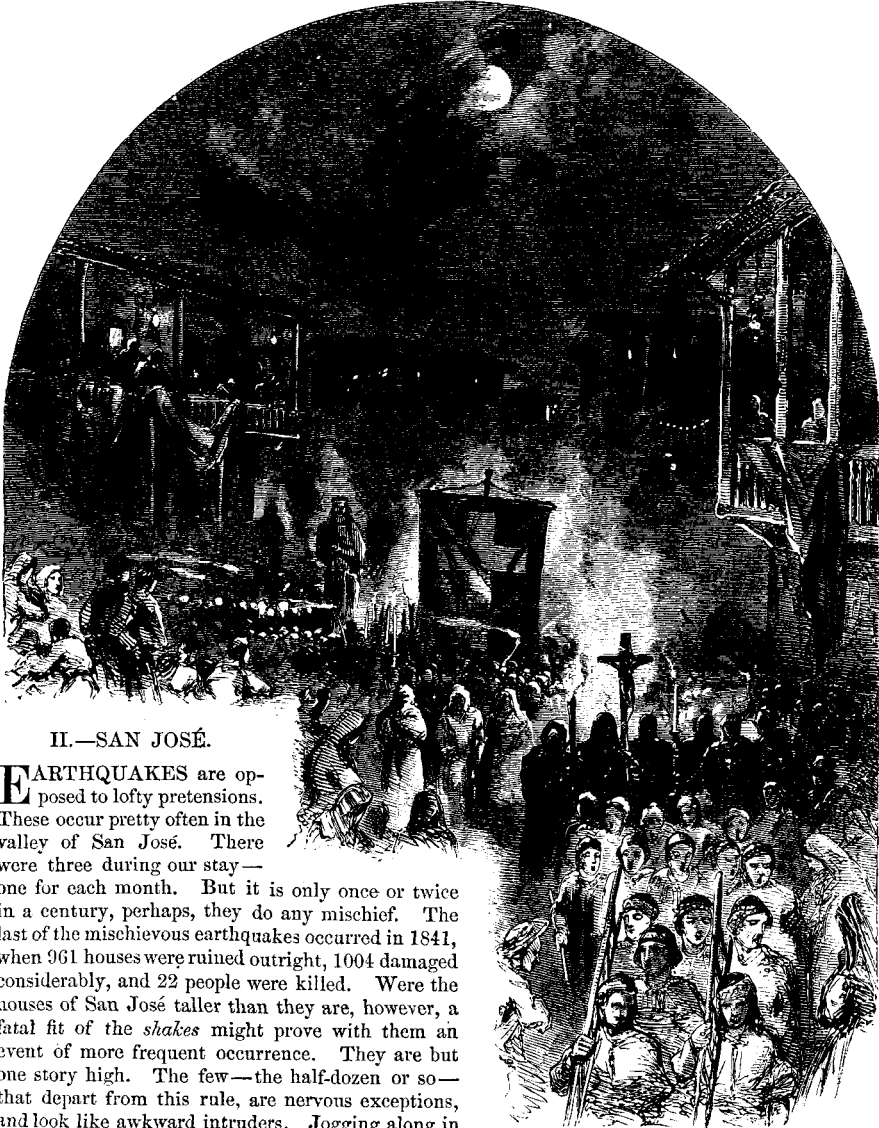


HARPER'S NEW MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

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HOLIDAYS IN COSTA RICA.

BY THOMAS FRANCIS MEAGHER.



II.—SAN JOSÉ.

EARTHQUAKES are opposed to lofty pretensions. These occur pretty often in the valley of San José. There were three during our stay—one for each month. But it is only once or twice in a century, perhaps, they do any mischief. The last of the mischievous earthquakes occurred in 1841, when 961 houses were ruined outright, 1004 damaged considerably, and 22 people were killed. Were the houses of San José taller than they are, however, a fatal fit of the *shakes* might prove with them an event of more frequent occurrence. They are but one story high. The few—the half-dozen or so—that depart from this rule, are nervous exceptions, and look like awkward intruders. Jogging along in our high-peaked saddles to the *Hotel de Costa Rica*,

THE EASTER PROCESSION.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1859, by Harper and Brothers, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.

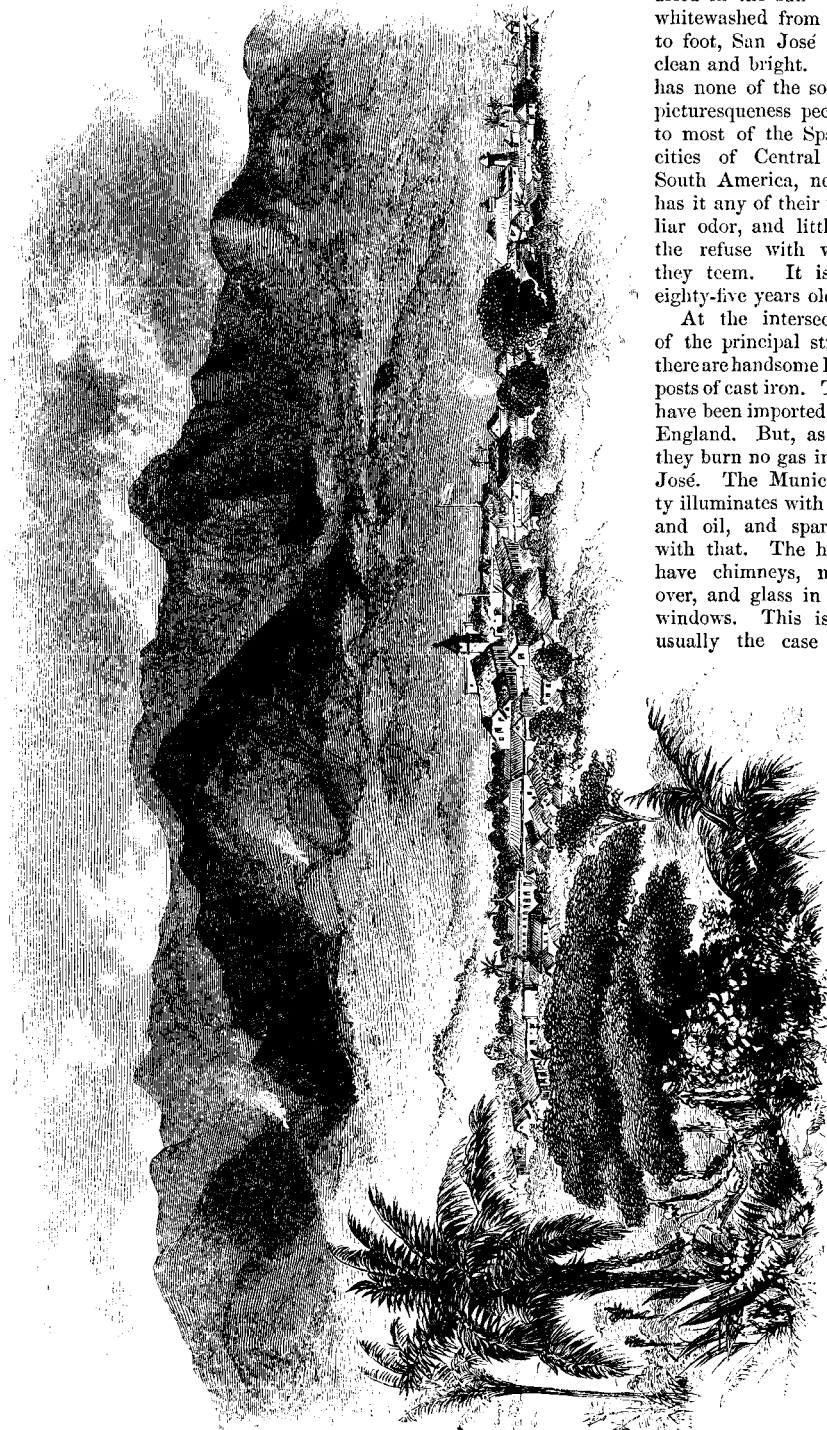
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the evening of our arrival, we felt ourselves looking over the roofs, the houses are so prudently low. It was a Lilliputian city, it seemed

to us, and we, the Gullivers in red flannel-shirts, riding it down.

For the most part built of *adobe*—the brick dried in the sun—and, whitewashed from head to foot, San José looks clean and bright. If it has none of the sombre picturesqueness peculiar to most of the Spanish cities of Central and South America, neither has it any of their peculiar odor, and little of the refuse with which they teem. It is but eighty-five years old.

At the intersections of the principal streets, there are handsome lamp-posts of cast iron. These have been imported from England. But, as yet, they burn no gas in San José. The Municipality illuminates with wick and oil, and sparingly with that. The houses have chimneys, moreover, and glass in their windows. This is not usually the case with



SAN JOSÉ.

Spanish-American houses. The reason is obvious. No one wants a fire in the Dog-days—no one shuts himself up in a Conservatory when he wants a mouthful of air. But San José stands 4000 feet above the sea, and from the mountains of San Miguel and the volcano of Irazu, between which it lies, there comes many a cold wind even in the brightness of the summer.

The Municipal Council of San José consists of three Chief-magistrates, and two Syndic *procuradores*. These officers are elected annually by the property-holders of the city, and are presided over by the Governor of the Province. They employ a Secretary and a Door-keeper, and hold their meetings once a month. Should circumstances require it, an extraordinary session may be called at any moment. The duties of the Council consist in the framing of all necessary local regulations, the designation of the citizens liable to serve in the Militia, the collection and disbursement of the Municipal taxes, the assessment of the expenses of each *canton* or district within the Province, the superintendence of the rudimentary Public schools, the agricultural interests, trade and manufactures. The Council is, also, empowered to negotiate loans, on the credit of the Municipal revenues, for the promotion of Public works. These revenues are derived from various sources—partly from the Tobacco and other Custom-house duties—principally from the license-tax imposed upon shopkeepers and traders generally.

The Police are picturesque. A little after sunset, they are mustered in the Plaza and told off for duty. With a carbine slung across the shoulder, a short brass-hilted sword and cartouche-box, a torn straw-hat, and an old blanket, full of holes, as a uniform, they patrol the silent city until daybreak, calling the hours, whistling the *alert* every half-hour, and, as their dreary vigils terminate, offering up the *oracion del sereno*—*Ave Maria Purissima*!—in the most dismal recitative.

They are faithful creatures, however, those ragged Policemen of San José. They are dutiful, vigilant and brave, though a stranger now and then may come across one of them snoring on the steps of a door-way, as we did occasionally in our surveys of the city by moonlight. The first time this occurred to us, the poor fellow was bundled up under the heel of an enormous boot, the original of which stands eight feet high in Chatham Street. The copy, at the corner of the *Calle de la Puebla* in San José,



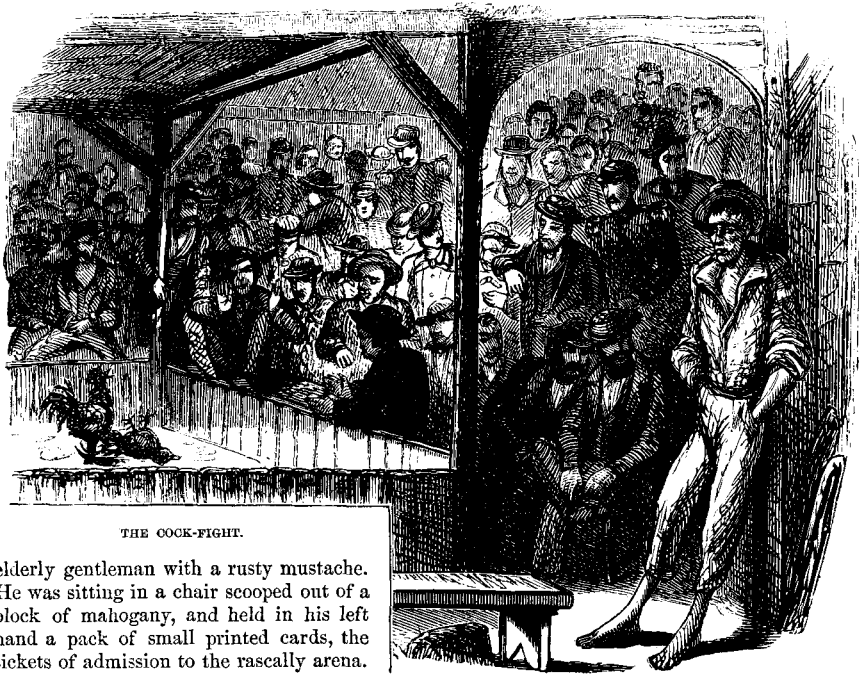
THE BOOTMAKER'S.

was furnished by an accomplished Filibuster to Mons. Eugénie, the French boot-maker, whose portentous sign it is. The artist was a prisoner of war. But even so, in captivity and defeat he proclaimed his principles. He stuck a spur with an immense rowel into the heel of the gigantic boot, and gave three cheers for General Walker and the Lone Star!

But there is no need of the Police—none whatever. Costa Rica is the most temperate and peaceful of countries, and San José is the most temperate and peaceful of cities. One might be provoked into saying it was stupidly well-behaved and insipidly sensible. The *chiffonnier* would have little to do there. The lawyer from the vicinity of the Tombs would fare no better. The entire rascality of the exemplary place is not worth an affidavit. Cock-fighting is the only dissipation the people indulge in, and that on Feasts of Obligation and Sundays exclusively.

Being one of the Institutions of the country, it would have never done for Don Ramon and Don Francisco to have overlooked or shunned the Cock-pit. Martyrs to the love of knowledge, they visited it with the purest motives, urged by a curiosity as disinterested as that which might have tempted a perfect stranger—an Ancient Briton for instance—to drop into the Roman amphitheatre in the days of the Thracian prize-fights.

Passing a rude door-way, they came upon an



THE COCK-FIGHT.

elderly gentleman with a rusty mustache. He was sitting in a chair scooped out of a block of mahogany, and held in his left hand a pack of small printed cards, the tickets of admission to the rascally arena. Having paid him two *rials*, he drew aside a torn pink calico curtain, and with a gracious *entren ustedes Señores*, bowed, stroked his mustache, and resumed his collection of *rials*. A second after, the Martyrs found themselves in a windy wooden building, which seemed to them, for all the world, like a cow-shed that had been converted into something resembling a circus.

It was Whitsunday. The place was crowded. All classes of Society were represented there. The merchant and the peddler—Colonels with blazing epaulets and half-naked privates—doctors, lawyers, Government clerks, fathers of families, genteel gentlemen with ample waistcoats and gray heads, youths of eighteen and less—the latter peppered with the spiciest pertness, and boiling all over with a maddening avidity for *pesos* and *cuartas*.

The benches of the theatre rise one above another, forming a square, within which, on the moist clay floor, inclosed by a slight wooden barrier eighteen inches high, is the fatal ring. In a nook, to the right of the pink calico curtain, stands a small table, upon which the knives, the twine for fastening them, the stone and oil for sharpening them, the fine-toothed saw for cutting the *gaffs*, and all the other exquisite odds and ends, devised for the deadly equipment of the gladiators, are laid out. The knives used in this butchery, are sharp as lancets and curved like cimeters. While the lists are being arranged, and the armorers are busy lacing on the gyves and weapons of the combatants, and many an ounce of precious metal is risked on their chances of life and death, the gladiators pertinaciously keep crowing with all their might, and in the

glossiest feather saucily strut about the ring as far as their hempen garters will permit them.

Don Ramon and his friend remarked, the moment they entered, that the betting was high and brisk. Gold pieces changed hands with a dazzling rapidity. The Costa Ricans are proverbial for their economy and caution. Outside the Cock-pit they never spend a *médio*—not so much as half a dime—if they can help it. Inside this charmed circle, they are the most prodigal of spendthrifts. One sallow lad particularly struck them. He had neither shoes nor stockings—not so much as a scrap of raw ox-hide to the sole of his foot. But had every pimple on his face been a ruby—and his face was a nursery of pimples—he could not have been more bold and lavish with his purse. It came, however, to a crisis with him. Stretching across Don Ramon to take the bet of another infatuated sportsman in broad-cloth and embroidered linen, he staked a fistful of gold on a red cock of the most seductive points and perfectly irresistible spunk. It was all he had in the world. There was a fluttering of cropped wings, a shaking of scarlet crests, a cross-fire of murderous glances, a sudden spring, a bitter tussle, fuss and feathers, a pool of blood, and the fistful of gold—all that the sallow-skinned pimple-faced prodigal had in the world—was gone!

A ruthless, senseless, ignoble game, it is fast going out of fashion. There was a time, and that not more than five or six years ago, when the President and the whole of his Cabinet were to be seen in the Cock-pit. But it is seldom, if ever, that a distinguished politician, much less a

statesman, even on the eve of an election, is discovered there now. Neither the mind, nor the manhood, nor the heart of the people will suffer when it has been utterly abolished.

The morning after our arrival, we called on the Bishop of San José. His residence is an humble one. Two workmen, tip-toe on ladders, were repairing the plaster over the door-way just as we reached it. Stepping across a perfect morass of mortar, we entered the *zaguan*. An aged gentleman softly approached us before we had time to call the *Portero* and send in our cards.

Tall, thin, sharp-featured, with a yellowish brown skin and long spare fingers, his eye was keen, his step firm, his voice distinct and full. He wore a pectoral gold cross and purple silk cassock. The latter had a waterish look. The purple had been diluted into pink. A velvet cap of the same weak color in great measure concealed his hair, which was short, and flat, and seemed as though it had been dashed with damp white pepper. It was the venerable Anselmo Lorenté, the Bishop of San José.

A door stood open on the left of the *zaguan*. The Bishop pointed to it. He did so with a

sweet smile and graciousness. Bowing to him respectfully, we passed into a dull saloon.

The walls were covered with a winterish paper, and would have been woefully bare were it not for three paintings which hung from the slim cornice opposite the windows looking into the street. One of these paintings—a likeness of Pius the Ninth—was really a treasure. A superb *souvenir* of Rome, it had all the softness, the calmness, the exquisite minuteness of finish which characterize the works of Carlo Dolce. The likeness of Anselmo Lorenté looked raw and miserable beside it. The third painting represented the ascension of a devout Prelate in full pontificals from the grave. For so glaring an outrage on canvas, it would have been a just chastisement had the Painter gone down while the Prelate went up.

Between the two windows facing these paintings, there stood a table of dark mahogany. It was covered with faded red moreen, books, pieces of sealing-wax, quills and papers. An arm-chair stood behind the table. Behind the arm-chair there stood a screen, and from this a canopy projected. Arm-chair, screen and canopy, every



STREET VIEW IN SAN JOSÉ.

thing was covered with faded red moreen. There was neither carpeting nor matting on the floor. The boards, however, were warmly coated with dust, the accumulation of months of domestic repose.

Having read the letters we had handed him on entering, the Bishop rose from the sofa—a sad piece of furniture it was—and cordially welcomed us to San José. The cordiality of the welcome was tempered with dignity. It was the subdued cordiality of age.

Just then there was a tap at the door. The Bishop was called out for a moment. During his absence, a monk of the Reformed Order of St. Francis entered the room. He was from Quito. Heavily clothed in a drab gown and cloak, drab hood and trowsers, all cut out of a wool and cotton mixture manufactured in the Andes of Ecuador, with his cropped head, a face the color of pale butter, and a pair of dark-blue spectacles—behind which his large black eyes rolled incessantly—he was, in truth, a strange apparition. The Archbishop of Ecuador being dead, and the Archbishop of Panama being absent from that city on a visitation of his diocese, the pious brother of St. Francis had journeyed to Costa Rica to be ordained.

The Bishop, resuming his seat on the sofa, presented his case of *cigarettes*—it was a dainty little case made of colored straw—and invited us to smoke. The holy hobgoblin from Quito taking the *mecha* from the table, where it lay coiled up in the inkstand, succeeded, after a number of failures, in striking a light. Whereupon he knelt and extended the *mecha* to the Bishop. The Bishop having lit his *cigarette*, the good monk kissed the episcopal ring, and rising with a profound obeisance, solemnly extinguished the fire. Shortly after, having silently glared at us through his purple spectacles, he bent the knee again, kissed the episcopal ring once more, and with head cast down, tucking his drab gown about him, retreated with a confused modesty from the room.

In the midst of fragrant clouds, Señor Lorenté pleasantly conversed with us. He spoke about the country, its drawbacks, its resources and its prospects, and in a few bright sentences, enunciated with considerable animation, gave us the principal points of its political history.

It was a deep source of regret to him that the churches of San José contained little to interest the stranger. They had no works of art, no paintings, no sculpture, and very few ornaments. The few they possessed were of the humblest description. The Spaniards had concentrated in Guatemala the entire wealth of the Central American church, and, up to this, Costa Rica had been too poor to enrich her altars. In Cartago, however, there were some old and valuable paintings, two or three fine images, shrines, reliquaries, and vestments of costly material and curious workmanship. From the churches, Señor Lorenté passed to the Indians of the country. His statements and surmises relative to the Guatusos of the valley of Frio—a race living absolutely se-

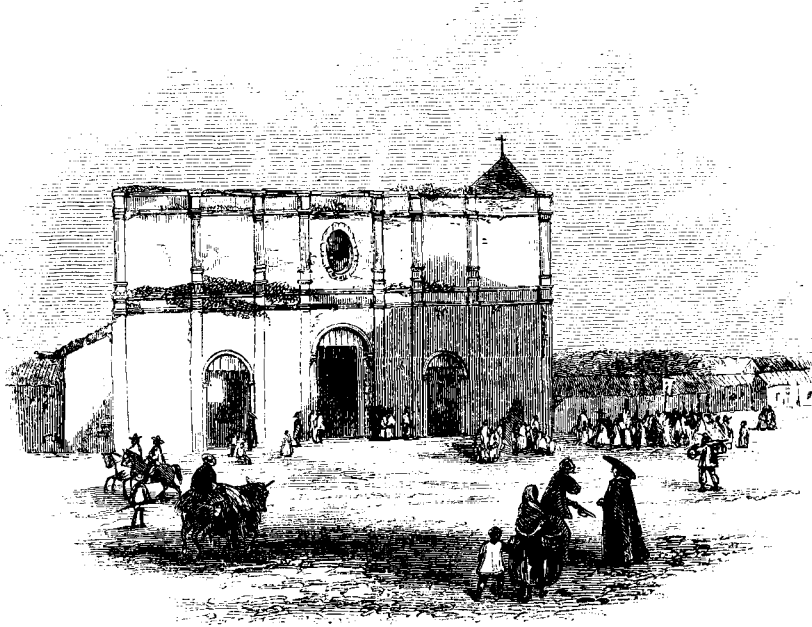
cluded and permitting no stranger whatever to set foot within their mysterious domain—were deeply interesting. Every syllable he let fall upon this subject was eagerly caught up.

In the end, he referred us to the History of Guatemala by the Archbishop, Francisco de Paula García Pelaez. There was a learned and profound chapter in it devoted to the Guatusos. We should read it. He would give us a copy of the work. It would be a pledge to us of his regard, and of his anxiety to aid us in our laudable researches. He was delighted to find we had been educated by the Jesuits. They were the nobility, the flower, the chivalry of the Church. Her bravest soldiers, they had been her sublimest martyrs. Wherever they were, there was civilization, erudition, eloquence, a disciplined society, an elevated faith, and the loftiest example of magnanimity. It would be well for Costa Rica were they established in the country. But there was an ignorant prejudice against them, and his efforts to obtain admission and a recognized standing for them in the Republic, had proved unavailing so far.

As we rose to take leave, the Bishop opened the door leading into the *zaguan*, and calling to a young student who was reading in the piazza of the court-yard, desired him to take the History of Guatemala from the library, and accompany us with it to the Hotel. We begged him not to trouble the young student. We could easily take the books ourselves. But the gracious good Bishop would have his own way. His consideration for us was relentless. And so, we returned to our quarters, followed by the History of Guatemala, in three volumes, and a modest youth in a clerical cloak, and a brown felt hat of the California pattern.

Anselmo Lorenté is the first Bishop of Costa Rica, the country not having been erected into a separate Diocese until August, 1850. Previous to that, it was subordinate to the Bishopric of Nicaragua. Astaburuaga speaks of Señor Lorenté as a zealous, prudent, illustrious man, who does honor to the Church. The Roman Catholic religion is declared by law to be the religion of the country. The Constitution guarantees it the protection of the Government, at the same time it tolerates every other persuasion. By the *Concordat* ratified with the Court of Rome, October, 1852, tithes were done away with, an allowance to the Diocese of \$10,000 per annum being substituted out of the National Treasury.

But it was with no affected modesty the Bishop spoke to us of the impoverished condition of the churches of San José. For Spanish-American churches, they are strikingly destitute of ornaments and treasures. The blank exterior, to say the least of it, is an honest index to the bleak interior. That of San Juan de Dios, however, of which Mr. Francis Kurtze, an enterprising and accomplished German, is the architect, will be a grand exception. The walls are high and massive. The decorations are chaste and solid. Corinthian pillars support the roof inside. Gardens.



THE CATHEDRAL.

stocked with fragrant shrubs and fruit trees and tastefully laid out, inclose the graceful and imposing edifice.

The Cathedral of San José stands on the east side of the Plaza. It is built of lava-stone. Three lofty door-ways—twisted pilasters flanking them and intervening, a series of plain pilasters springing from a moulding above the door-ways and supporting the plainest architrave—these are the only noticeable features of the *façade*. The elevation of the tower is little more than thirty feet. A wooden structure—something like a block-house—stands upon these thirty feet of masonry, and from a beam, close under its pointed roof, there pendulates a monstrous bell.

N.B.—There is little music in that monstrous bell.

The same, however, may be said of all the bells, profane and sacred, in San José. At times—when they ring out all together—the tumult is provocative of something the reverse of prayer. A city swarming with tinkers, and the tinkers hard at work, would be quite as melodious, and just as endurable, as the unaccustomed ear finds San José to be at such times. But it is harsh to say so. Were the people of San José wealthy enough to have them, there would resound this day, throughout the valley of the Río Torres and the Río María Aguilar, bells as sonorous as the silver *Susanne* of Erfurt, or mighty in their tones as those which, thundering forth suddenly, saved the Roman-walled city of the Yonne from the ravages of Clothair.

The interior of the Cathedral has a striking and fine appearance. Out of the simplest ma-

terials—having neither gold nor porphyry, nor Byzantine pavements, nor stained glass to help them—the people of San José have built a temple not unworthy of the Faith of which it is the attestation. Branching off into arches, graceful shafts of the hardest wood which the forests of Costa Rica yield—wood such as that of the *quiebrahacha*, which signifies the *axe-breaker*—support the roof, dividing the building into three broad aisles, the main aisle, or, to speak more properly, the nave, being 35 feet in breadth and 300 feet in length. The walls are white. These lofty shafts of *quiebrahacha* have white veins running through them. But the arches in which they terminate, as well as the steep-slanting roof inside, are painted in *arabesque*, and this gives to the whole interior a rich and curious aspect. Handsome chandeliers descend from the roof by chains of burnished metal. Supported on pillars painted in imitation of Sienna marble, stretching across the nave, the organ-gallery rises above the High-altar, a few feet behind it. A screen of lattice-work conceals the organist and choir. It is delicately constructed and painted white. The organ, also, is painted white. But it has silver pipes in front, and carvings richly gilt. The choir for the Dean and Chapter occupies the eastern extremity of the nave, the stalls, fashioned of the costliest mahogany by Guatemalian workmen, being on a level with the platform on which the High-altar stands.

Besides the Cathedral, there are two other churches in San José. There is the church of Our Lady of Mercy, and there is the church of Our Lady of Carmel. They are the Penitents of Architecture. No structures could possibly

look more modest, sorrowfully chaste, and humble. Walls of *adobe*, roofs of rough red tiles, floors of hardened clay, all cracked and gritty, belfries which seem to be but the skeletons of belfries—nothing could be poorer. In Holy Week, however, they wear a bright appearance. All their poverty and coldness—all their simplicity and inane sadness—all their silent miseries seem to vanish. They are warm, fragrant, florid. The nakedness of the walls disappears under folds of lace, and silks, and foliage. Palm-trees supplant, as it were, the sterile trunks which support the roofs. A pyramid appears where the High-altar stood, and over the crimson cloth, with which this pyramid from base to topmost point is draped, net-work and needle-work of elaborate contrivance and mellowed hue is thrown. The *armoires* of San José fly open to the claims of the *Mercedes* and *Car-men* at such times as these. The steps of the pyramid sparkle with a thousand wax-lights burning in silver candlesticks, in translucent globes of clouded glass, in plated branches, in cups of brass and alabaster. Between the lights are flowers, shrubs, herbs and flowers—herbs, shrubs and flowers, such as a soil like that of Costa Rica alone can yield. Nature in her affluence here more than compensates for the poverty of the people, and with overflowing horns assists them in their pious observances, becoming to them a beautiful and lavish Hand-Maid, as she was who poured the ointment of spike-nard on the Divine head in the house at Bethany.

In the church of the *Mercedes* there was a representation of the Garden of Gethsemane. A space, eight feet square, on the left of the nave close to the porch, was marked off with branches of palm bent and woven into fences. The flowers of the palm fell in expanding showers, or, fountain-like, displayed their chaste splendors in widening and descending circles within the Garden. Palm-leaves lay thick upon the ground, interspersed with the berries, the leaves, and blossoms of the brightest evergreens. All over this were strewn the sweetest flowers—flowers of the richest tint—flowers of the rarest form—the *lobelia* with its crimson and orange petals, the pink lily, and the canary-colored *phimelia*—vases and bowls of china filled with earth in which young shoots of rice had root—porcelain dishes in which were ripening grains of corn and aromatic herbs—oranges, wild grapes from the valley of Ujarras, the alligator pear, pine-apples, *granadillas* and sweet lemons. In the midst of all these offerings—in the midst of all this bounteousness and beauty, and all this wealth and sweetness of the earth—against a broken tree there knelt an image of the Christ of Gethsemane, overspread with a purple robe, blood oozing from the forehead, and the pale features stamped with an expression of anguish, which none, the most idle or irreverent, could witness without emotion. Inside the porch of the little church and outside, soldiers stood on guard with arms reversed. All day long, the

National Flag at half-mast overhung the Palace of the Government, the *Cuartel del Artilleria*, and the Barracks in the Plaza. The shops, the billiard-rooms, the *cafés*, the public offices, all were closed. No one was within. Every one was out. Out in the best attire. Out at sunrise—the livelong day—the livelong night. The livelong night visiting the churches, going through the devotion of the Stations, carrying lanterns, and humming their *Paters* and *Aves* through the streets. The next day—Good Friday—there was the same monotonous rolling of the drums, the drums being muffled as on the day preceding—the same display of drooping flags—the same passing to and fro of veiled faces, and graceful heads enveloped in silken shawls—the same harsh creaking of wooden rattles instead of bells—the same profusion of lights, and flowers, and fruits throughout the churches—the same pervading buzz of piety—the same solemn Holiday in all respects as Holy Thursday was, but quieter, perhaps, and somewhat more impressive from the great Sacrifice it recalled, and the mournfulness which in the hush of all profane business, the reversed arms of the soldiers, the deserted aspect of the houses, and the deepening shadows of San Miguel and Irazu seemed specially to mark the day.

When evening came, the procession which commemorates the interment of Christ, moved slowly and darkly from the great door-way of the Cathedral, and, descending into the Plaza, entered and passed through the adjoining streets. The *aceras* or side-walks of these streets were planted with wild canes, round which the leaves of the palm and wreaths of flowers were woven, the carriage-way being strewn with the *sempreviva*, the finer branches of the *urucu*, and the wondrous and beautiful *manitas* of the *guarumo*. Curtains of white muslin, festooned with crape or ribbons of black silk and satin, overhung the balconies of the houses along the line of the procession, and at the intersection of the streets were *catapultes* covered with black embroidered cloth, strewn with flowers, laden with fruit, and luminous with colored lamps and cups of silver. The pioneers of the procession were Brothers of Charity—*Los Hermanos de la Caridad*—clothed in long white woolen garments, shapeless and loose as bed-gowns, with white or checkered cotton handkerchiefs, tied with a pig-tail knot, about their heads. These Brothers carried the various insignia of the Crucifixion. The two first balanced a pair of green ladders upon their shoulders. One bore a crown of thorns on a breakfast tray, another a sponge in a stained napkin, the third an iron hammer and three nails. Then came a swarm of boys with extinguished candles. After them, three young men in ecclesiastical costume appeared, the one in the middle bearing a tall slender silver crucifix—the crucifix being shrouded in black velvet—the other two holding aloft the thinnest candlesticks, the yellow tapers in which burned with an ashy flame, melting excessively as they feebly gleamed. Close behind the candlesticks and

crucifix there walked four priests abreast, each one in *soutaine*, black cap and surplice. There was a black hood drawn over the black cap, while a black train, the dorsal development of the hood, streamed along the leaf-strewn pavement a yard or two behind. They were the heralds of a large black silk banner which had a red cross blazoned on it, and was borne erect by a sickly gentleman in deep mourning. Then came another swarm of boys, clearing the road for a full-length figure of St. John, the Evangelist, which, in a complete suit of variegated vestments, and with the right hand pressed upon the region of the heart, was shouldered along by four young gentlemen, all bare-headed and in full evening-dress. A figure of Mary Magdalene followed that of the Evangelist.

It was radiant with robes of white satin and luxuriant tresses of black hair, and the noble beauty of the face was heightened by an expression of intense contrition. As works of art, these figures are more than admirable. They are exquisite and wonderful. Guatemala, where they have been wrought, has reason to be proud of them.

But one, loftier far and statelier than those preceding it, approached. Lifted bayonets were gleaming to the right and left of it, thuribles were rolling up their fragrant clouds around it, pretty children in white frocks, and fresh as rosebuds, were throwing flowers in front of it all over the leafy pavement. It was the *Mater Dolorosa*. Sumptuously robed, the costliest lace and purple velvet, pearls of the largest size, opals and other precious stones, were lavished on it. From the queenly head there issued rays of silver which flashed as though they were spears of crystal. The black velvet train, descending from the figure, was borne by a priest. Behind him, carrying long wax candles, were many of the first ladies of the city, all dressed in black silk or satin, their heads concealed in rich *mantillas*, and these, too, black as funeral palls could be.



MATER DOLOROSA.

Some of them were young, tenderly graceful, and of a pearly beauty. The matrons, though slim and parched, were dignified and saintly.

All this, however, was but the prelude to the absorbing feature of the pageant. This was an immense sarcophagus of glass, upheld by some twenty of the most respectable citizens of San José, whose step had all the emphasis and grandeur of practiced soldiers. Acolytes bearing inverted torches, and smoking censers, and palm-branches covered with crape, went before, flanked, and followed it. And as it was borne along, the spectators at the door-ways, in the balconies, at the windows, on the side-walks, uncovered their heads and knelt. Within the transparent tomb were folds of the finest linen—snowy folds strewn with roses—a face streaming with blood, a crown of thorns, and the outline of a prostrate image. The image was that of The Crucified of Calvary. As it passed, no one spoke. There was not a whisper even. The swelling and subsiding music of the military band—heading the column of troops with which, colors furled and arms reversed, the procession closed—alone disturbed, at that solemn moment, the peacefulness of San José.

A few hours later, there was a very different scene. It was the dawn of Easter Sunday. The clouds lay full and low upon the mountains. San Miguel was a pile of clouds. The dark green base of Irazu alone was visible. The plantations and *potreros* were overwhelmed with clouds. It was a chaos of clouds all round. Nothing else was distinguishable. Nothing—unless, indeed, the lamp at the corner of the *Calle del Artilleria*, the light from which sputtered through the thick smoke with which the glass was blurred. But in the midst of this chaos of clouds, the bells of the Cathedral, the *Mercedas* and the *Carmen*, suddenly broke loose. Briskly, wildly, violently they rang out! Again and again rang out! Again and again, until the riotous air seemed to flash with the strokes! Again and again, until the drowsy earth seemed to reel and quiver!

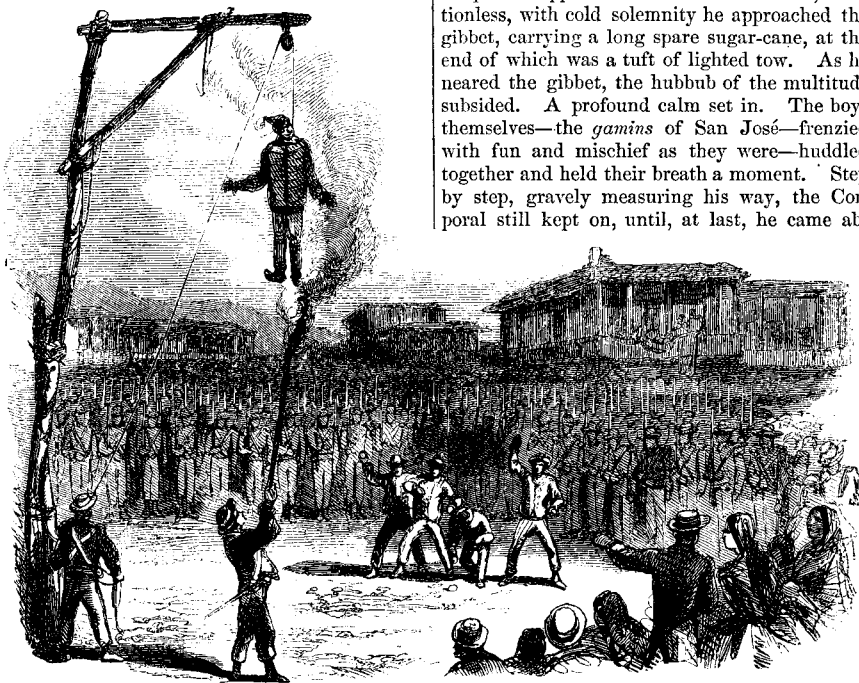
Then came the rumbling of drums, and the shrill chorusing of fighting-cocks, and the yelping of dogs, and the moaning of the cattle in the suburbs. In less than twenty minutes every house in San José was pouring out its inmates—pouring them out in *ponchas* and *mantillas*, in shawls, velvet-collared cloaks and shirt-sleeves—down upon the Plaza. And there—as the clouds lifted, and the mountains began to show themselves, and the sun streamed over the broken crest of Irazu—a startling spectacle broke upon the view.

The Plaza was full of people. The spacious *esplanade* and steps of the Cathedral were thronged to overflowing. The balconies and windows of the houses overlooking the Plaza—the bal-

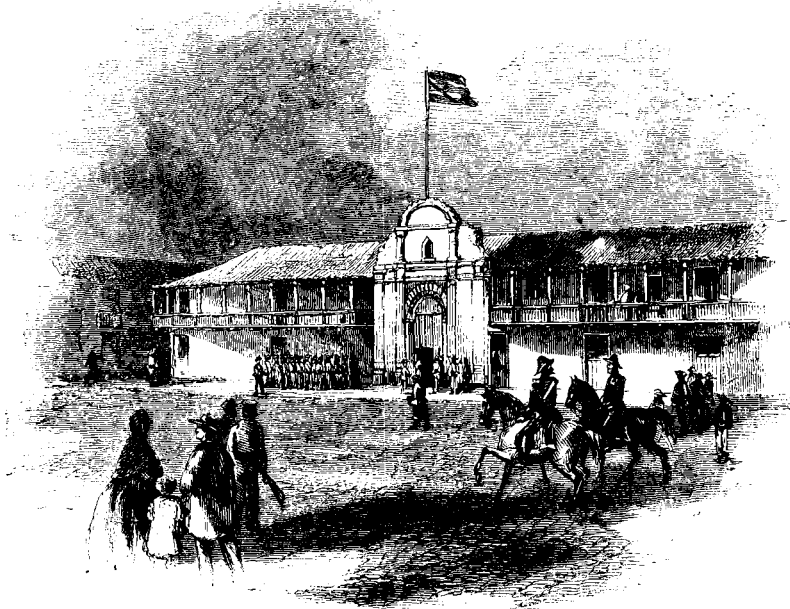
conies and windows of the houses converging on the Plaza—all sparkled and rustled with spectators. Every one was excited—every one was chattering—every one was smoking—every one was laughing—every one was on tip-toe—every one was impatient, fidgety and nervous. There was something in the wind!

High above the crowd—in the centre of the Plaza—were four lines of gleaming steel. The troops had formed a hollow square, and within this square, overtopping the lifted bayonets by twenty feet at least, there stood a monstrous gibbet. Fastened together with thongs of raw hide and pieces of old rope, the limbs of this gibbet were gaunt and ghastly enough to scare the boldest malefactor. From the cross-beam there dangled a foul bundle of old clothes. There was a red night-cap—a yellow flannel waistcoat, striped with black, the arms outstretched—a pair of torn brown breeches and musty boots, the latter crumpled at the toes and woefully wasted at the heels. Night-cap, boots and waistcoat, all were stuffed with Roman candles, squibs and crackers, while the breeches were burdened with a bomb-shell made of the toughest paste-board and swollen with combustibles. It was the effigy of Judas Iscariot! There—in the dewy dawn, with the faint soft light of the Easter morn playing on the night-cap, in the full strained view of thousands—the *simulacrum* of the traitor dangled, slowly turning, half-way round at times, as a puff from the mountains strayed against and elbowed it ignominiously aside.

The trumpet having sounded, a barefooted Corporal stepped from the ranks. Erect, emotionless, with cold solemnity he approached the gibbet, carrying a long spare sugar-cane, at the end of which was a tuft of lighted tow. As he neared the gibbet, the hubbub of the multitude subsided. A profound calm set in. The boys themselves—the *gamins* of San José—frenzied with fun and mischief as they were—huddled together and held their breath a moment. Step by step, gravely measuring his way, the Corporal still kept on, until, at last, he came ab-



HANGING JUDAS.



PALACE OF THE GOVERNMENT.

ruptly to a halt right under the cross-beam. The sugar-cane was lifted. It touched the left heel of the scoundrel overhead. In the twinkling of an eye, there was a terrific explosion! The boot flew in shreds—flames leaped from the stomach—the bomb-shell burst and split the brown breeches into a shower of rags and soot—rockets whizzed from the ribs—the outstretched arms vanished from their sockets in a gust of sulphur—the red night-cap shot up clean out of sight, and, a few seconds after, plopped down in cinders over the sign-board of the Restaurant next door to the Barracks—all this in less than two minutes, amidst the crashing of drums, the excruciating screams of the boys, the crowing of cocks and the yelping of dogs, the tittering of the modest *signoritas* and *signoras*, the gabbling of parrots, a tempestuous flight of stones, and the hootings, *maldiciones* and uproarious merriment of soldiers and civilians, priests, paupers, and patricians.

When the smoke cleared off, the back-bone was all that remained of the exploded ruffian. And that—being of iron—continued to dangle at the end of the rope until the gibbet was lowered. In half an hour, the Plaza had resumed its decorum, loneliness, and silence.

Leaving the Bishop's residence, the morning after our arrival in San José, we asked one of the two workmen who were plastering the wall, the way to the building in which the Hall of Congress and the *bureaux* of the Ministers of State are situated. Wiping the trowel through his apron, he gave us the direction with a graceful flourish of the implement.

"But you're not going there," he said—"it's a great way off—an immense distance!"

Somewhat surprised to hear this, but nowise deterred, we determined to try it. The experiment satisfied us that the *Casa del Gobierno* was little more than three blocks, or two minutes' walk, from the Episcopal residence. Judged, however, by his own estimate of distances, the discouraging plasterer did not exaggerate. Three blocks were to him, in truth, an immense stretch to attempt on foot, and were the votes of the citizens of San José demanded on the question, an overwhelming majority, no doubt, would be found to concur with him.

They take no exercise in San José. Pensive and listless—profoundly tranquil—they remain burrowed in-doors all day. The twilight fails to bring them out. The moon influences the sea, but San José sleeps beneath it, insensible to its witchery. Nor has the sun more power. The green sugar-patches—away up the slopes of San Miguel—are glistening in the light long before the doors are opened.

"People are rather lazy in San José," I ventured to observe, one morning, to an intelligent young Costa Rican, as we passed through the vacant streets of the *Campo de Martí*, a beautiful broad plain outside the city.

"No, Señor, may it please you, they are not lazy," he replied; "but not having any thing very particular to do at this hour, they stay in bed."

And it is the truth. The people of San José are not lazy whenever there is the least necessity for them to be active. It is the extreme quietude of their little city, in the mornings especially, which would induce the contrary impression.

Passing the wide-arched gate-way of the Palace of the Government—of which the reader has here

a correct outline copied from a photographic impression taken by Mr. T. C. Rhodes, an American resident of San José—the visitor finds himself in a spacious hall. A step or two brings him to a quadrangular court-yard floored with red brick. A gallery, ten feet in width, supported by a series of columns and arches and furnished with a pretty balustrade of bronzed iron, projects on three sides, fifteen feet above the brick flooring. The wall, fronting the entrance-hall, is unbroken. The roof of the building extends some twelve feet beyond the walls inclosing the court, and this again is supported by another series of columns and arches, precisely similar to that which supports the gallery. We have, thus, two tiers of picturesque arcades opening on the court-yard. Walls, columns, arches, all are painted white. The flooring of red brick is kept perfectly clean. The exterior is colored in imitation of blue granite, and, though modeled by a German, presents a cheerful Italian aspect in harmony with the serene and glowing sky which canopies the valley of San José. A tranquil tone of simplicity, good taste, strict order and dignified modesty pervades the whole. A fountain in the centre of the court-yard, softening with its perpetual showers the heated atmosphere which the walls inclose, would leave nothing else to be desired. With this, the Palace of the Costa Rican Government, in an architectural point of view, would be complete.

The glass folding-door of the *bureau* of the Minister of State opens on the upper arcade. So does that of the Minister of Justice, and that, also, of the Minister of Foreign Affairs. Immediately off the lower arcade, or corridor, are the offices of the *Intendencia*, the tribunal before which all known violators of the Revenue laws are cited to appear. The Secretary of Congress, moreover, has his office in this quarter of the building. Passing along the gallery with the bronzed iron balustrade, from the *bureau* of the Minister of Justice, we entered one of the two small galleries which overlook the floor of the Hall of Congress.

It is a superb apartment. The proportions are imposing. The length is eighty feet, the width thirty, the height forty. The walls are white as cream. Slightly arched, the ceiling is divided by heavy gilt mouldings into panels. These are deeply-set and crusted with golden filigree-work. The lofty windows, opening on the court-yard, sixteen feet in height, are curtained with crimson silk-damask. Between them are costly mirrors festooned with silk—blue, red, and white—the colors of the Republic. The President's chair is solidly gilt and cushioned with crimson velvet. A canopy of crimson satin shadows it, and a little above it appear the Arms of Costa Rica, wrought in gold and silver thread on a field of purple velvet. With their feet buried in a luxurious carpet, the chairs of the Members of the Costa Rican Congress are ranged against the wall, to the right and left of the canopy and throne, while the stained glass, with which the doors and windows of this Hall are

set, subdues the glare of the golden ceiling, the white walls, the crimson drapery, and all the splendors of paint and gilding imprisoned in it. Shortly after our arrival at the Capital, this Hall was the scene of a grand entertainment.

Returning late one evening to the Hotel, our Dutch servant, Charlemagne, with a smile heightened and diffused by the grease which pervaded his face, handed us a note in an envelope. Both were of cream-colored paper. Both had narrow crimson borders. The envelope was addressed to

*Señores Don
Ramon Paez y Sr. Mars.*

This was in writing. Opening the note, we found the following invitation neatly printed in Spanish—

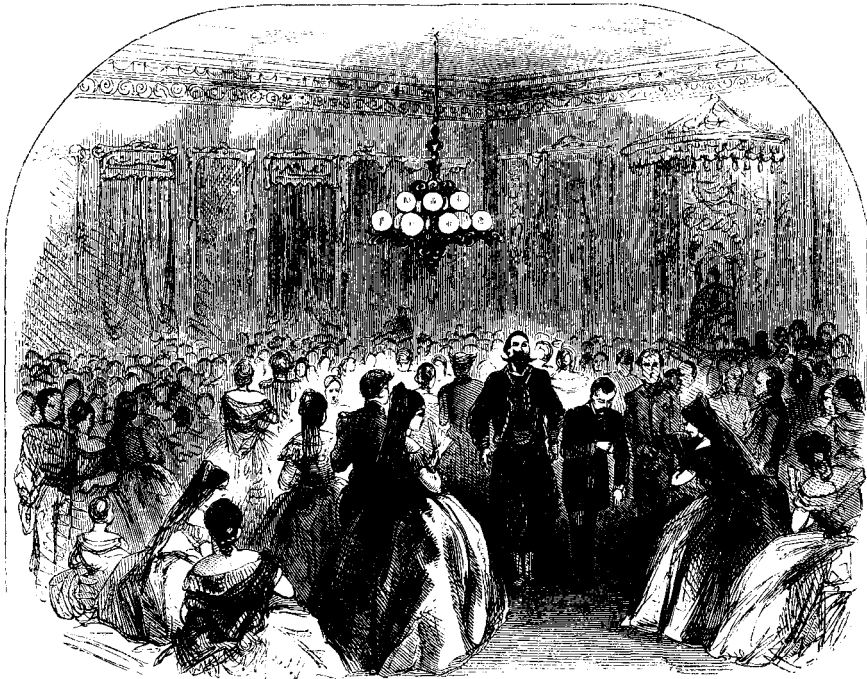
The undersigned, at the special desire of his Excellency, the President of the Republic, request the pleasure of your company at a Ball to be given, in honor of Señor Don Felix Belly, on Wednesday evening, at eight o'clock, in the Palace of the Government.

Vicente Herrera—Juan B. Bonilla.

P.S.—Signora Salvadora Gutierrez de Bonilla and Signora Mercedes Ramirez de Hiné will receive the Ladies.

Approaching the Palace, we found it all illuminated. Small colored lamps shone every where. In the niches either side the gate-way, along the window-sills of the *façade*, within the court-yard, along the balustrade of the upper corridor, from every projecting scroll and plinth, from the parapets themselves, above, below, in and out, all round, these colored lamps shone every where. There were sentries at the outer gate. There were sentries on the steps of the Hall itself. In compliment to Señor Don Felix Belly, the Guard was composed exclusively of Sergeants. They appeared in full uniform—dark blue *coatee*, red worsted epaulets, cap with yellow band, trowsers and pipe-clayed cross-belts. The cut and color of the trowsers in every instance had been determined by the fancy, the negligence, or the fortune of the wearer. Within the walls was a brilliant crowd. Every one of note in San José was there. Distinguished foreigners were, also, there.

President Mora—a dumpy, sleek, dark-featured gentleman, in a canary-colored embroidered waistcoat, his hair brushed stiff up from his forehead—sat the whole of the night in the towering gilt chair, under the crimson silk-damask canopy. From head to foot, his Excellency was one compact smile, cosily framed. In the gallery, opposite to that in which the Military Band was stationed—with a camp cloak thrown across his shoulders, the broad shirt-collar negligently thrown open at the neck, the swarthy mottled face reddening in the blaze of the chandeliers, his wild black eye flashing upon the rustling scene below—was General Maxime Jerez, of Nicaragua. General Joaquin Mora stood near him, his tranquil pale face, shrewd cold eye and staid address, contrasting strongly with the impetuous and generous nature betrayed in the features of the Nicaraguan soldier. Moping



MONSIEUR BELLY AT THE BALL.

about the principal door of the Ball-room—holding his hands before him as though he were holding a muff—was Señor Calvo, the Minister of State. Señor Calvo is an elderly gentleman with very short legs. A yellowish brown face, a very flat mouth and a very flat nose, give him the appearance of a Japanese priest. An impassive Indian from the village of Quiricót, as Minister of State he is singularly useful. All the mistakes of the Government are remorselessly saddled on him. Reconciled to the weight, and capable of patiently carrying it to the end of his days however much it augments, no President ever thinks of removing him. This is the fifth-and-twentieth year in which he has acted as Beast of Burden, and Minister of State. His employers devoutly wish that he and they may live a thousand years! Sliding through the mazes of the dance—having a pleasant word for every one, smiling through his small compressed eyes, and with ever so many little ingenuities rendering himself universally popular—was Señor Toledo, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the best educated Member of the Cabinet, by profession an expert physician, and an acute politician by trade. General Cañas, also, was present. And so was General Castro, an ex-President of the Republic, and one of the most genial, liberal, and accomplished gentlemen in Costa Rica. And there was Colonel George Cauty—a square-built, sailor-looking, sprightly fellow, with a deep-set cunning eye and a sharply-pointed small nose, light of foot, steaming and blossoming all over—in an extremely short-skirted blue frock, immense ep-

aulets and tricolor sash, quadrilling and waltzing with exhaustless agility. And, last of all, there was the closely-shaved head and the finikin figure, the spy-glass and spider-like legs of M. Felix Belly himself, with the Zouave at his elbow, in his prodigious red breeches, prim and smug, looking as though he were planted upon the column in the Place Vendôme, and had all its bronze and brazen glories radiating through him. This Zouave had hired himself for four years to the Government of Costa Rica at the breaking out of the war with the Filibusters, and had fought all through it. He was very ugly, very gorgeous, highly-peppered and pompous. At the time of the Ball he was detailed as interpreter, outrider, Red-Breeches-in-Waiting to M. Felix Belly, and seemed proud of the business.

A long white building, two stories high, with a heavy balcony overlooking the Plaza and a rugged roof of red tiles slanting three or four feet beyond the front wall, the Infantry Barracks flank the Cathedral on the right. The balcony is broken by a broad and lofty gate-way, rudely arched, outside which a disheveled sentinel, carelessly balancing his musket, night and day saunters up and down. Sentinels lounge along the balcony, also, while a small black field-piece looks out from under a shed of iron-work in the centre of the barrack-square, and, with its green wheels furrowing the gravel, ponderously keeps the peace. Inside the walls are dormitories, store-rooms, rows of wooden pegs hung with hats and belts, musket-racks, stretchers, frying-pans, iron-hooped buckets, and the rest of the

furniture one usually finds in Barracks the world over. But every thing looks very faded, very dusty, very primitive and cheap. The white ant has been busy with the wood-work, giving it the appearance of incurable decay. Were it not for the *Sala des Banderas*, the Infantry Barracks of San José would be destitute of interest.

In this apartment are deposited several relics and trophies of the Filibuster war. A large glass-case, handsomely gilt and paneled, elevated a few feet from the floor, contains the torn and sooty remnants of the Flag which flew from Fort Castillo while the Costa Ricans held it. On one of the panels, in golden letters, is this inscription—

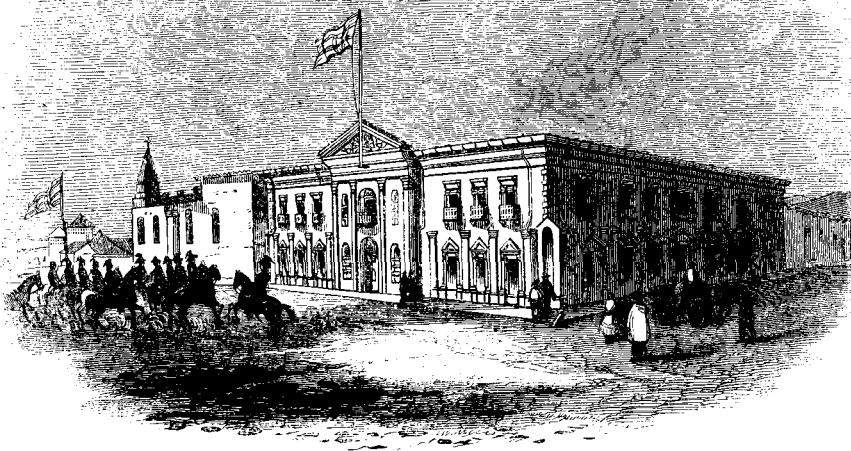
On the 15th of July, 1857, the National Flag which floated above the walls of Fort Castillo during the siege, together with the names of the Superior officers who defended it so brilliantly, were deposited in this urn, by order of his Excellency, the President of the Republic, Don José Rafael Mora. Eternal honor to the Heroes who defended the Castle of San Juan!

On the opposite panel is the following inscription—

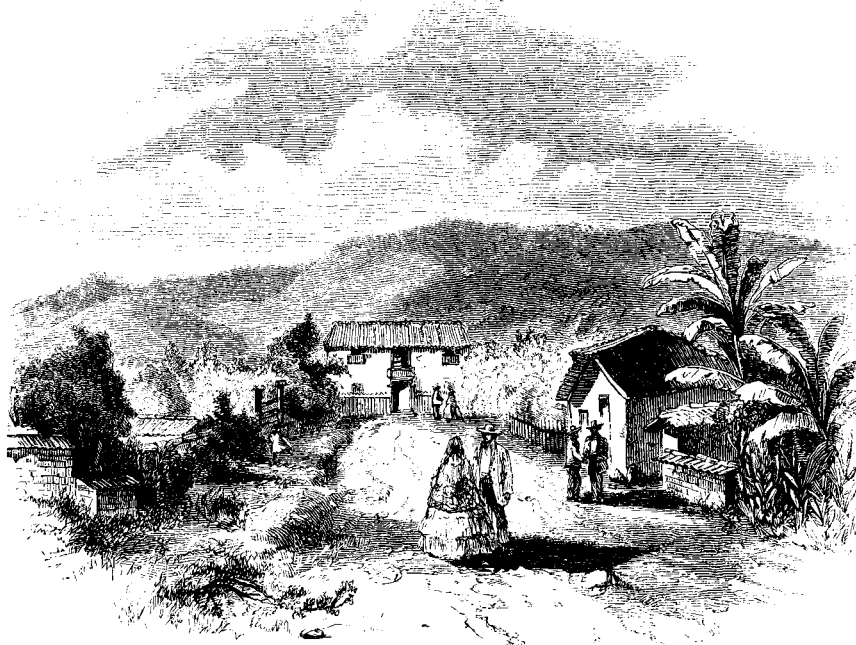
On the 15th of February, 1857, four hundred Filibusters, under the command of the so-called Colonel Titus, attacked the Castle of San Carlos, which was in a dilapidated state and garrisoned only by thirty-seven men. But animated by the brave Colonel, Don George F. Cauty, and the worthy Commandant of the Fort, Lieutenant Colonel, Faustine Montes de Orca, the little garrison heroically resisted the enemy until the 19th of the same month, on which day, seventy-seven Riflemen, under the command of Captain Jesus Alvarado, and Don Joaquín Ortiz, who had been sent to the relief of the Fort by the General-in-chief, Don José Joaquín Mora, fell upon the Filibusters with so much bravery, that they dispersed them in an instant, compelling them to throw away their clothes, so that they might fly with greater ease. This brilliant feat of arms, planned so admirably by our General, decided the happy issue of the Holy War which was sustained by the Republics of Central America against their invaders.

The Artillery Barracks face the *Calle de Artilleria* two blocks above the *Casa de Gobierno*. They form a quadrangular court, in which two hundred men, perhaps, might be drilled conveniently. Four square towers—one at each angle—defend the premises. Nine-pounders protrude from them, and the walls are perforated for muskets. Under a slovenly shed occupying one side of the barrack-yard, jumbled together and scantily covered with matting, are two eighteen-pounders, two nines, and two sixes. The eighteens were cast in England, shipped round Cape Horn, and dragged up from Punta Arenas by a herd of bullocks. The morning we visited these Barracks, on being shown to the officers' day-room, we found there an emaciated German on a crutch, tuning a broken harp, and one of the Chaplains attached to the Costa Rican Army in Nicaragua, the Padre Francisco Calvo, who wore the Cross of Honor pinned to the breast of his *soutaine*. The Padre is devoted to the Army. He has a soldierly appearance, and his propensities and tastes seem better suited for the camp than the cloister. As we entered, he had a *puro* between his rosy lips, and was chatting to a young officer decorated with a red ribbon, the inscription in gold letters upon which, announced him one of the Conquerors of Santa Rosa, the scene of the first, as it was the most damaging, defeat incurred by the Filibusters in their Nicaraguan enterprise.

Leaving the Artillery Barracks, and galloping for a mile and a half over a splendid road—a broad avenue, solidly constructed, drained by deep trenches running parallel with it, and shaded by lofty fences of *cactus* and *erithryna*, behind which thousands of coffee-trees breathe their perfume—we found ourselves at the *Campo de Martí*, a perfectly level plain, some hundred



THE ARTILLERY BARRACKS.



THE LABYRINTH.

acres in extent, carpeted with the softest grass, intersected with lines of young fig-trees, and in every feature displaying the studied neatness and subdued elegance of a Pleasure Park in England. Inclosed by *haciendas*, orange-groves, plantations and *potrerros*, the Mountains of San Miguel shelter it on the South. In the opposite direction, the white walls of Heredia glitter against the brown slopes of Barba. Beyond that huge volcano, the fires of which have been extinguished in a lake of unknown depth, the blue peaks of Poaz sparkle in the morning and evening sunlight. There are villas, too, close at hand, such as the charming one of which we have a penciling here.

It is called the Labyrinth. There is a roomy house and a luxuriant garden. Behind the garden, a sparkling fountain throws its waters into three reservoirs faced with brick and fine cement. These serve as baths—one for gentlemen, nine feet deep—another for ladies, seven feet deep—the third for children, three feet deep. Walls of a moral height surround them, and they have shady corridors in which the bathers lay aside and renew their *toilets*. The pathway leading to the baths is cool and fragrant, hedged with rose-trees and sweet lemons. Further back is the coffee-mill, and the *patio* in which they clean and dress the coffee. The farm-yard is stocked with farming implements of the best description, and a stud of handsome horses occupy a range of open stalls. This house, this garden, these baths, these horses, all belong to the Señora Fernandez, whose wealth is but a tribute to her goodness, her gracefulness and beauty.

Between the Labyrinth and the *Campo* lies the Protestant Burial-ground. It covers about a quarter of an acre, is walled in snugly, and has an iron-barred gate to it. A lozenge-shaped metal plate, screwed to the wicket, bears the following inscription—

THIS CEMETERY
WAS GRANTED BY THE GOVERNMENT IN FEBRUARY
1850

AT THE REQUEST OF

SEÑOR DON FREDERICK CHATFIELD,
Chargé-d-Affaires of her Britannic Majesty.

For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. And though after my skin worms destroy my body, yet in my flesh shall I see God. Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another, though my reins be consumed within me.

A little nearer to the *Campo* is the old Catholic Burial-ground. Bones have been lying there for more than two hundred years. The earlier inscriptions on the vaults and head-stones have been blotted out. The graves themselves have been blotted out. You look through the bars of the gate-way—clumsy bars honey-combed with rust—and all you see is a green mass of vegetation. Listening breathlessly for a while, you are sure to hear the rustling of the lizard, or some other reptile, in the depths of that dead sea. Four years ago, when the cholera swept the country, the neighboring victims of the plague—and they were counted by the thousand—were buried there. Since then the Cemetery has been closed. It is forbidden ground. And so, undisturbed, the green vegetation deepens, and the nameless graves are blotted out. A

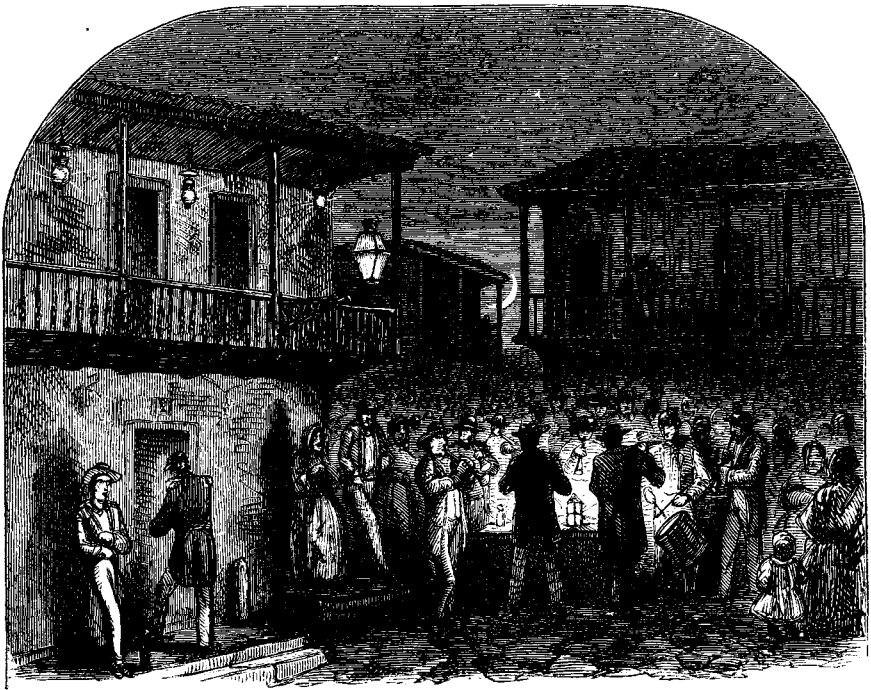
new Burial-ground has been opened for the Catholics elsewhere.

The *Campo de Marté* is to San José what the *Bois de Boulogne* is to Paris. It is the scene of the fashionable equestrianism of the Capital, the resort of carriages, and, once or twice a year, the arena in which military encampments and reviews take place. On these occasions the troops appear in uniform. The rest of the year, clean shirts on Sundays and Feasts of Obligation seem to be the only regulation in force, so far as costume is concerned. The officers, however, are handsomely uniformed. In their blue frocks faced with red, their *shakos* and red pompons, they present an appearance not inferior to that of French Lieutenants of the Line, and at the Military Mass, on Sundays, the little garrison of San José, occupying the nave of the Cathedral, forms a striking picture. The double line of bayonets quivers with the light reflected from the Altar, the lamps and chandeliers, the windows of the aisles, and the tall white shafts which support the roof. The Band, stationed in the chancel, accompanies the solemn service with martial hymns. The officers stand beside the men—the epaulets and crimson sashes of the former relieving the *camisas* of the latter—and as the Host is elevated, the sacred building vibrates with pealing trumpets and the ring of saluting arms.

Every Sunday evening, also, the Band plays in front of the President's private residence. Situated in the *Calle del Presidente*, a little off the Plaza, this house is a model of Republican

modesty. The narrow street darkened with listening groups—the lanterns at the music-desks piercing the shadows with the thinnest rays—groups of *señoritas* whispering at the door-ways, the faint smoke of their *cigarettes* gliding dreamily from their lips—a lean sentinel leaning against the door-post of the President's house, No. 12, rubbing one bare foot against the other—the whitewashed hall behind him, with a yellow candle in a glass case, suspended from the ceiling, winking at the brown balusters of the staircase—an officer in white trowsers and gold-laced cap lifting his spurred heels up the steps of the door-way, and slipping into the street again, having satisfied himself that all was right—these were the incidents I noticed the first Sunday evening I loitered in the *Calle del Presidente*, arm in arm with Don Ramon, listening to the Band.

The Theatre, too, is open on Sunday evening. Adorned with a Grecian front, this pretty edifice occupies an area sixty or seventy feet square. The street-door opens into a vestibule lighted by a large Chinese lantern, underneath which, on the nights of performance, half a dozen bare-footed soldiers are seated on a bench. There are two tiers of boxes. Under the lower tier are three rows of benches, and these are shut off from the parquette by horizontal bars of iron, which give the inclosure the appearance of a semi-subterranean cage for wild curiosities. The object of this arrangement I was unable to ascertain. Probably it is owing to an apprehension that the poorer people might grow savage if



BEFORE THE PRESIDENT'S HOUSE.

brought into contact with the civilization of the parquette. The night we were there the house was crowded. The boxes rustled with silk. There was a profusion of pearls, and clusters of teeth which rivaled them in whiteness, and masses of luxuriant black hair, and a plump array of arms laden with chains and bands of gold, and eyes of sparkling jet, and coronals and festoons of luscious flowers, and the airiest network floating about the daintiest heads. It was a Gala-night. The play was *El Poeta y la Beneficiada*. In a box decorated with the National colors, directly facing the stage, sat President Mora. To the right and left of his Excellency sat the Minister of Foreign Affairs, General Joaquin Mora, Señor Escalante, the Vice-President of the Republic, and M. Felix Belly, the champion, upon paper, of the Latin Race generally. The performers hailing from Cadiz and other parts of Spain, rendered the humor of Don Manuel Breton de los Herreros with a graceful vivacity. But the orchestra was fearful. Eight fiddlers, a drummer, and two trumpeters, all in a row, tortured us mercilessly whenever the curtain went down. The scenery was just as unpleasant. No two wings were alike, and fully one half the performance passed off in a parlor, upon which the sky-light and stairs of a garret obtruded. The drop-scene, however, representing Minerva instructing the Muses, displayed considerable taste, effectiveness of touch, and brilliant coloring. Between the acts, the occupants of the boxes promenaded the *galinero* or lobby of the Theatre, smoking their *puros* and *cigarettes*. The Ladies indulged in this refreshment as well as the Gentlemen. Lemonades, also, were handed round, and the *cigarettes* gave way to almond cakes, ices, and other delicacies. The President, mingling unaffectedly with the crowd, was voluble and radiant. M. Felix Belly, exquisitely booted and gloved, bowed himself constantly into profuse perspirations.

Having introduced the President—an efficient magistrate, a man of clear strong intellect, energy, and enlightenment, under whose administration Costa Rica has been blessed with a social and material development unknown to her before, and has achieved a sound national reputation, which it would be well for her sister Republics to strive for and deserve—a few words here, explanatory of the political system of the country, will not be inappropriate.*

The Constitution, under which it was reorganized in 1848, declares the Republic of Costa Rica to be a sovereign State, free and independent, and prescribes for it a popular government, representative, elective, and responsible. Asserting the inviolability of property, the liberty of the press, personal security, the equality of all citizens before the law, and vesting the Supreme Power in three distinct bodies—the Legislative, the Executive, the Judicial—it prohibits slavery,

privileged classes, *primogeniture*, the violation of correspondence, and rigorously restricts the punishment of death. The Legislative power resides in a Congress of one Chamber of twelve members, over which the Vice-President of the Republic presides. To exercise the electoral franchise, a citizen must be twenty-five years old—be the father of a family or the head of a house—and own real estate to the value of \$1000. Neither the President, Vice-President, nor any Member of the Cabinet can vote. All those officers, as well as the Judgeships of the Supreme Court, are incompatible with a Representative position. To be a Member of Congress, the citizen must be twenty-five years old, own real estate to the value of \$3000, or be a Professor of some recognized science. Congress appoints the Judges, prorogues its own sessions, and names for the Recess a permanent Commission, consisting of the Vice-President of the Republic and four of its Members. The passage of a law requires the approval of a Congressional majority after three days' discussion, or the lapse of three days, and the sanction of the Executive. The President and Vice-President are elected, for a term of six years, by the electoral assemblies of cantons or counties. To hold either of these offices, the citizen must be thirty years old, own property to the value of \$10,000, and be or have been married. Hospitality is prescribed as a duty by the Constitution, and citizenship is forfeited by ingratitude to parents, the abandonment of wife or children, and the neglect of the obligations due to the family and homestead. The Judicial power is vested in a Supreme Court, and other tribunals created by law. The first consists of a Regent, five Judges, and an Attorney-General. These officers—with the exception of the latter, who is elected for six years—hold their commissions during good behavior; but neither the former nor the latter can be suspended unless upon impeachment, nor can they be deposed except by a formal Judicial sentence. The Republic is divided into five Provinces. The Provinces are subdivided into Cantons, and these again into Districts. The Provinces have their Governors and Military Commandants. The two last-named divisions have their Political Chiefs and Alcaldes. As to the Educational system, there is a free school in every town. In San José there is a college for the education of masters, a Lyceum, and a University. Elementary and superior instruction are thus guaranteed by the Government, as well as by private enterprise; and if, as Astaburuaga remarks, Costa Rica does not as yet exhibit a more flourishing state of public education, she has, at all events, established the basis of a system which will improve and extend in proportion as the country materially advances.

Considered in an architectural point of view, the University of St. Thomas must be set down as the finest building in San José. But in point of size, the Hospital exceeds it. There is, in truth, very little need of such an institution in the Arcadian valley of San José. But a chari-

* Since these pages were given to the printer an unexpected Revolution has driven President Mora into banishment, but the writer sees no reason to modify the opinions above expressed.

table association—*El Junta de Caridad*—thought well of having one, so that no epidemic should suddenly strike the people and find them unprepared, or the poor be without a home and kindly treatment when sickness deprived them of their bread. Hence arose the Hospital of San Juan de Dios. The expense of its erection was defrayed from a fund in the hands of the *Junta*, and by a trifling percentage on wills. The same means maintain it. The incidental expenses are few. The Medical Superintendent, Dr. John Hogan, formerly of Philadelphia, gives his valuable services gratuitously.

The situation of the Hospital is unhealthy. It is built in a hollow immediately off the road to the *Campo de Martí*. The ground, on which it stands, was a marsh five years ago. The Doctor frequently shot snipe there. Consisting of a centre and two wings, the entire length of the building is one hundred and fifty feet. The wings—each of them—are one hundred feet square. The left wing contains the sick and insane of both sexes. The right wing is temporarily used as a prison. Of this portion of the Hospital the inmates are less than a handful, and, generally speaking, their offenses are venial. The yawning sentinel, in charge of them, lazily scraping the tiled floor with his bayonet, seemed to think he might well be dispensed with.

In my visit to the Hospital, I had the advantage of being accompanied by Dr. Hogan. In the Male Ward there were eight cases under treatment. Two of them were cases of severe gun-shot wounds. The sufferers were Costa Rican soldiers who had fought under General Cañas at San Jorge, on Lake Nicaragua. Opposite them lay three of Walker's men, suffering acutely from ulcers, the result of bad living, exposure and neglect. One of them told me he was from New York. He was fearfully emaciated and spoke with a painful effort. The second—a sprightly fellow, full of pluck and humor—told me he was from Louisville. The third hailed from Quebec. A bright-eyed, fair-skinned, gentle boy, the tears started from my very heart as he whispered the story of his adventures to me.

His father and mother were Irish-born. He himself was born in Canada. His father died while he was at his mother's breast. When she was strong enough to do so, and had scraped together a little money, his mother shifted to Chicago. There she took in washing, and was getting on very well, when, all of a sudden, he took it into his head to join the Filibusters, having heard they were carrying all before them. Somehow or other he contrived to get to New York. There he joined the Filibusters as an emigrant. He did so, believing that was all he had to do to get the best of living and lots of the richest land. He was not a day in Nicaragua before he wished he was home again with his poor, sick, lonesome mother. But it was too late—too late for him to do otherwise than make the most of his wild prank—too late for him to do any thing else than rough it good-humoredly,

and fight it out as manfully as he could. He would not be eighteen till June, and yet he had been in every battle the Filibusters fought, from the burning of Granada down to the last attempt of the Allies against Rivas. After the surrender of General Walker to Captain Davis, of the *St. Mary's*, he was taken ill at Punta Arenas, on the Pacific, whither he had been brought as prisoner-of-war, with several of his comrades. Struck down with fever there, General Cañas gave orders to have him sent to the Hospital at San José. It was a year ago, but he had not been out nor up from the day he entered it. He would give his life to hear from his poor mother. He had not heard from her since he joined the Filibusters. She knew nothing of his leaving, nor had he written to her all the time he had been away. This was cruel of him. So he said. And with this he hid his face in his hands, and burst out crying. I did my best to comfort him, telling him I should take steps to let his mother know where he was, and that he was getting on well, and might soon be with her. This seemed to soothe him, and, stretching out his thin white hand, he thanked me with fervent words. The next mail to the United States brought a notice from me, which appeared in one of the New York papers, giving the particulars I have mentioned. Nothing came of it however. No mother appeared to claim the sick boy in the Hospital of San José.

In the Lunatic department of the Hospital there were two women and two men. The two women were crazy on the subject of religion. One of them had covered the walls of the room, in which they were confined, with the strangest hieroglyphics—with death-heads and cross-bones—with skeletons—with horned devils and instruments of torture. These disordered fancies were portrayed in charcoal, and, as we entered, the bewildered artist was absorbed in the contemplation of her performances. The other woman was sitting upon a table—her feet bent under her—the stormiest picture of desolation. She had the one story for every ear that hearkened to her. It was that of a beautiful pure child, who, on passing through a dark street one evening, was presented by two abandoned women with an ear of corn. This she took from them and brought home. The child, the frenzied creature said, had ever since been under the spell of these bad women, and it was this which worried her. As she repeated the story to us—she tells it every day and every hour—the tears started from her blood-shot eyes, the clasped hands dropped with the weight of death upon her knees, her head fell upon her breast, and, shaking it from side to side in the vehemence of her grief, the long, black, disordered hair swept over her shoulders to her naked feet.

Leaving her, the Keeper opened the door of another room. It was a wilderness of a room. There was no ceiling to it. The cobwebbed rafters were exposed. The tiles, with which it had been floored, were torn up. Many of them were broken. The clay underneath the tiles

was, also, torn up. The plastering on the walls was all in flakes. The window-panes had been smashed. Large splinters of glass lay strewn about the plowed-up floor. Every thing within there was defaced. Every thing bore the stamp of exhausted riotousness and irreparable ruin. Crouching in a corner—naked to the waist—the paltry covering he had suffered to remain upon his wasted limbs, flapping in frowsy rags about him—eying us with the timidity of a worried rabbit—eying us stealthily from behind a heap of earth and broken tiles—was a boy with sunken jaws, shuddering from head to foot, jabbering violently, and frothing at the mouth. This poor wretch was little more than eighteen years of age. He had been one of the garrison of Fort Castillo. On the approach of Colonel Frank Anderson, December, 1858, he was seized with spasms, and from that day to this he has been a ghastly lunatic. The shouts of the Filibusters ring incessantly in his ears. Armed to the teeth—gliding like panthers through the *chapparal*—they are ever making toward him. He leaps from them, shrieks, writhes, foams, tears his tangled hair, harrows the walls and floor with his nails, digs up the earth, as though he were a hyena tugging at buried carrion, and so hacks and wastes himself to death.

The fourth case was somewhat an amusing one, and from the agonies of that terror-stricken creature it was a relief to follow for a moment the mild vagaries of one, whose only uneasiness was an impression, that a multitude of turkey-buzzards were after him, and that all he wanted was a hat. The turkey-buzzards kept him perpetually busy. He never ceased hooting at them, pelting them with bits of plaster, rushing into them, dispersing them in desperate style, and, having put them to flight, pursuing them round and round the room. Had he a hat, he would be in glorious humor. It was impossible, however, to satisfy him in this respect. He tore up every hat he laid his hand upon.



LUNATICS.

Having seen all that was to be seen in San José—having lounged often enough through the billiard-rooms and *lager-bier* saloons, of which there are half a dozen in the little city, within musket-shot of one another, and visited the Mint, where we learned something of the mineral resources of the country—having made the acquaintance of several of the friendliest and brightest people there—having talked politics by the hour, over bottles of Bourbon, with a sprightly wise Philadelphian who is fixed there for better or for worse, but rather for the better, his two-storied house in the *Calle de la Artilleria* being spacious, and his cacao plantation close to La Muelle being in the most promising condition—having breakfasted with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, where we had the pleasure of meeting at an overflowing table an accomplished and genial family—having dined in company with a large party of Germans at the house of a wealthy hospitable representative of the *Brod* and vintage of the Rhine—having spent more than one delightful evening in a generous English home, over the gayety, good-heart, and luxury of which a black cloud has lowered since, for she who was the favored and bounteous mistress

of that home lies in the Serapiqui, lost there on her way to see once more her old home in the oak-crowned isle—having, over and over again, ridden out with General Castro, whose graceful attentions to us were unremitting, and on his plantation of Pacifica, the finest in the country, in the midst of the perfume of 150,000 coffee-trees, and flower and fruit gardens surfeited with sweetness, and all the luxuries of a Farm in the Tropics, having dreamed away many an hour that is still a fragrant and radiant vision with me—having seen and done all this, we, the distinguished strangers from New York, betook ourselves to Cartago, the ancient Capital of Costa Rica, concerning which, the volcano that frowns above it and the valleys that girdle it with beauty and glory, another paper, the last of this Holiday series, will appear next month.

A LAY OF THE DANUBE.

I.—THE WISSEHRAD.

PILGRIM of the imperial Danube, pause 'neath yonder height,
Where a crumbling castle standeth draped in sunset-light,
Like a hoary king, stout-hearted, who his throne doth fill,
Though with age he tremble, totter—clad in shining purple still!

Climb those towers, and mark the river rolling calm and wide,
Till the frowning mountain-giants dare defy his tide!
Mark how he through flinty columns cuts a pathway free,
Dashes rightward, leftward, forward—throbbing, panting, toward the sea!

On those banks the angry nations gathered them of old,
Northern hordes and southern legions joined their battles bold,
Till the dark cold waves were flowing red and warm with blood—
Hideous Hun and haughty Roman, how they choked the crimson flood!

There, the sweet old rhymers tell us, Etzel held his court,
When he made, at Chrimhild's suing, feast for high disport,
Bidding fair her royal brothers from the distant Rhine—
Ah, ill-fated Nibelungen! wherefore did ye not divine

That an injured, vengeful woman, though her message fell
Loving as became a sister, could not mean you well!
Till the dark cold waves were flowing red and warm with blood—
There betrayed, the homelorn heroes died as heroes still should die!

'Neath the very towers thou scalest, now the spoil of fate,
Once a noble Magyar monarch kept his kingly state,
Great Corvinus, who Mohammed's flooding hosts could stem,
He by Rome's throned bishop counted worthiest Stephen's diadem.

There below, within the valley, lay his gallant men,
Resting from their hard-earned triumphs o'er the Saracen;
And a strange wild tale is told us from that gray old time,
Ever still of love and sorrow—wouldst thou learn it, hear my rhyme!

II.—THE MAGYAR MAID.

'Twas a day when autumn-hazes floated soft and still,
Lighter than Titania's vesture, over sky and hill;
And the sun, flushed as a lover, left the earth so fair,
With his golden smiles of promise filling all the rosy air.

On the further bank a maiden stood at that sweet hour,
Pouring o'er the bleaching linen fast the needful shower;
Humbly born this duty proved her, yet if queen might wear
On her brow such regal beauty, crown were never wanting there.

Now upon the turf she resteth, by the night-wind fanned,
Holding still the dripping pitcher with a careless hand,
More like some immortal keeper of a fountain-head,
Such as antique sculptures show us, than a simple mortal maid.