least doubtful. This despatch was dated the 7th of April, or seven weeks after the evacuation of the capital, and with it I enclosed copies of the correspondence in the Manlove difficulty, thinking that he could not complain of that, even though it should reveal a strange situation for a minister to be in; and in my synopsis of its contents I remarked that, in my opinion, the government of Paraguay had shown great disregard of the courtesies due to my Legation, if not a direct violation of its rights. I also complained of the neglect of our government in not keeping the way open so that I could communicate with it, though taking care to lay the blame mainly on the allies for detaining my correspondence. In fact, my official correspondence was carefully worded, so that if it were opened and read it would not give offence, and would be resealed and sent forward. In a private letter, however, to a friend, who was supposed at that time to have considerable influence, I stated more freely my apprehensions; and though I did not enter into an account of our situation, I complained of being so neglected by the government, and said that if it did not manifest more interest in us, a very grave responsibility would, before long, rest upon somebody. Whether or

not my friend should understand that unless a gunboat should come to our rescue soon we should never get away alive, I was sure he would hasten to Washington and represent our situation to the head of the State Department, and induce him to rouse up the Rip Van Winkle of the navy, and persuade him to order a gunboat to our relief.

Besides my own correspondence, I enclosed a few letters for other parties, being, as I thought, very careful not to send anything of a political character or to which either of the belligerents would object. Among these was an open letter from Don Domingo Parodi, relating only to a small matter of business. I also sent a letter from Dr. Carreras to his brother. He assured me it contained nothing except a notice to his family that he was in good health ; and as he participated with me in the apprehension that everything would be scrutinized by Lopez, he was sure to write nothing that was not favorable to him and hostile to the allies. His only fear regarding anything he might write was that it should be suspected by the Brazilians, if it were addressed to any of his own family. He therefore sent it under cover to a friend of his and mine, Mr. John F. Gowland of Buenos Aires. Strictly speaking, I had, perhaps, no right to send any letters but my own ; but as I knew they contained nothing of a political character, I enclosed them in my package of despatches, which I sent to head-quarters with a request that they might be forwarded through the military lines. A few days after I was notified that they had been sent through as requested, and thought no more about them till long afterwards. I then learned that they never went beyond the camp of Lopez.

CHAPTER XX.

Petty Annoyances become Frequent. — Our Fears of Impending Troubles. — Political Views of Dr. Carreras. — Brilliant Qualities and Attainments of Rodriguez. — Hope entertained by Natives and Foreigners of Protection under the American Flag. — The Mother and Sisters of Lopez share this Hope. — Letters received by an American Gunboat addressed to Carreras and Vasconcellos. — Their Contents. — News of the Assassination of Flores. — Another Visit to Lopez's Head-Quarters. — Dr. Carreras becomes Heir to a Fortune in Bolivia. — Lopez refuses him Permission to leave the Country. — Altered Aspect of Affairs at Head-Quarters. — Frigidity of Lopez. — Conversations with Drs. Stewart and Fox. — Bedoya and Benigno Lopez are Prisoners. — A Card-Party given by Madam Lynch. — Her Duplicity. — Return to Asuncion.

THE continuance of the war for so long a time after the town had been evacuated caused great anxiety to the people who had taken up their residence in my house in the hope that they would need its protection but for a few days. Though they had fled to it for protection against the Brazilians, they began to fear lest they had made a mistake. The strange inaction of the allies was the principal topic of our daily discourse. If they delayed too long, all realized that these annoyances would increase till they would be unbearable, and the English and Orientales feared lest they should become so offensive that I should be driven to demand my passports and leave the country. They would then all fall into Lopez's power, when he would doubtless take a terrible revenge on them for daring to suspect that he could not and would not defend and protect them. It was now clear that I could be of no service except to those who were in my house, and but for them I should have resented several annoyances, especially the arrest of Manlove, and, if they were not discontinued and satisfaction given, should have demanded my passports peremptorily and closed all official relations.

I was extremely averse to taking any step that would expose Rodriguez and Carreras. They were, both of them, most agreeable and intelligent gentlemen, though Carreras was a violent partisan, and had some of the most obnoxious characteristics of the Spanish American politician. I had a great many sharp discussions with him on political affairs and the character of South American notabilities. In common with Lopez he had a great dislike of President Mitre, and, personally, I had little reason for differing with them. But the animosities of South American politicians are so intense that it is considered impossible for an opponent to have any merit; and as I often defended Mitre for his courage, his eloquence, his literary accomplishments, and his courteous deportment, I found, long afterwards, that every word I had said in his favor had been treasured up to be quoted to my prejudice. Rodriguez, however, though strongly partisan, was, without exception, the most earnest, intelligent, sincere, and agreeable man that I ever met in all my experience in South America. He had the brightest intellect, the highest tone of integrity and honor, and in my whole life I have never encountered in any country a person to whom, in the same length of time, I became so strongly attached. He was a man of whom I often thought, that, if he should ever escape alive from Paraguay, he would be a prominent figure in the history of the regions of the Plata. True, in many respects we differed politically. He was possessed of the idea which is so common in South American countries, that liberty and independence are one and the same thing, and in all his acts he seemed to feel that the independence of the Banda Oriental was the first object to be considered by the public men of that Republic. Questions affecting the policy or measures necessary to the development and progress of the country were all to be subordinated to the idea of independence, which he carried to such an extreme that he had an almost idolatrous reverence and regard for the memory of that great cut-throat and assassin, Artigas. He it was of whom I have before spoken as having obtained a brick from the

house in which Artigas lived in Paraguay to carry to Montevideo as a relic, to be preserved as of especial interest to his countrymen. Yet he had the ability and the sincerity of character to have made him an eminent man, and his experience in Paraguay was such as to modify his views very much as to the advantages of independence without liberty. Paraguay had been independent for more than fifty years, and he was compelled to admit that so little liberty was never possessed by any people on the face of the earth. I felt, therefore, that it would be cowardly and wicked for me to take any steps that would prejudice the situation both of Rodriguez and Carreras; that I ought to remain at any sacrifice personal to myself, short of exposing and subjecting others who had stronger obligations upon me to danger of their lives. In addition to these two, there were several others who felt that their safety depended very much upon my remaining in Paraguay. This was the case with Bliss and Masterman, and all the foreigners in the country felt that the presence of the minister of a strong foreign power would be a security for them. It was the same with many Paraguayans, — in fact, with all of the better class with whom I had any acquaintance. The mother of the President repeatedly spoke to me of that fact. She and her younger daughter, who lived near the capital at that time, and whom I often visited, seemed to think that I might be disposed to go away from the country, and they often expressed to me their hopes that I should remain until the end of the war. They said that if the enemy were to come, I and my house would be the only place secure from sack, and they intimated to me that there were other dangers which they dreaded more than they did the allies. I told them all that I should remain as long as I could be of any service; that in the trying circumstances in which they were, I would not abandon them; that I would do all that I could to give them shelter and protection, if worse times should befall us than we then experienced.

It was under this general aspect of affairs, that, on the morning of the 6th of May, I was gratified to receive a visit

from young Gaspar Lopez, a clerk in the Office of Foreign Affairs, who brought me a despatch from Captain Kirkland, commander of the Wasp, and also a small package of letters addressed to Don Antonio Vasconcellos, the Portuguese Vice-Consul. The letter of Captain Kirkland I immediately opened and read. In it he stated that he had come by order of our government to take me and my family away, provided I wished to go; that he was below the blockading squadron of the Brazilians, and was not permitted to go any higher, and that he should wait there to hear from me. Young Gaspar was very anxious to hear the news which I had received, that he might, as I supposed, communicate it to his government. I told him that the letter from Captain Kirkland was only a brief note, informing me of his arrival and that he had come to take me away; but as for news, political or otherwise, beyond the limits of Paraguay, there was not a word, and I had no letters from other sources. Gaspar returned to the new capital of Luque immediately, and in the afternoon, as I had received no news from below, with the letter from Captain Kirkland I went to the house of Vasconcellos, a distance of about a league and a half from the capital, to carry his letter, and ascertain what news it might contain. On reaching his house I took a seat in the corridor, and delivered the package. This package had on the margin the name of G. Z. Gould, the English Secretary of Legation in Buenos Aires. Vasconcellos took it into his house, and directly returned with several letters, which he had hastily glanced over, and read their contents to me and to the Consul of Portugal, Leite Pereira. These letters were written by parties bitterly opposed to the war against Paraguay, and gave exulting accounts of the difficulties existing in Montevideo. They gave several particulars of the assassination of President Flores, and were extravagant in praise of Lopez and his cause, and the valor of the Paraguayans, and gave words of encouragement to hold out a little longer, for that the alliance could not long continue, and if Lopez could still hold his own for a few weeks or months he would come out triumphant.

Vasconcellos told me also that his package contained two or three other letters, one of which was for Don Antonio Tomé, and the other was for my guest, Carreras. That letter he gave to me to take in and deliver. It was a very small letter, contained in a thin, light, and very small envelope. Returning to my house, I delivered it to Carreras, and on opening it he found that the envelope contained two letters. One of them he read to me, and its contents were in all respects similar to the letters which Vasconcellos had received, giving the political condition of affairs at the mouth of the river. The other was a brief letter from his brother Edward, in which he wrote that an uncle of theirs had recently died in the town of Corocoro, in Bolivia, that he had left a large fortune and no lineal heirs, and that their family would inherit the estate, and advising him to get permission from Lopez to go through to Bolivia and look after the estate and interests of the family, stating that no time was to be lost, as according to the laws of Bolivia the heirs of deceased foreigners must present their claims within one year after their decease.

The next day I saw Colonel Fernandez, and advised him of the arrival of the Wasp, and that she had come to take me and my family away; that I did not wish to leave, but would send away my family, provided the steamer would come up the river far enough, so that they could conveniently embark; and that I thought it would be well for me to go to San Fernando to make the necessary arrangements for sending through my despatches, and for making any other arrangements which might be required in case the Wasp should come above the blockade. I received no answer from him nor from anybody during that day, nor the next, which was a bad indication as to the temper and disposition of the President towards me.

On the third day I called at the house of the Lady President, or Lopez's mother. I told her and her daughter Rafaela that it was very likely I should soon go to the head-quarters, as a United States steamer had come to take me away. They

expressed the greatest concern lest I should go, as the old lady said very decidedly that I was the only person in Paraguay having any security whatever. She begged me, if I went below, to ascertain as much as possible in regard to her son Benigno and her son-in-law Saturnino Bedoya. She said she had heard they were both prisoners, but could not learn any of the particulars. Her son Venancio, who was still living near the capital, was not allowed to visit her; nobody was allowed to visit her. The peons and the poor people around her all kept away, and she could not learn as much of what was going on as the most abject and miserable person in the neighborhood. But her great distress and anxiety seemed to be in regard to her son Benigno. She showed great emotion, and implored me to bring her some tidings from him. I told her I would do the best that I could. She was profuse in her thanks, and offered to send to me certain articles very necessary to the comfort of my family, such as sugar, tea, coffee, chickens, and milch cows. The next day I received an answer to my letter to Benitez, in which he said that the President would be pleased to receive a visit from me at his head-quarters, and that he would give me a steamer to go down to that place. It was not until the 12th, however, that I was informed the steamer was about to start. Carreras requested me to inform Lopez of his situation, of the fact that his uncle had died in Corocoro, leaving him a large fortune, and that he was very anxious to get permission to go through to Bolivia; that he was still, as he ever had been, a decided enemy of the Brazilians, and if he could go to Bolivia, Peru, and Chili, he should make it his business to enlist the governments and people of those countries in behalf of Paraguay and against the allies; that, if it were not convenient that he should go through by land to Bolivia, he would be glad to take passage on the Wasp, on her return to Montevideo, and would make any stipulation, if desired, not to make a landing at any place in the river; and that he would embark on some steamer that might touch at Montevideo on her way to Chili, and would do nothing that could

possibly compromise or injure the cause of Lopez, but everything that might lay in his power to assist it.

I left Asuncion on the 12th of May for San Fernando, and reached the landing-place on the succeeding day at about three o'clock. I was there provided with a horse and escort to take me to the head-quarters, some four miles from the bank of the river, and to get there I was obliged to pass over a road in some places extremely difficult. I reached the head-quarters a little before sunset. I was taken to a straw house, which was one of several of a similar character, and which I was told had been until the day before occupied by General Bruguez, but I saw no acquaintances, and nobody came near me. A servant, the same whom I had had on other occasions to wait upon me, was assigned to me; and he told me that the President and his staff, and Madam Lynch, and others whom I supposed to be still in favor, had gone on an excursion in a steamer. He, however, brought me some supper, and as the night was very cold, and I had nobody to converse with, I went to bed about nine o'clock. Soon after, I judged from the sound that the President had returned, and about ten o'clock I received notice that if I desired to see him that evening he would see me. I sent word that I would postpone my visit till the next day. In the morning I got up, and, looking about, was surprised that all of my old English friends, who were accustomed to visit me with great familiarity and frequency, kept away. Nobody came near that I could talk to. The old Vice-President had a room next to mine. I got sight of him, but he looked forlorn and woe-begone, and turned away, as if afraid to be seen recognizing me. I requested my servant to go and tell Colonel Thompson that I wished to see him. He came, and in reply to my questions regarding recent events he was very reticent, and gave me to understand that the less he said the better it might be for him, for if it were ascertained that I had derived any contraband information, Lopez would trace it to its source. There was a sort of tacit understanding among all the foreigners, and I fully appre-

ciated the delicate position of Colonel Thompson, and was well aware that his representations of the impregnable situation in which Lopez then was had been made with the apprehension that inadvertently I might express an opinion that he was not so strong as he wished to have it supposed. But his call was very brief, and an hour or two later I was informed that the President would see me at his house. I went immediately, and was received with a formality such as, with one exception, I had never observed in any previous interview. I commenced conversation with him upon the business that had brought me to his head-quarters, and stated my wishes that, as the government had sent a boat to take me away, I wished to avail myself of its presence to send off my family, but that for myself I preferred to remain to the end of the war; that I wished to communicate with Captain Kirkland, and urge upon him that he should come above the blockade. The conversation gradually became more free, and he expressed his opinion that the boat ought to come above the blockade, that the allies had no right to stop her, and said he would give me every facility for communicating with the commander of the vessel. I said then that I would write to Captain Kirkland that I wished to embark my family at Asuncion, or as near there as possible, and he could send the letter through with a flag of truce.

The preliminaries of these arrangements were all made satisfactorily to me, and then I proceeded to speak about the request of Carreras. I told him that he had received a letter from his family advising him of the death of his uncle in Bolivia, and was very anxious to leave the country. I stated to him, moreover, what Carreras said in regard to his feelings towards the Brazilians, and of his disposition to aid the cause of Paraguay in Bolivia, Peru, or Chili, could he pass over to those countries. I observed, as I began to talk in this way, that the countenance of Lopez changed, and that there was a great deal of suppressed anger working behind those eyes, that were assuming a fiendish character. I saw at once that I could hope for nothing in behalf of Carreras, and I dis-

continued the conversation for him to reply, but he said very little. He asked, however, why Carreras had gone to my house. I told him that being aware that he was extremely obnoxious to the Brazilians, and not knowing but when the ironclads went to Asuncion they would capture the town, and fearing that if they did they would do to him as they formerly did to Leandro Gomez, he sought shelter from them. He asked why he continued in my house after the ironclads had gone away, and there was no further danger. I replied that he and Rodriguez came there as guests; that we had become well acquainted, and I had found them agreeable, intelligent gentlemen, and as we had no society since the evacuation of the town, we desired to have them remain for company and companionship; that I personally wished them to remain. He said that was a very good reason so far as I was concerned, but he evidently felt a great animosity towards Carreras. I took my leave of him, and prepared my letter to Captain Kirkland. After this I had another interview, when Lopez made some suggestions regarding the signals that Captain Kirkland would do well to use coming up the river. I therefore wrote a second letter to Kirkland. He sent me, late in the evening of the following day, the orders which he had written for the commandants at Humaita and Timbo, and I stayed another night at his camp, as I could not deliver my letters for Kirkland until the next morning. I then went to see him again. During that interview I talked with him about the case of Manlove, and stated my views in regard to his arrest. He then spoke about my right of keeping so many people in my house who did not belong to the Legation, and intimated that he might officially call it in question, and that if I persisted in it a diplomatic correspondence would follow. I told him that the English had come there by permission of the government; that to the presence of Carreras and Rodriguez no objection had been made for months, though the government was aware of it; and that, as circumstances then were, I was not disposed to send any of them away. But as to Manlove he gave no encourage-

ment that he would be set at liberty. I then told him that as it would be several days before any answer could be received from Captain Kirkland, I wished to return to Asuncion as soon as possible. He said that the steamer would leave that afternoon as soon as I desired, — in form, if not in manner, fully complying with all that etiquette or diplomatic courtesy could expect or require.

Finding that the English who were in the camp were afraid to come near me, I went to see them. I went several times to the house of Dr. Stewart, and there I met not only him, but Dr. Fox. They both expressed their desire to call upon me, but they knew that it would be at the peril of their lives to do it, whereas, as I had called upon them, they could excuse themselves by saying that they had not invited me, but they did not wish to be rude to me and send me away. In fact, they were very anxious to see and converse with me. On one of these visits Dr. Stewart told me that the English government was moving in behalf of the English subjects in Paraguay; that he did not know much about it, but he was persuaded her Majesty's government had made a peremptory demand for all the English in the country, and that it would not be put off by any assurances from them that they were contented, and did not wish to leave, nor would it be satisfied by letters written by them while in the power of Lopez. They must be delivered; then, if they wished to return, it would be a matter of their own choice. I also saw Madam Lynch on several occasions. She, as usual, was all suavity, and abounding in expressions of interest in and kindness towards everybody, even those whom she had instigated Lopez to arrest and torture. I had inquired of Dr. Stewart as to the condition and situation of Don Benigno and Bedoya. He told me that they were both prisoners; that Bedoya was a close prisoner, and was being badly treated; that Benigno was a prisoner in a shanty near by, but further than that he knew nothing. The information from Dr. Stewart I could not convey to the President's mother, as she would probably intercede in behalf of Benigno and Bedoya if she knew their situation; and if in-

quired of from whom she obtained her information, she would doubtless give my name. Then, as I had been able to communicate only with Stewart, Fox, and Thompson, the information would be traced to them, and the offending party must suffer. I therefore asked Madam Lynch in regard to them. I was obliged, however, to observe great circumspection, and I remarked, as if casually, that I did not see several of my old friends, two or three of whom I was expecting to see, for instance, José Berges, Don Benigno, and Bedoya, and I asked her how they all were. She said that Berges was quite feeble, that Benigno and Bedoya were very well. This information derived from her I could communicate to the old lady, and compromise nobody. The more particular information derived from Dr. Stewart I could not impart to her without its being traced back to him, the result of which would very likely have been his imprisonment, and perhaps his execution.

Dr. Stewart also informed me that the Vice-President had been a prisoner, but was then at large ; that both he and Don José Berges had suffered extremely in coming from Humaita to San Fernando ; that Berges had come so near dying on the road, he at one time was left alone to expire under a tree, but afterwards he was got through to San Fernando, and there detained as a prisoner. The Vice-President at that time was so far liberated that he was allowed to go out of his house and visit the President. I saw the poor man several times, and a more pitiable object it is hard to imagine. A man more than eighty years old, with little more flesh on his bones than a skeleton, with only a thin old cloak about him, though the weather, for that country, was extremely cold ; he looked as though he had not blood enough in his veins to keep life within his body. I observed him standing about, with a most obsequious, forlorn look, apparently anxious to catch the President's eye, and by his extreme deference and attention to merit his forgiveness for some act of which he probably knew not the criminality.

The last evening I was there I was invited by Madam Lynch to her house, or to the President's house, as apparently

they lived in the same mud building, to play whist. I complied with the invitation, and the whist-party was made up of Madam Lynch, the Hungarian Colonel Wisner, Colonel Thompson, and myself. Colonel Thompson, however, soon gave up his place to General Bruguez, who came in after the game had commenced. Strange as it may seem, all of that party escaped alive from the hands of Lopez except General Bruguez, who was shot subsequently as a traitor. This Bruguez, I may here say, was probably the best fighting officer that Lopez ever had, with one or two exceptions. He was a man noted for his cruelty and for his fidelity to his master, and had exposed himself with a recklessness and a valor which were extremely rare even among Paraguayans, who usually think nothing of danger. His services to his master had been of such a character that it was supposed his only hope of escape from destruction was in the final triumph of Lopez, as he had been the instrument of so many cruelties, that, if taken prisoner, he could never expect anything less than immediate death. And yet Lopez observed towards him that impartiality which was so remarkable in his character. He was subjected to the same horrid tortures and experienced the same terrible death as though he had been of great injury, instead of service, to his chief.

Leaving the court of Lopez on the 16th of May, I returned to the bank of the river and embarked for Asuncion. I observed a large quantity of rubbish, consisting mainly of dried hides for holding corn, on the deck between the after cabin and the fore part of the steamer, as if thrown there carelessly for the sole purpose of carrying it to Asuncion. I learned, however, from one of the engineers of the boat, an Englishman, that there was a large number of wounded in the fore part of the vessel, and that these hides had been thrown in the way to prevent me from going forward and learning of their presence, as every effort was made on all occasions to prevent people from knowing that any disaster had occurred in battle, or any persons been wounded.

I went immediately, on my return, to call upon the Presi-

dent's mother and sister at the Trinidad. They were extremely desirous of seeing me, as they supposed that I could give them some information, the one in regard to the situation of her son and son-in-law, and the other of her brother and husband. I could only communicate to them what Madam Lynch had told me, that they were very well in health. I knew they were prisoners, for Dr. Stewart had told me so; but had I told the old lady that fact, the authority for it would have been traced to Dr. Stewart. Therefore I could say nothing more than that I believed they were still in health. As to their being prisoners in irons and badly treated I could give them no information. Perhaps I was not frank; perhaps I denied having knowledge which I really possessed; but if I erred lest I should subject others to suspicion, torture, and death by telling all I knew, I can only hope that my prevarication may have been blotted out after the manner of Uncle Toby's oath.

CHAPTER XXI.

Correspondence with Commander Kirkland. — Numerous Arrests. — Victories reported in the *Semanario*. — Difficulty of obtaining Provisions. — A Period of Anxiety. — Our English Guests. — Arrest of Captain Fianza and of many Foreigners. — The Portuguese Consul, Leite Pereira. — His *Exequatur* is withdrawn. — He takes Refuge in the American Legation. — Consultations on his Case. — His Surrender is demanded and refused. — Note to Benitez.

IT was not until the 30th of May, more than two weeks after I had sent my letter, that I received an answer to it from Captain Kirkland. This delay had caused us considerable uneasiness, as had the proper facilities been granted for making communication I should have received an answer within five days. In his letter, Captain Kirkland stated that the Marques de Caxias would not permit the *Wasp* to pass above the blockade, but offered, if I and my family would come to his lines at Pilar and Tayi in a Paraguayan steamer, to provide us with the means of going by land from either of those places to a point below the blockade, whence we could embark on board the *Wasp*. To our great surprise and disappointment, Kirkland sent us neither letter nor newspaper, nor any news whatever from the outer world, though he must have known that we had been many months, as it were, in prison, and without means of communicating with any one beyond the limits of Paraguay. I immediately answered the letter, declining the offer of the Marques de Caxias, stating that he had no right to detain the *Wasp* or prevent her from coming through the blockade. I also said that the state of Mrs. Washburn's health was such that she could not and would not attempt to go by land from Pilar and Tayi to the point indicated by him. I did not tell Kirkland that it was my intention to remain, and only to send my family. I distrusted his

motives and his judgment, and feared that if I stated anything of that kind he would consider that he had complied with his orders, and return to Montevideo. I told him by all means not to return, but to come through if possible. I told him, also, that if the Marques de Caxias persisted in refusing him permission to pass the blockade, he should attempt it without any permission; that the question of the right of a government to communicate with its minister by means of its naval vessels had been settled already in the case of the Shamokin at the time of my coming to Paraguay; and that he should give notice to Caxias, if permission was still refused, that he was going through without it; and that, should he start to pass through the blockade, I did not believe he would be forcibly stopped. If he were, and the Brazilians fired upon his vessel, then he could turn back, and not expose the vessel to be sunk or destroyed, but that I did not believe they would venture to fire upon her, and it was a matter of great importance that she should come through. I could not write to him of our real situation, or tell him that our lives were in danger, and that Lopez had entered upon a course that promised extermination of all the foreigners in his dominions, for my letter was to pass through the hands of Lopez, and would most likely be read by him before it reached Captain Kirkland. I, however, urged him very strongly not to go below, but to remain within call if possible. I told him they had no right to prevent his passing the blockade, and would not dare to fire upon him, and advised him to disregard their protests and come through. I knew our danger, and I knew that if he went away, and the fate that seemed to be impending should overtake us, and it should appear that by his leaving the river the evils that Lopez was preparing for us should overtake us, he would be held to a very grave responsibility. My object was to get the steamer above the blockade, and get my family on board of her first, and then to force Lopez to make certain explanations, and give certain satisfaction, with security for the future, or else to leave myself. I believed that, with a gunboat at hand, I could secure any explanations

that I demanded, and that I could forward such representations to the admiral of the squadron (who, I had learned, was not Godon) that I should not be left again for any considerable time without the means of communicating with him or the government. I had told Lopez that it was not my intention to go away until the war was over, though I had said nothing of my intention to go provided there was not a full and complete understanding as to what my relations were to be if I remained. I knew very well that if I should then tell Lopez that I and my family were all going away, he would not send my letters to the commander of the gunboat. I knew that he would refuse a steamer to carry us below, and it would not have been possible for us to get away without it. I was therefore obliged to use diplomacy in order to get the *Wasp* within hailing distance. He was anxious that the blockade should be forced, but he was more anxious that the only minister in the country should not appear to abandon him.

After having despatched this letter, the time passed as usual, with nothing to vary the monotony of our existence except the accounts which came to us nearly every day of persons arrested and sent in irons to head-quarters. We also heard various reports of the movements of the army; at one time that the ironclads were near San Fernando, and that a large body of troops was approaching that point by land. The *Semanario* invariably contained accounts of battles, all of which resulted in great victories for the Paraguayans. Scarcely a number of the paper appeared without containing accounts of actions in which one or two hundred Paraguayans were engaged with three or four thousand or more of the enemy, the result of which always was that, after performing prodigies of valor, each man slaying his dozens, they retired in good order, after the enemy had retreated, leaving thousands of dead and wounded on the field of combat, and with a loss to themselves of not usually more than two or three killed and twenty or thirty wounded. The impression among the English and other foreigners seemed to be that the allies were

approaching by land and water, and that the war could last but very little longer.

It was on the 3d of June that I sent my last letter to Captain Kirkland, advising him that my family could not go away on the *Wasp* unless she were to come above the blockading squadron. On the 23d I received his reply, in which he stated that the Marques de Caxias positively refused permission for him to pass the blockade, and that, after waiting for nearly two months, he should return to Montevideo for further instructions, not doubting he should return immediately with orders to pass the allied fleet. But as we knew not where the admiral was, or if he was of a similar character to his predecessor; it was uncertain whether the gunboat would return in one month, or three, or six.

During this time I was occupied very much in foraging for my large family. Having more than forty persons in my house, and the inhabitants being driven from the capital and from the neighborhood towards the interior, it was with difficulty that I could obtain a sufficiency of such provisions as the country produced. My Paraguayan servant, Basilio, was also employed a large portion of his time in the same occupation; and between us we were able to obtain everything absolutely necessary for health and comfort, if not for luxury. With beef, which was generally very good, and the maize, or Indian corn, from the meal of which we made our bread, with the mandioca as a substitute for potatoes, and the eggs and chickens, and the Paraguayan tea, or maté, with a little sugar and wine which the mother of the President occasionally sent us, the want of provisions was the least of our troubles. In fact, but for our apprehensions of danger from Lopez, ours would have been a very happy family. Engaged in literary occupations through several hours of the day, with billiards for exercise and amusement in the daytime, and whist and chess in the evening, the days passed away on the whole very happily. When talking of our situation we naturally became anxious, and the arrest of so many persons which was going on around us led us to fear lest some similar evil might over-

take ourselves. But it is not in human nature to give way to protracted anxiety, and the very depression which we experienced sometimes seemed to be followed by rebounds of careless hilarity. Our English friends residing in the rear rooms of the Legation were uneasy, and, situated as they were, were not always very amiable towards each other. On my return from San Fernando I had told them what Dr. Stewart had said to me, though without giving him for authority; that I had learned their government was moving in their behalf, and I believed that ere long they would be rescued from their unfortunate situation. About this time the men among them received word that if they would leave with their families and reside elsewhere, they would again be taken into the government employ. It was unfortunate for them that I had told them of what Dr. Stewart had informed me, for, had they not been so advised, they would probably have accepted the offer at that time, and saved themselves from a great deal of subsequent misery. As it was, trusting that their government, which they knew was fully informed of their situation, would do something for their relief, they determined to remain with me. The English government, however, left them to destruction, and, as I found afterwards, the information which Dr. Stewart had received in regard to its intended action was not in accordance with the facts. These English were all most respectable and worthy people. They were consuming at a rapid rate the earnings of years. Though I had received them into my house, I did not supply them with provisions further than to allow my servant to bring in for them the food which he procured at the time he was foraging for my own family. The Legation might be said to consist of a sort of colony, as, besides my own family, of which Rodriguez and Carreras were members, there was another party living by themselves, consisting of Meincke, my private secretary, Bliss, Masterman, and Manlove up to the time that he was arrested. They had a cook to themselves, a German, who was employed by Manlove and Masterman at the time of the evacuation of the town.

Among those arrested about this time was Captain Simon Fidanza. This man was an Italian, and the owner of one or two steamers which plied on the waters of the Plata. Just before the war commenced he came to Paraguay with one of his steamers in order to sell it. Lopez made a bargain with him to buy the steamer and the cargo, which consisted mainly of provisions, for a stipulated price. Before the money was paid, or Fidanza could get away, Lopez changed his mind and resolved to confiscate the steamer, as it had come to Paraguay under the Argentine flag. He therefore took possession of it as a prize of war, and would not permit Fidanza to leave the country. He was, however, allowed to take a considerable quantity of the provisions from the vessel for his own use, and he accordingly remained in Asuncion for about a year and a half, when, as there was no prospect of the war's ending immediately, he took a *chacra* about three leagues from the capital, in what is called the Campo Grande. He seemed to have abundant means, had quite a retinue of servants around him, and, being naturally inclined to hospitality, he liberally entertained everybody that chose to call on him. There I visited him very often. His house was directly on the road to Limpio, where I was accustomed to go very frequently, and I never went or returned without giving him a call. It was also a resting-place, not only for me, but for the French Consul, M. Cochelet, and others, whenever we wished to go into the Campo for partridge shooting. We had always supposed, from the fact that Lopez had allowed him so large a share of his own property, that he stood in high favor; and from the freedom with which he conversed with us, and from the confidential way in which he talked with me particularly, I knew that he never could have been engaged in anything that ought to excite the suspicion of Lopez. I was therefore greatly surprised to learn of his arrest. I heard that he was a prisoner in Asuncion, and I went to see Colonel Fernandez, to request permission to send his meals from my house. He told me that he had gone below, not as a prisoner, but that the President desired to

see him in regard to certain matters, and that he would be well treated.

I also heard, about this time, of the arrest of a great many other foreigners. In fact, it seemed that all the foreigners were to be arrested and sent below. My boy Basilio used to tell me with bated breath, on his return from the market, that he had seen this, that, and the other man going towards the police-office, accompanied by a *sargente*. From some of the English about the arsenal I learned that they were all taken in irons to San Fernando by the different steamers. And not only were there many men thus arrested and taken away, but many women, and almost invariably the women belonging to the best families in Paraguay. They were detained sometimes a day or two at or near the arsenal, with heavy fetters upon their ankles, before they were taken down the river. Of such I believe that no one ever returned. Poor Fidanza was kept a long time a prisoner, and treated with such inhuman cruelty that he became insane, and in his delirium accused nearly everybody, not only of conspiracy against Lopez, but of many atrocious crimes. He was tortured until he was about to die, and then, in accordance with the custom of Lopez to finally execute those who would otherwise soon expire, he was shot.

Of these transactions which were going on in the army we knew nothing more than that the parties had been arrested. We did not know how many, but we knew that a large number of foreigners had been sent below, and from our knowledge of Lopez's character we had little hope ever to see them again. As I look back upon those days, I can hardly believe that we treated the subject of our own situation so lightly as we did, and that the days passed without constant and uninterrupted fear and anxiety. Yet so they did. It may have been that we were selfish and had too little sympathy for those who had been arrested; and yet we all felt that the same miseries to which they were subjected would very likely soon be ours. I am inclined to think that human nature is so constituted that unusual anxiety and depression of spirits will

be followed, in spite of reason, in spite of danger, by alternate periods of carelessness and mirth. So long as we enjoyed immunity we made the most of it, and allowed the impending dangers to annoy us as little as possible.

But this feeling of comparative indifference as to the future was interrupted on the 16th of June by the appearance of the Portuguese Consul, Leite Pereira, and his wife, who came to my house about twelve o'clock of that day, in a state of great fear and anxiety, to ask me to give them shelter and protection in my Legation. A few days before this, the French Consul, Cuberville, who had just before been at San Fernando paying court to Lopez and Madam Lynch, had returned, and had told Pereira the President was very much enraged with him. He believed him to be a friend of the Brazilians, for if he were not, and had no arrangement with them, he did not understand why he would pay out so much money to assist and support Brazilian prisoners and other destitute foreigners. He believed that he had some assurances of compensation. Pereira, on hearing this, became greatly alarmed, and on coming to my house told me he had received a letter from Benitez a few hours before, informing him that his consular character would be no longer respected. Suspecting that this letter would be followed by a police force to arrest him, he and his wife had mounted their horses, galloped into town, and came to the Legation to ask me to protect them. Pereira said that his only object was to find some shelter for his wife. They had previously brought to my house all their most valuable papers, and Pereira said that they contained vouchers for more than two hundred thousand dollars of money which he had expended for the relief of Brazilian and Argentine prisoners, and for the destitute subjects of other countries. His succor of these unhappy people was the only offence which he had committed against Lopez, and these vouchers were the only records of his guilt. He desired me to retain them, and, if he were never to escape alive from Paraguay, to endeavor to take them out of the country and deliver them to the Portuguese Minister at Montevideo. He

said that if the government of Paraguay should request me to surrender him, he should not ask, and would not permit, that I should endanger the safety of the other people in my Legation on his account ; that he would stay there, if I would permit him, until the government of Paraguay should call for him, which, perhaps, they would not do, but if they did he should deliver himself up. He should in that case only ask me to do the best I could for his wife, and to save his property if possible.

I was greatly embarrassed by this unexpected call upon me. I knew that if I received them, and permitted them to remain, it would greatly enrage Lopez, and that it would increase the danger which Rodriguez, Carreras, and, in fact, all the rest of us, were in. I consulted with both Rodriguez and Carreras as to what I should do. They said that it was a very embarrassing affair ; they wished it had not happened ; but as it was, they thought that I was not bound to send them away until the government should ask for them. This view corresponded with my own. In fact, I felt from the first that I could not turn them into the streets, and it was a great relief to me to have Rodriguez and Carreras take the same view of the matter. I was playing, as it were, with life and death. If I received Pereira into my house, it might cause the death of Rodriguez, Carreras, and others ; if I sent him and his wife away, they might be subjected to torture and execution, which possibly might be averted if I permitted them to stay. Therefore I was in duty bound to consult with the Orientales, and when they approved of my course I felt relieved very much from the responsibility. Though evil should come upon themselves, they could never censure me for it. The Pereiras therefore remained, and for two or three days everything about us seemed as quiet as before. On the 23d I received a note from Benitez, which was the beginning of a very long, and, on my part, anxious correspondence, and on the part of Benitez probably equally so, as before it was concluded he was called below, and, after being subjected to the customary torture, executed. To form a correct idea of

the Jesuitical cunning and malignant mendacity of Lopez, as he laid his plans by which he hoped to destroy us all and yet appear justified to the world, this entire correspondence should be given. That, however, would require an additional volume, and therefore I must content myself with giving a brief synopsis, showing how, with the appliances he had at hand, he could manufacture such testimony as he wanted. In the first letter I was asked if Leite Pereira was in my house. I could not deny that he was, though I complained of the terms in which the information was demanded.

On the 27th I received another letter from Benitez, in which, if I was not peremptorily ordered, I was very urgently invited, to deliver Leite Pereira into the hands of a police officer, who would present himself at my house two hours after the delivery of the letter. To this letter I replied on the succeeding day. In my reply I stated to Benitez that his note had occasioned me great surprise, as it had not shown a proper respect for the accredited minister of a friendly nation; that I was requested, in a manner almost peremptory, to deliver up a guest of mine against whom no specific crime or charge was laid, and who, like myself, was entirely ignorant of the nature of the accusation that had been made against him. I was also requested to deliver him to a police officer who was to be sent to take him away. I answered, with some asperity, that this request for a foreign minister to deliver a party to the police appeared to me of so strange a nature that I must, under any and all circumstances, decline to accede to it. All that I could do, even were a specific crime laid to the charge of Pereira, would be to advise him that my house could no longer give him an asylum. I also stated that all the writers on international law whom I had been able to consult agreed, both in regard to the extradition from one country to another, and to the delivery of persons who have fled for asylum to the Legation of a foreign minister, that he is not under any obligation to deliver them except for some definite and high crime against the state or sovereign. This being recognized as the law in such cases, it followed that before

surrendering Leite Pereira I must first ask for the specific offence or offences of which he was accused ; and in support of this view I gave a pertinent quotation from "Vattel's Law of Nations," and added that, according to that distinguished writer, the mere allegation that a person is accused, without stating his offence, is not a sufficient reason why he should be delivered up, and that if I had not surrendered him it was from no wish or intention of shielding any accused person from the penalties of violated laws, but simply to conform to the law established for such cases, so as to be my own justification. I added, that the case was one of greater delicacy and responsibility, from the fact that up to the day that Pereira came to my house he had been known to me and recognized by the government of Paraguay in an official capacity, that of Acting Consul of Portugal. His offence or crime, therefore, must have been committed while he still held that character, and the case presented grave doubts whether the consul of one nation has not exceptional and stronger claims on the protection of the minister of another than a person holding no public position. I then went on to quote from distinguished writers on international law, showing that consuls, to some extent, enjoy the privileges and immunities of ministers ; that, therefore, my position was one of difficulty and delicacy ; that a too ready acquiescence would justly expose me to the severe censure of my own government and to the obloquy of the civilized world, and therefore I should request that the specific charges against Leite Pereira should first be made, and that then, if they should be of the grave character which should require it, he would be advised that my Legation could no longer give him an asylum. I also stated that Leite Pereira had at all times expressed his entire willingness to leave my Legation, and even surrender himself to the authorities of the country, whenever I should indicate that my house could no longer give him protection ; that, conscious of no offence, and relying on the justice of the tribunals of Paraguay, he would be ready to meet and disprove any allegations that might be

brought against him. This last statement, to Lopez and to all who knew the character of the tribunals there, must have seemed a grim sarcasm; and when Pereira advised me to insert something to that effect, it was with the avowed hope that it might mitigate the punishment which he feared was in reserve for him.

This letter was despatched on the 28th of June, and we all waited in fear and trembling for the answer. But several days passed, and, as no reply came, we began to hope that Lopez would not insist on the rendition of Pereira. The excitement and fear of the first few days gradually wore off, and Pereira and his wife, who at first showed an apprehension and fear only to be compared with that of two fugitive slaves who, in the good old times when bloodhounds and slave-hunters were in fashion, had escaped beyond the borders of the slave-region and were hid in the house of some good Quaker, yet knew that the hounds and the hunters, backed up by the law, were on their track. Gradually they got into a more normal state of mind; and as they were both most excellent and agreeable persons, the time passed with us perhaps even more pleasantly than it had before their arrival. True, we discussed anxiously each day our situation and prospects, and many and curious were the speculations as to what course Lopez would take. But yet, as we heard nothing, we continued our usual literary avocations for some hours each day, interspersed with several games of billiards; and when evening came we had invariably our games of whist, chess, and euchre, and always retired fearful, yet hopeful, in regard to the morrow.

CHAPTER XXII.

Benitez's Note of July 11, 1868. — The Beginning of the End. — The English leave the Legation. — Leite Pereira surrenders himself. — Pickets are placed around the Legation. — Carreras and Rodriguez are demanded. — Mysterious Charges against them. — Anxious Consultations. — Admirable Conduct of Rodriguez. — They finally give themselves up. — Note to Benitez in their Behalf. — Rights of Legation insisted on. — The Saddest Moment in this History. — Lopez demands the Surrender of Bliss and Masterman. — They are accused of High Crimes and Misdemeanors. — The Demand refused and Passports called for. — Rapid Succession of Notes. — Fresh Charges against Bliss and Masterman. — Offer to send them out of the Country. — Treatment of the English. — Sweeping Arrests at Luque. — A Brazilian Spy about the Legation. — Thomas Carter. — The Prisoners taken to the Army.

THIS period of expectation was of short duration. On the evening of the 11th of July, on returning from my customary *paseo* on horseback, I found that a letter had just been received from Benitez. All were intensely anxious to know its contents. On opening the letter I found it very long, consisting of nearly forty closely written pages. I glanced over it first to learn its general tenor, and found it was a recital of my own offences in having refused to leave the capital at the time its evacuation was ordered, of having received so many persons into my Legation, of not having answered certain official notes, and a multiplicity of offences that I had never before thought of or suspected that I had committed. It concluded with the notice that the asylum which had been given to persons in my Legation, who were not connected with it, must cease, and that, although it had been tolerated at the time of the evacuation, it would not be permitted any longer, and the government would give no explanation in regard to the individuals or the charges which it had to make against them. I was therefore requested to

dismiss, on the following day, all the persons in my house who were not members of my Legation, and in such terms that the only inference was, if they were not sent away they would be taken by force. All the persons in the house were immediately advised of the contents of this letter, and there was great consternation among them. Pereira said that, for his part, he should go immediately. He feared that he had precipitated the trouble which had come upon others, and considered that he could do no less than depart. I told him that I was under no obligations to send away anybody until specific crimes and offences were charged, and as no charges had been made in his case, I should not turn him out of my house. He could act his pleasure in the matter. To the English I also said they could go or stay, as they thought it best for themselves. No charge had been made against them, and Lopez had no right to demand them until something specific was alleged against them. They all saw, however, that the terms of the note were such as to show a determination to have them in one way or another, and that if they remained because specific charges of crime were not made against them, it would be but a short time before such charges would be manufactured and forthcoming.

Of what nature those charges might be, neither they nor I could have any idea ; but if specific crimes were alleged against them, I should then have no alternative but to give them up, even though convinced they were false. Lopez would then treat them as if they had committed the crimes charged and they were proved against them. They all concluded that the best thing they could do was to leave voluntarily the next morning, and they commenced making their preparations to do so the same night. Whither they were to go, or what was to become of them, they knew not. Carreras and Rodriguez seemed to think that it was not they that Lopez wished to get hold of, and did not believe that, if the others went, he would insist upon their departure ; and it was finally understood that the next day Pereira would go into the streets, where, of course, he would be immediately arrested, and the English would go

and report themselves to the police, and request to be sent to such place in the interior as the government might assign to them. Poor Leite Pereira and his wife that night were two of the most miserable beings that it has ever been my fortune to meet. They both seemed to realize that their separation was to be final. They were most tenderly attached to each other, and the misery depicted on their faces was such, that from sympathy there was scarce a wink of sleep in the whole house during that night. The next morning I found my house surrounded by a great number of police and soldiers. The English, when they opened their doors in the morning, found such a force watching for them as caused them to fear they were all to be taken to prison the moment they left the house. They requested me to go and see Colonel Fernandez in their behalf, and to learn of him what it was the desire of the government they should do, where they were to go, and to express to him their apprehension lest they were to be arrested as prisoners. I complied with their request, and when I told Fernandez what they had said to me, he answered that they were not to be arrested nor to be taken to prison ; that they should go, all of them, to the railroad station, where he would give me his word of honor they should be kindly and respectfully treated, and that assistance would be given them in carrying any of their goods, furniture, or provisions to the station ; and that within a day or two after they would be notified to what points in the interior they were to be removed. They accordingly commenced making preparations to depart. I busied myself in writing a brief letter in answer to that very long one from Benitez, in which I stated that I differed entirely from the opinions and conclusions advanced in his letter in relation to the rights and immunities of foreign ministers and legations, but that this did not affect the practical view of the case, as all the persons mentioned by name by him had informed me of their intention to leave my house voluntarily ; and as I supposed the government would not object that Mrs. Pereira should remain, she would do so, unless objection was made to it by the government. Carreras and

Rodriguez would remain for the present, as such was their desire ; I did not understand, and it had not been alleged, that any offence was charged against them, except that they had remained in the Legation ; and if for that offence the government were to insist on their leaving, it would assume that I had no right to have either guests or visitors in my house.

At about three o'clock in the afternoon the English all left and went to the railroad station. Fernandez had been as good as his word, and sent peons and carts to assist them. Pereira left at four o'clock. He started from the front door of the Legation, and as he reached the corner of the street several policemen who had been watching approached and arrested him, and this was the last I ever saw of him. At his departure, poor Mrs. Pereira seemed almost frantic. Carreras and Rodriguez, as did also Mrs. Washburn and myself, endeavored to console her by representations in which we ourselves had no confidence. Little did Carreras and Rodriguez then realize that within twenty-four hours their own situation would be as desperate as that of Pereira.

With the departure of Pereira and the English we all hoped that the government would be satisfied. Pereira had excited the suspicion and jealousy of Lopez, and we could understand why the latter wanted to get possession of his person, and we supposed that the object in requiring the English to leave the Legation was to induce the mechanics to re-enter the service of Paraguay. In his letter of the 11th of July, Benitez had complained that, by giving shelter to them, the public workshops were deprived of their services. Having attained these two objects, the person of Pereira and the services of the English, we hoped that the rest of us would be left alone and unmolested, though our fears that we should not be by far exceeded any such hopes. It may be supposed that during the evening our situation was earnestly discussed, and that when we retired we were all exceedingly anxious as to what the morrow might bring forth. By this time sleep was, to me at least, no longer tired nature's sweet restorer. The following

morning I arose very early, but before my toilet was completed I heard an ominous knock at my door. I hastened to answer it, and there I found the soldier who usually brought such missives with another letter, similar in appearance to all the others I had lately received, in his hand. I took it, and retired to read it alone before making its contents known to anybody else. I found that in its purport it was worse than ever I had even feared. It stated that I was in error in supposing that the only offence of Carreras and Rodriguez was in their remaining in the Legation, and I was informed that they were demanded by justice, and the necessity of their appearance before the tribunals was so urgent that I was requested to dismiss them before one o'clock of that day. And, as a specimen of the character and tone of the notes which I received, I will give this brief extract : —

“Your Excellency will perceive that there exist offences on the part of these Orientales, and that not only are they to be brought before the tribunal, but that it is urgent to do so, and I trust that though your Excellency has counselled them, and requested them to remain in your hotel when they were disposed to leave it, now that you know they are guilty you will hasten to dismiss them.”

As I did not know that they were guilty, and had no proof that they were except this statement of Benitez, and believed they were entirely innocent, and as it was clearly intimated that they would be taken by force if they did not deliver themselves up voluntarily, I then saw that my rights as a minister would be of very little protection to them. As soon as Rodriguez and Carreras had arisen that morning I showed them the letter, and great was their surprise that they should be accused and declared guilty of grave offences. Of the nature of their offences they professed to be, and I believe were, entirely ignorant ; and the question then was, what course they should take. They were at full liberty to go, or wait till they might be taken by force. I should adhere to my resolution to deliver nobody up unless specific charges were alleged against them ; but if these charges should be made, then I could no

longer give them shelter in the Legation. We discussed anxiously the probable course that would be taken by Lopez in the event of their going away or of their remaining. Carreras at first seemed to think that the war was nearly at an end, and that if he remained in the Legation he should perhaps escape with his life, for he did not believe that Lopez would violate the Legation and take him by force, and said if I would promise to remain where I was until the close of the war, he should not deliver himself up. That, I foresaw, I could not do ; for if I made such a promise I most probably could not fulfil it, as subsequent facts soon demonstrated. I had long before sent in my resignation, and was every day expecting notice of my recall, and a successor to come to take my place. Lopez would take good care to see that successor before I did ; and as the capital had then been in another place than Asuncion for some five months, it was not likely that another minister would take up his residence there, and, if he did not, then my house would be no protection. Besides, I had taken the ground that I was under no obligations to send any one away till specific charges were alleged against him, and that if such charges should be made, as it was laid down by all the writers on international law that the house of an ambassador cannot be used as a refuge for criminals, then, the moment I was notified of the offence committed, if it were of a grave character, and whether true or false would not matter, I should have no alternative but to send them away. If I returned for answer that I would not dismiss them till some crime were laid to their charge, it was very certain that if they were not taken by force immediately, such a charge would be made soon after, and then it would be worse for them than if they had gone voluntarily. Rodriguez was of the opinion that the best thing for them both was that they should go as if voluntarily, and afterwards Carreras was of the same opinion, and they made up their minds that before the hour indicated in Benitez's letter they would take their departure. On this occasion I saw very much in the character of Rodriguez to admire. He was well aware

of the danger that was before him, and still, as there was and could be nothing against him, he had some hope that he would escape with his life. That he would be forced to undergo most inhuman treatment, he had no doubt; but it seemed to him that life at best is but for a few years, and whether they were a score or two more or less would not signify in the great future. He said that as for the suffering, he could endure perhaps as much as any man. He had always lived a temperate and regular life, was in good health, had a good constitution, and could endure very much before he would succumb to the great destroyer. Besides, he was of a hopeful temperament, and in whatever situation of life he found himself he had sufficient philosophy to make the best of it, and to believe that in the end all was for the best. He also said that he had much greater apprehensions in regard to Carreras than for himself. Carreras, he knew, was nervous and excitable; he had neither the endurance nor the temperament to undergo the trials which he feared were in store for them both; and altogether he showed a disinterestedness and sympathy for his friend, at a time when his own dangers and his own trials might be supposed to be sufficient to engage all his attention, such as I have never seen equalled, nor have I read either in history or fiction of such sublime self-abnegation. They both made such preparations as they had time to make in regard to their private affairs, and wrote to their friends of their circumstances and situation, and of my efforts in their behalf, and commissioned both myself and Mrs. Washburn to bear what might be their last messages to their friends and relatives. I busied myself during the morning in writing a note to Benitez, hoping that in some degree I could placate the wrath of his master, and perhaps obtain for them better treatment than they would otherwise receive. From that note I make the following extract:—

“Your Honor then adds that in regard to the longer residence of Srs. Carreras and Rodriguez, instead of being in no other way culpable than for remaining in this Legation, they are claimed by the tribunals of justice and in a manner so peremptory

that it is expected they will leave this Legation by one o'clock to-day.

“ Having advised those two gentlemen of the contents of your note, they manifested much surprise, but expressed their readiness to go at once and meet and refute any charges that may be made against them, and they actually left before the hour indicated.

“ It is with as profound regret as I ever experienced in my life to have two friends whom I very much esteem, and who have been my guests for some five months, leave my house under such circumstances, and I am fully persuaded that no accusation can be brought against them from which they will not triumphantly vindicate themselves. During their long residence with me we have naturally talked with entire frankness on every manner of subject, and it appears to me that if they had, either of them, ever committed or connived at any act criminal or offensive to the government of Paraguay, I should have learned something of it. But I have not. The first named, Dr. Carreras, it is well known, came to Paraguay to give any assistance in his power to the cause of this country against Brazil, risking his life and fortune to arrive here; but as his services have not been made available, he has desired to leave it for the same object, believing that by going abroad he could have an influence in enlisting the sympathies, if not the active assistance, of one or more of the Pacific Republics in behalf of this country. How such a man, whose innermost sentiments I know so well, could have committed any offence against a government he was so anxious to serve, is beyond my comprehension. The same interest in the cause of Paraguay has always been evinced by Mr. Rodriguez. This gentleman, your Honor will recollect, came to Paraguay in a diplomatic capacity, that of Secretary of the Oriental Legation, of which he was left in charge at the departure of the Minister, Sr. Vasquez Sagastume. After the fall of the government which he represented his diplomatic functions were suspended, and he then desired to leave the country, but as yet has not been able to do so. Yet, as your Honor is well aware, it is laid down by all writers on the rights of legation, that, until they can depart from the country, the members of a once accepted legation are entitled to certain immunities, and if any one commits an offence, the government to which he had been accredited is not authorized to try him, but may send him out of the country, and demand his punishment of his own government. . . .

“ I have only to add that, if these gentlemen or Sr. Leite Pereira remain in this city, it will be a great gratification to me if I may be permitted to send their meals from my house, or other things necessary to their health or comfort. Will you please advise me on this point at your earliest convenience.

“ The colored servant of Dr. Carreras still remains with me in the capacity of servant.”

This letter was read to them before they left, and they appeared to feel that, coming as it did from the only minister of a foreign nation in the country, it would be to some extent respected. A little before the hour named in Benitez's letter they left the Legation, and each one took with him a bundle containing a few things such as they thought might be most needed in prison, — some changes of linen, a few books and toilet articles, and a blanket or two to protect them from the cold. Bidding us good by, and with many protestations of gratitude for the hospitality and protection which we had given them, they went out of the Legation, and, reaching the corner of the street, were arrested in the same manner as had been Leite Pereira the evening before. Their departure was the saddest event of my whole life, and the sorrow which I felt was participated in by all who remained in my house. After they were gone I reflected anxiously upon my own course, and though I believed I had acted with the best judgment possible under the circumstances by not insisting or begging them to remain in the Legation until they were accused of specific crime or taken by force, yet it occurred to me that possibly I had erred ; that if I had told them to stay, and unequivocally replied to Benitez that they would remain in my Legation as long as I remained there, unless taken away by force, that perhaps they would have been no further molested, and would thus escape the sufferings to which I feared they would then be subjected.

Lopez had now got all that he had asked for up to this time. No one was left in my Legation who was not a member of it. All the others, of their own accord, had gone away from it, and I supposed that we should be left, for a while

longer at least, to a dismal peace. But even that was not in accordance with the plans of Lopez. He had evidently been informed instantly by telegraph of every event that had occurred, and within a few moments of the time of the departure of Carreras and Rodriguez was advised of it, for the same evening, at about five o'clock, I received still another letter from Benitez, and as everything from him was dictated by Lopez at his head-quarters, and then sent from Luque by a *chasque*, or courier, to Asuncion, this letter must have been sent by telegraph from San Fernando very soon after Carreras and Rodriguez were arrested. In this last letter I was requested to dismiss from my house Porter Cornelius Bliss and George F. Masterman, as they were accused of crimes not less grave than the others had been charged with. From this it was evident that my apprehensions lest I had made a mistake in relation to Carreras and Rodriguez were entirely groundless. They had both considered that, as Bliss and Masterman belonged to my suite, they would not be molested, nor did they think that Lopez would commit any act of violence against my Legation.

To this letter I replied on the following day, that Bliss and Masterman were members of my family ; that Masterman had lived in my house many months previous to the order for the evacuation of the capital ; his name had been given, as also had that of Mr. Bliss, a long time before, as being connected with the Legation, and that no exception had been taken to their remaining in it ; and that, as I considered them both members of my suite, I could have no discussion in regard to delivering them up or sending them from my house. To yield to such a demand I must abdicate all my functions and rights as a minister, for if I acknowledged the right of the government to take away one person whom I considered a member of my suite, I must concede it for all, and thus, if it so pleased the government, I might be left, not only without a servant, but without wife, child, or secretary ; for, according to their reasoning, if it were only alleged that any person belonging to my Legation was accused, I had no recourse but to

deliver him up. I concluded by saying that from the recent occurrences, and from the tone and temper of the recent correspondence, it was evident that I could be of no further use by remaining in Paraguay; that it had been my intention to remain to the end of the war, and until I could see the Paraguayan people once more in the enjoyment of that peace and prosperity which their valor and devotion had so nobly earned, but that I was compelled to abandon any such hope, as the course which I had felt it my duty to adopt seemed to have been so at variance with the views of the government of Paraguay. I could serve no good purpose by remaining longer. I therefore requested passports for myself and for all persons belonging to the Legation, and for such facilities for leaving the country as comported with the character of an accredited minister.

The demand for my passports was evidently what Lopez did not expect nor desire, and the reply to this note was somewhat more considerate and respectful than had been the preceding ones. A long argument was made to show that neither Bliss nor Masterman could properly be claimed as members of the Legation, and the pretence was set up that Bliss having once been employed in literary occupations by the government I had no right to receive him into my service; and that as Masterman had been released from prison at my request, to serve as medical attendant to my family, it would be a very ungracious act on my part to take advantage of a concession and favor to me by giving shelter to a criminal against the government.

There was one statement, however, in this letter, which greatly surprised us, and gave us the first intimation we had of what the government was trying to make out, and of the dangers which encompassed us about. Bliss and Masterman were accused of being members of a conspiracy which by agreement with the enemy was to have broken out in the country about that time, the object of which was to overthrow the government and destroy the army that was fighting for its existence. These points were elaborated with

considerable acuteness and Jesuitical cunning, and the pretence was set up that they and the others who had already left the Legation had abused my confidence, and without my knowledge had been guilty of crimes, and Bliss and Masterman were still criminally abusing the immunities which the Legation afforded them. The letter concluded by saying, that, after the statements and arguments which it had set forth, I must know that I was wrong in declining to deliver up "those rascals," and that the government was perfectly right in demanding them, and believed that I should expel from my house such persons, who, "bathing the national soil with fratricidal blood, pretended to undermine the just title to sympathy of your Excellency which the abnegation and great sacrifices of my country have acquired, as well as that which the singular and conspicuous services which its Chief Magistrate and General-in-Chief of its armies, Marshal Lopez, has achieved in this struggle." In the belief that such would be the case, and that I should see the error of my ways and the righteousness of those of Lopez, I was informed that my passports would not be sent to me, but if I still insisted upon it he would ask for the orders of President Lopez in regard to them.

From this letter I inferred that Lopez did not intend at that time to take Bliss and Masterman by force ; that he did not desire me peremptorily to demand my passports ; and that the question of their rendition would be allowed — for a time, at least — to remain in abeyance. I therefore took several days to answer the last note of Benitez, and I entered into a long argument to show that, under the circumstances in which I had engaged Messrs. Bliss and Masterman, they belonged to the Legation, and were entitled to all its immunities ; that I could not give them up without abandoning the rights of my government, and of myself as its representative. I quoted largely from such authorities on international law as I had in the Legation, including Martens, Wheaton, and Vattel, and showed that, according to these eminent writers, even if Bliss and Masterman were guilty of any crimes which might

be charged against them, not then was it my duty to surrender them to the tribunals of Paraguay to be punished. It was my duty to send them home to their own governments if they had committed any violation of the laws of Paraguay. I also protested against the assumption which Benitez had made from the beginning, that the persons whom he had asked me to deliver were guilty because they were accused, as it was in violation of that maxim of the common law that every man is innocent until proved guilty, and no proof had ever been submitted to me that either of them had committed any crime, and for me therefore to send away Bliss and Masterman as guilty, when there was no proof to that effect, and I was bound to regard them as innocent, would be a great dereliction on my part; I must be governed by the laws of my own country, and according to them I must have proofs of the offences charged before I could treat these gentlemen as criminals. I stated, moreover, that the law of nations had clearly prescribed the course to be followed when persons connected with a legation were found engaged in any unlawful proceedings, and that the government in which the legation was situated could only demand that they should be sent away to their own country and government to be tried; and therefore if they should adduce charges and proofs against Bliss and Masterman, and request me to comply with the established usage, I should have no alternative but to send them away for that purpose. I added, that I hoped this course would be satisfactory to the government of Paraguay, as it would remove persons obnoxious to it from the country, and would subject them to trial according to the laws of their own countries; and as there was little doubt that an American gunboat would soon be in those waters, there would be but little delay in carrying that plan into effect. I expressed my great surprise at the statement in his note, that a conspiracy had been formed, and that by agreement with the enemy it was to have broken out about that time. I had no knowledge or suspicion of any such conspiracy, though I had supposed from the strange and unusual measures taken by the gov-

ernment that something of a dangerous character had been discovered, but of its form or extent, or of the persons implicated in it, I had not the most remote idea. Such conspiracies frequently did happen during long periods of war, but in Paraguay I did not suppose there were any persons so foolish as to engage in a combination that could not offer any other issue than their own ruin; but this allegation in his note, however, convinced me that something of the kind had been attempted, but that I should cherish the hope it would be found very limited in extent, and that I confidently believed it would appear to be confined to a circle with which no person who had ever lived in my Legation had any relations, connections, or intimacies. I concluded this letter by reiterating my opinion that my views differed as widely as ever from those of Lopez, and that I saw no object in my further remaining in Paraguay; that I had desired to remain at least until the solution of the question of the passage of the American gunboat above the blockading squadron; that I knew such gunboat would come sooner or later, if it took the whole American navy to force its way; and that I did not believe the allies would venture to prevent its passage, and thus provoke a war with the United States, but that the gunboat would pass unmolested, and the allies would be subjected to such another humiliation as they had been before, when they attempted to prevent me from returning to my post of duty.

That there was no conspiracy, and that Lopez knew it, and that he had no suspicion that there was any, at this stage of the correspondence, I now know. At the time, however, I believed there was something, but who the parties could be that were engaged in it I could not surmise. And yet I received another letter from Benitez, dated on the 19th of July, the day before that one of my own of which I have just given a synopsis, telling me that the servants in my house who were permitted to go outside of the Legation were accused of bearing communications from the enemy to the refugees in my house. Lopez was well aware that none of the enemy

were within a hundred and fifty miles of Asuncion, and for anybody beyond the lines to communicate with the capital, he must send his messenger through a region that no fugitive trying to escape from threatened death had been able to pass for fifty years. This letter, therefore, was only to be taken as a threat, and was another link by which Lopez intended to involve, not only Bliss and Masterman, but myself, and all in my house, in his pretended conspiracy.

On the 21st another letter was received, of a still more ominous character. In this I was told that by agreement of the traitors with the enemy, the latter were to commence certain movements on or before the 24th, and that as it appeared probable the criminals, Bliss and Masterman, might escape from my house if they should not be previously imprisoned, the government "would view with the greatest pain an occurrence of so much importance, which would once more disappoint the good faith and confidence which I was pleased to show towards these criminals, in thinking it my duty to discuss and delay up to that time the apprehension of individuals so dangerous to the national cause." I was requested to give the speediest possible answer to this note.

To this I replied on the following day, after having conferred with both Bliss and Masterman as to what it was most proper to do under these circumstances. From this time I did not send any letter to Benitez without having first submitted it to them, and if they had any suggestions to make I considered them deliberately, and no letter was sent away containing anything which either of them wished to have omitted, or in which I had failed to advance any fact or argument that either of them desired to have presented. Their lives I considered were at stake, and I did not dare to take the responsibility of any act against their wishes which might prejudice their safety. We were all encompassed by the same dangers. Theirs were greater than mine. They would probably be seized before I would be. But if they were seized, taken by force from the Legation, I was persuaded that their arrest would be followed by that of my-

self and everybody else in my house, and that no one of us would ever be permitted to tell to the world the story of the destruction of his companions. Benitez had pretended that the government was apprehensive lest they should try to escape. They knew that was but an impudent pretence, for Lopez was well aware they would not venture beyond the precincts of the Legation if they could avoid it. It was still another link in the chain of evidence which Lopez was forging to show to the world that there was a conspiracy against him, and the object of it evidently had been to have this letter appear in the published correspondence as a part of the proof that the conspiracy had really existed. For me to have said so, however, would have precipitated the very danger we were trying to avert. I could only reply, that I did not participate in his opinion regarding the criminality of these persons; but as I was entirely ignorant of the nature and extent of the combination to which he alluded, I would take care that if the revolution which was said to be impending should break out, they should not escape, for that I would hold them prisoners in my Legation until I could send them out of the country, or until the government might not object to their being set at liberty. This was the answer which was considered by Bliss and Masterman, as well as myself, to be such that Lopez could not complain that I was trying to screen criminals, or to aid them in escaping clandestinely from the country. Accordingly Bliss and Masterman changed their quarters, and both occupied the same room, and I went through the form of locking them in, and they were there as voluntary prisoners. This, however, endured but a short time, as Benitez informed me within a few days that such treatment of these "criminals" was not considered satisfactory, after which I made no pretence of any restraint upon them.

The English, after they left the Legation, all went to the railroad station, where they were huddled together in a few rooms, and found it very difficult to obtain anything to eat, notwithstanding Fernandez had promised me that they should be well treated. They were now anxious to be sent into

the interior, and I went to see Fernandez to make the request that they should be better provided for. That they were not, I am persuaded, was no fault of his, for of all the Paraguayans whom Lopez had about him, or who enjoyed any of his confidence, he seemed to be the only one having any of the feelings of humanity, or any desire to mitigate the sufferings of others. At the time they left, I had requested that two of the women might be allowed to remain in the Legation, as such was the desire of Mrs. Washburn. Benitez had replied that they would be allowed to return, but as Bliss and Masterman had been demanded immediately after, and everything seemed to indicate that we should all probably be driven from the city, if not arrested as prisoners, I could not advise them to separate from their companions.

While they remained at the station, I went every day to learn of their situation and see what I could do for them. On the 15th of July they told me that the night before the train from Luque had come in loaded with prisoners in fetters. Who they were they did not know, as no lights were allowed in the station, and they could not leave their rooms. They knew there were a great many, and they distinctly heard their groans and sighs as they were forced from the cars and driven from the station to the bank of the river. A few days after this I learned that these English had all gone into the interior, but to what point they had been sent, or whether they had gone together or been scattered in different parts, I could not ascertain.

I endeavored to comply with my promises to Carreras, Rodriguez, and Pereira to send them their meals from my house, provided they remained in the capital, and on the morning of the first day the food sent them was allowed to be left. Until this time I had been permitted to send Manlove his meals every day. At first, after his arrest, I sent them by a Brazilian. This Brazilian was the same person whose presence in and about the rooms of Manlove, Masterman, and Bliss I had prohibited, as I regarded him as a spy, and which interference Manlove had resented, and on that account left the Legation

several months before. While hanging about my premises he related to some persons the story of his capture and treatment by the Paraguayans. Being a man of some education, he was found useful, and therefore had never been executed. He was employed, for a long time, to write letters over the signatures of various Brazilians who had been taken or killed, to send into the allied camp, making such statements as Lopez desired to have circulated among the allies. They were generally to the effect that all prisoners were well treated there; that they had plenty to eat, and did not wish to return; that the Paraguayans were so strong they never could be conquered, and advising all his countrymen to come over at the first opportunity, and they would be well received and obtain great favors from his Excellency Marshal Lopez. He was also sent forward with the pickets to the front, and forced to stand up and call out to his countrymen to come over, to leave the ranks of the tyrant Don Pedro, where they were starved and ill-treated, and come over to the land of milk and honey, where they would be sure to be well received and provided with everything they could desire. At the evacuation of Asuncion he had been left there, and occupied a house directly in front of my own, and I had no doubt that the object in permitting him to remain was that he should serve as a spy upon my premises; though what the object was in having a Brazilian spy about me I could not understand, as there were always a large number of Paraguayans patrolling the streets in the vicinity, and always a picket of three at each corner of the house. This man, for a while, was allowed to carry Manlove his meals, and in return for this he received food for himself. Some time, however, before the departure of the English and the Orientals, he had been arrested, and another person, a man by the name of Carter, had performed this service. Carter had been a sailor on board an American gunboat, and, going ashore at Montevideo, he had done as such persons often do, got drunk, and while in that condition had been taken off as a soldier of the allies. In the first battle in which he was engaged, he deserted over to the Paraguayans,

and being sent to the capital he was soon taken sick, and in such condition I found him. Through the medical assistance of Mr. Masterman he partially recovered, and on the arrest of the Brazilian he was employed to take Mr. Manlove his meals. He too had been arrested; but as he was a prisoner of war, and besides that was a deserter from the American flag, I could not interfere in his behalf, and I made no inquiries in respect to him. After that I was obliged to send the meals by my private secretary, Mr. Meincke. The day after the arrest of Rodriguez and Carreras, he was told that he need bring nothing more for them, for they had gone below, and the next day he was told that he need bring nothing more for Manlove, for "he had gone to his destiny."

CHAPTER XXIII.

Visit from the Italian Consul. — Particulars of the Arrests at Luque. — Masterman writes his Vindication. — Papers of Mr. Bliss. — Their Preparations for Arrest. — Artifices to conceal our Manuscripts. — Colton's Atlas. — We learn of many Executions. — Visit from Madam Lynch. — She announces the Discovery of a Great Conspiracy. — She vouches for Lopez's Kindness of Heart. — Her Threats. — That Ominous Knock. — Benitez gives Particulars of an Intended Outbreak to take Place July 24. — He charges Mr. Bliss with a Design to assassinate Lopez. — Extract from his Note. — The Dangers thickening.

FOR several months after the evacuation of the capital a few foreigners were permitted to reside in *quintas* but a few miles distant, so that in my daily *paseos* I would frequently call on them, to get any news they might have, and discuss the situation. But about the time of the arrest of those who had left my house, I learned that the men had all been arrested and carried to head-quarters, and the women sent into the interior. The English engineers dared not be seen speaking to me, and I did not force my unwelcome company upon them. We were surrounded by an appalling mystery, and were as ignorant of the cause of it as though we had been all the while a thousand miles away. Surely, we thought, all these strange proceedings are not without motive. Lopez would not arrest all the best men in the country unless he had discovered some plot or conspiracy that threatened his power, and yet we could not believe that any of the arrested persons with whom we had been intimate had ever held any such designs. If they had, they had been too suspicious of us to give us a hint of their purposes.

On the 18th of July, this monotony was interrupted by a visit from the Italian Consul, Signor Chapperon. He was in as great a mystery as we were, and could tell us nothing further

than that it was surmised a conspiracy had been discovered, and that the purpose of it was to arrest or murder Fernandez and Sanabria, as they alone had any military authority, and then start a revolution. It was under the orders of these two that all the recent arrests had been made, and the inference of Signor Chapperon was, that, if there had been a conspiracy, the first step in the plot was to put them out of the way. There was but one foreigner left in the new capital. This was the Spaniard José Solis, the confidential agent and business man of Madam Lynch. All the civil officers of the government had been arrested, including the judges, the clerks, and the accountants of the different departments. He said that Benitez himself appeared to be in a great fright, as if fearing that he too might soon be arrested; that for the administration of the government there only remained at the new capital the old Vice-President; Benitez, Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs; the Chief-Justice; Ortellado, and the Chief of Police, Sanabria.

The arrest of all the others, without giving them any chance to confer together, was skilfully accomplished by Sanabria. One after another had been ordered to the station, where fetters were put upon them all. The people at Luque were terror-stricken at these proceedings. They saw those whom they had supposed to be highest in the confidence of Lopez taken off and put in irons. Aquino, the manager of the *Semanario*, whose last years seemed to have been spent in little else than glorifying the great Lopez, lent a ready hand to this work, and appeared to be the lieutenant of Sanabria, and to seek, by his zeal and readiness to arrest and manacle others, to win credit for himself. But when all the persons arrested had been safely fettered and placed in the cars, Sanabria turned upon him, and said, "You too." The fetters were accordingly placed upon his stout ankles, and his gross form was placed upon the train with the others. On reaching the station at Asuncion, they were forced to get down from the cars with their fetters upon them, and to make their way to the river, whence they were taken down to head-quarters at San Fernando.

The information given me by the Italian Consul, that besides the foreigners many Paraguayans had been arrested, was in one sense a relief to us. We had feared that all these strange proceedings which had recently taken place were aimed exclusively at the foreigners; but when we learned that so many Paraguayans, some of whom had been the most abject and willing tools of Lopez in carrying out his arbitrary and tyrannical measures, had also fallen into disgrace, we imagined that something of a dangerous character must have been discovered, for we did not then suppose he would arrest and torture people unless they had actually been guilty of some crime. If there were in reality a conspiracy, we believed the parties to it would be discovered, and that those who had had nothing to do with it, when that fact was ascertained, would be no longer persecuted; and as we were certain that nobody in the Legation had ever known or thought of such a thing, during their residence there or before it, we thought it augured favorably, not only for us who were left there, but for the others who had been there and on going away were arrested. We knew nothing, and could only judge of what had transpired from what we had actually seen and from the letters of Benitez. We were in a most terrible state of anxiety. Bliss and Masterman were expecting every day to be taken by force from the Legation. From the moment that they had been accused of still holding communication with the enemy, which was an impossibility, and a charge so absurd that it was clear that Lopez intended to respect neither probabilities, truth, nor right, we expected momentarily to see the house entered by a force of soldiers, and that they would be taken away and the Legation searched. Masterman had prepared a statement of his case and of the cruelties and injustice which he had suffered, that he desired to have published at some future time in an English newspaper. He knew that if the statement were to fall into the hands of Lopez it would be fatal to him, and he did not wish to destroy it, for he was not sure that he would be arrested, or, if he were, that I might not be able to take away his vindica-

tion of himself. He therefore folded up his manuscript and thrust it into an empty demijohn, thinking that if the Paraguayans should search the house, as they were not as sharp as London detectives, they would not think of looking in any such place, especially as there were other empty demijohns in the different rooms of the house. Bliss had been very careful, since his residence in Paraguay, to write nothing against Lopez; but at the time of the approach of the ironclads, in February, thinking that the day of deliverance was at hand, he had commenced a narrative of the events of that time, and in his introduction to it he had made some statements to the effect that at last we were all delivered from the most terrible despotism ever known, and that the power of the monster who had inflicted such terrors and atrocities, not only on his own people but on foreigners, was at an end. This was the only thing he had written which could do him any harm were it to fall into the hands of Lopez, and he said that would not be found, as he had left it in his former house before taking up his residence in the Legation. But I told him the police had been searching that house. With good reason he started up alarmed, and said, "If that is so, I am gone. I will go and look among my papers, and see if I can find it." Within a few moments he returned, bringing the manuscript, and instantly the dangerous half-page was torn into fragments.

Besides the papers of Bliss and Masterman, there were others of my own in the house that I did not think it prudent that Lopez should see. These were my own manuscripts, which I had been preparing for the purpose of this history. The reader of the preceding chapters of this work may judge whether or no their perusal would have pleased Lopez. I knew that if he were once to see them, neither the manuscripts nor the writer of them would ever leave Paraguay, and I was expecting daily, hourly, that Bliss and Masterman would be arrested and my house searched. I had some three hundred pages which I had prepared with a great deal of labor, and with the assistance of Carreras and Rodriguez, a part of which is the same that is given in this work in regard

to the commencement of the war. If I destroyed this manuscript, I could never get the materials together again, and I was exceedingly loth to lose it; but if my house were to be searched, probably every manuscript paper would be taken away. The last letters from Benitez had so clearly expressed the determination of the government to have Bliss and Masterman by force, if I did not send them away voluntarily, that we had no doubt the Legation would be violated and they would be dragged away. So convinced were they that they were to be seized, each had a little carpet-bag prepared, containing some clean linen, a few books, and such other things as they thought might be most necessary, and which, perhaps, if taken to prison, they would be allowed to retain. They had these things so packed that at a minute's notice they could take each his bag and march. But how could I save my manuscripts in that case? If the Legation were violated, the house would undoubtedly be searched, and I knew not where to hide them. It was impossible to bury them in any part of the yard, for by night and by day there were always policemen about, peering through the fences, and my Paraguayan servants would not dare to keep silence or fail to report anything of that kind which they might see. In fact, to attempt to bury them would insure their capture. The floor of my sleeping-room was of brick, and I considered whether I could not remove the carpets, take out a few bricks, and deposit them below; but every night, as soon as my windows and blinds were closed, I could hear the policemen whispering and their swords clanking beneath the window of my bedroom. Any noise which they might hear would only increase suspicion, and also lead to the discovery of that which I was trying to hide. So convinced were we for a time that the house was to be entered and searched, that I had a fire built in the oven of my kitchen as if for baking, and my manuscripts were laid in the room near by it, so that Mrs. Washburn, on the appearance of a police force at the door, and while I was parleying with them to detain them, could fly to the kitchen and throw the manuscripts into the fire; but this

repeated heating of the oven without baking anything in it would be sure to attract the attention of my servants, who would report to the police, and perhaps my object might be suspected. Then I thought I would destroy the manuscripts, but being dissuaded from this I hit upon the device of taking a large Colton's Atlas and placing a sheet of the manuscript between every two leaves of the book, and if the police were then to enter I did not believe they would be acute enough to discover it. Accordingly, one night, after the doors and blinds were all closed, I sat in my parlor holding the atlas in my hand, and turned over the leaves while Mrs. Washburn laid a sheet between each two leaves of the book. When this was done I placed the atlas back where it was accustomed to be, with other books over and around it, and thought that I had succeeded in concealing my work so well that the detectives of Lopez were not sharp enough to discover it. But it occurred to me, the next morning, that I had not been any sharper than I had supposed the Paraguayans to be, as at the very time I was engaged with Mrs. Washburn in putting the manuscripts between the pages of the atlas, the key-hole of my parlor door was open, so that if my own servants or the police had looked in they could have seen clearly what we were doing. My precautions, therefore, had increased the danger, for if the house were to be entered, the first thing that would be searched would probably be my Colton's Atlas. Those manuscripts did not remain in the atlas long after that. They were all shaken out, and then I thought that the danger attending their preservation was greater than their value would justify me in incurring. I thought of every possible place where they might be hid, but I could not imagine one in which the danger would not be increased if they were deposited in it; for if any papers were discovered which had been hidden, they would be certain to be very closely scrutinized, whereas if they were lying as if casually among other papers, they might be less carefully examined. In this dilemma it occurred to me that my dining-table had an oil-cloth cover which had never been taken off during all the

time I had occupied the house. Mrs. Washburn was stationed as a sentinel, that no one might come near (for I could not even shut the door or close the windows in the daytime without attracting attention), while I quickly removed the oil-cloth cover and distributed the sheets evenly over the table, and returned the oil-cloth to its place. I then felt very sure that, if the house were searched, these papers would not be found. After that I had little anxiety about them, though it occurred to me very often that it was a singular situation for the minister of a great nation to be in. Perhaps the danger was magnified by my own fears; and yet I thought then as I think now, and as I believe all who were in the country during those terrible times and escaped will say, that I had good reason to take these precautionary measures. People who know nothing of the danger may think otherwise, but in this case their condemnation must be in exact proportion to their ignorance.

From our Paraguayan servants we learned some things in regard to the fate of the parties who had been arrested and sent to San Fernando. One of them used frequently to go out and talk with the policemen or soldiers stationed on the corners of the streets, and they told her that some of the parties arrested had already been executed. This information confirmed us in our fears, that, if Bliss and Masterman should be taken, they would soon share the same fate; and that knock, so often heard at my door as to become familiar, by the bearer of government notes to me, came to be dreaded as though it had been a summons to execution. These portentous letters usually arrived at about sunrise in the morning or sunset in the evening, and we had learned by this time to expect that every letter would be worse than the previous one; and if a morning passed till eight or nine o'clock, we would then hope to hear nothing more for that day at least, and would discuss during the intervening hours between this and evening what might probably be the purport of the next missive.

The 21st of July was one of our longest and most anxious days. Sufficient time had passed for writing an answer to my last note to Benitez, and we were somewhat surprised that

nothing came for that day. At about eight o'clock in the evening, however, after the doors and blinds were closed, who should come to visit us but Madam Lynch. She had come from her own house on foot, though the night was very dark, and it had been cloudy and rainy throughout the day. I knew instantly that her visit portended something important, either good or evil. I hoped for the best, and in conversation with her expressed my surprise at what I had heard had taken place; so many people had been arrested, some of whom I supposed were the most loyal men in the country, and many of them I had always believed to be the most devoted friends of Lopez. I could not understand what it all meant. She said that a great conspiracy had been discovered, but of the details of it she could not give me any information; she would not be allowed to do so, but there was no crime conceivable but that the conspirators contemplated committing. I said, if that was the case, it was as much for my interest as that of anybody else to have it discovered, for if they were contemplating any general massacre, as they had none of them ever confided to me anything in regard to it, but had studiously kept it secret from me, evidently I should be one of the victims. She said, "O no; that is not in their plans at all, I believe." She spoke of Berges and Venancio Lopez as being among the principal conspirators. I expressed my great surprise at that, as Berges had always appeared to me as if he were the most devoted and loyal supporter of the government and the President, and I did not understand how he could at the same time have been engaged in a conspiracy. It was incredible to me. She said the discovery of this plot had been a great blow to the President. Many of his best friends, those for whom he had done the most and on whom he most relied for support, had been proven false and treacherous. I said that it might be so in regard to some of those who had been arrested, as I scarcely knew them, and of course could say nothing about them; but in regard to those who had been in the Legation, nothing could convince me that they had ever been engaged in any plot or conspiracy. I knew their every

thought so well, and had discussed the situation in every aspect so thoroughly, that I knew they had never had any such ideas up to the time of their arrest. "But they have confessed," she said. I replied that under certain circumstances confession was no evidence. People under fear, or on promise of reward, might confess to facts of which they were not guilty. "O no," said she, "there has been no constraint put upon them. It has all been voluntary. The President would never use restraint, or force them to confess against their will. He is very kind-hearted." This last expression she repeated several times, each time waiting for me to respond to it. Evidently she had come on a diplomatic mission, and her object was to see if I could be induced to approve and justify Lopez in all his atrocities. I remarked to her that it had been my intention to leave Paraguay for some time; that the situation there was not agreeable; cut off as we were from all communication with Buenos Aires, we were unable to obtain many things absolutely necessary for health and comfort, and the town being evacuated, and having no neighbors or communication with anybody, it was a position which I had not intended to occupy any longer than I could avoid, but that, owing to the strange turn which affairs had taken, I was anxious to remain to witness the *dénouement*, and learn of the facts in relation to the conspiracy. I should, however, send my family away very shortly. Mrs. Washburn found remaining there to be very disagreeable, and as she could not obtain many of the necessaries of life, both she and our child were exposed to dangers and inconveniences which I was not disposed to have them subjected to, and therefore she would soon go to Buenos Aires. To this Madam Lynch replied, "If she can," in a tone that said as clearly as words could say that neither Mrs. Washburn nor the child would be permitted to leave Paraguay. I affected not to understand it in that sense, and continued my conversation, saying that of course she would be able to leave, as there could be no difficulty in the way, since a minister or any member of his family could at all times leave any country whenever it suited their

convenience ; and therefore, as she was anxious to leave, of course she would go to Buenos Aires. She again repeated, "If she can." It was evident from this that she had been sent to learn if I could be induced to become the aid and apologist of Lopez in the robbery and execution of all the better class of Paraguayans and of the foreigners, and, if not, to threaten us with the vengeance of the "kind-hearted" President. The intimation that Mrs. Washburn would not be permitted to leave Paraguay was a semi-official notice that we were entirely within the power of Lopez ; that our ambassadorial privileges would not avail us if we should not in all things conform to his wishes ; that we were prisoners in his hands, and might expect the worst.

The next morning, a little before sunrise, at the usual hour when such notes were received, the dreaded knock was heard, and the barefooted soldier, with his scarlet sack and military cap and sword, was at my door with another letter from Benitez. Madam Lynch had undoubtedly advised Lopez of her visit to my house, and that she had made nothing by it, and probably so modified the report of the conversation that had taken place as to suit her own wishes, as this woman never was known to speak the truth when falsehood would serve her purpose as well. The letter had also undoubtedly been prepared to be forwarded to me or not, according as she should report the result of her interview. When she left the house that evening, I told both Bliss and Masterman that her visit boded no good to them or to any of us, and the next morning I found, on opening the letter, my prophecy had been fulfilled. Great surprise was expressed that I should still insist on keeping in my house "criminals and rascals," as they were called, "guilty of high treason," and saying that the conspirators, together with the enemy, were to make certain important movements on the 24th of that month, and that fears were entertained lest on that occasion they should attempt to escape from my house, for which reason an immediate answer was requested.

In my letter of July 22 I said : "Your Honor advises me

that the treasonable combination with the enemy was to have made certain movements on or before the 24th of this month, and it was apprehended that the persons in my house accused of being engaged in it would seek to escape, if not previously made prisoners."

In his letter of the 23d, however, Benitez, with Jesuitical mendacity and impudence, accuses me, in these words, of having given him the information that such a plan was in contemplation: "It is not I, Mr. Minister, who have said to your Excellency that the complot had been appointed to break out to-morrow, but I thank you for the intelligence." As I had given no intelligence, and had only stated that he advised me that such was to be the case, I could but ill express my indignation at the falsehood and impudence of Lopez, and his transparent intention of attempting to frighten and bully me into yielding to his demands. In addition to this he also said: "It is now my duty to express to your Excellency, that from your own house correspondences from the enemy's generals are received and replied to, treating of the details of the plot; and when your Excellency insists withal in the terms employed, and does not wish to believe in ingratitude, I am obliged to fear that the same conduct is still observed in your Excellency's house." That was as transparent a falsehood to my mind as the other, in which he accused me of having given him information of the time when the conspiracy was to have broken out. Lopez knew perfectly well that there was no enemy within a hundred and fifty miles of Asuncion, and that it was utterly impossible for any communications to pass to and fro between my house and the allied generals. Benitez then complains that his official declarations have not been accepted by me as proof of the guilt of Bliss and Masterman, in preference to their own statements. He adds that he shall not give any specific details concerning the accusations against them, since I had declared that even then I would not deliver them up, and says that I did not take into consideration the condition of the country and the great danger which it was in, and that if, under such circumstances, the

immunities of a minister were to reach to an extent which I claimed, no nation in the world would accept an embassy. He then abuses Bliss and Masterman as mendicants, who went to Paraguay begging their bread, and then became there *agents of the enemy*, and who had not appeared before the tribunal because, after having become criminals, they had obtained access to the Legation of a friendly power, in order to continue thence with impunity so iniquitous a work. To this he added the still more startling paragraph :—

“ Let your Excellency add to this that Porter Cornelius Bliss has signed in a secret committee of reciprocal obligation, swearing the treacherous assassination of the President of the Republic.

“ I cannot but declare categorically to you, that this Ministry does not recognize Cornelius Porter Bliss, American citizen, and George F. Masterman, British subject, as members of your Legation, and consequently I cannot accept a discussion with your Excellency upon that basis. I regret, Mr. Minister, that my friendly notes have not been able to avoid the present statement, and I am under the unavoidable obligation of again requesting the expulsion of these criminals from your hotel before sunset on the 25th instant, in doing which you will not only act with justice, but according to the law of nations.”

I now saw that Lopez intended to pay no regard whatever to the truth, and that the correspondence which he had begun in his *Semanario* was to contain assertions and charges wholly false, but which, as he intended that no one should survive who could disprove them, would serve as his justification beyond the limits of Paraguay. I also understood from this letter, that if, before the time indicated, I did not send away Bliss and Masterman, they would be taken by force. They understood it in the same sense, and made their preparations to be carried off to torture and execution. How anxiously the hours passed! How we longed to hear that the sluggish Brazilians were in motion, and that a great and decisive battle had been fought! How we longed to hear that an American gunboat had come to our rescue! The Wasp, we knew, had been turned back by the Brazilians; but we gathered hope

from the fact that Admiral Godon was no longer in command of the squadron, and indulged the illusion that his successor would have some regard to the honor of the American flag and the rights of his government, and would not allow us to be held there as prisoners till not one should be left to vindicate his companions, and expose the Jesuitical duplicity, falsehood, and cruelties of Lopez.

CHAPTER XXIV.

A more Ominous Letter. — The Purposes of Lopez become more Evident. — Visit to Berges. — Bliss and Masterman declared not entitled to Legation Privileges. — Threats to take them by Force. — Uncertainties and Doubts. — Was there a Conspiracy? — Speculations. — Colonel Marquez and other Refugees. — Official Receptions. — Correspondence with Benitez. — Benitez visits the Legation. — An Excited Discussion. — He threatens Strong Measures. — Arrest of Bliss and Masterman hourly expected. — Life in the Legation.

THOUGH the mystery in which we had been so long groping could not be more dense than it had been for the last two weeks, it was daily becoming more threatening. On the 23d, another letter of a far more portentous character than any preceding was received. It read as follows: —

“MINISTRY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
LUQUE, July 23, 1868.

“I have the honor to request of your Excellency the immediate delivery of a sealed packet of communications which the ex-Minister of Foreign Affairs, José Berges, delivered to you in his residence at Salinares, when, on the afternoon following the arrival of Berges from San Fernando to Asuncion, you visited him in that house, where you personally took charge of the said packet in order to keep it, as in fact, on arriving at your Legation at nightfall, you went with it to your office.

“This packet being, Mr. Minister, of great importance for my government, you will allow me to request its delivery to the officer who bears the present communication.

“I improve this occasion to salute your Excellency with distinguished consideration.

“GUMESINDO BENITEZ.”

A package delivered to me by Berges the day after his ar-

rival from San Fernando! I did not see him for weeks after his return from San Fernando, and when I did see him he gave me no package, nor did he ever allude to one. I had seen him but twice since his return, some two months before. A month before, having learned that he was at his quinta, and very unwell, I had, as a matter of courtesy, gone out to see him, where I found him very sick and miserably forlorn. His limbs were partially paralyzed, and he was in such a state he could scarcely turn in his bed. I expressed regret at finding him so infirm, and asked him if I could be of any service to him, or could send him anything that would conduce to his health or comfort. He said that there was nothing I could do for him, unless it was to send him a little brandy. I told him that I had none. I asked him if he had any news from the army, and he said no further than that he believed the war was nearly over, as the Brazilians could not hold out much longer, their credit was exhausted, and several provinces were in revolt. My call was very brief, and, promising to come and see him again within a few days, I took my leave and went to the house of Lopez's mother, where I had some conversation with her. She appeared to be very sad, and very anxious to know something of the condition of her children, but I was unable to give her any information. I saw Berges but once more, and that was about two weeks later, when, as Mrs. Washburn and myself were passing by on horseback, I suggested that I would run in a moment and see the Minister for Foreign Affairs. I found him, as before, in bed, and but slightly improved. I had but a very few words with him, the general purport of which was about the same as on the previous occasion.

As these were the only times that I had seen Berges since his arrival from San Fernando, and as on neither of them had he given me any paper or said a word which he could have objected to having heard by Lopez himself, I was somewhat staggered at this letter, in which I was requested to deliver a package which I had received, not a letter that Berges *said I had received*, but which *I had received* from him on a certain

day. I replied instantly, setting forth the facts as here stated. But I foresaw that the matter would not end here. It was getting more and more evident that Lopez was forming a plan to engulf us all, and this letter in regard to imaginary papers was but a link in the chain of evidence he was forging as a justification of his acts when all those whom he had accused should no longer survive to contradict it.

Having replied to this letter, I proceeded to write an answer to the preceding one of Benitez, in which he so strenuously demanded the surrender of Bliss and Masterman. In that letter, alluding to his statement that he thanked me for giving information in regard to the complot which was to break out on the 24th, I said that I was entitled to no thanks from him for that ; all the information I had on that point was derived from his letters, and what I had said in regard to it was almost a literal translation of his own words, and, so far from his thanking me, it was rather for me to thank him for any information of that kind. The first knowledge I had of the matter was contained in his note of the 21st. But I waived all discussion as to whether Bliss and Masterman were rightfully and legally members of the Legation ; I had assumed they were so, I believed correctly, and could not recede from that point. To send them away after that would be not only weak, but would be acting illegally, and would expose me to the censure of my own government. Holding the opinions I did, there was no other course for me to pursue ; and if Lopez were so confident that I was legally in the wrong, he could take them by force, and then the nations of the civilized world would be called upon to pronounce upon the legality of the act. My judgment might be wrong ; but so long as it was my judgment, I should be commended for adhering to it.

I stated, moreover, that if these parties to whom I had given shelter and hospitality had in the mean time been engaged in a plot or conspiracy against the government of Paraguay, there was no person in the country, except those whose lives were threatened, who had so much reason as I

had to desire that justice should be done and the criminals punished. If persons residing in my house had been, without my knowledge, engaged in a conspiracy, it was an act of gross bad faith to me, and they deserved, for their conduct towards me at least, to be punished. It is true I did not believe, in fact I knew as well as one man can know the opinions and sentiments of another, that nothing of the kind had ever been meditated or attempted by any person who was or had been in my Legation. To suspect otherwise I must have supposed a degree of hypocrisy and ingratitude towards me such as would, if proved against them, have completely excused me from any further attempts to protect them. They had no right, while they were guests of mine, to engage in any intrigue or plot that might expose me to danger and disgrace, and I knew they had not done it. I added, that if these men, Bliss and Masterman, were not members of my Legation, the government had its remedy at hand ; it could pursue them as criminals and fugitives, and the writers on international law had prescribed how such characters might be lawfully and properly taken from the house of a minister. It would not be for me to complain that any criminal was taken from my Legation ; but if these accused persons were taken, the responsibility of the act would be upon the government of Paraguay, and not on the minister who had surrendered them believing that he ought not to do so. I also added, that to the specific charge, — referring to the conspiracy to assassinate, — I would not allude, lest again he should thank me for information which I had only derived from him.

At this time we all supposed that something must have been discovered, and we had many discussions in the Legation as to what it might be, or who were the parties implicated in it. We did not believe that Berges was one of them, though we knew that he was accused as one of the principals ; and we were convinced nobody who had been in the Legation knew anything about it. Nor could we believe that any person who had long been a resident of Paraguay would be so stupid, so utterly foolish, as to engage in anything of

that kind with the least hope of success. The system of espionage had always been so thorough, and everybody was in such distrust of everybody else, that no two persons would ever dare to hint of such a thing to each other. If one Paraguayan had ever broached such an idea to another, I care not who the two might have been, he would have been suspected of being a spy set to entrap him, and would have been instantly denounced to the government. In fact, if he had been betrayed into listening to him, it would have been a race between them to see who should denounce the other first. It was the same between families as between neighbors, and the same between neighbors as strangers. No man dared either to speak or to hint anything against Lopez or his government, or to listen to anything of the kind, for it was the duty of every one to denounce, not only the man who thus spoke, but the man who would listen to such words and not report them immediately. Therefore we could not conceive it to be possible, from our knowledge of the country and of the terrible system of espionage which obtained, that any Paraguayans had been concerned in this alleged conspiracy.

But there were a few Argentines who had come into Paraguay since the war began, as fugitives, or to render assistance to Lopez, who, not fully realizing the character of the government, might possibly have been led to attempt some such feat as they were accustomed to perform in their own countries. There was that Colonel Marquez, who has been already mentioned, from Buenos Aires, who had been known as a sort of *caudillo* in his own country, and was a man of some military knowledge and considerable literary attainments. At one time he had written a novel, the subject of which was "The City of the Cæsars," in which he laid the scene of his story principally in that mythical or fabulous place. Indeed, he had held for a long time that there really was such a city, and that the followers of Sebastian Cabot who strayed away from the fort at Espiritu Santo had in fact entered that place, whose existence has since been disputed. He had been engaged in the wars between Buenos

Aires and the other provinces, and had committed some great excesses, for which he was taken prisoner, tried, and condemned to death. He was kept a long time in prison in Buenos Aires, from which, by the connivance of his jailer, he escaped, and reached Paraguay near the commencement of the war. Lopez permitted him to remain there, but gave him no employment, and he had no means of living except by the use of his pen. Men of letters, however, could find no occupation to support them, except in writing panegyrics on Lopez. Marquez, therefore, was accustomed to write, at a stipulated price, the patriotic speeches of the women of Paraguay, to be read at the times when they were ordered by the authorities to assemble and pledge their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor to the defence of the liberties of their country, and to support the great, the good, the brave, and the magnanimous Lopez. These speeches Marquez used to write by the score for the poor women, who had to deliver them or get somebody else to read them. He was a soldier of fortune, and though he kept very quiet, it was evident that a man of his nature, situated as he was, could not be very well contented. Besides him, there were several desperadoes who had come from one of the western provinces of the Argentine Republic which had been in revolt. These adventurers were of the worst class of *caudillos*, or gaucho chiefs. The revolution in which they had been engaged having been suppressed, they escaped to Bolivia, and thence came to Paraguay to confer with Lopez, and to devise some plan by which they could make a diversion in their own country or in Bolivia in his favor. Lopez, with his accustomed gratitude to those who came to his rescue, as in the case of Carreras and Manlove, had them all arrested and taken to his head-quarters, and their fate was like that of all the others whom he had arrested, — they were killed, either by exposure and starvation or by torture and execution. These men might very naturally consider the feasibility of a revolution, and it was our suspicion for a time that they had been engaged in sounding certain Paraguayans to ascertain whether they would engage in some-

thing of the kind, and that they had been immediately exposed,—as we knew no Paraguayan would dare to entertain such a project for a moment,—and that that was the whole sum and substance of the conspiracy, if there had been any. Possibly our surmise was correct, but as Marquez and the Argentines were all soon put out of the way, there is no evidence, so far as I know, either for or against it. It was only a suspicion of our own, and had been surmised only when we could devise no other theory or explanation of the strange proceedings which we were witnessing. As was my duty, however, when Benitez had stated in his letter, in an official form, that a plan for the assassination of Lopez had been discovered and frustrated, and that it was but a part of a great plot for a revolution, I requested him to congratulate the President on his escape from it. I believed it all to be a farce, got up expressly as a blind to a terrible tragedy; yet diplomatic forms must be adhered to, though the minister may know that the head of the government to which he is accredited is a traitor, an assassin, and a perjurer, as the whole world has recognized in its deportment to and recognition of another despot more successful than Lopez.

It had been intimated, in several of Benitez's letters, that on the 24th of July, the birthday of the President, the allies were to make a grand movement against the Paraguayan lines, and that at the same time the conspirators in and about Asuncion, Luque, and other places, were to make a demonstration. But the day came and went, and we saw nothing either of conspiracy or conspirators, and heard of no movement on the part of the enemy. On this day it was the custom to have an official reception, and it was expected that all persons holding any public character, as well as all the more prominent citizens, would present themselves at the Governmental House, to offer their felicitations to the President, or, in his absence, to the Vice-President, for the return of that auspicious day in which his Excellency first opened his eyes to illuminate the world. On this occasion I had several reasons for not complying with the custom. I found it would be very difficult to

frame any sort of an address that would not either offend Lopez or choke myself in its delivery. Besides, the very urgent letter of Benitez, of the 23d, required an immediate answer; and therefore I could not afford the time to go out to Luque, to be present at, or take part in, the disgusting ceremony.

It had long been one of the most difficult duties of my position to attend these receptions. On this occasion it was expected that the deans of the diplomatic and consular bodies would each make an address of congratulation, and also that the chief of each of the departments of the government would do the same. The Paraguayan officials of course could say nothing except in laudation of the great Lopez. Their addresses were made up of such fulsome flattery as must have disgusted any man who had not fed on adulation from childhood. These addresses were virtually Lopez's own productions, for they were all submitted to him beforehand, or in his absence to Benitez, who, in such matters, was his factotum, and if they were not sufficiently fulsome and idolatrous to gratify his inordinate vanity, they were altered to his taste. On previous occasions, when I had attended these receptions, I endeavored to preserve my self-respect, and at the same time not to give offence, by dwelling on the heroic conduct of the Paraguayan people; to express my sympathy, and my desire that they might soon enjoy that peace and prosperity which their valor and sacrifices had earned; but I studiously and invariably abstained from any approval of him or his course; and though I said enough in praise of the Paraguayan people, their valor and their endurance, I was not without misgivings that Lopez would take offence because I had not ascribed all the honor which they had achieved in the war to himself. My continuous refusal, either to flatter him or to say anything in justification of his course during the war, was doubtless one of the causes of his enmity towards me, as he must have observed that, however much I might do or say in behalf of the Paraguayan people, I would not put myself on the record as his champion or defender, and left the way open at all times by which I could, consistently with all that I had previously said or done, expose and denounce his atrocities.

The next day, the 25th, greatly to my surprise, — and, I may add, relief, — I received a visit from the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Benitez. Up to that time I had believed that the government had really discovered something of a revolutionary or dangerous character, and that the object it had in view in making so many arrests had been to discover how far it had extended, and who were engaged in it. I had not till then supposed that all which had been done had been but a part of a plan, the object of which was the destruction of all the foreigners in Paraguay, together with the better class of the Paraguayans. I supposed, too, that Benitez must know something of the facts of the case, and that, if there had been anything discovered, he could tell what it was, and who were the parties implicated in it. I took it for granted that by a personal interview I should learn something of what was the real cause of all the strange proceedings that had recently taken place. The only notice I had had that any act offensive to the government had been committed was contained in Benitez's letters, in which he stated that the conspirators were to have made a certain movement, in conjunction with the enemy, on the 24th, and that Bliss and others had signed a paper in which they had pledged themselves to the assassination of Lopez. The latter I knew was false, and I believed the former was. At least the 24th had passed, and no movement had been made. I thought that by a personal interview with Benitez I should learn what the government was seeking to accomplish or find out, and that I should be able to satisfy him that no one about the United States Legation had ever known anything in regard to it. In fact, I hoped that I should be able to impart such information, or give him such assurances, that Carreras, Rodriguez, and Pereira would soon be set at liberty, and perhaps be permitted to return to my house. I invited him into my parlor, and expressed great delight to see him. He said he was very glad to see me, and had come at the request of his Excellency to hold some conversation with me. The man was greatly agitated, and seemed to feel that he had a very difficult and dangerous task to perform.

He had evidently studied over what he intended to say, and proceeded to say it as if he had his lesson by heart. He went on to speak of the great regard that the government of Paraguay had for that of the United States, particularly for its worthy representative who had so long resided in Paraguay; that it had ever endeavored to show the most friendly disposition both to me and to my government, and he hoped to continue to do so. But certain offences had arisen of a very unusual character, which the government was required to meet with promptness and decision; and as I should be able to render great assistance to it in arriving at the truth, and in defeating the machinations of its enemies, he had come to me to speak with entire frankness of the situation, hoping that I should respond with equal frankness, and the government would then be spared the necessity of resorting to certain measures which it was unwilling, and hoped it would be unnecessary, to take. I replied that I was very anxious to know the meaning of certain strange proceedings of which I knew nothing more than what he had advised me in his official letters, and was very desirous of knowing what reasons the government had for the very unusual measures recently taken; and, in the doubt and darkness in which I was, I was disposed to speak with entire freedom, and if anything of a treasonable or criminal nature had been discovered I wanted to know the facts of the case, especially if any one in my house was implicated in it. He then said he wished to ask me if I had not forgotten some things that had occurred, and among others that package of letters which Berges had sent to me. Very undiplomatically, and perhaps imprudently, I became very indignant at this suggestion, and told him, in language somewhat heated, that I had written him on that matter, and had told him the exact truth; that anything of that kind could not be forgotten, and it was not respectful to make any such intimation. I had received from everybody who cared to leave anything in my house whatever they had brought. Multitudes of foreigners and Paraguayans had brought their most valuable articles and deposited them in the Legation.

The room in which we were sitting was half full of trunks and boxes belonging to other people ; in fact, there were three large boxes there belonging to Madam Lynch. They had been sent there at the time when the people were expecting the town would be taken by the allies. The boxes might be filled with treasonable papers ; I did not know, for they were locked or nailed up, and I had not opened them ; but, so far as I knew, there was not a document or paper of any kind that contained anything adverse or unfriendly to the government. I had seen Berges but twice after his return, and it had been probably two weeks after he got back from San Fernando before I even knew that he was in town, and yet he had said in his letter "the day after his return." I took up my journal and showed where I had made entries day after day of what I had done, and what had transpired on the different days, and it appeared that it was the 22d of June when I had first seen Berges after his return, and he had already been, as I had since learned, several weeks in his house. I called, as a matter of courtesy, to see him, then proceeded to see the Lady President (Lopez's mother), and then to the house of Leite Pereira, whence I brought a quantity of Paraguayan paper money ; that Berges had never said a word against the government, never alluded to any conspiracy at that time or the only other time at which I had seen him for several months. Benitez was evidently surprised and frightened at the answer I made. He said he regretted very much that the friendly effort of the government to arrange a matter of a delicate and difficult nature had been met by me in such a way, and therefore it would be compelled to put into the correspondence what it had no wish to make public, and to take entirely different steps from what it had intended. I told him I could not help that ; the government must pursue its own policy. I could give him no further information than I had already given ; I knew nothing more than I had heard from him of any revolution, or any action hostile to the government. He said that the government was already well informed of all that had trans-

pired, and that it was not so much to obtain further information that he had come to see me, as that the President might carry out his purposes without resorting to measures which he hoped would not be necessary. I understood from this that the government would take violent measures towards me, unless I should accede to his demands and deliver up papers which, to the best of my knowledge and belief, never had any existence. I told him that the government could take whatever course it saw fit; as for me, I had nothing more to say in the matter. He said, "*Sabemos todo*" ("We know all"); "We are informed already of what has transpired here in this house; of the conversations, the toasts given, and all the transactions within these premises." I said: "Whatever people may have told you, if there has been anybody here who has reported such things, it is false. I know nothing about them, only that nothing of the kind ever transpired here." He said he was very sorry his friendly visit had no better result; that they had before known all about what they wanted to learn directly from me, and therefore he had come in that friendly way to me to save his government from the necessity of taking measures of an extraordinary character. I told him that I regretted he had been so misinformed, but, as he was seeking for impossibilities, there was no remedy that I could see, and off he went. It may be here stated that Benitez was subsequently arrested, tortured, and executed for the unfortunate expression, "*Sabemos todo*," used in this interview. Lopez pretended that this was an admission that he knew something which he had never revealed. He knew all, while the government was not informed of many things; therefore it was clear he was one of the conspirators and my accomplice. Away with him!

I immediately conferred with Bliss and Masterman in regard to this interview, and told them, as nearly as I could, the conversation which had occurred. It rendered our situation more dark and hopeless than ever. Evidently Lopez was determined to proceed to extremities against the Legation. They were fully of my opinion, and from that time we were

expecting, for a few days more anxiously than ever, to have the Legation violated, and for them to be taken away by force. They had their carpet-bags ready, so that, in case of a descent upon the Legation, they could be taken without any delay; for they did not suppose that if the police entered they would be allowed a single moment to prepare themselves for departure, or to gather up anything they might need as prisoners.

With the clouds thus gathering around us, we discussed our situation as it might be supposed that condemned convicts would discuss the probabilities of a reprieve after they had been notified that they were to be executed on the next day. We believed that there were but two possible chances of our escape: the one was, that, ere the Legation had been violated, a gunboat should come to our relief; and the other was that the torpid Brazilians might move against Lopez and destroy him before he had destroyed us. The latter we regarded about as probable as that he might be struck by lightning in the mean time. It was time, we knew, for a gunboat to return; why it did not we had no means of knowing. Having learned that a new admiral was in command of the South Atlantic Squadron, that fact gave us some hope; for we were well aware that if Admiral Godon had been there, and had known that I and my family were in personal danger, he would have gone off in the opposite direction rather than send a gunboat to our relief. Of the new admiral we had no knowledge, but the presumption was that he must be better than the old one. We considered, also, that my chance of escape was very much better than that of either Bliss or Masterman, as, if they were seized, it would not be until some days, perhaps weeks, afterwards that he would be ready to seize me, Mrs. Washburn, and the other members of my family, and in the mean time the Wasp might return after they had been seized and before he had taken us. Thus our prospect of escape was better than theirs, as they would be taken first, and every day gained would improve our chances. That a gunboat must come within a month or two we regarded as

certain ; it might come within a day, and it might not come before several weeks. A day under those circumstances was an important item, and we considered that every possible device to prevent Lopez from violating the Legation might properly be taken.

But the days, the terrible days ! Bliss and Masterman regarded themselves as lost. The chances seemed to be at least twenty to one against them. Ever since the charge of conspiracy or of the attempt at assassination had been made, we were convinced that the fate of Rodriguez, Carreras, and Pereira was sealed ; that they would be, if they had not already been, tortured and put to death ; and that if Bliss and Masterman fell into the hands of Lopez, they must suffer the same fate. Every day each of them gave me what might be considered as final messages, requesting that, if I should escape and they should not, I would vindicate them before the world, and see that my government avenged them. Bliss made his will, which I still retain, and from which I make the following quotation : —

“ Being accused of conspiracy by the Paraguayan government, which has denied me a passport to leave the country with the American Legation, to which I belong, and that government having declared that it will put me on trial, I declare myself completely innocent of the charge made against me, or of any other offence against the government of Paraguay ; and I call upon my own government to institute a full investigation of the unexampled circumstances of the case, and to exact a fitting indemnity, should the proceedings against me result in my death.”

These anxious days were a sort of eternity. The dread of another letter from Benitez was constantly haunting us, for we had no doubt that the next would be worse than the last, and we greatly feared that it would precede but a few moments their arrest. But the most desolate and heart-stricken of all was poor Mrs. Leite Pereira. At first she had hoped that nothing serious would befall her husband ; that though doubtless he would be subjected to very severe treatment, and perhaps half starved to death, yet, as she knew he had never

done anything against Lopez or against Paraguay, and as there could be nothing against him, she still hoped that his life would be spared. But the rumors which we heard from below, together with Benitez's letters, which she insisted upon reading, nearly destroyed her every hope, and she went about the house like one who could not be comforted. She was ever talking of José Maria (her husband), and ever trying to devise some way by which she could placate Lopez or do something for her husband's relief. She would propose one day to write to Madam Lynch, another day to write to the President; again she would request that I should write to him and tell him that her husband was not guilty of anything, and then suggest that I should write something of a threatening character; then she would call to mind that on a certain occasion she had been one of the leaders of a patriotic demonstration, that she had given a great deal of money for presents to his Excellency, and that she had shown always a good and friendly spirit, and that her husband had done the same. Then she would propose to send him a box of provisions, and request me to get permission to have it sent below. With these latter requests I would comply, and several boxes were sent from my house to the police station to be taken to head-quarters for him, though I had little faith that he would ever know that they had been sent, or receive any of their contents.

It was a relief when darkness closed upon us, for after that hour we never received any letters; but the nights were so long and sleepless, it was a greater relief for the day to dawn, and long before that time I would be up and open the front door and take a look out to see if the messenger with a letter was not approaching. Most people know what it is to fall asleep with some weight or trouble upon the mind, and the disagreeable sensation of first awakening with a vague impression of trouble, and feeling a load upon the stomach before they can sufficiently collect their thoughts to recollect the cause of it distinctly. This was my experience for months; a brief sleep for a couple of hours was all that the

anxieties of the time would permit. Then I would lie awake and reflect on what would probably be the incidents of the day; what would the next letter contain? would Bliss and Masterman be seized that day? and if so, how many days would pass before I should be obliged to follow them? when would the Wasp arrive? how many days had passed since she left for Montevideo? why had she not come before? perhaps she will not come; perhaps the admiral has decided not to send her until he gets further instructions from home; how many months will that take? if that has been his course, she will not return for two or three months more, and that will certainly be too late to save us. These reflections would wear away the rest of the night until nearly daylight, and then I would get up, and, after taking my bath, light a cigar and walk up and down my inner corridor, again speculating upon our situation and what was before us. I endeavored as much as possible to disguise my apprehensions and to conceal my fears both from Mrs. Washburn and Mrs. Pereira. To the latter I always pretended to believe that, as Lopez could have nothing against her husband, he would not put him to death, but that she would see him again. To Mrs. Washburn I endeavored to maintain an appearance of indifference, and would tell her that as for me and her and our little child we were perfectly secure. Lopez would never dare to seize and execute the minister of a great and powerful nation, for he would know that the United States would follow him up and, cost what it might, would, sooner or later, have his head. These efforts, however, were but partially successful. She knew I had asked for my passports, had not received them, and could not get away, and suspected the reason of my detention, and, in spite of all my assumed confidence, could not but sometimes give way to despair and say that Lopez meant to kill us all, that not one of us would ever leave the country alive.

But with Bliss and Masterman, who fully realized the situation, it was useless to attempt to disguise the fact that Lopez was resolved on the destruction of us all, and that he was seeking to escape the consequences of his acts by rendering

our names and memories infamous. They knew as well as I did that Lopez had it in his power to destroy us all, that he could make it appear to the world that some accident had happened to such of us as he feared to kill openly, and that he could have all of the witnesses put out of the way so that no account of our taking off, except his own, would ever reach the outer world. That such was his plan we had abundant reason for believing, and every letter from Benitez rendered it more evident, and the day of its execution more near. He did not believe the Wasp would return. We did. To gain time was everything.

CHAPTER XXV.

Correspondence with Benitez. — Berges's Imaginary Papers again demanded. — Threats. — The Object of Benitez's Visit. — Accusations of Berges. — Commander Kirkland accused of forwarding Letters from Caxias. — Notice that Bliss and Masterman will be taken. — Passports. — Theory of Berges's Declaration. — Its Evident Falsehoods. — Carreras's Declaration. — Its Inexplicable Mixture of Truth and Falsehoods. — John F. Gowland. — The *Semanario*. — Its Sanguinary Contents. — Its Denunciations of Traitors. — The President's Birthday celebrated at the New Capital. — The Women denounce their Husbands, Brothers, and Sons. — Great Enthusiasm. — The Peace not disturbed in the General Joy.

UNTIL this time, in the whole correspondence, no accusation had been made against myself, nor had there been any intimation that I had known anything of the conspiracy, or been in any way a party to the plans of the conspirators. It had invariably been represented that they had imposed upon my confidence and abused my hospitality, and that having done so it was my duty to dismiss them from my house. On the 31st of July I received another letter from Benitez, in which he went into a long argument to show that I could not rightfully and legally maintain that Bliss and Masterman were members of my Legation. The letter was long, as most of his letters were, and had several quotations from different writers on international law to support his position ; but the sum and substance of his argument was this: We know they are criminals, and we have told you so, and you therefore know it. This government always does justice, and always shows great respect for the laws of nations, and is greatly surprised that you should give shelter in your Legation to persons who, after committing great crimes, are merely refugees in your Legation, having no right to its immunities. He added: "It is to be regretted that such individuals still remain in

your house, protected by the American flag, since your Excellency cannot but admit, upon your own conviction, that, far from being members of your Legation, they are improperly housed in it ; and as you know and have declared that your hotel ought not to serve as an asylum to criminals, I again demand of you the fulfilment of this duty, urgently required by justice and law." He also endeavored to prove that my action had been inconsistent, and that, as I had sent away others, I ought also to send away Bliss and Masterman, utterly ignoring the fact that I had sent away nobody, and had officially notified the government to that effect, and that all who had left had done so of their own accord, while having my full permission to remain. The letter then goes on to state the great consideration which had been shown me in the visit of Benitez, and the strong desire manifested by such visit to continue the friendly relations, the style of which consideration may be inferred from the following extract from the letter : —

"Your Excellency will remember that I then said that I had left my post to come and visit you, and inform you in a friendly manner that I considered the ground you had taken in the official correspondence as very serious, and that I desired I might not be obliged to say in it things which I wished to avoid for your own honor, Mr. Minister, and that I should be obliged to do so to prove officially the reasons which the government has for being exigent with you in the pending questions.

"I also said that I knew that you had received from Berge papers with certain precautions and declarations, and labelled them with your own hand, and that I attributed only to forgetfulness what you said in your note concerning this matter ; adding that I should infinitely regret to be obliged to make use of the declarations of the criminals in official notes, since that would carry this ministry upon a ground which it has not wished to enter upon with you, Mr. Minister."

He then proceeds to give the substance of the conversation between us, and says, "You ought to understand that we are in possession of even your confidential communications with

the criminals from a very early period, and that we did not wish to state this in notes, at least not in all its fulness, unless we should be obliged to do so." He also said that when he requested me to appeal to my memory in regard to those papers, that I "lost my temper, and replied that it was false, that there was no such thing, that whoever had so stated had stated a falsehood, a lie."

The visit of Benitez perplexed me more than anything else that had transpired. If there were no conspiracy, as I soon became convinced there never had been, why should he be sent to me on such an errand? why demand papers which Lopez knew had no existence? If Berges had ever made any statement of the kind, the words had first been put into his mouth, and he had been compelled by torture to say it, and Lopez could never have been so utterly daft as to believe in them. Why, then, had he sent Benitez to insult me by telling me that they knew I had received them and were informed of their purport, when he did not believe that they ever had an existence? The mystery was getting utterly impenetrable. There was only one explanation that could be given: he was weaving a network to justify himself in our destruction.

And yet, at that time, I did not fully realize the fact. We were all of us in such a state of doubt as to what had and what had not been discovered, that it seemed as if nothing could surprise us more than what had already taken place. The closing part of this last letter, therefore, was scarcely more startling than what had preceded, though it contained the declaration that ex-Minister Berges had stated before the tribunal that I had been his accomplice in a conspiracy. It said that Berges, in his declaration before the tribunal, had said that he had received an original letter from the Marques de Caxias, commander-in-chief of the allies, which letter had been received through the United States Legation, and his answer had been sent by the same channel, the draught of which was to be found in the package that he had delivered to me. There was one statement in this pretended declaration of Berges that gave us a ray of hope; at least it would be evi-

dence that there was no conspiracy if all the persons accused of being parties to it should be destroyed. In this declaration Berges was made to say that when the Wasp came it brought him another letter from Caxias, dated on the 1st of June, but which he did not receive till July, when it was delivered to him at his house by me after his return from San Fernando. This statement inculpated Commander Kirkland, as well as myself, as being a party to the conspiracy, for all the letters from the Wasp had been forwarded by him, and, with the exception of the one letter sent to Vasconcellos on his first arrival, nothing had been sent except Kirkland's own brief letters to me. Lopez had already begun to publish this correspondence, and if an investigation were ever to be had by our government, as doubtless would be the case if he should carry out his intention of allowing none of us to escape, then Kirkland would be a witness for us. He could testify, not only that Caxias never sent a message or letter through him to anybody in Paraguay, but that he entertained the most unfriendly feelings towards me personally, and had prevented him from coming through to my relief or rescue. This letter which Berges says was brought by the Wasp was not, according to the same declaration, replied to, for the reason that the ex-Minister was unable to write on account of a lame hand, and that I had assisted him to fold it up and place it with the other documents; that I took the package, sealed it, and labelled it "Papers of Berges," and took them away with me to my house. And he continues:—

"And Berges himself adds, in his second declaration, that it was, in fact, at the time of the first visit which you made him at his house in Salinares, about the middle of the afternoon, that you personally carried him the second letter written by Caxias to him, when you said: 'These papers came by the gunboat Wasp, and I received them under cover to me; it would seem that they are of importance.' That Berges took them and said, 'Let us see,' reading them, thereupon, in your presence; and that after a short time you observed to him that the papers were long, and that therefore you would retire, as you had something to do; that to this he replied, 'I shall claim

a little more of your time, you might take a walk for a little while in the quinta.' That you said, 'Your quinta is very sorry at present, rather give me a book to read.' That he then said to you, 'There are some,' pointing to a few books upon a small table, such as the 'Count of Monte-Christo,' 'La Garrota,' a work by Ascasubi, etc. That you got up to take one of them, he does not know exactly which, and read awhile, until Berges interrupted you, saying 'I am going to deposit these papers in your custody'; to which you replied, '*Vaya!* they are then from Caxias,' and he replied in the affirmative. You said to him, 'These are delicate matters; I would prefer to take charge of jewelry or other things which you may wish to deposit in the Legation, and I would do it without asking the so-much per cent (without saying how much) which I ask from other persons, but these papers may involve me in a compromise with my own government for abetting correspondence with the enemy's camp; for the rest I have no fear.' Berges then replied, 'How can a thing be known which has passed between us? I will fold them up with the previous communication (which you knew of), and give them to you now to carry away.' That you, after thinking a moment, said, 'I will take them, but, if anything should happen, I will burn them, and say I have received nothing.' That Berges then got up and took from a secret place in a red writing-desk, where he kept it, the first letter and the reply to it, and set about folding it up with the second one and the accompanying papers, as he had said in his before-mentioned previous declaration; the form of the package being quadrangular, about the size of a sheet folded in three, and having been closed with a wafer by Berges himself, you labelled it with the inscription already mentioned, 'Papeles de Berges,' and put it in the inside pocket of your coat over your breast, taking leave of him afterwards, and starting off in the direction of the Trinidad. That about a week afterwards you visited him a second time, along with your lady, who remained in the parlor, and you went into Berges's sleeping-room, he being in bed, on which occasion it was that you made him in more detail the offer of your services as minister and as friend.

"These are, Mr. Minister, the foundations which this ministry has had for soliciting of your Excellency the delivery of the package mentioned by the ex-Minister Berges."

What could I make of a statement of this kind? There

was a particularity of description, a minuteness of detail, calculated to carry conviction, and worthy of any Jesuit who ever sat in judgment in the holy Inquisition. Had Berges made up that story, made it all up with a view to screen himself, or had it all been instigated by Lopez, assisted by his bishop and his holy inquisitor, Padre Maiz and Madam Lynch? It occurred to me that Berges had, perhaps, endeavored to communicate with Caxias, and, being detected, had endeavored to conciliate Lopez by inculpating me, and had thought that by so doing the action of Lopez would be delayed, that his life might be prolonged, possibly, until the advance of the allies might, by the destruction of Lopez, liberate him. But it was all surmise. All we knew for a certainty was that it was fictitious from beginning to end, but who had concocted it, and for what object, we could only imagine. However, in replying to it, I could not tell Benitez that Lopez had invented the whole story, and that it was a part of his plan to justify himself in the butchery of persons who were obnoxious to him; I could only declare that there was no truth in it, and that the person who had made it had been guilty of atrocious falsehoods. In concluding this letter, Benitez said that his government had never avoided the responsibility of its acts, of whatever character, and would not hesitate to assume it before the world by making use of the means prescribed by the writers upon international law to take possession of the criminals Porter C. Bliss and George F. Masterman. We regarded this as a notice that they were to be taken, and again for several days were in hourly expectation of seeing the police enter to seize them.

The question with me now was, What answer should I make to this last letter of Benitez? The government had never before accused me directly, or brought any charge against me further than that I had sheltered criminals; it had never said that I had any knowledge of their guilty plans. My first impulse was to return the note as insulting, tell Mr. Benitez to send me no more, that I would not receive them, and peremptorily demand my passports and the means of leaving the country.

But I had learned long before that, in the case of the Brazilian Minister, Vianna de Lima, that passports were of little avail unless the means of leaving the country were provided. I had already asked them, and they had not been given me; and if now I were to demand them again, and refuse to hold further correspondence with the government, I should only precipitate a crisis, when everything depended on delay. I had no hope of getting out of the country until a gunboat came, whether I received the passports or not; and if they were sent me I should be forced to leave Asuncion, though it would have been impossible for me to get out of Paraguay. The plan of Lopez was to manufacture such evidence of the conspiracy as would justify him in the eyes of other nations for his extreme measures, the climax of which will appear hereafter. What I immediately most feared was that my Paraguayan servant, on whom I was dependent for obtaining provisions, would be taken away from me, or would be ordered by the police to voluntarily withdraw from my service. Then we should all be exposed to starvation, or compelled to leave Asuncion and go into the interior, in which case I knew the moment I left my house Bliss and Masterman would be seized, and what our fate would be could only be conjectured. It was more probable, however, that Lopez would not wait to drive us from the capital before seizing these two marked victims; and they both implored me not to break off formal relations with the government, as it would certainly precipitate their fate. Perhaps a steamer would come the next day, certainly it would come soon. By answering that letter at length I could, unless they were seized in the mean while, gain at least a week, and it would be several days before they could answer all the points of so long a letter as I would write; and though it might conclude with a notice that they were to be taken at a certain hour, unless previously delivered up, it was not improbable that the Wasp would return before that time. This was our only hope, for we had ceased to expect anything more from the Brazilians. It seemed to us as though it was their policy to give Lopez time to exterminate

the whole Paraguayan people, and I was well aware it would be pleasing to Caxias if I were to share their fate. After mature deliberation, therefore, I set myself to answer a letter which under other circumstances I should have returned with indignation and scorn.

In my answer, which was dated August 3, as I could not state my belief that the declaration of Berges was a tissue of falsehoods made up by Lopez and his inquisitors, I assumed that Berges himself had made the statements which had been imputed to him ; I took them up in detail and reviewed them, stating with great particularity everything that had occurred, and particularly in reference to any correspondence that had been sent from my Legation through the military lines. I had only received one letter for many months for anybody but myself, and that was the one to the Portuguese Vice-Consul, Vasconcellos, of which I have previously given an account. If, therefore, anything from Caxias had been received through my hands it had been in that package, but I had no knowledge of any such contents. I stated that the declaration of Berges was all false from beginning to end, and my theory was that he had ascribed to me a part which was performed by some other person ; that I did not consider he was a person of sufficient ingenuity to make up such a story out of nothing, but that perhaps he had had some such dealings with another party, and to screen that party he might have ascribed it to me ; that perhaps he had done that, not out of malice to me, for I had no reason to suppose he cherished any, but he was obliged to accuse somebody, and thinking that my official character would prevent scrutiny into my acts, he had thus sought to shield some friend ; but whether or no this was a correct supposition, his story was in all its parts a monstrous fiction. I said also, that until I had received the letter I had been groping in the dark, without any idea of what the government knew or suspected, but that this declaration of Berges had let in a flood of light upon the whole transaction ; for if a man who had held his high position had accused me of being his accomplice, there was good rea-

son why the government should regard me and all about me with suspicion. I then went on to show from the dates that it was impossible his statements could be true ; that I had always refused to send any despatches for him when I was obliged to avail myself of the courtesy of the allies to forward them through the military lines, as that would be an act of bad faith which, if discovered, would justify them in refusing to allow any more of my correspondence to pass either way ; that I had sometimes sent some family letters for private individuals, which I had been assured contained nothing political, and if Berges had ever sent through the Legation any correspondence, it must have been under cover of other persons. I then recapitulated what had transpired between Berges and myself at the interview of which he pretended to give an account, and added : " All that Berges says in his declaration about my giving him a letter from Caxias, and waiting for him to read it, of my taking up a book to read, and the conversation that passed between us, the taking of papers from a secret place in the writing-desk, folding and labelling the papers, is every word of it false, — as false as false can be." I also said that, during the only two interviews I had with him, his doors were open, and his servants were passing in and out and could have seen anything going on, and on neither occasion did Berges leave his bed.

As cumulative evidence that his other declarations were false, I alluded to the one in which he had said that, while I preferred not to receive his papers, I would receive his jewels and other valuables without charging the same per cent or commission that I had charged others. That this was a pure and malicious invention was evident from the fact, that though I had received, since the time of the evacuation of the town, money and other valuables from a great many people, I had never asked or received any commission, percentage, or compensation, and that such a remark to Berges was absurd upon its face ; that not only had I no knowledge of what he charged against me, but I could not believe that I could have had in my house for nearly five months persons

with whom I was on the most intimate terms and all whose thoughts I ought to have known, yet who were at the same time engaged in a plot against the government without my suspecting it; and that I cherished the hope that a full investigation would show that the Legation had never given shelter to any such persons, but if such there were, they had grossly abused my confidence and hospitality, and it was not for me to ask for their pardon, but rather for their punishment.

The next letter from Benitez, dated the 6th of August, was still longer, and indeed too long for any synopsis of its contents to be given here. This letter put me at a great disadvantage in argument, as I found that Lopez could manufacture his facts as needed, and I could not gainsay them. His witnesses, whom I had indorsed as honorable, truthful men, had admitted before the "solemn tribunal" they were guilty of high crimes. True I had only his word for it that they had done so, but I could not tell him in an official despatch that he lied, or that, if they had made the admissions alleged, they must have done so under torture, as I knew them to be false. I had stated in my letter to Benitez, on the day when Carreras and Rodriguez left my house, that I was fully persuaded they were innocent of any offence against the government, bespeaking for them kind treatment and that consideration due to their high social character and the honorable positions which they had held in their own government. In this letter Benitez alludes to that fact by saying that it will be very painful to me to learn "that the persons whose honorable character and purity of sentiment you so much vaunted in your note of the 13th of July now appear before the tribunal, not only as fully acquainted with your sentiments, tendencies, and intentions, but also as having been supported by your Excellency in a directly contrary sense, as may be judged from their own words as communicated to me by the court of justice." He then goes on to give what he calls "the solemn declaration" of Carreras before the tribunal, in which the unhappy man is made to give the details of the conspiracy almost as minutely as had Berges given the account of my interviews with him,

and to say that while he and Rodriguez were in the Legation we had a great many conversations about the conspiracy, the means by which it was to be effected, and the time when, in conjunction with the allies, it was to have broken out. With these things which were false were combined statements which I had really made,—as that I was disgusted with the slow progress of the allies, and that it seemed as though they did not intend to conquer the Paraguayans, but to exterminate them; to move against them without fighting until they should be completely destroyed through exhaustion. This satisfied me that Carreras had been put to the torture, for even those things which I had said he would never have divulged except he had considered them of no importance, and not even then unless in the extremities of suffering. But there was one statement in this “declaration” of Carreras which led me to believe that he had made some statements voluntarily. It was this, that on the 28th of April he sent a letter to Caxias, under cover to John F. Gowland, in Buenos Aires, and that I sent it under my official seal, knowing that it contained the letter to Caxias. Recalling the circumstances of sending away my despatches of the 28th of April, I recollected that Carreras had written a letter, which he said contained nothing except allusions to his own affairs,—nothing political whatever; and he also said that his friends were advised never to send anything of a political nature to him, and nothing that was not favorable to the cause of Lopez; and that he was always cautious to do the same thing. This letter, however, he said, as a matter of prudence, he could send to his friend, John F. Gowland, who was a great friend to the Paraguayan cause, and one with whom Lopez would not regard it a crime to correspond. But how should Lopez know that Carreras had ever sent such a letter, unless he had told him so? And if he had told one thing which otherwise would not have been known, perhaps he had said a great many things, and detailed a great many of my remarks in which I had severely condemned the conduct of Lopez in the prosecution of the war,

and spoken of him generally very much as I have in this book. In my mind I did Carreras injustice at that time. It did not occur to me then that my despatches on that occasion had been stopped and opened by Lopez, and this letter of Carreras taken therefrom; but afterwards it was all clear to me. Lopez having got possession of the letter to his family, and having learned that he had sent it under cover to Gowland, forced him to put in his declaration the statement that there was also a letter to Caxias, when of all the persons in Buenos Aires to whom any one would have intrusted a letter to Caxias, or to any one favorable to the cause of the Brazilians, this John F. Gowland was the last. In fact, he was an exile at that time because of his extreme opposition to Brazil, to the alliance, and to the government then in power in Montevideo. To the declaration of Carreras was added another from Vasconcellos, the Portuguese Vice-Consul, in which he stated that he had received a large package of letters from me, which he had delivered to sundry people, who were, all of them, his fellow-conspirators. Additional statements were also given in this letter from Berges, in which he made the same complaints that Lopez himself had made to me long before: that I had not shown proper zeal in behalf of Paraguay with my own government, having always been unfriendly to it; and when I went to the camp of the Marques de Caxias to treat in regard to peace, I was not favorably disposed towards Lopez, and when I returned I had even a worse disposition than when I went. Among my other offences I was charged with being a very intimate friend of the ex-Consul of France, M. Cochelet, who was always hostile to the government of Paraguay, and lamenting that he had been succeeded by a man of so disagreeable a character as M. Cuberville, his successor. To all these accusations of holding opinions which it did not suit Lopez to permit the minister of a foreign government to entertain, Berges added that he believed I was under pay of the Brazilian government, and that as I had never received any such inducements to friendship from the Paraguayans, I therefore had

“worked against the interests of this country and endeavored to produce discouragement among its sons.” There were also a great many general conversations which he represented that he had held with me, most of which were entirely new to me, and with which it is not worth while to lumber up more of this work. This note, containing these stupendous declarations, closed, as they nearly all did, with another request that I should send Bliss and Masterman away.

During these anxious days we waited with great interest the appearance of the *Semanario*. The days of its publication were very uncertain, though it was always dated on Saturday, notwithstanding it was scarcely ever issued till several days later. No allusion had been made in it to the correspondence which had been going on between Benitez and myself until the issue of July 19, which was not published until the 24th. This number contained the whole correspondence up to the 28th of June, and its appearance in that form was regarded by us as a favorable indication; for whatever might happen to us, it was improbable that some numbers of the *Semanario* would not be preserved and their contents made known outside the limits of Paraguay; and I knew that my words would outweigh a thousand times all the evidence that Lopez could extort from witnesses whom he was torturing, and would kill to make sure that they should not afterwards contradict it. The editorials of this paper grew more and more sickening and grandiloquent in their praises of Lopez as his deeds became more sanguinary, and they were repeated so often that it caused us to wonder at the flexibility of a language which would permit the same ideas and sentiments to be reproduced so many times in such varied phraseology. The correspondence from head-quarters, however, usually contained something from which we could judge more or less of the progress of the war; and this, in fact, was the only part of the paper to which we attached much importance. Those letters from the army, when taken in connection with the threats made against Bliss and Masterman, and the “declarations” against me, were certainly not of a cheer-

ing character. By this time we knew that nearly all our friends and acquaintances had been arrested, and while we were hoping that something would yet happen to avert the destruction which Lopez had prepared for them, the *Semanario* of August 8, 1868, appeared, containing a long letter from the army, which, if not written, was evidently dictated, by Lopez himself. All the writers and correspondents around him had seen others, who but a few weeks before were in as high favor as themselves, arrested as traitors and put to the torture, and knew that at any moment they were liable to the same fate. Sooner or later they were all to follow those whom they now denounced. The native Paraguayans who were accused of treason and conspiracy against the great Lopez were thus dismissed to infamy by the correspondent :—

“These accursed sons of Cain, these reprobates who might have enjoyed incomparable glory as being natives of the same soil as the GREAT LOPEZ, as being the sons of this classic land, blessed by God and admired by the universe, of this land which for its virtues and its glories has no equal in the world, so that its name alone, the Paraguayan name alone, is the light which frightens tyrants and puts them to flight, and arouses even in the farthest corners of the earth applause, envy, and hope; who, having had it in their power to record their names in the great sum total of the Paraguayan people, which will live eternally with inextinguishable splendor amid the blessings of posterity, have renounced this glory and the eternal home of the blessed, have gone down to Hell, taking with them the wrath of God, the anathema of the whole society, and the malediction, horror, and eternal indignation of their country.”

The fate of the foreigners, according to this correspondent, was little better than that of the accused natives. The latter had already been despatched and sent to their final account. The former were soon to follow them.

“These foreigners who found on Paraguayan soil what they could not obtain in their own native lands, who were but leeches fattening upon the people’s honey, who enriched themselves with the precious fruit of the sweat and the blood of the people, who, while the

people has been consecrating itself as a whole upon the altars of patriotism, making the greatest sacrifices, and bathing heroically with its blood the tree of liberty, and shielding with their lives the sanctuary of their religion and of their sacred rights, enjoyed not only all the benefits of a full state of peace, but also the advantages derived from the fact of all the natives being engaged in the service of their country, and who, O, horrible infamy! perverse degeneration of the human heart!—these Furies in human form who have come to take possession of our houses and our goods, to enjoy a peace of which we are deprived, and which we guaranteed to them with our blood and our sacrifices, are the persons who, as their only mode of payment, have whetted the knife upon our very altars to assassinate the providential man whom God has given us to free us from the slavery of captivity and of the Devil! the Father and Saviour of the land, the greatest and most endeared object of our existence, and consequently to assassinate our country, our sacrifices, our glories, our all; to do us all the evil which the barbarous and infernal enemy has not been able to do for himself, and a still greater evil, since, whatever may be the enemy, not merely that which we now hold impotent and prostrate at our feet, but any other enemy, even stronger and more powerful, shall never tread the conquered Republic of Paraguay, shall never destroy her by despoiling her of her anchor of salvation and of hope, her loved and beloved MARSHAL, and shall never cause her to drag the vile chains of slavery; but these infamous ingrates, these traitors toward God, toward humanity and ourselves, these seeds of corruption which have sought to germinate in the heart of our unsuspecting society, shall expiate their horrid crime, and there shall not remain any further vestiges of them than the malediction which will eternally persecute them. . . .

“Thanks to God and to MARSHAL LOPEZ! the Paraguayan people is to-day cured of the cancer which gangrened its existence. Confidence, tranquillity, and fraternity recover their immovable seat among us. Who can conquer us? Nobody! GOD and MARSHAL LOPEZ are with us!”

What an alliance!

The news from the new capital, Luque, was of the most gloomy character. On the 24th of July, Lopez's birthday, all the men, of whom there were not more than twenty left, and

all the women, were called together to protest against the treason of their relations and late associates. They did so, according to the *Semanario*, in the following terms:—

1st. The people as a body solemnly protests against the horrible crime of the traitors against their country.

2d. The people declares solemnly before God and the world that it does not participate in any manner in the said treason, &c., &c., &c.

The signers of this manifesto (headed by Canon Bogado, Minister Benitez, and Judge Ortellado) were themselves accused of treason before many weeks, and most of their names figure in the bloody pages of Resquin's Diary, along with the persons whose treason is protested against.

At the end of this document is the characteristic paragraph which follows: "At this stage of procedure several persons belonging to the families of the state criminals solicited urgently and repeatedly to be allowed to sign the foregoing act, which they did." The unfortunate wives of several of the recent victims were thus compelled to append their signatures to a denunciation of their husbands' crimes, which they well knew to be fictitious. They signed their *maiden names*, thus repudiating their husbands for the future. A large number of women also signed, whose husbands were not yet accused of treason, but were destined to become victims in a few more days. The first four signers were the wives of Colonel Fernandez and of Colonel Martinez, the sister of the Bishop, and the wife of Minister Benitez. As will be seen elsewhere, Señora Martinez was herself destined to become the most diabolical instance of the fiendishly protracted tortures of Lopez.

The fear and consternation that prevailed in Luque on that day, as the Italian Consul afterwards told me, were beyond description. Scores of the most respectable women in the country were there, whose husbands had been dragged away, they knew not for what offence, to probable torture and death. Many women had been taken in the same manner, and no greater misery could have been depicted on the faces of those

who were left, had they been warned that the morrow was to be the day of their own execution.

Yet the *Semanario*, in giving an account of the proceedings of that day, said that the enthusiasm was unbounded. The women had come forward and denounced their traitorous husbands, brothers, and sons, and pledged themselves anew to support their protector, the unparalleled warrior, Marshal Lopez. Notwithstanding the great enthusiasm and hilarity, it added that the best of order prevailed, and no violation of the peace occurred to mar the joy and festivities of that happy day.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Lopez's Opinion of American Admirals. — Benitez's Letters inexplicable. — Publication of the Correspondence. — Berges in the Double Character of Traitor and Patriot. — Letter from Berges and Reply thereto. — The Status of Bliss and Masterman. — Rights of Legation. — Solitude of Asuncion. — Houses sealed up. — Fate of their Owners. — Fernandez and Sanabria. — A Long Silence. — Arrest of Benitez. — His Character. — Madam Lynch withdraws her Treasures from the Legation. — Effects of Protracted Anxiety. — Death the Least of the Terrors. — Lopez and Lynch have their Plans matured. — The American Minister and Wife to be subjected to the same Treatment as the Brothers and Sisters of Lopez. — Details of the Plan. — Causes of Lopez's Antipathy. — His Indecent Exhibitions of himself. — Testimony of Dr. William Stewart.

THE savage and blood-thirsty tone of these articles in the *Semanario*, whenever any allusion was made to the conspiracy, the oburgations of those wicked men who had been engaged in it, with the assurance that they had been, or would be, sent to keep company with the spirits of the damned, rendered it more certain than ever to our minds that if Bliss and Masterman were taken they would be subjected to torture and an ignominious death. Lopez was now exulting in his power to terrify, torture, and kill. His naturally cruel disposition was revelling in the delights of creating the intensest misery. The terrors of the situation were greatly increased by our conviction that there was no conspiracy. Had we believed there had been anything of the kind, we should have deplored the folly of those engaged in it, and supposed that, after they had been put out of the way, others who knew nothing about it would be left unmolested. But being assured that scores of others had been executed for no other reason, as we believed, than to afford a pastime to Lopez, there was no hope left to us unless the Brazilians

in the mean time should make a movement and derange his plans, or a gunboat should appear. Therefore, as each event in succession intensified our anxiety for the arrival of the gunboat, did we the more often estimate the days that must pass before her probable return. Lopez evidently did not think she would return at all. The independence and insolence of Admiral Godon in refusing to give me any assistance in reaching Paraguay until positively so ordered to do by the government, and his going unrebuked afterwards, was sufficient to convince him that, in the American service, naval commanders were quite independent of the home government. He had seen how the Brazilians had persuaded Godon to delay, and how Kirkland had been induced to turn back, though urged by the Minister to force the blockade; and as it was clear that the Brazilians would try and prevent another gunboat from passing above their squadron, Lopez was confident that none would do so for months, and in the mean while he would have abundant time to weave his meshes around us, and manufacture all the testimony required to justify him in the extreme measures he was intending to take.

In only one point was his reasoning or calculations fallacious. As subsequent events proved, had the whole matter of sending the gunboat been left to Admiral Davis, the successor of Godon, it would not have been sent for weeks, perhaps months later, and would never have reached Paraguay till Lopez had made away with all whom it was sent to relieve. But the United States had a Minister at Rio de Janeiro of different stuff from Godon or Davis or Kirkland, and when the *Wasp* returned he made short work of the pretensions of the allies that she had no right to pass the blockade. The *Wasp* was accordingly sent back, and this time went above the squadron, and, greatly to the surprise of Lopez, arrived before his plans were completed. Had he supposed that the *Wasp* would come back so soon, he would not have indulged in so protracted a correspondence. He supposed that he would have abundant time to weave his network, that

was to convince the world that a great conspiracy against his government had been concocted in the American Legation. We, however, hoped that the Wasp would return before he had committed any act for which he would not imagine he could apologize ; for, desperate as he was, he did not intend to commit any act that would provoke the United States to declare war against him. He was deliberately planning to commit the greatest outrage, but was proceeding in such a way, as he supposed, that all neutral powers would admit he had respected the law of nations. But whether or not he were to succeed in making it appear that he was not responsible for events which he had prearranged to have the appearance of accidents, it would advantage us but little after they had happened. Though we were all to disappear, there would be two parties wherever the tragedy might be discussed ; and as there would be no evidence except such as he might manufacture, one half of the world might believe it, and might say that we had all received our deserts. The long, almost interminable, letters of Benitez, therefore, though insulting, Jesuitical, and clearly intended to entrap me into some admission or expression to my disadvantage, I regarded as favorable to me and to those about me. It took time to write them, and they were so long that he could not complain that my answers were as long as they were, and that I took as much time to get up my letters as he did to extort his declarations and invent his accusations.

It would be wearisome to the reader were I to give even a brief synopsis of this entire correspondence ; I will only note a few points which I made in my letter of the 11th of August, in reply to that of Benitez of the 6th, in which he pretended to give the declarations of Berges, of Carreras, and of Vasconcellos. The statement given in his letter as being the declaration of Carreras, that he had sent treasonable correspondence under cover to John F. Gowland, completely confounded me. It appeared to me that Lopez never could have known that Carreras had sent any letters to Gowland except by his own voluntary admission. If he had volunteered this testimony, it was clear that he had done so to exculpate him-

self, or at least to divert attention and persecution from himself by accusing me. I therefore denounced the statements of Carreras all through as being entirely false, further than that he did send a letter under cover to John F. Gowland, which he told me at the time was only a private letter to his family, having no allusion whatever to politics, or, at least, nothing in it unfavorable to Paraguay. Why he should have made such a statement I did not pretend to know. Possibly he thought that I should have advised him to remain in the Legation, and not deliver himself up; but I replied, "It is hard for me to believe that from such motives he could fabricate a series of such monstrous falsehoods as appears in his declaration, and try to implicate me as knowing of a conspiracy of whose existence I had not the most remote idea," and that, the more I knew of the affair, the greater was the mystery in which I was enveloped; that I could make nothing of it except that there was a conspiracy somewhere, of which I had known and suspected nothing, and that this declaration of Carreras, as reported by Benitez, went to show that, after having abused my confidence and hospitality, he and others had sought to divert the world's indignation from themselves by implicating me in their crimes, to which I added, "God knows that I would not wrong or unjustly accuse or suspect anybody, but that there has been treachery, ingratitude, and villany practised upon me in some quarter is but too evident." That this treachery and villany (I do not know that he owed me any gratitude) had been practised by Lopez, and by Lopez alone, I fully believed; and though I hypothetically ascribed it to others, yet, as the hypothesis was based only upon Lopez's statement, I knew that only upon him would fall the judgment of the next sentence, which is as follows: "All, however, will some day be made clear, and all the guilty parties must hold a place in the history of infamy never before paralleled." In reply to the statement made by Carreras, that I had in my possession the papers of Berges, I replied that they might be in my house, but if so they were contained in a trunk or box belonging to some other person,

and of whose contents I was entirely ignorant ; but that if they were in any such box, and the owner of it would send me a written order for the papers, and give me a description of them, so that I could distinguish them, I should be most happy to deliver them. I then reviewed the statement of Berges, but I will not recapitulate here the inconsistencies and the self-evident contradictions which I showed ; I thought they were so plain that if the *Semanario* in which they would be published should ever be read outside of Paraguay, it would vindicate me, though neither I nor any other of the witnesses then living should survive to do it.

There was one curious feature about this correspondence. At the time the evacuation of Asuncion was going on, Berges was the minister with whom I had to deal, and my notes regarding the persons whom I had received into my Legation were addressed to and answered by him ; and afterwards, when he was arrested and declared to be a traitor, the government justified and sustained all he had done, and maintained that he had in no way yielded anything to which the government objected, yet it maintained, at the same time, that he and I had then been in almost daily communication, plotting treason and forming plans for the overthrow of the government, so that it virtually held that Berges was at the same time acting the part of a traitor and of a loyal servant of the government of Paraguay. I therefore took occasion, in this letter of August 11, to point out this discrepancy, and to ask Benitez to state in which capacity Berges was acting at the different times when allusions were made to his official correspondence and to his declarations before the tribunal. When was he acting as a traitor, and when in the character of a loyal subject ? Long before this, I had taken it for granted that whenever I held any conversation with Berges about the situation of affairs, which I frequently did, that whatever I might say to him was immediately taken down by him and transmitted to Lopez ; I took it for granted that such was the case, and I used to speak with as much freedom with him as any one could with a person so reserved and cautious

and apparently distrustful as he was. We would speculate as to what might be the next move on the part of the allies, how it would be met by the Paraguayans, and of the various contingencies that might arise in the war ; of the means which Paraguay had to repel the allies if approached on this point or the other, and, in fact, talked with him as it would be proper for any foreign minister to talk when conversing with any member of the government who was supposed to enjoy its confidence and to be a man of discretion and judgment. The notes of these conversations, it was now evident, had all been preserved, for in Berges's declaration he alludes to the different interviews, and to what was said at different times, and I could recollect that he quoted some things of trivial importance which I had actually said ; but everything of the kind was distorted to have an allusion to the conspiracy or revolutions. If I said that the allies might approach in a certain direction and with a certain force, it was that the revolutionists or the conspirators might be prepared to co-operate with them whenever the time should seem to be opportune.

Berges had also stated that I had sent his letters under my official seal. That this could not be so it was easy to show by the dates ; as when I sent my letters to Captain Kirkland of the Wasp I had, and could have had, no communication with him, as he was then at the head-quarters. He was also at that time a close prisoner, though I did not say so in my letter, and if, at the times he mentioned, I had sent any letters for him out of the country, they must have gone in a balloon or been conveyed by a carrier-bird. At the conclusion of this letter I stated that as there was no truth in the declaration of Berges, Carreras, and others, for my part the correspondence must then close. If the government accepted my words as true, it must admit that I could give it no information ; but if it did not accept them, respect for my own character and the dignity of my office would forbid me to continue it ; that one of two things it should do, — accept my statements and drop the correspondence ; or, refusing to accept them, send me my passports and provide me with the means of

leaving the country. Thus for the third time did I ask for my passports.

This letter was barely despatched before I received another, signed by Berges, of which I give a translation, and also a copy of my reply.

“SAN FERNANDO, August 5, 1868.

“*To his Excellency Mr. Charles A. Washburn, Minister Resident of the United States of America.*

“SIR, — Events most unexpected by me decide me to address you this letter from the camp, to request you to have the goodness to deliver to the bearer the three sealed packages which I deposited with you in my quinta at Salinares, at the beginning of July ultimo, at the time of the first visit which I received from you, a few days after my arrival at the capital. The first is labelled by your own hand with the title, ‘Papers of Berges,’ and is the largest, being that which contains the correspondence which I have exchanged with the Marques de Caxias; the second is labelled, ‘Private Correspondence of Berges,’ and contains the letters exchanged with various persons in the Rio de la Plata; and the third is a small roll with the label, ‘Papers of my brother Miguel.’

“On this occasion I take pleasure in saluting you, and renewing the assurance with which I am your most attentive and sure servant.

“JOSÉ BERGES.”

“LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES,
ASUNCION, August 12, 1868.

“*His Honor Gumesindo Benítez, Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs.*

“SIR, — I have just received the note of your Honor, dated yesterday, together with a paper signed by José Berges, in which I am requested to deliver, not one, as formerly represented in his declarations, but three packages which he says he delivered to me at his house on one of the first days of July, at the time of my visit to him a few days after his return from San Fernando. Not having ever received any package, letter, or communication from him, as I have repeatedly advised your Honor, I am unable to see the object in sending me this paper. In my note of yesterday I said if any person had ever sent or brought any such papers to my house, and would send a written order for them, and a description so that I could know which they were, I would be happy to deliver them.

But I did not promise impossibilities, or to deliver papers I had never received, whoever might send for them or however minutely they might be described.

“I avail myself of this occasion to renew assurances of distinguished consideration.

“CHARLES A. WASHBURN.”

On the 13th I sent another note, devoted to a defence of my *protégés*, as Benitez called them, Bliss and Masterman. In answer to the pretension that because the government had not distinctly recognized them as members of the Legation it therefore had a right to demand them, and that I had no right to refuse to deliver them up, I stated that I had given in their names, and that if it had not recognized them, neither had it recognized my wife and child, nor my private secretary, nor any of the servants that had been long in my employ; and that, according to his reasoning and logic, he had only to say that any one or all of them were accused, and that the government refused to recognize them as belonging to my Legation, and I had no remedy but to send them away. I also stated, that if the testimony of Bliss and Masterman could be of any value to the government, they were perfectly willing to give it, and if a notary would come to my house they would give any information which they possessed in order to ascertain the truth in regard to other accused parties; and that Mr. Bliss had declared to me, in relation to the paper which Benitez said he had “signed in the secret committee of mutual obligations to commit an infamous crime,” that if any such paper, signed by him, should be shown to me, he would instantly leave my house; and that, while I should insist upon my rights of Legation, I should take good care that he kept his promise to me. To Benitez’s repeated complaint that I did not accept his official statement that they were guilty in preference to their own declaration to the contrary, I replied that I should not question the sincerity of his belief in their crime, but that, as he did not speak from his own knowledge, I doubted the truthfulness of his informants. The declarations of Berges and Carreras I knew contained almost as

many falsehoods as sentences; and if statements so false had been made by men who had held such honorable and responsible positions, it was very possible that equally false declarations had been made for the purpose of implicating others. But whether they were culpable or not, it was not a question of guilt or innocence, it was a question of the rights of Legation. I had long before given in their names as belonging to my diplomatic suite, and the government, by not objecting to them, tacitly acknowledged them as such, as much as it had acknowledged anybody in my house, and had just as much right to claim any one else of my family or household as to claim either of them. I concluded this letter by saying, that as all these charges were made by men who by their own showing were traitors and ingrates, the government could have no evidence worthy of credence, and I hoped it would not persist in its course, but would allow Bliss and Masterman to remain. After I had declared their status as members of the Legation, I should not, under any circumstances, deliver them up, except to force.

After I had despatched this note, the solitude of Asuncion became more and more oppressive. No one ever ventured near my house, either native or foreigner. My servant Basilio continued to go beyond the city limits to obtain the meagre food which could still be procured, and my fears every day increased lest he should tell me that he wished to leave my employ. The families living a little distance from the capital, whom we had been accustomed to visit, had nearly all been forced to retire into the interior. These families consisted mostly of foreigners, and all the men had been arrested and taken in irons to San Fernando, and were subsequently murdered. In my rides about town I seldom met anybody except policemen and soldiers; but I observed one thing that caused me great alarm in regard to many of my friends. I noticed that the houses of many foreigners, and of many of the better class of Paraguayans, had been sealed up; that a bit of cloth had been attached to the doors with sealing-wax in such a way that the door could not be opened without

disclosing the fact by the rupture of the cloth. What the object of this was I could not divine, for they had usually been sealed up during the night, and I had no means of knowing whether they had been previously opened or not. I suspected that the houses had been searched, and I subsequently learned that not only had they been searched, but everything in the way of money, jewelry, or other valuables of small bulk had been taken away. I feared lest the owners of all such houses had been doomed to destruction, and I now believe that not one of them was alive three months after I left Paraguay. I could only augur from the sealing up of these houses that disaster had overtaken their owners, but I could hardly understand how that could be, when many of them were the property of persons who, I supposed, enjoyed the confidence of Lopez to the highest extent of any people in Paraguay. The houses of most of the judges and of many priests had that ominous sign upon them.

What surprised me most was to see that the house of Colonel Fernandez, who had long been Lopez's confidential business man, was also closed, and the mark of the sealing-wax was on its doors. Up to this time I had no suspicion that he had fallen into disgrace. I had known that, at the time most of the arrests of other people had been made, he was the military commander at Asuncion, and it had devolved upon him to give the orders for their arrest; and had there been anything like conspiracy, it seemed to me that, with his assistance and approval, it might have succeeded, and that if it had been nipped in the bud it had been owing to his fidelity to his master. And now, if he had also fallen into disgrace, who was to be left to carry out the arbitrary decrees of Lopez? Sanabria, the Chief of Police at Luque, was also arrested not long afterwards, as I have since been informed, though I did not know it at that time. He and Fernandez had the whole power in their hands, the military being entirely under their control; and had they been so disposed, they, and they alone, could have saved Paraguay from its subsequent desolation, preserved the lives of hundreds of thousands of men, women, and chil-

dren, and been regarded as heroes to be blessed and honored. Acting in concert, they might have cut off the supplies entirely; they might have seized all the steamers, and, at first pretending to act by the orders of Lopez, they might have left him at the mercy of his enemies. But instead of that they sent him the supplies without which his whole army must have died or capitulated; and they executed all his cruel orders, arresting the others who had been accused, and sending them to head-quarters to be executed. And yet after this, strange as it may seem, they were both of them arrested, tortured most inhumanly, and afterwards put to death. Every person, in fact, holding authority at Asuncion or Luque, was arrested and executed. Did Lopez believe there was a conspiracy? If so, would he have intrusted the task of arresting and sending its members to his presence to those leaders in it who must have been the only persons that could have rendered it successful? Yet it was by Fernandez and Sanabria that the entire population, not in the army, was arrested; and as soon as this work was done, they too were called before Lopez, accused of treason and conspiracy with those they had before sent to him, and all shared the same fate. On one occasion, about this time, as I was taking my daily recreation on horseback about the town, I met one of the chief men of the arsenal, an Englishman by the name of Hunter, who was passing along the street, several Paraguayans being in sight. I reined up my horse to speak to him, asking him for the news. He made a deprecatory sign, and said, "There is nothing, I am frightened to speak to you," and passed rapidly along. Each day I saw more houses sealed up; and from the fearful anathemas heaped upon so many people in the *Semanario*, I judged that the property which those houses contained, or had contained, had been confiscated by the government, and that the owners had all been declared traitors, and had been or were to be destroyed.

But an unusual length of time passed without my receiving anything further from Benitez; and I had always found hitherto that the longer a letter was in preparation the more

threatening were its contents. On the morning of the 23d of August, the day being Sunday, I took a stroll towards the bank of the river, and saw one or two steamers lying near the wharf with steam up, as if about to start. As I approached the corner of the street I saw my friend Benitez, who I had supposed was hard at work at Luque getting up a despatch that was to confound me, walking rapidly towards one of the steamers. My first thought was to hail him; but as he averted his face from me, it appeared that he did not wish to recognize me, and I turned in another direction, while he continued his course to the wharf and went aboard the vessel. Was it possible that he, too, had fallen into disgrace?—he who had been writing those fearfully long letters, trying to prove me a conspirator, and to vindicate the right of his government to take Bliss and Masterman from my house by force if necessary; whose letters showed a cunning duplicity and a shameless disregard of truth that evinced a zeal so great as to have little respect for appearances,—could it be that *he*, too, had fallen into disgrace? Probably not, as I then thought; probably Lopez had called him below, that the correspondence might all be carried on at head-quarters. Still, as the man apparently did not wish to recognize me, but turned his face the other way, it was evident he was not in a hopeful mood. To judge from the fate of the others who had been called below, he had little to anticipate for himself but tortures and death, and to fear that, like Manlove, he was “going to his destiny.”

Up to this time I had entertained a feeling of contempt and bitter animosity towards Benitez. He was a man of considerable ability, and of an active, vigorous mind; but the alacrity with which he had always appeared to serve Lopez, in writing the foolish and disgraceful flattery of him contained in the *Semanario*, could but provoke contempt from any one who might read it, save and except Lopez. I had supposed, too, that he knew something of what he wrote, and that when he made statements to me that were false he had done so willingly and maliciously, for the purpose of entrapping or intimi-

dating me. Early in the war, a half-brother of his by the name of Valiente had been executed by supreme order, as was believed for no fault or crime whatever ; and yet Benitez did not appear to be affected by it, but continued to be always as eulogistic and sycophantic in praise of Lopez as ever before. I therefore regarded him as a man who actually admired the character of Lopez, which I considered hardly consistent for a person bearing the human form. It would have been charity to regard him as a hypocrite in all he did, and to believe that he was always writing with the knife at his throat. But he was one of the few that Lopez had around him who seemed to approve and justify all his acts ; and as he could not but know that his letters to me were filled with transparent falsehoods, I could not but have a feeling of great aversion and contempt for him. But my resentment towards him gave way to a great extent when I saw him embark on board that steamer, and it ceased entirely when I learned, as I subsequently did, that on reaching San Fernando he was put in heavy fetters, was subjected to the most terrible torture, was flogged until the flesh was nearly all cut from his back and shoulders, was subjected to the *cepo uruguayana*, to the rack, and starvation, and finally, when nearly dead, was taken out and shot.

And for what ? In the interview which he had had with me on the 25th of July, of which I have given a long account, he had made the remark that they *knew all* about the conspiracy, — “*Sabemos todo*” (“We know all”). For using these words he was called below, and was told by the inquisitors that he had told me he knew all, but he had never told them all, and that therefore it was evident that he too was a conspirator ; and he was accordingly subjected to that fearful treatment which all who had in any way excited the suspicion of Lopez were made to undergo.

On the 27th of August another incident of unfavorable omen occurred. The old Spaniard, José Solis, came to my house, bringing a note from Madam Lynch, requesting him to call upon me and take away all the property which she

had in the Legation. This property of hers was contained in three very large boxes, which were nailed up very strongly, and sealed in such a way that they could not possibly be opened without betraying the fact. She had sent them to my house about the time of the evacuation of the capital, when it was feared that the place might be taken by the allies, and that my house alone would be spared from search and sack. What the boxes contained I never knew. At different times she had withdrawn one after another and returned them, and my suspicion was, that whereas at first she had only placed in the boxes her most valuable goods, including her diamonds and jewels, — of which she had, as it was said, a hundred thousand dollars' worth, or more, — afterwards she had added to that very much of the jewelry which had been taken by force or robbery from the native people. No one of the houses of the foreigners, I believe, was opened, nor was their money or jewels taken, until all these boxes had been sent to my house for the last time. What reason she had for withdrawing them at this time did not appear ; but the inference we drew from the fact was that my house was no longer to be a place of protection ; that all of us were to be removed from it in one way or another ; and that, if the enemy ever should come, my power of protecting anything would have already ceased. Solis told me that he had been requested to withdraw the boxes and send them by the steamer to head-quarters. This, as I afterwards learned, was done ; and as she knew that Lopez had resolved to make way with me, she had them buried in some secret place, and all who had been engaged in, or knew of, the work, with one exception, were immediately despatched, so that they could never betray her secret. When Lopez was driven from that point she was compelled to leave this property behind her, as, the country being occupied soon after by the allies, she could not send it with the other spoils, and neither neutral gunboats nor honorable ministers could assist her in completing the theft. These boxes were buried somewhere in Paraguay, between Villeta and the Tebicuari, but of the exact point I could not tell within a dozen miles.

As I have already said, the time previous to the arrival of Leite Pereira had passed on the whole agreeably, notwithstanding the many anxious moments and many discussions of a gloomy character. We shut our eyes to the impending evils, and did not allow them to deter us from our literary pursuits, or from our billiards, whist, and chess. But after he and the Orientales had been arrested, and the English sent away, the overhanging dangers would not permit sufficient abstraction of the mind to admit of chess or whist, and even billiards afforded no diversion. While Bliss and Masterman were looking every hour for the entrance of the police to arrest them, and fearing every night that it would be the last which they would pass with their ankles unshackled or outside the walls of a prison, it was hardly to be supposed they would have much inclination for amusements. But though fear and anxiety may cause one to pass sleepless nights and anxious days, nature will finally prevail; and when these trials have been endured for a while, men will eat and sleep, and the mind will occasionally rebound to playfulness and humor. After a time we could joke upon our own situation, though the subject of these sallies was frequently of a very grim nature. But the arrival of a letter making our situation appear more desperate and hopeless would invariably lead to a very serious and prolonged discussion of its contents, that was gradually to be succeeded by a rebound and a sort of reckless cheerfulness and gayety.

This peculiarity of the human mind, as we observed its workings in ourselves, was frequently remarked upon, and we compared our situation to that of persons who, at the time of the French Revolution, had been marked as victims for the guillotine and arrested. We had read how such persons, when being thrown together, became after a short time reckless, and, as it were, indifferent to their fate, and would joke and laugh over the impending decapitation as a thing inevitable, yet not worth a serious thought. We however, were not numerous enough to enter into any boisterous or demonstrative hilarity, and besides, we had not

the felicity of looking forward to the guillotine ; what we looked to was torture, starvation, and death, by the lance or musket, only when human nature could endure no more. I believe that Bliss and Masterman would have gladly compromised at any time for the guillotine ; had my wife and child been beyond the power of Lopez and Lynch, I would eagerly have done the same. It was not the death that Lopez could inflict upon us that we had most reason to dread. What infamous acts we might confess after being subjected to starvation, exposure, the lash, and the rack, we could not tell. We knew that whatever Lopez desired to extort would be given to the world as confessions, and that he would take good care that no one should survive who might disprove them. He had the keys of truth in his own hands as no monarch or potentate ever had before in this world, and could prevent any version of events except his own from ever seeing the light. We believed we could endure as much as most men, and that nothing could force us to false confessions. We had read of men who had been burnt at the stake, and yet had refused to the last breath to deny their faith ; and we had believed that Rodriguez, Carreras, and Pereira would have been torn in pieces sooner than confess to infamous acts of which they were innocent. Rodriguez, especially, had that chivalric character, that firmness, and high sense of honor, that sensitiveness to the good name of his family, that tortures such as the old martyrs had endured could never have drawn from him confessions so infamous and false as were contained in the declarations which were sent me as being made by him before the tribunals of Lopez. At the time he left us he would sooner have been flayed alive than have made such admissions ; but he and Carreras and others must have been subjected to such prolonged torture that they were no longer the men they had been. The fact that they had confessed to charges which we knew to be false and infamous told the whole story of their sufferings ; and we foresaw that if we were taken we should be subjected to the same ordeal, and when worn out with hunger, thirst, and every torture that fiends could invent,

when the mind had given way under the prolonged agony, what assurance had we that we might not admit ourselves guilty of acts equally infamous, and sign any confession placed before us?

In speculations of this kind, and in reckoning over our chances of escape, that each day seemed to be growing less, these terrible days were passed. Bliss and Masterman had the advantage of me in one respect. Each of them was a single man, having neither wife nor children on whom Lopez could inflict his accursed tortures. But for my part I clearly foresaw that, if nothing else would force me to confess to such charges as he might think most disgraceful, my wife would be tortured before my eyes. Let not the reader start, or say that not even Lopez could commit such horrid barbarity. To his own sisters he was guilty of conduct equally savage and fiendish. He subjected them to the most merciless floggings, and compelled them to witness the tortures and executions of their husbands, and gave orders for them to be lanced to death ere they should fall into the hands of the allies. Even the mother who bore him was compelled to go before one of his so-called tribunals and declare that she had no son but him who was subjecting her to such cruel indignities, and afterwards was daily flogged by order of her first-born; and her death-warrant had been signed by him when he fell, like a gored wild beast, in the mud of the Aquidaban. Why, then, should he spare me and mine, when he could delight in such unnatural and horrid cruelties towards his own nearest kindred?

From the course pursued by Lopez in his correspondence, taken with the forced and false "declarations" that had been extorted from Rodriguez and others, it was easy to divine what treatment he had in reserve for the rest of us. I foresaw it all, while yet in his power, as clearly as I knew it afterwards, when the only foreigner about him who knew anything of his secret purposes escaped from his grasp and wrote the details of his plan. This letter, the first written to me by Dr. Stewart after being taken prisoner, confirmed all I had before

suspected, and gave me the order of proceedings that was to have been pursued towards me but for the timely arrival of the Wasp. The details of their plan he had learned from the conversations that had taken place between Lopez and Madam Lynch when he was present, and from remarks of the inquisitors and torturers who were to superintend the execution of the prearranged plan. From this and subsequent information furnished me by Dr. Stewart, I learned that Bliss and Masterman were to have been arrested about the time that the American flag was seen flaunting in the river below. They were to be compelled to corroborate all that the other "conspirators" had confessed, and to add to it that treasonable communications were still passing between me and Caxias. Then, for the "safety of the Republic," it was to be found necessary to restrain me of my liberty, and I should be taken to head-quarters and subjected to the torture which Lopez was anticipating the delight of witnessing. In the mean while, to supplement my confessions, Madam Lynch was to make a visit of sympathy and condolence to Mrs. Washburn, and tell her that I was in no personal danger; that I was well treated, and would be set at liberty and permitted to leave the country so soon as I had given in my testimony in regard to the revolution which I had already admitted had been planned. To hasten this result, it was only necessary for Mrs. Washburn to write a personal letter to the President, who was "very kind-hearted," and admit that there was a conspiracy, and that to her own knowledge I had been a party to it. Having obtained such a letter, it was to be used to overcome my obstinacy, and I was to be promised that, on making similar admissions, my own tortures should cease, and I should be permitted to leave the country with my wife and child. Judging from their experience with others, they supposed that, under the repeated application of the *cepo uruguayana*, I should by that time be willing to confess anything to escape the horrible torture. But if I were still obstinate, my wife was to have been brought into my presence and her back and shoulders flayed with

sticks, as were afterwards those of Lopez's mother and sisters, Pancha Garmendia, Mrs. Martinez, and many others. Would I not then have confessed to anything false or infamous, if by so doing I could stay the stripes? I do not know. But I do know that Lopez had attained a skill and refinement in torture that neither holy inquisitor, nor cannibal savage, nor imaginary demon, had ever reached.

It seemed that Lopez regarded me at this time somewhat as Polyphemus regarded Ulysses when he caught him and his companions in his cave, and was intending to keep me as the last of the foreigners whom he was to devour. His antipathy towards me, it seems, had been growing stronger ever since my visit to the camp of Caxias, more than a year before, when the proffered mediation of the United States had been rejected. He had thought that I should have had both the will and the influence to induce our government to intervene in his behalf, and save him from the consequences of his own folly and ambition. I had warned him when he began the war as he did, without previous warning, that he was committing a fatal error, and now he hated me for my Cassandra-like words. I had offended him by giving shelter in my house to so many other people, and he thought it a cruel wrong to himself that I should stand between him and people whom he wished to torture. For these, and perhaps other reasons, he had come to hate me worse than any one else in the world; and so well was this understood, that the abject flatterers about him, who sought to escape the fate that was befalling so many others by saying what would be most pleasing to him, soon learned that, next to adulation of himself, his bravery, his kindness, and his wisdom, nothing was so grateful to his ear as the most ribald abuse of me and my family. His torturers had learned this, and their victims were made to understand that the way to mitigate the horrors of the *cepo*, or the lash, was to accuse *el Ministro Americano* of all manner of iniquities and indecencies, and his wife as worse than he. When Lopez was partially intoxicated, and felt in a humor for hearing himself praised and his enemies denounced, he would gather around him his staff

his torturers, and his secretaries, and encourage them to speak. For a long time the great object of their objurgations, the *bête noir* to be cursed, was President Mitre. But after Mitre had left the army their mark of abuse was sometimes Caxias and sometimes the Emperor. At a later period I had the honor of supplanting these high dignitaries, and the flexibility of the Spanish language, that had been so often strained to find terms adequate to express the praises of Lopez, was now subjected to a severer test to frame expressions of obloquy and abuse of the American Minister. Lopez himself would set an example of grossness and obscenity which his flatterers dared not rival, and Madam Lynch would cover her face and pretend to blush at the immoralities of the American Legation.

From these proceedings all who were about the headquarters of Lopez understood that the American Minister was a doomed victim. The torturers were expecting to have him to break in to confession. The few foreigners about the camp were expecting every day to learn of his arrest, and with that they knew their own chances of ever escaping alive would be gone. They had not supposed, neither had I, that Lopez would ever execute me publicly.* He yet cher-

* " *Interrogatory 17.* — Did you consider your life in danger previous to the departure of Mr. Washburn ?

" *Answer.* — Yes.

" *Interrogatory 18.* — Had Mr. Washburn been made prisoner, would it have affected your condition and that of other foreigners in Paraguay who have since escaped ?

" *Answer.* — Indisputably. Our lives would have been endangered, most likely taken ; and had Mr. Washburn been thrown into prison, as was at one time suggested by Mrs. Lynch and by the late Bishop of Paraguay, I am convinced that he would have been tortured and made way with like the other victims of Lopez. In this case his death would no doubt have been attributed to natural causes or to suicide. Lopez would have set at defiance the whole power of the United States, and in all probability would not have left one of us to tell the story of his crimes.

" *Interrogatory 19.* — Did you consider the arrival of the Wasp and the departure of Mr. Washburn as improving your chance of escape ?

" *Answer.* — Certainly ; the belief of us who remained in the power of Lopez was that our chances of liberation were favored by his having escaped. He would be sure to acquaint the States and the whole civilized world with the true

ished the delusion that he would come out triumphant from the war, and he believed that with his means of manufacturing testimony he could satisfy the United States that the *accident* to their Minister was not to be imputed to him, that he would run little, if any, risk of provoking them to make war against him. He was so absolute, he had many ways to accomplish his object and yet appear innocent. His plans of torture would have been executed by persons who would have been put to death immediately afterwards. Madam Lynch was in favor of assassination, and for the credit of the sex it is to be hoped she recoiled from the hideous torture that Lopez proposed both for Mrs. Washburn and myself. In either case Lopez, to have proved that the deep damnation of our taking off was not to be imputed to him, would have executed several Paraguayans as having been our assassins. Then what could our government say? What could it do? Would he not protest that he deeply deplored the bloody deed, that he had punished the perpetrators? and would he not show his grief by posthumous honors? and would he not testify his sorrow by sending our child, under a flag of truce, with an escort, through the lines, and with many messages of regret, and with reams of manufactured evidence of the natural death of its mother, and of the suicide or assassination of its father, and request that it might be forwarded to its relatives in the United States?

It may be supposed that some part of the above is conjecture; and so it is in some of its details. But it is according to the general plan marked out by Lopez and Madam Lynch,

character of the tyrant, was our thought; would unveil the mystery which had so long shrouded the acts of the President, and kept out of sight the sufferings of Paraguay. Once public opinion was directed to the subject by the evidence of an unimpeachable witness, we felt assured that public sympathy would follow, and no effort be spared to rescue us from our perilous position. . . . While the Wasp, with Mr. Washburn on board, was waiting for the correspondence of Lopez, he asked me what I thought of his permitting Mr. Washburn to leave the country. Of course I could only answer that it was a proof of his Excellency's generosity, for I myself was in daily dread of being tortured and executed." — *Testimony of Dr. William Stewart, Paraguayan Investigation, by the Committee on Foreign Affairs*, pp. 311, 312.

to be varied according to circumstances ; and, had not the Wasp arrived for a few weeks later, would have been carried into effect. Should any of the others who were nearest Lopez during these times, and who yet survive, ever give to the world the true story of what they saw and knew, it will be confirmed. One only of the survivors will not confirm it ; that is the person who urged Lopez to commit the atrocities which the others will record, — Madam Lynch.

CHAPTER XXVII.

The Transactions at Head-Quarters unknown in Asuncion. — Arrest of General Barrios. — His Character. — Indications that Lopez believed in a Conspiracy. — Other Indications that it was all previously planned by himself. — Forging Fetters. — Lopez's Conduct inexplicable. — General Bruguez's Fall, Arrest, and Execution. — What was it for? — Barrios attempts Suicide. — His Wife, Lopez's Sister, horribly flogged. — Insanity and Execution of Barrios. — Affected Piety of Lopez. — Why did no one rebel or resist? — His Constant Fear of Assassination. — Anecdote from Thompson's Book. — Madam Lynch increases his Natural Cowardice. — Her Selfishness. — She causes many to be arrested and tortured. — The other Intimates of Lopez. — Their Fate. — Madam Lynch in Danger. — Brazilian Chivalry. — The "Conspiracy." — No other Proof than that of Tortured Witnesses.

THE "declarations" that were sent to me in Benitez's letters as being the admissions of the leading conspirators was conclusive evidence of the treatment they had received. But regarding the condition of, and accusations against, many others in whom we felt a deep interest, we knew scarcely anything. Our ignorance of the real state of affairs was a blessing we did not then appreciate. From the official letters we had surmised enough to be aware of our dangerous situation; but had we known of the daily tortures and executions that were taking place at San Fernando our anxieties for ourselves must have been greatly increased. As early as the 15th of August we had seen that General Barrios, the brother-in-law of Lopez, had been degraded from his position of Minister of War and Marine. What the reason was for his disgrace we were unable to conjecture. He was eminently fitted to do the work of Lopez or Madam Lynch, being a man of dashing valor and as cruel as he was brave. For his military successes Lopez had been more indebted to him than to any man in his army, excepting only the English engineer, Colonel George

Thompson. Like Lopez, he was regardless of the number of men sacrificed, and would kill his own soldiers for the slightest delinquency, in a manner highly approved by his master. Before the war he had commended himself to the favor of Madam Lynch in a way calculated to win her highest regard. This imported teacher of morality, having suspected a man employed about her premises of too great an intimacy with one of her maid-servants, affected to be so greatly scandalized and shocked that any improprieties should be committed in her abode of virtue and purity that she sent the offender with a note to Colonel Barrios, then holding the office of Mayor of the Plaza. What the contents of the note were may be inferred from the fact that the man was flogged to death.

There would seem to be little doubt that at one time Lopez really believed that some of his principal officers were false to him and were engaged in a plot for his overthrow. Yet his conduct was so inconsistent with any theory of this kind, that, of all who afterwards escaped, not one can explain it. It is all a mystery. It can hardly be explained on the theory that he was insane, for in all matters in which he was uninfluenced by his vanity and his innate love of cruelty, his mind was as clear and logical as ever.

One fact that came to my knowledge long before there was any pretext of a conspiracy, and before the evacuation of the capital or the arrest of all the men in the country not in the army, leads to the conclusion that the whole long tragedy of horrors was deliberately planned while Lopez was yet at Paso Pucu. Early in the year 1868 I had been told by Mr. Treuenfeld, the constructor of telegraphs, that in one of the workshops in Asuncion several native blacksmiths were employed in making grillos, or fetters. The men so employed were kept under strict surveillance, and worked in a shop by themselves, so that the public should not know what they were doing. Treuenfeld, however, learned that the whole force in this shop was engaged in making fetters. These fetters consisted of a ring for each ankle, so made that an iron bar about fourteen inches long was riveted to them. Their weight varied from

five to twenty-five pounds. Sometimes as many as three pairs of the latter were placed on the limbs of one person, and were kept upon him continuously for months. There had always been, from the time of Francia, an enormous number of these fetters in the country; and the fact that Lopez had a number of men employed in making hundreds or thousands more, at a time when there was nothing to indicate for whom they were intended, was certainly ominous of danger to somebody.

If there were in reality a conspiracy, as Lopez pretended when he arrested so many, its discovery just after fetters had been made for them all was certainly a remarkable coincidence. But if the whole thing was but an invention of his own by which he could gratify his love of inflicting pain and misery, and at the same time have a pretext for robbing his victims of their property, the coincidence may be explained without ascribing it to a special providence, as Lopez was accustomed to ascribe any event favorable to his cause.

But if Lopez never believed in the conspiracy, his course is equally inexplicable. Why, then, did he kill off nearly all of his best officers? Why kill Barrios? Why kill Bruguez? They were his two best generals, reckless, cruel, and brave. They were always at his head-quarters, and he could not well spare them. No one about the camp had ever noticed but that they were both in favor with their chief, as they were often in his company and usually dined at his table.

Colonel Thompson gives the following account of the reward that Bruguez received for his fidelity and valor: "My room at Lopez's head-quarters was next to that of General Bruguez, and he and I were very good friends. One evening, arriving from Fortin, I went into his room to see him, and found that all his things were gone, and other things in their place. There was a boy in the room, and I asked him for General Bruguez; he did not know. I then asked him if he had moved? 'Yes.' 'Where?' 'I don't know.' I then imagined that something must be wrong with him, and asked no further questions; I had asked too many already. Next

day I dined with Lopez ; Barrios, Bruguez, and the Bishop used always to dine with him, but Bruguez was not there. Lopez's little boy asked where he was, and they told him, with smiles, ' He is gone.' He was, I have since learned, bayoneted to death."

A cheerful prospect for the other guests ! Two of those, Barrios and the Bishop, who told the boy with smiles that Bruguez was gone, were shortly after to follow him, and share his fate.

The cause of the sudden fall of Bruguez, I afterwards learned, was this : When Lopez first began torturing people to make them confess to having taken part in the conspiracy, his plan was to subject them to such misery that when they could endure it no longer they would in their agony admit anything. Having confessed their own guilt, the torture was afterwards reapplied to force them to expose their accomplices. As they had never known anything about the conspiracy, of course they could have no confederates ; and as the torture was continued till they either denounced others or died, they would accuse at random. One of these miserable wretches, it seems, while in the *cepo uruguayana*, mentioned Bruguez as one of the conspirators, and said that he was the leader of them, and that if the revolution were successful he was to marry the daughter of Sinfiorano Caceres, Madam Lynch's former partner in the butchering business, and have himself elected President. The bare hint that anybody else might, in a possible contingency, be eligible to the Presidency aroused Lopez to fury. Bruguez was immediately removed in the manner described by Colonel Thompson, and Caceres and his son, according to Resquin's Diary, were executed.

His wife and daughter, it is conjectured from the fact that their names do not appear in the lists of those who were executed, were tortured to death.

The only inference to be drawn from the fact that Bruguez was so summarily despatched is that, at the time, Lopez believed in the conspiracy.

It was but a few days after the arrest of Bruguez that Barrios was put under arrest. What his offence had been will probably never be known. He had seen the most of those who but a little before were highest in the confidence of their common master arrested and horribly tortured. He had known Lopez from a boy, and had been his willing tool in outraging other people. He had been his accomplice and assistant long years before, and acted as pander at the time that he attempted an infamous outrage on the beautiful



GENERAL JOSÉ VICENTE BARRIOS.

(Executed by his brother-in-law, Dec. 21, 1868.)

Pancha Garmendia. He had seen so many subjected to the torture, and in many cases had ordered its application, that, brave man as he was on the battle-field, his courage failed him when he was arrested, and he attempted to commit suicide. This was construed by Lopez as evidence of guilt,

and he directed that he should be well treated till he could sufficiently recover to endure the *cepo* and make confession. His wife, Doña Inocencia, the elder sister of Lopez, was thereupon immediately arrested and questioned as to what she knew of the conspiracy. She could only reply, as did everybody else when first questioned, that she knew nothing. She was then flogged like any felon. Like all the Lopez family she was very fleshy, and for a Paraguayan of very fair complexion.

For the work of flogging the strongest men were always selected, and they were given withs or sticks of a very hard and heavy kind of wood, about four feet long, and an inch in diameter at the butt, and tapering to half the size at the other end. Their orders were to lay on with all their might, and, if one of them hesitated or faltered, he was immediately seized and subjected to the same treatment. The flogging of Doña Inocencia, as described by some of the witnesses, was such as to strike them, though familiar with such scenes, as peculiarly savage and brutal. Her endurance and resignation astonished them. Though the flesh was all cut away from her shoulders by the repeated blows, she never uttered a cry or a groan ; and when they ceased for a moment, and she was importuned to confess, and thus win the clemency of the kind-hearted President, her reply was, " I know nothing ; ask my husband."

Doña Inocencia was not flogged to death, nor was she executed. The manner of her deliverance will be described at the proper place. Her husband, after recovering from his self-inflicted wounds, was so harshly treated that he became insane, in which condition he was executed by shooting on the 21st of December,—more than three months after I left Paraguay.

During the time that Lopez was perpetrating his most atrocious acts he affected to be very religious. He had a church built at San Fernando so that he might perform his devotions in public ; and while his inquisitors and torturers were engaged in extorting false confessions by means of the

cepo, the rack, and flogging, he would be in the church, frequently for four hours at a time, kneeling and mumbling and crossing himself, while between the genuflections the Bishop or Dean Bogado would tell the people of their duties towards him, as he was the anointed of the Lord, set to rule over them, and making devotion to him their first and only duty.

I have been asked a great many times, why, if Lopez was the monster that I and all others who are not sharers of the property he stole from the multitudes whom he afterwards murdered have denounced him to be, some one of those who were near him did not assassinate him? If he was arresting and executing daily his most devoted friends, could not those still at large and permitted to approach him foresee their own fate? And was there no one of them all to stop his wholesale executions by a Brutus-like act? That has been a hard question to answer. But Francia died in his bed, after near thirty years of tyranny such as had never been known before. Rosas ruled for years in Buenos Aires with an iron hand, keeping up all the while an organized band of assassins, killing and robbing whom he pleased with impunity; and such was the spell under which the people were that no one ever attempted to kill him, and he is yet alive. The Paraguayans of Lopez's time had never known anything but a reign of terror; and from my knowledge of their character I do not believe there was a single person in the whole country who, at the suggestion that he should lift his arm against Lopez, would not have felt himself detected, and certain to be put to death unless he instantly denounced it. But, notwithstanding this, Lopez was undoubtedly in constant fear of assassination, and allowed no one to approach him unless it were those who showed alacrity in executing his most cruel orders, and who, in case of his fall, would share his fate. "He was," says Thompson, "in great fear of being assassinated, and at night had a double cordon of sentinels around his house. This was afterwards increased to a treble one. During the daytime these were removed, and the guard was kept under an open roof, next door to

Lopez. People who wished to see him had to wait under this same roof. One evening I was waiting there to see Lopez, as were also several other officers, and a sergeant of the guard entered into conversation with me. After a short time there was a great stir, officers going in and out of Lopez's room, the guard relieved, and the other officers who were waiting all arrested. One of Lopez's aides-de-camp came and said to me, 'His Excellency sends word to you to write down all the conversation you have had with the sergeant of the guard, and to bring it to-morrow morning.' I went away, not expecting to be able to remember a twentieth part of the silly talk of the sergeant; but, as things looked serious, I tried, and probably remembered it all. It filled a whole sheet of paper, and was all of it somewhat in this style: 'The sergeant asked me if Queen Victoria always wore her crown when she went out to walk.' 'The sergeant asked me if I should wear the Paraguayan uniform when I went to England.' It was sealed up and taken next morning to Lopez about 7 A. M. He was not yet up, but the sergeant was already shot, and all the soldiers of the guard had received a hundred lashes each. A few months afterward I heard that the sergeant had been conspiring with two men who had just returned from Uruguayana to murder the President, and that the two men had been found that night in the yard of Lopez's house. The sergeant's manner was certainly not that of a conspirator. Lopez never said a word about it to me, nor acknowledged the receipt of the written conversation, probably feeling ashamed to do so."

Similar conspiracies were frequently detected. Prisoners taken near the lines, or deserters from the other side, were generally assumed to be assassins sent by General Mitre to murder Lopez, and were tortured till they admitted it or expired. Lopez was constantly publishing in his *Semanario* that men had been sent to assassinate him, and even wrote to Mitre, accusing him of having done so. Yet no one besides himself ever believed either that Mitre had done anything of the kind or that anybody else ever harbored such an idea in

his mind. No suspicious person could ever possibly get near him, and he was so constantly and immediately surrounded by his staff that any one who should make a movement towards him would have been instantly struck down. Men like Francia, Rosas, and Lopez are not assassinated. Being conscious that there are thousands who would be glad to see them killed in any way possible, they suspect everybody that comes near them, and surround themselves with guards and sentinels. It is men like Abraham Lincoln, who, "with charity for all and malice towards none," cannot realize that any one should desire to kill them, and therefore expose themselves to the dagger or bullet of the fanatic or madman.

Madam Lynch, for some purpose of her own, was always trying to increase the natural cowardice of Lopez. She had an abundance of that courage of which he was so greatly in want, and in time of battle would expose herself where the danger was greatest; and it is probable that her object in playing on his fears was to increase her influence over him. When he, at the first sound of a gun from the allied lines, would hasten to gain the shelter of his cave at Paso Pucu, she would move about unconscious of danger, as danger she knew there was none; yet at the same time she would counsel him not to expose to a chance shot his valuable life,—a life on which the hopes, the fortunes, and the liberty of all Paraguayans depended. She was also constantly advising him to greater precautions, telling him that his enemies were thick around him. She saw that such counsels pleased him and increased her own influence, and she would tell him that he was too good, too credulous, too kind-hearted, and too indifferent to danger for his own safety. With her at his side ever whispering in his ear that he was in great danger, that his enemies were plotting his destruction, it is not strange that he was constantly haunted with fear of treachery and assassination. No one else of those around him could venture to tell him that such fears were groundless, without a certainty of being suspected as a traitor and an accomplice of conspirators. To this bad, selfish, pitiless woman may be ascribed many of the

numberless acts of cruelty of her paramour. That she was the direct cause of the arrest, torture, and execution of thousands of the best people in Paraguay there is no doubt, and it is equally certain that it was for her benefit and that of her children that so many hundreds were arrested and robbed of their property, and afterwards tortured as conspirators or traitors, and then executed, that they should never, by any contingency of war, survive to reclaim their own.

It may be said that all those in whom Lopez, towards the last of his career, had most confidence gave him similar advice to that of Madam Lynch. Resquin, Aveiro, and his Bishop before he arrested him, all took advantage of his weakness to play upon his fears. This they did, in most cases, from pure selfishness, as in most cases they could have nothing personal against the people they accused and denounced. But so suspicious had Lopez become, that he distrusted all who did not accuse others. Every one about him, not excepting Madam Lynch, was in personal fear; and as they all saw that those who were most forward in accusing others, and showed most alacrity in torturing them, stood highest in favor and most secure from arrest themselves, there was a rivalry among them in this infamous work. At one time Madam Lynch was for several days in constant dread lest she should share the fate of those whom she had caused to be sent to their final account. She had seen Barrios and Bruguez, and several others of those who but a few days before were the most devoted and apparently the most trusted officers taken off "to their destiny," and Lopez's elder sister had, to her own knowledge, been most cruelly tortured. At this time she could not conceal her fear lest she too might be a victim to the jealous, suspicious spirit she had done so much to arouse. Dr. Stewart having been called into her house one day, just after the arrest of Barrios, found her and the Bishop, and one or two others yet highest in favor, apparently in counsel. Fear and consternation was on every face, and the silence was broken by Madam Lynch's saying, "Who knows whose turn will come next?" Stewart, suspecting a trap, replied, "I don't know whose

it will be. I know that my conscience is clear, and nothing can touch me." They all sat silent for a few moments, each appearing afraid to speak, and Stewart withdrew, happy in the belief that he had said nothing which could be tortured to his prejudice. On another occasion, about this time, she remarked to one of her countrymen that she would give up everything she had in the world if she could only get safely out of Paraguay. She had good reason to be in fear for her own life. She knew people, men and women alike, were daily tortured to force them to accuse others. She knew, too, that she was bitterly hated by all the better class of Paraguayan women and most of the men, and why should not some of them in their agony make false accusations against her as well as against others? Might they not accuse her of being in the conspiracy? Possibly they did so; but if it were so the fact would only indicate that Lopez did not himself believe that there had ever been any, and that he tortured people, not for the purpose of getting evidence, but for amusement.

While events of this kind, of which we knew little or nothing, were transpiring at head-quarters, the work of implicating all of us still left in the Legation was going on. It was an essential part of the plan of Lopez that we should share the fate of the others whom he accused, for after he had taken such pains to prove a conspiracy it would never do to allow any one who could deny and disprove it to escape from his power. This was evident to us from the character of Benitez's letters; and as we saw that it was only a question of time whether one of us should ever get away from Paraguay, it was but natural that we should freely discuss the character of the allies, and the moral guilt of their generals in conducting a war in a manner that would lead to the inevitable extermination of the whole Paraguayan people.

With that peculiar chivalry characteristic of the Brazilians, they did not try to molest the Paraguayans, while they were endeavoring to make a "change of base." When Lopez abandoned Paso Pucu, Caxias did not learn of the evacuation for several days afterwards, but kept up a vigorous bombard-

ment till an enterprising pedler in pursuit of customers got inside of the abandoned fortifications, and, finding nobody there, went back and reported the fact, after which a gallant charge was made, the forts were carried at the point of the bayonet, and then the whole army joined in celebrating their great victory, and the commanding general despatched a steamer to bear the glad tidings to Buenos Aires and Rio de Janeiro, and bring back the thanks of the Emperor and orders for promotion. At San Fernando the same miserable inaction and inattention to the movements of their enemy marked the course of the Brazilians. It seemed as if they dreaded to come in contact with the Paraguayans, no matter what the odds in their favor. After spending six months or more in investing the whole Paraguayan army, and with such a preponderance of men and guns that with a fair degree of energy and valor every man must either be killed or capitulate, they would allow them all to retire and carry their guns and ammunition with them. Then the Brazilians would prepare to follow them, and perhaps for another year repeat the long tedious work of again getting ready to attack in overwhelming force, at the end of which time they would find Lopez had again moved away, and that for months before he had been fortifying at another point, to which, before the Brazilians were ready for a general attack, he would fall back with his whole army. Thus it was at Itapiru, at Paso Pucu, at Humaita, and at San Fernando. At the latter place, though the allies had entire command of the river, and had a squadron lying below strong enough to have utterly destroyed the Spanish Armada of Philip the Second, and the whole army was gathering to overwhelm Lopez, yet he was permitted quietly to disarm the place and send all his guns and ammunition a hundred miles higher up the river, to be there again placed in position for another stand. The only thing he left was the telegraph, and an operator to work it, at the extreme southern point, where he could report the movements of the squadron below, and retire as soon as he saw that he and his Quaker guns would no longer keep it in check.

This dilatory conduct of the allies could cause nothing less than contempt in the mind of an impartial observer. The foreigners in Paraguay, however, were not impartial. They saw that they had no hope of deliverance from a horrible death except in the advance of the allies; and when year after year went by, their number each year becoming less, though they wished the Brazilians success they could never speak of them without the greatest contempt and bitterness. It seemed to them all that Lopez could not have held out so long against such odds unless it had been the policy of the allies, not so much to destroy him, as to give him time to exterminate all his people. That was the feeling of all in my house, and I gave expression to it in one of my letters to Benitez of the 11th of August: "The allies, however, with their large squadron, always kept at a safe distance, and, in my indignation at their mode of warfare, I remember to have said to Bergees it was cowardly, it was barbarous; that if they conquered Paraguay by fair fighting it would be legitimate warfare, but if they attempted to exhaust and starve out the people by means of superior numbers and resources, it was infamous, and deserved the execration of all civilized nations." This was certainly an opinion such as no minister of a neutral nation ever before expressed without being rebuked by his government; but as Lopez was torturing people to force them to declare that I was in correspondence with Caxias, receiving vast sums of money from his government, and was intending to destroy me so that I could never deny or disprove it, I thought it excusable for me, while I might, to express my personal opinion of Brazilian policy and Brazilian generalship.

The whole charge of a conspiracy was based on the assumption that the conspirators were in treaty with Caxias; that for a long time letters had been passing to and fro between him and them, generally through the American Legation and under the official seal of the Minister. What object was to be gained by prolonging it so was never explained by the witnesses before the "solemn tribunal." From the "declarations" sent to me, and from the numerous arrests, embracing all the men, foreign-

ers and natives alike, not in the army, besides many officers who were, it would appear that it was going on for at least a year and a half in a manner so open that it must have been exposed within a month after its inception in any country, and in Paraguay within twenty-four hours. The very absurdity of the whole scheme, and the inconsistencies and contradictions contained in the "declarations" of the victims, were enough to convince any man of ordinary intelligence that the conspiracy was only a phantom. But Lopez in many things was a fool, and could not or would not see that by his elaborate efforts to make it appear there was a conspiracy he was proving that there never had been anything of the kind. When in Benitez's letter of July 23 the charge was made that Mr. Bliss and others had signed a paper engaging themselves to each other to assassinate the President, I replied that I did not believe it; that Bliss positively denied having ever seen or heard of any such paper, and said if it could be produced he would instantly leave the Legation and deliver himself up to the Paraguayan authorities. I added that, if such a document were produced, it would clearly prove that while he was in my house, and living on my hospitality, he had betrayed my confidence, so that, while I should still insist on my rights of Legation, I should take good care that he fulfilled his promise to me. But no such paper was ever produced, and no allusion was made to it in the subsequent letters.

During the whole time that I was engaged in the correspondence with Benitez, in which he was trying to make it appear, on the evidence of tortured witnesses, that there had been a conspiracy, he never professed to be in possession of any document or paper prepared or signed by any of the accused. Nothing of the kind was ever published. Had Caxias, as was alleged, been holding correspondence for a year and a half with Benigno and Venancio Lopez, with Berges and Carreras, and the letters been passing back and forth during all that time, it would seem strange that not one of the conspirators who confessed to everything should have been able to tell where to find one of the original let-

ters. Berges alone said he had given his into my care. What became of those to Benigno, Venancio, and Carreras? Why was no one of them ever produced or published? As the houses of all the conspirators were searched, it is strange that no document or letter or writing of any kind was ever found that might have been published, and thus afford plenary evidence that a plot against the government had been discovered. But as there never was anything like a plot or conspiracy entered into by any persons in Paraguay, no such document could be found, and Lopez was left to the necessity of giving, in his own justification, the testimony extorted in such a way that it would prove nothing except his own inhuman practices.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Silence and Anxiety. — Reflections of Persons in Time of Danger. — Indications that Lopez's Plans are deranged. — Luis Caminos. — Lopez retires unmolested from San Fernando. — The French Chancellor accused. — Robbery of the National Treasury. — Lopez's Object. — Letter from Captain Kirkland. — The Delay explained. — Long Letter of Accusations from Caminos. — Passports promised to all but Bliss, Masterman, and Baltazar.

MORE than two weeks had elapsed since the date of my last letter to Benitez, in which for the third time I had asked for my passports and for the means of leaving the country. I cannot say that I was hoping to have my passports sent to me. My official relations would only be closed with their receipt; and as we were quite sure that Lopez would provide us no means of going away, and as it was impossible to reach the military lines of the allies by any other conveyance than such as he might furnish, our condition would be worse than ever, and the receipt of the passports would precede but a few hours the seizure of Bliss and Masterman, and but a few days that of all the rest of us. What I had so often asked for was just what, under the circumstances, I did not wish to get. The delay in answering my last note, however, was ominous of a long letter, and we had seen that the longer the letter the more outrageous the threatened act which it was intended to justify. It was not likely that Lopez would be longer baffled or put off by my elaborate disquisitions on international law. The issue was distinctly made up. I had said Bliss and Masterman were members of my Legation, and I would not give them up. He had declared that they were not, and he would take them. There was no occasion for further argument. Lopez must either carry out his threats or recede from his position. This delay in replying to my

note of the 11th of August had become so intolerable that Bliss and Masterman both said that, if Lopez were resolved to take them and kill them, they hoped he would do so at once, and put an end to the killing anxiety which they, as well as all the rest of us, were in. His most refined tortures, they imagined, must soon end, whereas the almost certainty that they were to be taken and subjected to them was wearing on their minds and weakening their bodies, and they longed to know the worst, dreadful as that worst was likely to be. Hope with them had died out, and if it had not entirely with me, it was because I had a premonition—I cannot call it a belief, nor a reason for a belief—that before Lopez should be ready to seize me a gunboat would come to my rescue.

It may be supposed that, situated as we were, with so slight a prospect of escape, and the conviction that we were all to be subjected to a horrible and infamous death, we should reflect whether we had in any way, through pride or folly or from any fault, brought ourselves into our present condition.

The thoughts that pass through the minds of persons under circumstances analogous to ours have been often related, as it has been no very rare thing for people to be saved from dangers after reason forbade them hope. The first reflection of persons so situated is one of self-examination. They ask themselves if they have brought the impending evils on themselves through any fault or folly of their own. We often thought of the different sensations that our friends must have experienced when undergoing the torture and when brought to face their executioners, and of how different it would all seem to a man of the noble character, the clear conscience, of Rodriguez, from what it would to others who by their own pride or ambition or partisan violence had courted their dreadful fate. For my own part, I could not see how any fault of mine had brought me into my critical situation. I could not accuse myself of being in the wrong in refusing to become the flatterer of Lopez, or in declining to defend and justify his atrocities. I had forced my way into his territory, where he held me

within his power, when to have turned back would have justly subjected me to the censure of my own government; and I had remained there while the dangers were thickening around me, at a time when I supposed I might have got away, solely that I might be of service to others. To save life I had risked my own, and not only my own, but the lives of those who were nearer and dearer to me than all the others for whose benefit I had remained. I had had a "divided duty," and had I not possibly erred in exposing those having the stronger claims upon me to the fate that now seemed almost inevitable? And yet I could not think it my duty, when so many others believed and felt that their safety, perhaps their lives, depended on my remaining, to turn my back upon them and leave them from motives purely personal and selfish. I therefore had nothing, so far as my official acts and my conduct towards the unhappy wretches around me who had been seized were concerned, to reproach myself for. Yet I had seen so much of the Jesuitical cunning and audacious mendacity of Lopez that I feared he would contrive a plausible story of conspiracy and revolution that should impose on the world the belief that I had confessed to acts dishonorable and infamous.

People who have never been put to the test find it hard to understand why persons who have been condemned to death are so anxious and earnest to have their names vindicated from unjust aspersions. It matters not whether the victim is a dethroned king like Charles I., or a fallen minister like Wolsey, a patriotic statesman like Algernon Sidney, a convicted highwayman, or a condemned murderer, he will to the last cry out against untrue and unjust accusations. Though admitting himself guilty of crimes which he ought to expiate by death, yet if accused of others of which he is innocent his last breath will be spent in protesting the fact. In my younger days I had wasted a good deal of time in writing a novel. It must have been a very poor novel, for few bought it and fewer read it. The hero of it is represented as having risked his life to defeat the capture of a shipload of fugitive slaves. He succeeds in this, though the fugitives, seeing him among the pursuers, be-

lieve that it is he who has betrayed them and given notice of their flight. He hears at a distance their curses and maledictions upon him at the moment he disables the pursuing vessel, knowing all the while his life will be the forfeit, and that both those whom he saved and those whom he balked will unite in rendering his name and memory infamous. I had never thought it would be my lot to perform an act in any degree like that, and yet it seemed that, without foreseeing it, I had put myself in a position to become the hero of my own novel. I alluded to this circumstance on one or two occasions to my companions, while we were yet together in the Legation, and, as will be seen hereafter, one of them while in prison repeated it in his confessions.

The delay in answering my last letters, that for a time we regarded as a bad omen, we afterwards regarded as a favorable indication. The very long hesitation of Lopez in carrying his threats into effect could only have been caused by something which had deranged his plans and made him pause.

Instead of the very long letter which I had been expecting, I was disappointed by receiving a very brief note signed by Luis Caminos, and informing me that he had been called to take the place of Benitez as Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs.

This Caminos had been Military Secretary of Lopez from the beginning of the war, and was one of those who seemed to participate the spirit of his master and to feel a positive delight in executing his cruel orders. Of those who had been in authority in and about Asuncion and Luque at the time the "conspirators" were arrested, the Chief of Police, Sanabria, only was now left. He was to follow them and share their fate soon after the arrival of Caminos. In Resquin's Diary his name appears in a list with forty-six other accused traitors who were executed on the 27th of September, only fifteen days after my departure from Paraguay. In this list is also to be found the names of Benitez and Carreras.

Caminos in this first letter requested me to send him a list

of the persons for whom I demanded passports. I replied on the same day, giving the list, including in it, of course, the names of Bliss and Masterman. The next day I learned that Lopez was abandoning San Fernando with his army, and that he was fortifying himself at Angostura and Villeta. It appeared from this that the Brazilians, with their usual torpidity and imbecility, had allowed him to repeat the part he had played at Itapiru and Paso Pucu ; and that, while they were engaged in making great preparations to attack him, he had withdrawn his army, his guns, and in fact all his force, to some point higher up the river, where he had already thrown up the necessary earthworks. It seemed probable, that, as he was being driven nearer Asuncion, he found my remaining there more inconvenient to the execution of his plans, and perhaps he had desired this list as preliminary to some extraordinary action. Yet it might be that a gunboat had arrived ; and this hope, which was indeed very faint, led us to regard the request of Caminos for a list as a favorable sign.

On the 31st the French and Italian Consuls came in from Luque and called at my house. They told me that the Chancellor of the French Consulate, M. Libertat, was accused of being a fellow-conspirator with Bliss and others, and of having signed the same document in which they had all agreed to assassinate Lopez, if necessary, to effect their plans. It was from them I learned that there was no official in what was then called the capital, Luque, above the grade of Chief of Police, whose rank was that of captain in the army, — no civil officer whatever. The old Vice-President, Sanchez, had gone below ; so had Benitez, and Ortellado, and the priest Bogado, all of whom had so eloquently denounced the conspiracy at the grand celebration in Luque, soon after the arrest at that place of nearly all the civil officers of the government.

For the first time I now heard that the national treasury had been robbed ; that on moving the treasure supposed to be in it from the old to the new capital a great deficit had been discovered, and that all who had had anything to do with that department were in disgrace and were prisoners. How under

such a government as that of Lopez the treasury could have been robbed, it was impossible for me to conceive; nor did I then see the object of publishing to the world such a statement. But I was soon to learn that the opening and searching of the houses of all the people in the capital who it was supposed had money or jewels to any considerable amount was but a part of a device of a pretended robbery of the treasury, and that the owners of these houses had all been accused of being engaged in that great robbery, and the money which they had upon their premises was declared to be a part of the plunder which they had stolen. Of course, being accused of a crime like that, it was necessary for Lopez to put them all to death, lest if any of them should escape they would deny that they ever had anything in their possession which was not legally and rightfully theirs; and the foreigners, should they survive, would appeal to their governments to compel Lopez to make restitution. It was a necessity of the first crime, if he would succeed in it, that he should practise on the principle of the footpad and the midnight assassin, that "dead men tell no tales."

On the 2d of September, while we were yet debating in regard to the object of Lopez in asking for the list of the *personnel* of the Legation, the same soldier who had brought us so many letters of portentous import appeared with one of a different character. It was from Commander Kirkland. The Wasp had returned; and the mystery of the long delay in answering my last letters was explained. She had reached the lower fortifications of Lopez, at the mouth of the Tebicuari, and was then waiting for permission to proceed higher up the river. Kirkland wrote that he had come to take me and my family away, if we wished to leave. He complained that he had been treated with great discourtesy by Lopez, who had not replied to his letters, and that he knew not where I was or where Lopez was, or where it would be convenient for me to embark. I immediately answered this letter, telling him that I would be ready to embark at any moment; and as it would suit my convenience to do

so at Asuncion, he would oblige me by coming up to that point.

This letter I sent to Caminos to be forwarded, at the same time sending him a note advising him of the arrival of the Wasp and of its object in coming there. I also gave him the purport of my letter to Captain Kirkland.

For two days I heard nothing either from Kirkland or Caminos, but late in the evening of the 4th I received another letter from the former, stating that he was lying two leagues below Villeta, but that he could not learn where I was, or where the President was, as he had not answered his letters, though he had written him three times officially, and that his conduct in treating him thus was very disrespectful and discourteous, and requesting me to so represent to his Excellency. It was clear from this that Captain Kirkland knew nothing of our situation, or of what had transpired during the few preceding months in Paraguay; and we all felt that our troubles were not yet over, and that Lopez was hesitating whether to detain us or to let us go. On the morning of the 5th, however, I received a very long letter from Caminos, much longer than any that I had ever received from the unfortunate Benitez. It consisted of forty pages of closely written official paper. This letter had evidently been prepared before the arrival of the Wasp, and while it was the intention of Lopez to treat us as he had Carreras, Rodriguez, and Pereira. It was written in the same style and in similar phraseology to those signed by Benitez. Who had written all these letters was a matter of frequent discussion with us. They showed a Jesuitical cunning worthy of Lopez, but they displayed a talent for writing and an intellectual capacity so far above his mental powers that we ascribed their composition to either the old Vice-President Sanchez or Padre Maiz. Benitez was already in disgrace, and could not have written this last one; and it was therefore clear that, though he had signed the preceding, an abler pen than his had written them.

Caminos had no pretensions to be anything but a head spy of Lopez, and from his alacrity in carrying into effect his

cruel orders still appeared to retain the confidence of his master. Next to Lopez himself and Madam Lynch, he had probably been more successful in obtaining the hatred of all, foreigners and natives alike, than anybody else in Paraguay. His character was so atrocious and detestable that it must have been apparent to Lopez, that, whatever might be his own fate, Caminos would share it; that he would never dare to betray him or desert to the allies, for no service of that kind could save him from the thousand daggers which had been whetted alike for him and for Lopez. This letter concluded with another recapitulation of my offences in still retaining Bliss and Masterman, and asserting and reasserting that they were not, and never had been, members of my Legation; that they were criminals and conspirators, and the government had a perfect right to take them and treat them as it did other criminals. To my proposition, that, if Bliss and Masterman could be useful to the government in ascertaining the truth in regard to the conspiracy, they were perfectly willing to give their testimony if a notary would come to my house to receive it, the reply was that it would be beneath the dignity of the government to do so, and that it would not hesitate in making them appear before the tribunal, for the reason that they were merely refugees in my house. To my statement that I was bound to regard Bliss and Masterman innocent until I had some proof of their guilt, and that as I knew the statements of the declarations in regard to me were all false I had a right to presume that those made against Bliss and Masterman were equally so, the reply was substantially that no further evidence of their guilt would be given me; that I was bound to take the word of the government, and the depositions of witnesses which they had furnished me, in regard to their guilt, as sufficient proof, and therefore no attention would be paid to the maxim of the common law to which I had referred, that every person was to be considered innocent until proved guilty. In this letter Caminos inadvertently showed that the letter had not been written by himself, but had been prepared by the same hand that had

dictated the others, as he alludes to the fact that I did not credit *his* words. As this was the first letter I received from him, I never could have expressed or shown any doubts in regard to his official statements; and this charge against me proved conclusively that it had been written before the Wasp had arrived, and when the writer supposed Benitez was to sign it. This was also evident from the following words, which elsewhere appeared in the letter: "I cannot, however, conceive how your own conveniencé is incompatible with the expulsion of these individuals, whereas their stay there must give rise to very unsatisfactory apprehensions, from the fact of their being implicated in a vast conspiracy, the depositions in regard to which affect even your Excellency." Of course nothing of this kind would have been written had Lopez suspected the question was to be solved by my going away on a vessel that had already arrived.

The letter proceeded to adduce the further proofs of my own complicity with Bliss, Masterman, and the other conspirators. The first witness whose testimony was given was Benigno Lopez, the President's younger brother. This testimony was principally made up of general conversations which Benigno averred he had held with me from time to time for two or three years before; in fact, that he had been in the most intimate relations with me, and had held confidential conversations with me, at a time when I had not even a speaking acquaintance with him. That this declaration might carry conviction to persons beyond the limits of Paraguay, the same particularity, the same fulness of detail, which appeared in the declaration of Berges in regard to his treasonable papers and his various conversations with me, were observed. Of course this device was resorted to to convince others, as the setting forth of transactions and conversations of a purely imaginary character could have no other effect upon me than to show the audacious mendacity of Lopez and his despicable character, and it is evident that it had been prepared with the view that I should not survive to expose it; and though the Wasp was in the river when the despatch was

sent to me, I am fully persuaded that even to that time Lopez was determined that I should not escape from his power. Benigno then continues, repeating many conversations in which he said the plan of the conspiracy was talked over, and I had informed him of my intimate relations with Caxias, that I was having everything arranged so that, when the blow should be struck, the revolution might be successful. He states that, in order to induce me to engage in the conspiracy and to persist in rendering all the assistance in my power, he himself had advanced me a large sum of money from his own fortune, and I was also receiving money to a large extent from the Marques de Caxias ; so that, on the whole, it would seem that I was in a good way to become a millionaire. Besides this I had assured him that if the revolution should succeed, and the new government be installed, I would instantly recognize it as the government of Paraguay, as I had already advised the State Department at Washington that such would be the case, and I was sure it would support me in that proceeding, and accept of the revolutionary government as the legal authority of the country. In putting this statement in the declaration of his unhappy brother, Lopez did not exhibit his usual cunning ; for though at the time it was written he did not intend that I should ever live to disprove it, yet, if it were published, its falsity would be proved by the fact that no such despatches had ever been received at Washington.

Besides the testimony of Benigno, that of Venancio Lopez, the other brother, was brought forward. He also is made to report a great many conversations that he had with me about the revolution. These conversations were related very minutely, and showed the same Jesuitical cunning as in the other cases. Venancio was also made to say that he had been in correspondence with Caxias, and that I had forwarded his letters and received the answers thereto ; that, in fact, I had been the principal promoter of the revolution, and that it had been through my proposition that he had been seduced into the wicked plot. Otherwise than this, his deposition contained little except reports of conversations, which were

given in detail, clearly that they might on the face bear the evidence of reality. The deposition of another witness whose name had not before appeared in the correspondence was now produced. This was José Vicente Urdapilleta, who had been from an early period of the war the nominal chief-justice of Paraguay. His testimony contained nothing of importance except what had been stated by the others, and evidently was intended to appear beyond the limits of Paraguay as cumulative proof that a conspiracy had really existed. Besides these Paraguayans, poor Rodriguez and Carreras were brought forward again, and the testimony as given by Rodriguez, if he ever gave it, must have been given with a grim smile, even though it were forced from him while he was in the *cepo uruguayana*, and every word extorted with a blow; for in this he is made to say that the women-servants of Benigno had brought to my house in big baskets, on their heads, Paraguayan currency to the amount of one hundred and forty thousand dollars, and that of this sum I had offered him and Carreras forty thousand dollars, but that they had declined to accept it, having no way of investing it to advantage. Had the two servants, as he testifies, brought one hundred and forty thousand dollars of Paraguayan money, in such notes as were circulated there, in baskets on their heads, they must have had loads as large as a moderate sized hay-stack; and as no Paraguayan at that time could carry a bundle two squares without being overhauled by the police and the contents of the bundle investigated, the ridiculous absurdity of the story must have amused Rodriguez, no matter how miserable might have been his situation. The story appears more ridiculous from the fact that neither Rodriguez nor myself, nor anybody else, considered that the Paraguayan paper money, if the war should end, as we then supposed it would, with the destruction of Lopez, would be worth anything more than its value for waste paper. I certainly considered it would be of as little value as was the Confederate money at that time in Virginia or Alabama.

In fact, I do not suppose that Rodriguez ever made any such

statement, for he had certainly been executed some weeks before that time. The testimony in this letter concludes with another statement from Carreras, in which he says that not only was I the chief of the conspirators, but that I "approved the plan of the revolution, and took part in it to overturn the Marshal by hunger or by the dagger." With a cunning stroke, which was evidently intended to enlist again in the cause of Lopez the eminent counsel who had been employed in Washington at the time of the convention in 1859, another declaration is given from Berges to the effect that I had said that I ought to receive, in compensation for my services in the revolution, as much as had the secretary of Commissioner Bowlin, or the counsel for Paraguay, Mr. Carlisle. This much of the letter bears internal evidence of having been written before the news of the arrival of the Wasp had been received, and with the intention of giving it a different ending from that which was really given. At the time it was in preparation those Englishmen and others who were nearest Lopez and knew most of his thoughts and intentions, and who have since escaped from his power, were daily expecting, as they have since informed me, to hear that the Legation had been violated and all of us made prisoners, and they were at that very time expecting every hour to hear that I had been brought a prisoner to head-quarters.

The plan of Lopez, so far as those around him could infer, and as is shown by the character of his last letter, was to have concluded it with the declaration, that, as I had refused to deliver up Bliss and Masterman, they would be taken by force; that communications were still passing between me and the enemy; and, as the safety of the Republic would not permit it any longer, that Bliss and Masterman must appear before the tribunal and give in their evidence.

Of course they would have been made to declare whatever Lopez wished to extort from them; if they would not do it without torture they must do it with; and if they should die under the *proceso* before giving it the declarations would have been produced all the same as having been made by them, and

would have been to the effect, that to the last moment of their stay in my house I was still holding frequent correspondence with the enemy. Another letter from Caminos would have followed soon after, containing their declarations, and would have concluded by saying that a person so hostile to the Republic and so dangerous to its safety would no longer be permitted to remain at liberty. My arrest would have followed immediately, and, having committed that outrage on the American government, Lopez knew that the only way to ward off its natural consequences was to take such measures as would prevent any version of his acts except his own from ever seeing the light. To have carried out this plan would require the destruction of a great many other people; it would certainly involve that of all the foreigners who were immediately around Lopez; and Drs. Stewart and Skinner, Colonel Thompson, Burrell, Valpy, and the other English, considered that, if Lopez once laid his hands upon me, he would immediately put them out of the world, lest through chance of war some of them might escape to tell the tragic story. Of the presence of Parodi, who was in an extremely feeble state of health, he might soon have been relieved by a natural death; while of myself it was his plan to have an infamous declaration made, admitting everything that had been asserted by the others, and force me to sign it; and if I refused, my fingers would have been jammed to pieces, as had been those of poor Carreras, and then I might have been exposed, as was the French Consul, M. Cochelet, to be taken off by a shot from the enemy, or some other *accident* must have been improvised. But the probability is that my confession would have contained a statement, that, having been detected in an infamous plan to overthrow the government and to assassinate the great and good Lopez, who had treated me with the highest indulgence and consideration from my first entrance into Paraguay till that moment, my mortification and remorse were such that I could not longer endure life, and therefore I had resolved to commit suicide. Of course the parties assisting me in the self-murder would immediately after have been ex-

ecuted on some other charge, and Lopez and Madam Lynch would have shed crocodile tears over the unfortunate accident, or over my still more unfortunate resolution which had driven me to suicide at a time when, notwithstanding my crime, Lopez was abounding in charity and kindness towards me, and, great as had been my offence, would have done nothing against a representative of the United States.

But the arrival of the Wasp just at this time, when the letter was already written announcing his determination to take the last but one fatal step, deranged his plans. The whole army knew that he was meditating extreme measures against me; they knew too that nothing had yet been done; that I was still at liberty when Lopez received the unwelcome news that the stars and stripes were to be seen above the blockading squadron; and in the chances of battles which would occur it was impossible but that many should escape who would report these facts, so that if he committed any violence against me it would be known by the government of the United States. It was then too late for the planned accident to happen to me, or a confession to be published, for it would be evident to every one that all had been done after the arrival of the Wasp in Paraguayan waters; and Lopez knew that the protest that the safety of the Republic required my arrest would never be admitted by the United States government when it had a steamer there ready to take me away. The letter, therefore, which had been prepared while Caminos was yet at head-quarters, and brought by him when he came to Asuncion to superintend the seizure of the inmates of my house, was returned to Lopez to be altered so as to meet the changed circumstances. Instead of closing with the announcement that Bliss and Masterman were to be taken by force, it concluded, after a recital of my offences as before written, in these words: "Notwithstanding all this, and notwithstanding the circumstances which your Excellency is aware would have justified my government in breaking off some time ago all intercourse with a Minister who, in the critical circumstances through which the people of Paraguay are

passing, figures in the testimony of the infamous traitors to the country as being one of themselves, my government, anxious to give the most unequivocal proofs of its high consideration and regard towards the government of the great American Republic, has done no such thing, and only confines itself to sending your Excellency the passports which you have repeatedly solicited in order to leave the country ; and I am happy to inform you that the Wasp, which has come to take your Excellency away, is waiting for you in Villeta, and that a steamer will be in readiness in the port of Asuncion for you and your suite." To this was added, that among the individuals whose names were in the passports that would be sent me those of Bliss and Masterman would not be included ; that "they must remain to answer the charges hanging over them before the local courts of justice." Neither could Baltazar, the servant of Carreras, be permitted to leave the country, and therefore his name was not included in the passports.

CHAPTER XXIX.

The Situation of the Wasp. — The Wild Beast in his Cage. — Anxious Conferences. — Unanimity in the Plan of Escape. — Money, etc., left in the Legation. — Some of the English withdraw theirs. — Dispute with Caminos in regard to Property left in the Legation. — Not allowed to take any Property but my own aboard the Paraguayan Steamer. — Further Delays. — Indications that Lopez still intends to keep us Prisoners. — Danger in taking away Masterman's Property. — My Baggage opened and examined. — A Fruitless Search. — Another Letter from Kirkland. — Mrs. Leite Pereira. — Antonio Jara. — The Legation Premises left in Charge of the Italian Consul. — Basilio. — Parting Interview. — Departure from the Legation. — Arrest of Bliss, Masterman, and Baltazar. — Fears of the Consuls for their own Safety. — Mr. Hunter and the Money of the English. — The Paraguayan Steamer. — The Wasp.

THE letter of Caminos we all regarded as little better than the death-warrant of Bliss and Masterman. The Wasp would not be allowed to come near enough for me to communicate with her commander before embarking, nor could I send him a letter containing an account of the recent proceedings and of our dangerous situation without its passing through the hands of Lopez, and being probably read by him. The little fort that had frightened away the two invulnerable iron-clads of the Brazilians was between us and the Wasp, and she could not get above it without the permission of Lopez. Had she come to Asuncion, and could I have got on board with my wife and child, he would hardly have dared to offer violence to Bliss and Masterman, or to attempt to detain them. Had he done so, he probably foresaw that I should have demanded their instant release, and if refused should have advised Commander Kirkland to knock down his new palace. Whether the latter would have taken my advice I have since had reason to doubt. The Wasp could have done it, however, without exposing herself to any danger. Lopez had

no steamers left except three or four very small and rickety affairs, either of which the Wasp could have easily destroyed by a single shot. But the Wasp could not have returned to Buenos Aires so long as the batteries of Lopez commanded the river between Asuncion and the Tebicuari. There was no obstacle in the way above Asuncion, and she could have gone to Matto Grosso without difficulty, as the wood necessary for fuel could have been readily obtained on the banks of the river, and the steamer would have been welcomed as a deliverer by the people of Matto Grosso, who would have cheerfully supplied all the provisions needed before the river might be cleared and she could return to Buenos Aires. Lopez had doubtless foreseen that we should have him at a disadvantage if the Wasp were to come to Asuncion, and that the outrage on the Legation which he was still resolved upon would be resented then and there. Besides this, if the Wasp were to proceed to Matto Grosso she would carry the news that there were no men in Paraguay between Asuncion and the northern frontier, and Lopez had no troops that he could send to defend that region, as a small force could easily take and hold the entire country and cut off all supplies for the army. His refusal, therefore, to permit the gunboat to come to Asuncion did not surprise us, but it was a death-blow to the recently revived hopes of Bliss and Masterman that they would be rescued.

We now all consulted most anxiously together, and considered what it was best to do. All concurred in the opinion that, situated as we were, it would be worse than folly to delay to argue the question of their status in the Legation, or protest against their detention. They knew that without some display of power which I could not command they would never be permitted to leave the country, and it was yet far from certain that I would get away. It was clear that the plans of Lopez had been disconcerted; but we all knew how reluctant he was to allow anybody whom he had devoted to destruction to escape from his power, and that even with a gunboat near the greatest circumspection must be observed lest he should, notwithstanding that, carry into effect his previous resolution

towards me. My own situation may be properly compared to that of a man with two companions within the den of a lion, confronting the angry beast, which is standing with flashing eye, gnashing his teeth and lashing his body with his tail, his eye fixed upon the central person, but held in check, and not venturing to spring so long as the eye of the man is fixed steadily upon him. To advance upon the beast is to invite inevitable destruction to all; the only possible way of escape is to withdraw gradually and cautiously, keeping the eye always fixed, and watchful of every motion of the enraged animal. And if by this means the entrance to the cage may be passed and the bar replaced, perhaps relief may come to the others before they are all torn in pieces. This was my situation; I saw that I must watch with the greatest circumspection every movement that was made from that hour. I believed that on the least pretence Lopez would detain me, and as I knew that his *civil processes*, as he called them, were very long, and it was his custom to prolong the lives of those whom he had resolved to murder, I thought it possible that if I should give the alarm in regard to Bliss and Masterman, an American squadron might come to their relief before he had consummated his plans in respect to them. They fully concurred in this opinion. They felt that their only possible chance of escape consisted in my getting away; for if I were detained, of course there would be no hope for them. They were even more anxious than I lest, inadvertently, I should take some step that might further enrage Lopez, or give him some advantage or pretext for detaining me.

I immediately answered Caminos's letter, stating that I was prepared to leave immediately, and should accept of his offer to depart on the following morning on the Paraguayan steamer to Villeta. I stated that I had a considerable amount of money which had been left in my charge by various parties, mostly Englishmen in the employ of the government, who had requested me, in case I should leave Paraguay, to take it with me and deposit it to their credit in Buenos Aires. This

money was nearly all in silver dollars, and consequently both heavy and cumbersome. I could not take it away without the knowledge and assistance of Lopez, and there was a law of the country that no specie should be exported without the payment of ten per cent export tax. If I attempted to take that money away in the boxes I knew that it would be stopped, and probably confiscated, and that I should be accused of attempting to take away the money of other people illegally. And it would be as easy to charge that these boxes were all full of doubloons, which I received from the conspirators, as it had been to make a thousand other accusations which had their origin in the mind of Lopez. Nevertheless, as the owners of this money were mostly the employees of the government, whose services were of great importance to Lopez, and who up to that time were supposed to be in his favor, perhaps to oblige them he would allow me to take the money away. I therefore advised Caminos of the fact that it was in my house, and that the owners had expressed a wish that I should take it out of the country, which I would gladly do, provided no objection were made by the government.

In answer to this Caminos requested a list of the names of persons who had money in my possession, and of the amount. As it had been brought at various times, and I had given no receipt for it, and had kept no list or memorandum of it, I could answer his questions only so far as to give the names upon the different bags and boxes, and in those cases where the amount was not marked to give the weight. With two exceptions all were English. But I received no such permission to take away their money as I had expected, but got letters from most of them requesting me to deliver whatever they had in my possession to the bearers of their letters. The money was accordingly delivered in most cases, though not in all I had instanced. From Dr. Skinner I received a letter requesting me to take away his money for him. From Dr. Stewart I heard nothing, though I advised the government that I had a large box belonging to him, containing, as I sup-

posed, a considerable quantity of silver. The money which I particularly requested to take away with me belonged to foreigners, and it had been given into my charge with the request that I would send it out of the country at the first opportunity. There were besides this in my house a great many trunks and boxes, and several iron safes, the contents of which were unknown to me. These I had not even been requested to take away, and were I to do it, and Lopez should find that it had slipped through his fingers, he would say that it had been done through the connivance of the owners and at their request, and it would be fatal to them. I did not then know that many of them had been already killed. There was one trunk in particular which I was greatly tempted to carry with me; it belonged to Doña Carmelita Cordal, of whom I have before spoken. She had a considerable amount of silver money and a large quantity of jewelry, which, before the time of the evacuation, she had sent to my house. After the evacuation she had sent me the key to the box containing these treasures, requesting me to send her certain things which it contained. I therefore was well informed of the contents of this chest, and I was sorely tempted to try to smuggle away the box of jewelry. I am afraid I should have violated the laws of Paraguay by doing so, had I not feared that she would be tortured and executed for my offence in saving her money from the grasp of Lopez and Madam Lynch. I anticipated that as soon as I left the house it would be immediately searched by the myrmidons of Lopez; and should it be discovered that her valuables were not there, she would be taken before the tribunal and questioned in regard to the large amount of diamonds and valuable jewels which she was known to possess. She could then only plead that I had taken them away without her authority. That, however, though perfectly true, I knew would never suffice with a person so greedy as Madam Lynch. She would be accused of having sent them away by me, and I did not doubt that she would be tortured until she could stand it no longer and then executed. I fully believed she would gladly have given

seventy per cent of her treasures to secure the balance, yet I feared that by saving the whole I should be doing an act that would be fatal to her.

I saw that the possession of property belonging to other people was liable to cause me great difficulty. Caminos had many questions to ask about it, and the notes passed between us at the rate of two a day, and I found I could do nothing or propose nothing that was acceptable. But I disclaimed all responsibility for the property in my possession, and said I had taken it at the risk of the owners, and told them that I should not be responsible for it in any way, and that, as I had received my passports, I wanted the means of leaving the country. Then, as every pretext for further delay in regard to the property of foreigners in my possession had been exhausted, I received another note, in which I was requested to delay my departure until the Paraguayans who had deposited their valuables in my house could have time to come and take them away. To this I replied that I would not wait a single hour for that purpose; the government had known for several days that I was intending to leave, and the Wasp was then waiting for me, and it could have advised these Paraguayans long before of that fact, and that they should come and remove their property. Many of the foreigners having property with me had come and taken it away, but not a single Paraguayan had done so, and if I acceded to a request of that kind it might be weeks, or months even, before I should get away. I therefore should listen to no such proposition. I had been told a week before that a steamer would be at my disposal to take me as soon as I was ready, and I had been ready ever since. The deposits I had belonging to Paraguayans, and which I should be obliged to leave there, could still be delivered to the owners whenever they wished, as I should leave the keys of my house with a responsible party, and whenever the owners chose to come for their property they could obtain it as well as if I were there. I had already sent aboard the most of my luggage, supposing that we were to follow it immediately, and we were left there in the house

without many things absolutely necessary for health and convenience.

With my own baggage I had sent that of Mr. Bliss and Mr. Masterman, and that of the latter gave me more alarm than anything else. All the property which he had in the world was contained in the trunks and boxes which I had sent aboard the Paraguayan steamer. I was very much averse to taking this property away, for I could see that Lopez was still hesitating whether he would let me go or not, and was watching for any pretext to detain me, and I feared that at the last moment I should be met with the accusation of attempting to carry away the property of criminals and conspirators, and it would be alleged that the trunks of Masterman contained the proofs of the conspiracy and of the part which he and I and others had taken in it. On some pretext of this kind I feared that they would be seized, and that I also should be detained until further investigation could be had. Such detention I knew would be perpetual, and it was with the greatest reluctance that I consented to incur the risk of carrying this property away. But the appeal of Masterman was so piteous, and his desire that what he had might be saved, if not to himself, to his family, was so great that I finally promised to take it all away. But that I might have an answer ready, if it should be seized, he wrote me a letter making a free gift of it to me as a compensation for the kindness and hospitality I had shown him from the time I had rescued him from prison until that date. With this document, if the property were seized, I could show that I had nothing which belonged to Mr. Masterman; that everything which I had that was once his had been made over to me formally as my property. In one of these chests of Masterman was a bag containing one hundred silver dollars, as he told me, which he wished, whether he survived or not, to be forwarded to that friend of his, a Paraguayan, who had supplied him with food during his long imprisonment.

My trunks and boxes were on board the Paraguayan steamer for some four or five days before I was allowed to follow them,

and in that time they were opened and searched, though evidently great pains were taken to prevent it from being discovered. Notwithstanding all precautions, a single circumstance disclosed the fact that they had been opened. It could hardly be that Lopez, if he ever had believed in a conspiracy, was not convinced before this time that nothing of the kind had ever existed. But if he still believed in it, and thought to find some of the fabulous wealth that his witnesses before the solemn tribunal had testified that I had received from Caxias, Benigno, and others, he must have been greatly disappointed in finding none of the many thousand doubloons in my baggage. Masterman had marked this bag with the name of the person for whom it was intended. He told me that, if I should ever get out of the country and he should not, he wished that money to be sent to this person, provided I should ever have the opportunity. But from the fact that when the chest reached Buenos Aires, he, upon opening it after his escape, found that money missing, I am led to infer that everything which I had sent on board the steamer had been, during the four or five days' delay that intervened between the time of its being sent aboard and my departure, opened to ascertain whether I was taking away anything of a contraband nature. I had taken it for granted that this would be done, but as I had nothing in my possession but my own manuscripts which I was not perfectly willing that Lopez himself should see, I did not care how closely this part of my baggage was examined. My manuscripts, about which I had been so anxious, I kept back, and had them in my other trunks, which did not leave the house till I was about to go on board the steamer. But these trunks were so very light that a Paraguayan woman could easily have carried either one of them on her head from the Legation to the bank of the river, and from this circumstance, which was doubtless instantly reported to Lopez by telegraph, it must have been evident to him that, however full they might be of treason, they did not contain any considerable amount of silver or gold. Most of the English took away their money; but as several did not do so I advised Caminos of the fact,

and stated that as they had not removed it, but had previously requested me to take it in case I should go myself, I proposed to do so. To this I never got any written answer; but the Italian Consul, who came in the day before I left, told me that Caminos had informed him that the government would not permit me to take away any money from my house. I could not get it out of the country without having, not only the permission of Lopez, but his assistance in getting it aboard the steamer, and therefore I must either abandon it or remain there to keep guard over it.

Though I repeatedly reminded Caminos that we were ready to depart; that, our baggage having gone aboard, we were very uncomfortable in the house, and that I had no further business to detain me, yet I received no notice that the Paraguayan steamer was prepared to take me on board. I now observed that the guards about my house were very much strengthened, and as the darkness shut down on the evening of the 8th I saw that soldiers were posted around the house at a distance of about two rods from each other. The object of this I could not understand at the time, but regarded it as an indication that something of a very disagreeable nature would soon occur. But a letter which I received from Commander Kirkland the next day, September 8, explained why this extra precaution had been taken. The letter was dated near Lambaré, a point less than two leagues from the capital, and it appeared as though Lopez was afraid that an attempt would be made to rescue us all by force. However, the *Wasp* did not come any higher up, and remained only a few hours at that place, when she returned and anchored opposite Villeta. She had only moved higher up in order to be out of the way of the shots from the Brazilian vessels that were bombarding the Paraguayan fortifications at Villeta. Supposing that the *Wasp* was still at Lambaré, my poor wife, who by this time was getting more alarmed than ever, urged that we should start on horseback and leave everything behind us. But she little knew the difficulties which we should have to encounter. I knew that if Lopez was determined to

detain us we should not escape in any such way, and that if he did allow us to leave he would furnish us with such facilities that he could parade his magnanimity as a signal proof of his respect for the laws of nations, and his consideration especially for the United States.

The presence of the wife of Leite Pereira in our house now caused us a great deal of embarrassment. She could not leave Paraguay, and she feared to attempt to return to her house in the country lest she might be immediately arrested and sent to prison. I therefore was compelled to intercede for her and obtain her a passport for the interior, which, after much vexation and delay, I succeeded in doing, where I sent her on horseback, accompanied by my ever-faithful Basilio. Her hopelessness and misery at leaving us were very affecting. The anxious days and nights which she had passed with us since the arrest of her husband completely prostrated her, and she could see nothing but greater suffering and misery before her. Her departure was a relief to us, for her constant lamentations and her distraught appearance only added to the afflictions and misery of others, and were fast reducing them to a state of despair as dark as her own.

On the 8th I received a letter from another person, which led me to infer that Lopez, having failed to find any pretext for detaining me from the correspondence which we had had in regard to the property left in my charge by other people, was trying to make some other accusation or excuse for keeping me in the country. It was a letter from the Chief of Police, enclosing another from the same Captain Antonio Jara who had before claimed to be the owner of the premises we occupied, and of Basilio, who had been a slave of the former owner of the house, Don Luis Jara. In this letter he inquired whether I was going to pay him for the rent of the house, and also if I proposed to take away his slave Basilio. I made no reply to this, though I sent a note to the Chief of Police, telling him that I had received a note from a person, who said his name was Captain Antonio Jara; that the former owner of the house, Don Luis, had told me to take

possession of it, to occupy it as long as I desired, and to make use of whatever I found in it, and that he should ask neither rent nor compensation of any kind ; that since that he had died and had left no legal or legitimate heirs, as he had never been married ; therefore I did not know why he should molest me by sending me letters from such a person, whose rights to the property I had no knowledge of and could not recognize.

Late in the same day I received another letter from Caminos of a more amiable tone, and, comparing dates, I found that Lopez had had, since the preceding letter, an interview with Commander Kirkland, and after that interview had concluded to let me go. Having made up his mind to this, it would appear that he had concluded to put no further obstacles in my way, or do anything more to aggravate me or give ground of complaint against him to my government. He had tried very hard to embarrass me in regard to the archives of the Legation. I did not propose to take them all away, as many of the Patent Office Reports, the Agricultural Reports, and other rubbish which our Congress for inexplicable reasons has been in the habit of publishing and sending abroad, I did not consider worth the freight ; and besides, if I attempted to carry them away, from their great weight Lopez would suspect that the box containing them held money, and would cause me further delay until he could contrive to have the box opened, the contents examined, and then closed again, so as not to show that they had been tampered with. The records of the Legation, the official correspondence, and everything of any considerable value I took ; but in regard to the other things I simply said I should leave them in my house, and also the property of those Paraguayans and others who had left anything with me, and which I could not carry away, and that the government could take its own course in regard to them after I was gone. I could do nothing further. This plan being objected to by Caminos, I then requested the Italian Consul, Lorenzo Chapperon, to accept the charge of them and to receive the keys of my house when I should leave it. He engaged to do so, and on the 9th he and the French Consul

came up and remained until my departure on the following day. I had hoped to leave on that day, as the indications were that our detention would not long be continued. We had nothing in the house to eat, and I complained to Caminos of our condition there; that, as our baggage was aboard the Paraguayan steamer, and we had been notified that she was soon to depart, we had obtained no provisions from beyond the city limits, and were exposed to great inconvenience and should soon be in absolute want. Another excuse for a longer detention which was sent on the 9th was, that it had not been convenient to put my remaining trunks on board the boat because it was raining. Early the next morning I therefore sent a very urgent note, telling Caminos that we were all ready, and I should expect and hope to be on board the steamer at an early hour and on my way down the river. I soon received an answer, telling me that the little steamer Rio Apa would be ready to leave as soon as we could embark. A cart was also sent to take away such effects as we had not already sent off. At eleven o'clock we started from the house; and as we left our poor Paraguayan servants seemed abandoned to despair. I would gladly have taken them all, and so I told Basilio; but he said it would be worse than useless for me to try to take him away, as he would not be allowed to go, and I had better not claim him as belonging to my Legation. He begged me, if I ever returned to Paraguay, to inquire for him and of his fate. He feared that he would be sent to this Antonio Jara, and subjected to the most cruel treatment. I told him he would doubtless be taken as a soldier, but I hoped nothing worse than that would come upon him. He said that was nothing, he was willing to go as a soldier, but that it was the flogging and the torture that he dreaded. What became of him I have never learned.

That day, very early in the morning, the house had been surrounded by a large force of police and soldiers. Directly in front were standing all the time as many as twenty persons, two or three mounted; and at each corner there were eight or ten more. I again told Bliss and Masterman that they had

my free permission to say anything about me that could save them from torture or prolong their lives. I said to them substantially these words : We have all seen how Carreras, Rodriguez, Berges, Benigno, and the others who have been taken, have made declarations against us all that are entirely false, that have no foundation whatever. We know that the declarations which have been given in the letters of Benitez as coming from them were never made by them, or that, if they were made, they must have been previously subjected to the most terrible tortures. That there is not a particle of truth in them we all know. You will be taken, very likely, and tortured until you will corroborate what they have said. Now you have my permission to say anything against me ; you will not hesitate to save yourselves by admitting everything true or false which you may find Lopez is determined you shall admit. You may accuse me, if you can save your lives by it, of any crime you can imagine ; you may charge me with sorcery, or stealing sheep, or anything else. Nobody will believe it in Paraguay, and certainly nobody will believe it outside of Paraguay. It can do me no harm ; and if your declarations should ever be published, they will only prove to the world what an infamous wretch Lopez is, for everybody will know that any declarations of that kind must have been extorted by torture or the fear of torture. Bliss and Masterman were convinced that they would be arrested as soon as they stepped beyond the precincts of the Legation. We conversed as to the order in which we should leave. At one time it was suggested that they should remain in the house, and claim that they were still in the Legation if Lopez's soldiers should enter to take them. This, however, was thought to be not the most prudent course to take, but that they should accompany me as far as they were permitted to, and never leave me unless taken by force. The French and Italian Consuls had come to accompany me from the house to the steamer, and Bliss and Masterman bade us all good by. They had, indeed, little hope that they would ever meet any of us again. Possibly, if I got away, something

would come to their relief ere they had been put out of the world.

That Mrs. Washburn might not be a witness of the scene that would probably take place at their arrest, she left the house with the child, in company with my private secretary and a woman-servant. As soon as they had turned the corner of the street we all started to follow. As we approached the door the crowd of soldiers moved up towards the house, and we stopped a moment and had a few words together, and walked along under the corridor of the house about half the way to the corner, when Masterman, with a foolishness and stupidity almost incredible, came very near committing a fatal blunder. He proposed to surrender himself to the police then and there, saying that if they were determined to take them they might as well do it there as to go out to the corner of the house. I instantly checked him and prevented him from taking so fatal a step, and told him and Bliss to follow me into the street, not to give themselves up, but to compel the police to take them by force. They accordingly followed on, keeping close in my rear. As I stepped off the piazza into the street the police hustled them away in another direction, and they all crowded around, separating me from them. I then, with the Consuls, stepped a little farther on, when I stopped and saw Masterman waving me an adieu and saying, "Don't forget us." I had just time to reply, "I will do the best I can for you," when he was pushed rudely along. Bliss was not even given time to make a parting salute, but was pushed along so roughly that he could not get a sight of me through the crowd of soldiers that was between him and me.

They were gone, taken from me by force, and within three feet of my own house. Could I yet save them? There was but one way. A quixotic attempt to rescue them by my single arm might involve me in their destruction, but could not help them. They had begged me to do nothing to still further enrage Lopez until I was beyond his power. I therefore moved on towards the river in company with the Consuls, and with my family, that were anxiously waiting for me on the

bank, went on board the steamer. The Consuls then left us and returned to town. At this time they were in great anxiety in regard to themselves. The Frenchman was particularly anxious, as he told me before we left the house that his Chancellor had been already accused, and would be very likely arrested, and that as for himself it was very probable he would have fetters upon his ankles before night.

We were now aboard the steamer, and I impatiently awaited the moment when she should cast off; but every moment seemed an hour. I still had great apprehensions that I should be detained, and I believed that Masterman's baggage would be the pretext for so doing. In the mean while a number of peons came from the arsenal to the boat, bringing on board some heavy boxes containing the money of the Englishmen which had been withdrawn some days before from my Legation. With them came Mr. Hunter, an Englishman, and the head man of the arsenal. I had not seen him to speak with him since some weeks before, when I had met him in the street and he had told me that he was afraid to speak to me. On this occasion he came on board, and the only sentence he said to me in English was to request me to talk to him in Spanish. I had hoped to learn from him something of the fate of his countrymen who had been at my house and had left it some two months before, but I saw the danger he was in, and that it would not do for him to say anything to me which the spies of Lopez could not understand and report. Therefore I only talked with him in Spanish, and of the most commonplace matters, but could learn nothing of the condition of others for whose welfare I felt the keenest anxiety. But when this money had come on board it was clear that we should finally get off; and yet never was order so welcome to my ears as that which was given to the engineer of the boat, about an hour after, to get under way. It was about two o'clock when we started, and I was expecting to find the Wasp lying near Lambaré, and I watched, as the boat rounded the point, with straining eyes, to catch a glimpse of the star-spangled banner. But we passed Lambaré, and went on and

on, and no sight of the Wasp, and then again I began to suspect that there was treachery, and that we were all to be taken to head-quarters to be subjected to I knew not what. In about two hours or a little more after leaving Asuncion we came in sight of Villeta, and there lay the Wasp in front, with her flag flaunting in the breeze. I now realized that our dangers were passed; and yet it was not till we had come to anchor, and I saw my wife and child in the gig of the Wasp, and took my seat beside them, that I could believe that Lopez had consented to forego the pleasure of seeing me brought before his "solemn tribunal."

CHAPTER XXX.

The Officers of the Wasp. — Interview between Kirkland and Lopez. — Lopez threatens to detain the American Minister. — Kirkland warns him of the Consequences. — Lopez frightened. — The Correspondence detained by Caxias. — Discourtesy and Dishonesty of Caxias. — Parting Visit of Kirkland to Lopez. — Messages to Lopez. — Letters from Mr. Bliss and Mr. Masterman. — A Parthian Arrow. — Masterman; Account of his Arrest, Torture, and Imprisonment. — Lopez's Protestations to Commander Kirkland. — Condition of Carreras, Fidanza, and other Prisoners.

ON reaching the Wasp I immediately informed her commander of the arrest of Bliss and Masterman, and gave him a hurried account of recent events in Paraguay, telling him that he had arrived barely in time to rescue me and my family from the grasp of a monster who had resolved on our destruction, and that his last act towards me in seizing two members of my Legation had been a gross violation of my rights as a Minister of the United States, and an insult to the American flag. Commander Kirkland was not wholly unprepared for such a report, as, having been stationed for several years on the South Atlantic station, he had been frequently in Paraguay, and knew something of the government and of the despotic character of Lopez. Besides, there were many startling rumors in circulation at the mouth of the river at the time he left there, which led him to apprehend that he had a very delicate and difficult task to perform. He had been confirmed in this on reaching Paraguay, as appears from his first letters to me, in which he complained of the great discourtesy with which he had been treated, and said he could not learn either where I was or where Lopez was. The most of the officers of the Wasp, however, I found to be of the opinion, held almost universally throughout the United States and Europe, that Lopez was a hero, fighting bravely in

defence of his country and republican principles against monarchy, despotism, and slavery. They had, as was natural, an intense contempt of the Brazilians for allowing themselves to be held in check so long by a power so inferior in resources to themselves, and the sight of the huge squadron they had passed in the river lying idle for years, or bombarding at long range, apparently afraid to move against fortifications that would not delay an American monitor for a single day, was indeed well calculated to excite the contempt and disgust of veterans who had fought at Mobile and Fort Fisher. They were therefore unwilling to credit my statements in regard to the character and conduct of Lopez, or to admit that all their sympathies had been with a wretch so vile, cowardly, and cruel that all history could not show his parallel. Commander Kirkland, however, with whom I had been for a long time quite intimately acquainted, seemed to concur with me in everything, and gave me a minute account of all that had occurred between him and Lopez since he had first notified the latter of his presence in the vicinity. He told me that he had been greatly annoyed and delayed by Lopez's conduct towards him, until at last he was invited to an interview at his head-quarters. He had gone there with extreme distrust, feeling that Lopez was none too good to arrest him and treat him as he had many others, and had carried a loaded pistol in his pocket, prepared at the least sign of harm towards himself to shoot the tyrant dead on the spot. In the interview Lopez received him with his usual affability, and entered into conversation in regard to the object of his visit. Kirkland replied that he had been sent to take away the American Minister and his family. Lopez then said that his relations with Mr. Washburn were very bad; that a great conspiracy had been discovered, and Mr. Washburn had been engaged in it; that the conspiracy included a plan by which a revolution was to take place in Paraguay at the same time that the Brazilians, under the Marquês de Caxias, should make a grand demonstration at different points; and that the plan of the conspiracy had been arranged by Caxias and the American Minister.

Kirkland said that he laughed in his face when he told him this, and replied that Caxias was too unfriendly to me to have any arrangement with me ; that he was very badly disposed towards me, and had done everything that he dared to prevent the Wasp from coming to my relief ; that whatever the American Minister might have had to do with other parties, he could not have had any relations with the Marques de Caxias, as he was his bitter enemy. Lopez replied to this, that he had no doubt of the fact ; that he had hundreds of witnesses to that effect. Kirkland replied that whether he had or not he did not know and did not care. It was not his business to inquire into any such matter ; he was not a diplomate, and it was not for him to enter into diplomatic questions. He had been sent there to take away the American Minister, whose official acts were of no concern to him as a naval officer. His own duties were the same. Lopez replied that under the circumstances he should not permit the American Minister to leave. He might perhaps allow him to take away the Minister's wife and child, but as for Mr. Washburn he must remain in the country. Kirkland promptly answered that he would not take away Mrs. Washburn and the child unless he took Mr. Washburn ; he had been sent to take away the American Minister, and unless he took him he would take nobody. At this stage of the conversation, Kirkland, according to the version of the interview that he gave me when I first went on board the Wasp, and many times afterwards, saw that it was time to appeal to the only motive that could influence Lopez, — fear. Assuming therefore an air of indifference, and smiling as if talking of a trifling matter, he said to Lopez he had better not commit any act of violence against Mr. Washburn. He then proceeded to magnify the influence and importance of the man whose liberty and life were the subject of discussion, saying some things of so extravagant a nature that I forbear quoting them. In substance they were to the effect that the American Minister still in the power of Lopez had such connections and political influence at home. that, were he to receive any harm, the whole military and

naval power of the great Republic would be despatched instantly to Paraguay to punish the outrage and avenge the insult. The government and people of the United States were not expecting any such action on the part of Paraguay. On the contrary, they had been greatly provoked by the conduct of the Brazilians in preventing the *Wasp* from passing the blockade several months before, and were even then preparing to take such measures against the enemies of Paraguay as would greatly inure to its advantage. The United States were greatly outraged by the refusal of the Marques de Caxias to permit the *Wasp* to pass the blockade in the preceding May, and had sent a squadron of six monitors, which was already on the coast of Brazil, with instructions, if the allies did not recede from their pretensions and make ample apology for the wrongs they had done in detaining the *Wasp* previously, to make war upon them. "And," said Kirkland, to quote his own words to me, "I told him that when these monitors reach Rio, if they shall find that Minister Washburn has been maltreated by you, they will not make war against Brazil, but will ascend the river Paraguay, which they can easily do, as they draw only seven feet of water; and the first you will know, you will find that Asuncion is knocked about your ears; and I advise you not to touch that man, for if you do the United States will hunt you all through Europe; they will have your head sure." Kirkland said that while talking to Lopez in this way he could read his thoughts, and see that he felt as though he wanted to order him out to be shot; that he could see the workings of his mind, and the smothered wrath that was raging within, and which he could hardly repress. He said that throughout the conversation he could see his object, and could tell when he was talking for effect and when he was telling the truth; and he said that, of all the men with whom he had ever come in contact, he was the most transparent fool. At the threats of what the United States would do in case he carried out his intentions towards me, Kirkland said he could see that rage and anger were struggling against the fears of the cowardly tyrant; and though he assumed a laughing, banter-

ing style in talking to him, he kept his eye fixed upon him, determined, if his passion got the better of his cowardice, and he showed any signs of treachery by ordering him to be arrested, to get the start of him by shooting him on the instant.

After this conversation, as Kirkland told me, Lopez drew a long breath, reflected awhile, and said he should let me go; and on comparing dates afterwards I found that it was not till after that conversation with Kirkland that I received the letter from Caminos, in which, after recapitulating at such enormous length my offences and crimes, he concluded with the notice that my passports would be sent to me.

Commander Kirkland had brought with him a large number of official and other letters addressed to me, and an immense number of newspapers, in fact all the correspondence and all the newspapers that had accumulated at different places between the mouth of the river and the military lines during the last ten months. Among these were a box and a package that the same officer had left with the Marques de Caxias on the 10th of June preceding, with a request that he would send them through the lines together with the letter that he intrusted to him, to advise me that, as he was not permitted to pass the blockade, he was about to return to Montevideo.

I now learned that Caxias, taking advantage of my inability to make complaints to my government, had committed an act of great discourtesy and palpable dishonesty in detaining those packages. The letter from Commander Kirkland, stating that he had left them to be forwarded, did not reach me for two weeks, and when it did come I was informed by Colonel Fernandez, and I have no doubt correctly, that it had not been sent by an officer with a flag of truce to the advanced lines, but advantage had been taken of the errand to send a monitor under flag of truce above Humaita to Timbo to deliver the letter, and at the same time take observations of the Paraguayan defences. Caxias had promised to send the packages at the first opportunity. Yet though he sent a gunboat to carry the letter from Kirkland, he showed that he cherished his old vindictiveness towards me by detaining my

correspondence, and keeping it in his possession till after I had left Paraguay and it had become nearly valueless. Thus while Lopez was trying to fasten upon me the charge of being engaged in a conspiracy with Caxias, holding frequent correspondence with him for more than a year, and planning the details of a revolution, the latter would have it that I was the friend and champion of the Paraguayan tyrant, and that he was absolved from observing the ordinary rules of courtesy and of common honesty towards me.

Among the despatches brought me by Commander Kirkland was my letter of recall, for which I had so often asked my government. There were also several letters from our Minister in Rio, General Webb. In these letters he complained of the vacillating and tortuous course of the Brazilians, the shameful corruption that was existing in the army, and the weakness and duplicity of that government; and as he supposed at the time that some of them were written that I was still in good relations with Lopez, he assured me that if he could hold out for a limited period he would finally triumph; that the Brazilians would not much longer maintain so expensive, exhausting, and useless a war. As Commander Kirkland advised me after I had got aboard the *Wasp* that he should again visit Lopez to take a final leave of his Excellency, I requested him, with an object more malicious than diplomatic, to take my letter of recall and one of General Webb's letters and read them to Lopez. This object was to show him how transparent were all the falsehoods which he had put into the declarations of Berges and others of his victims in regard to me, and likewise to make it manifest to him that in all I had done I had been supported by my government, and that, having been recalled at my own request, made many months before, it would be clear to all the world that I could not possibly have had any such designs as had been imputed to me in the declarations which he had extorted by torture from his victims or else had forged himself. I also gave to Kirkland a memorandum of things which I desired him to say to Lopez: among others, that there never had been any conspiracy to the best

of my knowledge and belief; and that I knew none of the parties who had been in my house, and who were then, as I supposed, in his power, had ever taken any part in anything of the kind, even supposing that there had been a plot of a treasonable character undertaken by others. I also requested him to protest against the arrest of Bliss and Masterman, and say that I regarded them as members of my Legation, and that their seizure in the street from my side was as much a violation of my rights as a Minister, and of the American flag, as though he had entered my house and taken them by force; that I should thus represent their seizure to my government, which I had no doubt would take the same view of it and demand their release, holding him responsible if any evil should befall them.

Kirkland left the *Wasp* on the morning of the 11th September to make his visit of ceremony. At the time he left he regarded Lopez as a wretch capable of any fraud or treachery, fully believing that he was going into great personal danger, and the last thing he did before going over the side of the vessel was to place in the side-pocket of his coat a small revolver; large enough, however, to do efficient work at close quarters. When he came back in the evening and related to me the incidents of the day, I was greatly surprised and disappointed at being told that he had forgotten to take my memorandum with him. Having read it over hastily, before going on shore, he had endeavored to recollect its contents and to comply with my request by telling Lopez all that I had desired him to say. He delivered the letter of recall, and translated the letter of General Webb. The main point, however, my protest against the arrest of Bliss and Masterman, he did not allude to, or at least not in such terms as I had desired him to use. From the general tenor of the conversation which he had, both with Lopez and Madam Lynch, I inferred that his reception had been much more gracious and cordial than on the preceding occasion, and that they had concluded it would be for their interest to make a friend of him before his departure. I was confirmed in this by the fact that the next morning some supplies of fresh

beef and a quantity of sugar-cane were sent to the Wasp, besides which there were several large tercios of yerba maté.

Previously to his going on shore the last time, Kirkland received a note from Dr. Carreras, requesting that if he had brought any letters for him he would deliver them to the bearer. Being familiar with the handwriting of Carreras, I knew the signature to be his, and as there were several letters for him in my packages I requested Kirkland to deliver them in accordance with this request. I knew, indeed, that this note had been written under compulsion; but as I was convinced there could be nothing in the letters that could implicate or compromise Carreras in any manner, but that they must rather vindicate him, I could see no objection to their falling into the hands of Lopez, though that Carreras would ever see them I had little expectation. Kirkland, however, declined to deliver them, unless I would first open them and ascertain whether they contained anything of a treasonable nature or not; for, after the accusations which had been brought against me, he said he was determined to deliver nothing of which he did not know the contents, lest he too might be accused of aiding conspirators in transmitting their correspondence.

As nothing favorable to Bliss and Masterman had resulted from Kirkland's last interview with Lopez, it was incumbent upon me to send a written protest directly to him, and I accordingly wrote a note to that effect early the next morning; Kirkland, having expressed his intention to weigh anchor and start at an early hour, left no opportunity for discussion. While I was writing this letter an officer came aboard, bringing a letter from Mr. Bliss to me, another to Captain Kirkland, and a third to Henry Bliss, Esq., of New York. I opened Bliss's letter, and found it to be the following very extraordinary document, in Spanish:—

“ September 11, 1868.

“ *To his Excellency Hon. Charles A. Washburn, United States Minister Resident.*

“ SIR, — Finding myself at length relieved from the restraint which your Excellency has so long exercised over my will, I cannot do

less than confess freely and spontaneously the important part which your Excellency has taken in the revolution, in which you have involved many persons, and among them myself. I have declared (regretting deeply, because I would like to avoid such a scandal to your Excellency, but following out the truth) that you have been the soul of the revolution; and if this deed now appears to the light of Heaven, confessed to by all its accomplices, to whom does it owe its existence save to your Excellency, who has continued its direction up to a very recent period? I consider myself, therefore, completely absolved from the promise which you extorted from me yesterday in your office, not to reveal your proceedings old or new. Even your brilliant speculations with the company of Hopkins, for which you were to pocket a hundred and odd thousands of patacones, have been put in evidence, as also the gilded pill Polidoro and Octaviano made you swallow, besides the last one administered by Caxias, at the time of your Excellency's celebrated visit of mediation in March, last year.

“The object of this letter is to say to you that I have determined to request from your Excellency the delivery to the bearer of my historical manuscripts, which involve a compromise with this government, and which are without reason in deposit with Your Excellency, you having taken possession of them during my illness last year, and I having forgotten to demand them of you. They consist, as your Excellency well knows, of a voluminous history of Paraguay till the year 1810, and some two thousand pages or more of notes in Spanish on more recent epochs, with the chronology up to our days.

“Also, I beg that you will have the goodness to send me the three letters written by your express order for your justification regarding the affairs of the revolution, of which one is addressed to the New York World, another to Rev. William T. Goodfellow in Buenos Aires, and the last to my father, Henry Bliss, Esq., of New York.

“The truth having been fully displayed, these letters cannot serve you for any object, and since they are false it suits me no longer to keep the mystery of hypocrisy, and for your own honor you ought to comply strictly with these my demands.

“I do not exact from you the English manuscripts which you made me write in a spirit inimical to Paraguay, since these are your property. But I advise you as a friend not to attempt to fight against the evidence given by infinite witnesses.

"I take advantage of the occasion to salute your Excellency with distinguished esteem and appreciation.

"PORTER C. BLISS."

Commander Kirkland's letter contained a request from Mr. Bliss that he would delay the departure of the Wasp a sufficient time for me to deliver to the Paraguayan authorities the documents, letters, etc., alluded to, and enclosed a duplicate of his letter to me. The letter which Bliss had sent to me addressed "Henry Bliss, Esq., New York," I saw at a glance was for a mythical person. It explained the whole story of the circumstances under which it had been written, though for my part I needed no explanation. The letter was in these words : —

"PARAGUAY, September 11, 1868.

"HENRY BLISS, ESQ.

"DEAR FATHER, — I feel myself under an obligation to inform you that the letter which you will receive through Mr. Washburn, dated the 5th instant, is utterly unreliable in all its details, for the reason that it was written at the command of Mr. Washburn, and for the only object of clearing him from the true charges made against him by the conspirators, who have given in their truthful testimony before the tribunals. Mr. Washburn demanded of me that letter, in order to publish it in self-justification, when the fact of the case is that Mr. Washburn has not only been the head of a revolution here, but has by his influence and commands, taking advantage of his official position, involved me in a co-operation to some extent in his plans, for which I am truly sorry, and deposit all my hopes of pardon in the magnanimity of Marshal Lopez. I have written from the same point of view two other letters, one to the New York World, and another to William T. Goodfellow, of Buenos Aires, both of which are to be considered in the same light as that to you, and I do not write to rectify them solely from lack of time. I hope you will not be deceived into accepting as facts the statements in the letter referred to, but will believe that the conduct of Mr. Washburn has been in this matter worthy the highest execration, and I hope that you will give publicity to the present rectification.

"Your affectionate son,

"PORTER C. BLISS."

As I knew that Henry Bliss was not the name of the father of the writer of this letter, but that his father was the Rev. Asher Bliss, of Cattaraugus County, New York, it was clear that Bliss had resorted to this subterfuge at the last moment in order to show, not only to me, but to others, that he was writing under duress.

Masterman, I may remark, wrote the following letter to me, which for some reason I never received. I found it published afterwards, however, by the Paraguayan government : —

“ September 12, 1868.

“ MY DEAR MOTHER, — In my letter to you of the 8th instant, sent through Mr. Washburn, I mentioned the terrible conspiracy to destroy the government of Paraguay and its President, who by his skill and bravery in this war has defied the power of Brazil and gained a reputation unexampled. The conspiracy was suggested and cheerfully arranged by Mr. Washburn, who was in league with the enemy. As I was living in his house, I could not help hearing about it ; and I am sorry I did not denounce him to the government, but I have done all I could to make up for the neglect. I have candidly confessed all I know of this terrible business, and I hope I shall be pardoned by the President. I hope my life may be spared so I may see you again.

“ Your affectionate son,

“ GEORGE.”

Kirkland, upon reading the letter from Bliss, said to me : “ This man must be a fool. Does he think I am going to stop the steamer here for him ; that I will delay for his accommodation ? ” I instantly told him that both these letters from Bliss had been written at the dictation of Lopez, and undoubtedly their author had been most cruelly tortured in order to compel him to write them ; that he should pay no attention to his letter, as I knew that Bliss neither expected nor desired it.

I hastily finished my letter to Lopez, and as soon as possible had it copied. I give it here entire : —

“ United States Steamer Wasp, off Angostura, River Paraguay,
September 12, 1868.

“ *To his Excellency Marshal Lopez, President of Paraguay.*

“ SIR, — When Captain Kirkland was about leaving this vessel yesterday to bid farewell to your Excellency, I gave him a memorandum of certain things to which I requested him to call your attention. Captain Kirkland informs me that on reaching your head-quarters he found he had omitted to take this memorandum with him, and therefore was unable to comply fully with my request, having only given the paper a hasty perusal. I therefore take the liberty, at the moment of my departure, of deviating from diplomatic customs, and sending a personal note directed to your Excellency. In this memorandum I suggested that he might show you a letter from General Webb, our Minister in Rio, from which it would appear that he had almost come to a rupture with that government, by reason of its refusal to permit this vessel to pass above the squadron. This he had done on his own responsibility, without waiting for orders from the United States government, which, on hearing of the outrage, has doubtless taken the most energetic measures to enforce its rights and extricate its Minister from a most frightful position. This letter, which you saw, proves how much truth there was in the declaration of your ex-Minister for Foreign Affairs, José Berges, that I was in collusion with General Webb, and in the interest and pay of the Brazilians.

“ I have in my possession several letters for Dr. Carreras, which I yesterday requested Captain Kirkland to deliver, but which he refused to do unless I would open them, lest he too should be accused of conveying treasonable correspondence. I herewith send the letters, however, as I do not believe that any treasonable correspondence has ever passed through my hands for or to anybody. In fact I do not believe there has ever been any conspiracy.

“ The declarations of Berges, your two brothers Venancio and Benigno, and Sr. Urdapilleta, as given in the notes of your last two Ministers of Foreign Relations, in so far as they implicate me of having any knowledge of a conspiracy, are entirely false, and you know it ; and you know that not one of them would confirm or affirm the declaration imputed to him if he were out of your power, but would deny it *in toto*, and declare that he had never made it, or that he had done so under torture. Declarations of that kind, your

Excellency ought to know, will have no weight outside of Paraguay. Not one word of them will be believed; and that all may not be denied by them, you must not only kill all the persons who have made them, but all by whom they were extorted.

“Before finally leaving Paraguay it is my duty to make my solemn protest against the arrest of those two members of my Legation, Porter Cornelius Bliss and George F. Masterman. Their arrest in the street, as they were going with me from the Legation to pass on board the steamer, was as gross a violation of the laws of nations as would have been their seizure by force in my house. It was an act not only against my government, but against all civilized powers, and places Paraguay outside the pale of the family of nations; and for this act you will be regarded as a common enemy, one denying allegiance to the laws of nations.

“You will also be regarded as a common enemy for having seized and made prisoners and loaded with fetters nearly all the foreigners in Paraguay, and afterwards entered their houses and taken away their money on the miserable pretext, that, finding less in your treasury than you expected, those who had any money in the country must therefore have robbed it from the government.

“Your threat to Captain Kirkland, on his first arrival, that you would keep me a prisoner in the country, will be duly represented to my government; and I only wish to confirm his reply to you, that had you done so my government would have hunted you, not only through all South America, but throughout Europe.

“Your obedient servant,

“CHARLES A. WASHBURN.”

I enclosed this with a brief note to Bliss, which I did not suppose he would ever be permitted to see, stating that I had nothing in my possession belonging to him, and therefore should send nothing, and requesting him to deliver the accompanying letter to President Lopez with his own hand.

As I was writing that note I had little doubt that, if Lopez should receive and read it before the Wasp was below his batteries, in his rage and fury he would fire upon her. But I was then under the American flag and in a national gunboat, and I knew that if he sunk the vessel and destroyed us all we

should not die unavenged. He could not then fabricate a version of the affair that could justify him or avert from him a terrible retribution. He had not the power to destroy all the witnesses and blot out the entire record as he had while I was yet in Asuncion. I said nothing to Commander Kirkland, however, in regard to the danger which such a letter would provoke if received by Lopez while we were yet under his guns. But before we were ready to start, or my letter had been delivered, we were informed that a small steamer with a flag of truce would accompany us below the Paraguayan fortifications and to within sight of the Brazilian squadron. The letter accordingly was not delivered until we had passed all the Paraguayan batteries, and the flag-of-truce boat had turned up the river, where it was detained for a moment, and a boat from the Wasp put off to deliver this Parthian arrow. In this opinion, that Lopez would have fired on the Wasp had he received that letter in time to have done so, I was confirmed by the first letters which I received, both from Dr. Stewart and Colonel Thompson, after they had escaped from the power of Lopez. Colonel Thompson wrote me very soon after he was taken prisoner, that, had Lopez received that letter while the Wasp was yet above his lower batteries, he himself, being in command of them, would have had orders to sink the vessel. Dr. Stewart, who was near Lopez at the time, also, in the very first letter which he wrote me after escaping from Paraguay, alluded to the narrow escape of the Wasp, and said that, had my letter been received in time, all the Paraguayan guns that could have been brought to bear against her in her descent of the river would have opened upon her.

Bliss and Masterman have both in published statements given their experience of those times, and I will give the following extract from Mr. Masterman's book of his experience during the first days after they fell into the hands of Lopez; and as in all its parts it agrees with the statements of Mr. Bliss, and is otherwise corroborated, I believe it is literally correct.

The manner in which they were taken from me when I left

the Legation has been already described. Their subsequent treatment I give in Masterman's own words:—

“We—that is, Mr. Bliss, the negro Baltazar, and myself—were surrounded by about thirty policemen, who with shouts and yells ordered us to march down to the Policia. . . . When we reached the office we were halted in the road, and kept standing there about an hour; then the negro was taken within, after some time Mr. Bliss, and lastly myself. I found the Chief of Police seated in the corridor, with a group of his savage myrmidons around him; he looked at me in silence for some minutes, and then by a gesture ordered me to be stripped. My clothes were most strictly and systematically examined, the lining torn out, and every fold ripped up. My little packets of quinine were of course discovered, pounced upon with a shout of triumph by the men, and put carefully on one side. My handkerchief, cravat, and money were taken from me, the rest returned. I was then told to sit down, that fetters might be riveted on my ankles, and afterwards taken through a side court and thrust into a cell. . . . About seven o'clock in the evening the door opened; a sergeant and two men entered with a lantern; one carried a hammer and a small anvil, the other a set of irons. . . . The fetters I was wearing were removed, and the massive bar the man bore on his shoulder was riveted in their place. Two rough iron loops, with eyes at their extremities, were first placed over my ankles; then the bar, which was about eighteen inches in length and two in diameter, was thrust through the eyes; and an iron wedge, with many a blow of the heavy hammer, riveted firmly at one end, whilst a broad knob secured it at the other. Thus fettered, it was with the greatest difficulty that I staggered to my feet, and then sat down again, scarcely able to bear the weight. I had previously heard them riveting similar irons on my companions. A short time afterwards the sergeant reappeared, and motioned me in silence to follow him. I did so. He led me to the front of the Policia, where, by the light of some lanterns, I saw Mr. Bliss and Baltazar mounted sideways on mules, and waiting for me.

I was lifted into the saddle, for the thirty or more pounds' weight of my fetters prevented me even raising a foot from the ground. . . . I soon found to my dismay that Villeta was our destination, a distance of thirty-five miles. . . . I begged the sergeant to let us travel as slowly as possible; for at every step the heavy bar swung back-

wards and forwards, and a jolt was agonizing. He did so ; but once, in descending a steep slope, the mules broke into a trot. In trying to steady the bar, I lost my balance, and fell to the ground. I was tied to the girths, and, unable to extricate myself, was dragged for some distance head downwards, the mule kicking viciously the while. Fortunately the only damage was a deep cut in the ankle and a few bruises."

Of that night's journey, Mr. Bliss* testified as follows before the Congressional Committee of Investigation :—

"The sufferings of that night to all of us were such as I never endured in an equal period before or since, though I was subsequently put to the torture on various occasions ; but the tortures to which we were subjected were tolerable, when compared with the agony we suffered on that fearful night. . . . The weight of the fetters on my ankles had become excruciating torture, until I nearly fainted, but nevertheless was obliged to maintain my position, still without food or relief, until noon of the next day. . . . I fell off several times, and was dragged a considerable distance by the horse I rode."

On arriving near Villeta they were helped to dismount, when they fell exhausted, and more dead than alive, to the ground. Masterman's narrative continues :—

"An *alferez* harshly told me to stand up ; I tried, but the weight of my irons threw me on my face. He drew his sword and struck me heavily with the flat of it, and a corporal came up and thrashed me with his stick, until, by a violent effort, I staggered to my feet. A few paces off was a square space enclosed with hide ropes ; I was told to go within it ; and then, too fatigued to notice the poor wretches, my fellow-prisoners, I threw myself on the bare ground, and fell almost immediately into a deep sleep. Late in the afternoon I was awakened by a blow with a stick, and told to rise and march towards a little grove of orange-trees, about half a mile off. Aching in every limb, I obeyed, and, supporting my fetters with a strip of hide, moved with pain and difficulty in the direction indicated as fast as my bruised and bleeding feet would carry me. A *cabo*, or corporal, followed, armed with a bayonet and a stick. 'Go faster!' he shouted every moment ; I tried, but in vain, to do so.

* Paraguayan Investigation, p. 138.

He thrashed me savagely with his stick over my shoulders and arms, knocked me down twice, and beat me more cruelly for falling. At last, bruised and breathless, I reached a group of little huts, made of branches and reeds, and placed in two rows. I saw Mr. Bliss and Baltazar taken separately on one side; I went to the other, and entered the farthest hut. Within it was seated an old captain, named Falcón, and a priest, who, as I afterwards found, acted as secretary.

"The former signed me to enter, and after scrutinizing me for a few minutes, said, 'Ah! we have got you at last. Now confess that Washburn is the chief of the conspirators, and that you took refuge in the Legation for the purpose of plotting against the government.' I replied, calmly, that I had no confession to make; that I had never plotted against the government, but had done all in my power to serve the Paraguayans; that I was sure that Mr. Washburn was quite innocent of the crimes alleged against him; and I explained in a few words under what circumstances I had entered his service. He heard me with many marks of impatience, to the end, and then said, 'You will not confess?' 'I have no confession to make.' 'Confess,' he repeated, 'or I will see if we cannot make you.' Then turning to the priest, he told him to take me out and put me in the rack (*potro*). He took me behind the hut, but close to it, so that Falcón within could hear all that passed. I prayed silently for strength to bear this trial, and then looked round for the implements of torture, but found that these savages, like those in 'The Last of the Mohicans,' ought to have expressed regret that their means of inflicting pain were so primitive. At this call the corporal and two soldiers came forward, carrying a bundle of muskets and strips of hide. I was told to seat myself on the ground, with my knees raised; I did so, and was again asked, 'Will you confess?' 'No, I am innocent.'

"One of the men tied my arms tightly behind me, the other passed a musket under my knees, and then putting his foot between my shoulders forced my head down until my throat rested on the lower musket; a second was put over the back of my neck, and they were firmly lashed together. They left me so for some time, striking the butt-ends of the fire-locks occasionally with a mallet; the priest meanwhile, in a monotonous voice, as if he were repeating a formula he had often gone through, urged me to confess, and 'receive the mercy of the kind and generous Marshal Lopez.' I made

no reply, but suffered the intense pain they were inflicting in silence. At length they unbound me, and I was asked once more, 'Will you confess?' I replied in the negative. They bound me up as before, but with two muskets at the back of my neck. As they were tightening the cords, I threw my head forward to avoid the pressure on my throat, and my lips were badly cut and bruised against the lower musket; the blood almost choked me, and I fainted from the excruciating pain.

"When I recovered I was lying on the grass utterly exhausted, and felt that I could bear no more; that it would be far preferable to make a pretended confession, and be shot, than suffer such cruel torture. So, as they were about to again apply the *uruguayana*, as it is called by them, I said, 'I am guilty; I will confess'; and they immediately unbound me. The priest said, 'Why were you such an obstinate fool? Your companion Bliss was only threatened with the torture, and confessed at once.' . . . I heard poor Baltazar loudly praying for mercy several times, and now the sounds of heavy blows, each followed by a shriek from him, proved how much more they were prepared to inflict upon us; they were smashing his fingers with a mallet; I pitied him very much, for he knew nothing whatever about the pretended plot, nor the charges against his master, and could not save himself, even by protesting that he was guilty.

"I drank some water and tried to eat a little meat they offered me, but could not, and then, returning within the hut, I told as well as I could remember it, the same miserable story that had been wrested from Carreras, Berges, Benigno Lopez, and the rest whose depositions I had read with Mr. Washburn. There was no help for it, but God knows with what agony and shame I repeated that wretched tissue of fables and misrepresentations. I felt that I ought rather to have suffered any martyrdom than purchase life on such terms, and until I was put to the torture I hoped and believed I should have done so; it was that, however, and not death, I feared. It must be remembered that for three months I had suffered great anxiety, daily expecting to be arrested; that I had heard how mercilessly those who refused to confess had been mangled before execution; that I had had a long and painful journey; and that I had been almost without food for two days. On the other hand, I could do but little wrong to the accused. Mr. Washburn was safe on board

the Wasp; Rodriguez, Gomez (late the Mayor-de-Plaza), Bedoya, Barrios, and Gonzales had already been shot or died; and as to the others, I could only repeat what I had heard of their own depositions. . .

“During my examination several officers came in. . . . From the conversation of these men I gathered several valuable hints as to the course I had best adopt, and especially that the more I abused Mr. Washburn the better. I also ascertained incidentally that he was then on board the Wasp, and that I could not therefore endanger his safety by anything I should say against him.

“Late at night a priest named Roman came in; he looked at me, with a malicious smile playing round his mouth for some time, and then asked for my deposition. Falcón, who was evidently in great awe of him, handed over the papers. He read them through, was about to tear them in pieces, but restrained himself and threw them contemptuously on the table, saying, ‘Que miserables desaparates!’ (‘What wretched trash!’) Then turning to me, ‘Are these your revelations? Now, look you. I go for a short ride, and if on my return I do not find that you have confessed clearly that the great beast (*gran bestia*), Washburn, is the chief conspirator, that he was in treaty with Caxias, and that he received money and letters from the enemy, and that you knew it, I will put you in the *uruguayana*, and keep you there till you do. . . .

“The clanking of my irons as I move uneasily on my hard seat calls the attention of the ‘fiscal’ to the business in hand. ‘Come, Masterman,’ he says, not unkindly, ‘let us have the whole of the story; tell us how the great beast intended to destroy us all.’ He puts on his spectacles again and writes down my words in a condensed form on a spare piece of paper, for he likes to amplify them himself without any particular attention to what I did say; but I am too tired to object and protest as I did at first, and am not sure but that it is better to let him do as he likes. ‘The criminal, having confessed freely and voluntarily his guilt,’ he begins to dictate to his secretary, the awkward subject of torture being kept in the shade, ‘and having been solemnly admonished by the Señores Fiscales to tell the whole of the truth now, in order to relieve his burdened conscience, deposes that Washburn was the originator and chief mover in the plot,’ and so on through two sheets of closely written foolscap. I got on swimmingly for a time, but presently I

was asked how much money Washburn had paid me. 'Not a rial,' I answered, stoutly, and truly enough. . . . Thus I had had many disputes with Mr. Washburn on political and literary subjects. . . . I magnified these into quarrels, and put it to them as reasonable men if it were likely that a person who regarded me as an enemy, and who had retained me in his house because he needed my professional services, would place his life in my hands by confiding such a secret fully to my keeping.

"I went on to remind Falcón how much I owed to Mr. Washburn ; that he had obtained my release from prison, and had taken me for his medical attendant when the government had refused me a license to practise, and for that reason I had not denounced him to the police. For although I was a devoted friend of the Paraguayans (and there I spoke truthfully enough), I felt so grateful to him that I could not ruin him, a man who had befriended me. I took shame to myself, and repented greatly of my obstinacy in compelling my judges to put me to the torture, when I ought to have declared the truth months before ; but they must remember that I was distracted between obligations to the state and to him."

This treatment, which was bestowed with much impartiality on both Bliss and Masterman, was that which they received on the day following their arrest. It seems that they were brought to head-quarters and immediately tortured and examined, with the purpose of compelling them to disclose before the departure of the Wasp what they had written to their friends. Having admitted that they had sent letters by me, they were ordered to write others also to be taken by me, declaring that their first letters had been written under compulsion and at my dictation, whereas the letters they then wrote were free and spontaneous, and what, having escaped from my power and influence, a sense of duty induced them to write. Bliss's letter, as given before, he was compelled to write over five separate times before it met entirely the views of Lopez. More properly it was Lopez's letter, and Masterman's letter was written also while the fetters were on his ankles, with a soldier over him, and in such terms as suited the purpose of Lopez. They had little hesitation in regard to those letters, so far as they themselves were concerned, for

they knew that I should understand under what circumstances they had been written. We had all anticipated that something of the kind might be done ; and under that anticipation I had advised them, if necessary to save their lives, to admit anything whatever so far as I was concerned. According to the narratives of both, they were subjected simultaneously to the same treatment. When first questioned as to their knowledge of any conspiracy or plot, both of them declared that they were ignorant of anything of the kind, and the tortures were applied to make them confess. At first they asserted that they had nothing to confess, — that they knew nothing. They were told, however, that it was useless for them to deny anything ; that the government was already informed of everything ; and in order to induce them to yield, as they were both being examined at the same time at a considerable distance apart, each was told that the other had already confessed, and had admitted that he was a conspirator, and that the other was equally so. Masterman when told this was very indignant that his fellow-sufferer should so easily give in, and not only confess to what was false, but should inculcate him. Bliss, who still retained his self-possession, saw at once through the trick when told that Masterman had confessed, and did not give in till afterwards. The matter of priority, however, was of little consequence ; they were both compelled to yield at last ; and as they had no idea of what they were expected to admit or to avow a knowledge of, they could only judge from the questions that were put to them what answers were desired.

These two gentlemen, members of the American Legation, were subjected to the dreadful tortures which have been described on the very day subsequent to my departure from Asuncion, while the Wasp was yet lying in the river in front of Villeta, and at the very moment that Commander Kirkland was holding an interview with President Lopez, in which interview, while expressing great dissatisfaction with my course, the tyrant was professing the greatest regard and respect for the government and people of the United States, and declaring

his intention to do everything in his power to maintain friendly relations with them.

On entering the open space in which he was to be confined as a prisoner, after having undergone the torture described, and confessed to his complicity in the conspiracy, Masterman thus proceeds :—

“ Within a space on the gently sloping hillside which had been roughly cleared from brushwood, and about a hundred feet square, lay forty prisoners ; and on all sides, as far as I could see, were similar enclosures tenanted in the same way. The nearest was somewhat luxurious, for each prisoner had a little straw kennel to lie down in ; and there I saw Don Venancio, the President’s eldest brother, and Captain Fianza, an old friend of Mr. Washburn ; the rest were officers, some of high rank. I have said that Dr. Carreras lay next to me during the night ; I was removed some distance from him in the morning ; but he had time to whisper, ‘ Has Mr. Washburn gone ? ’ ‘ Yes. ’ He was about to ask other questions when a sentry noticed us and growled, ‘ Hold your tongue. ’ The doctor was a pitiable object, indeed so changed that I could scarcely believe that the wretched creature before me was really he. Emaciated, travel and blood stained, he was but a shadow of his former self. For two months he had been lying as I saw him, in the open air, with no shelter from the sun or rain but a blanket. He had rolled it up for a seat, and was furtively watching me and trying to form questions by the motion of his lips. . . . Taylor, the master mason and builder of the new palace, of whose arrest we had no knowledge while in the Legation, looked at me and raised his hands with a gesture of commiseration, but did not dare to give any other sign of recognition. In the centre of the prison encampment, or *guardia*, as the natives term it, was a row of priests, I think eight in number ; they were all in irons, and must have been recently brought in, for their long cloth cloaks were little worn ; then some prisoners of war, — there were a major and three captains among them, as I learnt when our names were called over ; they were not fettered, but were in the last stage of misery, almost, some quite, covered with wounds, and the majority too feeble to walk ; and lastly a group of felons, distinguished by a single iron ring on the right ankle. These looked scarcely human, were without a rag of clothing, and generally lay in a huddled heap on the ground. . . .

In our rear was the kitchen, that is, a large iron pot set over a fire in the open air ; there a stalwart negro, assisted by several prisoners, prepared the food for all the *guardias* around, and little enough it was, — a small allowance of boiled meat and broth in the morning, and at night a handful of parched maize and the bones and scraps left by the soldiers. I saw poor Dr. Carreras, once the most influential man in Uruguay, an ex-prime minister, eagerly gnawing the gristle from a few well-picked bones, contemptuously thrown him by a passer-by."

Such was the treatment accorded by the tyrant of Paraguay to the two members of the American Legation that he had forcibly taken from the protection of the Minister. The details of their treatment, of course, I did not know then, but the letter that I had received from Bliss after his seizure told the whole story of his torture. What could I then do for him or Masterman, was my first thought on reaching the Wasp. They would, of course, be treated with most inhuman cruelty ; but I knew that Lopez took too much delight in the infliction of pain to put them speedily to death, and besides I believed that fear would restrain him from such an act until he might learn whether or not my government would sustain me and demand them. My last letter to him, in which I still claimed them, though taken in the street, as members of my Legation, and denounced their seizure as the act of a common enemy of the human race, would appeal to his sense of fear ; and I hoped that ere they were executed an American squadron would come to their rescue. My first duty was to hasten to the mouth of the river to give the alarm, and advise the Admiral of the insult to the flag and the outrage on the Legation.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Final Departure. — Corrientes. — Duties of Neutrals. — Excitement at Buenos Aires. — The *Semanario*. — Published Correspondence. — Letter to the English Minister. — Hostility of the Allies. — The Wasp sent to the Seat of War. — Refused a Passage through the Blockade. — Return to Montevideo. — General J. Watson Webb. — His Energetic Action. — He demands his Passports. — The Objections withdrawn. — The Wasp returns to Paraguay. — Her Arrival a Surprise to Lopez. — His Plans deranged. — Indignation of the Allies. — Gaucho Ideas of the Duties of a Neutral Minister. — The American Navy: the System and the Practices under it. — Despotic Powers of the Admiral. — Rear-Admiral Charles H. Davis. — His Fleet-Captain, Francis M. Ramsey. — Difference of Opinion between the Admiral and General Webb. — Insulting Letter from the Admiral. — He shows his Independence by delaying the Departure of the Squadron.

AT last we were beyond the tyrant's power. As we passed beyond the reach of the guns of his fortifications at Angostura, the sense of security to ourselves which we then experienced brought more vividly than ever to our minds the situation of those we had left behind. The misfortune that had befallen Bliss and Masterman was but a single item in the catalogue of disasters that had happened to hundreds of our friends, whom we should never meet again, and of whom we should never learn anything more than that they had been made to suffer the most horrible agonies that the combined cruelty and avarice of Lopez and Lynch could invent. Bliss and Masterman might escape, but of many others in whom we took a deeper interest than in them we were convinced we should never hear more than that they had miserably perished of torture and starvation or had been executed. I had lived for a long time in Paraguay, and the people, without exception, when acting of their own impulse, and not under the orders of Lopez, had always treated me with kindness, hospitality, and

respect. Among all the Paraguayans I believed I had not a single enemy except Lopez, and among all the foreigners none except Madam Lynch.

On our way down the river we stopped at Corrientes, where I advised every one I met that Lopez had arrested all the foreigners in Paraguay, and had killed or would kill them all unless the allies should show more activity and destroy him before he had time to carry his plan of indiscriminate murder into execution. I was hoping that this information might be known to Caxias and the whole allied army, and that it might stimulate them to move before the whole people were exterminated. Lopez had committed an act of war against the United States, and for it I had denounced him as a common enemy. I therefore considered myself at full liberty to publish to the world any information I might possess, and believed that I was not only acting within the limits of my official duty, but should do the world a service, if I contributed to bring to a speedier close his murderous career. I observed, however, that Commander Kirkland was extremely reluctant to have anything promulgated prejudicial to Lopez, giving as a reason that neutral gunboats passing the military lines had no right to convey intelligence from one belligerent to the other.

On arriving at Buenos Aires, the news brought with us caused the greatest excitement. I had scarcely reached my hotel before it was overrun with people who came anxiously to inquire for friends in Paraguay. I had but one answer for all: "Lopez has arrested your friends, and has either killed them all or holds them as prisoners loaded with fetters. Their wives and children, if not arrested, have been driven to the interior to die of starvation and exposure, rather than that they should escape to tell the story of his cruelties."

I had brought away with me a file of the *Semanario* containing the correspondence between Benitez and myself until Lopez, finding that my answers confounded his witnesses and showed them to contradict themselves and each other, discontinued the publication. I loaned this to an editor of one of the daily papers to be republished, reserving that which had

not already appeared in the *Semanario*, as it is a rule of the State Department that official correspondence shall not be published till so authorized by the Secretary. Commander Kirkland had brought another file of *Semanarios*, which had been furnished by Lopez, that the correspondence might be published in Buenos Aires. A copy of the long letter signed by Caminos, which had not appeared in the *Semanario*, was also given to Kirkland to be published with the rest. Lopez also ordered Dr. Stewart to write a letter to his brother, George D. Stewart, in Buenos Aires. This letter was never published, but was shown to me by the recipient, who, before I read it, said he hoped I would not feel any unkindness towards his brother for writing such a letter. I replied no, I certainly should not. It was Lopez's letter, not Dr. Stewart's; and though it might be in the handwriting of the latter, it had been dictated by Lopez. This letter pretended to give some details of the conspiracy which we had never heard of before. Among other things it said that it was a part of the plan to kill off the soldiers of the Republic by poisoning the wine in the public storehouses. As there was no wine in the country except that which was closely guarded for the use of Lopez and Madam Lynch, the absurdity of the story would defeat the object of the letter among those who knew anything of Paraguay. But the purpose of Lopez in having the letter written was to have it published and circulated in countries where people could not know of its absurdity. This letter, together with the *Semanarios* and a manuscript copy of the long letter of Caminos to me, was given to Commander Kirkland, to be made use of for the benefit of Lopez in Buenos Aires; and that officer, who had been so cautious lest he should violate the rules of war by conveying intelligence that might be used to the prejudice of Lopez, readily became his agent to carry away his secret despatches. Finding that Lopez had taken such measures to have his part of the correspondence published entire, while a material part of mine would be suppressed, I gave out the whole, together with a long letter I addressed to the English Minis-

ter, the Hon. William Stewart, on the condition of affairs in Paraguay; and it was all published in every daily paper in Buenos Aires, besides which a large edition was issued in pamphlet form, by the government, for circulation abroad.

My first duty after reaching Buenos Aires was to advise the admiral of our squadron of the outrage committed by Lopez in seizing two members of the American Legation at Asuncion, and urge him to go to their rescue. But previous to giving an account of the part taken by the squadron in this affair — not in vindicating the American flag, but in trailing it in the dust at the mandate of the tyrant of Paraguay — it becomes necessary to revert to events which had previously occurred.

As early as the 14th of October, 1867, I had sent a despatch to the Secretary of State, advising him that even then there was great fear among the people lest the evacuation of the capital should be ordered, to which I added, that I should not leave the town till so ordered by my government, unless it were as a prisoner. From the contents of this despatch, Mr. Seward inferred that my situation was liable to become dangerous, and so advised the Secretary of the Navy, and instructions were sent to Rear-Admiral Charles H. Davis, then commanding the United States South Atlantic Squadron, to send a gunboat to my relief.

The Wasp was accordingly despatched ostensibly on this service. Commander Kirkland was ordered to proceed in her "to the seat of war," and then communicate with me, and take me away if I should wish to leave. The "seat of war" at that time was Humaita, nearly two hundred miles below Asuncion, and for all practical purposes of relief Admiral Davis should have known that the Wasp might as well have been on the coast of Africa as below that point. He gave no instructions for her to go above the blockade, and apparently did not care whether she did or not, or whether she afforded any relief to me. As might have been foreseen, when the Wasp arrived near the blockading squadron, objection was made by the Brazilians to her going above it. This was a repetition of the outrage which had been at-

tempted on the Shamokin a year and a half before, but from which they receded when they saw that only force would avail to stop her. The question of principle or right having been previously settled, they would adhere to or waive their objection at this time according as they found the commander of the gunboat disposed to respect or disregard it.

As previously related, I advised Commander Kirkland that the Brazilians had no right to stop the Wasp, and not to heed their protest until they fired upon her or at least across her bows, — an act I had already proved they would never commit. Kirkland, however, disregarded my advice, and, reporting his exploits to the Admiral, took credit to himself for having shown his independence, and volunteered the opinion that it was very impertinent for a minister to make suggestions or recommendations to a naval officer.

Kirkland had been the favorite officer in command of a vessel when Godon was admiral of the squadron, and had doubtless learned from him that the most direct road to reward and promotion from the head of the Navy Department was to treat with contempt the advice or requests of the diplomatic agents of his government.

On arriving at Montevideo he wrote to Admiral Davis, then at Rio, of the refusal of the Brazilians to permit him to pass their blockade. His despatches were duly received by the Admiral, but so little importance did he attach to them that he allowed them to remain for several days unopened, and perhaps would never have looked at them had not his attention been called to them by General Webb.

The Minister of the United States in Rio de Janeiro at this time was General James Watson Webb, a gentleman having a national reputation as a diplomatist and political writer. Having been for more than thirty years editor and proprietor of a leading newspaper, and accustomed to deal as a statesman with all the great political questions of the time, foreign and domestic, his experience had admirably qualified him for any exigency that might arise in the career of a diplomat. This experience, joined to a very high order of ability, had not only

rendered him familiar with international law, but the frequent discussion of questions affecting our foreign policy had made him peculiarly sensitive to any infringement of the rights or honor of the United States. When these were touched, General Webb, as Minister, did not wait for instructions from home as to the course he should pursue. He took the responsibility of acting without waiting to learn whether or not his government would sustain him. For him to act, it was only necessary to know what the national honor and dignity required.

When the *Wasp* was despatched on her voyage in the month of April, 1868, for the purpose, not of carrying a minister to Paraguay, but of bringing him away, General Webb little thought that the Brazilians would again assume an attitude towards the United States from which they had been compelled most ungracefully to recede. Great was his surprise, therefore, to learn, on reading his morning paper, that the *Wasp* had been refused a passage through the blockade, and had returned to Montevideo. The paper boasted that the insolent Yankee had been snubbed, and the stars and stripes that had gone flaunting up the river had returned drooping to Montevideo. On reading this, General Webb lost no time in finding the Admiral and inquiring if it were indeed true that the *Wasp* had been sent back; for if it were so, he supposed the Admiral must have known of it for some days, and would have notified him of the fact, in order that he might take such official action as the case demanded. But on meeting him the Admiral remarked he knew nothing of the matter. True he had received despatches from Commander Kirkland some days before, but they were lying unopened on his table. He would read them on returning to his flag-ship, and would then take the matter into consideration. But he could not see that the case demanded any unusual action from him. The government could be advised that the *Wasp* had been turned back, and then, if instructions should be sent to him to force the blockade at the risk of a war, it would be time enough to do it. General Webb said, "No, the issue must be made here and now; advise me officially that

the Wasp has been turned back, and I will have the question settled at once. The allies shall not be permitted to keep a Minister of the United States a prisoner in a position declared dangerous by our government."

After much persuasion, which it may be presumed was so urgent that it might more properly be expressed by a stronger word, the Admiral gave him the official notice, and then General Webb addressed himself to the Brazilian government. The Ministry approved the course of the Marques de Caxias in refusing permission to the Wasp to pass the blockade. General Webb replied, "She must go through and she will go through; if not with your consent, still she will go to the relief of our Minister." The government, having indorsed Caxias, refused to yield; and General Webb then gave notice, that, unless it did so, the friendly relations between the United States and Brazil could no longer be maintained. The Wasp must be permitted to go through the blockade, or he would demand his passports, break up his Legation, and return to the United States.

This energetic action had its intended effect. The Ministry that approved the conduct of Caxias resigned, a new Ministry was appointed, and orders were sent to Caxias that when the Wasp might next appear she should be allowed to pass.

The Wasp was accordingly again despatched for Paraguay; and notwithstanding the vehemency with which General Webb had pressed the Brazilian government to grant permission for her to pass the blockade, nearly three months had passed from the time she had left Curupaiti, to return to Montevideo, before she returned and dropped anchor within the Paraguayan lines. As before related, she arrived barely in time to derange and defeat the plans of Lopez, not only towards all who were in the American Legation, but all the intelligent foreigners in his camp who might, if left alive, escape through the fortune of war, and publish to the world the truth in regard to his false accusations and pretended conspiracy. Had the return of the Wasp been delayed till instructions could have been received from Washington, she would have found no minister to take

away, and no member of his family, unless it were a little child too young to tell of anything which had transpired.

The arrival of the Wasp completely deranged the plans of Lopez. It had been his purpose to kill all the witnesses and blot out the record, and then to send forth to the world his own version of the occurrences which had led to their destruction; and on their own confessions he was to be justified, and they were to be adjudged by the world as having received their deserts. Her appearance had been most unwelcome to Lopez, and for several days after her arrival he hesitated whether to give up his cherished purposes or not. His position was embarrassing. He knew that if I were to escape I should expose him and his hideous acts to the world; and it was then too late to consummate his plans towards me, and yet make it appear that he had been forced to it for his own security or the "safety of the Republic." It was too well known that when the Wasp arrived I was still alive and well; and with all his precautions, including the destruction of the foreigners about his camp, it was impossible that many Paraguayans should not, either as prisoners or deserters, fall into the hands of the enemy. Then the whole plot would be exposed, and his well-woven web of testimony would be proved to be but a tissue of falsehoods invented by himself and ascribed to the victims whom he had killed in order to make sure that they should never deny them. That this plan was not carried out in all its parts many of those now alive, besides myself and the others in the United States Legation, have to thank General Webb. It is true he was not then aware of our terrible situation, for, so far as he knew, my relations were as friendly with Lopez as they had ever been. But he knew that for a long time I had been unable to communicate with the outer world, and that the conduct of Brazil was insulting to the honor and integrity of the United States. He knew, too, that our admirals on that station had shown a criminal indifference to the dignity and rights of their country, and he took the responsibility of forcing Brazil to the alternative of a rupture with the United States or of receding from her pretensions.

The indignation in Buenos Aires against Lopez, when it was known that he was torturing and killing all the foreigners in his power, was most intense. Many of his victims were Portefios, and many others had friends and relatives at the mouth of the river. The publication of my correspondence with Benitez and Caminos touched the pride of the Argentines, as in it I had made many reflections far from complimentary to the allies. I had remarked on the barbarism of making war, as they appeared to be doing, without fighting, and with the object of exterminating the Paraguayan people by starvation. These remarks were too just and true not to be keenly felt; but it was not for them I was arraigned so much as for what I had said in regard to the "conspiracy." When I had been officially notified by Benitez that a conspiracy had been discovered the object of which was to assassinate Lopez, I had, in accordance with all diplomatic usage, expressed my felicitations at his escape from the threatened danger. I had declared my abhorrence of assassination; and to the charges that the conspirators were making my Legation their headquarters, and thence carrying on a correspondence with their fellow-conspirators and with the Marques de Caxias, I had replied that I would not tolerate such persons in my house if such charges could be substantiated against them, but would instantly send adrift and denounce any one who could thus abuse my confidence and hospitality. It was at this that the gaucho republican editors of Buenos Aires and Montevideo were so vehemently indignant;—that I would not allow my house to be used as a rallying-point for a conspiracy against such a wretch as I had shown Lopez to be; that I should refuse to take part with conspirators, and denounce assassination as a crime, when the object was to destroy a monster who was daily murdering scores of the best people in Paraguay,—one whom I had denounced as an enemy of the human race!

On reaching Buenos Aires, my first duty was to fulfil my promise to Bliss and Masterman. I immediately wrote to Ad-

miral Davis and General Webb, both of whom were at Rio, advising them of the violation of the American flag by the seizure of these two members of my Legation, and that they had already been subjected to torture, and would inevitably be killed unless prompt measures were taken to rescue them.

In writing this work the disagreeable task has devolved upon me of exposing and denouncing the perverse and unpatriotic conduct of several officers of high rank in the American Navy. This exposure of the misconduct of the public servants of the United States I would gladly have omitted, had they not brought the naval service into contempt, and were it not a duty to inform the American people, so far as lies in my power, of the way in which their naval commanders demean themselves on foreign stations. The interests, the dignity, and the honor of the United States demand a most thorough and complete reorganization of the navy, which will only be brought about when the people who are taxed to maintain it shall learn to what purposes their money is devoted. I therefore shall make no apology for a digression in this place for the purpose of showing those defects in the present system which have kept the most meritorious officers in inferior and subordinate positions, while fawning sycophants and flatterers have through favoritism been advanced to places they were utterly unfit to fill. The system as it now is constitutes the admiral of a squadron the absolute despot over all who serve under him, so that whatever tyranny he may inflict on his subordinates they have practically no remedy. The autocratic powers of an admiral over all in his squadron lead him to suppose that in the ports which he visits he is the only representative of the United States, and that ministers or consuls have no more right to advise him, or suggest to him what the honor of the flag demands, than the midshipmen of his squadron. The system which makes the admiral so independent and despotic fosters this idea; and though the most of those in our naval service have the honor of the country too much at heart to allow their personal feelings to interfere with their public duties on foreign stations, yet when weak, vain, and malicious men are put into

such responsible positions, they may, as was seen in the case of these South American difficulties, bring great discredit on the naval service, and seriously compromise the relations of the government with other nations. A system that permits such abuses is certainly susceptible of reform and improvement.

When an admiral is ordered to a distant station to take command of the squadron there, the Secretary of the Navy, the only person to whom he is responsible, will be the better pleased the less he hears from him. If few questions, or disputes, or reports of courts-martial, are referred to him, he assumes that all is harmonious on board the fleet, and that the admiral is a competent and successful officer. Hence it is an object with them all that their reports shall show nothing but the regular routine which always is supposed to exist when the admiral is a just man and officers and men are respectful and obedient.

Once on a distant station, the admiral is the autocrat of the fleet. Of course he will have his favorites; that is human nature. Admirals, like other men, are susceptible to flattery, and when they are weak and vain, as it is possible for admirals to be, the sycophants and tale-bearers become his intimates, while those who scorn to act the flunky and the scandal-monger are subjected to a most galling tyranny. Every officer is anxious to be well reported to the Secretary of the Navy, as on his record made up by his admiral must he depend for promotion. Hence the admiral has absolute power over what the honorable and aspiring officer most highly prizes, his good name and his chance of promotion. If any injustice is done to an officer, the regulations provide that he may appeal to the Secretary of the Navy. But in practice it is left to the discretion of the admiral to send forward their complaints or not. Everything must first be submitted to the admiral before it is forwarded to the Secretary; and then if it be of such a nature that the admiral dreads to have it go forward, but fears to suppress it, he will try and conciliate the complainant and induce him to withdraw it. If, however, the wronged and insulted officer insists on sending forward his

statement, he knows that he will be in purgatory so long as he is subjected to the admiral's orders. Hence it is that, however intolerable the situation, however insolent and tyrannical the admiral, the aggrieved officer almost always finds it to his interest to submit in patience till death or the Secretary shall promote the admiral to another station. If the charges finally go before the Secretary, the admiral is sure to have his counter-charges; and the Secretary as a rule listens to the admiral, and dismisses the complainant with a reprimand, usually equivalent to a notice that by his insubordination he has injured his standing at the Department.*

* *Q.* What are the relations between you and Admiral Godon,—friendly or otherwise?

A. Unfriendly. They had their origin mostly, nine tenths of them, on account of my having been on friendly terms with Mr. Washburn.

Q. Prior to this period you were on friendly terms with the Admiral?

A. There had been no rupture at all, no open rupture.

Q. Were there unkind feelings before that?

A. I had no very particular admiration for him. Still I did my duty. I had received several complimentary letters from him for services I had performed; not very complimentary, but as complimentary as he was capable of writing. I had heard about this coal business, that Mr. Hale and some Americans had offered to furnish coal to enable Mr. Washburn to go up the river.

Q. What was the motive of the Americans in doing that?

A. I suppose they saw that the Minister was treated with indignity, and that it had the effect to bring our country in disrepute with the Argentine Republic; that we were losing very much of the importance which we had already, and which we still held in that country as a nation. He (Admiral Godon) charged me with not having written to him about Mr. Washburn, his conversation, and his movements, while I had been acting as the senior officer in the ports of Montevideo and Buenos Aires. I told him that I did not consider that that was any part of my duty; that my duty was to report to him everything official; but as for writing of Mr. Washburn, what he said, or about his movements, or anything connected with him, I never could perform any service of that kind. I said it in considerable warmth, and he charged me with being disrespectful in language and manner. I disclaimed any intention of that kind. . . . I then stated to him that he had on more than one occasion outraged my feelings; that I had no desire any longer to serve in his squadron; that he had upon more than one occasion insulted me. He replied that I should go on board my ship; that he would not put me under suspension. I obeyed the order. While smarting under this imputation of Admiral Godon, I applied officially to the Secretary of the Navy to be relieved from the command of the United States steamer *Kansas*, assigning as a reason that I had been promoted on the station to a commander, and was therefore entitled to a large vessel; but that I had also reasons of a special

Admiral Charles H. Davis, to whom I communicated the circumstances of my departure from Paraguay, though an old man, and one who had been long in the navy, had seen but little sea service. Though a man of liberal education and courteous manners, he was utterly wanting in that tact or quality that carries with it obedience without assuming the appearance of authority. Incapable of organization, his time was devoted to trifling details, which so engaged his attention that matters of grave importance were neglected, and in a little while his squadron was, if not bordering on mutiny, in a state of constant broils and quarrels. Courts-martial were so frequent as to crowd upon each other, and the Admiral soon found himself in more than one sense lost at sea.

character which I would at some future day make known to the Department. I forwarded that communication to Admiral Godon, sending it by the coxswain of my boat, and indorsed on the outside of it the subject-matter of it. That application he returned to me, because it happened to be Sunday.

Q. Was it the same Sunday that he had the dance and music aboard his vessel ?

A. No, sir ; it was some other time ; I only heard of that ; it did not occur then. I sent the same application to him the next day. By some mistake I had indorsed the subject-matter on the outside of the envelope ; there I made a mistake. He then hoisted the signal for me to repair on board ; this was in the afternoon. When I went on board I was told by his acting fleet-captain, Lieutenant-Commander Marvin, that the Admiral was taking a nap, and that I should wait there. I was invited by that officer into his stateroom, or office adjoining the cabin, which invitation I declined to accept. I remained on the quarter-deck nearly an hour before the Admiral sent for me. He seemed to be very much excited, very much enraged. He referred to this application of mine. I told him that I had no desire to serve any longer in his squadron. I was standing at that time against the sideboard in the cabin, and was perfectly respectful in manner and in language. He spoke of my repeated disobedience of orders, and said that while I was serving in his command I was to understand that I must obey his orders. He accompanied this with an offensive and insulting gesture, shaking his finger in my face. I called his attention to it, and he repeated it. I again called his attention to it in these words : ‘ Admiral Godon, you are shaking your finger in my face.’ He then ordered me in the most peremptory manner to go on board my vessel under suspension. As I was leaving the cabin I asked him if I should transfer the command to the executive officer. He shook his finger again towards me ; at that time I was some three or four feet from him ; he said that he knew what his duty was, and that I should go on board my ship under suspension. I remained under suspension two days, the first suspension that had ever been inflicted upon me in a naval service of over twenty-six years. By the rules and regulations of the service, I was obliged to

In the midst of his perplexities the Admiral leaned on his fleet-captain, whose unpopularity and insolence were the cause of many of his difficulties. This fleet-captain was Francis M. Ramsey, an officer very young for his position, and one who in his person afforded an excellent illustration of the defects in our naval system. During the years preceding the Rebellion, while the Navy Department was managed with a view to a dismemberment of the Union, he had connections at Washington who were able to second his own efforts to obtain rapid promotion. He had early learned that the surest road to advancement in the navy was by striving in all things to please the flag-officer of the squadron. Hence he had been promoted far beyond his deserts as an officer, and was fleet-captain of

confine myself to the cabin, about one third the size of this committee-room. I was not allowed to go to any other part of the ship, except, perhaps, to use the water-closet; that was on the upper deck. While under suspension I made a report in detail of this outrage to the Secretary of the Navy. I wish to state, however, that during this time I had orders to proceed to the coast of Africa on a cruise, to visit the ports from the Cape of Good Hope up. I reported all these indignities which I had endured. I attributed them mostly to my friendship for Mr. Washburn, and because I did not conform to the strict regulations of the service, which require the official communications to be sent to the commander-in-chief of the squadron. To protect myself from further indignities, which I knew he would visit upon me if I presented this report of his conduct in person, I confided it to Surgeon Wells of the Shamokin, requesting him to place the document on board the flag-ship as soon as he learned I had left the port of Montevideo. . . . I came home and reported my return to the Secretary of the Navy, and pressed this matter upon Mr. Welles as much as it was possible for a man to do. I courted the strictest investigation into my conduct. Mr. Welles said he was very sorry that our relations had been so unfriendly; that Admiral Godon, in a conversation with him on this subject, had disclaimed any intention of insulting me by his gesticulations; he said that Admiral Godon was a Frenchman; that he was naturally excitable, and that he had gesticulated in that way to him. I told him that I did not think Admiral Godon would dare to shake his finger in his face. Mr. Welles then seemed inclined to order an investigation. I had submitted documentary evidence refuting all the charges. Mr. Welles thought the matter had better drop; that it was unfortunate; that I had better let the matter die out. I told him it was a matter I thought of the first thing in the morning and the last thing at night, and that I would be willing to go out on the station and place myself under arrest for an official investigation into these troubles. He would not consent to that, and after an interview which lasted half an hour I left him." — *Paraguayan Investigation, testimony of Commander Clark H. Wells*, pp. 110, 111, 113.

the South Atlantic Squadron at the time that Admiral Davis was in command of it. He had a certain positiveness and self-assertion, qualities entirely wanting in the Admiral ; and these, united to a most offensive vanity, made up to some extent for his other defects, including a propensity to look after those petty details of buttons and formalities which men of average scope of mind seldom think of or notice. These qualities, while they caused him to be disliked in the squadron, commended him so much to Admiral Davis that he became virtually the commander of the fleet. But neither the actual nor the nominal admiral had any idea that the squadron might be called upon to perform any service which might interfere with his pleasure or convenience. They fully shared the opinion which Admiral Godon had so freely expressed, that they were under no obligations or responsibility to the diplomatic agents of the government, and were not bound in any way to defer to their wishes or requests. It was, therefore, far from agreeable to both of them, when the *Wasp* was turned back by the *Marques de Caxias*, that General Webb should so promptly resent the indignity to the United States, and compel Brazil to grant permission for her to pass the blockade. The consent, however, having been granted, there was no alternative but to send back the *Wasp*.

Until the *Wasp* had completed this latter voyage, there had been no rupture between the diplomatic and naval representatives. General Webb and Admiral Davis were on the most intimate and cordial terms, and supposed they were about to part as the best of friends, when the news came that the flag of the United States had been insulted by Lopez, and two members of the Legation in Paraguay had been arrested and carried off to prison and probable torture and execution. It was not necessary for a man to be "sudden and quick in quarrel" for an outrage of this kind, which was nothing more or less than an act of war against the United States, to arouse in him a feeling of intense indignation. Such a feeling was aroused in the mind of General Webb. The Admiral, however, seemed to regard it as a matter of little importance and

as calling for no unusual action on his part. Neither of them had received any official notice of what had transpired, and had only read the accounts in the newspapers of Buenos Aires, and their comments abusive of me. These the Admiral and his fleet-captain were disposed to listen to, while General Webb, without hesitation, assumed that they were scandalously and transparently false. But true or false, he said that it made no difference as to the duty of the Admiral. A gross outrage had been committed on the American flag, and instant redress should be demanded.

On the 5th of October, 1868, my letters to the Admiral and to General Webb were received by them. General Webb immediately sought the Admiral, to urge upon him that the case would admit of no delay. The Admiral, however, hesitated, and questioned the necessity of any action on his part. He said that my version of what had transpired in Paraguay was not to be credited, and my evidence of the violation of the flag was not sufficient for him to base any action upon. Finding that the Admiral was not disposed to do anything whatever, General Webb returned home mortified and heartsick. To all appearance the Admiral was playing into the hands of Lopez, who had already committed an act of war against the United States. But General Webb, anxious to avoid a rupture, wrote him a letter in terms such as one friend might employ in addressing another who he feared was about to make a fatal mistake. It was earnest and kind, and in no sense dictatorial, disclaiming all right to control the squadron, while forcibly representing the insult to the national flag.

This urgency on the part of the veteran statesman and diplomatist the fleet-captain chose to consider impertinent, and a very brief and grossly insulting note was sent in reply to the long and friendly letter of General Webb. This letter was doubtless written to warn the Minister that, in questions of grave interest affecting the honor of the country, he was not only not to control the Admiral, but not even to express his opinions. It had been notoriously owing to the action of General Webb that the *Wasp* had gone through the blockade

after having been once sent back ; and if his advice were now to be followed, the idea which many naval officers cherish and seek to promulgate, that they are the only representatives of the United States abroad, would be dispelled.*

As before stated, the day for the departure of the squadron for the Plata had been already fixed when the news of the outrage of Lopez on the Legation in Paraguay reached Rio. Though not officially announced, the officers understood that they were to be ready to sail on Saturday, the 10th of October, and it had been so announced in the English newspaper published at Rio. But General Webb, on receiving information that Bliss and Masterman had been seized by Lopez, and that the only chance of their escape consisted in the promptness with which a force should be sent to rescue them, urged it upon the Admiral that he should not wait so long, but sail for the Plata as soon as he could possibly get ready. In this way he could save two whole days, and on the saving of that time might depend, not only the lives of the men seized, but the averting of a war on the tyrant who held them in his power. But the Admiral had chosen to quarrel with the Minister, and to show his independence he gave public notice that the fleet was not about to leave for the Plata nor for any other place. In fact, the departure of the squadron on a duty so urgent and pressing that every moment of unnecessary delay was criminal was deferred for three weeks, for no other purpose than to demonstrate the independence of the Admiral.

* The letter of Admiral Davis was as follows : —

" UNITED STATES FLAG-SHIP GUERRIERE, (first-rate,
RIO DE JANEIRO, October 8, 1868.

" SIR, — I owe you, perhaps, an apology for not having acknowledged sooner the reception of your letter of the 6th instant, in which you give me the *unsolicited* benefit of your opinion on the subject of my official duties.

" Since your opinion is formed without a knowledge of all the circumstances of the case, I may not, possibly, attach so much value to it as you seem to expect.

" Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

" C. H. DAVIS,

Rear-Admiral Commanding South Atlantic Squadron.

" HON. J. WATSON WEBB, *United States Minister Plenipotentiary
and Envoy-Extraordinary to the Court of Brazil.*"

CHAPTER XXXII.

The Commercial Interests of Paraguay. — Policy of the United States in Regard to the Republics of South America. — M. T. McMahon appointed United States Minister to Paraguay. — Conflict of Testimony. — Admiral Davis's Excuses for Delay. — Extract from General Webb's Testimony. — Davis and McMahon. — Indorsement of Commander Kirkland. — His Letter to Admiral Davis.

DURING the whole time of my residence in Paraguay the commercial interests of that country with the United States amounted to nothing, and so long as the Lopez dynasty and system might last it never would amount to enough to justify our government in the expense of keeping a minister there. Only political reasons can be alleged for maintaining ministers, as is now done, at several South American republics. It had been the policy of the United States to be the first to recognize them as independent sovereignties after they had severed their connection with Spain; and the principal motive in keeping up diplomatic relations with several of them has always been to encourage them, amid their many changes and revolutions, to adhere, at all times, to the republican form of government. The despotism of Paraguay, however, was so absolute, and the prospect that our commercial relations with that region would be extended was so slight, that on resigning my office as minister it would have been my duty, except for the peculiar state of affairs existing at the time, to recommend that the office be discontinued. But in view of the fact that important political changes seemed impending in that part of the world, in which both the political and commercial interests of the United States might be concerned, I urgently requested that a successor should be appointed to my place. Another motive with me in making

this recommendation was the fact, that the people there, especially the foreigners, thought that the presence of the minister of a great power would give them a certain protection and security. In accordance with this request, another minister was appointed to succeed me. The person selected for the position was General Martin T. McMahon of New York. His appointment was made about the 1st of July, 1868; but as the State Department soon after received information that affairs in Paraguay were in a most uncertain and unsatisfactory condition, his departure was delayed till the latter part of September. The Admiral afterwards alleged, as a reason or excuse for his long delay in Rio, that he had received information that General McMahon was to leave New York on the American steam-packet for Rio on the 24th of September, and that he waited for him and the instructions which he might bring with him before starting for the Plata. This, however, was an afterthought, and I am sorry to say was not true. Though he had heard of General McMahon's appointment, he could not have had any definite information of the time of his leaving for his post at the time he postponed his departure for the Plata, nor of the instructions which he was to bring.*

* "He (the Admiral) stated distinctly that he should sail from Rio on the following Saturday, it being the 10th of October; or, if he did not get off on Saturday, the 10th, he would most certainly leave on Monday, the 12th, or possibly Tuesday, the 13th; but he had no doubt about getting off on the 10th. On Monday, the 5th of October, I met an unusual number of officers in the streets of Rio, and learned from one or more of them that they were there for the purpose of settling up their accounts, because the Admiral had given notice he would sail on Saturday, the 10th; and on reference to my correspondence with the Admiral it will be perceived that I say, in substance, to him, "that inasmuch as you are prepared to sail on the 10th, let me beg you to get off on Thursday, the 8th, and thereby save two days." At that time, bear in mind, the Admiral had full knowledge of the fact that these gentlemen of the Legation had been seized, and we were actually corresponding about the necessity of his moving to their relief. It appears to me, therefore, utterly impossible, that on the 5th of October, when he refused to move, his "motive" in so doing was, as he alleges *now*, to await the arrival of General McMahon; and it is equally impossible that at that time he could have known, as he says he did, that General McMahon would arrive in the next steamer. Had it been his intention to await the arrival of the new minister on the 20th or 21st of October, why announce to me, and to all at

It was not till after McMahan had actually reached Rio, which he did about the 20th of October, that the Admiral ventured to put forth as a reason for his delay the fact that he was waiting for his arrival. As soon, however, as he knew he had come, he sought to capture him and make him an ally as against General Webb. The reader has seen how Admiral Gordon refused to give passage both to General Asboth and myself at a time when no other means of passage was available, and from that would infer that it is contrary to the naval regulations for war vessels to convey the ministers of their own nation. But no sooner had General McMahan reached Rio, than Admiral Davis, without waiting to be asked, invited Minister McMahan and his family, consisting of three besides

my table, that he would sail on Saturday, the 10th; and why give notice to that effect to the squadron, in order that the officers might settle up their accounts?

"Anterior to September, General McMahan had been appointed Minister to Paraguay, and ordered to proceed to his post of duty. The State Department, learning from me the difficulties that existed in regard to the Wasp, and that the Wasp had been stopped by the allies in passing up to Asuncion, instructed General McMahan, on the 18th of August, *not* to leave the country until he received further orders. On the 2d of September, 1868, Mr. Seward addressed to General McMahan the following:—

"When, on the 18th of August last, you were on the eve of your departure for Asuncion, the capital of Paraguay, as Minister Resident of the United States to that Republic, this Department by direction of the President, requested you to remain in the United States until you should receive further instructions. The occasion of that direction was, that Rear-Admiral Davis, who commands the United States South Atlantic Squadron, had just then reported that he had sent the United States ship-of-war Wasp up the Parana, for the purpose of bringing away your predecessor, Mr. Charles A. Washburn, and his family, from Asuncion. . . .

"To-day I received from Mr. Webb a despatch, which bears date August 7, and which came from London by cable, in which despatch he says that the Brazilian Ministry has yielded to his request, and that the Wasp goes to Asuncion.

"The information thus received is deemed sufficient to warrant your proceeding at once, by the *next United States steamer*, to the seat of your legation.'

"Now, the next United States steamer was to sail September 23. That despatch most probably did not reach General McMahan, in New York, until the 4th. By what means, then, could the Admiral know of its existence at Rio on the 5th of October? If General McMahan wrote to Captain Ramsey, by the steamer of the 5th, via England, the day after the receipt of this letter from Washington, it would not reach England before the 17th. There is no telegraph from England to Rio Janeiro, or any part of Brazil, and the first steamer from England would

himself, to take passage to Montevideo on board the flag-ship *Guerriere*.

General McMahon, having been advised to confer with General Webb on arriving at Rio, did so, notwithstanding his newly fledged friendship for the Admiral. The latter freely expressed his views on the situation, and in an official letter gave it as his opinion that Lopez had committed an act of war against the United States, and that therefore no diplomatic relations could be held with him till he had restored Bliss and Masterman, and given satisfaction for the outrage on the American flag.

In my letter from Buenos Aires to Admiral Davis, I had, after telling him of the circumstances attending the seizure of Bliss and Masterman, advised him that I should remain

be that of 20th of September, from Liverpool, due in Rio in twenty-four days, she being a freight propeller. That would make its receipt in Rio fall on the 14th of October, whereas my correspondence with the Admiral, in regard to this movement to Paraguay, commenced on the 5th of October, and terminated on the 10th, the very day which he had fixed for his departure, my application for his departure having been made and refused on the 5th. It appears, then, to be morally and physically impossible that any information could have been in the Admiral's possession, by private letter, apprising him that General McMahon would arrive in the steamer of the 23d, and I therefore again give it as my firm belief that the Admiral did intend to sail on the 10th, without having any idea of the arrival of McMahon, and that he remained in the harbor of Rio, not for the purpose of receiving General McMahon, as he alleges, and of whose arrival he could not have knowledge, but because, as I have said to the government, I, as Minister, had urged him to expedite his departure from the 10th to the 8th. I consider the declaration now made, that he knew that McMahon was coming, a mere subterfuge, not sustained by what possibly could be the facts of the case, and palpably an afterthought. But the Admiral also says that he waited for the Minister to Paraguay, 'who had a right to be consulted and needed to take direction, and that was the intention of the government, as he was specially instructed to act in co-operation with me, and I in co-operation with him.'

"Now mark this additional specific reason assigned for delay. The committee asks the Admiral: Did General McMahon, when he arrived on the 21st, bring any instructions? The Admiral answers in the negative. It is true that the government did expect and did order that General McMahon and the Admiral should co-operate, but *not* previously to the 5th of October. That order was not given except in a despatch dated Washington, November 21, which would arrive at Rio only on the 20th of December; and yet the Admiral says that a knowledge of that fact on the 5th of October, forty-six days before its existence, induced him to determine not to move until General McMahon had arrived."—*Paraguayan Investigation, testimony of General J. Watson Webb*, pp. 257, 258.

there to await his arrival, in order to give him any further information that it might be necessary for him to have, in order to act with a full understanding of the situation. I did not then suppose that there would ever be the least difference of opinion as to what ought to be done, and was greatly surprised, after waiting for some two or three weeks, to learn that a quarrel had arisen between General Webb and the Admiral. From the Admiral, whom I had never known personally, I received a most polite and friendly letter, congratulating me on my escape. From General Webb I received another letter, advising me of the difference he had had with the Admiral, partly because of his apathy and indifference to the honor of the flag, and partly because he had given as a reason for his inaction his disbelief in my statements, and alleging that he had other information, derived from Commander Kirkland, in regard to matters in Paraguay, that conflicted with my account of them. But General Webb, in his letter to the Admiral, said it mattered very little what Kirkland had reported, and added: "The duly accredited Minister to the government of Paraguay has made his report, which I have placed in your possession, and every word of which I indorse. . . . Both you and I know him to be the duly accredited Minister of the United States, and his testimony, which we have, it is our bounden duty to respect."

As the reader is aware, I had had before this a very serious dispute with Admiral Godon, whose conduct had been such as to give the people of the Plata anything but a favorable impression of his fitness for the position he occupied. But with all his insolence, his efforts to defeat or embarrass me in the performance of my official duties, he had never called in question any statement I had ever made. But with Davis, I find that even before he knew me he had quarrelled with General Webb, and to justify himself in that quarrel he questions my veracity!

This was certainly an embarrassing position. I had seen my flag violated, my rights as a minister outraged, and two members of my suite, as much entitled to legation privileges as I was, had been forcibly torn away from me and carried off to

torture and probable death. Their last words to me were an appeal to notify the Admiral of our squadron of their situation. I had done so, and I was the only witness that could testify to the outrage. And yet the Admiral would not take my word, but remained at Rio to show his independence.

Until I received this letter from General Webb, I had not suspected but that Commander Kirkland was acting in the most perfect good faith towards all parties. On the voyage down the river he had repeated to me so many times the conversations he had held with Lopez, — both while he was threatening to keep me a prisoner and afterwards, — in which he made it appear that it was by his threats to Lopez that the tyrant had been induced to let me go, that I supposed his conduct could not be too highly commended. In my letter to the Admiral, I made use of the strongest terms of approval of his conduct, based entirely on his own version of the service he had done me.*

What information Admiral Davis received from Commander Kirkland, at the time he alleged it as a reason for discrediting me, he has never made public. He could have no knowledge of what had occurred in Asuncion, as he was not permitted to go there, and at the time of the arrest of Bliss and Master-

* "BUENOS AIRES, September 30, 1868.

"MY DEAR SIR, — . . . I wish here to give my testimony in regard to the firmness and good judgment displayed by Captain Kirkland in treating with Lopez. No one who has not lived in Paraguay can realize the delicate nature of the task he had to perform,—that was to get me and my family unharmed out of the country. Fortunately he speaks the Spanish language fluently, and had known Lopez before, and knew that he was the most arrant coward on the face of the earth. He therefore knew how to take him ; and when Lopez threatened to keep me as a prisoner, he talked to him in such a manner that the craven wretch quailed before him and said he would let me go. And this defiant attitude he maintained during all the time he was detained there by Lopez, waiting for me to come on board the Wasp. He repelled the rude officiousness of Lopez's officers as though he had the Dunderberg, the Monadnock, and Miantonomoh at his back, and fairly cowed Lopez and attained his object, where a man of less nerve or tact would have failed entirely. I trust that this important service may be put to his credit and allowed to draw interest.

"Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

"CHARLES A. WASHBURN.

"REAR-ADMIRAL C. H. DAVIS, *United States flag-ship Guerriere,*
Rio de Janeiro."

man was some twenty miles distant. While at Lopez's headquarters he had no communication with any persons except Lopez and Madam Lynch, unless others were present to be spies upon them; and therefore whatever he wrote to Admiral Davis that conflicted with my published statements must have been received either from Lopez or his paramour. What object Kirkland could have at that time in becoming the mouthpiece of Lopez, and what was the nature of the statements he made to Davis while acting in that character, has never to my knowledge been divulged, and is, I believe, a secret among the real conspirators, Davis, Ramsey, McMahan, ✓ and Kirkland, — conspirators engaged in a plot to destroy the testimony of a minister of their own government, and serve the interests of the worst tyrant that ever figured on the page of history. From an expression of McMahan in a despatch to the Secretary of State, written while he was still at Rio, October 27, 1868, an inference may be drawn of the general character of Kirkland's letters. In this despatch McMahan says he learns "that all prisoners held for political offences in Paraguay are treated with no unnecessary harshness."

How could he learn that? No one but Kirkland or myself could have brought the news, and if Kirkland had any such knowledge he had derived it from Lopez or Madam Lynch. I had published to the world that Lopez was torturing and murdering all the best people in Paraguay for alleged political offences, and McMahan had read my letters. Yet he writes to the Secretary of State that he is not treating them with unnecessary harshness. Evidently the plan by this time is already conceived, and McMahan, Davis, and Kirkland have determined to become the apologists and champions of Lopez. Though I have told them his hands are reeking with the blood of hundreds of foreigners and thousands of Paraguayans, including some of his own nearest relatives, they see that their interest lies in discrediting me, and in taking Lopez's own words as reported to them through Kirkland.

As a part of this conspiracy,—and now I talk of a real

conspiracy,— it is thought prudent to send abroad for publication a statement to neutralize the effect which it is surmised my accounts of Lopez's atrocities may have on the people of the United States. This was accordingly done. Immediately after the newspapers throughout the country had given currency to my version of Lopez's barbarities, another statement was sent forth as coming from Kirkland, in which Bliss and Masterman are represented as being in no danger, as Lopez had assured him that he was still desirous of maintaining friendly relations with the United States. So it would seem that Lopez still had good friends in the American Navy, and that his outrage on the flag did not prejudice him in their minds.

The official report made by Kirkland to Admiral Davis was dated September 22, but that contains no reference to the treatment of prisoners in Paraguay for political offences, and therefore McMahon's knowledge of it, which he communicated to Mr. Seward, must have been derived from private and unofficial letters which have not been made public. In the meanwhile, Kirkland, having sent to the Admiral his report of the trip, remained at Montevideo, awaiting further orders from Rio; but before he could receive any reply, he sent another letter to the Admiral, unofficial, in which he pretended to give an account of his first interview with Lopez. I give the following extract :—

“On the 2d of September I first visited President Lopez. I inquired after Mr. Washburn, and Lopez replied, ‘I am sorry to say we are very bad with Mr. Washburn.’ I said that I was very sorry to hear it. Lopez said, ‘Mr. Washburn is an enemy to Paraguay.’ I said I did n't believe it; and he continued: ‘I do not doubt it; I have the proofs.’ I then said again: ‘I do not believe it, but if he is, it is none of my business.’ Lopez then said: ‘I wish you to take a part in this, and try to arrange the matter between myself and Mr. Washburn, as I am very loath to take any step inimical to the United States.’ I replied that my mission was a specific one; that I was not a diplomate, and that I would not interfere in the matter in any way. He remarked that, unless the matter could be arranged, he feared he

would have to detain Mr. Washburn ; and I answered him, as nearly as I can recollect, as follows : ‘ Any steps taken against the United States Minister will be avenged by that government, even should the Minister be in the wrong in the first instance. Your duty is to allow him to depart peaceably, and to refer your complaint, if you have any, to the President of the United States ; and you may rest assured that if the Minister has been guilty of unfriendly acts to the government of Paraguay while residing in your country he will be called to account for it ; but if you take the law in your own hand, and insult his sacred diplomatic character by such an act, a fleet of six light-draught monitors, with fifteen and twenty-inch guns, which was in Pernambuco, bound to this river for the purpose of forcing the Brazilian blockade, will take sides with the allies, will pass your batteries, knock down your towns and cities, and the government of the United States will hunt you over the world, and demand you from any government that may have given you shelter. I shall wait a proper time, and if Mr. Washburn is not put on board, or I am not allowed to embark him with the means at my command, I shall return immediately, and report to the government that he is a prisoner at your hands.’ Lopez then asked how long I would remain. I replied, ‘ Only a few days, as I have strict orders on the subject.’ Lopez, after a short while, said : ‘ You are right ; I will let Mr. Washburn go, and will represent his conduct to his government.’ . . . I have no idea that Lopez’s remark was intended as any threat against Mr. Washburn’s liberty ; but he was very anxious to have the ship in the river, if possible, and thought he could accomplish that by temporizing.”

In his first version of this interview with Lopez, made to me verbally on board the *Wasp*, Kirkland represented that he made use of much stronger language than he has given in this account of it, subsequently sent to the Admiral, and at that time he did not disclaim the credit of having frightened the tyrant by his threats of the vengeance of the United States. He had heard many rumors of the atrocities of Lopez but a short time before, and when he went on shore to visit him was quite uncertain of his reception, or of the dangers before him. He watched the countenance of the despot as he talked to him, and could see the suppressed anger raging behind his

malignant, cowardly eyes, and was watching for the first sign of a movement against himself, or for an order in Guarani to the surrounding guards to seize him, prepared to make an end of Lopez sooner than be arrested. Kirkland is the only person, so far as I know, that ever went armed into the presence of Lopez, and with the intention of killing him sooner than be arrested. It was from his own version of the interview with Lopez that my letter of indorsement and approval of his conduct was based. I then believed, as I believe now, that Kirkland conducted himself with great judgment and tact in all his intercourse with Lopez up to the time when he had succeeded in frightening the tyrant from his purpose of keeping me. For that service I wished to do him all possible credit, and when afterwards I learned that he repudiated my gratitude, and was seeking to invalidate my words by representing that Lopez was not the wretch I knew him to be, and did not treat his prisoners unkindly or with any "unnecessary harshness," I was forced to the conclusion that Lopez, having given me up, decided to try and make Kirkland his friend,—and succeeded.

In the same letter to the Admiral, as if to show, without saying so, that he discredited my words, Kirkland wrote the following :—

"Mr. Washburn told me that he had never heard anything of a revolution or conspiracy against the government ; but, on one occasion, Mrs. Washburn, when her husband was not present, said that there was a plan to turn Lopez out of power, and to put in his place his two brothers, Venancio and Benigno. As Mrs. Washburn had entirely agreed with her husband when he emphatically denied ever having heard of any plan, this admission on her part rather astonished me ; but I did not comment on it."

In all the "declarations" of Lopez's tortured witnesses, and in all the statements made at different times by the persons who subsequently escaped from his power, no allusion was ever made to this plan to turn out Lopez and put his brothers in his place. No one of the survivors had ever heard of it except Mrs. Washburn, and the improbability, not to say impossibility,

that she could ever have made such a remark, is, therefore, sufficiently evident.

It may be here remarked, that when the Congressional Committee on Foreign Affairs were engaged in the investigation of the Paraguayan difficulties, all the friends and apologists of Lopez, including Davis, McMahon, Kirkland, and Ramsey, were categorically questioned if they had any evidence derived from persons beyond the reach of the tyrant that any conspiracy had existed in Paraguay, and they could allege nothing except this remark that Kirkland said was made by Mrs. Washburn, and one or two sentences in my correspondence with Benitez, in which I had spoken of the conspiracy as if I had believed in it. All who have since escaped, and have spoken in regard to the matter, have expressed their belief that there never was any conspiracy, so that the only witnesses to the contrary are Mrs. Washburn and myself.

At length, on the 28th of October, the Admiral started for Montevideo in the *Guerriere*, having Minister McMahon and his family on board. The smaller vessels of the squadron had sailed a day or two before. Nearly a month had elapsed since he first heard of the seizure of Bliss and Masterman, but by his delay he had taught the lesson to American ministers, that in all cases in which the honor of their country is concerned they are not to be consulted, and that if they offer any opinion they may be rudely insulted, and the insult will be indorsed by the Secretary of the Navy.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Investigation of Paraguayan Affairs by Congress.—Its Object.—The Course taken by the Naval Department.—Extracts from the Report of the Congressional Committee.—Admiral Godon censured.—Extracts from the Testimony of Captain Clark H. Wells.—Interview with Admiral Davis and General McMahon.—The Admiral's Forgetfulness.—He determines to demand the Release of Bliss and Masterman.—Extract from a Letter to McMahon.—His Subsequent Course.—Antecedents of McMahon.—Return to the United States.—Naval Courtesy.—Captain Ramsey.

THE reader who has followed me thus far in my "Reminiscences of Diplomacy under Difficulties," may object to so long a digression from the events in Paraguay to the conduct of officers in the American Navy. It may also be objected that in a work of this kind, intended to be more permanent than the ephemeral literature of the newspapers, the faults of our own countrymen should be made public. It is certainly a task far from agreeable to expose the doublings and dishonesty of men to whom is intrusted to some extent the guardianship of the national honor, and the person who does it is sure to bring upon himself a crowd of assailants who, if they cannot disprove his facts, will impugn his motives. Before he ventures on such a labor, therefore, he should be very sure that there is no vulnerable point in his own armor. These possible objections have all been duly considered. When I first escaped from Paraguay, knowing that I brought away with me the good-will of every person in that country except Lopez and Madam Lynch, and that hundreds felt grateful to me for the efforts I had made, at great risk to myself and family, to serve and save them, and that every one who had ever lived there, and could appreciate my situation, would approve my every act, I did not anticipate that the

acknowledgment for all these services would be a general condemnation, based not only on the ridiculous and self-contradicting charges of Lopez and the tirades of the allies, but on the reports of the officers of our own squadron. I then said that the truth would at some day be made clear, and that I could afford to wait. At that time I had nothing but my own unsupported word to put against that of Lopez and his multitude of tortured witnesses, against the allies, and against the higher officers of the South Atlantic Squadron.

Afterwards, when Bliss and Masterman were released, and I had some witnesses, they prepared a memorial to Congress, asking an investigation into the treatment they had received from Lopez, and also at the hands of Admiral Davis and his officers. This memorial was referred to the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, and by a resolution which, at my instance, was made to call for an investigation into the conduct of the officers of the squadron, and that of "the late Minister to Paraguay," — myself. I desired that the investigation might be thorough, and that those officers who had been so free to defend Lopez and assail me might have a chance to make good their statements, and if, in their zeal to serve a tyrant, they had disgraced the naval service, that the public should be informed of it. It was not enough that the head of the Navy Department should know it, for I had learned that it was a rule, scarcely ever departed from, in that Department, to sustain the higher officers in the service, whatever they might do. The Secretary of the Navy had indorsed and approved throughout the conduct of Admiral Godon, notwithstanding which the Committee on Foreign Affairs, after full investigation, severely condemned it.* The conduct of Ad-

* "This manifest indifference on the part of Admiral Godon to the reasonable request of an American Minister continued for a considerable period of time, and finally resulted in excuses which soon became as numerous as they were frivolous. . . .

"That this excuse of an 'insufficiency of coal' was a mere evasion of the Admiral is furthermore apparent from his own testimony. . . .

"Thus, after a delay of over a year, for which there was, in our opinion, no justifiable excuse on the part of Admiral Godon, Mr. Washburn was permitted to reach his destination.

miral Davis was likewise approved throughout by the same Secretary, Gideon Welles, who not only justified him in all he had done, but induced the Secretary of State also to write a letter of commendation.

The Vice-Admiral of the Navy, now the Admiral (Porter), when called before the investigating committee to give his testimony in regard to the usages of the navy, found nothing in the conduct of Godon, Davis, Ramsey, or Kirkland to condemn, but approved and indorsed it all, and testified that they were all most marvellously proper men, and ornaments to the country and the service. In fact, so explicit was he in his approval, that he justified Davis for treating Bliss and Masterman as prisoners, though the latter had under oath denied that he had thus treated them. Had he hung them both at the yard-arm of the *Wasp* at the order of Lopez, he would doubtless have been as fully sustained by the Navy Department. In the naval service it is understood that there is no appeal to any power but to the Secretary. No wronged subordinate officer can appeal to the public through the press without incurring the liability of being court-martialed. His complaints to the Secretary must first be delivered unsealed to the admiral, who will forward them or not, according to his own pleasure. If sent forward, they are accompanied by the admiral's justification and counter-charges, and the difficulty is hushed up by the Secretary, always, however, leaving the admiral unscathed and the public ignorant of his tyranny and injustice. That the public may remain quiet and acquiescent

“During this investigation your committee have seen, with regret, the existence, among the officers of the South Atlantic Squadron, of a feeling of extreme bitterness and malevolence, accompanied with acts of superciliousness and petty tyranny totally unworthy of their position, derogatory to our national character, and subversive of that efficiency in the naval service which can spring only from harmony and proper respect on all occasions. The necessity and justification of these remarks are to be found in the accompanying testimony.

“In this connection we also feel compelled to advert to a feeling of disrespect exhibited by Admiral Godon towards our diplomatic representatives with whom he came in contact, and which probably furnishes the motive for his course in this matter.” — *Paraguayan Investigation, Report of Committee on Foreign Affairs*, pp. iii, v, xxvi.

in the enormous expense of the navy, it must be kept uninformed of the tyranny practised within it, and of the utter uselessness of the squadrons that are maintained on foreign stations, at the cost of millions annually. To keep one first-rate, like the *Guerriere*, flag-ship of Admiral Davis, abroad, costs more money than the whole diplomatic service of the United States ; and yet, though Admiral Godon made himself the friend and "confidential" adviser of the allies, in preventing an American Minister from reaching his post of official duty, and bitterly persecuted the best officers in his squadron because they would not approve his conduct and act a part unbecoming a gentleman,* and though Admiral Davis meekly submitted to the indignities offered by Lopez to the American flag, without pretending to resent them, yet the conduct of both admirals was approved and commended by Mr. Secretary Welles. When such acts were approved, certainly it was time for a power stronger than the Secretary to take the matter in hand, and make a thorough investigation. In the ordinary routine of the navy, under its present system, which prevents the public from knowing how their money is squandered, and renders the department an *imperium in imperio*, these abuses might go on indefinitely if their exposure were dependent on persons subject to the authority of the Secretary. They cannot appeal to the public without a certainty of being ignominiously dismissed from the service, after which, as disgraced men, they have little or no influence. Hence it is for persons in no way connected with the navy to expose the abuses within it, if the people are ever to be informed of them. But as it is seldom that any one not in the navy becomes cognizant of the tyranny and wrongs which are perpetrated on distant stations by

* "He (Admiral Godon) charged me with not having written him about Mr. Washburn, his conversation and his movements, while I had been acting as senior officer in the ports of Montevideo and Buenos Aires. I told him that I did not consider that that was any part of my duty; that my duty was to report to him anything official: but as for writing of Mr. Washburn, what he said, or about his movements, or anything connected with him, I never could perform any service of that kind."—*Paraguayan Investigation, testimony of Captain Clark H. Wells*, p. 110.

officers high in rank and command, it is certainly my duty as one of those in another branch of the public service who have been forced, not only to witness, but to suffer from the arrogant pretensions on one hand, and the humiliating concessions on the other, of these same officials, to fully expose their delinquencies as a part of my "Reminiscences of Diplomacy under Difficulties."

On the 4th of November, the *Guerriere* arrived at Montevideo, and shortly after Admiral Davis and General McMahon took passage on the *Wasp* for Buenos Aires, where I had the honor of being visited by both of them at my hotel. I now learned for the first time that the Admiral had decided to go to Paraguay and demand the release of Bliss and Masterman, and was assured by him that the report I had heard of his having expressed doubts in regard to my representations of the conduct of Lopez, and the condition of affairs in Paraguay was utterly untrue. He had never said anything of the kind. This was a flat contradiction of what General Webb had written to me; and I afterwards had other evidence that would indicate that the Admiral was forgetful.

He nevertheless seemed disinclined to believe that Lopez was quite so bad as I had represented him to be, and declined to advise me as to the course he should pursue in case Bliss and Masterman had already been executed or Lopez should refuse to give them up. I warned him that Lopez would try very hard to deceive him, and that he could manufacture testimony at pleasure. From my intimate knowledge of all the circumstances of Lopez's character and his system of diplomacy, I thought I could be of some service in the negotiations if I could return as a passenger. But the Admiral thought himself too acute to be overreached, and declined my offer; and though I knew perfectly well that a sharper man than he, and one more sensible of the difficulties of the task, would be hoodwinked and imposed upon, I could not with propriety tell him so. I advised him, however, without reserve, and also General McMahon, of the obstacles they

would have to encounter. To the latter I expressed the opinion that he ought not to go near Lopez, nor present his credentials, till he received further instructions from the government. In order to advise him more definitely in regard to the property of certain persons that had been left with me, and to enlist him in behalf of friends whom I had left in Paraguay, if they should survive till Lopez was overthrown, I wrote him a letter, from which, as it contained the impressions then fresh in my mind just after my escape from the despot's power, and was addressed to one who might soon have an opportunity of verifying their correctness, I make the following quotations :—

“ We left many friends in Paraguay, concerning whose fate we feel the most painful interest. To spite us, we fear, Lopez may have robbed, imprisoned, tortured, or shot those known to be our friends. We are terribly anxious to know their fate, and depend on you to advise us. Of all the Paraguayans, the family in which we take the most interest is that of the late Don José Mauricio Casal, living, if still in their old home, near the villa of Limpio, some five or six leagues from Asuncion. Both Mrs. Washburn and myself were more intimate with that family than any other, visiting them often and being visited by them in return. On leaving, I made a request that my horses, four in number, and cows, of which I had about ten, might be sent out to this family. I am afraid, however, they were not sent, but, instead, our good friends were sent off to the Cordilleras, or were taken in irons to the army, and perhaps the backs of the pretty Conchita and Anita scored with the lash. We charge you, both of us, to inquire particularly about this family, and let us know what became of them. Should the war end and they be left in their old home, you will find their house the most delightful place to visit in all Paraguay.

“ Another friend in whom we take great interest is the widow Doña Carmelita Gill de Cordal. She lived close by, and visited us very often. She is a sister of the Captain Gill who was one of the heroic defenders of Humaita. Few men living have been under fire so much as he. But, because he and his handful, surrounded by ten times their number, and literally starving, with no possible chance of escape, surrendered, Lopez has published him as a

traitor, very probably confiscated the property of all his family and sent them into exile, or, perhaps, taken them in irons to his headquarters to be shot. That is his style. So he has served many others under similar circumstances. Try and advise us of the fate of our spunky, witty, confidential, Lopez-hating little friend. When the war began she had a husband, who was one of the richest men in Paraguay, and three children. Her husband was taken as a common soldier, and sent into the ranks barefoot, and killed in the first battle in which he took part. Now we fear she has nothing left but her iron anklets.

“Several Englishmen and one German, in the employ of Lopez, sent away their money by me. It was brought down by the Wasp. Lest it might be seized in Buenos Aires and confiscated, I sent it to Montevideo, and ordered it to be delivered to the London and River Plate Bank, and the part that was to be sent to England was to be forwarded as directed on the boxes, and the rest was to be put to the credit of the owners in said bank. The Wasp charged two and a half per cent as freight, which was all the expense incurred.

“You will understand that I write now in view of contingencies that may never arise. I take it for granted that after Lopez’s insults to me, and his seizure of two members of my Legation, you will not have any communication with him till the government has been advised of his conduct, and has deliberately resolved on its course of action. I am confident that our government will never resume diplomatic relations with Lopez. I have denounced him as a common enemy, and have no doubt my course will be approved. But a common enemy cannot long stand against the world. He must soon bite the dust, and my hope is that this ogre may be finished off before he has destroyed all my friends in Paraguay. In that case you may learn something of the condition of those who remain, if any such there be, and the way the others were murdered by the grim monster. It is in view of such contingencies I beg of you to advise me of the fate of some of the dearest friends I have ever known. I never was so anxious to leave a place as I was to leave Paraguay, and I never left a place with so sad a heart. I had the feeling that all who had been particular friends to me and mine were to be put to death — perhaps after torture — for that crime.

“But I could do no more for anybody, and the more I defied Lopez the more provoked he was to visit his wrath on my friends,

and at the time of the last arrival of the Wasp he was on the point of proceeding to violent measures against me. This fact will appear if any of those persons immediately about him shall escape to tell what they know. But he does not intend they shall escape. His plan is to destroy all the witnesses. I beg of you to see if all I now write is not confirmed ; and if you will advise me from time to time of what you may learn, I will thank you very sincerely, and reciprocate in any way that I may be able."

Little did I think, while penning that letter, that a few months later General McMahon would return from Paraguay, knowing nothing of the friends for whom I had solicited his good offices, but abounding with admiration for the great Lopez, the murderer of most of them ; and that he would return to the United States and endeavor to convince the government that Lopez was invincible, was a great and good man, dearly beloved by his people ; and that the diplomatic relations that had been suspended by his recall should be immediately renewed.

General Martin T. McMahon, who was appointed by Andrew Johnson to succeed me as Minister to Paraguay, was born in Canada, and is of Irish parentage. Left an orphan in his youth, he was taken in charge by Archbishop Hughes of New York, and educated at his college. At the breaking out of the Rebellion, he volunteered as a soldier on the Union side, and rose during the war to the rank of brigadier-general of volunteers, having throughout a good military record. In the long list of brigadiers who were brevetted as major-generals after the war, his name was included. Having been educated as he was, not unnaturally he was earnestly devoted to the Catholic Church, and certain magnates of that body united in recommending him to the President as a proper person to send as Minister to Mexico. A more eminent soldier, though probably no braver, General W. S. Rosecrans, and one, it is to be presumed, more faithful to the Catholic Church, was appointed to Mexico ; and as the mission to Paraguay was vacant, McMahon was appointed to it. With such antecedents it was hardly to be expected that he could ever become

the champion of a tyrant who had murdered the bishop and nearly all the priests in Paraguay, after subjecting them to every imaginable indignity and suffering. Yet the champion of such a character he became.*

* There were three native Americans in Paraguay at the time I left, besides Mr. Bliss, — John A. Duffield, Thomas Carter, and a man by the name of Sheridan. Manlove had been already executed. There were also two naturalized Americans, — José Font and Leonard Charles. Duffield and Charles escaped by being taken prisoners by the Brazilians; the others are all supposed to have been killed by Lopez. From a letter received from Duffield, dated July 6, 1869, I give the following extracts, as indicating the zeal of my successor in looking after the interests of his countrymen.

“My True and Considerate Friend, Mr. Washburn: —

“My dear Sir, — I received your note of November 11, 1868, May 18, 1869, enclosed to me in a letter and package of books from your successor, General M. T. McMahon, in which letter he gives no reasons for the detention of said note. . . . I was asked by a great many natives, and also by the families of murdered foreigners, why the United States wished to prolong such a heart-rending, bloody war by sending a Minister here to back up a remorseless tyrant and coward, at a time when he was driven out of his last stronghold, and every hope fled of being able to stand against his enemy. At this crisis the General arrived to congratulate a phenomenon of tyranny, who had just wallowed in the blood of six hundred foreigners whom he ordered to be first tortured and then lanced to death, without trial or explanation of any kind. Nor was he contented with taking the lives of innocent, industrious foreigners and natives, but also took their property, even to the wearing-apparel of the widows and orphans. . . . I will mention again, that a Christian country sends a Minister to congratulate the author of all these inhuman barbarities in its President's name, — as McMahon mentioned in his oration to Lopez when he presented his credentials, — to congratulate a cowardly despot who has never yet been nearer to a battle-field than two leagues, to congratulate a consummate, blood-thirsty despot, immoral in his habits as any savage or brute beast, and who boasts of having ruined hundreds of women; and it is well known that lately he ordered several of these same women to be ignominiously put to death for some trifling word which they said, or were accused of saying. . . . I will finish this painful subject by giving you a short account of General McMahon's regret on being recalled, also the last farce or petty piece on his departure. In the first place, he sent me a letter and the package of books before mentioned, with your note enclosed, by post. . . . His letter was as follows: ‘I have seen the Minister of Foreign Relations, and he tells me that the chief of your partido will furnish the necessary pass for you to come here and visit me, as I am recalled, and will be very much pleased to see you before my departure from this country. Come as quick as possible, for I intend to leave on Saturday next.’ I immediately put on my best clothes and started in flying colors, after ten months of sickness and imprisonment. . . . The next day I arrived at my destination, having travelled all night on an empty stomach, and wet to the skin, as the distance was twenty-four miles, and he leaving the very next day I could not wait

Admiral Davis having resolved on his plan of action, and being little more inclined to respect my opinions than he was those of General Webb, I could be of no further service by remaining longer in Buenos Aires; and as Mrs. Washburn

until the rain was over. On my arrival I went straight to his house, directed by a policeman. I met the General standing in his doorway. He received me very cordially, so far as words went. His first conversation was to express great regret on being recalled, and mentioned your name, saying that he believed you were the cause of it. His next remark to me was that the Legation in Asuncion had been sacked by the Brazilian soldiers, and that he wanted a list of the articles which were there belonging to me. I told him that a safe, which I lent you for the Legation, and a large red-cedar box, also four cushions belonging to my large coach, were the only property which belonged to me in the Legation. He then asked me if there was money in the box. I told him no; but that there were articles in it that were the same as money to me, as the box had a false bottom, underneath which was jewelry of the most expensive kind, studded with brilliants and diamonds, and in the upper part of the box there were books, clothes, and various other articles. . . . I told him I left the stars and stripes in my room, so that if there was a sack it could not be done innocently; also the fire-proof safe in the same contained my papers to show the amount which the jewelry cost me. . . . The amount total I paid was \$ 6,000 and some *pesos* (dollars), of which I cannot recollect the exact amount. . . . At this part of his questions and my answers, an officer walked right into the room where we were sitting, without any ceremony, and told the General that her Excellency was coming to visit him in a very short time. This knocked me out of time to see a Paraguayan soldier plunge headlong into an American Minister's house and apartments, as if he was all at home and quite accustomed to the room of the American Legation. I also was puzzled to know who her Excellency was, but in a very few minutes I was relieved of my suspense on seeing Madam Lynch's face approaching the Minister's door, and he running to do the amiable in ushering her into his house. On entering, she gave a distinct nod of her head to me. . . . McMahon turned to me and said, 'Duffield, excuse me a few minutes.' . . . On leaving the Legation, I met by accident some old friends of yours, who were the family of Requelmes and Annabella Casal. They inquired after you very kindly, and invited me to go with them to have maté at their house, or *tolderia*, which was a few hides stuck on posts; and even that was more than a majority of the best families have. . . . After taking a few maté, I felt myself coming to life, as I was perfectly benumbed with cold and wet, and weak with hunger, which those good-hearted girls could see directly, though they were very little better themselves. Still they sympathized with me far more than the thoughtless, inconsiderate McMahon. . . . After whispering over a great many things in general, as you know well we could not talk very loud, they told me about a great many respectable families that had nearly all died off in that district of starvation and exposure. . . . Finally I thanked them for their maté and took my departure, leaving them all in sorrow. I directed my course back to the Legation, where I met the General alone and very pensive after his conversation with her Excellency.

had so far recovered from the reaction consequent on the terrible strain and anxiety of the last three months in Paraguay that her physician thought she might venture upon the sea, we started, on the 14th of November, to return to the United States.

He told me if I needed money he would cash the order which your note contained on Samuel B. Hale and Company, if I wished ; which proposition I agreed to, and he handed me the money on my indorsing the note. Having no more business to transact in the Legation, and McMahon offering me no consolation or prospect of being able to get out of this dreadful hell on earth, because, as he said, 'This was no time to embarrass Lopez with questions,' I left him a cold-water good-by and started immediately to change some pats* and have a little to eat. Not finding any person that dared to offer more than ten reals for each pat, I was obliged to change four to pay for a little dish of puchero (stew) that did not half satisfy my hunger. I omitted to mention, that, on my departure from the Minister's quarters, I was surprised on seeing José Solís standing in the doorway of a room adjoining the Legation. As I passed, he saluted me, and appeared to be very much astonished that I was not dead yet. Before he got over his astonishment, I asked him if he occupied those rooms. He said that they were her Excellency La Madama's, and that he had just come to pack, or superintend the packing of a large quantity of boxes for the American Minister to take away.

"I will now finish this sorrowful account of suffering, hoping that neither you nor yours may ever experience the like. May God bless you and your family! If this letter reaches you, please publish a part or the whole of it, as you think proper, but first correct my bad orthography, and oblige

"Yours,

"JOHN A. DUFFIELD."

* *Patacones*, silver dollars.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Delay of Admiral Davis in going to the Rescue of Bliss and Masterman. — The Paraguayan Tribunal. — Examination of Mr. Bliss. — Specimen of his Testimony, as taken down by the Tribunal. — Torture. — Political Prisoners. — The Narrative of Mr. Masterman. — His Fellow-Prisoners, Dr. Carreras, Don Benigno Lopez, and others. — The *Cepto Uruguayana*. — Its Origin. — Mr. Taylor's Experience in it. — Other Victims. — Sufferings and Privations of the Prisoners. — The President's Sisters. — His Mother.

THE Admiral, having learned to his satisfaction that Bliss and Masterman were treated with "no unnecessary harshness," delayed his departure from Buenos Aires to go after them till the 23d of November, nearly two months after he first heard of their arrest. This delay would be regarded as no less than criminal by the people of the United States, should all the facts ever become known to them. It was necessary, in order to palliate the dilatory conduct of the Admiral, to manufacture evidence in Lopez's favor, and prove that he was not the cruel tyrant that I had represented him to be. Having thus taken measures to forestall public opinion at home, the squadron, consisting of four vessels, — the *Wasp*, the *Pawnee*, the *Quinnebaug*, and the *Kansas*, — started for Paraguay.

In the mean while it may be of interest to the reader to know what had become of Bliss and Masterman. Each of them has given to the public a full narrative of his treatment, to the general correctness of which numerous others have given corroborative testimony. In a previous chapter I have given an account of their torture and sufferings immediately after their arrest, while I was on board the *Wasp*, and Kirkland was holding that last interview with Lopez, in which he learned so much of his benevolent intentions, and

of his ardent desire to continue friendly relations with the United States.

Mr. Bliss, on being taken into the open square, found a large number of prisoners there confined. All of them were in the most squalid, starving condition. Among them he noticed a person who had a familiar look, but whom he was unable to recognize for a long time. His nose had been broken in, evidently by forcing his head against a musket, while undergoing the torture of the *cepo uruguayana*. He was heavily ironed, as were the other political prisoners, of whom there were some fifteen or twenty that Mr. Bliss recognized. There were also several priests in like manner loaded with heavy fetters. Of the large number of these prisoners who were to be his companions, he alone escaped death. A few days after the rescue of Bliss and Masterman, the great battle of Pikysry took place, which resulted so disastrously to the cause of Lopez. As was usual with him when anticipating an attack, he gave orders, that, in case the battle should go against him, the prisoners, with a few exceptions, should be killed. Of the political prisoners there were at least five hundred executed or tortured to death between the time when he devised his plan of conspiracy and his defeat at Pikysry. A very few of these political prisoners, at the time this battle commenced, had been so far set at liberty as to be released from their fetters; and in the battles which succeeded, some half-dozen of them had the good fortune to escape and to be taken prisoners by the Brazilians. But all the others, with two or three exceptions, were killed. During the first days of the prolonged combat they were kept in a place exposed to the shots of the enemy, and had the Wasp, which went to their rescue, not arrived before this battle took place, Bliss and Masterman would both of them have shared the fate of the other prisoners. Being in fetters, so that they could not run away, they could not have escaped at the same time with Truenfeld, Von Versen, and Taylor, who a few days before had been so far set at liberty as to have only a guard over them.

On being called before the tribunal, these two members of the United States Legation were driven, with their fetters still on them, from where they had dismounted, being beaten over the head and shoulders at almost every step by the soldiers having them in charge. The tribunal consisted of six men, all in uniform, and apparently officers, though two of them were priests. One of these proved to be the "terrible Padre Maiz." The tribunal began its examination of Bliss by asking him why he had been arrested, and continued as follows : —

"You ought to understand that when we have brought you before *this* tribunal your guilt is an ascertained fact. You are not brought here to make any defence of yourself. You are brought here simply for the purpose of clearing up by your own confession and your own depositions the facts in the case connected with your complicity in the conspiracy. As to your guilt, we know that already, and we shall not allow you to endeavor to dodge the point.' I was then asked again if I would confess myself to be guilty. I replied that I would not, 'that I had always been, during my entire residence in Paraguay, perfectly loyal to the government, had never taken any step which could justly be complained of by the government; that so far as relates to the quarrel between Paraguay and Brazil concerning the question of boundaries and of the balance of power in South America I had sympathized with Paraguay, and had done what I could to sustain the Paraguayan cause in that aspect of the case; that, as to the accusation of *conspiracy*, it was absolutely false, no matter who might have testified to the charge.' This was all recorded as my protestation of innocence. I was then asked if I knew Dr. Carreras, and if I knew Mr. Rodriguez, and then each one of five or six others who were charged as being principal persons in the conspiracy, and who, as I afterwards learned, were named as members of the *committee* to which I was accused of having belonged, and which included two of the members of Lopez's Cabinet, his own brother, Benigno, and two or three foreign gentlemen who had resided in the country. I was asked if I knew these persons. I replied in each case in the affirmative, stating exactly how far I had known each of these gentlemen. I was then interrogated the second time how it was possible, — I having stated

that I was well acquainted with each of these individuals, and they having confessed that they were members of the conspiracy in which I was deeply involved, holding an important post therein,— for me to have the audacity to maintain my innocence. I replied that ‘I knew nothing about any such committee or any such conspiracy; that other people might say what they liked, but I would speak the truth. That as I had been sworn, on my entrance to the tribunal, to speak the truth, in accordance with the terms of my oath I was resolved to tell the truth, and nothing but the truth.’

“After that, the two priests, as members of the tribunal, appealed to me again, saying that it was entirely useless for me to maintain my innocence. ‘It was well known I had been led away by Mr. Washburn, who was the genius of evil for the Paraguayan nation.’ It was intimated to me, by insinuation, that, by developing all I knew about Mr. Washburn’s machinations as connected with the conspiracy, I might lighten my own sufferings and the guilt which they considered as attaching to me in the case. They said to me that they knew I had a most wonderful *memory*; that I was perfectly acquainted with all that had taken place in the matter from first to last; that I had conducted the correspondence in a great measure, and they expected from me a full and detailed statement of all the facts and circumstances, saying that by so doing I might render a service to the government which might go very far to mitigate my own position. They desired me, therefore, to state ‘all the facts in regard to the manœuvres of this wretch Washburn, who had just got away from the country by the skin of his teeth.’ They expressed themselves very bitterly against Mr. Washburn, who had been charged by the prisoners previously tortured and forced to confess with being at the head of the conspiracy. The plan of proceeding was simply this: These prisoners were obliged to invent some story, and were desirous of attaching as much blame as they could to parties whom they knew to be beyond the reach of the Paraguayan government; it being their plan to protect as far as possible the innocent prisoners who were then within the clutches of Lopez.

“ . . . After a good deal of reflection, extending amid these altercations through several hours, and having undergone fearful physical suffering (I was not *then* put to what was ordinarily called torture; but the treatment I had suffered was actually *greater* torture to me than that I endured on any other occasion); having

been taken to that tribunal and kept for twelve mortal hours without any food, and this after having been denied food for twenty-four hours previously, with my manacles on me, which had become painful beyond endurance, eating into the flesh, what I suffered was to me torture beyond anything I afterwards endured, although not *technically* called torture. I say that, having endured all this, and after reflection, I finally came to the conclusion that I would confess in a general way, and throw the blame of everything on Mr. Washburn; that I would not implicate any one within the reach of Lopez, but that I would spin out my statement as long as possible, for the purpose of gaining time, until I was sure Mr. Washburn had left the country, and was out of harm's way; that I would go into great detail about Mr. Washburn's previous antecedents, thus *talking against time*, and see if it were not possible, by throwing everything upon *him*, to palliate the charges against myself and the other victims who had been forced to make similar confessions. I therefore commenced my statements, going back to the first arrival of Mr. Washburn in the country, seven years before. I spun a long story about the influences under which Mr. Washburn had been appointed. . . .

"On the fourth day I was told that my statements about Mr. Washburn were all very well so far as they went, but that I had been prevaricating; that I had not confessed the full extent of my own complicity with what was called the *revolution* (that was the cant name for the supposed conspiracy). I had not confessed my own very great complicity, and the very important part I had taken. I was interrogated by the person who acted as chief torturer, an officer named Major Aveiro, and who was brought into requisition whenever the services of any person were needed for that purpose. The plan of the conspiracy, as this tribunal had it, was that eleven individuals, constituting a committee, at such a place and such a time, had put their names to a certain paper, which I had drawn up as secretary, in which they had agreed to assassinate Marshal Lopez and organize a new government in Paraguay. This was the first intimation I had of such a committee. I knew before that I was accused of having put my name to some such paper, but who were the *other* persons who had signed along with me I had no idea, and the demand made by the tribunal for the details of this transaction took me by surprise. I replied that I knew nothing about it; that I had not seen such a paper. The Major said it was useless to

deny it; that he knew I had been secretary of the committee, and drawn up the paper myself, and then said I would be confronted by all the other members of the committee, that they had all confessed *their* complicity and accused *me*, and that I would have to confess mine. I again replied that I knew nothing about it. During the rest of that day I continued to hold out in my denial of any knowledge of this committee. This was the fourth day. At nightfall, after having been taken back to the encampment where I was kept, I was brought up again along with Dr. Carreras, the Portuguese Consul, and an Italian captain (Fidanza), who had been a friend of mine, also a prisoner, all three of whom were accused of having been members of that committee to which I was supposed to have belonged. We were brought up in single file. I was taken in and asked if I still persisted in denying my signature to that document. I replied: 'I do deny it, and I will continue to deny it.' 'O,' said a priest, 'we will bring in witnesses'; and they did bring in the Italian captain, who, being confronted with me, was asked if it was true that I had signed that paper. This man, having of course been previously tortured and forced to confess, said I was one of the eleven who had signed it. I still stood out, and said that I had not. He was then told to expostulate with me, and he said to me substantially: 'You know, Bliss, you signed this paper. Why do you attempt to deny it? All of us will testify to the same fact. You know very well that you did. Let me bring the circumstances to your mind. Don't you remember that on a certain evening we met together, — eleven of us; that Manlove was to have been there, but did not appear? Don't you remember that you arrived last, after we were all assembled?' Said I: 'Who were the individuals that signed the paper, and in what order did they sign?' He then mentioned the names in order, commencing with Benigno Lopez, the brother of the President; then Berges, the ex-Minister of Foreign Affairs; then Bedoya, a brother-in-law of Lopez; then Dr. Carreras, the Uruguayan Prime Minister, and Rodriguez the former *Chargé d'Affaires* of Uruguay, both of whom had been lately living with us at the American Legation; then the Portuguese Consul and Vice-Consul, the former of whom had also been arrested from the American Legation; then the Italian captain, who was a witness against himself; then two Frenchmen, one being chancellor of the French

consulate, and lastly myself. I paid great attention to this detail, as it gave me the first clew to the individuals with whom I was expected to confess myself to have acted on that committee ; and it was for that purpose that I requested him to give the *order of names* in which we had signed. Having a good memory, I was enabled to keep it in my mind for the purpose of making use of it whenever I should come to the point of continuing my confession into this branch of the conspiracy.

“ This captain was then taken away and Dr. Carreras brought in. He was asked, ‘ Is it true that Bliss was one of the eleven who signed that document with you ? ’ He replied that it was, and the question was then asked of me, ‘ What do you say to that ? ’ I replied, ‘ It is false. ’ Dr. Carreras said to me in a low tone, ‘ It is useless to deny it. ’

“ Dr. Carreras was then taken away and the Portuguese Consul brought in, being the third witness, who was asked simply, ‘ Do you know the prisoner before you ? ’ His answer was, ‘ Yes. ’ ‘ Was he one of the eleven who signed with you ? ’ ‘ Yes. ’ I had also ascertained that I would be charged with having received an amount of money for my services ; in fact, that had been stated to me before by the torturer. And I wished to ascertain what had been deposed against me. I therefore asked permission to cross-examine this witness, to which they assented. I then said to the Portuguese Consul : ‘ You have testified to my having signed that paper ; I suppose you have also said that I received money for it ? ’ ‘ Yes, ’ he said. ‘ How much money do you pretend to charge me with having received ? ’

“ The officers of the tribunal, breaking in then, refused to allow the question to be answered, and the Portuguese Consul was hustled away. Then turning to me they said : ‘ Three witnesses, you see, have testified against you. You know that two witnesses constitute legal proof. We have been very indulgent towards you, while you have been making a fool of us for the last three or four days. You have made statements upon certain points, but you have not confessed the most important point up to the present time. We were under no obligation to bring these witnesses, because our own word is sufficient. All the other members of that committee have confessed in like manner. Will you now confess your part of the plan ? ’ I replied : ‘ No ; because of the oath I have taken. I

admit that three witnesses constitute legal proof, and yet they cannot make a falsehood true. And I can mention circumstances which would somewhat lessen the worth of their testimony.' 'What circumstances do you allude to?' Said I, 'I allude to physical torture.' There was an exchange of glances on the part of the members of the tribunal; when one of them remarked, 'You are talking very *metaphysically* with us.' 'But we will treat you in a very *physical* manner. Call in the Major,' he said, referring to the officer acting as chief torturer. Major Aveiro then came in. He repeated the question, 'Do you confess having signed that paper?' I replied, 'No.' He said, 'You are trying to make a fool of me. I shall not fool with you.' Whereupon he commenced buffeting me in the face with his fists. I stood there in my irons while he continued striking me with the full weight of his fist in the face, at every blow asking me, 'Do you confess? Do you confess? Do you confess?' And I answered him, 'No.' When he got tired of that, he drew his sword and commenced beating me over the head in like manner, each blow bringing the blood, and asking me, 'Do you confess?' I replied in like manner, 'I do not,' until, believing I had done enough to save my conscience, and that I should not gain anything by enduring this suffering any longer, I replied, 'Yes.' 'Then dictate to us the document you signed on that occasion, as we know you were secretary of that organization,—the document in which you promised to assassinate Marshal Lopez and to take upon yourselves the direction of the revolutionary movement.' Thrown upon my wits in that manner, I did dictate in a slow manner the document which is published in one of these congressional papers, in which I gave the text of a paper agreeing to assassinate Marshal Lopez, provided the means were not found of overthrowing him otherwise, and giving each to the other our word of honor not to reveal what had been agreed upon. . . .

"I had been twice obliged by the pressure of events to confess what was not true, as I had been confessing all along; but I thought I would again make a stand, that I would not confess anything further now, that, if obliged to do it, I would stand the torture as long as I could. I had had eight or ten days of enforced idleness in which to think about it, and came to the conclusion that I would say nothing more, unless I was obliged to by pressure beyond my ability to endure. So then I refused to confess anything further, and

the torture was put in execution. I was seated on the ground, two muskets were placed under my knees and two muskets over my neck, my wrists were tied together behind my back and pulled up by the guard : the muskets above and below were connected with thongs fastened around them so as to be readily tightened ; in some instances they were violently tightened by pounding with a mallet. They continued to tighten them, bringing my body in such a position that my abdomen suffered great compression, and that I distinctly heard the cracking of the vertebræ of the spine, leaving me in that posture for a long time. In fact, after I was on board the United States squadron I could never stoop forward without feeling a twinge in the back and in the abdomen. I remained in that position about fifteen minutes, the officers standing over me, watching the effects of their cruel work. At the end of that time I was prepared with a new batch of novelties of the most startling character. The priests came and stood over me, cross-questioning me, and extracted from me a general confession as to the heads of what they had inquired about before they released me. After I had confessed in general, I was taken in that condition before the tribunal, who set to work to elucidate the minutiae of my new confession." *

* This testimony of Mr. Bliss as taken down by the tribunal and forwarded to the United States as evidence against their late Minister extends through twenty-five octavo pages, of which the following is given as a specimen :—

"He" (Washburn) "also said of the patriotic speeches that appeared in the *Semanario*, that they were got up for the occasion by professional orators, and did not express the sentiments of the people. Dr. Roca, for instance, had written more than five hundred speeches for such occasions, and they were all just as like as coins from the same mould, and the same soup was served every Saturday from the *Semanario*, namely, praise of Lopez. Its columns were devoted to the praise of the government, and nothing could be discussed if not in laudation of Lopez.

"In fact, Washburn ridiculed the government to all his correspondents.

"On the 15th the evidence was as follows : Deponent confesses having signed a document with ten others, at Berges's house at Salinares, to concert with the commanders of the allied armies to bring about a revolution against the national government. He acted as secretary to the meeting, and drew up the secret pact sworn to by the conspirators present to take Lopez's life. The persons that assisted him in drawing up this document were José Berges, Benigno Lopez, and Antonio Carreras. The document was engrossed in a fine, clerkly hand, and, to the best of his recollection, was as follows :—

"We, the undersigned, citizens of the Republic of Paraguay, and strangers residing therein, having good reasons for desiring a prompt termination of this

When Bliss and Masterman were first brought before the tribunal and questioned in regard to their knowledge of the "conspiracy," they said it was limited to what they had learned, while in the Legation, from Benitez's letters; and after having been put to the torture till they could endure it no longer and promised to confess, their greatest difficulty was to learn what sort of confession would save them from further suffering. This they could only guess at from the nature of the questions put to them. They were as ready to confess one thing as another, and when Bliss was commanded to give the names of his fellow-signers of the "secret pact" of assassination, all of whom but himself, he was told, had already confessed, he could say nothing, as he might, if he gave names, inculcate persons who were still in favor, and thus cause their destruction. So he positively denied all knowledge of any such pact till three of the other signers were brought forward to confront him. With their aid, and the blows administered lustily by Aveiro, Bliss's memory was so

long and bloody war that is ruining the country and destroying the male inhabitants, and believing it necessary to select competent persons to bring about a radical change in the system of government by putting out of the way the only obstacle to the accomplishment of this, and having the consent of the allied enemy, we bind ourselves mutually to work together to effect a change of government and choose a new chief-magistrate; and if it is found necessary to resort to violence to rid ourselves of the President of the Republic, we also obligate ourselves to do so, after trying other means to effect the same end. We swear by our word of honor upon the holy Evangelists to aid each other in whatever is agreed on by the majority of the signers to realize the design already expressed, and to keep the secret of this conspiracy upon the pain of death. In faith whereof we have signed this pact in each other's presence. Dated at Salinares, November, 1867 (about the middle of the month, he thinks). Signed by Benigno Lopez, José Berges, Saturnino Bedoya, Antonio Carreras, Francisco Rodriguez Larreta, José Maria Leite Pereira, Antonio Vasconcellos, Simone Fidanza, M. Libertat, Domingo Pomié, Porter Cornelius Bliss.'

"Manlove did not come in time to sign."

"After the signing of the above document, another was drawn up as a constitution for the country, after the first project was executed. It was signed early in December by Carreras, Rodriguez, and deponent, at the house of Benigno Lopez, at Asuncion. Conferences were held at the house of Carreras in Trinidad, at Berges's office, and several other places, before it was finally adopted. . . .

"For his services in the conspiracy, deponent got five thousand patacones from

quicken that he was able to testify as desired, and afterwards as he could judge to some extent from the questions put to him what answers were required, he for a while could confess quite satisfactorily.

The narrative of Mr. Masterman gives an equally vivid description of the miseries to which he and Bliss, and indeed all those prisoners accused of political offences, were subjected, none of whom, however, as the Secretary of State was advised by General McMahan, "were treated with unnecessary harshness." A few days after their arrival near headquarters, an order was given for the prisoners to be removed to a place some leagues distant, called Pikysyry. Says Masterman : —

"We were turned out into the sun, and had to wait for some time, for we were at the head of the sad procession and the hundreds of prisoners. The lines of the guard and men carrying the cooking-pots and troughs were marshalled with difficulty, blows and curses being showered mercilessly on the sick and loiterers.

Benigno Lopez, at one time, and on three other occasions five thousand five hundred dollars in paper money, which he thought came out of Lopez's private property, but found it came from the national treasury, which was the banking-house for the conspiracy. Deponent learned this from Washburn, who had received large sums of money on account from the same source. This was found out after the evacuation of the city. Washburn also told him that Carreras and Rodriguez had received money for their co-operation in the contemplated conspiracy.

"All the money received by deponent (except eight hundred dollars, his expenses up to the time of his imprisonment) was deposited with Washburn, to be taken to Buenos Aires and deposited in Maua's bank there, subject to deponent's order.

"Washburn acknowledged to deponent that he had received large sums of money from Benigno Lopez, to pay the conspirators. Deponent saw two women carrying the money in covered baskets on their heads to the Legation more than once. All this money, with much more belonging to Carreras, Rodriguez, and others, was carried away by Washburn to be deposited for the owners in Buenos Aires."

"On the 16th the testimony given was this : —

"Deponent heard of the surrender of Humaita from Washburn, who had a letter from Caxias, dated the 10th of June, informing him that the surrender was agreed upon for the last of July with the chief officers, Francisco Martinez, and Remigio Cabral, called Admiral of the Paraguayan Navy. Deponent thinks a letter came at the same time from Caxias to José Berges, announcing the same event."

“From one of the hovels near me crept out, on all-fours, Don Benigno Lopez, the President’s youngest brother; he was well dressed, but heavily ironed; and from another, a spectral old man I was long in recognizing as the ex-Minister for Foreign Affairs, Don José Berges. He was leaning feebly on a hedge-stake, and was followed by his successor, Don Gumesindo Benitez, bareheaded and with naked fettered feet. Then two very old men, evidently in their second childhood; they were without a rag to cover them. One was in irons, and could only crawl tremblingly on his hands and knees; the other looked round with a timid smile on his silly face, pleased with the bustle around him, and evidently but faintly conscious of what was going on. . . . And what would their offence be? A wailing complaint for the loss of their few comforts, a passionate lament for the death of their sons or grandchildren; an idle word spoken in garrulous old age, and construed into treason, or perhaps simply the fact of their relationship to some poor wretch who had died in the rack or on the scaffold.

“At length we set off in an easterly direction, skirting the base of the hills, through a narrow defile, and then into a pathless wood. In the former we got into some confusion; the prisoners were huddled together and separated a little from the soldiers who, with fixed bayonets or drawn swords, were guarding them. It was an opportunity I had long been waiting for; for some minutes I was at the side of Dr. Carreras; he asked me again, in an eager whisper, if Mr. Washburn had gone. ‘Yes, he is safe,’ I replied in the same cautious tone, and then went on to ask him if there were any truth in his depositions. ‘No, no, — lies, all lies, from beginning to end!’ ‘Why did you tell them?’ I asked somewhat unnecessarily. ‘That terrible Father Maiz,’ said he, ‘tortured me in the *uruguayana* on three successive days, and then smashed my fingers with a mallet.’ He looked at me with an expression of utter wretchedness on his worn face, and held out his maimed hands as a testimony. Then, after a pause, he asked me, ‘Have you confessed?’ ‘Yes,’ I answered sadly. ‘You have done well, — they would have compelled you to do so: God help us!’ I told him about a difficulty I had had in not being able to say how much money Mr. Washburn was said to have received from the Brazilians, although the sum had been mentioned several times in the ‘depositions,’ and asked how much I should say. ‘Fifteen thousand ounces, I told him,’ he replied; ‘lies, false, false!’ . . .

“The two old men, being found too feeble to walk, were each put in a hide, and carried with a pole by two soldiers; they were tumbled out on the ground when they halted, close to me, yet thanked their bearers with, ‘God’ reward you, my sons! God reward you!’ But the next day they were denied this favor, and were thrashed most horribly by the corporals to make them go faster; it was heart-rending to hear them, in weak treble tones, praying for mercy, and to see them arrive an hour after the rest, covered with dust and blood; they had crawled on their hands and knees nearly a mile. Several women were brought in that day, strangers to me, but evidently belonging to the better class of natives; two or three had the little huts I have mentioned, others had formed a screen of a shawl or two strained over a few sticks; and I saw one poor girl, about sixteen years of age, crouched under a hide propped against her shoulders; she never moved save to turn as the sun wested, and sat with her eyes bent to the earth, and tears often stealing silently down her cheeks. . . .

“I remained there four days, and one afternoon, as I was viewing the shocking spectacle of a prisoner being tortured in our midst, a guard came and took Mr. Bliss and myself away with them. I fully expected to be shot, but it was to rejoin our late companions. They were located in a rocky cleft in the hills far from the others. I found there Leite Pereira, Captain Fidanza, Berges, Don Benigno and Don Venancio Lopez, — the latter a colonel and the President’s eldest brother, — Benitez, and Carreras, each in a hovel apart. . . .

“On the 23d of September, Don Benigno Lopez was put to the torture; he had been taken away early in the morning, and did not return till long after noon; he shuffled slowly into his hut, which nearly faced mine, and shortly afterwards an officer, with three men carrying the well-remembered bundle of muskets and cords, came up. I became sick with anxiety, Don Benigno turned pale, and rose tremblingly as they came near him, — thinking, probably, of his brother-in-law, Don Saturnino Bedoya, who died under its infliction some months before, — and followed them, at a signal from the officer, behind a copse of trees near at hand. About an hour passed away; several officers, including Major Aveiro, went to see him; and at length he was led back, unable to stand, and with his face frightfully distorted by the agony he had suffered.”

The torture known as *cepo uruguayana* is said to have been

first used in Bolivia in the time of Bolivar. Its efficiency as a means of extorting confession is believed to be unequalled by any means ever invented by pitiless man. It was never resorted to in Paraguay previous to the time of the second Lopez ; and how he learned of its terrible capacity for creating pain is not known. It was formerly called the *cepo boliviano* ; but the surrender of Estigarribia at Uruguayana so greatly enraged Lopez, and those who offended him were so frequently subjected to this terrible punishment, as to cause it to be considered as in some way connected with that disastrous campaign. At least it was called, after that, the *cepo uruguayana*.

Mr. Alonzo Taylor, an Englishman, who had lived about ten years in Paraguay, and was in the employ of the government as master-builder or mason of the more important public buildings, and of the new palace of Lopez, thus describes his experience of the *cepo uruguayana* : —

“The torture is as follows, and this is how I suffered it : I sat on the ground with my knees up ; my legs were first tied tightly together, and then my hands behind me with the palms outward. A musket was then fastened under my knees ; six more of them, tied together in a bundle, were then put on my shoulders, and they were looped together with hide ropes at one end ; they then made a running loop on the other side from the lower musket to the other, and two soldiers hauling on the end of it forced my face down to my knees and secured it so.

“The effect was as follows : First the feet went to sleep, then a tingling commenced in the toes, gradually extending to the knees, and the same in the hands and arms, and increased until the agony was unbearable. My tongue swelled up, and I thought that my jaws would have been displaced ; I lost all feeling in one side of my face for a fortnight afterwards. The suffering was dreadful ; I should certainly have confessed if I had had anything to confess, and I have no doubt many would acknowledge or invent anything to escape bearing the horrible agony of this torment. I remained two hours as I have described, and I considered myself fortunate in escaping then ; for many were put in the *uruguayana* twice, and others six times, and with eight muskets on the nape of the neck.

“Señora Martinez was tortured six times in this horrible way, besides being flogged and beaten with sticks until she had not an inch of skin free from wounds.

“At the expiration of two hours I was released; Serrano came to me, and asked if I would now acknowledge who was to be the new President. I was unable to speak; and he went on to say that I had only been kept in the *cepo* a short time, owing to the clemency of his Excellency Marshal Lopez, and that, if I did not then divulge it, I should have three sets of irons put upon me, eight muskets in place of six, and be kept in much longer. I was so utterly exhausted, and so faint, that at the time his threats made no impression on me. Afterward I was taken back to the guardia, and as a great favor I was not tied down that night.”

Mr. Taylor could not tell why it was that he was so barbarously treated. But that was the case with all. According to his own account, his treatment was humane as compared with what he saw inflicted on many others. It is incredible that any being having the human form could inflict, from mere delight in causing pain, such cruelties as he describes. He says:—

“I saw an Argentine officer taken away one day, and when he returned the whole of his body was raw. The next morning, when we were loosened, I pointed to his back, but did not speak; he let his head fall on his breast, and with a stick wrote in the sand ‘one hundred.’ From that I gathered he had received a hundred lashes with a cow-hide, or else with one of the creeping plants (I think they call them lianas) which grew in plenty on the trees around us. That afternoon he was sent for again, and when he came back he wrote ‘two hundred.’ The next day he was shot.

“The prisoners were of all nationalities and of all grades and positions, but with the heat, wear and tear, the rain and wind, they were soon all alike, nearly naked. And our guards used to offer us pieces of bread or a few spikes of maize for our clothes, and, suffering from hunger as we did, we were glad to purchase a day’s life at the price of a coat or a shirt. Amongst them were many women, some of them belonging to the best families in the country; some quite old and gray-headed, others young and pretty,—especially Dolores Recaldè, a very tall and beautiful girl, and Josefa

Requelmè, a handsome woman, with very fine eyes. They suffered much, poor creatures, though they had little A-shaped straw huts to shelter them, as did some few of the other prisoners of the highest class, and used to weep piteously over their miserable fate. . . .

“For my part, I do not believe that there was any conspiracy at all, unless on the part of the President himself and some of his tools to rob foreigners of their money. . . .

“It is useless to attempt to describe the miseries of our daily life in San Fernando, — one unvarying round of privations, fresh prisoners, punishments, and executions. Not a day passed but some of us were taken out to be beaten, tortured, or shot. The cries of those being flogged were heart-rending. Two Orientales I saw flogged to death; and when young Capdevila was shot, he was black and blue from head to foot from the blows inflicted on him.

“There were several ladies among the prisoners; they were flogged in the huts, but we could hear their cries. . . .

“On the 21st of December we were released from the stocks, as usual, at 6.30, but at once tied down again, because the Brazilians had got our range, and shells were flying over and close to us, and the Paraguayans hoped to see us thus got rid of. But I felt no fear, and was quite resigned; for the shocking misery I had suffered for five months had blunted — indeed, nearly obliterated — all feelings, moral and physical.”

While yet a prisoner, but after he had been relieved of his fetters, Taylor was so fortunate as to be taken prisoner by the Brazilians. Of his condition when taken he thus speaks: —

“I was a miserable object, reduced to a skeleton, and enfeebled to the last degree. When I was at Luque, I weighed one hundred and seventy-eight pounds; and when I went on board the gunboat Cracker, only ninety-eight pounds.

“After recruiting my strength for four days at Lomas, I left on horseback for Asuncion. I suffered terribly on the road; for I had scarcely any flesh on my bones, and had not strength enough to keep myself in the saddle.

“There I arrived at last, but so ill that I could not speak for some days. . . .

“I am daily getting stronger and gaining flesh, but I look like a

man just recovering from yellow fever ; and as I dictate this to Mr. Shaw, my memory sometimes seems to leave me, I cannot fix my attention ; but I hope I shall soon recover my health, both of mind and body."

Of all those fearful scenes and trials to which the prisoners were subjected, Lopez's two sisters, Inocencia and Rafaela, were witnesses and participators. The only distinction shown them was that they were not forced to make the first part of the journey, after leaving Pikysry, on foot. Each of them was kept closely shut up in a cart, similar to those which are commonly made use of for wild beasts that are carried about for exhibition. From these they were never taken out, while at Pikysry, except to be carried before the tribunal, to be there treated like other accused persons. It was not till a later period that the mother of Lopez was arrested, tortured, and condemned to death.

CHAPTER XXXV.

The Depositions of Bliss and Masterman. — Contradictions. — A Conspiracy to overthrow Republicanism in South America. — Lopez's Mode of eliciting the Truth. — Measures adopted by Bliss and Masterman to gain Time. — Bliss becomes my Biographer. — Youthful Infirmities. — Kleptomania. — College Life. — Favorite Books. — Experience as a Lawyer, Doctor, and in other Capacities. — Removal to California. — Novelist, Editor, Poet. — Appointed Minister to Paraguay. — Magnanimity of Lopez. — My Ingratitude. — The Paid Agent of the Brazilians. — Pretended Extracts from my Forthcoming Book. — Parallel between Lopez and Rehoboam. — My Opinion of Lopez and the Principal Characters among the Allies. — Character of the Book. — Robinson Crusoe and Gulliver outdone. — Circumstances under which it was written. — Remarkable Memory of the Author. — His Style. — He endeavors to excite the Superstitious Fears of Lopez. — The Letter "B." — Previous Relations with Mr. Bliss. — Want of Taste and Delicacy shown in the Book. — Extenuating Circumstances. — The Writer accomplishes his Object. — Indignation of the Naval Officers.

THE depositions of Bliss and Masterman are such a strange medley of contradictions as to render the Paraguayan mystery more dark and incomprehensible than ever. In them a great number of persons are charged with being engaged in the conspiracy who were out of the reach of Lopez, and would certainly deny all knowledge of or participation in any such plot. It would seem, therefore, from his sending these depositions abroad, that he believed them, and that they would be taken as evidence, by our government, to convict me of wrongful practices while in office. According to these declarations before the "solemn tribunal," it would appear that correspondence passed through my hands between the conspirators in Paraguay and their colleagues on the other side of the lines as freely and safely as if there had been a daily mail. The number of letters that passed between me and Caxias was astonishing, considering the fact that we were

two hundred miles apart, and that for more than fifty years no person not authorized by the government had ever been able to traverse the space between us. It was also singular that none of this treasonable correspondence was ever discovered and published; and more singular, that the only evidence of it that exists is the testimony of tortured witnesses.

The Marques de Caxias, when he first learned of the frequent and protracted correspondence that he had been carrying on with me, wrote a letter to his government denying the accusation, asserting that he had always freely advised the Ministry of War of all he had done, and that his official reports would show that the allegations contained in the declarations made before Lopez's tribunal were utterly without foundation. He said that when he first took the command of the allied army he would have had no hesitation in assisting the Paraguayans to make a revolution against the tyrant; but he soon learned, that, under such a system of espionage as was maintained by Lopez, it would be utterly impossible for dissatisfied persons to have any concert of action, and had never thought of such a thing as a revolution afterwards, till he read in Benitez's letters that he had been engaged for a year and a half in promoting one.

Caxias, however, according to the testimony of the witnesses before the "solemn tribunal," was only acting a subordinate part in the great scheme I had devised for changing the map of South America. The principals with whom I was intriguing were Napoleon III. and Pedro II. These two mighty potentates had vast designs of territorial aggrandizement, and in arranging the details they both appealed to me as arbiter or umpire. Brazil, however, had got the start by appointing me Minister Plenipotentiary, with a salary of forty-eight thousand dollars a year, besides occasionally sending me, in the way of extras, such trifles as twenty thousand gold ounces. I did not, however, consent to the establishing of new empires in South America in order to give thrones to the scions of the imperial houses of Bonaparte and Braganza, though

I had an Emperor on each hand imploring me to do so. I persistently adhered to the Monroe doctrine, and told Don Pedro, that, while he might annex all the adjoining territory he could get possession of, I should not permit him to erect another throne on the American continent.* Certainly I had never supposed, when first appointed as Minister to the little republic of Paraguay, that I was to figure in such company. But, as Shakespeare says, "some men have greatness thrust upon them."

The other conspirators, it seems, had no knowledge of the full extent of my relations with the crowned heads, and it was

* "On the 4th of November the deposition was as follows: — Washburn told deponent that at the time of his arrival at Rio Janeiro, in 1865, the leaders of the imperial government there made no secret of their intentions, in case of success in the war against Paraguay. He said Paranhos, Saraiva, Octaviano, Zacarias, and even the Emperor, confessed the intention to annex all the territory on the left banks of the Plata, Parana, and Paraguay Rivers to Brazil.

"Washburn believes another war will break out, after the conclusion of the present one, between the Argentine Republic and Brazil, about the division of spoils; and he expressed as much in his note to Caxias, in reply to the one mentioning the secret treaty.

"The Emperor Napoleon III. has a mortgage on that vast region of Brazil north of the Amazon, and has done all he could to get a prince of his house on a throne of South America. His original idea was to extend his colony of Cayenne by annexing to it British and Dutch Guiana, to be acquired by purchase, and then add the Brazilian territory mentioned, so as to form an empire or kingdom almost as large as Mexico. In case Brazil chose to pay off the mortgage, he proposed to erect a kingdom on the Plata, containing all the territory east of the Plata, Paraguay, and Parana Rivers, or composed of Paraguay, Mato Grosso, and Eastern Bolivia; and, as inducement, he proposed to marry the new monarch to a princess of the house of Braganza.

"This proposition did not meet with much favor in Brazil, because the nobility there preferred annexing the conquered territory to Brazil; or, in case of a new empire, they wanted one of their own princes or princesses to occupy the throne, — proposing the Count d'Eu, or the Duke of Sax, with his wife, the second daughter of the house of Brazil.

"In his conferences with the statesmen above mentioned, Washburn rejected the French proposition, on account of the Monroe doctrine professed by the North American government, — not to permit the erection of any throne on the American continent, or at least no throne for a European prince. For the same reason he opposed the founding of a throne for a prince of Brazil, because Napoleon would not allow any of the Bourbon family on a new throne in Europe." — *Deposition of Porter Cornelius Bliss before the Paraguayan Tribunal*, Executive Doc. 5, Part 3, pp. 31, 32.

not till Mr. Bliss had been many times before the tribunal, and testified satisfactorily on all points on which the others had confessed before him, that Lopez was made aware of the grand combination against him. Having obtained all this, Lopez then thought he would try the effect of the *cepo uruguayana*, to which Bliss had not yet been subjected. He was therefore told by the inquisitors that he was keeping back important information, and they knew it. Having endured the torture as long as he could bear it, he promised to confess everything, and was then released. His further confessions are thus related by himself:—

“I thought I would try the experiment of frightening Lopez by representing that the whole world was engaged in a combination against him. I stated to that tribunal, that the alliance of Brazil, the Argentine government, and Uruguay had been dissolved and replaced by a new secret treaty of double alliance on the part of Brazil and the Argentine Republic, by which the Republic of Uruguay was to be sacrificed along with Paraguay, and both of them fall a prey to the larger powers, and to be divided up like Poland. I went into geographical details, stating what were to be the boundaries of each one of these countries, and to give the terms of the treaty, which I had called the *double alliance* between Brazil and the Argentine Republic; stating that England, France, and Spain, through their diplomatic agents, had all been lending their countenance to the allies, that they were all in sympathy with the conspiracy going on against Paraguay, that it had been resolved to take possession of the Paraguayan army after the conquest of the country, and engage it with the Brazilian army in fighting against Bolivia, Peru, and other adjacent countries. In that way I endeavored to confuse Lopez, who believed every word of these statements, and to convince him that he was in a most desperate strait. The evidence that he believed it may be found in the fact that after this he issued a proclamation to his army on the 16th of October, the Paraguayan 4th of July, in which he repeated the statement made in my last declarations as to a general combination of most of the civilized nations against them, and made a last appeal to their patriotism.”

It was certainly a hazardous venture to make up such

a stupendous story in regard to matters that if true could not escape public notoriety, and which would be proved entirely fictitious were any neutral gunboat to arrive bringing files of newspapers. If the trick were discovered, the perpetrator might count on a renewal of the *cepo*, to be prolonged till the body could no longer endure it, when he would be handed over to the executioner.

The official declarations having been completed, Bliss and Masterman then supposed they would be despatched. But a new lease of life was given them, that they might write out in narrative form the substance of their testimony. They were both furnished with writing-materials, and their straw huts so raised that they could sit upon the ground. A box was placed before each of them, to serve as a writing-table, and then they were told to commence. They had their fetters on all the time, and a sentinel was always at hand to prod them on and to keep them to their work. They had both learned by this time, that their work, to profit themselves, must abound with abuse of me and in praise of Lopez. Masterman's work was not published, or, if so, was not sent abroad. It was made up almost entirely of praises of Lopez and abuse of me; but as it threw little light on my political offences, it was probably suppressed for that reason.*

The work of Mr. Bliss, written under such circumstances, while in taste it was little better than Masterman's, — in fact, nearly as bad as could be, — so completely effected the writer's object that it may be regarded as the greatest literary success of modern times. It undoubtedly saved the writer's life and that of his companion, Masterman. On being arrested, they both felt that their only hope of ever leaving Paraguay depended on my success in bringing a gunboat or a squadron to their rescue. They had little doubt, that, if they were not killed within three or four months, a force of some kind would

* "In order to conceal my real object, the whole was interspersed with abuse and ridicule of *el gran bestia* and his friends the *macacos* and *camdàs* (the 'baboons' and 'niggers' of Brazil), and laudation so fulsome of Lopez, that he would indeed be a blind man who did not see through it directly." — MASTERMAN'S *Seven Eventful Years*, p. 301.

be sent for them ; and as they had learned that Godon was no longer in command of the squadron, and knew nothing of the character of Davis, they hoped that within a few weeks the American flag would be seen again in the river. It was everything, therefore, for them to gain time ; and when Bliss was commanded to write a connected account of those events to which he had testified as a witness, he saw that the more extensive the scale on which he projected his work the better were his chances of escape. The torturers had taught him that the more extravagant the denunciations of the "evil genius of Paraguay," or the "Great Beast," as the inquisitors were accustomed to call me, the more acceptable were his "declarations" to their master. He, therefore, as he testified before the committee of Congress, resolved to make his narrative serve a double purpose ; his work should be gross and startling enough to make Lopez desirous of its continuance, and at the same time so absurd and ridiculous that it would defeat the very object which the tyrant had in view in ordering it to be written. He had seen, by the way his "declarations" had been received, that Lopez, though in many things showing a marvellous degree of shrewdness and cunning, in all matters touching himself was little better than a lunatic or an idiot. With this knowledge of the man whom he was to glorify and vindicate to the world, he began his task, which, before it was concluded, formed a volume of three hundred and twenty-three pages.*

Few men, indeed scarcely any except those who are put forward as candidates for President, are so eminent either in good or evil as to have their biographies written while yet living. Lopez, however, having resolved to make me one of those few and favored individuals who are permitted to read the story of their own famous deeds, set Bliss to the task of relating them ; and so well satisfied was he with the execution

* "Historia Secreta de la Mision del Ciudadano Norte Americano Charles A. Washburn cerca del Gobierno de la Republica del Paraguay. Por el Ciudadano Americano, Traductor titular (in partibus) de la misma mision, PORTER CORNELIO BLISS, B. A. 'Quousque tandem, abutere patientia nostra.' — *Cicero*."

of it, that he took every possible opportunity to send the book abroad to convince the world that he had defeated the greatest diplomatist, and the boldest, most unscrupulous intriguer, who had ever sought to make kings and emperors the "mere titular dignitaries of the chess-board."

The book (written in Spanish), commences with the following paragraph: "Charles Ames Washburn, late Minister of the United States in the Republic of Paraguay, is a personage that, for his own misfortune, will figure so much in the annals of four countries of South America that some details on his biography cannot be otherwise than interesting to all who care for contemporaneous history." The author then goes on to state that "he had enjoyed great advantages for the fulfilment of the task that he had undertaken, from having received from the mouth of his hero the relation of the rogueries of his childhood, the follies of his youth, and the inexpressible as innumerable adventures of his advanced age." As a youth, the author says that the subject of his memoir was one of those who give early promise of rising to eminence by being hanged; and that, "among the other precious qualities that adorned the hope of the family, and which caused unceasing anxiety to his parents, was a constitutional inability to distinguish between *meum* and *teum*, which induced them to consult a physician of the place, who gave them the benevolent decision that it was an organic infirmity known in the profession by the scientific name of kleptomania! and that perhaps he would be cured by diet and by the assiduous use of certain remedies. The remedies indicated were tried, but without result; and it is sad to add that our hero yet suffers with frequent attacks of kleptomania."

The unfortunate youth is afterwards sent away to school, where he learns all that ought not to be learned and little else, and is expelled from different institutions of learning on account of his mental or moral depravity. Every anecdote, from the time of the peripatetics of students reprimanded or ridiculed by their teachers which the author can recollect, is made to do service in this biography. His hero's

favorite books in youth were the works of Shakespeare, Charles Lamb, and *Joe Miller*; and at a later period, Machiavelli, John Stuart Mill, and Henry Thomas Buckle. The cause of his leaving college so abruptly is thus explained: "The cause of this new misfortune is not perfectly clear, and is one of the matters on which he always preserved a significant silence; but the explanation that rumor gives is, that it was connected with the disappearance of certain silver spoons from the table of the academic dining-room." Having tried his hand at a variety of occupations, the subject of this biography obtains a clerkship at Washington, where, according to the biographer, "he was given up to the pleasures and orgies of the capital in company with the dissolute youth he met there, and was expelled from office without a certificate of character; and when he left, his reputation was well established as a rake given up to the bottle, to gambling, and the pleasures of the table."

The future "evil genius of Paraguay" afterwards becomes a schoolmaster, then a lawyer, then a doctor, in all of which professions he attains similar distinction. As a lawyer he had no clients; and as a doctor his patients ordered their coffins before consulting him. At last, however, the hero of this volume abandons the scenes of his early triumphs, and flees to California. "There, among the purlieus of political intrigue, in the worst-governed city of the world, where crime most abounded, he found the field of his natural abilities." He gathered around him a set of desperadoes, and was known as the chief of a gang of political demagogues. "Then the administration of the city of San Francisco was in the hands of the comrades of Washburn, depraved men, whose rule was a true reign of terror." The power of this leader of the roughs was "cut short by the rising of the people, who constituted themselves a vigilance committee, and improvised a code of laws after the style of Draco, and sent to the gallows by the dozen the most daring of the ruffians that before had ruled the metropolis. Their leader just escaped with his life, by fleeing on board a vessel bound for Panama, at the first mutterings of the tempest."

The fugitive from the vigilance committee tries his hand at writing a novel, of which the principal characters are the most abandoned wretches found in any work of fiction, one of whom is the type of himself, and escapes hanging in a similar manner. The versatile hero next becomes an editor, and serves up to his readers old jokes that can be understood because they are old, and new ones that cannot because they are original. That the original wit might not be lost, the following notice was kept standing at the head of the column in which it appeared: "The editor gives notice to his subscribers, that if there may be any among them who hereafter may not comprehend the whole sense of his original jokes, he will have much pleasure in going round to the houses of such subscribers as may desire it, in order to explain, *viva voce*, the meaning of all that may have appeared obscure in these jests."

This accommodating editor adds to his other qualifications for office that of a poet; and his biographer devotes some six pages to a criticism of his poetry, not a line of which, unfortunately, is he able to remember. The critique, however, as a literary feat, is a remarkable production, and illustrates, as well as anything can, the situation of the author at the time he was writing it. Literally, he was *writing for life*; and was contriving every possible way to spin out his work till something should come to his rescue. To criticise imaginary poetry and "body forth the form of things unknown" was only to be done by one who could "give to airy nothings a local habitation and a name." But Bliss, though a prodigy of learning and a living encyclopædia of knowledge, was not aware till then that he possessed the divine afflatus, or held the poet's pen; and yet he gives a slashing criticism of poetry that was never written, which would have done honor to a quarterly review. In relating his experience at this time, he has since said that his mind was abnormally active. His ideas were not clogged by over-indulgence at the table, for while thus engaged he never had half so much to eat as he wanted, and what he did get was seldom anything more than

a bit of boiled beef without salt. He was kept at work incessantly for twelve or fourteen hours a day, a guard over him all the time to keep him up to his task, being frequently roused up at night to correct his proofs. In spite of himself, therefore, his work got on faster than he desired; and at the rate he was progressing it would be completed before the hundred days which he fixed as the time that must pass before the squadron would come after him. To gain time, he made errors in his manuscript, and a great number of corrections in his proofs; and when these were returned to him, he would correct them again and then again, thus prolonging his task, as did Penelope her web while waiting the return of Ulysses.

About forty pages of the book are devoted to the life of his hero previous to his appointment as Minister to Paraguay, which was conferred upon him, notwithstanding his notorious character, at the instigation of the Rhode Island Company, and especially of their former agent, E. A. Hopkins. Some twenty pages more are devoted to his career during his first residence in Paraguay, in which he showed himself to be a bitter enemy of both government and people; and yet he so won the esteem and confidence of his Excellency, Francisco Solano Lopez, that he covered him with benefits, and loaded him down with money to expend for the benefit of Paraguay, but which he put in his own pocket, and left his illustrious friend to look elsewhere for his lost treasure. When he left the country he did not intend to return to it, but unexpected events at home, particularly the death of President Lincoln, decided him to go back; and as soon as he reached Rio de Janeiro, he was taken into the councils of the Brazilian government, and became their paid agent, holding the most confidential relations with the Emperor and his principal ministers. His pretended quarrel with Admiral Godon was a farce, all arranged to deceive the American government, as he was receiving four thousand dollars a month from the Emperor during all the time of his delay. His own government, however, at last imperatively orders him to his post; and so at last he passes through the blockade, being continued in receipt of an in-

come from the allies, compared with which his salary from his own government is a mere bagatelle.

Having exhausted that part of the early life of his hero, Mr. Bliss was at a loss for another subject on which to enlarge. But as it was known to Lopez that during my residence in Paraguay I had been collecting materials for a book on the country, a part of which was already written, he instructed his inquisitors to question the prisoner as to the tenor and contents of the forthcoming volume. By this time Bliss had shown so much zeal in denouncing and exposing the subject of his biography, had abused him with such apparent unction, had cursed him so roundly for having seduced him from the path of virtue, and from the loyalty and devotion that was justly due the "greatest warrior of the age," that Lopez seemed to believe that he had in reality become my bitterest enemy; that he had been conquered by kindness, and converted to be his friend and champion. He did not, however, take off his fetters or give him any better food. So long as a man, though a starved prisoner who had often been tortured, had breath in his body, Lopez considered that he owed him an infinite debt of gratitude; and that, if afterwards he were set at liberty, he ought to spend his days in defending the cause and person of his magnanimous benefactor, and in chanting his praises. My biographer, therefore, continued on the dangerous experiment of giving from memory what he called quotations from my unpublished book, in which he resolved to incorporate so much truth, that, though Lopez was not acute enough to see his object, it would, if ever published and circulated beyond the limits of the Paraguayan camp, enlighten the world as to the tyrant's character and government. As fast as eight pages of his work were completed, it was printed and distributed through the army.

The object of Lopez in circulating the advance sheets is intelligible, so long as the work was limited to abuse of me; but that he should continue to do the same afterwards, when the sheets thrown off contained little more than the most violent denunciations of himself, seems almost as incompre-

hensible as the mystery of the great conspiracy. During the long and intimate acquaintance which I had had with Mr. Bliss, every act of importance in the career of Lopez had been passed in review by us, and we were perfectly in accord in our estimate of his character; our opinion being that of every intelligent person in Paraguay, with the exceptions only of himself and Madam Lynch. These opinions were the same as have been expressed in this work, and it will be found that the material facts in Bliss's book and mine in regard to the character and conduct of Lopez are virtually the same. Many things in Bliss's narrative, however, are not in mine; some for the reason that they are of too gross a character to be believed by the general reader, even if true, and some because I had never heard of them till I saw them in my own biography.

From this singular book I shall translate a few pages, regretting that I cannot give the larger part of it. If the author shall ever make a translation of it, and publish it with notes explaining the circumstances under which it was written, his surroundings, and the hints received from the torturers, the quotations from old Latin works furnished by the priests who watched the progress of his writing it, it could hardly fail to be as extensively read as ever was Robinson Crusoe or Gulliver's Travels.

In giving what he called extracts from my manuscripts, he more frequently gave the substance of conversations that actually took place. Long before Lopez had marked me out as one of his victims, I had, in a conversation with Bliss, compared him to Rehoboam, and from this suggestion my biographer gives the following as an extract from my book:—

“The conduct of Lopez forcibly suggests the analogy of Rehoboam, son and successor of Solomon, of whom the Bible gives the following account. The Hebrew people, during the latter part of the reign of King Solomon, having been oppressed with heavy labors for the construction of the celebrated Temple and other objects, some of them conceived great hopes that their burdens would be alleviated by the son, and in that expectation addressed him their

supplications. Rehoboam, unused to the cares of empire, collected in a council the old servants of the crown, and submitted to them these petitions. The council of old men gave their opinion in favor of the petitioners, and so represented to the young king ; but he in the mean while had taken a dislike to those old public functionaries, and, before deciding, he convoked a company of the young companions of his orgies. These furnished to Rehoboam the text of the famous answer to the petitioners in the opposite sense, that is : ' My father has loaded you with light yokes, but I will oppress you with heavy yokes ; my father has chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions : my little finger shall be thicker than my father's loin.'

" In the same way General Lopez has discharged ' the most aged and faithful servants of his father, until it came to this, that to have belonged to the council of the last administration soon came to be a just ground of suspicion and persecution of the new *régime*. Very soon the principal personages among them fell under the stern rod of the Paraguayan laws, that in other words are the despotic mandates of the modern Rehoboam, in comparison with whose atrocities the rule of the autocrats of all the Russians is mercy itself, and the worst rigors of the Holy Inquisition are tender caresses."

Following this estimate of the character of Lopez, probably the most just one he ever heard expressed of himself, the biographer next gives the opinion of the barbarian Minister, who " had just' escaped by the skin of his teeth," and gone abroad to spread his calumnies on those holy men, the Paraguayan priests : —

" In the world are three classes of despotisms, civil, ecclesiastic, and military, each of which is sufficient to effect the misery of a people ; but the unhappy Republic of Paraguay is the only country in the world where are found all three in a state of full activity and perfect equilibrium, administered by the great *Equilibrista* of the Plata. If the civil despotism is the head, the ecclesiastic and military are the two arms, of the present government ; all the clergy, from the bishop down, being but an active instrument of espionage systematized into complete subordination. The immorality of the Paraguayan clergy is excessive, and runs apace with its gross igno-

rance. As there is scarcely a priest in the whole Republic that knows more Latin than is strictly necessary to mutilate the words of the holy office, who can believe that the Great Architect of the universe would wish to be represented on earth by such a vile horde of intriguers and spies?"

From the treatment that the priests were receiving about this time, it would seem that Lopez had a very similar opinion in regard to them as is here expressed. For while Bliss was pretending to quote to him from my manuscripts the calumnies on those pious sons of the Church, all the more intelligent among them, excepting only Padre Maiz, were prisoners in fetters, several being within sight of his hut.

Of Lopez's courage and fitness for military command I am thus made to speak by my biographer:—

"When Washburn came to treat of the military knowledge and strategy of the Marshal, he represented them to be very limited, and asserted more than once that he lacked the first requisite of a soldier,—personal valor! That the Marshal had an extraordinary regard for the safety of his own skin, and that he is perhaps the only general in the world, at least of those who have directed a campaign as chief, that does not know personally the emotions of the battle-field, as he has never had a near view of any combat of war, and has always remained at a respectable distance from the scene of battle, whilst he showed a criminal disregard of the lives of his subjects, whom he sacrificed by thousands without the least compunction; that if the Marshal had at any time established or given proof of his personal valor, his present conduct in keeping himself far from the immediate theatre of battle could not be criticised, but that nobody had a right to demand from his subordinates a bravery and contempt of life of which he had not at any time given an example. Notwithstanding this, Marshal Lopez wishes to have the reputation of surpassing valor, and to be considered as one who is accustomed to cavort unterrified on his mettlesome charger, in the midst of a shower of bombs and balls."

How Lopez could permit a man to write truths like these I have quoted, and which everybody around him knew to be truths, whether quotations from me or original with Bliss, seems scarcely credible even to me, who have known of so many of

his stupid and foolish acts, and have the book before me from which I make the translations. The others saw through the trick, and on several occasions Padre Maiz said to the prisoner, *sotto voce*, that, while he was pretending to be quoting from me, he was writing a most scathing criticism on his Excellency.

The character of Lopez having been portrayed in such colors, the biographer next proceeds to quote from my forthcoming book my opinions of the principal characters among the allies, of whom he says I speak in terms of the bitterest sarcasm and contempt, notwithstanding the large sums of gold they had paid me to be their friend and champion, and at the very time I was writing the most biting satires on the Emperor Pedro II., Caxias, Octaviano, Mitre, and others, I was in fact the Brazilian Minister Plenipotentiary, and receiving a fabulous salary from the imperial treasury.

"From a regard to truth," says the author of this interesting work, "we shall admit that the satires which Washburn hurls at his *friends*—Caxias, Mitre, *et id omne genus*—are well merited, and sometimes felicitous. This part of his work was written about the middle of the year 1867, when the scheme of the revolution was not far advanced, and when the fierce anger of his hate—beyond the theological—towards this Republic had not arrived at the extreme to which it afterwards reached. Therefore this part of the work of Washburn is the only part that possesses any merit; and leaving out of view the ingratitude, we can applaud the justice of his hits. They have deserved it, but not from him, will be the judgment of the impartial reader; since our hero satirizing his comrades among the allies would be like the pot calling the kettle black, or, more expressively, Satan rebuking sin. If it is true that the characters of the chiefs of the alliance are not completely immaculate, it is no less certain that their implacable satirist is one on which coal would make a white mark.

'O wad some power the giftie gie us,
To see oursels as others see us!'

has sung the inspired bard of Scotland. When the Marques de Caxias may see the pages of Washburn, ingratitude, more sharp than treacherous steel, will quite conquer him; he will exclaim, '*Et tu, Brute*. This is the most unkindest cut of all! Get thee behind me, Satan! Take any form but that! Save me from my friends!'

Probably he will.

In giving so many and such long extracts from this book of Bliss, it has not been my object to amuse the reader so much as to let him understand the contemptible character of Lopez. Every page of it, before it was published, was submitted to him and approved, and in one sense it may be considered Lopez's book. His object, undoubtedly, in sending it abroad, was to vindicate himself, and to prove to the world that the minister of another country, whom he had so grossly insulted, whose ambassadorial rights he had outraged, and whose employees he had imprisoned, was none other than the arch-plotter of modern diplomacy, the agent of foreign potentates who sought to deprive the Paraguayan people of their liberties ; that he was a scoffer at religion, the very Antichrist who would defile the fountains of knowledge by substituting for the pious teachings of the priests of Paraguay the doctrines of such profane writers as Shakespeare, Milton, Pope, John Stuart Mill, Buckle, and Tennyson. These writers are the ones most frequently quoted by Bliss ; and as it is scarcely possible that Lopez ever heard of them before, he must have imagined, from the frequency with which Shakespeare was quoted, that he was the inventor and advocate of all abominable doctrines. To give a more complete idea of the character of the book, I translate a few pages for a foot-note.* These will

* "It is a portentous phenomenon," says Bliss, pretending to quote from me, "how this people has been able to consent to be their own hangman, in the same way that sometimes the Roman citizens, whose death the tyrant Nero desired, received permission from the Emperor to open their veins. . . . It is inexplicable how this people, seeing itself, like Prometheus, chained to a rock, whilst a vulture (the Marshal) devours its entrails, and being able, by a simple gesture, to break these chains, there has not been found one to act the part of Junius Brutus ; that it can only be explained by the ancient proverb, 'WHOM THE GODS WISH TO DESTROY THEY FIRST MAKE MAD!!!' That, without doubt, among the designs of God is the complete destruction of the Paraguayan race, as the fig-tree in the Evangel, of which, not having produced fruit for three years (the years of the war), Jesus Christ said, 'Cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground?' That already are very near the *dies ira*, *dies illa* of the Paraguayan people. That God's vengeance may be slow, but it is sure, approaching with an imperceptible step, as the Greek poet Æschylus has expressed it (that applying them to the delays of the allied forces Washburn has repeated times without number

serve to show, not so much the wealth of the writer in quotations, his remarkable memory, and a playfulness of style,

in conversation), 'The avenging gods are shod with wool.' That for their stupidity and blindness, and other sins, the Paraguayan people have merited the complete extermination that awaits them, and that the world will have reason to congratulate itself when there shall not be in it a single person that speaks the accursed Guarani idiom.

"That at the mouth of the river Paraguay ought to be erected a column with this warning inscription, which Dante in his poem of the *Divina Commedia* represents to have been placed above the door of hell, 'All you who enter here, leave hope behind!' And, changing the solemn style for the festive, he says there are two classes of men that ought never to come to Paraguay, — the fools and the men of sense; and that his advice to all persons who think of coming here would be the same that Punch gave to persons about to marry, — 'don't' . . .

"That as in the feast of Belshazzar, the last night of the Babylonian Empire, appeared in characters of fire traced upon the wall, by a visible hand, the warning prediction, *Mene tekel upharsin*, the same prophecy is already written against the Republic of Paraguay (and particularly against Marshal Lopez) in letters so large that he that runs may read them!!! That the Marshal has the greatest reason to exclaim, in the famous words of Prince Metternich, 'After me the deluge,' since as the prophet Daniel had prognosticated that the end of Babylon would be by a deluge, the same will happen in the present case.

"That, as to exclamations, Lopez will find more than one that will be suggested in his last extremities in the two master works of Shakespeare, the celebrated dramas of Richard III. and Macbeth, whose heroes, kings, one of England and the other of Scotland, were flagrant criminals, in whose death, as tragic as well deserved, the Marshal could get a glimpse of his own if he knew enough of English to read what he would recommend to him."

The story of Richard's death is then related at considerable length, and a description is given of the manner in which the shades of his many illustrious victims arise from the earth and pass in slow procession before him, each one shaking his bony finger at him, "at which Richard, starting up, calls out, 'A horse, a horse! my kingdom for a horse!' In such case Lopez (adds Washburn, with gross indecency) would be satisfied with a jackass." Then the tragic story of Macbeth's last hours is related, and it is foretold by the same irreverent prophet that Lopez will have the same death; but having already perished like Belshazzar and Richard, he must have been a character like Mrs. Malaprop's Cerberus, "three gentlemen at once."

"Macbeth also knew of the death of his queen, the accomplice of his crimes, and kept on to the last point of desperation; one of his suite having hinted to him that something should be arranged for to-morrow, there broke forth from his agonized heart this tremendous soliloquy: —

'To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,
Creeps on its petty pace from day to day,
To the last syllable of recorded time;
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusty death.'

under the circumstances, still more remarkable, as the incredible stupidity of Lopez in publishing and circulating a

“And though Jesus Christ may have said, Take no thought of to-morrow, for to-morrow will take care of itself, yet Lopez has too often present to his mind the avenging shears of the *Parcæ*, that will cut the throat of his criminal existence, to fail to appreciate the whole force of these lines.

“Before leaving the arsenal of war that he had found in Shakespeare, our prophet wished to throw the last dart against Marshal Lopez, remembering in the tragedy of Julius Cæsar the appeal of Cassius to Brutus inciting him to take part in the conspiracy against the life of Cæsar, —

‘Now, in the name of all the gods at once,
Upon what meat hath this our Cæsar fed,
That he hath grown so great?’

And answered the question contained in these lines, saying that probably Lopez had nourished his heroic valor on lion’s marrow, and concluded saying he has no doubt that Lopez in his disturbed dreams had seen many times a spectre like that which appeared to Brutus, saying, ‘I am thy evil genius! You will see me at Philippi.’

“Lopez has imitated exactly the conduct of the celebrated Scottish Chief Lochiel in disregarding an augury, very similar to that which before the battle of Culloden, in 1745, was given by a Highland seer in these words, according to the poetic version of Campbell: —

‘Lochiel! Lochiel! beware of the day,’ etc.

“That Lopez also pretends to gifts of inspiration, and in an address in the Guarani language to the officers of his army in Humaita, near the beginning of the war, he told them, ‘This hand has signed the commissions of five hundred of you, and has been guided in it by the direct inspiration of God!’

“That if the inspiration of God were never more effective than in the case alluded to, the inspiration of the Devil would be better, since the greater part of those to whom this speech was addressed did not respond to the expectations of Lopez, and many of them have been compelled to go and give an account of their inspired commissions by means of four shots that the inspired Lopez had ordered to be discharged at them.

“That if this state of things should continue much longer, the Republic will be converted into a vast prison, in which the entire population will be shut up, and that then Marshal Lopez, being the only person who will remain at liberty, may mount the tribune, shaking in his hands the keys of the prisons, and proclaim to the astonished world, parodying the words of Louis XIV., (*L’État c’est moi!*) ‘I am the Paraguayan people. Order reigns in Warsaw. The Paraguayan people is free and happy, and has had no part in the iniquitous plan of revolution incited by some traitors in its bosom.’ Washburn added that this discourse would perfectly express the idea that the Marshal has of what constitutes the liberty of a people, since he accepts without reserve the famous definition enunciated by James I. of England: ‘A free government is that in which the monarch is perfectly free to do whatever he pleases.’”

— *Extracts from Bliss’s “Historia Secreta,”* pp. 113 to 120.

work of this kind in vindication of himself. It fully equals Francia's letter of vindication against the charges of Dr. Rengger. Frequently passages are given in Latin as quotations where the Latin is made for the occasion, and ascribed to writers of whom neither Lopez nor any of his inquisitors ever heard.

The quotations which I have given from this book show that Bliss was trying to work upon the superstitious fears of Lopez. In another place, as a reason for introducing such absurdities as signs and omens, he describes me as a great believer in them, and as having a variety of ways by which I prognosticated the future. Among other portentous signs that to me were of prophetic import were certain letters. The letter B was of all in the alphabet most ominous of disaster to Lopez; and to call his attention to the fact, Bliss gives the following proofs that it was really so:—

“And what shall we say of the stupendous discovery that Washburn made about this time, *that the letter B is of evil omen for Marshal Lopez*; as all the countries, persons, and things whose names begin with this letter seemed to have entered into a conspiracy against the Marshal? As such, he cited the *countries* Brazil, Buenos Aires, Banda Oriental; and also, for certain contingencies, Bolivia and Great *Britain*. The persons alluded to were the brothers of the Marshal, Benigno and Venancio, (whose name he spelled with a B,—*Benancio!*) the Bishop, Barrios, Bedoya, Berges, Bruguez, Benitez, Bliss, Bareiro (Candido), Brizuela, and *Bonaparte*; and the author does not know why he did not cite Beelzebub and Belial, as these illustrious persons ought not to be omitted from such a list. The *things* which were mentioned in this strange connection were the ironclads (*blindados*), the blockade, batteries, bombs, balls, and bayonets of the enemy. . . .

“Apropos of this list, the author wishes here to suggest to his hero, what did not occur to him at the time, that, as he included Venancio in the list, substituting a B for a V in his eccentric orthography, he might with double reason have included his own name, as in that case the double V (W) would signify with great truth a *double fatality!*”

Thus while Lopez by brutal force was extorting such “con-

fessions" as these from his victim, the latter was playing on his known credulity and superstition, and telling him of the horrid visions and killing remorse of others, who like him had shed seas of innocent blood. In the course of his work Bliss also stated that the late Minister had fully appreciated the dangers from which he had escaped, and had frequently said, during the two months preceding the arrival of the Wasp, that he was likely to be "the hero of his own novel," who, in endeavoring to serve and save others, had exposed himself to a miserable death.

The portrait of Lopez, as drawn by Bliss in the extracts I have given, was very correct; and in reading them he must have seen that every stroke had been suggested by acts that were notorious; and if he believed that I had gone away with the proofs of his cowardice, his cruelty, his jealousy and thirst of blood, which I had already arranged for publication, he must have been even more angry with himself that he had not made way with me before the arrival of the Wasp than he was after the receipt of my letter denouncing him as an enemy of the human race and a common thief. It would be a satisfaction to many to know how he received these advance sheets of his own biography. Did he regard them as so preposterous and extravagant that they could never affect his name or reputation? Did he still believe that the words which his paramour, his torturers and inquisitors, were constantly whispering in his ears, that he was too good, too kind-hearted, too unsuspecting, too reckless of danger, were the same that would be finally inscribed on the page of history? Or did he take a delight in contemplating the destruction he had caused, and reflect with satisfaction that his would be a name forever accursed in the future annals of his country; and that, like Attila, he had achieved a name so infamous in history that men would call him the "Scourge of God." Did he glory in leaving a

" . . . name to other times,

Linked with *no* virtue, and a thousand crimes " ?

The book reaches its climax with the concluding para-

graphs. The writer, having spun out his story to such length, is admonished that he must bring it to a close. He anticipates that with the conclusion of the work will come the order for his execution. He therefore makes a last appeal for life by swearing that if it shall be spared him he will spend it in exposing and bringing to justice the "evil genius of Paraguay":—

"We have sketched with free strokes the history of the greatest violation of the duties of a neutral diplomate that modern times can offer. We denounce to the Divine anger, to the opprobrium of the world, and to the condign punishment of his country, Charles Ames Washburn as guilty of high treason, and particularly of an enormous conspiracy against the government to which he was accredited, and against the life of the supreme Magistrate of this Republic of Paraguay.

"Our present task is concluded ; but at laying aside the pen we swear solemnly, if God gives us the opportunity, to follow Washburn through all the earth until he shall receive the just punishment of his unheard-of and execrable crimes!!!"

This book, though as an intellectual and literary feat a most remarkable production, certainly shows little of the heroic or noble in the author ; and a person reading it, who knew nothing of the circumstances under which it was written, while he could not but wonder at the great memory and extensive reading of the writer, as evinced by his numerous and often very long quotations from a multiplicity of authors, would naturally have great contempt for his character. That any person having a proper sense of honor and decency should make up such a farrago of falsehoods about a man who had for years befriended him, and on whose efforts to save him hung, at the very time he was writing, his only hope of life, appears incredible. The utter want of taste and delicacy shown in the book would seem to be impossible to a man having a due regard to them, and the sustained humor and wit, taken with the professed indignation and repentance, would appear to be hardly within the range of human power and self-control, unless the writer were in earnest, and enjoyed the labor in which he was engaged.

Other men of unimpeachable character and the highest sense of honor had confessed to having committed the same acts as those admitted by Mr. Bliss, and no one who knew of the horrid appliances that Lopez made use of to extort confessions ever reproached them for doing so. The apparent pleasure, however, that Bliss took in imposing his fabulous stories on Lopez was well calculated to create a prejudice against him among those who were not aware of the circumstances under which the book had been written. As I was the only person to be affected by his startling revelations, garnished with allusions and anecdotes of at least questionable taste, it would hardly be supposed that the very parties who were most unfriendly to me should be the most indignant with Bliss. The officers of the squadron affected to be very angry with him that he should thus calumniate a friend and benefactor, at the same time that they tried to create an impression in the public mind that his accusations were true, and that they had obtained irrefragable evidence while in Paraguay that there had been a great conspiracy, of which I had been the master spirit. They assailed me because I had needlessly abandoned Bliss to the horrid cruelties of Lopez, and then, when he had been rescued from his perilous position, they treated him like a felon, alleging as a reason his ingratitude to me ; and next, to crown all, they became the apologists and defenders of Lopez, and tried to excuse his barbarities, though numerous and unimpeachable witnesses testify to his having committed almost every crime imaginable, and such as were never committed before by any person bearing the human form.

The book was a success, and its style had made it so ; for, writing it as he did, Mr. Bliss so interested Lopez that he was permitted to continue at his work until so long a time had expired that he might reasonably hope for deliverance.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Arrival of the Wasp. — Admiral Davis's Letter to Lopez. — The New American Minister. — The Release of Bliss and Masterman demanded. — Lopez boasts that he has the Naval Officers on his Side. — Interviews between Davis and Lopez. — Bliss and Masterman regarded as Criminals. — Lopez's Opinion of Davis. — Davis sends two of his Officers to verify the Declarations of Bliss and Masterman before the Tribunal. — Extracts from the Testimony taken during the Paraguayan Investigation. — Joy of Bliss and Masterman on learning that their Deliverance was at Hand. — Lopez's sudden Turn of Affection for Bliss. — The Incomprehensible Character of Lopez.

THE book at last being finished, the author was anxiously waiting to know whether Lopez had any further use for him than to shoot him. The last sheet of manuscript had but just passed from his hands when the American flag was again discovered by the advanced pickets on the river-bank. What followed was thus related by Bliss to the Committee on Foreign Affairs : —

“I had spun my pamphlet out as long as it was possible, and finally brought it to a conclusion on the 2d of December ; that is to say, the printing was finished then ; the writing had been finished some time before. On the 4th of December I was told that Marshal Lopez, out of his unbounded clemency, had determined to mitigate my sufferings, and a blacksmith was called in to take off my fetters. I had worn my fetters all this time, and had been kept on starvation diet, which consisted of a small ration of boiled beef twice a day, with a little cake of mandioca flour, made from the root of a vegetable of that country used as a substitute for potatoes. The diet was insufficient in quantity. I could have eaten, at any time, twice as much as I received. I was then asked what I would do in case I should see Mr. Washburn, or be brought face to face with him. I was asked if I remembered the concluding paragraph of my pamphlet, in which I expressed myself as desiring nothing

better than to be allowed to go away from Paraguay, in order to prosecute Mr. Washburn before his own government for malfeasance in office. I declared that I would prosecute Mr. Washburn from one end of the world to the other, until I had obtained satisfaction from him for getting me into that 'bad box.' I replied that I *did* remember it well, and quoted it. Some further hints were then given me that I might, perhaps, be soon set at liberty, though nothing definite was said on that subject. I was asked whether I would maintain my consistency in case I was the recipient of the clemency of his Excellency Marshal Lopez. A blank book was brought to me, and I was invited to write in it, and asked what I wished to write. I said I did not know ; 'I was willing to write anything.' I was set to work writing some epistles in a satirical style, directed to the commander-in-chief of the Brazilian Army, the Marques de Caxias, which were immediately published in sheets by order of Lopez. Four days later (on the 8th of December), I was called out of my hut and had an interview with the inquisitor and head torturer. I was at that time, as I have mentioned, without any irons on, they having been removed four days before. I was then told that in his most exalted clemency Marshal Lopez had resolved to *pardon* my great offences ; that a new American Minister had arrived there, and that, as an act of courtesy to this American Minister, President Lopez wished to pardon me, on condition of my maintaining *consistency* with my declarations before the tribunal, and that I was about to be brought before the tribunal for the last time ; that everything would depend upon my conduct there, and my *preserving consistency*. I had been for three months wearing the same suit of clothes, and of course my pantaloons were cut to pieces with the irons. Of course I was fearfully dirty, and covered with vermin. A pair of drawers, a shirt, and some water, were brought, and I was requested to put myself into a little more presentable condition before being called before the court for the *last act*. I was told I would find some of my countrymen there. I was not told who they were, or for what purpose they would be there. Nothing was said about the presence of the American squadron. Nothing was said about a demand having been made for our liberation. I concluded I was going to be formally sentenced to death, and that this sentence would then be remitted, and prepared to listen to such a process. But no sentence was passed upon me, and my trial never came to a technical conclusion."

By this time Admiral Davis had arrived, accompanied by Kirkland and Ramsey and Minister McMahon. Of the four gunboats that left Buenos Aires, only the Wasp came through the blockade. The others remained below to await orders.

When Lopez was notified that an American gunboat had arrived and was at anchor below Angostura, he immediately divined the object of her coming, and at first appeared greatly excited and enraged; so much so that those around him feared he would show his defiance and signalize the occasion by some new enormity. He anticipated that he would be called upon, not only to deliver up Bliss and Masterman, but to make other humiliating concessions. He was yet in this frame of mind when Commander Kirkland appeared at his head-quarters, bearing a letter from Admiral Davis. The few foreigners yet remaining in his camp, knowing the desperate state of mind that he was in, were exceedingly anxious lest he should answer the unwelcome message by arresting and shooting the bearer of it, and were greatly relieved when they saw him return unharmed to the Wasp. But the first paragraph of Admiral Davis's letter, if not the assurances of Kirkland, convinced him that Davis had come as a friend, and not as an enemy; that his object was rather to make than to demand an apology. It was in these words:—

“SIR, — I have the honor to inform your Excellency that I have arrived in front of Angostura, having on board his Excellency General M. T. McMahon, the Minister of the United States to the Republic of Paraguay.”

So he was not an outlaw and a barbarian, after all. Though he had grossly insulted the last American Minister by making the most outrageous accusations against him, had threatened his imprisonment, and arrested and tortured two members of his suite, yet here was a new Minister coming with gentle words, asking to be received.

The Admiral, having thus advised Lopez that he had brought a hostage to leave in place of the prisoners in his hands, then

says: "As an indispensable preliminary step to the presentation by General McMahon to your Excellency of his credential letters, I have to request that Messrs. Bliss and Masterman, the persons arrested and detained in Asuncion while under the protection and attached to the Legation of the previous United States Minister, be restored to the authority of the United States flag."

Having read this letter, Lopez expressed a wish to have a personal interview with Admiral Davis, and requested Kirkland to return and invite him to come on shore at a later hour of the same day. As soon as Kirkland was gone, the Marshal appeared to be greatly relieved, and intimated to those around him that he had already got the naval officers on his side, "and would you believe it?" said he, "another Yankee Minister has come." As may well be supposed, the hearts of the foreigners in his camp, who had hoped that he was to be taught a lesson, and made to understand that he could not imprison and kill innocent persons with impunity, sank within them when they heard of these boastful words.

A little later he started with a part of his staff for the bank of the river, where he was met by Admiral Davis, and they had an interview that lasted for some three hours. No full report of what transpired on this occasion has ever been published; but from the course pursued afterwards by the Admiral, it would seem that he was completely charmed and captivated by the Marshal. What proofs Lopez offered to disprove the statements that I had made, and which the Admiral had evidently come to seek, the latter has never made public. In his report of the interview to the Secretary of the Navy, he said, however, that Lopez did not object to delivering up the men, but was unwilling to concede that they had ever been members of the Legation, and therefore objected to surrendering them at a request based on that ground. He accordingly desired that Davis should withdraw that letter and write another, so that by surrendering them he would not yield the point so long in dispute between him and me. The Admiral, promising to write such a letter, returned

on board the *Wasp*, deeply impressed with the courtesy and frankness of the Marshal; and Lopez, feeling very jubilant, went back to his head-quarters. The high opinion which the Admiral conceived of Lopez was not reciprocated by the latter. On the contrary, when he reached his head-quarters, he expressed the greatest contempt for his visitor, exulting over his success in outwitting him, and said he was anything but a soldier.

In the next letter of the Admiral, dated on the 4th of December, he makes no allusion to the fact that Bliss and Masterman had been members of the United States Legation, and says that it does not belong to him to define, or even to consider, the status of these individuals, but that "Lopez may repose confidence in the justice and friendship of the United States." He also promises that any papers which Lopez "may be pleased to send with those individuals will be transmitted to Washington by the earliest opportunity."

But even this did not satisfy Lopez; and on the following day a note was sent to the Admiral, signed by the military secretary of Lopez, in which, with an insolence and impudence showing that he had rightly gauged the firmness and calibre of the man he was dealing with, he tells him that "he should not conceal from himself the fact that Bliss and Masterman are criminals deeply committed in the affairs of a horrible conspiracy, very particularly the former." Nevertheless, Lopez says he will deliver them up, "provided it is requested in a manner more in conformity with the fact of their being accomplices of Mr. Washburn, and the first intimately acquainted with his intrigues in the character of conspirator and agent of the enemy, of which he is now accused in the national tribunal, since they would be useful in the administration of justice by the American government, to whose judgment he would confide the above-mentioned criminals."

The demand that the Admiral shall first recognize Bliss and Masterman as criminals, and my accomplices in a conspiracy, is immediately assented to by the Admiral. In a letter to Lopez of the same date, he says that it is no part of his

official duty "either to offer or refuse any terms which will affect the alleged criminal conditions of the two persons in question." Having made this concession, the Admiral again reminds Lopez that he has a Minister with him who is waiting to present his credentials; and says that he wishes Bliss and Masterman to be sent on board, in order that he "may keep them in security, subject to the government of the United States." By this time, however, he begins to fear that it is Lopez's purpose not to deliver them; and he therefore requests to be informed when he may expect to receive them on board, or else to be apprised that it is not his Excellency's intention to send them at all.

To this Lopez replies that it has never been his intention not to give them up, but in doing so it would be as a courtesy to the United States. The reclamation or demand being waived by the Admiral, the "criminals," as they are invariably called, would be sent on board the *Wasp* on the afternoon of the 8th of December. There was, however, another preliminary to their rendition. Lopez desired to further humiliate and degrade the naval service of the United States by having two officers of the squadron to assist at his "solemn tribunal," and *verify as witnesses the "declarations" of those who were to be delivered up as my accomplices, and sent as prisoners for trial to the United States.*

I have now to give the circumstances and details of a transaction that I would gladly pass over unnoticed. The story must cause a blush of shame to mantle the cheek of every American that reads it; and whoever else may know of it will bless his lot that the shame and disgrace of the act does not attach to his own country. That such acts may not be repeated, the people must know of them. It is nothing that the Navy Department may be advised of them; for, as we have before seen, it is according to the policy and system of that department to defend and justify every act of its higher officers, no matter how tyrannical or disgraceful to the country and the service.

Admiral Davis having promised to send the two officers to

join the court of inquisition, his fleet-captain, Francis M. Ramsey, and Commander Kirkland, were sent on shore, on the morning of the 8th of December, to render that last humiliating service to Lopez.

In the mean while Bliss and Masterman were made aware that something had occurred which promised deliverance. On the day after the interview between Lopez and the Admiral, and two days after his book was finished, Bliss received the first intimation that it was not the purpose of Lopez to execute him. He thus relates the incident:—

“I was brought before the tribunal, and found there two of our naval officers, to whom I was introduced in a very indistinct way. I understood one to be Lieutenant-Commander Kirkland. The other officer's name I did not then catch, but ascertained subsequently that it was Fleet-Captain Ramsey, chief of staff to Admiral Davis. These officers said nothing to me except to ask my name, — ‘Are you Bliss? or are you Masterman?’ I replied, giving my name. The tribunal then proceeded to cause all my depositions which had been taken down, during twenty days or more, to be read over, occupying the entire afternoon in the process. This took place in the mud hut in which the tribunal was held by the two priests I have referred to. These two naval officers took seats with the members of the tribunal, with whom they were laughing, smoking, drinking brandy, and receiving presents.* They seemed to be on

* It should be here stated that Captain Ramsey, when before the Congressional Committee, denied that he partook of the refreshments offered. His testimony is as follows:—

“While standing outside, talking to these officers, one of whom had been in London and the other in Paris, a boy passed by wearing a pretty embroidered shirt, which I remarked upon, and asked if that was the work of the country. They told me that it was, and that their women prided themselves on that kind of work. He then sent into the house for some specimens of the work, and a shirt and a towel were brought out. He handed me the towel, and said, ‘Perhaps your countrymen would like to see some specimens of Paraguayan work. Won't you take this?’ He then gave me the towel, which I have brought with me, for the purpose of showing it to the Committee. I received nothing else. They also brought out some *caña* and cigars, and asked us to partake of them. I neither smoke nor drink, so I did not accept of their invitation. Commander Kirkland, however, did take some; and after a short recess we returned to the hut where the tribunal was held, and Masterman was brought in. While we had

the most intimate terms with the members of the tribunal, but never saying a word to me, or taking any interest in my condition. At various times during this proceeding I was called on to acknowledge the genuineness of my signatures to the successive depositions. I did so, speaking in Spanish. I was then told by one of the naval officers to speak in English, and I replied in English, 'That is my signature.' At the conclusion of this proceeding we exchanged no further words, and in the presence of the United States officers I was called upon to subscribe to the entire document, acknowledging all my signatures, and certifying again to the correctness of the entire depositions, on which the members of the tribunal and the officers of the United States Navy present signed the record. It was not stated whether or not they signed as witnesses, or as members of the tribunal. . . .

"During this interview there were present two Paraguayan officers who understood English, so that I could not have spoken freely to the American officers. The head torturer sat opposite me, sword in hand, and with his sinister eyes fixed upon me with the most menacing manner all the time." *

been out I saw a person standing beside a tree, with a sentry near him, whom I supposed to be Mr. Masterman. As Mr. Masterman came in he had to pass close by my side, and as he passed me he said: 'You must forgive me for what I am going to say. I hoped to be spared this shame.' Those were his exact words, and I wrote them down as soon after as I could. When he was first sworn he exhibited great fear. His manner was that of a man very much alarmed; and when he took his seat he twitched and moved about all the time. He seemed very uneasy." — *Paraguayan Investigation: testimony of Fleet-Captain Francis M. Ramsey*, p. 178.

* Questions to Mr. Bliss at his examination by the Congressional Committee:—

"Q. Did it occur to you that you could speak right out and deny all these confessions before these naval officers?"

"A. The question occurred to me, and I reflected upon it as much as I could within the limited time allowed me; but I was then of the opinion, which I still hold, that my life depended upon my confirming those statements.

"Q. Did you not believe it was in the power of these officers to have protected you?"

"A. No; the presence of these officers would have afforded no protection. I should have been ordered out for instant execution.

"Q. Did these officers then leave you?"

"A. They did.

"Q. Did they put no questions to you at all?"

"A. None, except to ask me my name, and tell me to speak in English.

Mr. Masterman was also called up, and "the terrible Padre Maiz" gave him a long lecture on the duty of consistency, and told him that it would be his duty thenceforth "to denounce Mr. Washburn as a conspirator all over the world." At hearing this, Masterman at once divined the reason of it. He thus speaks of what next occurred:—

"I could scarcely conceal my joy, for I knew that help had come; but I replied, submissively, that what was written was written, that which I had said I could never unsay. He smiled approvingly. . . . He went on to tell me that a new Minister had arrived from the United States, and that the President had commuted my sentence of death to banishment for life, and he trusted that I would employ the rest of my days in praising the clemency of the Marshal and denouncing the wickedness of Washburn. I promised that I would make the truth fully known, (luckily he did not ask, 'What is the truth?') and now I am fulfilling that promise. A blacksmith was then called, my fetters were knocked off, and I was told that in a few days I should leave the country. I thanked him unaffectedly, but he said

When I was called upon to verify my signature, I replied, 'That is my signature.' That is all I said and all they said.

Q. Did they ask you whether your statement was true or false?

A. Lieutenant-Commander Kirkland said, 'You acknowledge all that to be true?' I replied, 'Yes.'

Q. Did he ask you how it was obtained?

A. He asked no further question whatever.

Q. Did either of them remonstrate with the officer for keeping watch over you with the drawn sword?

A. They made no remonstrance whatever. They seemed to be perfectly satisfied with the manner affairs were going on.

Q. Had you reason to believe that these American officers were under any impression that these statements had been extorted from you?

A. I did not consider it safe for me to say a word to that effect under these circumstances.

Q. Were they under the impression that your depositions were all true?

A. If they were fools enough to believe so, under such circumstances, they may have done so; in fact, I suppose they did so believe.

Q. How long had they been in the country before this?

A. They had just arrived. They arrived on the second day of that month. This was on the 8th. They had had no communication with any foreigner in the country, the foreigners being all in the prison; and they knew nothing except what Lopez had told the Admiral. Lopez said that we had freely confessed our guilt, and apparently succeeded in bamboozling him completely."

my thanks were due to the Marshal, and that I ought to write a letter to him. I excused myself by saying that he could express my gratitude so much better personally than I could in my imperfect Spanish ; but, in truth, I loathed the very idea of writing more adulation and lying compliments. . . .

"Two days afterwards I was again sent for. On my way I met Father Maiz, who repeated the substance of what he had told me before, and reminded me that my life depended on my discretion. He told me that two American officers were then waiting to hear me acknowledge the truth of my written statements, and that I must declare that they were all true ; none knowing better than he the falsity of my confession of guilt."

He was then brought before the tribunal, where he found two officers wearing the American naval uniform, and was told to listen while his "declarations" that had been extorted by means before described were read over to him in their presence and hearing. At the time they had been taken down, he had been obliged to sign each sheet on which they were written, and now he was required to verify his signature in presence of these additional members of the inquisition. On entering the miserable hut where the court was held, he found the two priests with whom he had so often been confronted before ; and to make sure that he should not deny anything before written, the head torturer of Lopez, Major Aveiro, who had not only beaten both him and Bliss most unmercifully at various times, but had put them in the *cepo uruguayana*, sat all the while in front of him, with his eyes constantly fixed upon him. The additional precaution was taken of having two Paraguayans present who understood English, so that no word not understood by the tribunal should pass between him and the officers. Neither of them gave him a word of encouragement, or intimated that he would be protected in speaking the truth. Ramsey, indeed, asked him if the depositions read to him were true, and Masterman begged that he would ask him no questions. He had good reason for doing so, for he had just been warned that his life depended on his adherence to his previous "declarations."

The declarations of both the "criminals" having been reaffirmed by them, the two priests Maiz and Roman, and the two American officers Kirkland and Ramsey, signed as witnesses, after which the accused were remanded to prison, and the officers returned on board of the gunboat.* It was two days after this before they were delivered up; and as they had been treated so contemptuously while in the presence of the American officers, who seemed to be on the best of terms with Lopez's inquisitors, they began to apprehend that these officers had been induced to be witnesses of their declarations as

* One of the most melancholy incidents of these Paraguayan difficulties was the humiliation experienced by Captain Ramsey on reading my correspondence with Lopez, and to which he thus pathetically testified before the Committee of Foreign Affairs:—

"Q. How do you know that Mr. Washburn would have been safe had he remained?

"A. I only know that Mr. Washburn was the representative of the United States of America accredited to the government of Paraguay, and there was no danger for any representative of a foreign government. He could have remained there with perfect safety. I felt humiliated when I read Mr. Washburn's letters.

"Q. Are you aware that Bliss and Masterman, knowing all the circumstances, advised Mr. Washburn to take the course he did take?

"A. I read that in the letter of Mr. Washburn.

"Q. Had you any reason to doubt it?

"A. No, sir.

"Q. Are you not aware that Rodriguez, Secretary of the Legation of Uruguay, duly accredited to Lopez, was kept in the country after relations were suspended, was arrested, tortured, and executed by Lopez; and that if he did it in one case he would do it in another?

"A. I know nothing about the case. I do not believe all these stories."—*Paraguayan Investigation*, pp. 184, 185.

The Committee also felt humiliated, but for another cause. In alluding to the "declarations" of Bliss and Masterman before the court of inquisition of which Ramsey and Kirkland were members, they say:—

"The 'declaration' referred to in the foregoing testimony is a so-called confession that Bliss and Masterman were engaged in a conspiracy to dethrone Lopez, and that Mr. Washburn, forgetful of the duties he owed to himself as a man, and to the government whose Minister he was, was engaged in the same conspiracy. When we reflect that this declaration had not the least semblance of truth, that it was extorted from those trembling and friendless prisoners under torture, and that the Admiral and his two witnesses had every reason to believe it had thus been extorted, we seek in vain for any excuse or palliation for their connection with this shameful transaction.—*Id.*, p. xxvi.

a step preliminary to their execution. Bliss, however, had so completely imposed on Lopez by his book, that he received comforting assurances that he would be permitted to leave Paraguay in order that he might carry into effect the threat contained in the last paragraph, "to follow Washburn through the whole world until he should bring upon him the punishment due to his unheard-of and execrable crimes."

On the day before they were delivered up, Bliss was made the object of very particular attentions. He was repeatedly told by the priests of his great obligations to his Excellency, the Marshal, who pardoned him on the condition that when beyond the limits of Paraguay he would be his friend and defender, and would not fail to bring the great intriguer, plotter, and arch-conspirator to trial and punishment by his own government. He had previously been made to write a letter to Lopez, thanking him for the great fairness and impartiality shown him at his trial, and for his abounding, unparalleled goodness in pardoning so great a criminal.

As an earnest that Bliss was not only pardoned, but forgiven, Lopez sent him a very affectionate message, and also forty copies of his pamphlet, which he was to scatter abroad, for the purpose of exposing the character of "*el gran bestia*." He also sent him some sixty dollars in gold coin, at which proof of his affection and kindness Bliss sent to ask him what disposition he should make of the \$ 5,000 in silver, and \$ 5,550 in currency, that he had received for his part in the conspiracy, and had sent out of the country by me. He received for reply that he might keep it, and make use of it in bringing to punishment the late Minister; but, if his conscience urged him to restore it, he might pay it over to the Paraguayan Legation in Paris.

Perhaps no act of Lopez so fully illustrates his weakness as this sudden turn of affection for Bliss. Was the man a fool, an idiot, to believe that a kind message sent to Bliss with a few dollars, and a few copies of his own wonderful book, would suffice to obliterate the memory of the cruel tortures he had received, and the tissue of falsehoods that he had been forced

to fabricate, and convert him to be his friend and advocate when once beyond his power? Whatever may have been his motive, the act proves that he was not a person governed by the same motives and reasoning as other men; and this deed of generosity only goes to confirm the judgment that his countless acts of cruelty have caused to be generally pronounced upon him, — that he was not, properly speaking, a member of the human family; that he was mentally a malformation, a monster.

NOTE. — For the entire correspondence between Lopez and Admiral Davis, see Appendix.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Arrival of Bliss and Masterman on Board the Wasp.—Their Reception.— They exchange one Prison for another.—Comparing Notes.—McMahon refuses Bliss an Interview.—The American Naval System.—The first Version of the Affair sent to the United States.—Dr. Marius Duvall.—Arrival of Bliss and Masterman in the United States.—They memorialize Congress.

IT was about eleven o'clock on the night of the 10th of December that the Paraguayan canoe having the two men whose fate had within a few months become a matter of general interest throughout a large part of Christendom came alongside the United States gunboat Wasp.

Their arrival had been anxiously expected by all on board ever since the return of the two officers who had witnessed their final confession. Commander Kirkland, who at the last scene of the inquisition had listened, and without denial or remonstrance, to the deposition of Bliss that he had carried back and forth the correspondence between the Marques de Caxias and Minister Washburn, was, of course, eagerly waiting to receive him on board the Wasp, and there, when safe from the grasp of Lopez, to hear from his own lips that all such imputations were false, and had been wrung from him by torture. The Admiral, Captain Ramsey, and General McMahon also, though late at night, left their beds to go out and hear what these men, who had been rescued at an expense of many thousand dollars to the United States, would say now that they might speak without fear of the stocks or the *cepo uruguayana*. They would also hear that they had been heartlessly abandoned by the late American Minister, who might have taken them with him when he left the country, or by remaining have saved them from the sufferings

to which they had been subjected. They had last seen them looking starved and wretched, with long, unkempt hair, and in the same clothes in which for three months they had lain in fetters on the ground, their pantaloons worn and eaten off by the iron that encased their ankles. A squadron of four vessels had come up the river to effect their rescue and vindicate the flag that had been outraged by their arrest ; and when the hail was heard from the canoe, announcing that they were coming on board, the word was passed to all that the prisoners were free, and the first order was : Bring them bread and meat, for they are perishing with hunger ; bring them wine to revive them, that they may briefly tell us of the horrors they have seen and suffered ; bring clean clothes, even from our own wardrobes ; let them be cleansed of the dirt and vermin that cover them ; and then, when that is done, give each of them a mattress to sleep upon, and to-morrow see that they want for nothing that may be required to restore them to health.

Such was the reception to which these men were looking forward when they set their feet on the gunboat, beneath the stars and stripes : but alas ! they were soon to find that they had only exchanged one prison for another ; that they had only changed keepers, and were to be exposed to a deeper shame and humiliation at the hands of Davis, Kirkland, and Ramsey than they had ever been subjected to under Lopez, Maiz, and Aveiro. As they stepped on the deck they were met by Commander Kirkland, who, without deigning to notice or speak to them, commanded the officer of the deck to call the master-at-arms and order him to "take these men forward, put a guard over them, and see that they do not loaf about." At this order, Masterman ventured to remonstrate against being sent forward among the crew ; but he was roughly answered by Kirkland, who told them he received them as criminals, and as such they would be sent to the United States. They therefore went forward, a sentry was placed over them, and they were permitted to lie down on the bare deck among the sailors. It was three months since they had been

arrested, and during all that time they had not interchanged a word with each other. Tired and weak as they were, they could not, after the excitement and anxieties of the day, sleep for several hours, but lay upon the deck comparing notes and recounting their experiences to each other. Each then learned for the first time that the other had been writing a pamphlet, by order of Lopez, in abuse of the arch-enemy of his Excellency, the late American Minister. They both now found the thread of their own stories. While writing their pamphlets they were required to introduce certain subjects in regard to trivial matters that had occurred in the Legation ; and they now found that when one alluded to anything that had occurred, or invented any story partially or entirely fictitious, the other had been required to confirm it. Hence, as it appeared, their stories had a wonderful coincidence.

The next morning they found the sentry still over them, and that all, officers and men alike, looked upon them with distrust and aversion. In the naval service, the authority of the admiral is so absolute that all seek to conform to his wishes before being ordered. Flunkyism always accompanies tyranny, and the lackey is pretty sure to ape the airs and manners of the master. These men, debilitated by exposure, by torture, and by unwholesome and insufficient food, were in such a condition that humanity would have dictated that they should be treated as invalids. One of them (Bliss) was actually sick when he came on board, and still suffering from the effects of the *cepo uruguayana*. The ship's surgeon, an amiable, kind-hearted man, was disposed to treat them with as much attention as it was safe for him to show them. But the feeling throughout the ship was that they were a couple of felons, and as such they were treated all the time they were on board the Wasp.

Their miserable condition served to excite the compassion of some of the petty officers, and in the course of a day or two they sent them some clothes, though in a manner so secret that the recipients never knew their benefactors. But not an inquiry was made in regard to their condition by Admiral

Davis or General McMahon, nor was any thought taken by Ramsey or Kirkland to see that they had a change of clothes, so that they could afford to cast their infested rags into the river. No one of these guardians of the nation's honor gave them an interview or an opportunity to tell their story of tortures and exposure. By their conduct they showed a consciousness of guilt ; and having become the champions and jailers of Lopez, they did not wish to hear any vindication of the prisoners whom, at his dictation, they had received as criminals, nor did they care to hear anything of the horrible cruelties of their newly found friend. Among themselves they talked over the propriety of giving them an interview, but Ramsey strongly objected, and the Admiral and the Minister acquiesced.

It was not till the two prisoners were safely under guard on board the *Wasp* that they learned the name of the new Minister, and not till then were they aware that anything more than a single vessel had come up the river. Having now learned, however, that General McMahon was the Minister, and that, notwithstanding the insult to his predecessor and the violation of our flag he was intending to land and present his credentials, Mr. Bliss requested the officer of the deck to take a message to him, and to say that he wished to see him and advise him of the situation of other American citizens still in Paraguay. The officer went aft with the message, and returned soon after with this answer : "When General McMahon wishes to see you, he will send for you." McMahon left the *Wasp* the next day, and Bliss did not even get a sight of him while on board the vessel.

The Minister having disembarked, the *Wasp* turned her head down stream, and returned to Corrientes, where the rest of the squadron was waiting the result of the Admiral's negotiations with Lopez. On reaching that port the officers of the inquisition, exulting in their achievements, took advantage of a mail-steamer about to start, which would reach Buenos Aires in advance of the *Wasp*, to send an account of their achievements for publication in the newspapers. The first the public heard, therefore, of their exploits, was their own version,

which was substantially this: That Bliss and Masterman had been delivered up by Lopez, notwithstanding he had produced irrefragable proof that they had been the accomplices of the late Minister in a conspiracy against his government and life; that McMahan had accomplished prodigies of diplomacy; and that his conduct would doubtless be highly gratifying to our government, forming, as it did, such a marked contrast to that of his wicked and unscrupulous predecessor.

On reaching Montevideo the prisoners were transferred from the *Wasp* to the flag-ship *Guerriere*, where for a day or two they were at liberty on board of the ship. They were then put under the surveillance of an officer, and denied any communication with the shore, or with individuals who came on board to see them. They were, however, provided with decent food to eat, which they never had while on board the *Wasp*. Instead of the hard-tack and salt junk of the sailors, they were put into the mess of the warrant officers, where the food was good and wholesome. Some of the petty underlings, however, seemed to think it an imposition on them to be compelled to mess with men whom their superiors treated as felons, and who were on their way to the United States to be tried for high crimes and misdemeanors. Letters to and from them were detained by the Admiral, and in some instances opened, and not delivered for several days. In fact, they were treated like condemned criminals, who were being transported to a place of execution or imprisonment.

To the credit of the naval service it should be here said that the officers of the squadron did not all take their cue from the Admiral and his favorite commanders, and think it incumbent on them to treat with insult and contumely the unfortunate prisoners. The fleet-surgeon, Dr. Marius Duvall, early divined the animus of the Admiral in going after them, and saw clearly that his object was not to extricate them, but to find excuses for his delay after his quarrel with General Webb; that he went, determined to conciliate Lopez at any sacrifice of the national dignity, and on his return to represent him as a humane and benevolent gentleman, who in his dispute

with the late Minister, and in his subsequent treatment of Bliss and Masterman, was entirely in the right, while the latter were brawling revolutionists, who had been treated with "no unnecessary harshness." Feeling that the government did not, or at least ought not to, keep squadrons on foreign stations for the mere purpose of insulting its diplomatic representatives, Dr. Duvall did not join in with the Admiral and his favorites in praise of Lopez and in the abuse of General Webb and the late Minister to Paraguay. As a penalty for his temerity, the Admiral persecuted him on the most trivial pretexts, and ordered him to be court-martialed, naming the court that was to try him. The trial was but a contest between weakness, duplicity, and malice on one side, and firmness, truth, and patriotic duty on the other. The question turned on a point of veracity between the two, and the court that the Admiral had selected was compelled to find that the truth was not with him.

The two prisoners were kept under arrest as long as the *Guerriere* remained at Montevideo. The large first-rate was taken to Rio, at a cost of several thousand dollars, for no other purpose than to carry two men who were treated all the while as felons. They might have been sent by a merchant steamer at a cost of one hundred dollars; and the conditions which the Admiral made with Lopez would have been fulfilled as well as they were by his going with them in the flag-ship.

From Rio the Admiral sent his prisoners to the United States on a merchant steamer. To do this he was obliged to trust to the honor of men whom he had treated as condemned criminals. He notified them that their passage would be paid to New York by the government; and requested them, on reaching that port, to report themselves to the Secretary of State. They engaged to do so, and fulfilled their promise. The Secretary, Mr. Seward, told them that he had nothing against them, and the Secretary of the Navy (Gideon Welles) highly commended the Admiral for his course throughout the whole affair.

But the prisoners did not so highly appreciate the conduct of the Admiral. On the contrary, they memorialized Congress in regard to it, uniting in a joint petition for an investigation of their treatment by him and his favorite officers.*

* It should perhaps be here stated that there was one member of the Committee of Foreign Affairs, Thomas Swann of Maryland, who sustained and justified the Admirals throughout. The following Resolutions were submitted by him; and wherever this book may be read, I trust he may have the credit of them:—

“Resolved, That the forcible arrest and detention of Messrs. Bliss and Masterman, while under the protection of the American flag, was an outrage which demanded prompt reparation.

“2. That Mr. Washburn, in submitting to the insult of President Lopez in his refusal to grant passports to Messrs. Bliss and Masterman, and in separating himself from them in the streets of Asuncion, and leaving them in the hands and at the mercy of the Paraguayan authorities, caused a serious compromise of the American flag, and could not be justified upon any consideration of personal safety; and that Minister Washburn, in justice to his position and the honor of his flag, ought not to have accepted his passport until permitted to withdraw with every member of his Legation.

“3. That in the hostile or unfriendly attitude assumed by Minister Washburn toward Lopez and the Paraguayan government, in his relations and intercourse with the President of that Republic, and in associating Bliss and Masterman with his Legation, (one a British subject, suspected by Lopez of a conspiracy with his enemies and the enemies of his country, both adventurers and of doubtful reputation) Minister Washburn committed a grave act of imprudence, which resulted in most, if not all, of the complications attending his residence in Paraguay.

“4. That Admirals Godon and Davis, in command of the South Atlantic Squadron, have committed no act to subject them to the censure of this government or the investigation of a court-martial; said officers having, to the best of their judgment and understanding, complied with the instructions of the Navy Department, and received its approval.

“5. That no legislation is required on the part of Congress, growing out of the facts stated in this record and the correspondence now on file in the State and Navy Departments.

“6. That this committee be discharged from the further consideration of the subject.” — *Paraguayan Investigation*, pp. xix, xx.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

McMahon presents his Credentials. — His Reception by Lopez. — Mutual Sympathy. — He becomes the Confidant of Madam Lynch. — Lopez makes his Will. — McMahon constituted Custodian and Trustee. — The Blockade broken. — The British Secretary of Legation in Buenos Aires visits Paraguay. — Lopez abandons the Tebicuari and falls back to Angostura. — Battle of Pikysry. — Defeat of the Paraguayans. — Massacre of Prisoners. — Departure of McMahon for Pirébeui. — Sufferings and Misery of the Paraguayan Women and Children. — Lopez's Cabinet Ministers. — Furious Bombardment by the Allies. — Bravery of the Paraguayan Troops. — Cowardly Flight of Lopez. — Lopez's System of Vicarious Punishments. — Dr. Stewart. — Treatment of his Family by Lopez. — Inaction of the Brazilians. — Lopez allowed to fortify himself at the Pass of Ascurra. — Capitulation of Colonel Thompson.

THE two prisoners having been sent to the United States in a manner so satisfactory to Lopez that the incident of their arrest and torture was not likely to disturb the friendly relations "so happily existing between the two governments," Minister McMahon disembarked from the *Wasp*, and presented himself at the head-quarters of the Marshal President. Lopez having already learned that he had not come to demand apologies or satisfaction for insults to the late Minister, or for the violation of the flag in the arrest of Bliss and Masterman, was not only predisposed to be affable and conciliatory, but to make a friend of him, if possible. It would not do for him to quarrel with another American Minister, as by his last quarrel he had come very near bringing upon himself a war with the great Republic, and had already brought upon him the general execration of the world. The new Minister did not sustain or approve of the course pursued by the former one, and on this point Lopez, Madam Lynch, and General McMahon were united. Before they met, therefore, they were prepared to be charmed with each other, and at their first

interview McMahan was so gracious as to intimate that Bliss and Masterman had been treated as they deserved to be. The description of this interview is thus related by an eye-witness : —

“The General arrived at head-quarters on the 11th of December, and left the camp on the 23d of the same month. He was invited to dinner by Lopez on the day of his arrival, and I met him at table. We sat opposite to each other, and I had to act as interpreter between the President and him, not on this occasion only, but on several others. The General referred to the reception Masterman and Bliss had met with from Captain Kirkland of the Wasp. He ‘ordered them to be taken forward,’ said McMahan. I give the account in the words of the latter, ‘Take these men forward, and give them into the custody of the master-at-arms’; at which Masterman demurred, observing, ‘I have been lieutenant in her Britannic Majesty’s service.’ To this Captain Kirkland retorted, ‘If you are ladies, and not men, say so,’ and they were sent forward as prisoners. The President listened with undisguised pleasure to this narrative of McMahan’s, and was greatly chagrined and displeased, when General McMahan put the question to me, by my corroborating Masterman’s assertion that he had been an officer in our service. But that which most delighted the President was McMahan’s declaring that Mr. Bliss had applied to him for an interview, and that his answer to this request of a fellow-citizen had been, that when he (McMahan) wanted to see him, he would let him know.”*

Lopez had now evidently got a Minister after his own heart ; one whose ideas of government were very different from those of his predecessor ; one who doubtless mourned that in the other parts of the world the “age of faith” had passed away, and with it had departed the Inquisition and all its holy appliances. In Paraguay only, in all Christendom, was the government conducted after the manner of Philip II., of Torquemada, and of Alva. Lopez was the pope of Paraguay, in the full exercise of absolute temporal power, and his government that which for ages the Jesuits have been laboring to establish throughout the world. The friendship struck up so suddenly

* Paraguayan Investigation : testimony of Dr. William Stewart, p. 313.

between the two was not unnatural. Nor was it strange that the same feeling of sympathy had never existed between his predecessor and Lopez as was testified to by McMahan before the Congressional Committee. In alluding to me on one occasion, Lopez remarked to his friend (McMahan was his only friend in Paraguay, save and except Madam Lynch and her children): "I ought to say that ever since Mr. Washburn's arrival in the country he has disliked me. There was a want of congeniality between us. Since his arrival in this country I have never personally liked him, and for that reason always endeavored to treat him officially with the more respect, because I recognized the lack of congeniality." It seems that he found a congenial spirit after I left Paraguay.

I have stated in its proper place, that, soon after the evacuation of Asuncion, and before Lopez had invented his plan of a conspiracy, Madam Lynch sent several large boxes, supposed to contain her most valuable articles, to my house. She then supposed that her paramour was in a trap from which he would never escape alive, and she was naturally anxious to save her ill-gotten wealth. This property was withdrawn when she found that it was Lopez's purpose to make me one of the conspirators, all of whom he had resolved to destroy. Afterwards, when all the people who were supposed to have any money were arrested, their houses searched, and their money and jewels stolen, her stock of valuables was largely increased, and she was more anxious than ever to have it put in some place of security. The boxes that had been in my house were believed by Dr. Stewart to have been buried somewhere between San Fernando and Villeta, but the property which had been stolen was still within the lines of Lopez. Her first thought on the arrival of the new Minister, therefore, was to make him her confidant and aid in securing this blood-money. She was anxious also to secure to herself, in the event of Lopez's death, his estate; but, knowing his suspicious nature, she did not dare to suggest that he should make a will in her favor. The new Minister,

as she informed Dr. Stewart, made the suggestion, but Lopez did not act upon it until after his narrow escape on the 21st of December, when he realized that he was surrounded by a force so largely outnumbering his own that his situation was indeed desperate. The instrument was then drawn up and signed, and duly witnessed by the two British doctors, Stewart and Skinner. The will is dated the 23d of December, 1868. Another paper bearing the same date as the will, constituting McMahan custodian and trustee, was also prepared and signed by Lopez, and a letter particularly requesting him to take charge of Madam Lynch's children. This business having been completed, McMahan left the camp, taking with him the illegitimate progeny of Lopez and his paramour.

The Brazilians having yielded to the demands of General Webb and allowed the Wasp to pass their blockade, other nations insisted on the same privilege; and three other gunboats — French, English, and Italian — went up to look after their respective countrymen. The English vessel had on board her Britannic Majesty's Secretary of Legation at Buenos Aires, Mr. G. Z. Gould, who, having previously been in Paraguay, thoroughly appreciated the character of Lopez, and did not venture to trust himself again in his power. From the vessel, which remained below the fortifications of Lopez, he sent a letter, advising him that he had come to take away her Majesty's subjects. Lopez invited him to come to his headquarters; but having been formerly treated with great discourtesy by Lopez, and knowing that he was his bitter enemy, he declined the invitation of the spider to walk into his parlor. He returned to Buenos Aires, and afterwards another gunboat, the Beacon, was sent up, and her commander, Captain Parsons, went to Lopez's head-quarters. Lopez, in answer to previous demands that foreigners should be permitted to go away, had answered that none of them wished to leave, and the complaint had been made that their wishes had never been consulted. Lopez told Captain Parsons that he might go about and talk with all the British subjects, and he would find that none desired to leave. "He had, however," says Colonel

Thompson, "bottled up the few British subjects who were near head-quarters, and only one was allowed to see him, and then only within ear-shot of Lopez. Everything was so arranged as to impress Captain Parsons that he had been allowed to go wherever he wished, and to see everybody he liked. He was allowed to take away Dr. Fox and a dozen English women and children." Lopez took advantage of this opportunity to send away a large number of copies, so far as it was printed, of Bliss's book, which valuable contributions to current history were to be sent to England, that the world might know the truthful history of the great conspiracy, and the character of the great intriguer, the late American Minister.

In permitting me and my family to go away, Lopez was compelled to abandon his purpose of destroying all who might be witnesses against him. The arrival of the *Wasp* had been most untimely for his plans; as after my exposition of his character and acts, though he were to kill all the other witnesses, no amount of testimony previously extorted by torture would be credited, but all would be taken rather as proof of his inhuman practices. A dozen women and children were taken away on the *Beacon*, and afterwards about fifty more were allowed to go away on the Italian gunboat. That they were able to do so they have to thank the American Minister at Rio, James Watson Webb; as but for his action in sending the *Wasp* above the squadron it is not probable that one of them would ever have left Paraguay alive.

By this time the tide of war was setting strongly in favor of the allies. They had come upon Lopez with overwhelming numbers; but instead of pursuing their previous chivalric mode of fighting, which permitted Lopez to retire whenever he got ready, taking with him all his arms, guns, and stores, they adopted a plan that if vigorously carried out would have ended the war two years before. I have already said, that, with an energetic commander, a corduroy road could have been made through the Gran Chaco from the Tres Bocas to a

point opposite Pilar or San Fernando in less than thirty days, and with less loss of life than was caused in the same time by the miasma of the swamps in which the army was encamped. But months and years were allowed to pass, and it was only in December, 1868, four years after the war had commenced, that it occurred to Caxias that he would send his army across the river and thence a few leagues higher up, and from there cross back and prevent Lopez from repeating the manoeuvre he had tried successfully so many times before. The whole allied army, therefore, of thirty-two thousand men, was passed over the river, and while Lopez was yet incredulous, refusing to give Caxias credit for so sensible an act, he learned that the enemy was preparing to attack him from above, where there were no intrenchments. Lopez saw his danger, and began to make trenches on that side. His head-quarters, which he had located at a safe distance from harm in case of attack from the front, would be exposed in case of assault from the other side. This new trench, at some points of which he was sure to be attacked, had so great a radius, says Colonel Thompson, in order that Lopez's house might be out of rifle range, that it was thinly defended in front, notwithstanding Lopez had his whole army along its inner line. Says Thompson: "There was not time to dig this ditch all round, and the rear towards Cerro Leon was completely open, and had no men to defend it. This, however, did not signify with a general like Caxias, who was certain to find out which was the strong side and attack it." Thus the incapacity of one offset the cowardice of the other.

The allied army, having passed above, had taken a position near Villeta, north of Angostura, to which point Lopez had fallen back after the abandonment of the Tebicuari to make another stand against the advance of the allies. It was at this pass in the river that Sebastian Cabot had been attacked by the Payagua Indians in 1526, and from the natural configuration of the country the point was admirably adapted for defensive operations. The guns of Lopez were so placed that they commanded a long curve in the river, so that from the

instant an ascending vessel came in sight until it should get some distance above it was exposed to a formidable battery. Just below, a small river, or *riacho*, that leads from the Lake Ipoá, falls into the Paraguay. Near the confluence it is very deep, and some twenty yards across. For about two leagues to the south the ground is very wet and marshy, and covered with woods that are almost impenetrable. The position from that side was therefore almost invulnerable; and until Lopez learned that the allies had got in his rear by way of the Chaco he supposed he could hold them at bay for a good while longer. It was next to impossible for them to flank him on his left, and as his enemies, during a war of four years, had never availed themselves of the only feasible way of attacking him, he did not suppose that so sensible an idea would ever occur to them.

The allied army being to the north of the Paraguayan, the impending battle promised to be decisive. The Brazilians outnumbered the Paraguayans as three or four to one, and, if defeated, would be in an enemy's country with no way of retreat; and should victory once more rest on their banners, Lopez and his army could not again escape or fall back, for the country in his rear was but a series of streams, swamps, and jungles, such as had often served him in better stead than trenches or cannon. The head-quarters of Lopez were at Cumbarity, a hill that overlooked the surrounding country for several leagues, and distant some four miles from Angostura. The country between the head-quarters and the riacho Pikysyry is known by the name of the stream.

It has not been my purpose to describe the battles of this war. Colonel Thompson, in his military history of the events in which he took part, has given a full account of these last battles near the river; and General McMahon, who was an eye-witness of some of the most important of them, has given to the world an account of what he saw.* As my knowledge of these events is derived from their descriptions, which to

✓ * The War in Paraguay. By General M. T. McMahon. Harper's Magazine, April, 1870.

some extent conflict, — I shall content myself with giving little more than general results. The Brazilians seemed to realize in this battle that they had the enemy completely in their power ; and had the skill and dash of the officers been equal to the courage of the soldiers, the war would have ended with the battle of Pikysry. The lines of Lopez were furiously attacked at different points, and his whole army was engaged, save only his staff and a hundred or two other mounted men, that he kept as a sort of body-guard near his own person. His house was not in the line with any of the points attacked ; though, hemmed in as he was, more or less chance shot fell in that direction. With characteristic prudence, Lopez took a position on horseback behind the walls of his adobe house, ready to run at a moment's notice in case the enemy were to cut their way through his lines and render his post unsafe. Dr. Stewart, who was near him all this time, says he exhibited the greatest fear, though, for his part, he did not realize that there was at any time the least danger where he was, notwithstanding he did not seek the shelter of the mud walls. It was, however, the first time that Lopez had been under fire since the war began ; and Madam Lynch was afterwards at great pains to impress it on all that he had exposed himself with reckless valor ; that one bullet had passed through his whiskers, and another between his legs. Though the Paraguayans held their own in front, fighting with the greatest valor, and as if for liberty rather than for their own perpetual enslavement, a new danger appeared from another direction. A large cavalry force had moved along under cover of woods and ravines to the extreme right of Lopez's lines, from where all the troops had been withdrawn to support other positions, and came with scarcely any opposition to within some thirty rods of the head-quarters. Lopez had but a mere handful to oppose them, and had they deployed they would have been masters of the field, and he must have been killed or captured at that time. But that fatality which had marked the Paraguayan people for destruction had not yet been so completely fulfilled as to then remove the author of all their

miseries. Hundreds of thousands were yet to die before the curtain should fall on the last scene of the tragedy. The advance of this body of cavalry is thus described by Mc-Mahon:—

“They came also in column, and advanced until within eighty yards of the head-quarters. The staff of the President and irregular horsemen, to the number of perhaps two hundred in all, dashed against them and clustered like bees around the head of the column, using their weapons—sabres, carbines, or lances—with terrible effect. Had the Brazilians deployed, they would have engulfed the little handful of men resisting them, captured the Paraguayan head-quarters, and probably Lopez himself. Yet they still advanced in column,—more slowly at every step,—but the weight from behind still pressing the whole column forward. Meanwhile those in front seemed to make no fight at all, while the Paraguayans were striking on all sides with singular rapidity, although still pressed back and moving with the mass. The pace had decreased to a walk. The Paraguayan officers, with their red blouses, were confusedly mingled with the leading ranks of the white-capped Brazilians. The latter seemed half paralyzed, but still moved forward, pressing back the Paraguayan horses, which gave ground sidewise or by backing. At last the forward motion ceased, the column recoiled upon itself, turned, and retreated. The others followed with fierce enthusiasm. A section of artillery opened on the retreating enemy, and the allied cavalry did not appear again in that day’s battle. The day closed with the complete repulse of the assailants at all important points, although it was evident that the Paraguayan line of defence must be still further contracted, in view of the heavy losses among the defenders. The enemy maintained their musketry fire all night long, and for five days and nights succeeding. They knew the scarcity in numbers of their adversaries, and they hoped to exhaust their enemy by giving him no rest.

“The condition of things within Lopez’s lines that night and the following days was deplorable. There were no means of caring for the wounded in such numbers, nor could men be spared to bring them off the field, or to bury the dead. Many children, almost unnoticed, were lying around under the corridors, grievously wounded, and silently waiting for death. Women were busy making lint, by the light of lanterns, from whatever material could be collected for

that purpose. Garments of all descriptions were torn into bandages. Groups of officers, many of them wounded, were sitting here and there, discussing the events of the day. The President sat apart with a few of his chief officers, similarly occupied."

Lopez, on arriving at Pikysry, was encumbered by those prisoners whom he had brought from the Tebicuari, and whom he still kept alive for the pleasure of torturing and prolonging their misery. The prisoners of war, and those Paraguayans who were not regarded with any particular hate, were humanely butchered at San Fernando, before it was abandoned. Those, however, who had been accused of conspiracy, were kept alive, as long as possible, for no other object than that Lopez might indulge in his love of inflicting pain. On the morning of the 21st of December, the day of the battle before described, he saw that he could no longer indulge in his favorite pastime without running the risk of having his victims fall into the hands of the enemy. These prisoners were all confined in a retired place; and one of them, who subsequently escaped, thus relates the incident of the execution of his companions:—

"On the 21st of December we were (about forty of us) prisoners, lying in a retired place in the wood, when the allied army began to make a formal attack on the Paraguayan fortifications in Las Lomas. Early in the morning there came a body of officers and priests to our place, and Commander Marco read a list of about one third of the prisoners, who had to step forth, and by everything it was evident that then was the solemn moment of what the Paraguayans venture to name an execution of justice. Then the called prisoners formed a circle, Commandante Marco read a short sentence, the priests took them to confession, a body of soldiers took them a few steps into the thicket of the wood, another pause of silence, and a musket volley finished all. It will interest you, dear sir, but deeply afflict you, to know the names of some of the persons of that day's execution. There were among them Don Benigno Lopez, the brother of the President; Barrios, the brother-in-law; the Minister Berges; the bishop; the Portuguese Consul, Leite Pereira; Colonel Alén; Captain Fidanza; the very old mother and the wife of Colonel

Martinez ; and the priest Bogado. We also had as companion-prisoners the sisters of the President and the other brother, Colonel Venancio Lopez. These were taken and shut up, each one in a cart, and carried off, I do not know where. People speak here of their also being shot, but I could not assure the truth of it."*

The remaining prisoners of this group were left in confinement, all of them being either in fetters or in the stocks, and under a guard whose orders were to kill their prisoners should the enemy come so near as to threaten their capture, or, rather, release. On the 24th, being the fourth day of the battle, Lopez and his staff, including Madam Lynch, chanced to pass so near them that the latter observed the long line of miserable wretches who, ever since their arrival, had been kept there in a state of almost absolute nakedness, lying on the bare ground that was soaking wet from the frequent rains. She called the President's attention to them, and suggested that as it was the anniversary of the national independence he should signalize it by ordering these prisoners to be set at liberty. He complied so far as to order them to be released from their fetters and the stocks, though they were still held as prisoners with a guard over them. Three days after this the Paraguayans were completely routed, and then Treuenfeld and Taylor, a Prussian officer by the name of Von Versen, and several others, managed to escape into the woods and conceal themselves until they could surrender themselves to the allies, after which their troubles were at an end. One of the last acts of Lopez, when he saw that the field was lost, was to send an adjutant to make sure, by cutting their throats, that none of them escaped. "But," says Treuenfeld, "we fortunately had hooked it already, and all I know is that the adjutant, with his list, is taken prisoner by the Brazilians ; so I escaped a second condemnation to death."

In his description of the events of this day, General McMahon makes no allusion to the butchery of the prisoners. He was not a witness of it ; and as he had not been long in

* Paraguayan Investigation : letter from R. von Fischer Treuenfeld to the Author, p. 25.

Paraguay, it was but natural that he should be incredulous when told by others that his good friend, who was all the while treating him with such attention that they soon became ardent admirers of each other, was engaged, at the very time, in acts of barbarity never before paralleled in the history of the world.

Thus invested with the high and responsible office of guardian of the progeny of Lopez's imported mistress, the American Minister set out for the new capital. The road through which he was to pass was as bad as could be, and was lined by the wounded, who were dragging themselves away from the battlefield towards the old camp of Cerro Leon, and the women and children, who had been ordered to the interior from Pikysry to prevent them from falling into the hands of the enemy. These poor wretches were half-naked, emaciated skeletons, and yet not a sigh or complaint was ever heard against the tyrant that was thus driving them to the mountains. They had long before learned that to repine was a crime, to be punished with death. Lopez had threatened, but a few months before, that, if he were forced back from the river, he would drive every man, woman, and child before him. He had told me, nearly two years before, that sooner than yield he would prolong the war till not a man was left. He was now carrying out his threats.

The capital was now at Pirébebui, a little town, or capilla, some fifteen leagues to the east of Asuncion, and beyond the first range of hills or cordilleras east of the Paraguay; and to this point the American Minister, with his precious charge, made way. Here Lopez still pretended to have his seat of government. The old Vice-President Sanchez had finally been forgiven for his delinquencies at the time the ironclads passed Humaita, and was then at Pirébebui, and Lopez, though he had killed off all his former ministers, still kept up the fiction of a Cabinet; but General McMahon, when he speaks of "the residences of the Cabinet ministers," omits to give the names of those functionaries, or to tell us whether any of them were prisoners while he was there, or subjected to the *cepo uruguayana*. All their predecessors had been so dealt

with, and afterwards executed, save only one, the treasurer, and he expired under the torture.

The wounded and the superfluous women and children having been driven out of the camp and towards the cordilleras, Lopez still held out for several days longer. After his narrow escape of the 21st, he had a secret road, or path, looked out, so that he himself might run away, though everybody else were to perish. Madam Lynch remained with him, for she had been from the first the Lady Macbeth to incite him to his barbarities and to keep him from deserting his post.

On the 25th the allies began a furious bombardment at different points, and they caused such havoc that Lopez's force was reduced to less than one thousand men. This did not include the troops under command of Thompson, at Angostura. The Brazilians had lost more than one third of the army that had passed through the Chaco. But from their style of fighting on this occasion it was clear that they meant this for their last battle. On the 26th the fighting was not so desperate; but on the 27th it was renewed with such fury that the Paraguayans could make scarcely any resistance, and the allies marched in and held the field. There were few prisoners taken, for the Paraguayans had fought till they were nearly all killed.

Lopez, as soon as he saw that his few remaining troops could not longer keep back the allies, skulked off, as he had always done before, when he found it necessary to retreat. While his officers were fighting like tigers, leading the remnants of their forces against ten times their number, and while individuals would rush against battalions, striking right and left, till cut down, refusing to surrender, Lopez was improving his time to run away by the path he had before prepared, but of which he had kept them in ignorance. He went away so suddenly that even Madam Lynch did not know when he went, or by which road. She rushed frantically about the field, inquiring what had become of the President. Dr. Stewart, who had seen him start, pointed in the direction he had taken, and away she went, being followed by Generals

Resquin, Caballero, and about sixty of the cavalry. The little force of mounted men was the only party, on the whole battle-field, that escaped. Individuals in the different parts of the field crawled away when the fight was over, and made their way after the fugitive Marshal. That any should try to return to his service, when they might escape, may seem incredible to those unfamiliar with his system of vicarious punishment. Lopez having run away without giving any orders to those he abandoned, with any other soldiers the most natural cry would have been, *sauve qui peut*; but the Paraguayans knew that, as their chief had fled, his first act of vengeance would be on the families of those who surrendered. The surgeon-general, Dr. Stewart, who had remained at his post attending to the wounded after Lopez, Madam Lynch, and the principal officers had escaped, seeing the field was lost, undertook to follow them, for he had a wife and children still in the tyrant's power. But suddenly finding himself surrounded and escape impossible he surrendered, and was, so soon as Lopez knew that he had not been killed, denounced as a traitor and deserter, and his wife, who was finally rescued, was for several weeks kept a close prisoner, treated with the most cruel indignities, and nearly starved to death. One of her children died while she was thus held as a prisoner; and it was only by the sudden advance of the allies, some six months afterwards, that she escaped the fate of nearly all her countrywomen, — death by starvation or the lance.

When Lopez saw that the allies were moving on his headquarters, he fled so precipitately that all his baggage, his fine clothes, and his papers, were captured. Among the latter was found the diary of General Resquin, which contained a list of the political prisoners who had been put to death at different times, and from which I have so often quoted in this work. He evidently had been greatly surprised by being driven out so suddenly; for among these papers was found the will and the letter of trusteeship to General McMahan, or a copy of them. It is presumed that the originals were in the possession of McMahan, and that but for the capture of these papers

the world would never have known of the affection that so suddenly sprung up between Lopez and Lynch and the new American Minister, and of the plan or conspiracy for saving the property that had been stolen from countless murdered victims.

During the whole war Lopez had never, before these battles at Pikysry, been under fire ; "and then," says Thompson, "he can hardly be said to have been so, as he was always either out of range or protected by the thick mud wall of his house. During the last days he repeatedly swore to the troops that he would stay and conquer, or die with them there. On his going away, therefore, almost without smelling powder, the men, though so well trained as to think everything he did as perfectly right, yet felt disgusted with him, and I have heard many of them who were taken prisoners descant upon his cowardice."

In his flight Lopez made for the old camping-ground of Cerro Leon. It was here that he had gathered his army after the general conscription in 1864, but eight months before the war was commenced. Extensive barracks for sixty thousand men were erected at that time, and after the war commenced these were used, so far as they were required, for hospital purposes. A few reserves, consisting of convalescents and boys, were here up to the time when Lopez saw that he was to be attacked in the rear, and then they were all called in to join the main army. The place was entirely exposed, and had Caxias ordered pursuit immediately after the flight the war must then have ended. He had, at that very moment, eight thousand finely mounted cavalry, with nothing whatever for them to do ; and had a small body been sent in pursuit of Lopez and his little party, who were fleeing on their jaded and ill-fed horses, they would have easily overtaken the fugitives, and killed or captured every one of them. Even had Lopez reached Cerro Leon he had no men to defend it, and the stragglers who were following after to join him could never have reached him.

But the fatal infirmity and imbecility of the Brazilian gen-

erals still clung to them, and gave Lopez a new lease of power to exterminate his own people. Caxias gave no orders for pursuit; and so Lopez was left in peace to gather up the shattered remnants of his army, to collect from different points such artillery, small arms, and ammunition as he could still lay hold of, and to retire to a natural fortress in the mountains, there again to bid defiance to the invaders. To take advantage of a victory was what no commander-in-chief of the allies could ever do. Their peculiar chivalry forbade them to crowd upon or distress a prostrate or fleeing enemy; and Caxias, seeing that the Paraguayan army was dispersed, that Lopez himself had fled with only about a hundred men, declared that the war was over. Without waiting for orders from home, he left his command and returned to Rio, expecting, like Barroso, Tamandaré and others who had disgraced their country and cause, to be promoted, enriched, and more highly honored by the Emperor. And such were the Emperor's first intentions towards him. But before the Marques had been created a Duque, the Emperor had the mortification of learning that Lopez was strongly intrenched at the Pass of Ascurra, in the cordilleras, and that the Empire must prepare for another campaign. Poor Caxias was therefore allowed to retire on his laurels before won, and was never again to be spoken of but in bitterness and contempt.

Though Lopez had fled from Pikysyry, Thompson still held his ground at Angostura; and though outnumbered by at least five to one, he gallantly maintained himself till he learned that the army at Pikysyry had been completely routed. To hold out any longer was to expose his men to useless slaughter. His situation was somewhat like that of Martinez after the evacuation of Humaita. But, fortunately for Thompson, he had no wife in the country, on whom Lopez and Lynch could exercise their ingenuity in torture. Calling his officers around him, he told them of their situation, and asked them if it were not better to capitulate rather than fight till all were killed. They had but very little ammunition left, yet they could doubtless do much

injury to the enemy if they would never surrender. Should they fight till the last man was killed, or should they capitulate? With one exception, all answered, capitulate; and on the 30th of December, the terms of surrender having been agreed upon, the whole force, consisting of twenty-four hundred persons, of whom five hundred were women and four hundred wounded, marched out as prisoners of war.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

The Count d'Eu takes Command of the Brazilian Army. — Lopez at the Pass of Ascurra. — The Paraguayan Women and Children driven before the Army. — Their Condition one of Appalling Wretchedness. — General McMahon at Pirébeui. — He is recalled. — His Departure from Paraguay. — Reception in Buenos Aires. — Burlesque Procession. — He endeavors to interest the United States in Behalf of Lopez. — Closing Events of the War. — Statement of General Resquin. — Capture of Pirébeui by the Brazilians. — Retreat of the Paraguayan Army. — More Conspiracies. — Execution of the Alleged Conspirators. — The Mother, Sisters, and Brother of Lopez accused of conspiring against him. — Execution of Venancio Lopez. — Statement of Doña Inocencia.

WHEN the Emperor learned that, notwithstanding the disastrous defeat and rout of the Paraguayans at Piky-syry, Lopez was organizing for another defence, and had intrenched himself at a point stronger than he had ever held before, he realized the fact, which had been patent to everybody else for a long time, that if the war was ever to terminate in accordance with the terms of the Triple Alliance, he must intrust the command of his armies to some one not a Brazilian. He had seen repeatedly that a Brazilian commander-in-chief would never follow up a success; that a victory of his troops was always a drawn battle in its results, from the inability of his generals to improve their advantage. His troops, ever since the invasion of Paraguay, had vastly outnumbered those of Lopez; and on numerous occasions, after desperate fighting, with perhaps equal losses on both sides, where by sheer force of numbers the Paraguayans had been overborne, he learned that instead of pressing on, and not allowing Lopez to collect together his forces again, he had permitted him to retreat and take with him all his troops who were not killed or prisoners, and nearly all his cannon, ammunition,

and small arms. He therefore reluctantly and unwillingly assented to the desire expressed long before by his son-in-law, the Count d'Eu, who had married the Princess Imperial, to take command of his army.

This young officer, the son of the Duke de Nemours, and grandson of Louis Philippe, had married the Princess Imperial in the year 1864; and having had a military education and showing a decided taste for military life, had long desired to be put in command of the army. But his request was not acceded to until after the return of Caxais, who had come back with a great flourish of trumpets, claiming that the war was over, and that Lopez had been routed and was a fugitive and wanderer among the mountains, impotent for further harm. Great was the mortification of his Majesty, therefore, when he learned soon after that Caxias, through his utter incompetency, had allowed Lopez to escape when he might easily have captured him. He then resolved to send the Count d'Eu to finish up the war.

— On the arrival of the new commander-in-chief at Asuncion, — which, soon after the battle of Pikysyry, was captured and made the head-quarters, — he entered upon the campaign in a manner which clearly showed that he would not repeat the errors of his predecessors. Lopez, having remained long enough at Cerro Leon to gather in the stragglers, and to collect all arms that had not fallen into the possession of the allies, started for the Pass of Ascurra in the cordilleras, which he proceeded to fortify. He made good his threat of driving all non-combatants before him; and at that time it may be presumed, though the reliable data on which to base an opinion are very scanty, that there were some three hundred thousand people left alive in Paraguay, of which number two hundred and seventy-five thousand were women and children. All the boys above nine or ten years old had been taken for soldiers, and therefore nearly all of the remainder were females; and as during the war the inhabitants from the southern part of the state had been driven northward as the army had been forced back, and all between Asuncion and the scene of the late

battles were upon territory which was likely to be invaded by the enemy, nearly half of the women left in the country were to be driven before the fugitive remnants of the defeated army. Lopez's orders, as he retreated, were that no Paraguayans should be left to fall into the hands of the allies; and parties were sent in all directions to drive in and keep in front the women and children that were scattered through the country. To do this required more troops than Lopez could spare; therefore the scouting-parties, when they found a crowd of women and children too numerous for them to drive into the interior before being overtaken by the allies, indiscriminately slaughtered them. There was little of this butchery at first, for the reason that the Brazilians, previous to the arrival of Count d'Eu, made scarcely any pursuit until the whole population had been driven into the mountains, and in the rear of Lopez's new camp at Ascurra. These people had scarcely anything to eat, except what they could pick up in the woods and deserted country. The wild oranges, and a nut that is produced in great abundance by a sort of palm-tree, was about all the poor wretches had to eat. Seldom in the history of the world has such misery and suffering been endured as by these helpless women and children. Many of them were forced to the severest kind of drudgery, while all of them were driven about through the wilderness, exposed by day to the scorching rays of the sun, with no shelter at night, and with only such food as the forests afforded. Thousands and tens of thousands of them died of actual starvation; and weeks afterwards, when the allies, who were preparing for another advance, sent out their scouting-parties, they would not unfrequently surprise small bodies of Paraguayans holding guard over large numbers of these unhappy wretches. If the guard were not strong enough or numerous enough to drive the fugitives all before them in their retreat, the rule was to cut their throats; and when the allies came up, they found nothing but the mutilated bodies left unburied on the plains and in the forests. Lopez had said he would leave none behind him; that, if he must fall, no Paraguayan should

survive him ; and he was carrying out his threats in this manner. He could have no other object than a desire of seeing his people exterminated before he should himself fall. These women and children were of no advantage to him ; on the contrary, many of his troops were required to guard them, and prevent them from escaping or from being taken prisoners ; and were they to be taken by the enemy, they could be of no service to them, but would rather be an encumbrance and hindrance to their movements.

In spite, however, of all he could do to prevent it, a great many of these women and children fell behind and were taken prisoners. According to the descriptions that have been given of them, their condition was uniformly one of appalling wretchedness. They were all mere walking skeletons. The most of them were nearly destitute of clothing, and many were entirely so. They appeared to have lost all hope and all sensibility ; to care for nothing and think of nothing but to get something to appease their terrible hunger. No sense of shame or modesty was left to them ; and when taken prisoners all feeling of hope was so utterly extinguished, and they had been so long taught that the misery they had suffered was nothing compared with what they would suffer should they fall into the hands of the enemy, that they welcomed their captors rather as executioners than as deliverers.

While Lopez was gathering his forces at Ascurra, fortifying as much as possible, and waiting for the allies to again attack him, General McMahon was at the new camp of Piré-bebui. This place was some three leagues in the rear of Ascurra, and immense numbers of the poor women and children who had been driven from their homes to the interior were in the town and vicinity. The destitution among them was terrible. Starvation was written in every face, and death was making fearful havoc among them. The Minister, however, was treated with distinguished consideration, and was enabled to obtain all that was necessary for comfort, if not for luxury. But the sight of the misery around him was appalling. Two English engineers, Valpy and Burrill, were his companions at

this time ; and the representations which they have made since their escape, of the misery of which they were the unwilling witnesses, are such as to cause them to curse more bitterly than ever before the author of all this suffering. People were dying of starvation all around them, and not unfrequently in the morning, when the doors of the Legation were opened, the corpses of dead women, who had expired in the night from actual starvation, would be seen at or near the door. Minister McMahan was greatly astonished at this evidence of patriotism and devotion to the great Lopez, and has ever since ascribed, not only their submission, but their endurance and patience under the trials to which they were exposed, to their love and affection for his Excellency.

But General McMahan was not to remain long in Paraguay. He had gone there and presented his credentials, notwithstanding the gross insult to the flag and indignity to his predecessor committed by Lopez, before his government had time to give him such instructions as the changed circumstances required. After that no communications were allowed to pass the military lines of the allies for months, and he received nothing from his government until his naval friends at the mouth of the river becoming anxious lest Lopez should treat him as he had treated nearly every foreigner in the country, including several consuls, Admiral Davis sent his son and his fleet-captain, Ramsey, through with family letters, to learn something of his whereabouts and condition. These bearers of despatches were received at the head-quarters, where they met General McMahan, and were treated with immense distinction. From them Lopez received the gratifying intelligence that Bliss and Masterman had been sent for trial to the United States, and that the former American Minister, whom he had accused of being in league with the allies, and the champion of their cause, had, on leaving Paraguay, been assailed by a whirlwind of newspaper abuse. It is presumed they did not tell him that the burden of that abuse was the fact, that, at his departure from Paraguay, he had left Bliss and Masterman to the

mercies of a tyrant unparalleled in history for his horrible cruelties.

They returned to Buenos Aires greatly charmed with Lopez and Madam Lynch. The latter had entertained them with regal magnificence, notwithstanding the fact that around them, all through the country, wherever the power of Lopez extended, women and children were dying daily by thousands. Lopez, in his controversy with me, had apparently gained his point. I had not been sustained apparently either by the people or by the government of the United States, while the course of McMahan was approved, and poor Bliss and Masterman were to be tried on their own confessions. But within a few months the face of things was changed, and with the first despatches that McMahan received from his government, after it had been informed of the treatment of his predecessor by Lopez, was his letter of recall ; and at the same time came the information that the Admiral and his officers who had received Bliss and Masterman as prisoners, treated them like felons, and sent them to the United States to be tried, had been ordered home to appear before a committee which had been ordered by Congress to investigate their very singular conduct.

McMahan, however, did not leave his friends until about four weeks after he received his letter of recall. That last month he spent at the head-quarters, and when ready to depart he had a very large quantity of baggage to take away with him. Among other things there were eleven tercios of the yerba maté, and also a great number of boxes and packages, besides the trunks supposed to contain his personal baggage which he had taken into Paraguay. On reaching the lines of the Brazilians, they provided him with the means of transporting these rewards of industry to Asuncion, where he remained for several days ; thence he took passage in a merchant steamer for Buenos Aires, where the greatest curiosity was felt to know what these boxes from the camp of Lopez contained, and whether the yerba maté in the tercios was solid, or merely used as packing for ounces

and the jewelry that had been stolen from the murdered victims of Lopez and Madam Lynch. He was, nevertheless, allowed to take everything away with him when he left the Plata for France, whither he took passage after a brief delay in Buenos Aires. If the press and the people of Buenos Aires had evinced an unfriendly feeling towards me on my arrival from Paraguay, yet my reception was cordial and flattering compared with that which was accorded to my successor. The fact that he had been made the trustee of Lopez and the guardian of his children provoked the most bitter sarcasm, and a burlesque procession paraded through the streets, in which the American Minister, the friend of Lopez, was represented dressed in woman's clothes, in a carriage with several unkempt and unwashed urchins.

On reaching Asuncion, McMahon represented the position of Lopez as very strong, and that he could maintain himself where he was for an indefinite length of time, as he was lacking for nothing essential to the support of his army. Provisions were abundant, and the Paraguayans were enthusiastic in their devotion to Lopez, and in their faith that they would yet conquer. As the allies, of course, could not doubt the words of an American Minister, they were somewhat perplexed to reconcile these statements with the fact that all the prisoners that came in, all the women and children who were rescued, — and at this time they were coming in daily in considerable numbers, — were almost in a state of starvation, and that they were but mere skeletons, many of them in a state of absolute nudity, and all of them reporting that they had had nothing to eat for weeks except what they could gather in the woods, in common with the beasts and the birds.

The recall of McMahon by the United States government was not, however, entirely distasteful to Lopez, as he cherished the idea, that, on the return of his friend to his adopted country, he would be able to procure the intervention of the United States in his behalf; and that, with so good an advocate to plead his cause with the government of the great

Republic, he might yet come out victorious from the war. What encouragement McMahan gave him to prolong the war and continue the sacrifice of his people until the United States might have time to act in his behalf has only been made public through Madam Lynch, and therefore there is no reliable evidence in regard to it. It is known, however, that McMahan, on his return to the United States, most earnestly advocated the cause of Lopez, and urged on the government the duty of sending out another minister, and taking immediate measures to put a stop to the war. Before the Investigating Committee he defended the cause of Lopez with a zeal worthy of an advocate, and told the committee that he was contending for the principles of republican independence in Paraguay, and that the most direful consequences would result to the cause of republicanism if Lopez were to be overborne. He also represented Lopez to be very strong, and holding then a position almost impregnable, and that, if driven from there, he could fall back to other points equally strong; that he had already taken heed, by ordering the planting of extensive crops, that for the future there should be no lack of provisions. But neither the committee nor the President could see that it was the duty of the United States to intervene in behalf of such a monster and tyrant as everybody who had escaped from Paraguay, except McMahan, declared Lopez to be; and unfortunately, not long after, he was driven out with great loss from Ascurra, and from that time was but a fugitive in the mountains.

From the time that Lopez was driven from Ascurra until his death, the information that I have been able to obtain in regard to the closing events of his career has been fragmentary, and some parts of it are not entirely reliable. I have been obliged to depend upon the reports of the Brazilian officers, and on the statements of such Paraguayans as afterwards escaped alive, and on a few private letters which I have received from persons who were with him to the last. I have been unable to converse with any of the witnesses of the last scenes of the tragedy, or to sift the evidence which I have col-

lected ; therefore I shall only give a very brief, and doubtless imperfect, summary of the closing events of the war.

The only succinct and intelligible statement of the progress of the war, after the defeat of Lopez at Pikysyry, that I have seen, is contained in the statement of General Resquin, made by him after the death of Lopez, and while he was a prisoner. From that disastrous field, Lopez, according to Resquin, fled, accompanied by only sixty men. At a distance of six or seven leagues from the scene of the battle he met a force of seven hundred of his own troops, who were on the way from Cerro Leon to be incorporated with his army at Pikysyry. Leaving a part of this force to check any small party that might be sent in pursuit, he continued his flight to Cerro Leon, where he made a short stay, and then hurried on to Ascurra. Here he began to gather again the remnants of his army, — the soldiers who had escaped from the late battles, besides those who had been left to guard various points which it was not necessary to defend after the capture of Pikysyry. From this stronghold he sent out to make another conscription of old men and boys who up to that time had not been in the army ; and with these additions, and also a great number of the wounded that had partially recovered in the hospitals, his force, according to Resquin, even at that time, amounted to thirteen thousand men. Immediately after the flight from Pikysyry all was confusion. There was no one to command, and no one to obey. In the midst of this confusion it appears that the carts containing the money from the treasury were lost. This caused the greatest consternation among the principal officials. Says Resquin : “ The Minister Caminos accused the Minister Gonzalez, the Minister Gonzalez accused the Minister Falcon, they all accused the Vice-President, and Lopez, in his turn, confounded them all because of the disappearance of the treasure.”

Several months before, a foundry had been established at a village called Caacupé ; and the casting of small cannon was commenced and prosecuted with such energy that before Lopez

left Ascurra they had cast eighteen pieces of artillery. Two of them were of iron, and sixteen of brass. He had also collected all the artillery from Asuncion, from Cerro Leon, and from other points not in the possession of the allies. Here Lopez waited, expecting to be attacked, the position affording him such advantages that his few troops could repulse ten times their number. Count d'Eu, however, did not choose to attack him this time, as Caxias had usually done, at that point where he was the strongest, but proceeded to flank him and to capture the various towns around him, including Pirébeui, the late capital. On the day that Pirébeui was taken, says Resquin, "Lopez knew, by means of some troops that he had in the woods, that the Brazilian Army had entered into that village, but he concealed the news, announcing that the allies had been defeated; and, in order to solemnize such a happy victory, he commanded them to celebrate a *Te Deum*. Lopez and all the Ministers, besides many people of the army, assisted at this festivity. Lopez showed himself very well satisfied, and received the compliments of all. In the mean while none of the defenders of Pirébeui, who amounted to two thousand and odd men, appeared at Ascurra. On the following morning, Lopez told Resquin and the persons of the higher grade of the army that he had been deceived, that Pirébeui had been taken by the Brazilians, and that in the evening the army would move, telling them to keep it a secret. The force that was in Ascurra amounted to ten thousand and odd men, besides eighteen hundred sick. On the evening of the 13th of August, 1869, the Paraguayan army commenced its march. It was divided into two corps, the first of which consisted of five thousand men, under the immediate orders of Lopez, who was accompanied also by Resquin. The first corps marched all that night, the next day and the next night, and even the succeeding day, scarcely a moment's rest being allowed. Leaving Ascurra on the night of the 13th, and thus travelling without rest, the army, almost dead from exhaustion, arrived at Curuguayti on the 16th. The second corps, which had most of the artillery and all the other

heavy objects that must be transported, was attacked by a Brazilian force on the 16th, and completely defeated. It lost not only its artillery, but the principal part of the army, provisions, archives, etc. No part of this whole corps was ever united again with the rest of the army, with the exception of the general in command, Caballero, and five men, all of them on foot, who succeeded in escaping through the woods. After reaching Curuguayti, Lopez detached from his little army a force of nine hundred men, with artillery, under the command of General Caballero, who guarded the mouth of the pass that led to that opening. This party was completely defeated on the 18th of August, when the Brazilians attacked and took that place." The army started again on the 18th, and reached the banks of the river Estanislao on the 25th. "During this march," says Resquin, "many women and children died, the soldiers often losing their way, since the road was heavy, and they made scarcely any halt to sleep or eat."

At this time it appears that Lopez suspected another conspiracy; and he immediately commenced in his customary manner to ascertain the correctness of his suspicions. By reason of some mysterious circumstances, a man and a woman had been made prisoners near Curuguayti; the man, a Paraguayan, escaped, but the woman was brought to the head-quarters of Lopez at Estanislao. The sergeant in command of the outskirts was shot for having allowed the man to escape; and the woman was examined according to Lopez's favorite method for finding out the truth. "She confessed," continues Resquin, "that her companion was a spy of the allies, and that he had an understanding with an ensign, one of Lopez's escort by the name of Aquino, with whom he had previously arranged, while the army was at Ascurra, that, with a part of the escort of Lopez himself, he would rise and assassinate the President. She further said, that, after the Paraguayan Army left Ascurra, he received notices, by means of Aquino, which he transmitted to the Brazilians, who had been met near Curuguayti, and that he had given information to the Brazilians of all he had seen. Aquino, brought face to face with the woman, denied all at

first, but afterwards, having been punished with blows and the *cepo*, confessed to Lopez himself, saying that it was not he whom he wished to destroy, but the country. Lopez on this occasion ordered that he should be given something to eat and drink. Then Aquino denounced some others as his accomplices, these in turn denounced others, so at one blow were executed eighty-six individuals of the troop and sixteen officials, among them Colonel Mongilo, commandante of the escort, and Major Rivero, its second, not because they had taken part in the conspiracy, but because such a plot had been concocted in the corps under their command without having been discovered by them. The other officials, before being shot, were flogged in the sight of Lopez until they were about to expire."

On the 12th of September, the army left San Estanislao and moved in the direction of Igatimy. On the way a halt of six days was made, in order to make further investigation relative to the conspiracy of Ascurra. Here sixty more men were shot, and among them Aquino. Resquin himself, as he declares, and the other principal officers, were in a state of the greatest anxiety from the fear of being executed at any moment, without any reason being given for it, because, as he says, "Lopez was a monster, and so entirely disregarded the lives of those next to him, that for no reason whatever he would order his most faithful followers to be killed." In Curuguayti another conspiracy was discovered; and of all these alleged conspiracies which were devised by Lopez for amusement and revenge, or else were the creations of his fears and imagination, this last was the most horrible. It appears that among those who were arrested and put to the torture, that he might learn more in regard to this last conspiracy, the wife of Colonel Hilario Marcó was arrested, and subjected to the usual ordeal. This Marcó, during the time of the elder Lopez, had been the chief of police at Asuncion, and was regarded at that time by the people of Asuncion generally as the worst man in Paraguay who was not a member of the Lopez family. He had married a niece of

General Barrios, the brother-in-law of Lopez ; and it was this woman who was put to the torture and bidden to confess what she knew in regard to the conspiracy. Of course, she could confess nothing, as probably there was no conspiracy, and consequently she could know nothing. But, when the pain became so severe that it could be no longer borne, she began by accusing the mother and sisters of Lopez, and his brother Venancio, as also her husband. When questioned further, she said the plan was to kill Lopez by putting poison in his food. The mother was immediately put in prison ; and the two sisters, who for some time had been at liberty, were again shut up in their carts.

When Lopez heard that his mother had been accused of conspiring with her daughters and her other son to murder him, he called together his principal officers and asked them if he ought not to bring his mother to trial. Resquin and all the others, with the exception of Aveiro, answered that it was better not to proceed formally to the trial of the old lady, at which Lopez became furious, and called them sycophants and flunkies, praising Aveiro highly for having said that his mother should be tried like any other criminal. He said that among them all Aveiro was his only friend. The trial was accordingly ordered. Marcó was flogged till he confirmed the confession of his wife, and until he also accused the old lady. From this time the poor old woman and her daughters were treated with such a degree of cruelty as would appear incredible were the evidence such as would admit of a doubt.*

* Lest it may be said that all the evidence of Lopez's atrocious treatment of his mother, sisters, and brothers is from Brazilian sources, and therefore not reliable, I give the following extracts from a letter received by me from Dr. Frederick Skinner, the English physician, who was surgeon-general of the Paraguayan Army after the capture of Dr. Stewart. It will be found to confirm the worst ever said against the tyrant by his bitterest enemy : —

“BUENOS AIRES, June 20, 1870.

“MY DEAR MR. WASHBURN, — You will doubtless be surprised to receive these few lines, but the remembrance of the many pleasant whist-parties of which I was a member, and of the many good dinners which I ate in the Plaza Vieja during our acquaintance in Paraguay, causes me to believe that you will be glad to hear

Lopez, as we have before seen, when he had any particular feeling of hatred for persons, was careful not to have them punished beyond the power of endurance. He desired them to live for the pleasure that their torture afforded him. For this object he kept his mother, his sisters, and his brother alive for a considerable time, and they were flogged most unmercifully as often as it could be done without danger of hastening their death. His brother Venancio had been in feeble health from the commencement of the war, and the sufferings he had undergone during the last year had so com-

from myself personally, having escaped alive and well after so many dangers and adventures. . . .

"I was taken prisoner on the 1st of March, when Lopez was killed, and was with him about three minutes before his death; and very thin and weak I was. The Brazilians set me free, as the Count d'Eu ascertained that I was one of the monster's victims, and not of his accomplices."

"Thank God, now that the war is over, and all the dreadful atrocities of the unparalleled brute Lopez cannot fail to be brought to light, your veracity and honor must be thoroughly established, and all your conduct vindicated. I was much grieved and disgusted at hearing them doubted in some papers, and attempts made to gloss over, or rather to deny, the fact of his being the very worst devil that ever polluted this earth. Who but he ever flogged his own mother and sisters, and killed his brothers, — one, after a mock trial, by bullet; the other, by starvation and flogging with a doubled lasso, a lance-thrust finishing the scene of torture when the victim could no longer move. Who else exterminated a whole people by starvation, while he, his mistress and bastards, passed a life of comfort, feasting, nay, drinking choice wine *ad libitum*, surrounded by every convenience attainable in a retreat from a pursuing army? More still, at the time of his death he had stores sufficient to have saved numbers, amongst them several cart-loads of salt, which his victims and followers had not tasted for months. I myself felt the want of it more than any other privation, much more so than short rations.

"I can hardly realize everything even now. I should much have liked to take a trip to Europe and the States when all was over; but my funds did not permit, as the only money which I have to compensate for nine years' service does not amount to much more than £——, and I must begin the world again, and think I cannot do better than return to Paraguay, as the new government will employ me, and the survivors of the war are grateful for my past services, and wish me to remain amongst them. . . .

"I should much like to see you again and talk over past time, but at any rate I trust you will write to me shortly, and I will certainly answer and give you the news of poor Paraguay. So with best regards to yourself and compliments to your lady,

"Believe me, yours faithfully,

"FREDERICK SKINNER."

pletely prostrated him that under the daily flogging with the double lasso which was applied to him he soon became so helpless that he could no longer walk, and his brother ordered him to be lanced. He was accordingly despatched, and buried by the wayside. After the battle of Pirébebui, it would appear, from the account of Doña Inocencia, that her mother and her sister Rafaela were both driven along like common prisoners. All the carts were engaged in transporting the provisions and valuables, including a large stock of wines, liquors, salt, and camp equipage for Lopez and Madam Lynch, and those children that a little before had lost their protector by the recall of the American Minister. In Doña Inocencia's account of their sufferings after the battle of Pirébebui, she says: "When we were ordered to march after the battle of Pirébebui, a soldier came and offered to carry for us the hides which we used as beds. Happily for us he did this, else we should all have perished of hunger, for along the march we used to scrape the hair off and roast the hide. This was our only food. On arriving at the place designated by Lopez, such was our awful condition that the girls, almost perfectly naked, had to wander through the woods, during the terrific heat, in search of a frog, or a snake, or any kind of insect to eat. The Calagua Indians at times would bring us a piece of meat of some unknown animal, or mandioca or maize, for which we gave them a gold ring, or some other valuable trinket. But our moral sufferings were even worse. How often have we seen a mother weeping over her unfortunate child expiring from famine!" But these terrible sufferings could not long endure. The Brazilians were all the while pressing hard after Lopez; and his troops that followed him in the rear, driving the starving women and children before them, were so often cut off by the allies that his army was fast melting away.

CHAPTER XL.

Lopez's System of Warfare no longer practicable. — His Army melts away. — His Encampment on the Banks of the Aquidaban. — A Surprise. — Flight of Lopez. — Capture and Death of his Ministers and Principal Officers. — The Pursuit of Lopez. — His Death. — Flight and Capture of Madam Lynch. — Death of Pancho Lynch. — The Rescue of Lopez's Mother and Sisters. — Return to Asuncion. — Ruined Condition of the City. — The Havocs of the War. — Nine Tenths of the Population destroyed. — Desire of the Paraguayan Women to wreak their Vengeance on Madam Lynch. — She is protected from their Fury by the Brazilians. — Her Property sequestrated. — The Fugitives in Asuncion. — Their Wretched Condition. — The Provisional Government. — Efforts to relieve the General Distress.

THE plan of organization adopted by Lopez early in the war, to compel his men to fight desperately and never surrender, had been completely successful so long as he could maintain his head-quarters in a central position and closely watch all his subordinates. This plan could only be made available among a people so thoroughly trained to obedience that they had become mere machines, that would go wherever ordered, though inevitable death should confront them. In everything, from long before the war began, it was "theirs not to make reply, theirs not to reason why," and when marshalled to battle the Paraguayan soldier understood that it must be "victory or death." They were sent into action in such a way that every man was responsible for the good conduct of at least five others. Every soldier, as he advanced to the attack, was aware that if he lagged or faltered, or should attempt to desert, his two comrades next him must shoot him on the instant, or, in turn, be shot themselves. The non-commissioned officer immediately over them was responsible for them all, and, should one of them escape, would either be flogged or shot when the battle was over. Then the captain,

lieutenant, or ensign, was responsible in turn for them all, and the higher officer in command must answer for every man under him. Desertion, therefore, was scarcely possible; and as surrender to overpowering odds was always considered to be desertion, the men fought with desperation, knowing that their only chance of life was in victory. The greatest danger was always in the rear. The distrust was so universal, that though a squad or company were individually all anxious to desert or be captured, and were completely cut off from the main army, no one would dare to suggest surrender. They must all fight till they were killed, for if some were captured and others were not, the latter were certain to be most inhumanly flogged and then executed. In the early part of the war, the punishment for those who fought bravely themselves, but yet could not, or did not, prevent defection among others near them, was generally limited to flogging. Afterwards shooting was the rule for all delinquents of this kind except when a repulse was general, in which case the officers were shot and the men decimated.

This system was for a long time so effective that nearly the whole male population of the country was sacrificed, and caused the outer world, which knew nothing of it, to wonder at the courage and endurance of the Paraguayans, who, it was believed, were fighting, with a valor never surpassed, for liberty and independence, under an heroic leader. But after Lopez had been driven into the mountains he could no longer maintain his system in perfection. To drive before him so many thousands of the helpless, starving women and children he was obliged to send out a great many small parties to force along those who could walk, and to kill all who if left behind might be taken prisoners. In this practice it was inevitable that many stragglers should be captured, and Lopez, in retreating through the cordilleras, found his forces fast diminishing, even though no battles were fought. He had reached a place called Cerro Cora, on the banks of the Aquidaban, with only about twelve hundred men, and had there made a halt. The position selected for this last encampment was favorable

to his plans, as it was approachable on the side liable to attack only through a narrow opening, and had a way of escape in the rear, in case his little band could not hold the pass in front. On this, as on all previous occasions, Lopez intended to make sure of a way of escape for himself in the event of defeat at the entrance of the pass.

Through all the long marches, from the time he had left Cerro Leon, one of his constant cares had been to provide that in no contingency should the means be wanting for supplying his own table in a manner that fighting generals would scorn to maintain. During the latter part of the retreat, nearly all the carts and oxen left to him were employed in transporting his elegant camp equipage, and provisions, wines, and liquors that were intended only for the use of himself and Madam Lynch, and their joint progeny. Lopez seemed to the last to indulge in the hope that he would be able to get so far into the forest that the Brazilians would give up the pursuit, and that then, as a sort of cacique among the native Indians, he might continue for years to play the part of a despot, and be such a pest on the borders of civilization as to figure in the newspapers of other countries. He even made a treaty with some chiefs of the miserable tribes of that region, by which they were to furnish him with provisions for his army for the period of seven years. Copies of these treaties he contrived to get published by having them fall into the hands of the Brazilians, and they were then republished by his faithful agents in Europe and the United States, to prove that he was still invincible, and that it was the duty of foreign powers to interfere and put an end to the war. To provide for such a life, he always had a large quantity of salt carried along in the advanced train with his personal baggage. All around him, even his staff, were denied this luxury; and from witnessing the suffering that the want of it had caused in his army, he seemed more in dread of being deprived of it himself than of anything else. Hence it was guarded with the greatest care, and neither his mother nor his sisters were allowed a grain of it, nor of any of the other luxuries that were still abundant with

him when he was overtaken and killed. They were kept nearly at the point of starvation, but so far removed from it that they should not die and thus deprive him of the delight of torturing them.

In this fastness on the banks of the Aquidaban Lopez had halted, not knowing how near the Brazilians were in pursuit. The pickets and reconnoitring parties, worn down by incessant watching and toil, were either killed or so demoralized as to desert, and failed to report the proximity of the enemy. The Brazilians, therefore, were close upon him, while he was yet resting at his ease, in the belief that they were several leagues distant. The main army of the pursuers had almost reached the pass which guarded the entrance to Lopez's head-quarters, when a call was made for reinforcements from a reconnoitring party. The Brazilian general, José Antonio Correa da Camarra, ordered an instant advance of the whole infantry force at his disposal. But the power of Lopez had already departed. The little force left to guard the pass would not obey the standing order to fight against any odds till all were killed. At the sight of the Brazilians they broke, some to surrender, some to hide themselves in the woods, and a few to fly to head-quarters and give the alarm.

Lopez, when he heard that the pass had been forced by the Brazilians, gave instant orders to form in order of battle and keep back the invaders, while he mounted his horse, which was always kept ready for such an emergency, and ran away. The carriage of Madam Lynch was also at hand, ready for flight; and she had just time to gather her children into it and summon a small escort under the command of her eldest son, Pancho, a youth of about seventeen, and dash off in another direction from that taken by Lopez, when the Brazilians rushed in to find no one to oppose them. They pushed on after the fugitives, and in the pursuit the old Vice-President, Sanchez, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the much-detested Caminos, were killed. Resquin attempted to follow the carriage of Madam Lynch, but seeing that escape was impossible, he turned to his pursuers, and, throwing away his

sword, proclaimed himself a *pasado* (deserter), and was taken prisoner. Aveiro, and some others, followed his example. Lopez, being better mounted than any of his followers, had succeeded in gaining the woods, and was making off with all his might, apparently trusting to that fortune which had so often saved him in previous cowardly flights. But the ground over which he made his way was so soft and treacherous that his horse floundered, and almost stuck fast in the mire. Dismounting, the hunted chieftain made his way to the bank of the river, the Brazilians, among whom was General Camarra, being close in pursuit. The Aquidaban at this season was but a broad marshy brook, and Lopez had succeeded in wading across it, and had just reached the farther bank, when General Camarra came upon him. Seeing that it was Lopez, Camarra called out to his soldiers, who were rushing forward to finish him, to disarm and not to kill him. A soldier called Chico Diablo (Little Devil) sprang forward to obey the order, when seeing that Lopez had drawn his revolver, and was raising it to shoot the man who had just ordered his life to be spared, he made a thrust at him with a lance, at which the tyrant fell headforemost into the muddy stream. But he instantly attempted to scramble up, and was upon his knees, when he was hit by a shot from an unknown hand, and fell again in the mud, and there expired.

General Camarra, seeing Lopez fall, came up, and, being satisfied that it was indeed he, ordered his men to pull him out of the mud and carry him back to his late head-quarters.

As soon as the Paraguayans knew that Lopez was dead, they set up a shout of joy. It was necessary to post sentinels around his hated corpse to prevent the women who had gathered round from tearing him to pieces. Could they have got at him, their hatred of him was so intense they would have cut him into mince-meat; and, of all who now cursed him, those who had been the most ready, the most zealous, apparently, in executing the cruel orders of Lopez in torturing and killing his subjects, were loudest in denouncing and execrating him as a monster and wretch that had held

them spell-bound, and had forced them to commit acts against which their souls revolted.

Madam Lynch, who, on seeing the approach of the Brazilians, had fled with her children in a coach, with a small escort under command of her son Pancho, was soon overtaken by a party of Brazilians, and young Lynch was told to surrender. The officer in command approached, and as he turned to give an order for Pancho to be disarmed the youth made a treacherous thrust and slightly wounded him, at which a Brazilian soldier ran him through with a lance. Madam Lynch was then taken, with her other children, to the place where the corpse of Lopez was lying. A guard was also found necessary to protect her, as the Paraguayan women, had they been permitted, would undoubtedly have dug out her eyes with bodkins, stripped her of the elegant silks and rich jewels which she still wore, and thrust her mutilated body into the Aquidaban, to become food for the alligators.

The mother and sisters of Lopez were also taken prisoners; but there was no disposition on the part of the Paraguayan people to insult or injure them. They had been their fellow-sufferers, and with them shared the general joy that the tyrant was dead. They were brought to view the dead body of the author of all their miseries. At beholding him, the old lady could not restrain herself from a flood of tears. The sight of him, her first-born, on whom she had built so many hopes, and who had inflicted so much misery on his country, until but a remnant of its people was left, who had killed his two brothers and his brothers-in-law, and whipped and starved his sisters, and had not spared even his own mother, whose back and shoulders at that time were covered with fresh scars caused by the blows of the double lasso inflicted by his order, was certainly enough to cause an outburst of tears of mingled joy and maternal affection. The sisters, however, looked unmoved upon the carcass, and Doña Rafaela, turning to her mother, said, "Mother, why do you weep? He was no son, no brother; he was a monster." They then turned away, and for the first time for many

months they received treatment which might be called human. Lopez was then rudely buried ; and as the war was over, as the last and the only enemy against whom the allies had made war was dead, nothing more was to be done but to gather up the scattered forces and return to Asuncion. Madam Lynch requested permission from General Camarra to give Lopez a more decent burial ; the request was granted, and she and her surviving children accordingly dug a grave, in which Lopez and young Pancho were buried. Orders were then given for them to prepare to march for Concepcion, as this was the nearest town on the banks of the river where they could meet steamers to convey them to Asuncion.

On arriving at the old capital, the mother and sisters of Lopez were permitted to go on shore, where for a while they were held under surveillance, but were afterwards allowed to occupy one of their own houses, and to recover from the prostration caused by their terrible and long-protracted suffering. Madam Lynch, however, was detained as prisoner on board the Brazilian gunboat.

On the occupation of Asuncion, a year before, by the allies, a provisional government had been established, having respect, in form at least, to the terms of the Triple Alliance. The members of this new government, or junta, were all native Paraguayans, and all but one were persons who, at the commencement of the war, were not in Paraguay. During the time of the elder Lopez a considerable number of Paraguayans had been exiled from the country ; or rather, having left by the President's permission, had never returned ; and a few who had left between his death and the commencement of the war, ostensibly intending to return, had remained outside of Paraguay. These, with the prisoners of war and deserters that from time to time had passed over to the allies, constituted almost the entire male population of Paraguay. At the time of Lopez's death, his army probably contained less than a thousand soldiers. At the commencement of the war, it is estimated that there were about eight hundred thousand people in the country, of whom it is supposed that four

hundred and fifty thousand were females. Of the remaining three hundred and fifty thousand males all had perished, save those who had been taken prisoners and those boys under eight or nine years of age who were too young to have been made useful for any service in the army. During the war more women than men perished, notwithstanding that, at the death of Lopez, there were seven women to one man left alive. According to the estimate of Messrs. Burrill and Valpy, who were taken prisoners about the time of the battle of Pirébeui, one hundred and twenty thousand women and children had died of starvation and exposure from the time of the battle of Pikysry to their own escape. After this the mortality increased, and so many perished, that, when the war was ended, it is probable that of the four hundred and fifty thousand females in Paraguay at the commencement of the war not sixty thousand were left alive. Of the males, including the boys under ten years of age, there were not twenty thousand. Of full-grown men capable of bearing arms, there could not have been ten thousand; so that, after this terrible war, there was left alive, of the whole Paraguayan nation, but one tenth of its population. All had been sacrificed to the ambition, the folly, and the cruelty of Lopez and Madam Lynch. More than seven hundred thousand Paraguayans had perished, and probably the war had cost the allies three hundred thousand lives; so that the unnatural tyrant, during the seven years of his power, was the immediate and direct cause of the death of a million of people. But he had accomplished his purpose. His threat that, if he could not come out of the war triumphant, he would leave his country an uninhabited desert waste, had been fulfilled. He had inflicted on it and its people all the misery that a selfish, weak, and wicked man could do, and left a name to be abhorred wherever the story of his crimes should be known.

The Paraguayans who had escaped and were in Asuncion at the time that Madam Lynch was brought there a prisoner were exceedingly anxious for an opportunity to wreak their

vengeance upon her ; and the provisional government made the request that she should be delivered to it, in order to be tried by the Paraguayan tribunals. This was refused by the Brazilian authorities ; and a petition was drawn up and signed by a large number of the surviving Paraguayan women, in which they set forth the wrongs which they had suffered at her hands, and stated that they had been forced to give up their money and their jewels, under the pretence that they were for the defence of their country, when they knew they had not been expended for any such purpose, but had been wrested from them for the benefit of Madam Lynch and the offspring of the tyrant, who, besides having thus robbed them, had murdered their husbands, brothers, fathers, and sons ; and they begged that she might not be permitted to leave the country and carry away the property of which they had been thus robbed to spend in other countries.

For a year previous to the evacuation of Asuncion in February, 1868, Madam Lynch, foreseeing that Lopez must finally be overthrown, had been engaged in buying up a large part of the most valuable property in Asuncion. The people who owned it had no alternative, when she offered to purchase it, but to accept her terms. She invariably paid in the paper money of the country, which would be of little, if any, value should Lopez be overthrown, and of which she had an unlimited supply by order of her paramour. When she made an offer for a house or other building, the owner dared not refuse it, for he knew she had both the power and the will to punish him for a refusal ; and hence all those bargains were in fact nothing more than a confiscation of the property for the benefit of Madam Lynch, for which in turn she gave them, in charity, just what she pleased. Under these circumstances, it could not be otherwise than that the new government should declare sequestrated all the property held in her name in Paraguay ; and both government and people tried very hard to find out what had become of the money and jewels that had been stolen, and to get possession of them. But she had prudently taken care, long before, that such things should

be placed where the rightful owners could not in any contingency regain them.

Asuncion by this time had become, as it were, a mass of ruins. It had been abandoned nearly a year and a half before it was captured by the Brazilians ; and in that time many of the poorer houses had been completely destroyed by the frequent rains, and many of the better class had suffered so from neglect as to be scarcely habitable. After being captured by the Brazilians, whose habits are notoriously slovenly and unclean, its condition was much worse, for little pains was taken to preserve order and cleanliness ; and to the havoc made by the weather was added that of the soldiers, who did not care what damages they caused. But the most melancholy spectacle was that presented by the Paraguayan women, who, having escaped from Lopez, had come to the old capital in hopes of obtaining food. These were mere skeletons, and were so exhausted and miserable that on reaching the capital they could hardly walk. They were generally without any clothing whatever ; and women who had once been considered among the most respectable in the country would come dragging their weary, emaciated limbs into the town in a state of perfect nudity, and walk through the streets without the least sense of shame or modesty. This fact, perhaps, is stronger proof than any other that can be adduced of the terrible sufferings that these people had endured. It is known, that among the lowest and most brutal savages, as low as the Guaicurus or the Guatos of the Upper Paraguay, or the Bushmen of Australia, a certain modesty is the instinct of the female. No matter how low, how base, how brutal, the women always seek to cover their persons ; but these Paraguayan women who escaped from the army of Lopez and came into Asuncion had, many of them, not a trace of this feeling left. They had been driven before the brutal soldiery so long, through the woods and over the mountains, with nothing to eat but wild fruit and such small animals as they could catch, many of which were repulsive even to the sight, beaten with sticks, and certain to

be lanced to death if they lingered behind, their scanty clothing at last all torn from them, with the dead and dying around them, with scarcely a vestige of hope left to them, that they in time became indifferent to everything like decency or modesty ; and when they came straggling into Asuncion, their very appearance told the whole story of the miseries which they had endured.

When once assured that they were beyond the reach of Lopez, their first impulse was to go to the capital ; and so many thousands of them coming in together, there was, of course, the greatest destitution after they reached there. Many of them were so exhausted and reduced on arriving there, that only the best of treatment, with good medical skill, could restore them. It was impossible that adequate provision should be made for so many ; and among soldiers like the Brazilians and the Argentine gauchos it was not likely they would be treated with either kindness or pity. The provisional government, and indeed the military commanders, endeavored to alleviate their sufferings ; yet as scarcely anything eatable had been produced in the country for a long time previously, all the provisions necessary, not only for the army, but for this multitude of fugitives, must be brought from the mouth of the river. No adequate provision having been made for such an increased number, the allies could not, if they had been disposed to, have provided for so many as applied to them for relief. This, perhaps, to a certain extent, was an inevitable consequence of such a war ; but it cannot be denied that for a long time the conquerors did not exert themselves as they should have done to mitigate the sufferings of the unhappy women and children who appealed to them for relief. Yet it should be said for them, that whenever any foreigners fell into their hands they treated them with the greatest kindness. I have myself received numerous letters from those who escaped by being taken prisoners, subsequent to my departure from Paraguay, and they invariably testify to the kindness and good treatment which they received from the hands of the Brazilians. I have also seen the published statements of

others, and, with a single exception, they all speak in the warmest terms of gratitude of their deliverers, and note the date of their escape from the power of Lopez as the termination of their sufferings. Though weak and debilitated by what they had before endured, yet the hope which had been revived by their rescue rendered the period of their subsequent trials a time of comparative ease and joy.

CHAPTER XLI.

The Surviving Companions of Lopez unable to explain his Conduct. — He left no Evidence against his Victims. — His most trusted Officers alarmed for their own Safety. — Bewildered by a Phantom. — His Charge against Don Benigno. — Lopez, dying, left no Friend to mourn him. — His Name universally accursed. — The Character of Lopez not to be judged by any Human Standard. — A Mental and Moral Deformity. — Likeness and Unlikeness to Francia. — His Treatment of his Family. — The Curse of Solomon. — The Future of Paraguay. — The Immigration needed. — Advantages which the Country offers. — The Present Government. — Conclusion.

THE expectation which had been cherished by many, and particularly by those inclined to judge more leniently of the character of Lopez than the unexplained record of his acts would warrant, that after his death facts would be disclosed which would in some degree palliate his conduct, was not realized. It was believed that if any of those immediately around him, and with whom his relations were supposed to be somewhat intimate and confidential, should escape or survive their chief, they would reveal the motive of his strange and unnatural conduct. But although several of these were taken prisoners they had nothing to disclose. They could tell of nothing more than that they were in as great a mystery as the thousands of victims who had been executed for taking part in a conspiracy of whose existence they had never heard until they were arrested and by torture forced to confess their complicity in it. Resquin who had ordered, and Aveiro who had applied, the torture in thousands of instances, and had witnessed with apparent pleasure the contortions of the victims, were no sooner aware that their terrible master was dead than they became his accusers, and declared that they had been but unwilling instruments to

enforce his horrible orders. They protested that for years they had been in constant danger, and were liable at any moment to be arrested and subjected to the treatment they were obliged to inflict on others of whose innocence they were fully convinced. But of the different conspiracies for which so many were made to suffer they knew nothing. It was not supposed that Aveiro had ever been admitted into the counsels of his master, as he was nothing but an evil-looking wretch, selected for the most revolting work of the tyrant solely on account of his brutality. Resquin was for years the most trusted of all Lopez's lieutenants in executive matters, and it had been through him that the tyrant's most sanguinary orders had been promulgated. But his long statement, published in the newspapers of Buenos Aires not long after the death of Lopez, throws no light on the most mysterious parts of the long tragedy. In regard to the great conspiracy, he says he knew nothing beyond what Lopez told him. He had no evidence of it except the confessions of tortured witnesses. Lopez, in explanation of the many arrests which he ordered, told him at one time that Don Benigno had planned a revolution, and to assassinate his brother, the President, with a knife; that an ensign had revealed the plot. How the ensign found out the secret intentions of Benigno was not related. Lopez also told Resquin that Benigno, Bedoya, and others had robbed the treasury to reward their accomplices (of whom, I suppose, I was chief) in the conspiracy; and that Benigno had sent a map of the Paraguayan positions to Caxias, and two chests of gold. How this gold was sent does not appear, as all this time there was no communication through the military lines; of course, Resquin must have known that there was no truth in the statement, and that Lopez knew there was not at the time he made it. Resquin also knew that any question showing incredulity would be but a prelude to the arrest and execution of the doubter.

The circumstance that caused us so much surprise at the Legation in Asuncion, when we learned of the arrest of

Benitez, Fernandez, Venancio Lopez, and others who, we supposed, were still in favor, and who had just before been engaged in arresting scores of others and sending them to head-quarters, also caused great alarm among all the higher officers of the army, including Resquin himself. They could not understand how Venancio and Fernandez, if they were leaders in a conspiracy, should implicitly obey the orders of Lopez to arrest all their accomplices and send them to his presence. Why, if there were a conspiracy of which they were members, did they not try to escape, instead of arresting their accomplices and sending them in irons to head-quarters, and then waiting their own turn for arrest and execution. The fact that they did not attempt to do so was conclusive evidence that they were as much in the dark as to the cause of the strange proceedings that were passing around them as was everybody at head-quarters except Lopez, and perhaps Madam Lynch. If Lopez were killing off so many of those lately in high favor from a cowardly fear; if, dreading imaginary dangers, he was slaying right and left his most servile followers and instruments, — then indeed might Resquin, Aveiro, and even Madam Lynch, fear for their own safety, and endeavor to prove their loyalty and devotion by greater zeal in accusing others.

From this testimony of Resquin, it appears that Lopez throughout, like his prototype Francia, kept his own counsels; and though it would seem from many things which he did that he believed at times that there really had been some kind of a scheme or plot devised against him, the inference to be drawn from a review of his whole conduct is that his distempered imagination had conjured up a phantom which at times he believed to be a reality; that he cherished this belief, as it furnished a reason or pretext to his own mind for indulging in his favorite pastime of inflicting pain and torture on others.

And yet it is possible that Benigno, who was an intriguing, ambitious, and avaricious man, had devised a scheme with one or two of his most intimate friends by which he hoped to

obtain the succession, in case his brother should be overthrown. But this is only a surmise, and has no other foundation than that the conduct of his brother towards him can be explained in no other way. But as we know that Lopez tortured and executed hundreds or thousands of innocent persons for no offence whatever, the inference drawn from his own unnatural conduct can hardly be said to afford a shadow of evidence to favor this surmise.

Previous to the death of Lopez, history furnishes no example of a tyrant so despicable and cruel that at his fall he left no friend among his own people; no apologist or defender, no follower or participant of his infamies, to utter one word in palliation of his crimes; no one to regret his death, or who cherished the least spark of love for his person or his memory; no one to utter a prayer for the repose of his soul. In this respect, Lopez had surpassed all tyrants who ever lived. No sooner was he dead, than all alike, the officer high in command, the subaltern who applied the torture, the soldier who passively obeyed, the mother who bore him, and the sisters who once loved him, all joined in denouncing him as an unparalleled monster; and of the whole Paraguayan nation there is perhaps not one of the survivors who does not curse his name, and ascribe to his folly, selfishness, ambition, and cruelty all the evils that his unhappy country has suffered. Not a family remains which does not charge him with having destroyed the larger part of its members and reduced the survivors to misery and want. Of all those who were within reach of his death-dealing hand during the last years of his power, there are but two persons living to say a word in mitigation of the judgment pronounced against him by his countrymen and countrywomen.

In concluding, it might be expected that an attempt would be made to give a general summary or estimate of the character of Lopez. But this can only be done by a recital of his acts, as he did not seem to be governed by the ordinary motives which influence mankind. He committed so many acts of an atrocious

character, without any object, so far as those around him could discover, that he is not to be judged by the same standard as other men. He was a mental and moral deformity, a monster; and it is therefore idle to attempt to analyze or estimate his character as a reasoning being subject to the passions, impulses, and motives that are supposed to inspire all members of the human family. Destitute of the ordinary feelings of humanity, he was uninfluenced by the motives which govern the generality of mankind. He was an exception, *sui generis*. He was as different from other men as had been Francia, but in another way. Francia had no natural affection. He sent a curse as his last message to his father, and gave no thought to his natural children, who wandered destitute through the streets of Asuncion. The character of Lopez is redeemed by the fact that he did have a regard for his natural children; but that regard was of so perverted a nature that it prompted many of his most atrocious acts. It was to enrich these children that he robbed so many thousands of people, whom he afterwards executed, that they might never again claim their own. But his treatment of his parents was infinitely worse than that of Francia, of whom Carlyle says, "If he could not forgive his dying father at such a time, may God never forgive him!" The curse of Francia was but the ebullition of ill-temper; but the whole career of Lopez, from the time of the death of his predecessor, who, though not his father, had always been as a father to him, was one compared with which the brutal message of Francia was but an idle exclamation. As we have seen, no sooner had the breath left the body of Carlos Antonio Lopez than his most intimate friends, his counsellors and advisers, and all to whom he had shown any attachment, or in whom he had placed any confidence, were immediately arrested; and the most of them, after long imprisonment, during which they were subjected to the most cruel treatment and protracted tortures, either died or were put to death; throughout the latter part of his career, he derided the counsels and refused the petitions and prayers of his

mother. Upon his younger brother and the husbands of his two sisters he inflicted the most exquisite and intense misery, and finally put them to death. His elder brother he drove before him like a fettered wild beast into the mountains, and caused him to be flogged daily, until he was about to die, when he ordered him to be despatched by a lance. His sisters and mother were subjected to the same treatment, except that they had not been executed at the time the unnatural monster was killed ; but he had previously given orders that neither of them should under any contingency of battle escape. He had instructed the jailers of his sisters, that both of them should be given fifty blows a day until they expired ; and he had already signed an order for the execution of his mother, when the Brazilians unexpectedly broke in upon him and put an end to his terrible career. Early in his administration, the strange antipathy and animosity which he seemed to have for all the old friends of his parents was the subject of remark among those foreigners who could talk among themselves without fear of having their conversation reported to the police ; and more than once were these words quoted as foreshadowing his miserable end : " The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it." Lopez, from the outset of his career as President, was inviting this curse upon himself. He fell in the mud of the Aquidaban, and was buried upon its banks with so slight a covering of earth that it is more than probable that the curse pronounced by Solomon for filial disrespect and disobedience has been literally fulfilled.

The future of Paraguay must depend entirely on the extent and character of the immigrants who may come to repopulate its waste places. The nation, with its peculiar civilization, is destroyed. The Paraguayan people no longer exist in numbers sufficient to control the destinies of the country ; and of the native population remaining there are perhaps seven women to one man. This inequality of the sexes is diminished to a considerable extent by the numerous camp-followers and

deserters from the allied armies, who were left there when the troops were withdrawn, and who will probably remain there in large numbers, to be a pest and a hindrance to the redemption and development of the country. Should there be a large immigration from Central and Northern Europe of people educated to respect and enforce the laws, Paraguay may soon become the paradise of South America. The greatest danger now is, that the gauchos from the Argentine provinces will flock in there, and possess themselves of the fine plains and fertile valleys in such numbers as to render the lives and property of the industrious and law-abiding settlers insecure. To guard against this, those who would emigrate to Paraguay should, under the present circumstances, go in colonies, and in such numbers as to give mutual protection. They should imitate the example of the emigrants from Europe to the United States, and regard Paraguay as their permanent home, assuming as early as possible the duties and responsibilities of citizens. They should avoid the errors of their countrymen in the lower countries of the Plata, who have left all political matters to the revolutionary gauchos, and thus exposed themselves to incessant revolutions and civil wars. The country itself offers inducements to the emigrants from the Old World greater than any other part of South America, if not of the world. Thousands of the abandoned houses can at slight expense be made comfortable habitations, and the fields, once cultivated but more recently neglected, would again yield, with little labor, ample supplies of food for a large population; and the countless acres of as yet unbroken greensward only await the plough and the husbandman to yield magnificent harvests of Indian corn, cotton, tobacco, and sugar-cane. The woods promise immense profits to the capitalist who will erect saw-mills and export the lumber; the plains are capable of supporting vast herds of cattle throughout the year, subjecting their owners to no other expense but to mark them and guard them from straying. It is now for the government that has succeeded to the destroying tyranny which has been overthrown to pursue a policy that shall bring in such people from

other countries as will appreciate the great advantages that the country offers. If the newly established authorities shall be wise enough to imitate the example of the United States, and dispose of the lands belonging to the state in small tracts at a nominal price to those who will occupy and cultivate them for a given number of years ; if it shall firmly repress the spirit of gauchoism and revolution so that life and property may be secure, — there is no reason why this land, so favored by nature, should not soon become the garden of the earth.

A P P E N D I X.

CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN REAR-ADMIRAL DAVIS AND PRESIDENT LOPEZ.

Rear-Admiral Davis to President Lopez.

UNITED STATES FLAG-SHIP WASP, (fourth-rate,
In front of Angostura, Paraguay, December 3, 1868.

SIR, — I have the honor to inform your Excellency that I have arrived in front of Angostura, having on board his Excellency General M. T. McMahan, the Minister of the United States to the Republic of Paraguay.

As an indispensable preliminary step to the presentation, by General McMahan to your Excellency, of his credential letters, I have to request that Messrs. Bliss and Masterman, the persons arrested and detained in Asuncion while under the protection and attached to the Legation of the previous United States Minister, be restored to the authority of the United States flag.

Knowing that before the occurrence of this arrest and detention it was the earnest desire of the government of the United States to continue, under the existing circumstances, its friendly relations with the Republic of Paraguay, — a desire sufficiently manifested by the prompt appointment of General McMahan, — it is my hope that your Excellency will hasten to remove the only obstacle which stands in the way of these relations.

I have the honor to be, with the highest respect, your Excellency's most obedient servant,

C. H. DAVIS,

*Rear-Admiral commanding the Naval Forces of the United States
in the South Atlantic.*

HIS EXCELLENCY MARSHAL DON FRANCISCO SOLANO LOPEZ,
President of the Republic of Paraguay.

Rear-Admiral Davis to President Lopez.

UNITED STATES FLAG-SHIP WASP, (fourth-rate,
In front of Angostura, Paraguay, December 4, 1868.

SIR, — I have the honor to apprise your Excellency of my arrival in front of the batteries of Angostura.

My object in placing myself in personal intercourse with your Excellency is to request that M^{ess}rs. Bliss and Masterman, the individuals arrested and detained in Asuncion on the 10th day of September last, may be delivered into my keeping, subject to the order of the government of the United States.

It does not belong to me to define, or even to consider, the status of these individuals.

But on this subject your Excellency will, I do not doubt, repose confidence in the justice and friendship of the United States, which has afforded your Excellency many recent proofs of its respect and sympathy.

Any papers your Excellency may be pleased to send with these individuals will be transmitted to Washington by the earliest opportunity.

I have the honor to be, with the highest respect, your Excellency's most obedient servant,

C. H. DAVIS,

*Rear-Admiral commanding the Naval Forces of the United States
in the South Atlantic.*

HIS EXCELLENCY MARSHAL DON FRANCISCO SOLANO LOPEZ,
President of the Republic of Paraguay.

Secretary Palacios to Rear-Admiral Davis.

HEAD-QUARTERS AT PIKYSRYVY, December 5, 1868.

ADMIRAL, — I have the honor to inform your Excellency of the receipt of the note which you have been pleased to address, under date of yesterday, to his Excellency the Marshal, President of the Republic, by whose order I now reply to your Excellency.

The Paraguayan government, always influenced by the best and most friendly sentiments towards the United States of America, would gladly avail itself of every opportunity in which, without receding from its sovereignty and its rights, it could offer fresh proofs of its constant friendship; but his Excellency the President

regrets that it is not in his power to accede to the delivery, in the terms of your Excellency's note, of the accused Bliss and Masterman to the keeping of your Excellency, who, if not called upon to define, or even to consider, should not at least conceal from yourself the fact of their being criminals, deeply committed in the affair of a horrible conspiracy, very particularly the former. Nevertheless, his Excellency the President of the Republic would cheerfully consent to the delivery of the criminals Bliss and Masterman, provided it were requested in a manner more in conformity with the fact of their being accomplices of Mr. Washburn, and the first intimately acquainted with his intrigues in the character of conspirator and agent of the enemy, of which he is now accused in the national tribunals, since they could be useful in the administration of justice by the American government, to whose judgment he would confide the above-mentioned criminals.

I avail myself of this opportunity to assure your Excellency of my very distinguished consideration.

JUAN MANUEL PALACIOS,
Chief Military Secretary.

HIS EXCELLENCY REAR-ADMIRAL C. H. DAVIS, *Commanding the
Naval Forces of the United States in the South Atlantic.*

Rear-Admiral Davis to President Lopez.

UNITED STATES FLAG-SHIP WASP, (fourth-rate.)
In front of Angostura, Paraguay, December 5, 1868.

SIR, — I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of a communication from your Excellency, in reply to my communication of the 4th instant, in which your Excellency expresses a willingness to deliver to the United States government, in my keeping, the accused persons, Bliss and Masterman, mentioned in the said note, but that your Excellency objects to their delivery under the terms of my note.

I wish your Excellency to believe that it is no part of my official duty either to offer or to refuse any terms which will affect the alleged criminal condition of the two persons in question. The papers accompanying these two persons will sufficiently express to the government of the United States the judgment of the government of Paraguay in their cases.

I take this occasion to inform your Excellency that I am accom-

panied by a Minister accredited to the government of Paraguay, who, should no difficulties exist to prevent it, will present his credentials. Considering this and the friendship of the government of the United States of America for that of the Republic of Paraguay, I have to ask your Excellency to embark the accused persons, Bliss and Masterman, on board of this vessel, in order that I may keep them in security, subject to the disposition of the government of the United States, of whose justice and friendly sentiments your Excellency can entertain no doubt. Your Excellency is aware that the present position of this vessel is one in which she should not be detained longer than is absolutely necessary. Will your Excellency, therefore, be pleased to inform me when I may expect to receive these persons on board, or to apprise me at the earliest moment that it is not your Excellency's intention to send them at all, if such should be your final decision.

I have the honor to be, with the highest respect, your Excellency's most obedient servant,

C. H. DAVIS,

*Rear-Admiral commanding the Naval Forces of the United States
in the South Atlantic.*

HIS EXCELLENCY MARSHAL DON FRANCISCO SOLANO LOPEZ,
President of the Republic of Paraguay.

Secretary Palacios to Rear-Admiral Davis.

HEAD-QUARTERS, PIKYSVRY, December 6, 1868.

ADMIRAL, — His Excellency the Marshal President of the Republic directs me to reply to the communication of yesterday's date, which he has just received from your Excellency, in answer to a communication of mine of the same day, written also by his Excellency's command.

As to what is said of the form of your Excellency's application for the embarkation of the criminals Bliss and Masterman, that it never intended either to offer or refuse terms which might affect the criminal condition of the individuals in question, but to leave it well established that this application could not be complied with in the sense of a reclamation, but of a graceful courtesy on the part of the government of Paraguay towards that of the United States of America; if in my answer your Excellency could find anything different, I beg pardon.

Your Excellency will now permit me to remark that I have written nothing in that communication which authorizes your Excellency to believe that it has ever been the intention of his Excellency the President of the Republic not to deliver up the criminals Bliss and Masterman unreservedly.

I thought that I had made it distinctly apparent that his Excellency regretted that it was not in his power to accede to the conditions of the first demand ; but since neither a reclamation nor a demand is in question, thus strengthening my former communications, his Excellency has given the necessary orders for the delivery of the criminals in a conspiracy, Bliss and Masterman, on board of your Excellency's vessel, that they may be securely retained, subject to the disposition of the government of the United States of America, asking permission to recommend to your Excellency their entire non-intercourse with the belligerent countries in whose service the conspiracy was set on foot.

Your Excellency will consider this application sufficiently justified by the actual state of the war, which has also led your Excellency to request that you should not be detained longer than is absolutely necessary.

In this respect I am happy to inform your Excellency that the prosecuting officers who have received the orders of his Excellency, with a recommendation to be brief, expect to get through in time for the embarkation of the criminals, Bliss and Masterman, by three o'clock of the afternoon of the 8th instant ; and at the same time they have expressed a wish, which they hope will be gratified, that your Excellency will name one or two of your officers who can witness, on the morning of the same day, the verification of the declarations of both of the accused in the case.

His Excellency the President thanks your Excellency for the information that you are accompanied by a Minister accredited to this Republic, the presentation of whose credentials the Minister will be pleased to arrange at his convenience in the customary form.

I profit by the occasion to offer to your Excellency the assurance of my very distinguished consideration.

JUAN MANUEL PALACIOS,
Chief Military Secretary.

HIS EXCELLENCY REAR-ADMIRAL C. H. DAVIS, *commanding the
Naval Forces of the United States in the South Atlantic.*

Rear-Admiral Davis to President Lopez.

UNITED STATES FLAG-SHIP WASP, (fourth-rate,
In front of Angostura, Paraguay, December 7, 1867.

SIR, — I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your Excellency's letter of the 6th instant.

In obedience to your Excellency's wishes I shall appoint two superior officers, one of them the chief of my staff, to witness the verification of the declarations of the accused, Bliss and Masterman; and I shall be ready to receive the accused on board of my flag-ship at the time appointed by your Excellency.

These officers will be at your Excellency's command on the morning of the 8th instant.

I have the honor to be, with the highest respect, your Excellency's most obedient servant,

C. H. DAVIS,

*Rear-Admiral commanding the Naval Forces of the United States
in the South Atlantic.*

HIS EXCELLENCY MARSHAL DON FRANCISCO SOLANO LOPEZ,
President of the Republic of Paraguay.

INDEX.

INDEX.

A.

- Abreu, Don Diego de, i. 60.
 Abreu, General Sonsa's agent, i. 157.
 Acuna, Juan J., ii. 36, 143; family persecuted by Lopez, 144; imprisonment, 145, 146.
 Aguiar, Colonel, ii. 193.
 Aguierre, Atanacio C., i. 518; ii. 17, 19.
 Alberquerque, capture of, ii. 10.
 Aldecoa, a messenger, i. 324.
 Aldiuno, Padre Juan, i. 124.
 Alegre, Baron Porte, i. 513.
 Alén, Colonel, ii. 76, 77, 208, 259; execution of, 565.
 Alexander, the Emperor, joins the alliance against Napoleon, i. 205.
 All Saints, Bay of, i. 70.
 Alonzo, Mariano Roque, i. 338.
 Alsina, Valentin, i. 500, 510.
 Alta Amazonas, i. 62.
 Alva, Duke of, i. 70.
 Alvear, General, i. 241, 242, 246.
 Amazonas, steamer, ii. 11.
 Amiens, Congress of, i. 36 (note).
 Angostura, i. 11; ii. 561, 571.
 Antiquera succeeds Balmaceda, i. 109, 110; his rebellion, trial, and execution, 110-113, 116.
 Apa, Rio, i. 44.
 Apipé, island of, i. 11, 141, 373.
 Aramburu, i. 290.
 Aranda, Count de, i. 121, 126, 127.
 Argentine Confederation, i. 255, 364, 381, 496; war with Buenos Aires, 497 *et seq.*, 509, 515, 525; its difficulties with Lopez, ii. 13; steamers of, taken by Lopez, 19; denies the request of Lopez to pass through the Misiones, 37; alliance with Brazil, 38; war declared against, 43.
 Arregui, Juan de, bishop of Buenos Aires, i. 115.
 Arroyo Mbutuy, ii. 80.
 Artigas, José de, the freebooter, i. 234; character and policy, 238-241; joins the governor of Montevideo, 241; treachery, 242; in conflict with Francia, 244-252; goes to Ibirai, 253; apotheosis, 253; posthumous honors, 256, 267, 300.
 Asboth, General, ii. 130, 183, 185.
 Acurra, Pass of, ii. 571.
 Assumption, i. 23, and see *Asuncion*.
 Assumpção, i. 23, and see *Asuncion*.
 Assumption, i. 23, and see *Asuncion*.
 Asuncion, its early settlement, i. 5, 11; advantages for a trading-post, 22, 23, 27; expeditions centre at, 28; its antiquity, 28, 34, 39, 43; colony removed to, 48, 51; De Vaca reaches, 51, 57, 60, 73, 87; Cardenas imprisoned at, 92; Jesuits expelled from, 93; Solano at, 95, 98, 110, 112, 114; Jesuits return to, 116, 135, 144; schools at, 161, 164; Robertsons arrive at, 165, 167, 175, 197, 206, 209, 269; college at, 279, 284; merchants of, 295; rebuilt by Francia, 302 *et seq.*, 323, 340, 365, 394, 424; congress at, 485, 530; description of, ii. 226; government at, 228; decision to defend it, 234; evacuation of, 236; sad condition of the besieged city, 239, 240; its desolation, 375; capture of, 574; condition at close of war, 597.
 Atajo River, i. 426.
 Atherton, William, i. 532, 537-539.
 Audience of Charcas, i. 91, 93, 94, 109, 116.
 Audience of Lima, i. 114.
 Audience of Peru, i. 112.
 Aveiro, Major, ii. 501, 585, 591.
 Ayolas, Juan de, kills Osorio, i. 16; foraging expedition under, 19; search for, 21-25; prolonged absence of, 27.
 Azara, the historian, cited, i. 28, 35; sketch of, 36 (note); quoted, 39, 40, 42, 45, 78; his estimate of the Jesuits quoted, 79-82, 100.

B.

- Bahia de Todos los Santos, i. 70; ii. 153.
 Baiz, Dr. José M., i. 176.
 Balcarca, i. 254.
 Balmaceda, Don Diego de los Reyes, appointed governor, i. 100.
 Banda Oriental, i. 234 (note), 239, 242, 254; revolution in, 491, 504, 513, 514, 519.
 Barboza, Amaro José dos Santos, ii. 6.
 Bareiro, Candido, ii. 131.
 Bareiro, José Luis de, i. 114.
 Barrios, General Vicente i. 319, 445; ii. 9, 52, 77, 90, 157, 187, 220; degraded, 389; arrested, 393; picture of, 393; torture of his wife, 394; execution of, 565.
 Barroso, Admiral, ii. 71-73.
 Barton, Dr., i. 476.
 Barua, Don Martin de, appointed governor, i. 113, 114.
 Bastiat, F., quoted, i. 79 (note), 132.
 Bastos, Dr. Taveres, i. 521.
 Battle between Mendoza and the Indians, i. 18, 19; of Paraguari, 149.
 Battle of Riachuelo, ii. 69-73; results of, 74.
 Bay of All Saints, first landing-place of Jesuits, i. 70.
 Beacon, steamer, ii. 559.
 Bedoya, Dr. Ventura, i. 182, 183.
 Bedoya, Saturnino, tortured to death, i. 320 (note); ii. 76, 257, 262, 285, 286.
 Belgrano, *Historia de*, cited, i. 141, 151, 497.
 Belgrano, Manuel, i. 140; expedition under, 142 *et seq.*; his duplicity, 144; his invasion of Para-

- guay and defeat, 144-151; his diplomacy, 153.
- Bella Vista, ii. 163.
- Benitez, Gumesindo, ii. 32, 77, 200; character, 230, 231, 260; his correspondence with Minister Washburn, 297 *et seq.*; his wife compelled to testify against him, 365, 508.
- Benitez, Valiente, ii. 379.
- Berges, Don José, commissioner, i. 384, 386, 418, 528, 550; ii. 5, 111, 151, 156, 179, 211; character, 229, 230, 273, 508.
- Bermejo, ii. 32, 33.
- Bermejo River, i. 95, 97; exploration of, 366.
- Berro, Bernardo P., i. 503, 517.
- Bishop, i. 66.
- Bismarck of Prussia, i. 119.
- Bliss, Henry, ii. 444.
- Bliss, Porter C., quoted, i. 96; ii. 90; his abilities, 96 (and note), 98; made member of the Legation, 236, 254; action against, by Lopez, 310; accused of conspiracy, 311; his narrative, 323; makes his will, 346; perils of, 367; accusations against, 413; perilous situation, 425; arrest of, 432; his forced letter to Minister Washburn, 444; letter to *New York World*, 444; his treatment by Lopez, 448-454; tortured, 455, 478; new plans for release, 490; situation of, 497; examination of, 499-505; his testimony, 516; his book cited, 519; his portrayal of Minister Washburn, 520 *et seq.*, 542, 543; release, 549; infamous treatment by Davis, etc., 550 *et seq.*; transferred to the Guerriere, 553; petitions Congress, 555.
- Bliss, Rev. Asher, ii. 445.
- Blyth, J. and A., i. 473, 540, 543.
- Bogado, Dean, ii. 395.
- Bogardin, i. 177.
- Bogarin, Lisardo, i. 322.
- Bohanes, the, i. 36.
- Bonaparte, Joseph, i. 137.
- Bonaparte, Napoleon, i. 52, 55, 137; imitated by Francia, 222.
- Bonpland, M. Aimé, i. 260 *et seq.*; encounters Francia, 261; capture, 262; sent away, 266, 267.
- Bougainville, cited, i. 79 (note).
- Bowen, George, prisoner, ii. 160.
- Bowlin, Hon. James B., commissioner to Paraguay, i. 379, 415.
- Brayer, Count de, French Consul, i. 411; his efforts for the French colonists, 412-414.
- Brazil in trouble with Lopez, i. 416; policy toward Paraguay, 512 *et seq.*, 518; dishonorable conduct of, 522; trouble with Lopez, 526; warlike preparations, ii. 12, 13, 15; lack of honor in its Emperor, 17; joins the alliance against Paraguay, 22-24; fleet sails up the Parana, 24; military inefficiency, 36; alliance with the Argentine Confederation, 38; battle of Riachuelo, 66-73; condition of the army, 187, 188; squadron passes Humaitá, 222 *et seq.*; attack and ignominious retreat by the gunboats, 241, 242; inefficiency, 253; inaction of, 400; success of, 561, 568; bad management of Caxias, 571; a new commander, 574; closing scenes of the war, 581 *et seq.*
- Brazilian Navigation Company, i. 536.
- Bristol, birthplace of Sebastian Cabot, i. 5.
- Brizuela, i. 407, 408.
- Brossard, the French Consul, i. 415.
- Bruguez, General, ii. 52, 157, 161, 187, 282; treatment by Lopez, 287, 391; put to death, 392.
- Bucareli, Francisco de Paula, i. 126, 129.
- Buchanan, President James, his policy in regard to the Rhode Island Company, i. 384, 423.
- Buckle's *Civilization*, referred to, i. 13.
- Buckley, R. C., i. 372.
- Buenos Aires, location of, i. 8; bad situation, 17; its different names, 17 (and note); abandoned by Mendoza, 20, 23, 25, 27, 37; abandonment of, 418; founded a second time, 67, 68, 111, 115, 116, 119, 127; Jesuits at, seized, 127, 128, 135, 136; dislikes the rule of Spain, 136; revolution in, 139; sends army to Paraguay, 140; cause of revolution in, 157; the Robertsons arrive at, 165, 175, 176, 178; its war with Spain, 186, 234, 241, 245; arrival at, of Bonpland, 260, 267; commerce of, 295, 348, 496; war with the Argentine Confederation, 497; policy respecting Paraguay and Uruguay, 509 *et seq.*, 517; treacherous neutrality of, 518; declines an alliance with Brazil, ii. 15; indignation at Lopez, 21; opposed to war, 39; arrival at, of Minister Washburn, 121; indignation at Lopez, 466.
- Burgos, Pedro, ii. 52; his daughter mistress of Lopez, 52.
- Burrell, Percy, i. 542; ii. 222, 576.
- Buzzard, gunboat, i. 398.

C.

- Caacupé, Virgin of, worship of the, i. 75.
- Caaguazu, i. 456, 461.
- Caapucu, i. 443.
- Caballero, military commander, i. 174, 175, 177, 178, 179; ii. 583.
- Cabañas, Manuel Alanaco, i. 153, 156, 280; his treatment by Francia, 323, 324.
- Cabildo, the, or municipal council, i. 137.
- Cabot, John, birth and marriage, i. 5; his contracts with Henry VII., 6; discoveries in North America, 6.
- Cabot, Sebastian, sketch of, i. Chapter I.; Paraguay discovered by, 5; enters service of the king of Spain, 6; efforts to reach Peru, 11-15; sends for reinforcements, 12; returns to Spain, 14, 42.
- Cabral, flag-officer, ii. 96, 266.
- Caceres, General Nicanor, i. 515.
- Caceres, Sinfiorano, ii. 20, 171, 392.
- Calagua Indians, ii. 587.
- Camarra, General, ii. 592.
- Caminos, Luis, ii. 204, 219; his letter to Minister Washburn, 407, 410; correspondence, 413 *et seq.*, 460; death of, 591.
- Campo Grande, ii. 177-179.
- Campos, i. 337.
- Campos, Carneiro de, ii. 70.
- Cañabé, the river, i. 11.
- Canavario, General David, i. 508, 515.
- Candelaria, expedition arrives at, i. 22, 42, 142, 151, 260, 263.
- Canstatt, James, i. 394 *et seq.*, 464, 532.
- Capdevila, Aureliano, ii. 150.
- Capdevila, Don Ramon, ii. 14, 150.
- Caracaás Indians, i. 37.
- Cardenas, Bernardino de, Bishop of Paraguay, i. 90 *et seq.*; imprisoned at Asuncion, 92; disgraced, 94, 98, 108.
- Carios Indians, i. 37.
- Carlyle's *Essay on Francia*, i. 166; quoted, 196, 211, 252 (note), 274, 278.
- Carranza, Major, ii. 19.
- Carreras, Antonio de los, i. 315, 502 (note), 517, 549, 550, 555; ii. 237, 238, 254, 275, 277, 281, 283; Lopez dislikes him, 284, 360, 361, 369, 442; dreadful condition of, 457, 458, 502.
- Carter, Thomas, ii. 244, 318, 494.

- Carvalho, Sebastian, attacks Jesuitism, i. 118 *et seq.*, see *Pombal*; policy against Jesuits, 119, 121, 158, 159.
- Casal, Anita and Conchita, ii. 100, 124, 222, 233, 245, 246, 490.
- Casal, Candida, ii. 233.
- Casal, Dolores, ii. 233, 245.
- Casal, José Mauricio, i. 443, 444; ii. 208, 491.
- Cass, Lewis, his policy with Lopez, 378 *et seq.*
- Castro, Don José de Antiquera, 378 *et seq.* See *Antiguera*.
- Cataldino, José, one of the first Jesuits in Paraguay, i. 69.
- Catalina, Saint, island of, i. 50.
- Catechism of San Alberto, ii. 56; extracts from, 56, 57 (note).
- Cavallero, Don Alexandro, i. 452, 462.
- Cavour, Count, i. 119.
- Caxias, Marquis de, ii. 88, 165, 187, 188; correspondence with, 197-199, 264, 289, 366, 361, 401; his dishonesty, 439, 462; fictitious correspondence, 514; bad management by, 571.
- Centeno, Diego, Irala superseded by, i. 60.
- Centinela*, newspaper, ii. 171.
- Cepeda, battle of, i. 497.
- Cepo uruguayana, torture of the, i. 510.
- Cerda, Gregorio de la, i. 186; his popularity, 187-189, 197.
- Cerrito, i. 263, 417, 427; ii. 90.
- Cerro Leon, i. 452, 512; encampment at, ii. 179.
- Céspedes. See *Faray*.
- Chaco Indians, i. 58, 96.
- Chapperon, Lorenzo, ii. 225, 320, 321, 429.
- Charcas, Audience of, i. 91, 93, 109.
- Charles I., i. 131.
- Charles II., i. 163.
- Charles III. of Spain, i. 119.
- Charles IV., i. 137, 144.
- Charles V., his desire for gold, i. 11; his contract with Mendoza, 15, 48, 55, 114, 121.
- Charles XII. of Sweden, i. 148.
- Charles, Leonard, ii. 494.
- Charlevoix, the Jesuit historian, i. 77, 78; estimate of his writings, 78, 98, 108.
- Charruas tribe, i. 35.
- Chaves, Captain Nuño de, leads an expedition, i. 61.
- Chiriguano, the, i. 37.
- Chili, i. 162*.
- Chiquitos, i. 127.
- Cisneros, the Viceroy, i. 137.
- Ciudad Real, i. 69, 73, 87.
- Civilization in Peru and Mexico, i. 13.
- Civita Vecchia, i. 119, 122.
- Clement XIII., i. 119, 125.
- Clement XIV., i. 125.
- Cochelet, M. Laurent, French Consul, i. 545, 546; his difficulties with Lopez, ii. 138 *et seq.*, 152; obnoxious to Lopez, 206; leaves Paraguay, 207, 225, 230, 361, 416.
- Coimbra, Fort, ii. 10.
- Coimbra, town of, i. 365.
- Collins Telegraph Co., ii. 29.
- Colonia, held by the Portuguese, i. 119.
- Communism, i. 79 (note).
- Company, United States and Paraguay Navigation, i. 357-372, 378-387.
- Concepcion, i. 177, 429.
- Concepcion del Uruguay, ii. 42.
- Confessional, Lopez uses the, ii. 254.
- Congress called at Asuncion, ii. 65 *et seq.*
- Congress of Amiens, i. 36 (note).
- Conspiracy, Guarani, i. 32.
- Conspiracy, the Yegros, i. 207 *et seq.*
- Constitution of Paraguay, i. 467.
- Convent of San Francisco, i. 292.
- Cordal, Carmelita, ii. 425, 490.
- Cordal, Fernando, ii. 168.
- Cordilleras, military expedition into the, i. 53.
- Cordova, University at, i. 127, 161, 162, 178, 214, 231, 279.
- Corocoro, ii. 281.
- Corpus Cristi, Fort, i. 20, 23, 25, 27.
- Correntinos, war with the, i. 352.
- Corrientes, the author's detention in, i. 46; miraculous cross at, i. 76; Cardenas at, 93, 110, 132, 234, 260, 349, 515; proposed invasion of, ii. 12; capture of, 20-22, 24, 26; campaign in, 88 *et seq.*; evacuation of, 90; Minister Washburn at, 116, 163.
- Corsica, Jesuits land at, i. 123.
- Cromwell, Oliver, i. 52, 163.
- Crosby, Captain Pierce, ii. 130, 131; the right man in the right place, 132-135.
- Cuberville, French Minister, ii. 207, 215, 225, 263, 296, 361.
- Curuguayti, ii. 582.
- Curuguati, Artigas sent to, i. 252.
- Curumba, i. 61.
- Curupaity, ii. 134, 135, 157, 210.
- Cuyabá, ii. 37.

D.

- Davis, Admiral C. H., ii. 368, 461; character of, 470; thwarts General Webb's plans, 473; insolent letter to General Webb, 474; treatment of McMahon contrasted with that of Minister Washburn, 477, 478; quarrels with General Webb, 479; apologizes for Lopez, 481; changes his tactics, 490; conveniently forgetful, 494; his delays, 497; arrives at Paraguay, 537; interview with Lopez, 539; his infamous treatment of Bliss and Masterman, 550 *et seq.*; probable reasons of his conduct, 553, 577; correspondence with Lopez, 609-614.
- Decidée, steamer, ii. 207.
- Declaration of Independence of Paraguay, i. 177.
- Decoud, Juan Francisco, i. 183.
- Decoud, the brothers, i. 402.
- Derqui, Dr. Santiago, i. 498.
- Diaz, General Cesar, i. 493, 501, 510; ii. 162.
- Doblas, Don Gonzalo de, i. 132.
- Dogtown, or Yaguaron, i. 161.
- Doria, William, Chargé d'Affaires, i. 401.
- Dorniac, i. 412.
- Duarte, ii. 80-82.
- Duffield, John A., ii. 244, 494; letter to Minister Washburn, 494-496.
- Dupin, Charles, his version of the conspiracy, i. 320 *et seq.*, 336.
- Duré, Ramon, i. 337.
- Duvall, Dr. Marius, his kindness, ii. 553; court-martialed by Davis, 554.

E.

- Echagüe, Don Pascual, i. 231 (note).
- Eco del Paraguay*, ii. 31.
- Ejusquiza, Don Felix, i. 402.
- Elizalde, ii. 117.
- El Paraguay, steamer, i. 359.
- Empedrado, ii. 101, 114.
- Encarnacion, i. 260; ii. 104, 189.
- England, attempt of, to aid her subjects in Paraguay, ii. 203 *et seq.*
- Entre Rios, i. 234; missions of, 244, 496; ii. 38.
- Escalada, Juan Pedro, a teacher, i. 317; instructs Lopez, 319, 325 (note), 388; ii. 46.
- Espinola, José, i. 135, 140.
- Espinosa, Don Salazar de, i. 20, 23; his servant reveals a conspiracy, 32, 55.

Espinosa, Lazaro Ribera, i. 135.
 Estagarribia, Francia's physician, i. 328.
 Estigarribia, General Antonio, ii. 80, 82, 84;
 capitulation, 87; treachery, 88, 89.
 Eu, Count d', in command of Brazilian army,
 ii. 574.

F.

Falcon, José, ii. 65, 451.
 Ferdinand VII., i. 137, 138, 140, 144.
 Fernandez, Francisco, Colonel, ii. 94, 200, 231,
 263, 280, 303, 317; his wife compelled to
 testify against him, 365, 376, 439.
 Fidanza, Simon, ii. 154; arrest of, 294, 542, 565.
 Fitzpatrick, Commissioner, i. 377.
 Flores, Venancio, i. 491; his treachery, 494,
 553; made Minister of War, 495; assumes the
 Presidency, 496; deposed, 496; his career,
 498-508, 510; his invasion, 513 *et seq.*, 527,
 547; ii. 22; fate of, 80; assassination, 279.
 Font, José, ii. 494.
 Fort Coimbra evacuated, ii. 34.
 Fort Itapiru, ii. 144; capture of, 145.
Four Years in Paraguay, J. P. and W. P.
 Robertson's, i. 164.
 Fourier cited, i. 100.
 Fox, Dr. John, ii. 142; arrest of, 143, 170; re-
 leased, 175, 285, 560.
 França, Garcia Rodriguez, i. 160.
 França, the elder, i. 280.
 France, joins Portugal against the Jesuits, i.
 119; attempt of, to aid her subjects in Para-
 guay, ii. 203 *et seq.*
 Francia, Don Juan José, i. 318.
 Francia family, the, i. 318.
 Francia, José Gaspar Rodriguez, birth and histo-
 ry, i. 160-164; education, etc., 167-172, 174;
 made a member of the Junta, 175-177; his
 treatment of Somellera, 178-181; his faithless-
 ness, 181 *et seq.*; withdrawal from the Junta,
 185, 186; creates disaffection, 188-190; plans
 of obtaining power, 197, 198; made asesor,
 197; calls a congress, 199, 200; chosen First
 Consul, 202; his mode of living, 203, 204; his
 character, habits, and government, 205-225;
 explains his policy to Robertson, 207-211;
 system of espionage, 212; prohibits Spaniards
 from marrying any but negroes or mulattoes,
 212; made Dictator, 215; personal habits,
 217-225; espionage, 226 *et seq.*; perpetual
 Dictator, 232; in difficulty with Artigas, 244-
 252; jealousy of Bonpland, 261; allows no
 vessels to leave Paraguay, 268; lack of histo-
 rical data concerning, 276; cruelty of, 277 *et*
seq.; hatred of his father, 280; his extortions
 from the rich, 280, 290; aversion to priests,
 292; the Yegros conspiracy, 297 *et seq.*; re-
 builds Asuncion, 302 *et seq.*; his defence
 against Rengger, 308-310 (note); his family,
 317 *et seq.*; his treatment of Cabañas, 324;
 his death, 326; superstition regarding him,
 329; his character, 330-333, 388.
 Francia, Pedro, i. 317.
 Francia, Petrona, i. 318.
Francia's Reign of Terror, cited, i. 164.
 Frazer, John, ii. 217.
 French colony to Paraguay, i. 408; injustice
 from Lopez, 409-412; leave Paraguay, 414.
 Fruits of Paraguay, i. 435, 436.

G.

Galan, Ruiz de, governor, i. 25; imprisoned by
 Irala, 25; his treachery, 26; returns to Asun-
 cion, 27.

Galvan, execution of, i. 301.
 Gamarra, General, i. 443.
 Garay, Don Miguel de, i. 114.
 Garmendia, Don Fulano, i. 290, 392.
 Garmendia, Francisca, i. 392.
 Garmendia, Pancha, i. 404; ii. 53, 393.
 Garro, Polycarpo, ii. 52.
 Gasca, La, i. 60.
 Gaspar, i. 176, 279.
 Gaua, ii. 20.
 Gelly, Juan Andres, ii. 31.
 Gelly y Obes, ii. 31, 117.
 Genoa, Jesuits at, i. 122.
 Germantown, U. S. ship of war, i. 375.
 Gill, Carmelita, ii. 169.
 Gill, Don Andres, i. 559; ii. 12, 36, 169, 266, 490.
 Giro, Juan Francisco, i. 492, 494-496.
 Godon, Acting Rear-Admiral S. W., narrative
 of his singular and reprehensible conduct, ii.
 114 *et seq.*; his influence on the Allies, 123;
 makes friends with the Brazilians, 127, 128;
 his course repudiated by the U. S. govern-
 ment, 128; his plans thwarted, 130-132; in-
 sulting conduct toward General Asboth, 197;
 unworthy of trust, 345, 368; conduct of, 469-
 472; censure of, 487, 489.
 Gomez, General Servando, i. 518.
 Gomez, Leandro, i. 508, 517, 548, 549; his char-
 acter, ii. 15; executed, 16; 232, 284.
 Gomez, the jailer, i. 285.
 Gonzales, Mariano, Minister of Interior, ii. 44,
 111.
 Goodfellow, Rev. W. T., ii. 443, 444.
 Gould, G. Z., ii. 203; arranges basis of peace,
 203, 204, 279, 559.
 Gowland, John F., ii. 275, 360, 369.
 Goya, ii. 99, 114.
 Goyez, Juan Bautista, clerk to Francia, i. 338.
 Gran Chaco, the, i. 45, 95, 96, 234, 366, 426, 445.
 Grappler, gunboat, i. 398.
 Graty, Du, cited, ii. 226.
 Great Britain, Francia's policy concerning, i.
 207-211.
 Great Falls, i. 73, 86.
 Guaicurus tribe, description of, i. 42, 45; treaty
 offered to, 52.
 Guarani Indians, i. 13; mild character, 23, 30;
 efforts to convert, 30; characteristics of, 32,
 35, 37, 38; intermarriage with Spaniards, 39;
 description of, 44, 46; as soldiers, 60; atti-
 tude toward Spaniards, 64.
 Guarani, Marquis of, i. 310 (note).
 Guardia, Francisco La, i. 214, 231.
 Guasarapos Indians, i. 37.
 Guatos, the, i. 44, 45.
 Guayrá, province of, i. 69; occupied by Jesuits,
 73, 81, 82, 84, 86; Jesuits expelled from, 89.
 Guayrá, Salto de, i. 73, 86.
 Guerreros, Francisco, i. 182.
 Guerriere sails for Montevideo, ii. 485.
 Guido, Don Eduardo, i. 382.
 Guzman, Alonzo Riquelme de, i. 61.
 Guzman, Ruy Diaz de, historian of Paraguay,
 i. 10; cited, 34, 61.

H.

Hale, Samuel B., ii. 496.
 Harrison, Captain, ii. 10.
 Henderson, C. A., consul, i. 394, 396.
 Henry VII., his contract with Cabot, i. 6.
 Herrera, Don Nicholas, diplomatic agent to
 Paraguay, i. 196, 197, 199; his reception in
 Paraguay, 199.
 Herrera, Juan J., i. 526, 527, 547.
 Herval, Baron, i. 513.

Hinistroza, Gregorio de, i. 91.
Historia Secreta, Bliss's, extracts from, i. 525-535.
 Holderberg, Baron, i. 242.
 Hopkins, Edward A., his arrival in Paraguay as U. S. agent, i. 353 *et seq.*; his plans, 355; returns to United States, 357; his company, and his business affairs with Lopez, 361-372.
 Humaitá, fortress of, i. 417, 428, 554; ii. 65, 121, 134; description of, 156, 180, 195, 233; its defence, 269.
 Hunter, ii. 377, 433.

I.

Ibai, the river, i. 85.
 Ibera, steamer, ii. 90.
 Ibirai, i. 176, 280.
 Ibitimi, i. 462.
 Ignacio, Admiral, ii. 162, 264.
 Igurey, steamer, ii. 136.
 Ila, Colonel, i. 513.
 Indians, character of, i. 9; Payagua tribe, 11; unjust dealings with, 18; Timbu, 19; Guaraní, 23; Querandí, 23; conciliated by Irala, 29.
 Indies, western passage to the, i. 8.
 Inquisition, the, i. 70.
 Institute of France intercedes for Bonpland, i. 263.
 Intermarriage, i. 46.
 Investigating Committee of Congress on Minister Washburn's case, quoted, ii. 123, 386, 387, 450, 469, 470, 476, 478, 485; censure of Godon, 487, 488, 516, 542-544, 546, 555, 557, 566, 580.
 Ipora, Lake, ii. 562.
 Ipora, steamer, ii. 189, 195.
 Irala, Domingo Martinez de, i. 21; ascends the Parana and Paraguay Rivers, 22, 24, 25; chosen governor, 27; his wise administration, 29, 42; his policy, 48 *et seq.*; his government, death, and character, 57-63; death, 65; what he accomplished, 103.
 Itapiru, Fort, ii. 19, 120; capture of, 121, 162, 196.
 Itapua, i. 260.
 Itu, village of, i. 317.
 Iturbe, Vicente, i. 178, 324.
 Izarié, M., French Consul, i. 440; ii. 144.

J.

Jara, Antonio, ii. 428.
 Jara, Don Luis, ii. 139; arrest of, 164, 428.
 Jarayes, Lake, i. 44.
 Jaray, Luis de Cespedes, i. 85; opposes Jesuits, 85; his crimes, 87, 88.
 Jeffers, Lieutenant, i. 373, 374.
 Jejuí, steamer, ii. 90.
 Jejuy, i. 429.
 Jequitinhonha, steamer, ii. 95, 98.
 Jesuits, the, their influence on the Paraguayan people, i. 64 *et seq.*; their operations, 63 *et seq.*; their first "reduction," 69; the policy of the Jesuits and that of Irala, 72, 73; their arrival not pleasing to the natives, 73; their deceit and treachery, 74; treatment of the natives, 77; estimate of their labors, 79-88; their expulsion from Guayrá, 87; distrusted by the government, 89; they appeal to the Pope, 89; expelled from Asuncion, 93; recalled, 94; new plans, 98; injustice of, 103, 104; trouble in prospect, 108; people weary of, 114; return to Asuncion, 116; exposed by

the Spaniards, 117; in Europe, 117; expelled from Portugal, etc., 122; charges against, 124; expulsion from Spain, 120-124; sent from Paraguay to Spain, 128; interfere with civil government, 134; expulsion from Paraguay, 159; establish schools at Asuncion, 161; influence of, in Paraguay, 173; influence on morals, 212, 213, 346 (note).
 Johnson, Hon. Cave, i. 385.
 Joseph, King, i. 140, 144.

K.

Kanzas, steamer, ii. 160.
 Kirkland, W. A., ii. 196, 197, 279, 283, 284, 289 *et seq.*, 409, 410, 419, 435; his interview with Lopez, 436, 441; his reticence concerning Lopez, 459, 461; commended in a letter by Minister Washburn, 480; apologizes for Lopez, 481; his interview with Lopez, 482; arrives at Paraguay, 538; his service to Lopez, 542; infamous treatment of Bliss and Masterman, 550.

L.

Laguna, Colonel, ii. 19.
 Lamas, Don Luis, elected President, i. 496.
 Lambaré, the hill, i. 429; ii. 226.
 Language, the, Guaraní, i. 31; Spanish taught in schools, 31; natives not taught European languages by the Jesuits, 105.
 Lapido, Dr. Octavio, i. 511, 528.
La Plata, the Argentine Confederation, and Paraguay, Page's, cited, i. 108, 130.
 Larreta, Francisco Rodriguez, i. 453, 528; ii. 17.
 Latitude of Paraguay, i. 5.
 Lavalleja, General, i. 495.
 Leal, Brazilian envoy, ii. 66.
 Leghorn, Jesuits at, i. 122.
 Leman, Gustavus, i. 309 (note).
 Leon, Sebastian de, i. 94.
 Lescam, Chief-Justice, arrested, i. 483, 487.
 Lettsom, W. G., i. 553; ii. 24.
 Lhuys, Drouyn de, ii. 107.
 Libertat, Chancellor, ii. 208, 408.
 Lima, Audience of, i. 114.
 Lima, Vienna de, Brazilian Minister, i. 529, 530, 532; ii. 3, 4; his reply to Berges, 6; his escape, 20; negotiations concerning, 21-25, 28, 29; his treatment condemned at Buenos Aires, 30.
 Limehouse, i. 540.
 Limpio, village of, i. 443, 452; ii. 208, 222.
 Lincoln, Abraham, i. 64, 423.
 Littson, William G., ii. 24.
 Lomas, Valentinus, ii. 57.
 Longchamp, i. 165, 174; allowed to leave Paraguay, 264, 267, 292, 308, 309, 317.
 Lopez, Adelina, ii. 202.
 Lopez, Basilio, made bishop, i. 353, 466.
 Lopez, Benigno, i. 388; ii. 179, 193; his character, 213; picture of, 214, 232, 254, 281, 285, 286, 503; execution of, 565.
 Lopez, Carlos Antonio, i. 319; his plans to succeed Francia, i. 337, 338; character and history, 338-341; assumes power, 350; made President, 351; his policy, 351; his friendship for Hopkins, 355; business matters between him and Hopkins, 361-372; fires upon the Water Witch, 374; his negotiations with the United States in regard to the Rhode Island colony, 377-387; his family, 388; makes common cause with Corrientes, 389; contest with Rosa, 389 *et seq.*; licentiousness of the family, 391, 392; his treatment of Can-

- statt, 394 *et seq.*; sends ambassador to Europe, 405; Madam Lynch, 407; treatment of French colonists, 408-414; suspicions of foreigners, 415; difficulties with Brazil, 417-419; refuses to reopen Rhode Island Company question, 424; character of Lopez, 463; takes possession of Church property, 465; difficulty with the Pope, 466, 467; death of, 474; character and administration, 477-482; funeral, 535; ii. 46, 109.
- Lopez, Cirilo, i. 339.
- Lopez, Doña Juana Carillo de, ii. 143, 200.
- Lopez, Doña Rafaela, i. 388; ii. 200, 209, 213, 254.
- Lopez, elder and younger, i. 281.
- Lopez, Francisco Solano, i. 319, 340, 381, 388, 389, 397; sent ambassador to Europe, 405; his course while there, 406 *et seq.*, 470; his visit to Europe, 471; desires a military glory, 472; accession to power, 475; prepares for war, 576; secures his own election, 484; negotiations with Mitre, 501; trouble with the Emperor of Brazil, 522 *et seq.*; his reception of foreign ministers, 530; his lack of good policy, 545; his warlike intentions, ii. 5, 8, 9; his ambition, 10-12; captures the Olinda, 12; his treatment of the officers, 13; interview and correspondence with the author, 17-22; change of manner toward the author, 4; his views as to policy of other nations, 13; captures Argentine steamers, 13; correspondence with Urquiza, 25, 26, 28; his official organ the *Semanario*, 29, 34; his treacherous policy, 39, 40 *et seq.*; calls a congress, 40; his reasons for war, 41, 42; birth, education, and character of, 46-56; his the confessional as a means of despotism, 54; arrests and tortures Maiz, 59-63; directs battle of Riachuelo, 66-74; distrusts Robles, and puts him to death, 75-77; his rage at defeat, 87, 88; builds a palace, 93, 95; court etiquette, 103-106; forced honors to, 95 *et seq.*; his reception of Minister Washburn, 105, 106; his disappointment at the non-interruption of intercourse between the United States and the Allies, 137; his troubles with the French Consul, 138, 139; cruelty to Englishmen, 142 *et seq.*; receives Mr. Washburn at Paso Pucu, 157; forced obsequiousness to, 161; levies taxes, 173, 174; consults Minister Washburn, 187, 188; his disappointment at inaction of foreign nations, 190; his vanity and assumption, 191-195; presentation to, 200; rejects basis of peace, 203, 205; causes of different opinions of, 205, 206; treatment of Manlove, 216-222; his desperate situation, 235 *et seq.*; makes new preparations for war, 249; retreats up the river, 253; presentation to, 257; cruelty to wife of Martinez, 270; his mother's anxieties, 281; numerous arrests by, 295; his malignity, 298; brings charges against Minister Washburn, 301 *et seq.*; false accusations of conspiracy, 313; his diabolical plans, 335; public reception, 339; his plans to ensnare Minister Washburn, 352; manufactures evidence, 355; plans thwarted, 369; his horrible cruelty, 382, 383; plan to entrap Minister Washburn, 384; hypocrisy, 394; the arrival of the Wasp prevents Lopez from arresting Minister Washburn, 417; forced to allow his prey to escape, 434; terrified by Kirkland, 436-438; letters written by compulsion of, 460; plans deranged by arrival of the Wasp, 465; pretends friendship for the United States, 482, 483; compels Bliss to write a book, 519; interview with Admiral Davis, 539; makes dupes of the navy officers, 340 *et seq.*; changes treatment of Bliss, 547; makes friends with McMahon, 557; new dangers of, 561; his defeat and cowardice, 568, 569; intrenches at Pass of Ascurra, 571; cruelties to the people, 574-576; defeat and incidents, 580 *et seq.*; suspects a new conspiracy, 584; tortures his mother and sisters, 585; last resorts, 590, 591; death of, 592; no apologists for, 600; correspondence with Davis, 609-614.
- Lopez, Gaspar, ii. 279.
- Lopez, Doña Inocencia, i. 388; ii. 111.
- Lopez, Venancio, i. 388, 389, 391, 444; ii. 211; character, 231, 263, 509.
- Loreto, the first Jesuit settlement, i. 70; abandoned, 74, 83, 85, 102.
- Louis XV. of France, i. 120.
- Loyola, Ignatius, and his followers, their influence on Paraguay, i. 64 *et seq.*; character of Loyola, 70.
- Luque, ii. 237, 279.
- Lushington, Admiral, i. 307.
- Lynch, Madam, mistress of Lopez, i. 407, 408, ii. 20; picture of, 52; her influence against Robles, 76, 77, 95; her services secured for Masterman, 151; her house at Paso Pucu, 157, 161, 171; her son Pancho Lopez, 182, 205, 206, 220; asks aid of Minister Washburn, 238, 259, 269; her duplicity, 285, 286, 327; removes her property from the Legation, 370, 380; aids Lopez in his cruelties, 385-388; her influence upon Lopez, 397; her fear of Lopez, 399; makes friends with McMahon, 557; friendship for McMahon, 570; flight of, 591; captured, 593; hatred toward, 595; her business shrewdness, 596.

M.

- Mably, cited, i. 79 (note).
- Maceta, Simon, one of the first Jesuit priests in Paraguay, i. 69.
- Machain, Juan José, i. 170, 171.
- Maciel, Andres, ii. 186.
- Macobies, i. 127.
- Macomb, Lieutenant W. H., i. 424.
- Madariaga, Governor, i. 390.
- Madruza, Manuel, i. 455, 461.
- Magellan's route, Cabot follows, i. 7.
- Maiz, Benigno, i. 480.
- Maiz, Padre Fidel, i. 477, 483, 487, 490; ii. 20, 58; his arrest and confession, 59-63.
- Mallada, Don Mariano, i. 180, 183.
- Mamelucos, the, i. 83, 84, 85; trouble with the Jesuits, 90.
- Mangolas Indians, i. 37.
- Manlove, James, i. 453; ii. 216; his career, 217 *et seq.*, 233; made member of American Legation, 236, 247, 248, 284, 494.
- Mansilla, Colonel, ii. 218.
- Maranham, i. 360.
- Marco, Commander, ii. 565.
- Marcy, W. L., Secretary, i. 372; interferes in behalf of the Rhode Island Company, i. 377-387.
- Maria de Fé, i. 102.
- Maria, Don José de, i. 176, 178.
- Mamelukes, the, i. 37.
- Marquesas Islands, i. 47.
- Marquez, Colonel Coriolano, i. 513; ii. 19, 173, 337.
- Marriage, questions of, i. Chapter II.
- Martinez, ii. 259; accused of treachery, 268; torture of his wife, 270; she is compelled to testify against her husband, 365; execution of, Madam Martinez, 566.

- Martinez, Francia's secretary, i. 281.
- Masterman, George F., ii. 142, 143; his book quoted, 146; a prisoner, 175, 210, 236, 254; action against by Lopez, 310; accused of conspiracy, 311; perils of, 367; critical situation, 425; arrest of, 432; his letter to Minister Washburn, 445; his experiences related by himself, 448-454; forced confessions and accusations, 454-455; tortured, 448-455, 478; new plans for release, 490; situation of, 497; his account of his treatment, 507-509; cited, 518; compelled to affirm charges against Minister Washburn, 543; release, 549; infamous treatment by Davis, 550 *et seq.*; transferred to the Guerriere, 553.
- Matórras, school at, i. 180.
- Matto Grosso, i. 62, 364, 416, 419, 425, 536; ii. 10; expedition against, 37.
- Mauricio, ii. 154.
- Mbayas Indians, i. 37; description of, 40-42.
- McCabe, M. B., cited, i. 236 (note).
- McMahon, Martin T., succeeds Minister Washburn, ii. 476-478; becomes an apologist for Lopez, 481; sails for Montevideo, 485; sketch of, 494; arrives at Paraguay, 538; infamous conduct of, 551 *et seq.*; interview with Lopez, 557; assumes charge of the illegitimate children of Madam Lynch, 559; his *War in Paraguay* cited, 562; incidents in his career, 565-567; his negotiations with Lopez, 569, 570; friendship for Lopez and Madam Lynch, 570; his devotion to Lopez, 576, 577; recalled, 577, 578; is derided by the people of Buenos Aires, 579; at Washington defends Lopez, 580.
- Medina, General, i. 502, 508, 517.
- Meincke, secretary, ii. 216, 310.
- Melgarejo, Ruy Diaz de, i. 69, 70, 73, 87.
- Melville, Herman, i. 47.
- Mendez, banishment of, i. 282, 283.
- Mendoza, Antonio de, in command at Corpus Cristi, i. 26.
- Mendoza, Don Diego de, i. 18.
- Mendoza, Don Gonzalo de, his search for Ayolas, i. 21; succeeds Irala, 63; death of, 64.
- Mendoza, Don Pedro de, expedition under, i. 15 *et seq.*; unpopularity, 16; dealings with the Indians, 18; abandons Buenos Aires, 20; death of, 20.
- Mendoza, Francisco de, appointed acting governor, i. 59, 60.
- Mesa, Admiral, ii. 66, 69-71.
- Mexico, civilization in, i. 13; despoiled by Spain, 50.
- Milleres, execution of, i. 284 (note).
- Minuanes, the, i. 37.
- Miracles, i. 26, 75, 76; by Solano, 97.
- Miranda, José del Rosario, i. 318.
- Misiones, province of, i. 136, 141; the Jesuits at, ii. 37, 38.
- Mitre, President, his history cited, i. 141, 142 *et seq.*, 497 *et seq.*; will not be involved in war, ii. 15; lack of honor, 17; urged to make war on Lopez, 21, 22, 26, 38; suspected by Lopez, 49, 85; his conduct toward Minister Washburn, 116 *et seq.*; his subterfuges, 127, 129; prepares to attack Lopez, 167, 273; accused by Lopez of conspiracy, 396.
- Molas, Don Mariano, cited, i. 245.
- Molina, Padre Luis de, i. 124.
- Molucca Islands, Cabot sails for, i. 7.
- Mongilo, Colonel, ii. 584.
- Monserrat, college of, i. 178.
- Montoya, Father, i. 78 (note); represents the Jesuits at the Court of Spain, 89.
- Monterroso, Friar, i. 243.
- Montesquieu cited, i. 79 (note).
- Montevideo, i. 110, 111, 184, 234, 240, 256, 282, 365, 382, 394, 492, 494, 496, 516, 519, 522, 536; siege of, ii. 17; fall of, 19, 25.
- Montiel, the brothers, i. 321.
- Mora, Don Fernando, i. 177, 197; execution of, 301.
- Moreno, General Lucas, i. 508, 517.

N.

- Nalicuégos Indians, i. 37.
- Neembucú, port of, i. 268, 269, 428.
- Negron, Diego Marin, supersedes Saavedra, i. 69; death of, 70.
- Nemours, Duke de, ii. 574.
- Nery, Felipe, i. 519.
- Nette, General Felipe, i. 513, 518, 520, 527; fate of, ii. 26.
- New Bordeaux, i. 429.
- Nuavas Indians, i. 37.
- Nufez, Alvar. See *Vaca*.

O.

- Obelar, Cristoval Dominguez de, i. 116.
- Ocole Indians, i. 97.
- Octaviano, Señor, ii. 121 *et seq.*
- Olinda, Marques de, steamer, i. 419; seizure of, 557 *et seq.*; treatment of her passengers, ii. 3, 6.
- Olimpo, Fort, i. 22, 24, 42, 61.
- Olimpo, steamer, ii. 179.
- Omoo Islands, i. 47.
- Ontéveros, town of, i. 69, 73, 87.
- Oribe, General, i. 492, 505, 506, 519.
- Oriental government calls Gomez into service, ii. 3.
- Oriental Republic of Uruguay, i. 496, 511.
- Orrego, the inspector, i. 228, 229.
- Ortellido, Don Bernardo, i. 316; intercourse with the author, 316; ii. 150.
- Ortiz, Manuel Antonio, i. 336.
- Osorio, Don Juan de, military commander under Mendoza, i. 16.
- Osorio, General, i. 513; ii. 22, 119; his plans for the campaign, 189.
- Owen, cited, i. 100.

P.

- Paddison, George, i. 439; ii. 145.
- Page, Thomas J., his book cited, i. 108, 130; commissioned to negotiate a treaty, 364; his experiences with Lopez, 365-374.
- Paisandu, capture of, ii. 15, 16.
- Palacios, Manuel Antonio, Bishop, ii. 52, 55, 59.
- Palos, Fray José, Bishop of Paraguay, i. 111.
- Paraguari, battle of, i. 149; town of, 453, 454; steamer, ii. 90, 98.
- Paraguayan nation, how composed, i. 39.
- Paraguayan Independiente*, the newspaper, i. 351; cited, ii. 30.
- Paraguay, vague ideas of, i. 1-4; situation, 5; various expeditions to, Chapters I.-IV.; general prosperity of, 57; Spanish ideas of the country, 57; the inhabitants as affected by the colonists, 58, 59; types of civilization, 58; how affected by Irala's failure, 61, 62; introduction of Jesuits and their influence, 64 *et seq.*; secondary to Buenos Aires, 68; treatment of natives by Irala and others, 72-74; Jesuit missions in, 83-88; domestic life in, 104; natives oppressed by Jesuits, 89.

- et seq.*; Balmaceda appointed governor, 109; people weary of Jesuits, 114; in rebellion, 116; Jesuits expelled from, 128 *et seq.*; Velasco made governor, 136; invaded by Belgrano, 140 *et seq.*; victorious, 150; revolution in, 156 *et seq.*; its independence, 159; influence of Jesuits in, 173; its declaration of independence, 177; conspiracies in, 180, 181; condition of the people, 196; general ignorance, 206; condition under Francia, 226 *et seq.*; non-intercourse with the world, 244; population, 247; general isolation under Francia, 267-269; industrial labors, 270; character of people, 272; a reign of terror, 285 *et seq.*; commerce of, 295; condition of, after death of Francia, 334, 335; release of prisoners, 342; education, 343; the new government, 344; law for extinction of slavery, 348; Lopez made President, 357; origin and history of the American Company, 357; in difficulty with the United States, 377-387; independence acknowledged, 405; revenue, 420-422; general description of the country, 425 *et seq.*; Constitution of, 467; military rule under Lopez, 474; policy of Brazil and Buenos Aires towards, 509; difficulties with Brazil, 529; forced support of war, ii. 28 *et seq.*; military efficiency, 36; declares war against the Argentine Republic, 67; religious sentiment of, 54; fleet sails for Asuncion, 64; the battle of Riachuelo, 66-73; return from the campaign, 91; people of, compelled to honor Lopez, 95 *et seq.*; impressment of people into service, 167; heavy taxation of, 173, 174; condition of, 199, 200; critical condition of, 233, 234; painful uncertainties and prospects, 261, 262; the bogus conspiracy, 321 *et seq.*; kindness of the people, 458, 459; commercial interests of, 475; in a bad military situation, 562; closing scenes of the war, 581 *et seq.*; condition of, at death of Lopez, 595; hatred of Madam Lynch, 595; probable future of the country, 606.
- Paraguay River, the, i. 37, 268; description of, 425.
- Paranahyba, steamer, ii. 95.
- Parana River, the, i. 8; ascended by Cabot, 9, 11; Jesuit settlement on, 70, 73, 81, 86, 88; union of the Bermejo with, 95, 136; recrossed by the army of Belgrano, 156, 233, 242, 260, 268; exploration of, 373, 426; Brazilian fleet on, ii. 48.
- Paranhos, Counsellor José Maria de Silva, i. 418, 495; ii. 13, 37, 39, 45, 62; returns to Rio, 21.
- Parish, Sir Woodbine, i. 264, 265.
- Parodi, Don Domingo, i. 451; ii. 212, 275.
- Parsons, Captain, ii. 559.
- Paso de la Patria, ii. 57, 88, 91, 117, 120, 162.
- Paso Pucu, ii. 50, 51, 136, 180, 195, 258.
- Patiño, Policarpo, Francia's secretary, i. 324, 336.
- Paulistas, the, i. 83, 85.
- Paunero, General, ii. 24, 81.
- Pavon, battle of, i. 498.
- Payagua Indians, i. 11, 22; difficulties with, 25, 42, 43.
- Payaguas, Rio de los, i. 43.
- Paysandu, i. 548.
- Pedro II., Emperor, i. 523, 526.
- Pendleton, Ensign, ii. 133-136.
- Penn, William, his treatment of the Indians, i. 32.
- Peonage, i. 432.
- Percy, Captain, i. 249.
- Pereira, Gabriel Antonio, i. 500, 501, 503.
- Pereira, Leite, ii. 225, 279; seeks protection of Minister Washburn, 296; difficulties concerning, 298 *et seq.*; arrested, 304; agony of his wife, 346, 428, 509; execution of, 565.
- Perez, Manuel Antonio, preaches Francia's funeral sermon, i. 328.
- Peribebui, steamer, ii. 66.
- Peru, Audience of, i. 112.
- Peru, ideas entertained of, i. Chapter I.; its gradual subjugation, 13; despoiled by Spain, 50; reached by Irala, 60.
- Pesoa, mistress of Lopez, ii. 52.
- Phillimore, Dr. Robert, i. 400.
- Philip II. and the Inquisition, i. 71, 121.
- Philip III. issues letters-patent to the Order of Jesus, i. 69.
- Philip of Pokanoket, i. 43.
- Pikysvry, battle of, ii. 498; description of, 561-566.
- Pilar, ii. 181.
- Pilcomayo, exploration of the, i. 366.
- Piratory, Republic of, i. 513.
- Pirayu, battle at, i. 115.
- Pirébeui, ii. 567; capture of, 582.
- Piriz, General Lucas, ii. 15, 16.
- Pizarro, Gonzalo, i. 60.
- Plata, Rio de la, the river, ascended by Cabot, i. 5, 7; description of, 8; second expedition to, 15, 28, 34, 37, 40; arrival of De Vaca at, 50, 246.
- Plaza del Gobierno, ii. 132.
- Pokanoket, Philip of, i. 43.
- Pombal, Carvalho, Marquis of, i. 118; his policy against the Jesuits, 119, 121. See *Carvalho*.
- Pompador, Madame de, i. 120.
- Porrero, Obella, ii. 181.
- Porter, Admiral, sustains Godon, ii. 488.
- Portehos, name given to the people of Buenos Aires, i. 136; in battle, 149, 156, 197, 234, 243.
- Portugal, Jesuits expelled from, i. 122.
- Portuguese explorers, i. 37; in Brazil, 82, 83; relations with Jesuits, 118 *et seq.*; antipathies of Portuguese and Spaniards, 255.
- Prat, Anna, i. 412.
- Priests, immorality of the, i. 170.
- Pulaski, the gunboat, i. 424.

Q.

- Quatrefaghts, Surgeon, i. 407.
- Queirolo, Señor, i. 455.
- Querandi Indians, i. 23, 35, 139.
- Quintera, General, i. 242.
- Quintanilla, i. 462.
- Quinteros, execution of prisoners at, i. 502, 510.

R.

- Railroad projected, i. 473.
- Raleigh, Sir Walter, his discoveries, i. 14.
- Ramirez, i. 251, 263; his defeat of Artigas, i. 267, 300; ii. 19.
- Ramsey, Francis M., ii. 471; character of, 472, 477, 488; his service to Lopez, 542; infamous conduct of, 551 *et seq.*, 577.
- Ranger, steamer, ii. 10.
- Raynal cited, i. 79 (note).
- Rebellion, United States, war of the, i. 136.
- Recalde, Don Francisco, i. 179, 290.
- Recoleta, town of, i. 338, 340; ii. 226.
- Rengger, cited, i. 161, 162, 165, 166, 174; quoted, 181, 184, 221, 243, 245, 262; allowed to leave Paraguay, 264, 267, 274, 284, 292; Francia's defence against, 308-310 (note), 317.
- Republicanism in South America, i. 256 *et seq.*

- Resquin, General, i. 453, 461; ii. 157, 161, 591; protests that he was an unwilling tool of Lopez, 601; his Diary, 53, 76, 150 (note), 186, 392; capture of, 569, 581.
- Rhind, Dr. James, ii. 142; arrest of, 143, 146; released, 151.
- Rhode Island Company, i. 359-425.
- Rhode Island Legislature charters the United States and Paraguay Navigation Company, i. 359.
- Riachuelo, the river, i. 19; battle of, ii. 69-73; result of, 74.
- Ribera, General, i. 495.
- Ricci, Father, i. 122, 123.
- Rincon de los Gallinos, i. 507.
- Rio Apa, the, i. 44; ii. 430.
- Rio Blanco, steamer, i. 407, 473, 541.
- Rio de Janeiro, i. 83; court of, attempts to release Bonpland, 263, 519; correspondence with Montevideo, ii. 1, 8, 152.
- Rio de la Plata, the river. See *Plata*.
- Rio de los Payaguas, i. 43.
- Rio Grande, i. 255; campaign in, ii. 104.
- Rivarola, Lieutenant, i. 179, 320.
- Rivero, Major, i. 585.
- Robertson, J. P. and W. P., cited, i. 162, 164-166, 174, 184; quoted, 186-188, 190-195, 198, 203, 204, 205-211; Francia opens his policy to, 207-211, 215, 221; description of Orrego, 228, 229, 231, 232, 245, 246; taken prisoner, 247, 268 (note), 274, 282, 284 (note), 292; description of the Yegros conspiracy, 298 *et seq.*; quoted, 303-307, 317; account of conspiracy, 322, 325 (note).
- Robles, General Wenceslao, i. 488, 567; ii. 24, 59; suspected of treachery, 75; executed, 77; character, 78, 89.
- Roca, Tristan, ii. 171, 202.
- Rodriguez, ii. 238, 254; character, 277, 284; his troubles and good conduct, 305 *et seq.*; arrested, 300, 414.
- Rodriguez, Domingo, i. 170, 171.
- Rojas, Logan, i. 340, 388.
- Rojas, Manuel, i. 485.
- Roman priest, ii. 453.
- Romero, ii. 88.
- Ros, Don Baltasar Garcia de, i. 110, 111.
- Rosa, Octaviano d'Almeida, ii. 22.
- Rosario, town of, i. 380, 499; ii. 117.
- Rosas, the tyrant of Buenos Aires, i. 245, 349; war with the Correntinos, 352, 389, 492, 506, 519.
- Rosecrans, General W. S., ii. 493.
- Rousseau, Jean Jacques, i. 79 (note).
- Ruiloba, Don Manuel de, i. 115.
- Russell, Earl, i. 546.
- S.
- Saá, Victoria Correa de, i. 85.
- Saavedra, Hernando Arias de, i. 169; efforts to convert the natives, 69, 137.
- Sagastume, José Vasquez, i. 528, 556; ii. 17.
- Saguier, Adolfo, i. 530.
- Saguier, Carlos and Fernando, i. 533, 535, 536; their escape, 537; Don Carlos, ii. 139.
- Saldanha, Colonel, i. 513.
- Salinares, ii. 333.
- Salter, W. D., Commodore, i. 374; his reprehensible conduct, 374, 375.
- Salto, capture of, ii. 39, 98.
- Salto, Oriental, ii. 60.
- Sanabria, Matias, ii. 232, 247, 321; arrest of, 376.
- San Antonio, i. 428, 429.
- San Blas, patron saint of Paraguay, i. 27.
- San Borja, ii. 104.
- Sanchez, ii. 111, 228; character, 229, 567; death of, 591.
- San Espiritu, visited by Cabot, i. 10; Fort, ii, 12.
- San Estanislao, colony of, i. 82.
- San Fernando, ii. 280; abandoned by Lopez, 408.
- San Francisco, convent of, i. 292.
- San Ignacio, i. 102, 112.
- San Ildefonso, treaty of, i. 36 (note).
- San Joaquin, ii. 32.
- San Luis, i. 128.
- San Martin, i. 254.
- San Miguel, i. 129.
- San Paulo, i. 83, 85.
- San Pedro, i. 429.
- San Plabo, i. 37.
- San Salvador, i. 287.
- Santa Cruz, Gongalez de, Governor, i. 70.
- Santa Fe, i. 23, 231 (note), 242, 497.
- Santa Maria, i. 262, 263.
- Saraiva, José Antonio, i. 521, 526, 527, 547, 548, 550.
- Saraiva, Señor, i. 15.
- Sarmiento, i. 254.
- Savannah, U. S. ship of war, i. 375.
- Semanario*, the, ii. 30, quoted 53 (note); its character, 55, 56.
- Seward, W. H., Secretary, sustains Minister Washburn, ii. 149, 272; directs that Minister Washburn be relieved, 461.
- Shamokin, steamer, i. 130; conveys Minister Washburn to Asuncion, 132-135.
- Shubrick, Commodore, i. 380.
- Silva, Captain, ii. 171.
- Silvero, Victor, ii. 20.
- Skinner, Dr., ii. 422, 559, 585.
- Slavery, i. 37, 72, 73, 85, 86; law for extinction of, 348.
- Social questions, i. 30.
- Solano, Francisco, first American saint, i. 95; sketch of, 95 *et seq.*; performs miracles, 97.
- Solis, José, ii. 379.
- Solis, Juan Diaz de, his voyages, i. 8, 35.
- Solis, Rio de, the, i. 8.
- Somellera, Don Pedro, i. 136, 157-159; author of the revolution, 159, 161, 174-176; quoted, 178-184, 245, 324.
- Somerella, Benigno, i. 179.
- Soroeta, Ignacio, Governor, i. 113.
- Sousa, General, i. 157.
- Spain, Vol. I. *passim*; Jesuits in, i. 120; expelled from, 122, 123, 126; war with Buenos Aires, 186.
- Spanish adventures, early, i. 6.
- Spanish intercourse with natives, i. 30; rule in Paraguay, 103; better than represented by the Jesuits, 103; they attempt to expose the Jesuits, 117, 241; antipathies of Spaniards and Portuguese, 255.
- Squillaci, i. 120; his influence over Charles III. of Spain, 120; dismissed, 121.
- Stark, William, i. 453.
- Stewart, Dr. William, i. 476, 566, 567; ii. 136, 158, 163, 181, 187, 220, 285; his revelations, 384; testimony of, 386, 387, 399, 422, 448, 460, 557; his wife a prisoner, 569, 585.
- Stewart, George D., ii. 460.
- Stewart, William, ii. 461.
- St. Robert, M. Chevalier, cited, i. 236 (note).
- St. Stephen's, i. 209.
- Suarez, Goyo, ii. 16.
- Swann, Thomas, his report, ii. 555.
- T.
- Taboada, Padre, i. 183.
- Tacuari, the river, i. 150, 151, 158; battle of, 323; war steamer, 398, 473; ii. 65.

Tamandaré, Baron de, his circular, i. 553; ii. 22, 82, 117, 119; his connection with the annoyances of Minister Washburn, 122 *et seq.*, 155; treatment of, by Emperor of Brazil, 162.

Taruma, i. 81.

Tayi, ii. 181, 242.

Taylor, Alonzo, ii. 118, 498; his description of the torture of the cepo uruguayana, 510, 511, 512, 566.

Tea, Paraguayan, or yerba maté, i. 260.

Tebicuari, the river, i. 110, 115, 129; Belgrano's army crosses, 146, 428; head-quarters of Lopez, ii. 258.

Telegraph Company, the Collins, ii. 29.

Temperature of Paraguay, i. 457.

Tevego, or San Salvador, i. 287.

Thompson, George, his history cited, ii. 25-28, 79; his description of Humaitá, 156, 158, 161, 181, 182, 205, 282, 283, 287, 389, 448, 560, 562, 571.

Thornton, Sir Edward, i. 397, 401, 530; his reception by Lopez, 531-533, 538-540; his opinion of Lopez, 546; ii. 8.

Timbu Indians, i. 19; Spanish treachery towards, 25, 26, 37.

Tobacco, manufacture of, i. 160.

Toledo, i. 66.

Tome, Antonio, ii. 280.

Torre, Pedro de la, appointed bishop, i. 66; his policy, 72.

Treaties, various, with Paraguay, i. 405.

Treaty of San Ildefonso, i. 36 (note).

Treaty, Lieutenant Page commissioned to negotiate, i. 364; between United States and Paraguay, 371; between Brazil and Paraguay, 419.

Tres Bocas, i. 416, 426; ii. 134.

Treuenfeld, ii. 390, 498, 566.

Trinidad, ii. 226.

Triple Alliance, the, i. 491; formed, ii. 22-24; absurd features of, 199, 257, 594.

Troya, Don Nicolas, i. 452, 453.

Tucaques Indians, i. 37.

Tucuman, bishop of, ii. 80; colony of, i. 68; province of, ii. 167.

Tupis Indians, i. 37.

Turin, i. 530.

Tuyuti, Marques, ii. 183.

Typee, i. 47.

U.

Ulrich, Carlos, ii. 236.

United States and Paraguay Navigation Company, history of, i. 357 *et seq.*, 362-372; wars in, 495-505.

United States government, its instructions to Godon, Webb, and Asboth, ii. 130 *et seq.*; mediation of, 185; rejected, 195; renewed attempts, 197; its policy toward South American republics, 475.

Urbietta, Juan Gregorio, appointed bishop, i. 467; ii. 55; death, 56, 257.

Urdapilleta, Captain Pascual, i. 312 *et seq.*

Urdapilleta, Andres, i. 312 *et seq.*

Urdapilleta, José Vicente, i. 312 *et seq.*, 453; made Chief-Justice, 315.

Urdapilleta, Vicente, ii. 210, 414.

Urdapilleta family, the, i. 312-317.

Urquiza, General J. J., i. 381, 396, 496, 498; ii. 42; his vacillating course, 18-20, 25; fate of, 26 (note); his intrigues, 38.

Uruguay, missions, i. 119; republic of, 234, 254, 260; Oriental Republic of, 436; policy of Buenos Aires towards, 509, 527; difficulties with Brazil, ii. 5.

Uruguay River, the, i. 8, 9, 81, 87, 136, 515.

Uruguayana, ii. 80.

V.

Vaca, Cabeza de, expedition of, i. 48-56; his character, 49; journey through the wilderness, 51; imprisoned, 54; sent to Spain, 55.

Valiente, Captain, ii. 77.

Valpy, Henry, engineer, i. 542, 543; ii. 158, 181, 222, 273, 576.

Varela, Don Florencio, i. 486, 487; 505.

Vargas, Valta, i. 297.

Vasconcellos, Antonio, ii. 279.

Vasquez, Nicholas, i. 384, 485, 487.

Velasco, Benito, i. 136, 156; resigns, 158, 174, 175; a prisoner, 179, 184, 192, 197, 280, 317; his character, 324, 325; death, 325 (note).

Velasco, Don Bernardo, appointed governor, i. 136, 139, 140; his career, 141 *et seq.*

Velazco, Ramirez de, governor of Tucuman, i. 68.

Vergara, Francisco Ortiz de, i. 61; governor, 64.

Vermejo River, i. 428.

Vianna de Lima, his note, i. 550, 552, 559.

Viceroy of Peru appoints Santa Cruz governor, i. 70; appoints Balmaiceda governor, 109.

Vidal, Dr., i. 313.

Villa del Pilar, i. 268, 428.

Villa del Salto, i. 548, 552; gunboat, ii. 2; attempt to capture, 6, 178.

Villa Franca, i. 428.

Villalba, Don Thomas, ii. 41.

Villa Occidental, i. 429.

Villa Oliva, i. 428.

Villa Rica, i. 69, 73, 74, 87, 455.

Villeta, i. 428; ii. 561.

Volney, i. 280.

Voltaire, i. 280.

Von Versen, ii. 498, 566.

W.

Walloon Guards, the, of Spain, i. 120.

Ward, Samuel, secretary to James B. Bowlin, i. 379, 385.

Washburn, C. A., appointed resident commissioner at Paraguay, i. 424; reception by Lopez, 425; personal experiences and adventures, 439 *et seq.*; a visit to the yerbales, 451; protests against seizure of steamer Olinda, etc., 562 *et seq.*; correspondence with Brazilian Minister, 568; interview with Berges, ii. 16; with Lopez, 4, 5; leave of absence, 8; interview with Caxias, 88; personal observations on court customs of Lopez, 104 *et seq.*; reception by Lopez, 105, 106; his efforts with Lopez for justice to foreigners, 113 *et seq.*; sails for the United States, 114; obstacles and diplomatic annoyances in return to Asuncion, 115 *et seq.*; difficulties with Mitre and Admiral Godon, 122 *et seq.*; his protest, 125; renews his demands on Mitre, 126; is master of the situation, 130; welcome at Curupaiti, 136; reaches Asuncion, 162; welcome at, 138, 141; secures the release of imprisoned Englishmen, 151; negotiations for Masterman, 151; visits Lopez, 156; labors for release of American prisoners, 160; personal incidents, 179 *et seq.*; visits Lopez, 179; visits the camp of the Allies, 183; interviews with Lopez, 187 *et seq.*; extracts from journal, 188-195; receives despatches from United States, 196; attempts mediation, 197-199; daily life at Asuncion, 200-216; refuses to leave the city, 223; inter-

- view with Berges, 233; increases numbers of the American Legation, 236; notifies the authorities of this act, 237; Madam Lynch seeks his aid, 238; routine of life at the Legation, 253; extracts from journal, 261, 262; displeases Lopez by his protection of foreigners, 272; asks to be recalled, 273; precautionary measures, 277, 278; preparations for leaving, 280; correspondence with Kirkland, 289; inmates of his house, 293; difficulties, 297; correspondence with Benitez, 297 *et seq.*; charged with various crimes by Lopez, 301; under displeasure of Lopez, 309, 310; asks for his passports, 311; gains time by diplomacy, 313; visited by Chapperon, 320; concealment of manuscript, 323; visited by Madam Lynch, 327; dangers increase, 333; visited by Benitez, 341; false charges against, 355; refutes them, 357; perils of, 367; a third time demands passports, 373; defends Bliss and Masterman, 374; in personal danger, 384; direct issue with Lopez, 404; correspondence with Caminos, 413 *et seq.*; preparations for leaving in the Wasp, 422; the escape, 434; attempts to rescue Bliss and Masterman, 441; receives letters from, 444; letter to Lopez, 446, 447; final departure, 458; publishes the course of Lopez, 459; embarrassments, 460, 461; reaches Buenos Aires, 466; comments on the United States naval service, 467, 468; difficulties with Admiral Davis, 479, 480; iniquities in the navy, 483, 490; forced charges against, 500-507; fictitious correspondence with Caxias, 514; portrayed by Bliss, 520.
- Washington, George, i. 64.
- Wasp, gunboat, arrives at Itapiru, ii. 196, 280, 289 *et seq.*; returns, 368, 409, 417; the situation of, 419, 434, 461; recital of her voyages, 461 *et seq.*; returns to Corrientes, 552.
- Water Witch, steamer, i. 364; ii. 19; its vicissitudes, 365-372; fired upon, 374-376, 557.
- Watts, John, ii. 65, 150, 247.
- Webb, General James Watson, ii. 130, 131, 185; letters from, 440; his efficiency, 462; his activity and patriotism, 463, 464; promptness to vindicate rights of Americans, 472; difficulties with Admiral Davis, 473; his testimony, 476, 478; his opinions, 478, 553; his valuable services, 560.
- Wells, Captain Clark H., ii. 136; testimony of, 469-471.
- Welles, Gideon, Secretary, approves of Admiral Godon, ii. 487, 488, 489, 490.
- Whytehead, W. K., superintendent, i. 439.
- Wisner, Colonel, ii. 95, 159, 187, 220, 287.
- World, New York*, Bliss's letter to, ii. 444.
- Y.
- Yaguaron, i. 91, 161, 279.
- Yatai, ii. 80; battle of, 86.
- Yegros, Fulgencio, i. 151, 156, 159; made President, 177, 201, 280.
- Yegros, José Tomas, i. 178; chosen second consul, 202; his duties, 205; deposed, 214; dissatisfaction of people at, 216; conspiracy of, 297 *et seq.*, 319, 464.
- Yerba maté, or Paraguayan tea, i. 260; description of, 433; culture of, 450, 457-461.
- Yequibel, Doña Juana, her grand entertainment, i. 191-195.
- Ytapua, entertainment at, i. 192.
- Yturbide, execution of, i. 301.
- Z.
- Zavala, Bruno Mauricio de, Governor of Buenos Aires, i. 110-113, 116.
- Zavala, Doña Petrona, i. 170.
- Zavala, Juan B., i. 182.

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