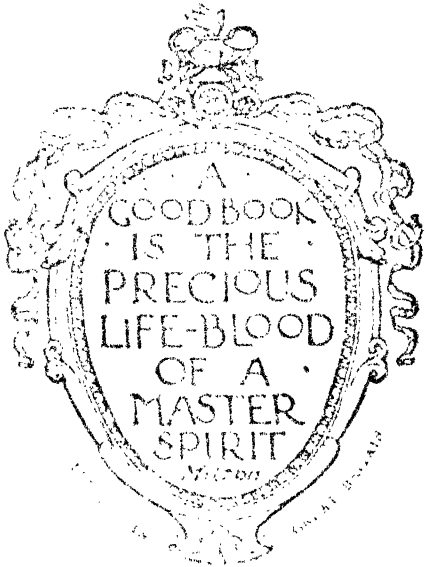
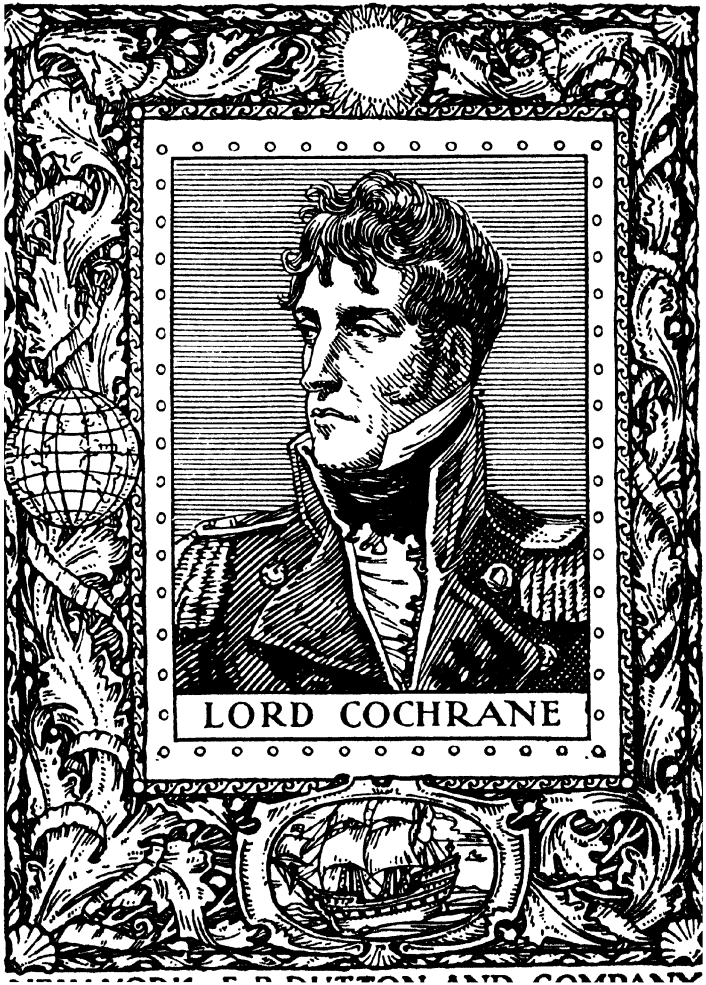

A
GOOD BOOK
IS THE
PRECIOUS
LIFE-BLOOD
OF A
MASTER
SPIRIT
Milton

The KINGS TREASURIES
OF LITERATURE

GENERAL EDITOR
SIR A·T· QUILLER COUCH


LORD COCHRANE

ADVENTURE & EXPLORATION IN SOUTH AMERICA

EDITED BY CAPTAIN
ALEXANDER QUICKE
R.N.

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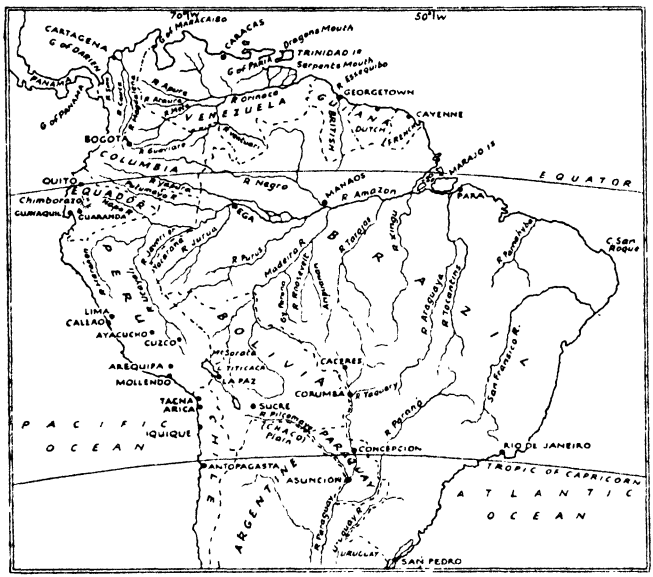
INTRODUCTION

The scene of one of the last novels written by the most widely-read of modern Spanish novelists, the late Vicente Blasco Ibañez, is laid in the great Argentine Republic, and is entitled *La Tierra de Todos*, which may be rendered as "Everybody's Land." Not only the Argentine, however, but the whole vast extension of South America, still offers opportunities for every kind of human interest and endeavour, and does so to a greater extent than the more sophisticated and far more crowded continents of the Old World can do. There are vast mountains to be climbed, vast rivers to be explored, unknown, and but little known; varieties of mankind, animals, birds, insects, and plants to be studied; whilst from the point of view of development the untold resources of its territories have scarcely yet been scratched at, notwithstanding the millions of money already invested in enterprises of every kind.

To the young man seeking opportunities for a life that is at once more free and more promising of quick advancement to a man of character than is possible in the over-populated European countries, South America offers attractions that are with difficulty to be found elsewhere; and the labour expended on this little series of selections from the vast mass of literature that has been written about it will not have been in vain if it serves to direct the attention of the ambitious to a sphere in which they can be useful to their country and to themselves. The foreigner from Europe or the United States is usually known as a "gringo," the term, perhaps,

being more particularly applied to the fair-skinned races; and among gringos the man from the British Isles is particularly well received, because those who have gone there before him have inspired a certain confidence



GENERAL MAP NO. I

and respect which is indicated by such expressions as *hora inglesa* (English time), for punctuality, and *palabra de inglés* (word of an Englishman) for "word of honour." Here and there among the South American aristocracy one may still see the long finger-nail indicating its owner's dislike of, and contempt for, any kind of work;

but that is a point of view which tends to disappear under pressure of circumstances; and in any case it is not one that has ever held any water at all among the members of the European colonies, who have gone out to "make good." A young man going to South America will be taken on his own merits and judged by his performance.

Let us now take a summary glance at the general characteristics of South America before passing on to the selections which have been chosen from the many writers who have found their inspiration in events connected with it during the last four centuries.

Along the whole length of the western part of the sub-continent, at places (in the south) forming part of the Pacific coast, and never very distant from it, runs the mighty chain of mountains, the Cordilleras of the Andes; on their western side these mountains slip off almost abruptly into the great depths of the Pacific Ocean which fills, so some scientists believe, the cavity left by the moon when it was first disrupted from the earth. Certainly there would seem to be some weakening of this part of the earth's crust, for the countries in proximity to the Pacific are very subject to earthquake, and a day rarely or never passes without the occurrence, at some point or another, of a "temblor," a more or less pronounced earth-tremble. The eastern side of South America, between the Andes and the Atlantic, and comprising by far the greater part of its whole area, is much less rugged in character, except for the hilly fringes of parts of the eastern coast.

The climate, generally speaking and as is natural, varies with the latitude, except as modified by altitude; thus, although the northern countries all lie within the tropics, yet many of them include mountainous or hilly

districts which are not only suitable for Europeans to live in but extremely healthy. In the temperate zone there is a certain crispness and exhilaration in the air which is very stimulating after the humidity of Great Britain; whilst in the extreme south, in Patagonia, the great island of Tierra del Fuego, and the British colony of the Falkland Islands, it is almost always raw and wet —but sheep flourish exceedingly in those parts, and it has been said of them that it is easier to make a fortune than a garden there.

Apart from the Guianas (British, Dutch, and French) and with the (very large) exception of Brazil, where Portuguese is spoken, the official language is Spanish, though by no means always spoken with a Spanish accent; for, just as is the case with English as used in the United States, there are many minor differences from the mother tongue, and many terms and expressions are used which are unknown, or used in a different sense, on this side of the Atlantic. In the Argentine, again, the enormous immigration from Italy has distinctly modified and italianised the spoken language. There are, of course, many indigenous dialects among the Indian tribes scattered throughout the various countries.

The great bulk of the inhabitants of these countries, apart from the Indians themselves, have a good deal of Indian blood in their veins, this attribute usually becoming the less marked the higher the social scale and reaching vanishing-point in the case of some of the old Spanish and Portuguese families and the descendants of more recent immigrants from Europe; whilst there is a strongly-marked negro strain in many sections of the population of Brazil.

In the following excerpts from accounts of travel

and adventure in South America, we shall find but few references to the cities; so it may not be out of place to say a few words here concerning some of the principal capitals. For beauty of situation, Rio Janeiro is generally considered to be unrivalled in the world, unless it be by Sydney and Naples; lying, as it does, just within the tropics, the first sight of it (when the sun is shining, which is not always the case) positively leaves one breathless with admiration of its beauty as it sparkles beside its magnificent bay. The Argentine capital, Buenos Aires, with its two-million inhabitants, is the Paris of South America, not only modern but ultra-modern, and with a traffic-problem that bids fair to compete with London's. The capital of Chile is Santiago, a gem among cities, situated at the foot of the Andes. These three countries have the commercial and political pre-eminence in South America, and are sometimes referred to as the "A.B.C."; so that their capitals, and Monte Video, the Uruguayan capital, with its important harbour at the mouth of the River Plate, are naturally the cities in which most life and movement are to be found. Valparaiso, the great Chilean port and emporium for the west coast, is also of first-class importance, and further north on that coast is Callao, the port for that most charming and interesting of South American cities, Lima, the capital of Peru. La Paz, Quito, Bogotá, the capitals of Bolivia, Ecuador, and Colombia, respectively, though less easy of access have each their distinctive charm, and a visit to any of them is an interesting experience for the traveller.

South America presents many extremes; in some parts one may see the Indian "ploughing" with a stick, whilst at no great distance will be found a gigantic

copper-mine with all the latest developments for extracting the ore by electricity; in Buenos Aires the ladies are dressed in fashions that will only reach Paris a year hence, whilst the canoe-dwellers of Tierra del Fuego and the channels may have a loin-cloth or may not have even that; in the nitrate districts of the north of Chile a shower of rain is hardly less than a calamity, whilst in the extreme south of the same country the rain seldom ceases; one may shiver on Andean heights or swelter on the Amazon or Orinoco—a contrast which is vividly outlined in the narrative of Bolivar's march, which we shall come to later on in this book; one may travel in luxurious long-distance trains, or perchance spend weary days on mule-back.

Here, then, is a land where adventure and romance are still to be found by those who care to seek them—there is no such very great difference between the hardships and adventures of Captain Orellana in 1540 and those of Colonel Roosevelt in 1914; a land where even ordinary, everyday life on a salary seems, somehow, less humdrum and more vivid than a similar life in Europe.

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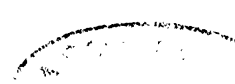
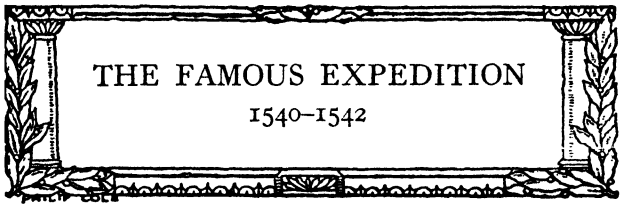




THE FAMOUS EXPEDITION

1540–1542

In any account of adventure in South America pride of place must almost necessarily be given to the wonderful expedition of Gonzalo Pizarro from Quito, now the capital of Ecuador, to the upper waters of the Amazon and back to Quito.

Unproductive in a material sense it certainly was; but as an illustration of the power of the human will to triumph over the forces of nature and the frailty of the human body it is an epic that is almost without a parallel, even among the experiences of the hardy adventurers of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

The English reader, moreover, has much cause to be grateful that the Spanish historians of the conquest of South America should have been the source of inspiration to so great a master of prose as Prescott; to read of an exploit such as this in language worthy of the exploit is to experience a thrill such as may, perhaps, afford man's best justification for his innate conviction that he is the lord of creation.

Men of indomitable courage and resolution, of iron will and immense physical endurance, and almost untroubled by any kind of conscientious scruple in restraint of their ambitions, the Pizarro brothers were eminently fitted to be leaders of desperate enterprises of a piratical nature; they had but one objective, namely gold, though they had a fair share of the astuteness common to human nature at all times, and in all stages of civilisation, of often using patriotism and religion as a cloak for their greed of power and wealth.

The most famous of the four brothers, he who discovered the existence of the Inca Empire and secured it for Spain, was Francisco Pizarro; he was eventually assassinated at

Lima by the partisans of a rival Spanish leader, Almagro, a man of great distinction who had been executed by the eldest Pizarro brother, Hernando. This Hernando, upon returning to Spain, was sentenced to twenty years' imprisonment for the murder of Almagro; he was an aged and broken man when he came out of prison, but he lived to be a hundred years old. The youngest brother, Juan, was killed in action at the taking of Cuzco, the ancient capital of the Incas, by the Spaniards.

Gonzalo Pizarro, the commander of the expedition of which we are about to read, was appointed governor of Quito by his brother Francisco, and almost immediately set out on this expedition. Upon his return from it, two years later, he heard the news of Francisco's assassination. A new viceroy having been sent out from Spain in Francisco's place, Gonzalo rebelled against and defeated him, and then took command of the whole country from Quito to the Chilean frontier; but the Emperor Charles V was by no means the man to approve of rebellion against his authority. He selected an able ecclesiastic named Gasca, and sent him out from Spain to restore the Imperial authority in the South American colonies of Spain, a mission which Gasca performed with so much skill, diplomatic and military, that early in 1548 Gonzalo Pizarro was defeated, made prisoner, sentenced to death, and beheaded, at the early age of forty-two. General Map No. I, p. 6.]

(*The Conquest of Peru*, W. H. Prescott, vol. ii, chap. iv (Vol. vi of the Complete Works, edited by J. F. F. Kirk in 12 vols.) Routledge.)

GONZALO PIZARRO received the news of his appointment to the government of Quito with undisguised pleasure; not so much for the possession that it gave him of this ancient Indian province, as for the field that it opened for discovery towards the east—the fabled land of Oriental spices, which had long captivated the imagination of the Conquerors. He repaired to his government without delay, and found no difficulty in awakening a

kindred enthusiasm to his own in the bosoms of his followers. In a short time he mustered three hundred and fifty Spaniards and four thousand Indians. One hundred and fifty of his company were mounted, and all were equipped in the most thorough manner for the undertaking. He provided, moreover, against famine by a large stock of provisions, and an immense drove of swine which followed in the rear.

It was the beginning of 1540 when he set out on this celebrated expedition. The first part of the journey was attended with comparatively little difficulty, while the Spaniards were yet in the land of the Incas; for the distractions of Peru had not been felt in this distant province, where the simple people still lived as under the primitive sway of the Children of the Sun. But the scene changed as they entered the territory of Quixos, where the character of the inhabitants, as well as of the climate, seemed to be of another description. The country was traversed by lofty ranges of the Andes, and the adventurers were soon entangled in their deep and intricate passes. As they rose into the more elevated regions, the icy winds that swept down the sides of the Cordilleras benumbed their limbs, and many of the natives found a wintry grave in the wilderness. While crossing this formidable barrier, they experienced one of those tremendous earthquakes which, in these volcanic regions, so often shake the mountains to their base. In one place, the earth was rent asunder by the terrible throes of Nature, while streams of sulphurous vapour issued from the cavity, and a village with some hundreds of houses was precipitated into the frightful abyss!

On descending the eastern slopes, the climate changed; and as they came on the lower level the fierce cold was succeeded by a suffocating heat, while tempests, of

thunder and lightning, rushing from out the gorges of the sierra, poured on their heads with scarcely any intermission, day or night, as if the offended deities of the place were willing to take vengeance on the invaders of their mountain solitudes. For more than six weeks the deluge continued unabated, and the forlorn wanderers wet, and weary with incessant toil, were scarcely able to drag their limbs along the soil broken up and saturated with the moisture. After some months of toilsome travel, in which they had to cross many a morass and mountain-stream, they at length reached *Canelas*, the Land of Cinnamon. They saw the trees bearing the precious bark, spreading out into broad forests; yet, however valuable an article for commerce it might have proved in accessible situations, in these remote regions it was of little worth to them. But, from the wandering tribes of savages whom they had occasionally met in their path, they learned that at ten days' distance was a rich and fruitful land abounding with gold and inhabited by populous nations. Gonzalo Pizarro had already reached the limits originally proposed for the expedition. But this intelligence renewed his hopes, and he resolved to push the adventure farther. It would have been well for him and his followers had they been content to return on their footsteps.

Continuing their march, the country now spread out into broad savannas terminated by forests which, as they drew near, seemed to stretch on every side to the very verge of the horizon. Here they beheld trees of that stupendous growth seen only in the equinoctial regions. Some were so large that sixteen men could hardly encompass them with extended arms! The wood was thickly matted with creepers and parasitical vines, which hung in gaudy-coloured festoons from tree to

tree, clothing them in a drapery beautiful to the eye, but forming an impenetrable network. At every step of their way they were obliged to hew open a passage with their axes, while their garments, rotting from the effects of the drenching rains to which they had been exposed, caught in every bush and bramble, and hung about them in shreds. Their provisions, spoiled by the weather, had long since failed, and the live stock which they had taken with them had either been consumed or made their escape in the woods and mountain-passes. They had set out with nearly a thousand dogs, many of them of the ferocious breed used in hunting down the unfortunate natives. These they now gladly killed, but their miserable carcasses furnished a lean banquet for the famishing travellers; and when these were gone they had only such herbs and dangerous roots as they could gather in the forest.

At length the way-worn company came on a broad expanse of water formed by the Napo, one of the great tributaries of the Amazon, and which, though only a third- or fourth-rate river in America, would pass for one of the first magnitude in the Old World. The sight gladdened their hearts, as by winding along its banks they hoped to find a safer and more practicable route. After traversing its borders for a considerable distance, closely beset with thickets which it taxed their strength to the utmost to overcome, Gonzalo and his party came within hearing of a rushing noise that sounded like subterranean thunder. The river, lashed into fury, tumbled along over rapids with frightful velocity, and conducted them to the brink of a magnificent cataract, which, to their wondering fancies, rushed down in one vast volume of foam to the depth of twelve hundred feet! The appalling sounds which they had heard for

the distance of six leagues were rendered yet more oppressive to the spirits by the gloomy stillness of the surrounding forests. The rude warriors were filled with sentiments of awe. Not a bark dimpled the waters. No living thing was to be seen but the wild tenants of the wilderness, the unwieldy boa, and the loathsome alligator basking on the borders of the stream. The trees towering in widespread magnificence towards the heavens, the river rolling on in its rocky bed as it had rolled for ages, the solitude and silence of the scene, broken only by the hoarse fall of waters or the faint rustling of the woods—all seemed to spread out around them in the same wild and primitive state as when they came from the hands of the Creator.

For some distance above and below the falls, the bed of the river contracted so that its width did not exceed twenty feet. Sorely pressed by hunger, the adventurers determined, at all hazards, to cross to the opposite side, in hopes of finding a country that might afford them sustenance. A frail bridge was constructed by throwing the huge trunks of trees across the chasm, where the cliffs, as if split asunder by some convulsion of nature, descended sheer down a perpendicular depth of several hundred feet. Over this airy causeway the men and horses succeeded in effecting their passage, with the loss of a single Spaniard, who, made giddy by heedlessly looking down, lost his footing and fell into the boiling surges below.

Yet they gained little by the exchange. The country wore the same unpromising aspect, and the river-banks were studded with gigantic trees or fringed with impenetrable thickets. The tribes of Indians whom they occasionally met in the pathless wilderness were fierce and unfriendly, and they were engaged in perpetual

skirmishes with them. From these they learned that a fruitful country was to be found down the river at the distance of only a few days' journey, and the Spaniards held on their weary way, still hoping and still deceived, as the promised land flitted before them, like the rainbow, receding as they advanced.

At length, spent with toil and suffering, Gonzalo resolved to construct a bark large enough to transport the weaker part of his company and his baggage. The forests furnished him with timber; the shoes of the horses which had died on the road or been slaughtered for food were converted into nails; gum distilled from the trees took the place of pitch; and the tattered garments of the soldiers supplied a substitute for oakum. It was a work of difficulty; but Gonzalo cheered his men in the task, and set an example by taking part in their labours. At the end of two months a brigantine was completed, rudely put together, but strong and of sufficient burden to carry half the company—the first vessel constructed by Europeans that ever floated on these inland waters.

Gonzalo gave the command to Francisco de Orellana, a cavalier from Truxillo, on whose courage and devotion to himself he thought he could rely. The troops now moved forward, still following the descending course of the river, while the brigantine kept alongside; and when a bold promontory or more impracticable country intervened, it furnished timely aid by the transportation of the feebler soldiers. In this way they journeyed, for many a wearisome week, through the dreary wilderness on the borders of the Napo. Every scrap of provisions had been long since consumed. The last of their horses had been devoured To appease the gnawings of hunger, they were fain to eat the leather

of their saddles and belts. The woods supplied them with scanty sustenance, and they greedily fell upon toads, serpents, and such other reptiles as they occasionally found.

They were now told of a rich district, inhabited by a populous nation, where the Napo emptied into a still greater river that flowed towards the east. It was, as usual, at the distance of several days' journey; and Gonzalo Pizarro resolved to halt where he was and send Orellana down in his brigantine to the confluence of the waters to procure a stock of provisions, with which he might return and put them in condition to resume their march. That cavalier, accordingly, taking with him fifty of the adventurers, pushed off into the middle of the river, where the stream ran swiftly, and his bark, taken by the current, shot forward with the speed of an arrow and was soon out of sight.

Days and weeks passed away, yet the vessel did not return; and no speck was to be seen on the waters, as the Spaniards strained their eyes to the farthest point, where the line of light faded away in the dark shadows of the foliage on the borders. Detachments were sent out, and, though absent several days, came back without intelligence of their comrades. Unable longer to endure this suspense, or, indeed, to maintain themselves in their present quarters, Gonzalo and his famishing followers now determined to proceed towards the junction of the rivers. Two months elapsed before they accomplished this terrible journey—those of them who did not perish on the way—although the distance probably did not exceed two hundred leagues; and they at length reached the spot so long desired, where the Napo pours its tide into the Amazon, that mighty stream, which, fed by its thousand tributaries, rolls on towards

the ocean, for many hundred miles, through the heart of the great continent—the most majestic of American rivers.

But the Spaniards gathered no tidings of Orellana, while the country, though more populous than the region they had left, was as little inviting in its aspect, and was tenanted by a race yet more ferocious. They now abandoned the hope of recovering their comrades, who they supposed must have miserably perished by famine or by the hands of the natives. But their doubts were at length dispelled by the appearance of a white man wandering half-naked in the woods, in whose famine-stricken countenance they recognised the features of one of their countrymen. It was Sanchez de Vargas, a cavalier of good descent, and much esteemed in the army. He had a dismal tale to tell.

Orellana, borne swiftly down the current of the Napo, had reached the point of its confluence with the Amazon in less than three days—accomplishing in this brief space of time what had cost Pizarro and his company two months. He had found the country altogether different from what had been represented; and, so far from supplies for his countrymen, he could barely obtain sustenance for himself. Nor was it possible for him to return as he had come, and make head against the current of the river; while the attempt to journey by land was an alternative scarcely less formidable. In this dilemma an idea flashed across his mind. It was to launch his bark at once on the bosom of the Amazon and descend its waters to its mouth. He would then visit the rich and populous nations that, as report said, lined its borders, sail out on the great ocean, cross to the neighbouring isles, and return to Spain to claim the glory and the guerdon of discovery. The suggestion

was eagerly taken up by his reckless companions, welcoming any course that would rescue them from the wretchedness of their present existence, and fired with the prospect of new and stirring adventure—for the love of adventure was the last feeling to become extinct in the bosom of the Castilian cavalier. They heeded little their unfortunate comrades whom they were to abandon in the wilderness!

This is not the place to record the circumstances of Orellana's extraordinary expedition. He succeeded in his enterprise. But it is marvellous that he should have escaped shipwreck in the perilous and unknown navigation of that river. Many times his vessel was nearly dashed to pieces on its rocks and in its furious rapids; and he was in still greater peril from the warlike tribes on its borders, who fell on his little troop whenever he attempted to land, and followed in his wake for miles in their canoes. He at length emerged from the great river; and, once upon the sea, Orellana made for the isle of Cubagua; thence passing over to Spain, he repaired to court, and told the circumstances of his voyage—of the nations of Amazons whom he had found on the banks of the river, the El Dorado which report assured him existed in the neighbourhood, and other marvels—the exaggeration rather than the coinage of a credulous fancy. His audience listened with willing ears to the tales of the traveller; and in an age of wonders, when the mysteries of the East and the West were hourly coming to light, they might be excused for not discerning the true line between romance and reality.

He found no difficulty in obtaining a commission to conquer and colonise the realms he had discovered. He soon saw himself at the head of five hundred followers, prepared to share the perils and the profits of his

expedition. But neither he nor his country was destined to realise these profits. He died on his outward passage, and the lands washed by the Amazon fell within the territories of Portugal. The unfortunate navigator did not even enjoy the undivided honour of giving his name to the waters he had discovered. He enjoyed only the barren glory of the discovery, surely not balanced by the iniquitous circumstances which attended it.

One of Orellana's party maintained a stout opposition to his proceedings, as repugnant both to humanity and honour. This was Sanchez de Vargas; and the cruel commander was revenged on him by abandoning him to his fate in the desolate region where he was now found by his countrymen.

The Spaniards listened with horror to the recital of Vargas, and their blood almost froze in their veins as they saw themselves thus deserted in the heart of this remote wilderness and deprived of their only means of escape from it. They made an effort to prosecute their journey along the banks, but after some toilsome days, strength and spirits failed, and they gave up in despair!

Then it was that the qualities of Gonzalo Pizarro, as a fit leader in the hour of despondency and danger, shone out conspicuous. To advance farther was hopeless. To stay where they were, without food or raiment, without defence from the fierce animals of the forest and the fiercer natives, was impossible. One only course remained: it was to return to Quito. But this brought with it the recollection of the past, of sufferings which they could too well estimate—hardly to be endured even in imagination. They were now at least four hundred leagues from Quito, and more than a year had elapsed since they had set out on their painful

pilgrimage. How could they encounter these perils again!

Yet there was no alternative. Gonzalo endeavoured to reassure his followers by dwelling on the invincible constancy they had hitherto displayed, adjuring them to show themselves still worthy of the name of Castilians. He reminded them of the glory they would forever acquire by their heroic achievement, when they should reach their own country. He would lead them back, he said, by another route, and it could not be but that they should meet somewhere with those fruitful regions of which they had so often heard. It was something, at least, that every step would take them nearer home; and as, at all events, it was clearly the only course now left, they should prepare to meet it like men. The spirit would sustain the body; and difficulties encountered in the right spirit were half vanquished already!

The soldiers listened eagerly to his words of promise and encouragement. The confidence of their leader gave life to the desponding. They felt the force of his reasoning, and, as they lent a willing ear to his assurances, the pride of the old Castilian honour revived in their bosoms, and everyone caught somewhat of the generous enthusiasm of their commander. He was, in truth, entitled to their devotion. From the first hour of the expedition he had freely borne his part in its privations. Far from claiming the advantage of his position, he had taken his lot with the poorest soldier ministering to the wants of the sick, cheering up the spirits of the desponding, sharing his stinted allowance with his famished followers, bearing his full part in the toil and burden of the march, ever showing himself faithful comrade, no less than their captain. He found

the benefit of this conduct in a trying hour like the present.

I will spare the reader the recapitulation of the sufferings endured by the Spaniards on their retrograde march to Quito. They took a more northerly route than that by which they had approached the Amazon; and, if it was attended with fewer difficulties, they experienced yet greater distresses from their greater inability to overcome them. Their only nourishment was such scanty fare as they could pick up in the forest, or happily meet with in some forsaken Indian settlement, or wring by violence from the natives. Some sickened and sank down by the way, for there was none to help them. Intense misery had made them selfish; and many a poor wretch was abandoned to his fate, to die alone in the wilderness, or, more probably, to be devoured, while living, by the wild animals which roamed over it.

At length, in June, 1542, after somewhat more than a year consumed in their homeward march, the way-worn company came on the elevated plains in the neighbourhood of Quito. But how different their aspect from that which they had exhibited on issuing from the gates of the same capital, two years and a half before, with high romantic hope and in all the pride of military array! Their horses gone, their arms broken and rusted, the skins of wild animals instead of clothes hanging loosely about their limbs, their long and matted locks streaming wildly down their shoulders, their faces burned and blackened by the tropical sun, their bodies wasted by famine and sorely disfigured by scars—it seemed as if the charnel-house had given up its dead, as, with uncertain step, they glided slowly onwards, like a troop of dismal spectres! More than half of the four thousand Indians who had accompanied the expedition

had perished, and of the Spaniards only eighty, and many of these irretrievably broken in constitution, returned to Quito.

The few Christian inhabitants of the place, with their wives and children, came out to welcome their countrymen. They ministered to them all the relief and refreshment in their power; and, as they listened to the sad recital of their sufferings, they mingled their tears with those of the wanderers. The whole company then entered the capital, where their first act—to their credit be it mentioned—was to go in a body to the church and offer up thanksgivings to the Almighty for their miraculous preservation through their long and perilous pilgrimage. Such was the end of the expedition to the Amazon; an expedition which, for its dangers and hardships, the length of their duration, and the constancy with which they were endured, stands perhaps unmatched in the annals of American discovery.

ORELLANA'S VOYAGE

1540, 1541

We have just read how that Gonzalo Pizarro caused a bark to be built in the forest and put Francisco de Orellana in command of it; and how Orellana, with a crew of fifty, was sent on down-river in the hope of his finding provisions for the whole force, but never returned to the main body.

Here is the story of his adventures as it appears in Sir Clements Markham's translation of the account given by the Spanish historian Herrera, though it has been necessary to omit some passages as it would otherwise be too long for this little book.

It is interesting to observe how the great river came by its present name; there seems to be no doubt that there was a fable among the Indians as to the existence of tribes of fighting women. The Spaniards in one of their battles with hostile Indians saw, or thought they saw, women among the ranks of their enemies; yet in this very narrative we see that they had already been visited by Indian *men* wearing their hair long. Whether or not women did actually sometimes help the men in their battles, the Spaniards evidently became quite confirmed in their belief of the truth of the Indian tale as to the existence of the "Amazons," the name they gave these fighting women, and the river thus came to be known as the "River of the Amazons." It is only comparatively recently that this name has been shortened to "River Amazon."

[General Map No. I, p. 6.]

(The Voyage of Francisco de Orellana (A.D. 1540–41) from *Expeditions into the Valley of the Amazons* by Sir Clements R. Markham, F.R.G.S. (Printed for the Hakluyt Society, MDCCCLIX) from the Spanish of Antonio de Herrera).

I

OF THE VOYAGE WHICH CAPTAIN ORELLANA COMMENCED, ON THE RIVER WHICH THEY CALL SAN JUAN DE LES AMAZONAS

SOME say that Orellana and his companions deserted Pizarro without his knowledge, and others that they continued the voyage with their commander's permission, in a barque which they had built, and some canoes. Voyaging, as they say, with the design of returning to Gonzalo Pizarro, with provisions, they found themselves, after going over two hundred leagues, unable to return, and, therefore, continued to sail on until they came out into the ocean.

The second day, after they had parted from Gonzalo Pizarro, they expected to have been lost in the midst of the river, as the barque struck upon a floating tree, and stove in a plank; but being near the land, they ran her on shore, repaired her, and continued the voyage. They made twenty or twenty-five leagues a day, assisted by the current. Passing the mouths of many rivers on the south side, they continued their course for three days, without seeing any habitation. Finding that the provisions they brought with them were exhausted, and that they were so distant from Gonzalo Pizarro, they thought it best to pass on with the current, commending themselves to God by means of a mass, which was performed by a Dominican monk named Carbajal. Their difficulties were now so great, that they had nothing to eat but the skins which formed their girdles, and the leather of their shoes, boiled with a few herbs.

On the 8th of January, 1541, when they were all expecting their deaths, Orellana heard the drums of

Indians, at which they rejoiced, as it now seemed that they would not die of hunger. After going on for two leagues they came upon four canoes of Indians, who presently retired, and Orellana came to a village, with a great number of Indians ready to defend it. The Captain ordered all his people to land in good order, and to take care not to straggle. At the sight of the village these afflicted soldiers plucked up such courage that, attacking the Indians with valour, the latter fled, leaving their provisions behind them, with which the Spaniards satisfied their excessive hunger. Two hours after noon the Indians returned in their canoes, to see what was going on. The Captain spoke to them in the Indian language, and, although they did not understand all he said to them, yet when he gave them a few Spanish trifles, they remained content, and offered to give him all he required. He only asked them for food, and they at once brought abundance of turkeys, partridges, fish, and other things. On the following day thirteen chiefs arrived with plumes of feathers, and gold ornaments. Orellana spoke to them with great courtesy, requested them to be obedient to the Crown of Castille, and took possession of the country in the King's name.[1]

As he knew the good feeling of the Indians, and his people being rested; knowing also the danger of sailing in the barque and canoes, if they reached the sea; he proposed to build another brigantine. One of the chiefs, according to the account of Friar Gaspar de Carbajal, gave information respecting the Amazons,

[1] When Portugal became independent of Spain in the year 1640, the Portuguese claimed the whole course of the Amazons, up to the mouth of the Napo; and in 1777, by the treaty of San Ildefonso between the two countries, the Portuguese obtained the lion's share of the valley of the Amazons.—ED.

and of a rich and powerful chief in the interior. Having commenced building the brigantine, they found no difficulty except in getting nails, but it pleased God that two men should make that which they had never been taught to make, whilst another took charge of burning the charcoal. They made bellows of their leathern buskins, and worked hard at everything else; some carrying, some cutting, and others doing various things, the Captain himself being the first to put his hand to the work. They manufactured more than two thousand nails in twenty days, a delay which was prejudicial, because the provisions were consumed which had previously been collected.

Up to this point they had made two hundred leagues in nine days, having lost seven companions, who had died of hunger during their former sufferings. They now determined (in order not to exhaust the Indians) to depart on the feast of Candlemas.[1]

Twenty leagues farther on, a stream flowed into the river on the right hand, which was so swollen, that at the point of junction with the larger stream, the waters struggled with such violence that the Spaniards expected to have been lost. Escaped from this danger, for the next two hundred leagues that they traversed, they met with no habitations, and suffered much from toil and dangers, until they arrived at some villages where the Indians seemed to be quite off their guard. In order not to disturb them, the Captain ordered twenty soldiers to land and ask them for food. The Indians were

[1] It would appear that Orellana intended to have built his brigantine at this spot, but that, after making the necessary preparations, he changed his mind, deferring the execution of his project until he reached the territory of the chief Aparia. —MARKHAM.

delighted to see the Spaniards, and gave them plenty of provisions, turtles, and parrots. Orellana then went to a village at another part of the river, where he met with no resistance. The natives gave him provisions; and, continuing the voyage in sight of villages, on another day some Indians in four canoes came to the vessel, and offered the Captain some turtles, good partridges, and fish; they were much pleased, and invited Orellana to come and see their chief, who was named Aparia, and who now approached with more canoes. The Indians and Christians landed, and the chief Aparia came, and was well received by Captain Orellana, who treated him to a discourse on the law of God, and the grandeur of the King of Castille; all of which the Indians listened to with much attention. Aparia inquired if he had seen the Amazons, whom in his language they call *Coniapuyara*, meaning Great Lord. He added that his people were few, while the Amazons were numerous. Continuing the conversation, the Captain begged the chief to name all the lords in the country. Having enumerated twenty, he ended, saying that all were children of the sun, and that as such, he ought to hold them as friends. They were rejoiced, and supplied plenty of provisions of good quality, and the Captain took possession of the land, placing a cross on a high place, at which the Indians expressed wonder and satisfaction.

II

OF WHAT HAPPENED TO CAPTAIN ORELLANA IN HIS VOYAGE, AND IN HIS DISCOVERY OF THIS RIVER OF THE AMAZONS

When Captain Orellana found that he met with a cordial reception, he determined to build the brigantine at this place; and it pleased God that there should be an engraver in his company, who, though shipbuilding was not his business, proved of great use. The timber having been cut and prepared with great labour, which the men endured with much willingness, in thirty-five days she was launched, caulked with cotton, and the seams payed with pitch which was given them by the Indians.

At this time four tall Indians came to the Captain, dressed and adorned with ornaments, and with hair reaching from the head to the waist. With much humility they placed food before the Captain, and said that a great chief had sent them to inquire who these strangers were, and whence they came. Orellana gave them some articles of barter, which they valued very much, and he spoke to them in the same way as he had done to the others, and so they departed. The Spaniards passed all Lent at this place, and all the Christians confessed to the two priests who were in the company, and the priests preached to them, and urged them to endure the hardships they would have to encounter with constancy, until there should be an end of them.

The new brigantine being completed, and fit to navigate the sea, they set sail on the 4th of April from the residence of Aparia, and voyaged for eighty leagues without encountering a single warlike Indian. The

river passed through an uninhabited country, flowing from forest to forest, and they found no place where they could either sleep or fish. Thus with herbs and a little toasted maize for food, they went on until the 6th of May, when they reached an elevated place which appeared to have been inhabited. Here they stopped to fish, and it happened that the engraver, who had been so useful in building the vessel, killed a guana with his cross-bow. The creature was in a tree near the river, and fell into the water. A soldier named Contreras also caught a large fish with a hook, and, as the hook was small and the fish was large, it was necessary to take hold of it with his hand; and when it was opened, the bolt of the cross-bow was found in its stomach.

On the 12th of May they arrived at the province of Machiparo,[1] which is thickly peopled, and ruled by another chief named Aomagua.[2] One morning they discovered a number of canoes full of warlike Indians, with large shields made of the skins of lizards and dantas (tapirs), beating drums, and shouting, with threats that they would eat the Christians. The latter collected their vessels together, but met with a great misfortune in finding that their powder had become damp, and that they were thus unable to load their arquebusses. The Indians approached with their bows, and the cross-bows did them some damage; and thus, while reinforcements continued to arrive, a gallant conflict was maintained. In this way they descended the river, engaged in a running fight until they reached a place where there was a great crowd in the ravines. Half the

[1] Probably in the Putumayo near its junction with the Amazon.—ED.

[2] Evidently the Omaguas. Orellana mistook the name of the tribe for the name of the chief.—MARKHAM.

Spaniards then landed, and followed the Indians to their village; and as it appeared large, and the people were numerous, the ensign returned to make his report to Orellana, who was defending the vessels against the Indians, who were attacking him from their canoes.

Understanding that there was a quantity of provisions in the village, the Captain ordered a soldier, named Cristoval de Segovia, to take it. He started with twelve companions, who loaded themselves with supplies, but were attacked by more than two thousand Indians, whom they resisted with such vigour, that they forced them to retreat, and retained the food, with only two Spaniards wounded. But the Indians returned with reinforcements, and pressing on the Spaniards, wounded four. Cristoval de Segovia, though he wished to retire to the ships, said he would not leave the Indians with the victory, nor place his retreat in such peril, and, making a gallant resistance, he succeeded in retiring in safety. In the meanwhile another body of Indians attacked the vessels from two sides, and, having fought for more than two hours, it pleased the Lord to assist the Spaniards, and some, of whom little was expected, performed wonderful deeds of valour. Such were the acts of Cristoval de Aguilar, Blas de Medina, and Pedro de Ampudia.

The Indians having retired, the wounded, who amounted to eighteen, were ordered to be attended to. All recovered except Ampudia, a native of Cindad Rodrigo, who died of his wounds in eight days. In this encounter the value of the commander's example was shown; for Orellana did not, because he commanded, cease to fight like any common soldier, while his good disposition, his form, his promptitude, and forethought, animated the soldiers.

As it appeared to Orellana that it was useless, and could serve no purpose to fight with the Indians, he determined to continue his voyage. He embarked a great part of the provisions, and got under weigh; while the Indians on shore, amounting to nearly ten thousand, gave loud shouts, and those in canoes continued to assault the Spaniards with much audacity. In this way the whole night was passed until dawn, when they saw many villages. The Spaniards, fatigued by so bad a night, determined to go and take refreshments on an uninhabited island, on which, however, they were unable to get any rest, from the crowds of Indians who landed and attacked them.

On this the Captain determined to proceed. He was continually followed by one hundred and thirty canoes containing eight thousand Indians, and accompanied by four or five sorcerers, while the noise of their drums, cornets, and shouting was a thing frightful to hear. If the Spaniards had not had arquebusses and cross-bows, they must have been destroyed, for the Indians advanced with the determination of grappling with and boarding the vessels. Orellana sent forward an arquebusier named Cales, who shot the Indian general, and the other Indians crowded round to assist him. The ships then set out down the river, followed by the canoes, without resting for two days and nights, and in this way they departed from the settlements of the great chief who was named Machiparo.

Having left the canoes behind, the Spaniards came to a village defended by several Indians. Orellana thought it would be well to rest here for four days, after the former toil, and having brought the vessels to, he landed his men with arquebusses and cross-bows. The Indians fled, and he took possession of the village.

III

CAPTAIN ORELLANA CONTINUED THE DISCOVERY OF THE RIVER, WHICH IS ALSO CALLED BY HIS NAME

They remained at this village for three days, eating plentifully. The Captain calculated that they had sailed down the river for three hundred leagues from Aparia, two hundred of which were through uninhabited regions. Having embarked a good supply of the biscuit which the Indians make from maize, yucas, and fruit, they set sail on the Sunday after Ascension; and a league farther on, Orellana found that another great stream entered the river, with three islands at its mouth, for which reason he called it the river of the Trinity. The land appeared to be well peopled and fertile, and many canoes came out into the river.

On another day they discovered a small village in a very beautiful spot, and, though the Indians resisted, they entered it and found plenty of provisions. There was a country house containing very good jars of earthenware, vases, and goblets of glass enamelled with many bright colours, resembling drawings and paintings. The Indians at this place said that these things came from the interior, together with much gold and silver. They also found idols worked from palm-wood in a very curious fashion, of gigantic stature, with wheels in the fleshy part of the arms. The Spaniards found in this village gold and silver; but as they only thought of discovery and of saving their lives, they did not care for anything else.

From this village two highroads branched off and the Captain walked about half a league along them, but finding that they did not end, he returned and ordered

his people to embark and continue the voyage, because in a country so well peopled, it was not advisable to remain on shore during the night.

Having sailed for one hundred leagues through this inhabited country, always in the middle of the river, to keep clear of the Indians; they reached the territory of another chief named Paguana, where the people were friendly and gave the Spaniards what they required. These Indians had sheep of Peru, the land was productive and yielded very good fruit.

On Whit-Sunday they passed in sight of a great village with many suburbs, and large crowds of people at each suburb. When they saw the vessels pass, the Indians got into their canoes, but returned, owing to the damage they received from the arquebusses and cross-bows of the Spaniards. On another day they reached a village which ended the dominion of Paguana. They then entered the territory of another chief of a warlike people, whose name they did not know, and on the eve of Trinity Sunday they came to off a village where the Indians defended themselves with large shields, but the Spaniards entered their village, and supplied themselves with food. Soon afterwards they discovered a river, on the left hand, with water as black as ink, the force of which was so great that, for more than twenty leagues, its waters flowed separately, without mingling with the Amazons river.[1]

They saw many small villages, and entered one, where they found quantities of fish, though it was necessary to force open a door in a wooden wall which surrounded the village.

Continuing the voyage, they passed through a populous country, well supplied with provisions, and when they

[1] This was the Rio Negro.—MARKHAM.

were on one side of the river, it was so broad that they could not see the other bank.

. . . . .

On the 22nd of June, they discovered many villages on the left bank, but they could not get at them on account of the strength of the current. The following Wednesday they came to a village, with a large square, through the midst of which flowed a stream. Here they obtained supplies, and they continually passed the habitations of fishermen. In doubling a point of the river, they came upon some very large villages. The Indians were prepared for the Spaniards, and came out to attack them in the water. Orellana called to them, and offered them articles for barter, but they mocked at him, and a great multitude of people advanced against him in different troops. The Captain ordered the ships to retire to the place where his people were searching for food; but the flights of arrows which the Indians discharged were such that, having wounded five persons, and among others the Father Fray Gaspar de Carbajal, Orellana made great haste to bring the vessel to, and land his people; where the Indians fought bravely and obstinately, without taking account of the number of killed and wounded. Father Carbajal affirms that these Indians defended themselves so resolutely, because they were tributaries of the Amazons, and that he and the other Spaniards saw ten or twelve Amazons, who were fighting in front of the Indians, as if they commanded them, with such vigour that the Indians did not dare to turn their backs; and those who fled before the Spaniards were killed with sticks.

These women appeared to be very tall, robust, fair, with long hair twisted over their heads, skins round their

loins, and bows and arrows in their hands, with which they killed seven or eight Spaniards. This account of the Amazons I repeat as I found it in the memorials of this expedition, leaving the credibility of it to the judgment of others; for the name of Amazons is that which these Spaniards chose to give them.[1]

As reinforcements were coming up from other villages, the Spaniards embarked and retired, calculating that up to that day they had gone over one thousand four hundred leagues, without knowing how far it might be to the sea.

. . . . .

IV

END OF THE DISCOVERY OF THE RIVER OF ORELLANA

Having reached the centre of the river, at a short distance they discovered a large village, and, yielding to the importunities of the soldiers, the Captain went to it to get provisions, though he said that if Indians were not to be seen, it was because they were concealed, which proved to be true.

On reaching the banks, they discovered a great number, who discharged a flight of arrows, and, as the Spaniards had not put up the defensive cloths, which were made after they left the country of Machiparo, they received much damage. Father Gaspar de Carbajal was so badly wounded by an arrow in the eye, that he lost the use of it; an accident which caused much sorrow

[1] This encounter appears to have taken place near the mouth of the river Trombretas.—MARKHAM.

to everyone, because this Father, besides being very religious, assisted them in their difficulties by his cheerfulness and sagacity.

After this encounter Orellana kept his people well together, and advanced more cautiously. He found the country very fertile and well populated, and called it the Province of St. John. They were continually followed by natives in piraguas, and unable to get any provisions.—ED.

Having left this province of St. John, and the piraguas having desisted from following them, they determined to rest in a forest. Captain Orellana, by means of a vocabulary which he had made, asked many questions of a captured Indian, from whom he learned that that land was subject to women, who lived in the same way as Amazons, and were very rich, possessing much gold and silver. They had five houses of the sun plated with gold, their own houses were of stone, and their cities defended by walls; and he related other details, which I can neither believe nor affirm, owing to the difficulty in discovering the truth.

Having rested themselves in this wood, they continued their voyage, not expecting to find more people; but on the left side of the river they discovered, on an eminence, some large and beautiful villages, and the Captain did not wish to approach them so close as to aggravate the Indians. But many of them came out into the water up to their middles, looking at the brigantine, as if they were terrified. The captive Indian said that this territory extended for more than one hundred leagues, under a chief named Caripuna, who had great quantities of silver. Finding a small village, the Spaniards landed to obtain provisions. The Indians, in defending it, killed Antonio de Carrança, a native of Burgos; and here they found that the

Indians used poisoned arrows. At this place also the Spaniards first noticed signs of the ebb of the tide.

Shortly after this they came to a small arm of the sea; here they were again attacked by Indians, this time armed with poisoned arrows.—ED.

They killed Garcia de Soria, a native of Logroño, with a wound from an arrow, which did not enter more than half a finger deep, but, being poisoned, he died in twenty-four hours. The land was well peopled, and belonged to a chief named Chipayo. Once more the crowds of piraguas attacked the brigantines, which were under weigh; and Alferez, with a shot from his arquebus, killed two Indians, and, frightened by the report, many others fell into the water. A soldier named Perucho, a Biscayan, struck one of their chiefs, on which the piraguas retired, and left the brigantines.

After this fight they continued down river on the left bank as being the more uninhabited; then they came to islands among which they sailed for two hundred leagues; the smaller vessel sprung a leak and sank, but, being left high and dry by the falling tide, she was repaired and refloated. Once more they ran very short of food.—ED.

V

CONCLUDES THE DISCOVERY OF THE RIVER OF ORELLANA AND THE CAPTAIN ENTERS THE SEA AND REACHES THE ISLAND OF CUBAGUA

. . . . . .

Having arrived near the sea, they made their rigging and ropes of grass, and their sails of the blankets in which they slept.

Here they remained fourteen days, eating nothing

but the shell fish that each man could pick up, and thus ill-provided they started on the 8th of August, 1541. They went under sail, taking advantage of the tide, which often when it turned, carried the vessels back, but it pleased God to deliver them from these perils, because as they went by lands which were inhabited, the Indians gave them maize and roots, and treated them well. They got water on board in pitchers and jars, toasted maize and roots; and thus they got ready for sea, to go where fortune might choose to take them, without either pilot, compass, or anything useful for navigation; nor did they know what direction they should take.

They left the mouth of the river . . . on the 26th August, 1541, at such a good season that neither in the river nor in the sea did they experience rains.

They continued in sight of land by day and night, and saw many rivers which entered the sea, and the small barque, having separated from the large one in the night, she was never seen again during the passage. At the end of nine days they reached the Gulf of Paria, and though they struggled for seven days, they could not get on, while their food consisted only of fruit like prunes, which they called Nogos.

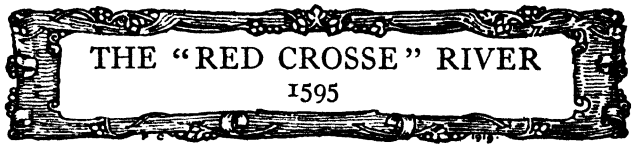
God led them through the mouth of the Dragon, and at the end of two days after getting out of that prison[1] without knowing where they were, or where they were going, they reached the Island of Cubagua on the 11th of September, two days after the smaller brigantine had arrived.

They were very well received in Cubagua, and from thence Captain Orellano determined to go and give an

[1] i.e. the Gulf of Paria.

account of his great discovery to the King, certifying that it was not the river Marañon, as the people of Cubagua declared, and many called it El Dorado.

According to Father Carbajal they sailed for one thousand eight hundred leagues, including the windings of the river.



THE "RED CROSSE" RIVER
1595

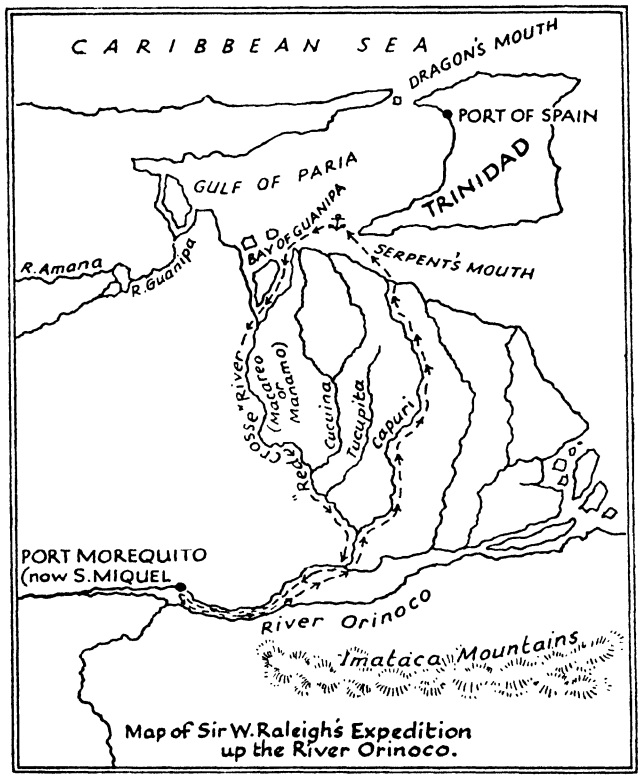
On 6 February, 1595, Sir Walter Raleigh left England with the object of exploring the country of Guiana, and with his "owne shippe and a small barke of Captaine Crosses onely" he arrived at Trinidad on 22 March. Here he met with Spaniards who "vaunted of Guiana and of the riches thereof."

Hearing that the Spanish officer in command of the garrison was one Berreo who, the year before, had treacherously ambushed and killed eight English sailors, he made a surprise attack, routed the garrison and captured Berreo. He was then joined by two more ships from England, and immediately set sail for the mainland; from Berreo he obtained more information about Guiana (which then included what are now the countries of Venezuela and the three Guianas) and then told Berreo of his intention to visit the country, whereat Berreo was "stricken into a great melancholie" and vainly tried to dissuade him.

Reaching the westerly outlets of the Orinoco, after failing to find an entrance for his ships he anchored them and proceeded to grope for a way into the river in open boats. It is at this point that we will take up the narrative in the words (and spelling) of his own account entitled "The Discoverie of Guiana," which is regarded as one of the most brilliant descriptions of adventure and travel of the many that appeared in the great days of Queen Elizabeth.

(*Sir Walter Raleigh's Voyage to Guiana*, edited by Sir R. Schomburgk, and printed for the Hakluyt Society, 1848.)

BUT this it chanced that entring into a river (which bicause it had no name we called the river of the *Red crosse*, ourselves being the first *Christians* that ever came therein) the 22 of May we were rowing up the same, we



Map of Sir W. Raleigh's Expedition up the River Orinoco.

espied a smal *Canoa* with three *Indians*, which (by the swiftness of my barge, rowing with eight oares) I overtooke ere they could crosse the river, the rest of the people shadowed under the thicke wood gazed on with a doubtfull conceit what might befall those three which we had taken: But when they perceived that we offered them no violence, neither entred their *Canoa* with any of ours, nor took out of the *Canoa* any of theirs, they then began to shew themselves on the banks side, and offred to traffique with us for such things as they had. . . . As we abode there a while, our Indian Pilot called *Ferdinando* would needs go ashore to their village to fetch some fruites, and to drinke of their artificiall wines, and also to see the place and to know the Lord of it against another time, and tooke with him a brother of his which he had with him in the journey: when they came to the village of these people, the Lord of the Iland offred to lay hands on them, purposing to have slaine them both, yeelding for reason that this Indian of ours had brought a strange nation into their territorie to spoyle and destroy them: But the Pilot being quicke and of a disposed body slipt their fingers, and ran into the woods, and his brother being the better footman of the two, recovered the creekes mouth, where we staied in our barge, crying out that his brother was slaine, with that we set hands on one of them that was next us, a very old man, and brought him into the barge, assuring him that if we had not our Pilot againe, we would presently cut off his head.

This old man being resolved that he should paie the losse of the other, cried out to those in the woods to save *Ferdinando* our Pilot, but they followed him notwithstanding, and hunted after him upon the foote with their Deere dogs, and with so maine a crie that all

the woods eckoed with the shoute they made, but at last this poore chased Indian recovered the river side, and got upon a tree, and as we were coasting, leaped down and swam to the barge halfe dead with feare; but our good hap was, that we kept the other old Indian, which we handfasted to redeeme our Pilot withall, for being naturall of those rivers, we assured ourselves he knew the way better than any stranger could, and indeed, but for this chance I thinke we had never founde the way either to *Guiana*, or back to our ships: for *Ferdinando* after a few daies knew nothing at all, nor which way to turn, yea and many times the old man himselfe was in great doubt which river to take. Those people which dwell in these broken Ilands and drowned lands are generally called *Tiuitiuas*, there are of them two sorts, the one called *Ciawani*, and the other *Waraweete*.

The great river of *Orenoque* or *Baraquan* hath nine branches which fall out on the north side of his owne maine mouth; on the south side it hath seven other fallings into the sea, so it desemboketh by 16 armes in al, between Ilands and broken ground, but the Ilands are verie great, manie of them as bigge as the Isle of *Wight* and bigger, and many lesse: from the first branch on the north to the last of the south it is at lest 100 leagues, so as the rivers mouth is no lesse than 300 miles wide at his entrance into the sea, which I take to be farre bigger than that of the Amazones: al those that inhabite in the mouth of this river upon the severall north branches are these *Tiuitiuas*, of which there are two chiefe Lords which have continuall warres one with the other. . . .

These Tiuitiuas [1] are a verie goodlie people and verie

[1] Now called Waraus.—Ed.

valiant, and have the most manlie speech and most deliberate that ever I heard of what nation soever. In the summer they have houses on the ground as in other places: In the winter they dwell upon the trees, where they build very artificiall townes and villages: for betweene *May* and *September* the river of *Orenoke* riseth thirtie foote upright, and then are those Ilands overflowen twentie foote high above the levell of the ground, saving some few raised grounds in the middle of them: and for this cause they are enforced to live in this maner.

After we departed from the port of these *Ciawani*, we passed up the river with the flood, and ancored the ebbe, and in this sort we went onward. The third daie that we entred the river our *Galley* came on ground, and stuck so fast, as we thought that even there our discovery had ended, and that we must have left 60 of our men to have inhabited like rookes upon the trees with those nations: but the next morning, after we had cast out all her ballast, with tugging and hawling to and fro, we got her afloate, and went on: At fower daies ende wee fell into as goodlie a river as ever I beheld, which was called the great *Amana*, which ran more directlie without windings and turnings than the other.

Here they lost the tides and consequently had to row hard against a very strong stream. Raleigh was mistaken as to the name of the river; it was the Manamo or Macareo, the Amana being another river. (See Map).

When three daies more were overgone, our companies began to despaire, the weather being extreame hot, the river bordered with verie high trees that kept away the aire, and the currant against us every day stronger than other. . . . The farther we went on (our victuall

decreasing and the aire breeding great faintnes) we grew weaker and weaker when we had most need of strength and abilitie, for howerlie the river ran more violently than other against us, and the barge, wherries, and ships bote of Captaine *Gifford*, and Captain *Calfield*, had spent all their provisions, so as wee were brought into despaire and discomfort, had we not perswaded all the companie that it was but onlie one daies work more to attaine the lande where we should be releeved of all we wanted, and if we returned that we were sure to starve by the way, and that the worlde would also laugh us to scorn. On the banks of these rivers were divers sorts of fruits good to eate, flowers and trees of that varietie as were sufficient to make ten volumes of herbals, we releeved our selves manie times with the fruits of the countrey, and sometimes with foule and fish: we sawe birds of all colours, some carnation, some crimson, orenge tawny, purple, greene, watched, and of all other sorts both simple and mixt, as it was unto us a great good passing of the time to beholde them, besides the reliefe we found by killing some store of them with our fouling peeces, without which, having little or no bread and lesse drink, but onely the thick and troubled water of the river, we had been in a very hard case.

Our old Pilot of the *Ciawani* (whom, as I said before, we tooke to redeeme *Ferdinando*) told us that if we would enter a branch of the river on the right hand with our barge and wherries, and leave the *Galley* at ancor the while in the great river, he would bring us to a towne of the *Arwacas* where we should find store of bread, hens, fish, and of the countrey wine, and perswaded us that departing from the *Galley* at noone, we might returne ere night. I was very glad to heare

this speech, and presently tooke my barge, with eight musketiers, Captain *Giffords* wherrie, with himselfe and foure musketiers, and Captaine *Calfield* whith his wherrie and as manie, and so we entred the mouth of this river, and bicause we were perswaded that it was so neere, we tooke no victuall with us at all; when we had rowed three howers, we marvelled we sawe no signe of any dwelling, and asked the Pilot where the town was, he told us a little farther: after three howers more the *Sun* being almost set, we began to suspect that he led us that waie to betraie us, for he confessed that those Spaniards which fled from *Trinedado*, and also those that remained with *Carapana* in *Emeria*, were ioyned togither in some village upon that river.

But when it grew towardes night, and we demaunding where the place was, he tolde us but fower reaches more; when we had rowed fower and fower, we saw no signe, and our poore men even hart broken, and tired, were ready to give up the ghost; for we had now come from the *Galley* near forty miles.

At the last we determined to hang the Pilot, and if we had well knowen the way backe againe by night, he had surely gone, but our owne necessities pleaded sufficiently for his safetie: for it was as darke as pitch, and the river began so to narrow it selfe, and the trees to hang over from side to side, as we were driven with arming swordes to cut a passage thorow those branches that covered the water.

We were very desirous to finde this towne hoping of a feast, bicause we made but a short breakfast aboord the *Galley* in the morning, and it was now eight a clock at night, and our stomacks began to gnaw apace; but whether it was best to returne or go on, we began to doubt, suspecting treason in the Pilot more and more;

but the poore old Indian ever assured us that it was but a little farther, and but this one turning, and that turning, and at last about one a clocke after midnight we saw a light and rowing towards it we heard the dogs of the village.

When we landed we found few people, for the Lord of that place was gone with divers *Canoas* above 400 miles of, upon a journey towards the head of the *Orenoque* to trade for gold. . . . In his house we had good store of bread, fish, hens, and Indian drinke, and so rested that night, and in the morning after we had traded with such of his people as came down, we returned towards our *Galley*, and brought with us some quantity of bread, fish, and hens.

On both sides of this river, we passed the most beautifull countrie that ever mine eies beheld: and whereas all that we had seen before was nothing but woods, prickles, bushes, and thornes, heere we beheld plaines of twenty miles in length, the grasse short and greene, and in divers parts groves of trees by themselves, as if they had been by all the art and labour in the world so made of purpose: and stil as we rowed, the Deere came downe feeding by the waters side, as if they had been used to a keepers call. Upon this river there were great store of fowle, and of many sorts; we saw in it divers sorts of strange fishes, and of marvellous bignes, but for *Lagartos* (alligators) it exceeded, for there were thousands of those uglie serpents, and the people call it for the abundance of them the river of *Lagartos*, in their language. I had a *Negro* a very proper young fellow, that leaping out of the *Galley* to swim in the mouth of this river, was in all our sights taken and devoured with one of these *Lagartos*. In the mean while our companies in the *Galley* thought we had beene

all lost (for we promised to returne before night) and sent the *Lions Whelp* ships bote with Captaine *Whiddon* to follow us up the river, but the next day after we had rowed up and downe some fower score miles we returned, and went on our way up the great river. . . . The 15 day we discovered a farre off the mountaines of Guiana to our great joy, and towards the evening had a slent of a northerly winde that blew very strong, which brought us in sight of the great river of *Orenoque*, out of which this river descended wherein we were.

They now reached the main stream of the Orinoco River, where they turned westwards and went some hundred and twenty miles upstream, in the country now called Venezuela, to Port Morequito, now San Miguel. There they remained some days collecting information about the country and the prospects of gold until, with the starting of the rains the river began to rise; and his party complaining of the dirty state to which they were reduced after a month's absence from their ships, Raleigh decided to return.

On their return journey they went down another outlet of the Orinoco farther to the eastward, the Capuri, and had some difficulty in finding the ships. However, they reached them in safety and sailed for home.

Raleigh eventually met his death on the scaffold in 1618, shortly after his return from a second and very unsuccessful and tragic expedition to the Orinoco, in which his son was killed in a skirmish with the Spaniards.

THE BUCCANEERS BAULKED

1680

There is a certain halo of romance about the Buccaneers of the Spanish Main in the seventeenth century; but if the truth be told, it is to be feared that the best of them were unscrupulous adventurers, the worst of them bloodthirsty murderers, and all of them pirates. It is true that their professed enemies were the Spaniards, and during the time that England was at war with Spain they were but seldom interfered with, and were sometimes made use of, by the English authorities. Yet many of the buccaneers were by no means averse to practising their acts of violence on any victim, regardless of nationality, who seemed likely to yield them plunder.

The word "buccaneer" is the English version of the French word "boucanier," a "boucan" being an establishment where meat was dried on the West Indian island of Santo Domingo or Hispaniola, upon which island wild cattle abounded; beginning as smugglers of this meat, which also formed their own principal sustenance, the buccaneers, who were chiefly of English, Dutch, and French nationality (in many cases having escaped when serving sentences of transportation to the plantations), extended their operations to the capture and plunder of Spanish ships and settlements.

In March 1679, a large party of these men assembled in nine ships and proceeded to the Darien coast, where they disembarked a party of some three hundred and eighty men which proceeded overland, and by canoe to the town of Santa Maria. Having taken and plundered this town, they crossed the Isthmus and took the town of Panama, where the party broke up, some returning to the ships on the Atlantic side, whilst others, in vessels captured from the Spaniards, continued operations on the Pacific Coast.

Among the most notable of the latter was Captain Bartholomew Sharp, or Sharpe; he proposed to attack Arica, a port which was then in Peruvian territory, but which has been held by Chile since the war of 1879–1881 between Chile and Peru. However, on reaching it he found the people prepared to resist his attack, so he desisted and went farther south to La Serena, near Coquimbo, which place he plundered and burnt; thence he took his ship to Juan Fernandez Island to careen her, and here his men mutinied, and elected one, John Watling, to be their captain in his place. This mistake cost them dear, as the following account of their second attack on Arica will show; it was written by Basil Ringrose, who was present at the attack.

Sharpe's exploits made him a sort of bogey-man to the inhabitants of the Chilean coast towns, so that the saying "When *Charpé* comes to Penco" was used to express an impending disaster—*Charpé* being the Spanish rendering of Sharpe, whilst Penco, a town in the bay of Talcahuano, was then a port of some importance. This saying has been passed down among the people through the centuries, but, its origin having been forgotten, it has been corrupted into the form "When *charqui* comes to Penco"; and this is a rather curious coincidence, because *charqui* is the Spanish word for that very dried meat which gave the buccaneers their name. [General Maps Nos. I (p. 6) and II (p. 67).]

(Ringrose's narrative first appeared as the second volume of *Bucaniers of America, written originally in Dutch by J. (or A. O.) Esquemelin . . . now . . . rendred into English.* W. Cooke, London, 1684–5.

The present excerpt was taken from an edition of 1923, Broadway Translations, Geo. Routledge.)

Monday, January 24th (1680). This day we had an indifferent gale of wind and we stood N. and by E., the wind being S.S.E. By observation lat. 21° 02′ S. Our whole easting I reckoned to be 92 leagues and a half. In the afternoon of this day Captain Watling, our Commander, and 25 men more departed from the

ship in two canoes, with design to seek for and take the island of Iquique, and there to gain intelligence of the posture of affairs at Arica. We were at the distance of twelve leagues from shore when they went away from the ship.

The next day by a clear observation, lat. 20° 40′ S. At four in the afternoon this day one of our canoes returned, bringing word that they could not find the island, though they had searched for it very diligently. At night came the other, being brought back by a wrong sign given us by the first canoe. The second canoe had landed upon the continent, and there found a track, which they followed for some little space. Here they met a dead whale, with whose bones the Spaniards had built a hut, and set up a cross. There lay also many pieces of broken jars. They observed likewise that hereabouts upon the coast were many bays, good landings, and anchoring for ships. That evening about seven o'clock a fresh gang departed from the ship to seek for the same island, while we lay becalmed all night, driving about a league to leeward.

Wednesday, January 26th, we had extremely hot weather. This day the Spanish pilot told us that on the continent over against us, and at the distance of a very little way within the land, are many rich mines of silver, but that the Spaniards dared not open them for fear of an invasion from some foreign enemy or other. We sailed N. at the distance of about two leagues from shore. At noon by observation found lat. 20° 21′ S. At four o'clock we saw a smoke made by our men, close by a white cliff, which proved to be the island. Hereupon we immediately sent away another canoe with more men, to supply them in their attempts. But in the meanwhile the first canoe, which had departed the

evening before this day, came aboard, bringing with them four prisoners, two old white men and two Indians.

The other canoe which set out last, brought back molasses, fish, and two jars of wine. To windward of the said island is a small village of eighteen or twenty houses, having a small chapel near it built of stone, and for adornment thereof it is stuck full of hides or the skins of seals.

They found about fifty people in this hamlet, but the greatest part of them made their escape at the arrival of the canoe. To this island frequently come barks from Arica, which city is not far distant, to fetch clay, and they have already transported away a considerable part thereof. The poor Indians, inhabitants or natives of this island, are forced to bring all the fresh water they use the full distance of eleven leagues, that is to say from a river named Camarones, which lies to leeward of the island. The bark wherein they used to bring it was gone for water when our men landed upon the place. The island all over is white, but the bowels thereof are of a reddish sort of earth. From the shore is seen here a great path which leads over the mountains into the country. The Indians of this island eat much and often a sort of leaves that are of a taste much like our bay-leaves in England, insomuch that their teeth are dyed a green colour by the continual use of it. The inhabitants go stark naked, and are very robust and strong people, yet notwithstanding they live more like beasts than men.

Thursday, January 27th. This morning on board the ship we examined one of the old men who were taken prisoners upon the island the day before. But finding him in many lies, as we thought, concerning Arica, our Commander ordered him to be shot to death, which

was accordingly done. Our old Commander, Captain Sharp, was much troubled in his mind and dissatisfied at this cruel and rash proceeding, whereupon he opposed it as much as he could. But, seeing he could not prevail, he took water and washed his hands, saying: "Gentlemen, I am clear of the blood of this old man; and I will warrant you a hot day for this piece of cruelty, whenever we come to fight at Arica." These words were found at the latter end of the expedition of Arica to contain a true and certain prophecy, as shall be related hereafter.

The other old man, being under examination, informed us that the island of Iquique afore-mentioned belonged to the Governor of Arica, who was proprietor thereof; and that he allowed these men a little wine and other necessaries, to live upon for their sustenance. That he himself had the superintendence of forty or fifty of the governor's slaves, who caught fish and dried it for the profit of the said governor, and he sold it afterwards to the inland towns, and reaped a considerable benefit thereby. That by a letter received from Arica eight days ago they understood there was then in the harbour of Arica three ships from Chile, and one bark. That they had raised there a fortification mounted with 12 copper guns. But that when we were there before, they had conveyed out of the town to the neighbouring stations all their plate, gold, and jewels, burying it there in the ground and concealing it after several manners and ways, which, whether it were now returned or not, he could not easily tell. That there were two great places, the one at ten, the other at twenty-five, leagues from Arica, at which towns lay all their strength and treasure. That the day before had passed a post to declare our having been at Coquimbo. That the embargo laid on all vessels going northwards was now

taken off, so that a free passage was allowed them. That by land it was impossible to go hence to Arica in less than four or five days, forasmuch as they must carry water for themselves and horses for the whole journey. And, lastly, that those arms that were brought from Lima to Arica, as was mentioned above, were now carried away to Buenos Ayres. All these things pleased us mighty well to hear. But, however, Captain Sharpe was still much dissatisfied because we had shot the old man. For he had given us information to the full, and, with all manner of truth, how that Arica was greatly fortified, and much more than before; but our misfortune was that we took his information to be all contrary to the truth.

The leaves of which we made mention above are brought down to this island in whole bales, and then distributed to the Indians by a short allowance given to each man. This day we had very hot weather and a S.W. sea. By observation we found lat. 20° 13′ S. Besides the things above-mentioned, our prisoners informed us that at Arica the Spaniards had built a breastwork round about the town, and one also in every street, that, in case one end of the town were taken, they might be able to defend the other. We stood off and on for the greatest part of this day. In the afternoon we were 8 leagues and a-half distant from shore, with a fresh wind. That morning, moreover, we took the bark that was at the river of Camarones, to fill water for the island.

Friday, January 28th. Last night about midnight we left the ship, and embarked ourselves in the bark aforementioned, the launch, and four canoes, with design to take Arica by surprise. We rowed and sailed all night, making in for the shore.

Saturday, January 29th. About break of day we got under shore, and there hid ourselves among the rocks for all the day long, fearing lest we should be descried by the enemy before we came to Arica. At this time we were about 5 leagues to southward of Arica, near Quebrada de San Vitor, a place so called upon that coast. Night being come, we rowed away from there.

Sunday, January 30th, 1680. This day (being the day that is consecrated in our English Calendar to the Martyrdom of our glorious King Charles the First) in the morning about sunrise, we landed amongst some rocks at some distance of four miles, more or less, to the southward from Arica. We put on shore 92 men in all, the rest remaining in the boats to keep and defend them from being surprised by the enemy, with the intent we might leave behind us a safe retreat in case of necessity. To these men we left strict orders that, if we made one smoke from the town or adjoining fields, they should come after us towards the harbour of Arica with one canoe; but, in case we made two, that they should bring all away, leaving only 15 men in the boats.

As we marched from our landing-place towards the town we mounted a very steep hill, and saw thence no men nor forces of the enemy; which caused us to hope we were not as yet descried, and that we should utterly surprise them. But when we were come about half of the way to the town, we spied three horsemen, who mounted the look-out hill, and, seeing us upon our march, they rode down full speed towards the city, to give notice of our approach. Our Commander, Watling, chose out 40 of our number to attack the fort, and sent us away first thitherwards, the rest being designed for the town. We that were appointed for the fort had ten hand-grenades among us when we

gave the assault, and with them, as well as with our other arms, we attacked the castle, and exchanged several shots with our enemies. But at last, seeing our main body in danger of being overborne with the number of our enemies, we gave over that attempt on the fort, and ran down in all haste to the valley, to help and assist them in the fight. Here the battle was very desperate, and they killed three and wounded two more of our men from their outworks before we could gain upon them. But, our rage increasing with our wounds, we still advanced, and at last beat the enemy out of all, and filled every street in the city with dead bodies. The enemy made several retreats to several places, from one breastwork to another, and we had not a sufficient number of men wherewith to man all the places taken. Insomuch that we had no sooner beat them out of one place than they came another way, and manned it again with new forces and fresh men.

We took in every place where we vanquished the enemy great number of prisoners, more indeed than peradventure we ought to have done or knew well what to do with, they being too many for such a small body as ours was to manage. These prisoners informed us that we had been descried no less than three days before from the island of Iquique, whereby they were in expectation of our arrival every hour, knowing we still had a design to make a second attempt upon that place. That into the city were come 400 soldiers from Lima, who, besides their own, had brought 700 arms for the use of the country people; and that in the town they had 600 armed men and in the fort 300.

Being now in possession of the city, or the greatest part thereof, we sent to the fort, commanding them to surrender, but they would not vouchsafe to send us any

answer. Hereupon we advanced towards it, and gave it a second attack, wherein we persisted very vigorously for a long time. Not being able to carry it, we got upon the top of a house that stood near it, and from there fired down into the fort, killing many of their men and wounding them at our ease and pleasure. But, while we were busied in this attack, the rest of the enemy's forces had taken again several posts of the town, and began to surround us in great numbers, with design to cut us off. Hereupon we were constrained to desist the second time as before from assaulting the fort, and make head against them. This we no sooner had done, than, their numbers and vigour increasing every moment, we found ourselves to be overpowered, and consequently we thought it convenient to retreat to the place where our wounded men were, under the hands of our surgeons, that is to say our Hospital. At this time our new Commander, Captain Watling, both our quartermasters, and a great many others of our men were killed, besides those that were wounded and disabled. So that now, the enemy rallying against us and beating us from place to place, we were in a very distracted condition, and in more likelihood to perish every man than escape the bloodiness of that day.

Now we found the words of Captain Sharp to bear a true prophecy, being all very sensible that we had had a day too hot for us, after that cruel heat in killing and murdering in cold blood the old Mestizo Indian whom we had taken prisoner at Iquique, as before was mentioned.

Being surrounded with difficulties on all sides and in great disorder, having no head or leader to give orders for what was to be done, we were glad to turn our eyes to our good and old Commander, Captain Bartholomew Sharp, and beg of him very earnestly to commiserate

our condition and carry us off. It was a great while that we were reiterating our supplications to him before he would take any notice of our request in this point, so much was he displeased with the former meeting of our people against him, all which had been occasioned by the instigation of Mr. Cook. But Sharp is a man of an undaunted courage and of an excellent conduct, not fearing in the least to look an insulting enemy in the face, and a person that knows both the theory and practical parts of navigation as well as most do. Hereupon, at our request and earnest petition, he took upon him the Command-in-chief again, and began to distribute his orders for our safety. He would have brought off our surgeons, but that they had been drinking while we assaulted the fort, and thus would not come with us when they were called.

They killed and took of our number 28 men—18 more that we brought off were desperately wounded. At this time we were extremely faint for want of water and victuals, whereof we had had none all that day. Moreover, we were almost choked with the dust of the town, this being so much raised by the work that their great guns had made that we could scarcely see each other. They beat us out of the town, and then followed us into the Savannas, or open fields, still charging us as fast as they could. But when they saw that we rallied again, resolving to die one by another, they ran from us into the town, and sheltered themselves under their breastworks. Thus we retreated in as good order as we could possibly observe in that confusion. But their horsemen followed us as we retired, and fired at us all the way, though they would not come within reach of our guns, for their own reached farther than ours, and outshot us more than one-third.

We took the sea-side for our greater security; which when the enemy saw, they betook themselves to the hills, rolling down great stones and whole rocks to destroy us.

In the meanwhile those of the town examined our surgeons and other men whom they had made prisoners. These gave them our signs that we had left to our boats that were behind us, so that they immediately blew up two smokes, which were perceived by the canoes. This was the greatest of our dangers. For, had we not come at the instant that we did to the sea-side, our boats had been gone, they being already under sail, and we had inevitably perished every man.

Thus we put off from the shore and got on board about ten o'clock at night, having been involved in a continual and bloody fight with the enemy all that day long.

The buccaneers, after further plunderings of towns and ships, found their way round the south of the continent and returned to the West Indian island of Antigua, which they reached a year after the events here recorded; the writer, Basil Ringrose, returning to England.

THE ORIGINAL "ROBINSON CRUSOE"

1705

The three islands of the Juan Fernandez group lie in the Pacific Ocean, the largest of them—Más á Tierra (which means "nearest the land")—being three hundred and sixty miles to the westward of Valparaiso. This island is now used as a penal settlement by the Chilean Government; and it is famous in South America for the size and quality of its crayfish, which it exports in great quantities to the mainland.

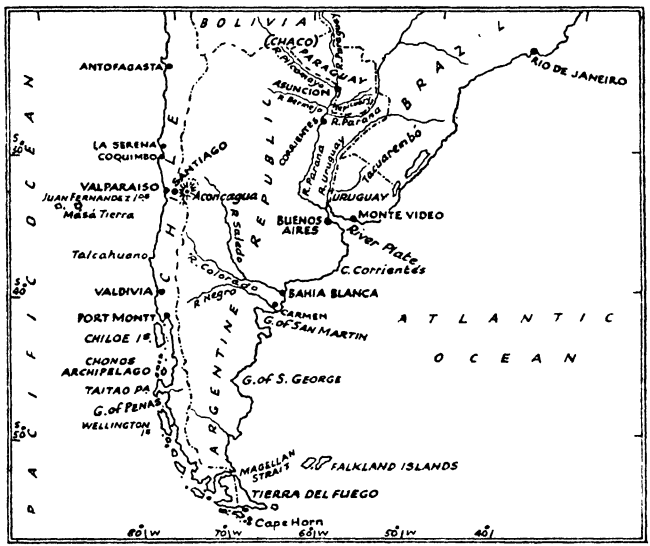
It was in Cumberland Bay, the principal harbour of the island, that the German cruiser *Dresden*, after escaping from the battle of the Falkland Islands, was finally found and sunk by a British squadron in March 1915.

Alexander Selkirk's account of his four years' residence on Más á Tierra, and his description of the island, are best given in the quaint style and language of the original as found in the collection of documents called the Harleian Miscellany.

(Harleian *Miscellany*, vol. v. Edition of 1810.)

PROVIDENCE displayed: Or, a very surprising Account of one Mr. Alexander Selkirk, Master of a Merchant-Man called, The *Cinque Ports*; who dreaming that the Ship would soon after be lost; he desired to be left on a desolate Island in the *South Seas*, where he lived Four Years and Four Months, without seeing the Face of Man, the Ship being afterwards cast away as he dreamed. As also, How he came afterwards to be miraculously preserved and redeemed from that fatal Place, by two *Bristol* Privateers, called The *Duke* and *Duchess*; that took the rich *Acapulco* Ship, worth one-hundred Ton of Gold, and brought it to *England*.

To which is added, An Account of his Birth and Education. His Description of the Island where he was cast; how he subsisted, the several strange Things he saw, and how he used to spend his Time. With some



GENERAL MAP NO. II

pious Ejaculations that he used, composed during his melancholy Residence there. Written by his own Hand, and attested by most of the eminent Merchants upon the *Royal-Exchange*.

In the Voyage of the *Duke* and *Duchess* Privateers belonging to *Bristol*, who took the rich *Acapulco* Ship,

they came to an Island called *Juan Fernandez*; where sending their Pinnace on Shore, she returned, after some Time, bringing with her a Man cloathed in Goat Skins, who seemed as wild as the Goats themselves.

Being brought on Board the *Duke*, he said, he had been on the Island four Years and four Months, having been left there by Captain *Stradling*, in a Ship called the *Cinque-Ports*, about the Year 1705, of which Ship he was Master; and Capt. *Dampier*, who was then with him, and now on Board the *Duke*, told Captain *Rogers*, he was the best Man then on Board the *Cinque-Ports*, who immediately agreed with him to be a Mate on Board the *Duke*. His Name was *Alexander Selkirk*, a *Scotchman*, and the Manner of his being found there, was by his making a Fire the Night before, when he saw the two Privateers aforesaid, judging them to be *English*, by which, judging it to be a habitable Island, they had sent their Boat to see; and so he came miraculously to be redeemed from that solitary and tedious Confinement, who otherwise, in all Probability, must have miserably ended his Life there.

He said, That, during his Stay there, he had seen several Ships pass by, but only two of them came in to Anchor, which he judged to be Spaniards, and retired from them, upon which they fired at him; had they been *French*, he said he would have submitted himself, but chose rather to hazard Dying on the Island, than to fall into the Hands of the *Spaniards* in those Parts, because he believed they would either murder him, or make him a Slave in their Mines.

The *Spaniards* landed so near him, before he knew where they were, that he had much ado to escape; for they not only shot at him, but pursued him into the Woods, where he climbed up to the Top of a Tree, at

the Foot of which they made Water, and killed several Goats just by, but went off without discovering him.

He told them, that he was born at *Largo*, in the County of *Fife*, in *Scotland*, and was bred a Sailor from his Youth.

The Reason of his being left on this melancholy Island, was a Difference betwixt him and his Captain, which, together with the Ship's being leaky, made him willing rather to stay there than go along with him at first, and, when he was at last willing to go, the Captain would not receive him.

He had been, he said, on the Island, to wood and water, when two of the Ship's Company were left upon it for six Months till the Ship returned, being chaced thence by two *French South-Sea Ships*.

He had with him his Cloaths and Bedding, with a Firelock, some Powder, Bullets and Tobacco, a Hatchet, a Knife, a Kettle, a Bible, some practical Pieces, and his Mathematical Instruments and Books. He diverted and provided for himself as well as he could, but, for the first eight Months, he had much ado to bear up against Melancholy, and the Terror of being left alone in such a desolate Place.

He built two Huts with Piemento Trees, covered them with long Grass, and lined them with the Skins of Goats, which he killed with his Gun as he wanted, so long as his Powder lasted, which was but a Pound; and, that being near spent, he got Fire by rubbing two sticks of Piemento Wood together upon his Knee. In the lesser Hut, at some distance from the other, he dressed his Victuals, and in the larger he slept, and employed himself in Reading, Singing Psalms and Praying; so that he said he was a better Christian while in this Solitude, or than, he was afraid, he should ever be again.

At first he never eat any Thing till Hunger constrained him, partly for Grief, and partly for Want of Bread and Salt; nor did he go to Bed till he could watch no longer; the Piemento Wood, which burnt very clear, served him both for Firing and Candle, and refreshed him with its fragrant Smell.

He might have had Fish enough, but could not eat them for Want of Salt, because they occasioned a Looseness, except Crawfish, which are there as large as our Lobsters, and very good: These he sometimes boiled, and at other times broiled, as he did his Goats Flesh, of which he made very good Broth, for they are not so rank as ours; he kept an Account of Five-hundred that he killed, while there, and caught as many more, which he marked on the Ear and let go.

When his Powder failed, he took them by Speed of Foot, for his Way of Living, and continual Exercise of Walking and Running, cleared him of all gross Humours, so that he ran with wonderful Swiftness through the Woods, and up the Rocks and Hills, as we perceived, when we employed him to catch Goats for us. We had a Bull-Dog, which we sent with several of our nimblest Runners, to help him in catching Goats, but he distanced and tired both the Dog and the Men, catched the Goats, and brought them to us on his Back.

He told us, that his Agility in pursuing a Goat had once like to have cost him his Life; he pursued it with so much Eagerness, that he catched hold of it on the Brink of a Precipice, of which he was not aware, the Bushes having hid it from him; so that he fell with the Goat down the Precipice a great Height, and was so stunned and bruised with the Fall, that he narrowly escaped with his Life, and, when he came to his Senses, found the Goat dead under him. He lay there about

twenty-four Hours, and was scarce able to crawl to his Hut, which was about a Mile distant, or to stir Abroad again in ten Days.

He came at last to relish his Meat well enough without Salt or Bread, and, in the Season, had plenty of good Turneps, which had been sowed there by Captain *Dampier's* Men, and have now overspread some Acres of Ground. He had enough of good Cabbage from the Cabbage-Trees, and seasoned his Meat with the Fruit of the Piemento Trees, which is the same as the *Jamaica* Pepper, and smells deliciously. He found there also a black Pepper, called *Malagita*, which was very good to expel Wind, and against Griping of the Guts.

He soon wore out all his Shoes and Cloaths by running thro' the Woods; and, at last, being forced to shift without them, his Feet became so hard, that he ran every where without Annoyance, and it was some Time before he could wear Shoes, after we found him; not being used to any so long, his Feet swelled, when he came first to wear them again.

After he had conquered his Melancholy, he diverted himself sometimes by cutting his Name on the Trees, and the Time of his being left and Continuance there. He was at first pestered with Cats and Rats, that had bred in great Numbers from some of each Species which had got a-shore from the Ships that put in there to wood and water. The Rats gnawed his Feet and Cloaths, while asleep, which obliged him to cherish the Cats with his Goat's Flesh; by which many of them became so tame, that they would lie about him in Hundreds, and soon delivered him from the Rats. He likewise tamed some Kids, and, to divert himself, would now and then sing and dance with his Cats; so that by the Care of Providence, and Vigour of his Youth, being now but

about thirty Years old, he came at last to conquer all the Inconveniencies of his Solitude, and to be very easy.

When his Cloaths wore out, he made himself a Coat and Cap of Goats-skins, which he stitched together with little Thongs of the same, that he cut with his Knife. He had no other Needle but a Nail, and, when his Knife was wore to the Back, he made others, as well as he could, of some Iron Hoops that were left a-shore, which he beat thin and ground upon Stones. Having some Linnen Cloth by him, he sewed himself Shirts with a Nail, and stitched them with the Worsted of his old Stockings, which he pulled out on Purpose. He had his last Shirt on when we found him in the Island.

At his first Coming on Board us, he had so much forgot his Language for Want of Use, that we could scarce understand him, for he seemed to speak his Words by Halves. We offered him a Dram, but he would not touch it, having drunk nothing but Water since his being there, and it was some Time before he could relish our Victuals.

He could give us an Account of no other Product of the Island than what we have mentioned, except small black Plums, which are very good, but hard to come at, the Trees which bear them growing on high Mountains and Rocks. Piemento Trees are plenty here, and we saw one sixty Feet high, and about two Yards thick; and Cotton Trees higher, and near four Fathom round in the Stock.

The Climate is so good, that the Trees and Grass are verdant all the Year. The winter lasts no longer than *June* or *July*, and is then not severe, there being only a small Frost and a little Hail, but sometimes great Rains. The Heat of the Summer is equally moderate, and there is not much Thunder or tempestuous Weather of any

Sort. He saw no venomous or savage Creature on the Island, nor any other Sort of Beast but Goats, etc., as above mentioned; the first of which had been put a-shore here on Purpose for a Breed by *Juan Fernando*, a *Spaniard*, who settled there with some Families for a Time, till the Continent of *Chili* began to submit to the Spaniards; which, being more profitable, tempted them to quit this Island, which is capable of maintaining a good Number of People, and of being made so strong that they could not be easily dislodged.

Ringrose, in his Account of Captain *Sharp's* Voyage and other Buccaneers, mentions one, who had escaped a-shore here, out of a Ship which was cast away with all the rest of his Company, and says, he lived five Years alone, before he had the Opportunity of another Ship to carry him off.

Capt. *Dampier* talks of a *Moskito Indian*, that belonged to Capt. *Watlin*, who, being hunting in the Woods, when the Captain left the Island, lived there three Years alone, and shifted much in the same manner as Mr. *Selkirk* did, till Capt. *Dampier* came hither, in 1684, and carried him off. The first, that went ashore was one of his Country-men, and they saluted one another, first by Prostrating themselves by Turns on the Ground, and then by Embracing.

But, whatever there is in these Stories, this of Mr. *Selkirk* I know to be true; and his Behaviour afterwards gives me Reason to believe the Account he gave me, how he spent his Time, and bore up under such an Affliction, in which nothing but the Divine Providence could have supported any Man. By this one may see, that Solitude, and Retirement from the World, is not such an unsufferable State of Life, as most Men imagine, especially when People are fairly thrown into it un-

avoidably, as this Man was; who, in all Probability, must otherwise have perished in the Seas, the Ship, which left him, being cast away not long after, and few of the Company escaped.

We may perceive, by this Story, the Truth of the Maxim, That *Necessity is the Mother of Invention*; since he found means to supply his Wants in a very natural Manner, so as to maintain his Life; though not so conveniently, yet as effectually as we are able to do with the Help of all our Arts and Society. It may likewise instruct us, how much a plain and temperate Way of Living conduces to the Health of the Body, and the Vigour of the Mind; both which we are apt to destroy by Excess and Plenty, especially of strong Liquor, and the Variety, as well as the Nature, of our Meat and Drink; for this Man, when he came to our ordinary Method of Diet and Life, though he was sober enough, lost much of his Strength and Agility.

An Account of the Island of JUAN FERNANDEZ

The Island of *Juan Fernandez* is nearest of a triangular Form, about twelve Leagues round, and has a small Island, near a Mile long, lying near it, with several Rocks close under it; near which there are very good Fish of several Sorts. It abounds with Cabbage-Trees, which grow for three Miles together, and are extraordinary good; also Turneps, which grow wild here. The Soil is a loose black Earth, and there are often great Drifts of Snow and Ice in July; but, in the Spring, which is September, October, and November, it is very pleasant.

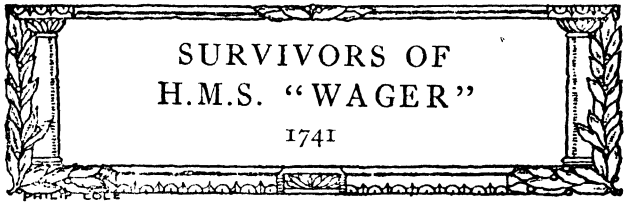
Mr. *Selkirk* says That, in November, the Seals come a-shore to whelp and ingender, when the Shore is so

full of them, that it is impossible to pass through; and they are so surly, that they will not move out of the Way, but, like an angry Dog, run at a Man, though he have a good Stick to beat them; so that at this, and their Whelping-seasons, it is dangerous to come near them, but, at other times, they will make Way for a Man; and if they did not, it would be impossible to get from the Water-side; they lined the Shore very thick, for above half a Mile of Ground, all round the Bay. When we came in, they kept a continual Noise Day and Night, some bleating like Lambs, some howling like Dogs or Wolves, others making hideous Noises of various Sorts; so that we heard them a-board, though a Mile from the Shore; Their Fur is the finest that ever I saw of the Kind, and exceeds that of our Otters.

Another strange Creature here is the Sea-lion; the Governor tells me, he has seen of them above twenty Feet long, and more in Compass, which could not weigh less than two Tons Weight. I saw several of these vast Creatures, but none of the above-mentioned Size; several of them were upwards of sixteen Feet long, and more in Bulk, so that they could not weigh less than a Ton Weight. The Shape of their Body differs little from the Sea-dogs, or Seals, but they have another Sort of Skin, a Head much bigger in Proportion, and very large Mouths, monstrous big Eyes, and a Face like that of a Lion, with very large Whiskers, the Hair of which is stiff enough to make Tooth-pickers. These Creatures come a-shore to ingender, the latter End of *June*, and stay till the End of *September*, during which Time they lie on the Land, and are never observed to go to the Water, but lie in the same Place above a Musquet-shot from the Water-side, and have no Manner of Sustenance all that Time, that he could observe.

I took Notice of some, that lay a Week, without once Offering to move out of the Place, whilst I was there, till they were disturbed by us; but we saw few, in Comparison of what, he informed us, he did, and that the Shore was all crouded full of them, a Musquet-shot into the Land. I admire how these Monsters come to Yield such a Quantity of Oil; their Hair is short and coarse, and their Skin thicker than the thickest Ox-Hide I ever saw. We found no Land-bird on the Island, but a Sort of Black-bird with a red Breast, not unlike our *English* Blackbird, and the Humming-bird of various Colours, and no bigger than a large Humble-bee. Here is a small Tide, which flows uncertain, and the Spring-tide flows about seven Feet.

This is the Account given by himself to the Captain of the Ship, as will be attested by several Merchants and Captains upon the *Exchange*, who have conversed with him: in which Relation, the Divine Providence of God may be visibly seen, *first*, in throwing him upon the desolate Island, and, *next*, in supporting him under such an Affliction, whilst the Ship, which he left, soon after perished in the Sea, and few of the Company escaped: All which singular Acts of Providence, that conspired in his Preservation, he wholly and piously ascribes to the infinite Goodness and Mercy of God; to whom all Honour and Glory be given, now and evermore.



Nearly eight hundred miles of the southern portion of the coast of CHILE, from Cape Horn, in lat. 56 S. to Port Montt, lat. 42 S., is protected by innumerable islands, and navigation among them, though not everywhere practicable for large vessels, reveals scenery of incomparable grandeur in which snow-capped mountains, glaciers, virgin forest, and rugged rock, combine to produce effects whose majesty and extension are nowhere else to be found.

The climatic conditions, however, are about as bad as they could be; it is a region of great gales and wet, cold weather which often endures for weeks on end.

There are one or two places in which the continuity of the chain of islands is broken, leaving the coast of the mainland fully exposed to the fury of the oddly-named "Pacific" Ocean; one of these gaps is the dreaded Golfo de Penas (Gulf of Troubles) where, in 1741, the *Wager*, Captain Cheap, of Lord Anson's squadron, was wrecked on an island during a gale of hurricane force.

Captain Cheap was not, as Gonzalo Pizarro so eminently was, the type of man who shines as a leader in times of adversity; the survivors of the wreck mutinied and eighty out of the hundred started off by boat for Brazil by way of Magellan Strait, thirty of them actually achieving this incredible venture. The captain, three officers, and six men remained on the island, which, after several attempts, they succeeded in leaving in one of the ship's boats that still remained in a sufficiently seaworthy condition for the purpose. They reached the north-east corner of the Gulf, here known as the Gulf of San Esteban, and disembarked on an island; here the six sailors made off with the boat, deserting the officers.

By a stroke of luck, however, some Indians happened

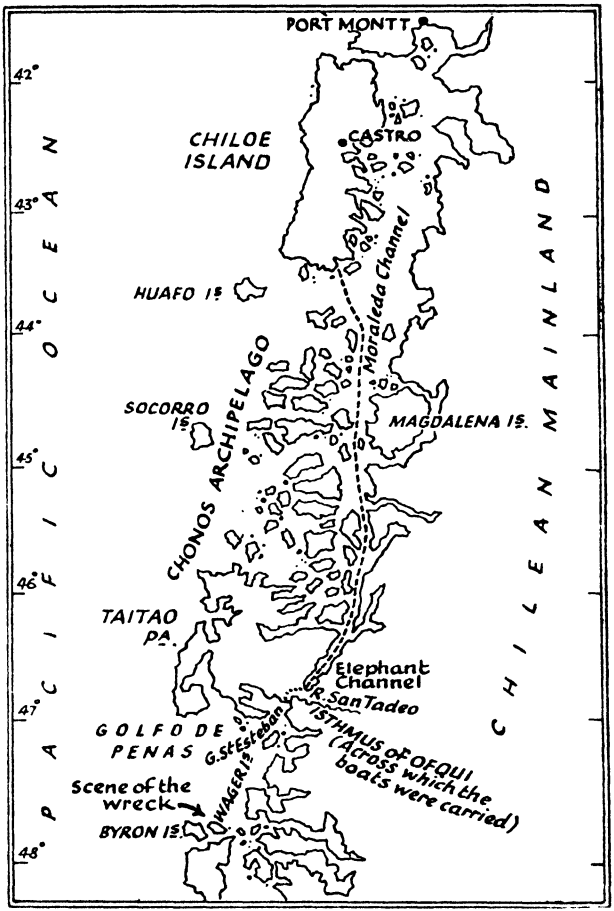
upon the spot whose cacique, or leader, was nominally a Christian, and who spoke Spanish, of which language the surgeon knew a few words; and these Indians eventually brought them, by the route approximately indicated on the map, to the island of Chiloé, then the southernmost outpost of Spanish colonisation. The Spaniards befriended them and sent them on by way of Valparaiso to Santiago, the capital of Chile.

One of these officers was a midshipman who later became Lord Byron, the poet's grandfather; and it is from his *Narrative*, published in London in 1748, that the following account is taken of the terrible sufferings endured by these starving men during their three-hundred mile journey in the frail canoes of the Indians.

(*The Narrative of the Hon. J. Byron, etc.* London 1768.)

It might be about the middle of March that we embarked with these Indians. They separated our little company entirely, not putting any two of us together in the same canoe. The oar was my lot, as usual, as also Mr. Campbell's; Mr. Hamilton could not row, and Captain Cheap was out of the question; our surgeon was more dead than alive at the time, and lay at the bottom of the canoe he was in.

The weather coming on too bad for their canoes to keep the sea, we landed again without making great progress that day. Here Mr. Elliot, our surgeon, died. At our first setting out, he promised the fairest for holding out, being a very strong, active young man: he had gone through an infinite deal of fatigue, as Mr. Hamilton and he were the best shots amongst us, and whilst our ammunition lasted never spared themselves, and in a great measure provided for the rest; but he died the death many others had done before him, being quite starved. We scraped a hole for him in the sand, and buried him in the best manner we could.


PORT MONTT
42°
CHILOE ISLAND
CASTRO
43°
PACIFIC OCEAN
Moraleda Channel
HUAFO Is
44°
SOCORRO Is
CHONOS ARCHIPELAGO
MAGDALENA Is.
CHILEAN MAINLAND
45°
46°
TAITAO Pa.
Elephant Channel
R. San Tadeo
47°
GOLFO DE PENAS
G. St Estevan
ISTHMUS of OFQUI (Across which the boats were carried)
WAGER Is
Scene of the wreck
BYRON Is.
48°

Here I must relate a little anecdote of our Christian cacique. He and his wife had gone off, at some distance from the shore, in their canoe, when she dived for sea-eggs; but not meeting with great success, they returned a good deal out of humour. A little boy of theirs, about three years old, whom they appeared to be dotingly fond of, watching for his father and mother's return, ran into the surf to meet them: the father handed a basket of sea-eggs to the child, which being too heavy for him to carry, he let it fall, upon which the father jumped out of the canoe, and catching the boy up in his arms, dashed him with the utmost violence against the stones. The poor little creature lay motionless and bleeding, and in that condition was taken up by the mother; but died soon after. She appeared inconsolable for some time, but the brute, his father, showed little concern about it.

A day or two after we put to sea again and crossed the great bay I mentioned we had been to the bottom of, when we first hauled away to the westward. The land here was very low and sandy, with something like the mouth of a river which discharged itself into the sea; and which had been taken no notice of by us before, as it was so shallow that the Indians were obliged to take everything out of their canoes, and carry it over the neck of land, and then haul the boats over into a river which at this part of it was very broad, more resembling a lake than a river.

We rowed up it for four or five leagues, and then took into a branch of it, that ran first to the eastward and then to the northward: here it became much narrower, and the stream excessively rapid, so that we made but little way though we worked very hard. At night we landed upon its banks, and had a most uncomfortable

lodging, it being a perfect swamp; and we had nothing to cover us, though it rained very hard.

The Indians were little better off than we, as there was no wood here to make their wigwams; so that all they could do was to prop up the bark they carry in the bottom of their canoes with their oars, and shelter themselves as well as they could to leeward of it. They, knowing the difficulties that were to be encountered here, had provided themselves with some seal, but we had not the least morsel to eat, after the heavy fatigues of the day, excepting a sort of root we saw some of the Indians made use of, which was very disagreeable to the taste.

We laboured all the next day against the stream, and fared as we had done the day before. The next day brought us to the carrying-place; here there was plenty of wood, but nothing to be got for sustenance. The first thing the Indians did was to take everything out of their canoes, and after hauling them ashore, they made their wigwams. We passed this night, as generally we had done, under a tree; but what we suffered at this time is not easily to be expressed. I had been three days at the oar without any kind of nourishment but the wretched root I mentioned before. I had no shirt, as mine was rotted off by bits, and we were devoured by vermin. All my clothes consisted of an old short grieko, which is something like a bearskin, with a piece of a waistcoat under it, which had once been of red cloth, both of which I had on when I was cast away; I had a ragged pair of trousers, without either shoe or stocking.

The first thing the Indians did in the morning was to take their canoes to pieces: and here, for the information of the reader, it will be necessary to describe the

structure of these boats, which are extremely well calculated for the use of these Indians, as they are frequently obliged to carry them over land a long way together, through thick woods, to avoid doubling capes and headlands in seas where no open boat could live. They generally consist of five pieces or planks, one for the bottom and two for each side; and as these people have no iron tools, the labour must be great in hacking a single plank out of a large tree with shells and flints though with the help of fire. Along the edges of the plank they make small holes, at about an inch from one to the other, and sew them together with the supple-jack or woodbine; but as these holes are not filled up by the substance of the woodbine, their boats would be immediately full of water if they had not a method of preventing it. They do this very effectually by the bark of a tree, which they first steep in water for some time and then beat it between two stones until it answers the use of oakum, and then chinse each hole so well that they do not admit of the least water coming through, and are easily taken asunder and put together again. When they have occasion to go over land, as at this time, each man or woman carries a plank, whereas it would be impossible for them to drag a heavy boat entire.

Everybody had something to carry except Captain Cheap, and he was obliged to be assisted or never would have got over this march; for a worse than this, I believe, never was made.

He, with the others, set out some time before me. I waited for two Indians who belonged to the canoe I came in, and who remained to carry over the last of the things from the side we were on. I had a piece of wet, heavy canvas which belonged to Captain Cheap,

with a bit of stinking seal wrapped in it (which had been given him that morning by some of the Indians), to carry upon my head, which was a sufficient weight for a strong man in health, through such roads, and a grievous burthen to one in my condition.

Our way was through a thick wood, the bottom of which was a mere quagmire, most part of it up to our knees and often to our middle; and every now and then we had a large tree to get over, for they often lay directly in our road. Besides this, we were constantly treading upon the stumps of trees, which were not to be avoided as they were covered with water; and having neither shoe nor stocking, my feet and legs were frequently torn and wounded.

Before I had got half a mile the two Indians had left me; and making the best of my way, lest they should all be gone before I got to the other side, I fell off a tree that crossed the road, into a very deep swamp; where I very narrowly escaped drowning, by the weight of the burthen I had on my head. It was a long while before I could extricate myself from this difficulty, and when I did my strength was quite exhausted. I sat down under a tree and there gave way to melancholy reflections; however, as I was sensible these reflections would answer no end, they did not last long. I got up, and marking a great tree I then deposited my load, not being able to carry it any farther, and set out to join my company.

It was some hours before I reached my companions. I found them sitting under a tree, and sat myself down by them without speaking a word; nor did they speak to me, as I remember, for some time, when Captain Cheap, breaking silence, began to ask after the seal and piece of canvas. I told him the disaster I had met with,

which he might easily have guessed by the condition the rags I had on were in, as well as having feet and ankles cut to pieces; but instead of compassion for my sufferings, I heard nothing but grumbling from everyone for the irreparable loss they had sustained by me. I made no answer, but after resting myself a little I got up and struck into the wood and walked back at least five miles to the tree I had marked, and returned just time enough to deliver it before my companions embarked, with the Indians, upon a great lake, the opposite part of which seemed to wash the foot of the Cordilleras.

I wanted to embark with them, but was given to understand I was to wait for some other Indians that were to follow them. I knew not where these Indians were to come from: I was left alone upon the beach, and night was at hand. They left me not even a morsel of the stinking seal that I had suffered so much about.

I kept my eyes upon the boats as long as I could distinguish them, and then returned into the wood and sat myself down upon the root of a tree, having eaten nothing the whole day but the stem of a plant which resembles that of an artichoke, which is of a juicy consistence and acid taste.

Quite worn out with fatigue I soon fell asleep; and awaking before day I thought I heard some voices at no great distance from me. As the day appeared, looking farther into the wood, I perceived a wigwam, and immediately made towards it; but the reception I met with was not at all agreeable, for, stooping to get into it, I presently received two or three kicks in my face and at the same time heard the sound of voices seemingly in anger, which made me retire and wait at the foot of a tree, where I remained until an old

woman peeped out and made signs to me to draw near. I obeyed very readily, and went into the wigwam: in it were three men and two women; one young man seemed to have great respect shown to him by the rest, though he was the most miserable object I ever saw—he was a perfect skeleton, and covered with sores from head to foot.

I was happy to sit a moment by their fire as I was quite benumbed with cold. The old woman took out a piece of seal, holding one part of it between her feet and the other end in her teeth, and then cut off some thin slices with a sharp shell and distributed them about to the other Indians. She then put a bit on the fire, taking a piece of fat in her mouth which she kept chewing, every now and then spirting some of it on the piece that was warming upon the fire; for they never do more with it than warm it through. When it was ready she gave me a little bit which I swallowed whole, being almost starved.

As these Indians were all strangers to me, I did not know which way they were going, and indeed it was now become quite indifferent to me which way I went, whether to the northward or the southward, so that they would but take me with them and give me something to eat. However, to make them comprehend me I pointed first to the southward and after to the lake, and I soon understood they were going to the northward. They all went out together, excepting the sick Indian, and took up the plank of the canoe which lay near the wigwam and carried it upon the beach, and presently put it together; and getting everything into it, they put me to the oar.

We rowed across the lake to the mouth of a very rapid river where we put ashore for that night; not daring to

get any way down in the dark, as it required the greatest skill, even in the day, to avoid running foul of the stumps and roots of trees, of which this river was full. I passed a melancholy night, as they would not suffer me to come near the wigwam they had made, nor did they give me the least bit of any one thing to eat since we embarked. In the morning we set off again; the weather proved extremely bad the whole day.

We went down the river at an amazing rate, and just before night they put ashore upon a stony beach. They hauled the canoe up and all disappeared in a moment, and I was left quite alone; it rained violently and was very dark.

I thought it was as well to lay down upon the beach, half side in water, as to get into a swamp under a dropping tree. In this dismal situation I fell asleep, and awaked three or four hours after in such agonies with the cramp that I thought I must die upon the spot. I attempted several times to raise myself upon my legs, but could not. At last I made shift to get upon my knees, and looking towards the wood I saw a great fire at some distance from me. I was a long time crawling to it, and when I reached it I threw myself almost into it in hopes of finding some relief from the pain I suffered. This intrusion gave great offence to the Indians, who immediately got up, kicking and beating me till they drove me to some distance from it. However, I contrived, a little after, to place myself so as to receive some warmth from it, by which I got rid of the cramp.

In the morning we left this place, and were soon out of the river. Being now at sea again, the Indians intended putting ashore at the first convenient place to look for shellfish, their stock of provisions having

been quite exhausted for some time. At low water we landed upon a spot that seemed to promise well, and here we found plenty of limpets. Though at this time starving, I did not attempt to eat one lest I should lose a moment in gathering them; not knowing how soon the Indians might be going again. I had almost filled my hat when I saw them returning to the canoe. I made what haste I could to her, for I believe they would have made no conscience of leaving me behind. I sat down to my oar again, placing my hat close to me, every now and then eating a limpet. The Indians were employed in the same way, when one of them, seeing me throw the shells overboard, spoke to the rest in a violent passion; and getting up, fell upon me, and seizing me by an old ragged handkerchief I had about my neck, almost throttled me; whilst another took me by the legs and was going to throw me overboard, if the old woman had not prevented them. I was all this time entirely ignorant by what means I had given offence, till I observed that the Indians, after eating the limpets, carefully put the shells in a heap at the bottom of the canoe. I then concluded there was some superstition about throwing these shells into the sea, my ignorance of which had very nearly cost me my life. I was resolved to eat no more limpets till we landed, which we did some time after upon an island. I then took notice that the Indians brought all their shells ashore and laid them above highwater mark.

Here, as I was going to eat a large bunch of berries I had gathered from a tree, for they looked very tempting, one of the Indians snatched them out of my hand and threw them away, making me to understand that they were poisonous. Thus in all probability did these people now save my life who, a few hours

before, were going to take it from me for throwing away a shell.

In two days after, I joined my companions again, but don't remember that there was the least joy shown on either side at meeting. At this place was a very large canoe belonging to our guide, which would have required at least six men to the oar to have made any kind of expedition: instead of that there was only Campbell and myself, besides the Indian, his companion or servant, to row; the cacique himself never touching an oar, but sitting with his wife all the time, much at his ease. Mr. Hamilton continued in the same canoe he had been in all along, and which still was to keep us company some way farther, though many of the others had left us. This was dreadful hard work to such poor starved wretches as we were, to be slaving at the oar all day long in such a heavy boat; and this inhuman fellow would never give us a scrap to eat, excepting when he took so much seal that he could not contrive to carry it all away with him, which happened very seldom. After working like galley-slaves all day, towards night, when we landed, instead of taking any rest, Mr. Campbell and I were sometimes obliged to go miles along shore to get a few shell fish; and just as we have made a little fire in order to dress them, he has commanded us into the boat again and kept us rowing the whole night without ever landing.

It is impossible for me to describe the miserable state we were reduced to; our bodies were so emaciated that we hardly appeared the figures of men. It has often happened to me in the coldest night, both in hail and snow, where we had nothing but an open beach to lay down upon in order to procure a little rest, that I have been obliged to pull off the few rags I had on, as it was

impossible to get a moment's sleep with them on for the vermin that swarmed about them; though I used, as often as I had time, to take my clothes off, and putting them upon a large stone, beat them with another in hopes of killing hundreds at once; for it was endless work to pick them off. What we suffered from this was ten times worse even than hunger.

But we were clean in comparison to Captain Cheap, for I could compare his body to nothing but an ant-hill, with thousands of these insects crawling over it; for he was now past attempting to rid himself in the least from this torment as he had quite lost himself, not recollecting our names that were about him or even his own. His beard was long as a hermit's: that and his face being covered with train-oil and dirt, from having long accustomed himself to sleep upon a bag, by the way of pillow, in which he kept the pieces of stinking seal. This prudent method he took to prevent our getting at it whilst he slept. His legs were as big as mill-posts, though his body appeared to be nothing but skin and bone.

As there was but one small canoe that intended to accompany us any longer, and that in which Mr. Hamilton had been to this time intended to proceed no farther to the northward, our cacique proposed to him to come into our canoe, which he refused, as the insolence of this fellow was to him insupportable. He therefore rather chose to remain where he was, till chance should throw in his way some other means of getting forward; so here we left him, and it was some months before we saw him again.

We now got on by very slow degrees to the northward; and as the difficulties and hardships we daily went through would only be a repetition of those already

mentioned, I shall say no more but that at last we reached an island about thirty leagues to the southward of Chiloé. Here we remained two days for a favourable opportunity to cross the bay, the very thoughts of which seemed to frighten our cacique out of his senses; and indeed there was great reason for his apprehensions, for there ran a most dreadful hollow sea, dangerous indeed for any open boat whatever, but a thousand times more for such a crazy vessel as we were in.

He at length mustered up resolution enough to attempt it, first having crossed himself for an hour together, and made a kind of lug-sail out of the bits of blankets they wore about them, sewed together with split supple-jacks.

We then put off, and a terrible passage we had; the bottom plank of the canoe was split, which opened upon every sea, and the water continually rushing over the gunnel, I may say that we were in a manner full the whole way over, though all hands were employed in baling without ceasing a moment.

As we drew near the shore the cacique was eager to land, having been terrified to that degree with this run, that if it had not been for us every soul must have perished, for he had very near got in amongst the breakers where the sea drove with such violence upon the rocks that not even an Indian could have escaped, especially as it was in the night. We kept off until we got into smooth water, and landed upon the island of Chiloé, though in a part of it that was not inhabited. Here we stayed all the next day in a very heavy snow, to recover ourselves a little after our fatigue; but the cold was so excessive, having neither shoe nor stocking, we thought we should have lost our feet, and Captain

Cheap was so ill, that if he had had but a few leagues farther to have gone without relief, he could not have held out.

It pleased God now that our sufferings, in a great measure, were drawing to an end.

BOLIVAR'S MARCH
1819

Simon Bolívar, "the Liberator" as he is known to this day, was born at Caracas, the capital of Venezuela, in 1783, and early took a leading part in the struggle of the colonies to free themselves from Spain. In 1812, starting from the port of Cartagena in New Granada (now Colombia) he drove the Spaniards before him and reached the borders of his own country with a force of five hundred men. Here the people rallied to him, and he obtained the mastery of Venezuela, which he held until defeated by the Royalist forces in 1814.

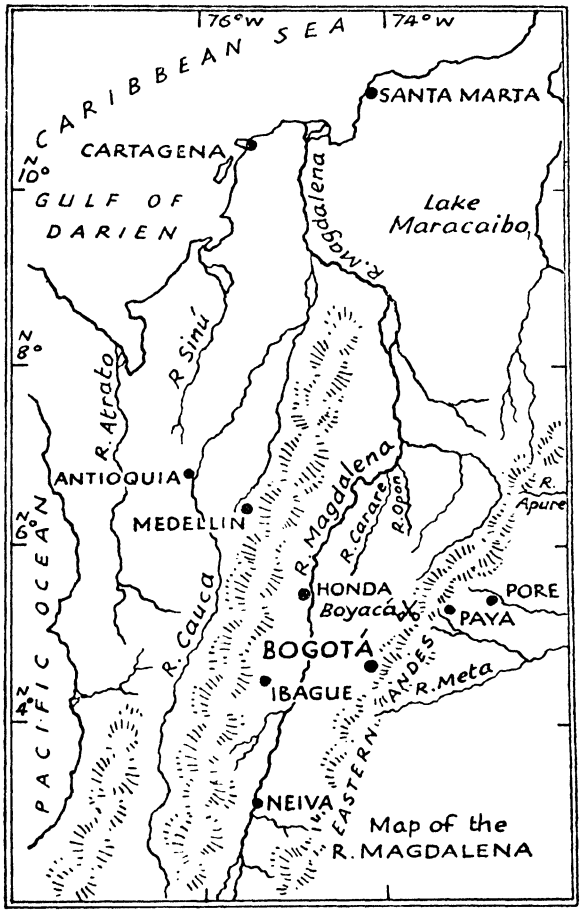
In 1817, having organised a force in the island of Haiti, he again landed in Venezuela and inflicted a lasting defeat upon the Spanish forces there. In this and subsequent fighting he had the support of many English volunteers, the greater number of whom perished by disease or the sword. Being in possession of Venezuela, his next project was to drive the enemy out of the high land of New Granada by uniting his forces with those of the patriot leader Santander, already operating there. To do this, he must needs cross the eastern chain of the Andes, and that historic march forms the subject of the present narrative.

After liberating New Granada, Bolívar expelled the Spaniards from Ecuador and, working from the north at the same time that San Martín's Chilean-Argentine forces were pressing from the south, finally succeeded in ousting them from Peru, their last stronghold in South America.

Bolívar ended his life as President of Colombia, dying in December 1830.

(*Simon Bolivar*. F. Loraine Petre. John Lane, 1910 (chap. x) p. 224 et seq.)

LOOKING at the map it seems but a small matter to march across the broad open plains which lie at the foot


76°W
CARIBBEAN SEA
74°W
SANTA MARTA
CARTAGENA
10° N
GULF OF DARIEN
R. Magdalena
Lake Maracaibo
R. Sinú
8° N
R. Atrato
ANTIOQUIA
MEDELLIN
R. Magdalena
R. Caracé
R. Opon
R. Apure
6° N
PACIFIC OCEAN
R. Cauca
HONDA
Boyacá
PORE
PAYA
BOGOTÁ
ANDES
IBAGUE
R. Meta
4° N
EASTERN
NEIVA
Map of the
R. MAGDALENA

of the Eastern Cordilleras all about the head waters of the Apure, the Arauca, and other tributaries of the Orinoco.

In the dry season, no doubt, it is comparatively easy; for, though the roads were, and still are, elementary in the extreme, the dead level of the country is only varied by slight elevations rising a few feet above it. Even the rivers, shrunk to mere brooks for the moment, are generally no serious obstacle. The country is a vast sheet of grass, broken only by scattered clumps of palms, and streaked with lines of forest trees marking the course of the innumerable rivers and streams. As for the roads, they are mere cattle tracks, rendered difficult only by the fact that the heat of the sun in a period of drought has left a hardened mould of every hoof-mark and every rut worn when the mud was soft.

But in the rainy season, from May to November, it is very different. The rivers and streams have overflowed their banks, and for the sea of grass has been substituted a sea of water, with islands representing the raised ground, and the lines of the water-courses still marked by the upper part of their fringe of trees. The roads have practically disappeared, and every petty stream has become a raging torrent.

It was over such country that Bolívar's little army [1] marched day after day. For a week on end the soldiers would be marching all day up to their knees, or even their waists, in water, and soaked by the rain above. At night they camped on the nearest eminence where they could obtain, not dry ground indeed, but ground not deeply covered by water. Day after day they had to ford a dozen streams, or to swim or ferry themselves across in boats constructed of hides. Swimmers

[1] Two thousand five hundred men.—ED.

were always exposed to terrible risks from alligators, electric eels, and the dreaded "caribe" fish.[1] The men, badly fed, were unable to find any shelter at night, and with difficulty kept their powder dry in the torrential rain. None suffered more than the English, ill-suited as they were to live on the small ration which kept the frugal Venezuelan alive and well. Bolívar, of necessity, shared all the hardships of his soldiers on equal terms.

The Mark Tapley of this expedition seems to have been Colonel Rook, commanding the English contingent. Nothing could damp his irrepressible good humour, and he was always satisfied, whatever the miseries and discomforts.

Pore was reached on the 25th June, and here the ascent of the Cordilleras began, an ascent full of difficulties which culminated after Paya was reached on the 27th. At Paya the first armed resistance was met with. Three hundred Spaniards, attempting to defend the place were dislodged and driven back on Labranza Grande, on the ordinary road to Bogotá. They expected to be followed thither, but Bolívar, fully aware of the immense defensive strength of the positions on the mountain road, had other designs.

After a few days' rest at Paya, during which he issued proclamations to the Granadians announcing his advent, which he could no longer conceal, he started again on the 2nd July. Instead of marching on Labranza Grande, he turned to his right by the track which led over the elevated and desolate Páramo de Pisba. So difficult was this route, rarely used even in dry weather, that the Spaniards never thought of guarding it, believing its passage by the army to be impossible. Road there

[1] The small, but ferocious, man-eating fish found in tropical South American rivers.—Ed.

was none in the ordinary sense of the word. The track which was followed was in many places blocked by fallen rocks or trees, over which the soldiers had to scramble as best they might. In other places the path had disappeared in a landslide. Every horse which had survived so far perished. Late in the night of the 2nd July the army bivouacked at the foot of the Páramo de Pisba. The unfortunate Venezuelans, hailing from a climate which is always warm and in the plains excessively hot, now found themselves, poorly clothed at the best, some of them almost naked, in even greater misery than before; for these "páramos"[1] at an elevation of 12,000 to 15,000 feet, only just below the line of eternal snow, are truly the abomination of desolation. Swept by an icy north-east wind, constantly enveloped in a chilly fog, almost devoid of animal life and even of vegetation, except for a few stunted and distorted thorny plants of low orders, Dante, had he known them, would have described them as one of the infernal circles.

Yet there was no retreating, and the weary, shivering men pushed on next day over the páramo itself. Many died from the effects of the freezing and rarified air. Flogging had to be resorted to, not for punishment, but to revive the circulation in the failing bodies. O'Leary records that his attention was called to the case of a soldier's wife who, in this awful desert, gave birth to a child, and yet marched five miles on the same day over this ghastly road. Ranks or order it was impossible to preserve as the troops toiled painfully through gorges where a hundred resolute men might have barred the way against the whole army. But no Spaniard was seen, for none supposed it possible the republicans could reach the uplands by this horrible pass.

[1] Deserts. —ED.

On the 6th July they had descended beyond the páramo to Socha, only some 9000 feet above the sea, and all the horrors of the past days were almost forgotten in a climate where it is always Spring, where the thermometer rarely rises to 70 degrees Fahrenheit in the shade, and as rarely falls below 50 degrees, where frost is almost unknown, and where, in the broad and fertile upland valleys, every crop of temperate climates can be grown irrespective of season.

The army was in a terrible state. Not a horse was left, and the llaneros [1] were reduced to an unaccustomed mode of progression on their own legs. What stores had not been left behind at Paya were almost all lost, for want of transport, in the passage of the páramo. The cartridges had been kept dry with infinite difficulty, but the muskets were so rusty that the first operation was to get them reasonably clean. It had been essential to push over the páramo with the utmost rapidity before the movement could be discovered, and, therefore, much of the ammunition had been left behind at Paya to follow later with the British Legion, the men of which Bolívar described as half-dead with their exertions.

At Socha the invaders were received with open arms, and supplied with food, tobacco, and country beer. Bolívar was all activity, collecting supplies, arms, ammunition, horses, mules, and recruits.

On 7 August, Bolívar's forces defeated the Spaniards at the Battle of Boyacá, a success which he largely owed to his British troops, and which marked the final liberation of the mountainous part of New Granada (now Colombia) from the domination of the Spaniards.

[1] The cowboys of the Venezuelan plains, the "llanos."—ED.

THE "ESMERALDA" EXPLOIT

1820

By way of introduction to this famous naval encounter, it will be well to give some explanation of the circumstances leading up to it.

In 1808 Napoleon Bonaparte nominated his brother Joseph to be King of Spain, under the protection of French armies—a usurpation which was ended by the Duke of Wellington driving the French out of Spain in the Peninsular War. Many of the Spanish colonists in South America, already aroused by the success of the English colonists in North America in freeing themselves from the domination of the mother country, saw a great opportunity in this occupation of the Spanish throne by a Frenchman to follow North America's lead and obtain their own complete independence. One colony after another broke into open revolt against the local Spanish authorities; the great general San Martín secured the freedom of Argentina, and Bolívar—"The Liberator"—that of Venezuela, Colombia, and Ecuador.

The Chilean patriots, under their leader O'Higgins, had a long struggle, with many ups and downs of fortune, between the years 1810 and 1817; but in the latter year San Martín brought a well-organised army of Argentinos and Chilenos across the Andes which defeated the Spaniards at the battles of Chacabuco and Maipo (5 April, 1818). It was not long before all the Spanish forces were driven out of Chile except in one or two places in the south; but they were still strong in Peru, Lima being the seat of the viceroy.

San Martín and O'Higgins determined to liberate Peru, but realised at once that they would not succeed unless they obtained the command of the sea; they therefore organised a squadron of four ships which, under the command of an artillery officer named Blanco Encalada, succeeded in capturing a Spanish frigate at Talcahuano. (This ship

was re-christened "O'Higgins.") They also engaged the services of an exceedingly able, gallant British naval officer, Lord Thomas Cochrane, to be their naval Commander-in-Chief; the son of the ninth Earl of Dundonald, he had earned a great reputation as a successful fighter in the British Navy, one especially notable episode in a remarkable career being the capture of the Spanish frigate *El Gamo* by his little gunboat the *Speedy*. Being a man of an essentially combative temperament, he was almost as ready to fight his superiors as he was to fight the enemy, so that he was not by any means always popular with those in authority; and he had been withdrawn from employment in the navy at the time that he was approached by the South Americans to help them in their struggle with Spain.

He reached Valparaiso just after Blanco Encalada's success, and immediately hoisted his flag in the *O'Higgins*, and took the fleet to sea in January 1819. In 1820 he captured the Spanish fortress at Valdivia, in the South of Chile, and later in that year he escorted the transport of some four thousand five hundred troops to the Peruvian coast; this done, he decided to try and cut out the Spanish frigate *Esmeralda* lying under the guns of Callao, the port of Lima.

We can now turn to his own narrative of his successful venture; it only remains to add that the freedom of Peru having been achieved, Lord Cochrane went to Brazil in 1823, and helped Dom Pedro to throw off the yoke of Portugal. He became tenth Earl of Dundonald in succession to his father, and in his later years, like his father, before him, he interested himself in scientific pursuits and research. He died in 1860, and was buried in Westminster Abbey; and few indeed are the towns in Chile which do not possess a street—Calle Cochrane—named in his honour.

[General Map No. 1, p. 6.]

(*Narrative of Services in the Liberation of Chili, Peru, and Brazil.* Cochrane. London 1859).

THE enterprise was hazardous, for since my former visit, the enemy's position had been much strengthened, no less than 300 pieces of artillery being mounted on shore,

whilst the *Esmeralda* was crowded with the best sailors and marines that could be procured, these sleeping every night at quarters.

She was, moreover, defended by a strong boom with chain moorings, and by armed blockships; the whole being surrounded by twenty-seven gun-boats; so that no ship could possibly get at her.

For three days we occupied ourselves in preparations, still keeping secret the purpose for which they were intended. On the evening of the 5th of November (1820), this was communicated to the ships by the following proclamation:

MARINES AND SEAMEN,

This night we are going to give the enemy a mortal blow. To-morrow you will present yourselves proudly before Callao, and all your comrades will envy your good fortune. One hour of courage and resolution is all that is required of you to triumph. Remember, that you have conquered in Valdivia, and be not afraid of those who have hitherto fled from you.

The value of all the vessels captured in Callao will be yours, and the same reward in money will be distributed amongst you as has been offered by the Spaniards in Lima to those who should capture any of the Chilian squadron. The moment of glory is approaching, and I hope that the Chilenos will fight as they have been accustomed to do, and that the English will act as they have ever done at home and abroad.

COCHRANE.

On issuing this proclamation, it was stated that I should lead the attack in person, volunteers being requested to come forward, on which the whole of the marines and seamen on board the three ships [1] offered to accompany me. As this could not be permitted, a

[1] *O'Higgins, Independencia, Lautaro.*—ED.

hundred and sixty seamen and eighty marines were selected, and after dark were placed in fourteen boats alongside the flag-ship, each man armed with cutlass and pistol, being, for distinction's sake, dressed in white with a blue band on the left arm. The Spaniards I expected would be off their guard, as, by way of *ruse*, the other ships had been sent out of the bay under the charge of Captain Foster, as though in pursuit of some vessels in the offing—so that the Spaniards would consider themselves safe from attack for that night.

At ten o'clock all was in readiness, the boats being formed in two divisions, the first commanded by my flag-captain Crosbie, and the second by Captain Guise—my boat leading. The strictest silence, and the exclusive use of cutlasses were enjoined; so that as the oars were muffled, and the night dark, the enemy had not the least suspicion of the impending attack.

It was just upon midnight when we neared the small opening left in the boom, our plan being well-nigh frustrated by the vigilance of a guard-boat, upon which my launch had luckily stumbled. The challenge was given, upon which, in an under-tone, I threatened the occupants of the boat with instant death if they made the least alarm. No reply was made to the threat, and in a few minutes our gallant fellows were alongside the frigate in line, boarding at several points simultaneously.

The Spaniards were taken completely by surprise—the whole, with the exception of the sentries being asleep at their quarters—and great was the havoc made amongst them by the Chileno cutlasses whilst they were recovering themselves. Retreating to the forecastle, they there made a gallant stand, and it was not until

the third charge that the position was carried. The fight was for a short time renewed on the quarter-deck, where the Spanish marines fell to a man, the rest of the enemy leaping overboard and into the hold to escape slaughter.

On boarding the ship by the main chains, I was knocked back by the butt-end of the sentry's musket, and falling on a thole pin of the boat, it entered my back near the spine, inflicting a severe injury, which caused me many years of subsequent suffering. Immediately regaining my footing, I reascended the side, and when on deck, was shot through the thigh, but binding a handkerchief tightly round the wound, managed, though with great difficulty, to direct the contest to its close.

The whole affair, from beginning to end, occupied only a quarter of an hour, our loss being eleven killed and thirty wounded, whilst that of the Spaniards was a hundred and sixty, many of whom fell under the cutlasses of the Chilenos before they could stand to their arms. Greater bravery I never saw displayed than that of our gallant fellows. Before boarding, the duties of all had been appointed, and a party was told off to take possession of the tops. We had not been on deck a minute, when I hailed the foretop, and was instantly answered by our own men, an equally prompt answer being returned from the frigate's main-top. No British man-of-war's crew could have excelled this minute attention to orders.

The uproar speedily alarmed the garrison, who, hastening to their guns, opened fire on their own frigate, thus paying us the compliment of having taken it; though, even in this case, their own men must still have been on board, so that firing on them was a wanton

proceeding, as several Spaniards were killed or wounded by the shot of the fortress, and amongst the wounded was Captain Coig, the commander of the *Esmeralda*—who, after he was made prisoner, received a severe contusion by a shot from his own party.

The fire from the fortress was, however, neutralised by a successful expedient. There were two foreign ships of war present during the contest—the United States frigate *Macedonian*, and the British frigate *Hyperion*; and these, as previously agreed on with the Spanish authorities in case of a night attack—hoisted peculiar lights as signals, to prevent being fired upon. This contingency being provided for by us—as soon as the fortress commenced its fire on the *Esmeralda*, we also ran up similar lights, so that the garrison became puzzled which vessel to fire at; the intended mischief thus involving the *Hyperion* and *Macedonian*, which were several times struck, the *Esmeralda* being comparatively untouched. Upon this the neutral frigates cut their cables and moved away; whilst Captain Guise, contrary to my orders, cut the *Esmeralda's* cables also, so that there was nothing to be done but to loose her topsails and follow; the fortress then ceasing its fire.

My orders were *not* to cut the cables of the *Esmeralda*; but after taking her to capture the *Maypu*, a brig of war previously taken from Chili—and then to attack and cut adrift every ship near, there being plenty of time before us; no doubt existing but that when the *Esmeralda* was taken, the Spaniards would desert the other ships as fast as their boats would permit them, so that the whole might either have been captured or burned. To this end all my previous plans had been arranged; but on being placed *hors de combat* by my wounds, Captain Guise, on whom the command of the

prize devolved, chose to interpose his own judgment, and content himself with the *Esmeralda* alone, cutting her cables without my orders; the reason assigned being, that the English had broken into her spirit-room and were getting drunk, whilst the Chilenos were disorganised by plundering. It was a great mistake, for if we could capture the *Esmeralda*, with her picked and well-appointed crew, there would have been little or no difficulty in cutting the other ships adrift in succession. . .

The following extract, from the order issued preparatory to the attack, will clearly show the plan frustrated by cutting the *Esmeralda* adrift:

> On securing the frigate, the Chilian seamen and marines are not to give the Chilian cheer, but to deceive the enemy, and give time for completing the work, they are to cheer "Viva el Rey" [1]
>
> The two brigs of war are to be fired on by the musketry *from the "Esmeralda"* and are to be taken possession of by Lieutenants Esmonde and Morgell, in the boats they command; which, being done, they are to cut adrift, run out and anchor in the offing as quickly as possible. The boats of the *Independencia* are to turn adrift all the outward Spanish merchant ships; and the boats of the *O'Higgins* and *Lautaro*, under Lieutenants Bell and Robertson, are to set fire to one or more of the headmost hulks; but these are not to be cut adrift, so as to fall down upon the rest.—COCHRANE.

By the cutting of the *Esmeralda's* cables, not one of these objects was effected. The captured frigate was ready for sea, with three months' provisions on board, and with stores sufficient for two years. She was, no doubt, if opportunity offered, intended to convoy the treasure-ship, which, by the precipitancy of Captain

[1] i.e. the Spanish cheer, "Long live the King."—ED.

Guise, we had missed; indeed the Spanish Admiral being on board at the time, with his flag flying, was a pretty clear proof that she was on the point of departure; instead of which, the Admiral, his officers, and 200 seamen were made prisoners, the remainder of the crew, originally 370 in number, being killed, wounded, or drowned.

SNAKES IN GUIANA

circa 1820

It is rare to pick up a book about the Guianas in which some reference will not be found to Charles Waterton and his book *Wanderings in South America*. It is, perhaps, not too much to assert that he was to a very considerable extent an originator of the very latest views in natural history and in philosophy, namely, that what is most important in studying any part of nature, from an atom to an elephant, is the *function* that it is called upon to perform in the environment in which it finds itself. As Mr. Selous points out in his preface to the edition of Mr. Waterton's book from which this extract is taken, naturalists of earlier days had been wont to quote the sloth as the most miserable of created things because, owing to the peculiar design of its legs, it could not stand, walk, or even lie down in comfort. But Mr. Waterton took the trouble to study the sloth in its own haunts, and was then able to observe that it had no need to do any of these things, because its normal position is back downwards on the bough of a tree, in which position it is entirely at its ease. Here, then, is an example of studying things *as they are*, not as we think they ought to be! We shall not learn one quarter as much natural history by a visit to caged animals at a zoo as we may by spending the same amount of time in watching a wild bird, or frog, or grasshopper, in its natural surroundings; and we shall be much less likely in the latter case to draw quite wrong conclusions as to the habits of the creature we are observing.

Mr. Waterton's famous book was first published in 1825; he was a man of unusual tastes in the way of amusing himself. Here we shall read of his ingenious methods for catching large snakes alive, and later on in this book we shall come across him again in the act of riding an alligator!

[General Map No. 1, p. 6.]

(*Wanderings in South America*. Everyman Edition, J. M. Dent, pp. 155–163.)

You will not be long in the forests of Guiana before you perceive how very thinly they are inhabited. You may wander for a week together without seeing a hut. The wild beasts, snakes, the swamps, the trees, the uncurbed luxuriance of everything around you conspire to inform you that man has no habitation here—man has seldom passed this way.

Let us now return to natural history. There was a person making shingles with twenty or thirty negroes not far from Mibiri Hill. I had offered a reward to any of them who would find a good-sized snake in the forest and come and let me know where it was. Often had these negroes looked for a large snake, and as often been disappointed.

One Sunday morning I met one of them in the forest, and asked him which way he was going: he said he was going towards Waratilla Creek to hunt an armadillo; and he had his little dog with him. On coming back, about noon, the dog began to bark at the root of a large tree which had been upset by the whirlwind and was lying there in a gradual state of decay. The negro said he thought his dog was barking at an acouri which had probably taken refuge under the tree, and he went up with an intention to kill it; he there saw a snake, and hastened back to inform me of it.

The sun had just passed the meridian in a cloudless sky; there was scarcely a bird to be seen, for the winged inhabitants of the forest, as though overcome by heat, had retired to the thickest shade: all would have been like midnight silence were it not for the shrill voice of the pi-pi-yo, every now and then resounded from a distant tree. I was sitting with a little Horace in my hand, on what had once been the steps which formerly led up to the now mouldering and dismantled building.

The negro and his little dog came down the hill in haste, and I was soon informed that a snake had been discovered; but it was a young one, called the bushmaster, a rare and poisonous snake.

I instantly rose up, and laying hold of the eight-foot lance which was close by me, "Well, then, Daddy," said I, "we'll go and have a look at the snake." I was barefoot, with an old hat, and check shirt, and trousers on, and a pair of braces to keep them up. The negro had his cutlass, and as we ascended the hill another negro, armed with a cutlass, joined us, judging from our pace that there was something to do. The little dog came along with us, and when we had got about half a mile in the forest the negro stopped and pointed to the fallen tree: all was still and silent. I told the negroes not to stir from the place where they were, and keep the little dog in, and that I would go in and reconnoitre.

I advanced up to the place slow and cautious. The snake was well concealed, but at last I made him out; it was a coulacanara, not poisonous, but large enough to have crushed any of us to death. On measuring him afterwards he was something more than fourteen feet long. This species of snake is very rare, and much thicker in proportion to his length than any other snake in the forest. A coulacanara of fourteen feet in length is as thick as a common boa of twenty-four. After skinning this snake I could easily get my head into his mouth, as the singular formation of the jaws admits of wonderful extension.

A Dutch friend of mine, by name Brouwer, killed a boa twenty-two feet long with a pair of stag's horns in his mouth. He had swallowed the stag, but could not get the horns down; so he had to wait in patience with that uncomfortable mouthful till his stomach digested

the body, and then the horns would drop out. In this plight the Dutchman found him as he was going in his canoe up the river, and sent a ball through his head.

On ascertaining the size of the serpent which the negro had just found, I retired slowly the way I came, and promised four dollars to the negro who had shown it to me, and one to the other who had joined us. Aware that the day was on the decline, and that the approach of night would be detrimental to the dissection, a thought struck me that I could take him alive. I imagined if I could strike him with the lance behind the head, and pin him to the ground, I might succeed in capturing him. When I told this to the negroes they begged and entreated me to let them go for a gun and bring more force, as they were sure the snake would kill some of us.

I had been at the siege of Troy for nine years, and it would not do now to carry back to Greece "nil decimo nisi dedecus anno." I mean I had been in search of a large serpent for years, and now having come up with one it did not become me to turn soft. So, after taking a cutlass from one of the negroes, and then ranging both the sable slaves behind me, I told them to follow me, and that I would cut them down if they offered to fly. I smiled as I said this, but they shook their heads in silence and seemed to have but a bad heart of it.

When we got up to the place the serpent had not stirred, but I could see nothing of his head, and I judged by the folds of his body that it must be at the farthest side of his den. A species of woodbine had formed a complete mantle over the branches of the fallen tree, almost impervious to the rain or the rays of the sun. Probably he had resorted to this sequestered place for a length of time, as it bore marks of an ancient settlement.

I now took my knife, determining to cut away the woodbine and break the twigs in the gentlest manner possible, till I could get a view of his head. One negro stood guard close behind me with the lance; and near him the other with a cutlass. The cutlass which I had taken from the first negro was on the ground close by me in case of need.

After working in dead silence for a quarter of an hour, with one knee all the time on the ground, I had cleared away enough to see his head. It appeared coming out betwixt the first and second coil of his body, and was flat on the ground. This was the very position I wished it to be in.

I rose in silence and retreated very slowly, making a sign to the negroes to do the same. The dog was sitting at a distance in mute observance. I could now read in the face of the negroes that they considered this as a very unpleasant affair; and they made another attempt to persuade me to let them go for a gun. I smiled in a good-natured manner, and made a feint to cut them down with the weapon I had in my hand. This was all the answer I made to their request, and they looked very uneasy.

It must be observed we were now about twenty yards from the snake's den. I now ranged the negroes behind me, and told him who stood next to me to lay hold of the lance the moment I struck the snake, and that the other must attend my movements. It now only remained to take their cutlasses from them, for I was sure if I did not disarm them they would be tempted to strike the snake in time of danger, and thus for ever spoil his skin. On taking their cutlasses from them, if I might judge from their physiognomy, they seemed to consider it as a most intolerable act of tyranny in me.

Probably nothing kept them from bolting but the consolation that I was to be betwixt them and the snake. Indeed, my own heart, in spite of all I could do, beat quicker than usual; and I felt those sensations which one has on board a merchant-vessel in war-time, when the captain orders all hands on deck to prepare for action, while a strange vessel is coming down upon us under suspicious colours.

We went slowly on in silence without moving our arms or heads, in order to prevent all alarm as much as possible, lest the snake should glide off or attack us in self-defence. I carried the lance perpendicularly before me, with the point about a foot from the ground. The snake had not moved: and on getting up to him I struck him with the lance on the near-side, just behind the neck, and pinned him to the ground. That moment the negro next to me seized the lance and held it firm in its place, while I dashed head foremost into the den to grapple with the snake and to get hold of his tail before he could do any mischief.

On pinning him to the ground with the lance he gave a tremendous loud hiss, and the little dog ran away, howling as he went. We had a sharp fray in the den, the rotten sticks flying on all sides, and each party struggling for superiority. I called out to the second negro to throw himself upon me, as I found I was not heavy enough. He did so, and the additional weight was of great service. I had now got firm hold of his tail; and after a violent struggle or two he gave in, finding himself overpowered. This was the moment to secure him. So while the first negro continued to hold the lance firm to the ground, and the other was helping me, I contrived to unloose my braces and with them tied up the snake's mouth.

The snake, now finding himself in an unpleasant situation, tried to better himself, and set resolutely to work, but we overpowered him. We contrived to make him twist himself round the shaft of the lance, and then prepared to convey him out of the forest. I stood at his head and held it firm under my arm, one negro supported the belly and the other the tail. In this order we began to move slowly towards home, and reached it after resting ten times; for the snake was too heavy for us to support him without stopping to recruit our strength. As we proceeded onwards with him he fought hard for freedom, but it was all in vain. The day was now too far spent to think of dissecting him. Had I killed him, a partial putrefaction would have taken place before morning. I had brought with me up into the forest a strong bag large enough to contain any animal that I should want to dissect. I considered this the best mode of keeping live wild animals when I was pressed for daylight; for the bag yielding in every direction to their efforts, they would have nothing solid or fixed to work on, and thus would be prevented from making a hole through it. I say fixed, for after the mouth of the bag was closed the bag itself was not fastened or tied to anything, but moved about wherever the animal inside caused it to roll. After securing afresh the mouth of the coulacanara, so that he could not open it, he was forced into this bag and left to his fate till morning.

I cannot say he allowed me to have a quiet night. My hammock was in the loft just above him, and the floor betwixt us half gone to decay, so that in parts of it no boards intervened betwixt his lodging-room and mine. He was very restless and fretful; and had Medusa been my wife, there could not have been more continued

and disagreeable hissing in the bed-chamber that night. At daybreak I sent to borrow ten of the negroes who were cutting wood at a distance; I could have done with half that number, but judged it most prudent to have a good force, in case he should try to escape from the house when we opened the bag. However, nothing serious occurred.

We untied the mouth of the bag, kept him down by main force, and then I cut his throat. He bled like an ox. By six o'clock the same evening he was completely dissected. On examining his teeth I observed that they were all bent like tenter-hooks, pointing down his throat, and not so large or strong as I expected to have found them; but they are exactly suited to what they are intended by Nature to perform. The snake does not masticate his food, and thus the only service his teeth have to perform is to seize his prey and hold it till he swallows it whole.

In general, the skins of snakes are sent to museums without the head: for when the Indians and negroes kill a snake they seldom fail to cut off the head, and then they run no risk from its teeth. When the skin is stuffed in the museum a wooden head is substituted, armed with teeth which are large enough to suit a tiger's jaw; and this tends to mislead the spectator and give him erroneous ideas.

During this fray with the serpent the old negro, Daddy Quashi, was in Georgetown procuring provisions, and just returned in time to help to take the skin off. He had spent best part of his life in the forest with his old master, Mr. Edmonstone, and amused me much in recounting their many adventures amongst the wild beasts. The Daddy had a particular horror of snakes, and frankly declared he could never have faced the one in question.

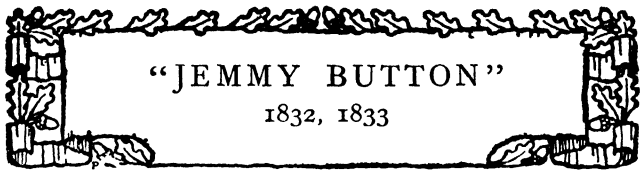
The week following his courage was put to the test, and he made good his words. It was a curious conflict, and took place near the spot where I had captured the large snake. In the morning I had been following a new species of paroquet, and, the day being rainy, I had taken an umbrella to keep the gun dry, and had left it under a tree; in the afternoon I took Daddy Quashi with me to look for it. Whilst he was searching about, curiosity took me towards the place of the late scene of action There was a path where timber had formerly been dragged along. Here I observed a young coulacanara, ten feet long, slowly moving onwards. I saw he was not thick enough to break my arm, in case he got twisted round it. There was not a moment to be lost. I laid hold of his tail with the left hand, one knee being on the ground; with the right I took off my hat, and held it as you would hold a shield for defence.

The snake instantly turned and came on at me, with his head about a yard from the ground, as if to ask me what business I had to take liberties with his tail. I let him come, hissing and open-mouthed, within two feet of my face, and then with all the force I was master of I drove my fist, shielded by my hat, full in his jaws. He was stunned and confounded by the blow, and ere he could recover himself I had seized his throat with both hands in such a position that he could not bite me. I then allowed him to coil himself round my body, and marched off with him as my lawful prize. He pressed me hard, but not alarmingly so.

In the meantime Daddy Quashi, having found the umbrella, and having heard the noise which the fray occasioned, was coming cautiously up. As soon as he saw me and in what company I was, he turned about and ran off home, I after him, and shouting to increase his

fear. On scolding him for his cowardice, the old rogue begged that I would forgive him, for that the sight of the snake had positively turned him sick at stomach.

When I had done with the carcass of the large snake it was conveyed into the forest, as I expected that it would attract the king of the vultures as soon as time should have rendered it sufficiently savoury. In a few days it sent forth that odour which a carcass should send forth, and about twenty of the common vultures came and perched on the neighbouring trees. The king of the vultures came, too; and I observed that none of the common ones seemed inclined to begin breakfast till his majesty had finished. When he had consumed as much snake as Nature informed him would do him good, he retired to the top of a high mora-tree, and then all the common vultures fell to and made a hearty meal.



"JEMMY BUTTON"

1832, 1833

Of the many famous English names connected with exploration in South America, Charles Darwin's will always hold a prominent place. Born and educated at Shrewsbury, he was only twenty-two when he sailed in H.M.S. *Beagle*, Captain Fitz Roy, as naturalist in her voyage round the world. He was away for five years (1831–36), and he related his experiences in his book, now a classic of the English language, *The Voyage of H.M.S. Beagle*.

The story of Jemmy Button, here given, is taken from that book. Tierra del Fuego is nowadays a prosperous sheep-raising country, and there are but few survivors left of the tribes of miserable Indians that Darwin describes; yet canoe-dwelling Indians, as much at home in the water as they are on land, and apparently almost impervious to cold and wet, are still to be met with about the Beagle Channel, as well as a little farther north among the innumerable islands and channels which characterise the southern part of the Chilean coast.

(Darwin's *Voyage of H.M.S. Beagle*. Harmsworth Library Edition. Amalgamated Press 1905, chap. x, pp. 203–226 [with omissions].)

I HAVE not as yet noticed the Fuegians whom we had on board. During the former voyage of the *Adventure* and *Beagle* in 1826 to 1830, Captain Fitz Roy seized on a party of natives, as hostages for the loss of a boat, which had been stolen, to the great jeopardy of a party employed on the survey; and some of these natives, as well as a child whom he bought for a pearl button, he took with him to England, determining to educate them

and instruct them in religion at his own expense. To settle these natives in their own country was one chief inducement to Captain Fitz Roy to undertake our present voyage; and before the Admiralty had resolved to send out this expedition, Captain Fitz Roy had generously chartered a vessel, and would himself have

taken them back. The natives were accompanied by a missionary, R. Matthews; of whom and of the natives, Captain Fitz Roy has published a full and excellent account.

Two men, one of whom died in England of the small-pox, a boy, and a little girl, were originally taken; and we had now on board, York Minster, Jemmy Button (whose name expresses his purchase money), and Fuegia Basket. York Minster was a full-grown, short,

thick, powerful man; his disposition was reserved, taciturn, morose, and when excited violently passionate; his affections were very strong towards a few friends on board; his intellect good. Jemmy Button was a universal favourite, but likewise passionate; the expression of his face at once showed his nice disposition. He was merry and often laughed, and was remarkably sympathetic with any one in pain; when the water was rough, I was often a little sea-sick, and he used to come to me and say in a plaintive voice, "Poor, poor fellow!" but the notion, after his aquatic life, of a man being sea-sick, was too ludicrous, and he was generally obliged to turn on one side to hide a smile or laugh, and then he would repeat his "Poor, poor fellow!" He was of a patriotic disposition; and he liked to praise his own tribe and country, in which he truly said there were "plenty of trees," and he abused all the other tribes; he stoutly declared that there was no devil in his land.

Jemmy was short, thick, and fat, but vain of his personal appearance; he used always to wear gloves, his hair was neatly cut, and he was distressed if his well-polished shoes were dirtied. He was fond of admiring himself in a looking-glass; and a merry-faced little Indian boy from the Rio Negro whom we had for some months on board, soon perceived this, and used to mock him; Jemmy, who was always rather jealous of the attention paid to this little boy, did not at all like this, and used to say, with rather a contemptuous twist of his head, "Too much skylark." It seems yet wonderful to me, when I think over all his many good qualities, that he should have been of the same race, and doubtless partaken of the same character, with the miserable, degraded savages whom we first met here.

Lastly, Fuegia Basket was a nice, modest, reserved young girl, with a rather pleasing but sometimes sullen expression, and very quick in learning anything, especially languages. This she showed in picking up some Portuguese and Spanish, when left on shore for only a short time at Rio de Janeiro and Monte Video, and in her knowledge of English. York Minster was very jealous of any attention paid to her; for it was clear he determined to marry her as soon as they were settled on shore.

Although all three could both speak and understand a good deal of English, it was singularly difficult to obtain much information from them concerning the habits of their countrymen; this was partly owing to their apparent difficulty in understanding the simplest alternative. Every one accustomed to very young children knows how seldom one can get an answer even to so simple a question as whether a thing is black *or* white; the idea of black or white seems alternately to fill their minds. So it was with these Fuegians, and hence it was generally impossible to find out, by cross-questioning, whether one had rightly understood anything which they had asserted. Their sight was remarkably acute; it is well known that sailors from long practice, can make out a distant object much better than a landsman; but both York and Jemmy were much, much superior to any sailor on board; several times they have declared what some distant object has been, and though doubted by every one, they have proved right, when it has been examined through a telescope. They were quite conscious of this power; and Jemmy, when he had any little quarrel with the officer on watch, would say, "Me see ship, me no tell."

It was interesting to watch the conduct of the savages,

when we landed, towards Jemmy Button; they immediately perceived the difference between him and ourselves, and held much conversation one with another on the subject. The old man addressed a long harangue to Jemmy, which it seems was to invite him to stay with them. But Jemmy understood very little of their language, and was, moreover, thoroughly ashamed of his countrymen. When York Minster afterwards came on shore, they noticed him in the same way, and told him he ought to shave; yet he had not twenty dwarf hairs on his face, whilst we all wore our untrimmed beards. They examined the colour of his skin, and compared it with ours. One of our arms being bared, they expressed the liveliest surprise and admiration at its whiteness, just in the same way in which I have seen the ourang-outang do at the Zoological Gardens. We thought that they mistook two or three of the officers, who were rather shorter and fairer, though adorned with large beards, for the ladies of our party. The tallest among the Fuegians was evidently much pleased at his height being noticed. When placed back to back with the tallest of the boat's crew, he tried his best to edge on higher ground, and to stand on tip-toe. He opened his mouth to show his teeth, and turned his face for a side view; and all this was done with such alacrity, that I daresay he thought himself the handsomest man in Tierra del Fuego. After our first feeling of grave astonishment was over, nothing could be more ludicrous than the odd mixture of surprise and imitation which these savages every moment exhibited.

December 21st (1832). The *Beagle* got under weigh; and on the succeeding day, favoured to an uncommon degree by a fine easterly breeze, we closed in with the

Barnevelts, and running past Cape Deceit with its stony peaks, about three o'clock doubled the weather-beaten Cape Horn. The evening was calm and bright, and we enjoyed a fine view of the surrounding isles. Cape Horn, however, demanded his tribute, and before night sent us a gale of wind directly in our teeth. We stood out to sea, and on the second day again made the land, when we saw on our weather-bow this notorious promontory in its proper form—veiled in a mist, and its dim outline surrounded by a storm of wind and water. Great black clouds were rolling across the heavens, and squalls of rain, with hail, swept by us with such extreme violence that the Captain determined to run into Wigwam Cove. This is a snug little harbour, not far from Cape Horn; and here, at Christmas Eve, we anchored in smooth water. The only thing which reminded us of the gale outside, was every now and then a puff from the mountains, which made the ship surge at her anchors.

December 25th. Close by the cove, a pointed hill, called Kater's Peak, rises to the height of 1,700 feet. The surrounding islands all consist of conical masses of greenstone, associated sometimes with less regular hills of baked and altered clay-slate. This part of Tierra del Fuego may be considered as the extremity of the submerged chain of mountains already alluded to. The cove takes its name of "Wigwam" from some of the Fuegian habitations; but every bay in the neighbourhood might be so called with equal propriety. The inhabitants, living chiefly upon shell-fish, are obliged constantly to change their place of residence; but they return at intervals to the same spots, as is evident from the piles of old shells, which must often amount to many tons in weight. These heaps can be distinguished at a

long distance by the bright green colour of certain plants which invariably grow on them. Among these may be enumerated the wild celery and scurvy grass, two very serviceable plants, the use of which has not been discovered by the natives.

The Fuegian wigwam resembles, in size and dimensions, a haycock. It merely consists of a few broken branches stuck in the ground, and very imperfectly thatched on one side with a few tufts of grass and rushes. The whole cannot be the work of an hour, and it is only used for a few days. At Goeree Roads I saw a place where one of these naked men had slept, which absolutely offered no more cover than the form of a hare. The man was evidently living by himself, and York Minster said he was "very bad man," and that probably he had stolen something. On the west coast, however, the wigwams are rather better, for they are covered with seal-skins. We were detained here several days by the bad weather. The climate is certainly wretched: the summer solstice was now passed, yet every day snow fell on the hills, and in the valleys there was rain, accompanied by sleet. The thermometer generally stood about 45 degrees, but in the night fell to 38 degrees or 40 degrees. From the damp and boisterous state of the atmosphere, not cheered by a gleam of sunshine, one fancied the climate even worse than it really was.

While going one day on shore near Wollaston Island, we pulled alongside a canoe with six Fuegians. These were the most abject and miserable creatures I anywhere beheld. On the east coast the natives, as we have seen, have guanaco cloaks, and on the west they possess seal-skins. Amongst these central tribes the men generally have an otter-skin, or some small scrap about as large as a pocket-handkerchief, which is barely

sufficient to cover their backs as low down as their loins. It is laced across the breast by strings, and according as the wind blows, it is shifted from side to side. But these Fuegians in the canoe were quite naked, and even one full-grown woman was absolutely so. It was raining heavily, and the fresh water, together with the spray, trickled down her body. In another harbour not far distant, a woman, who was suckling a recently born child, came one day alongside the vessel, and remained there out of mere curiosity, while the sleet fell and thawed on her naked bosom, and on the skin of her naked baby!

These poor wretches were stunted in their growth, their hideous faces bedaubed with white paint, their skin filthy and greasy, their hair entangled, their voices discordant, and their gestures violent. Viewing such men, one can hardly make oneself believe that they are fellow-creatures, and inhabitants of the same world. It is a common subject of conjecture what pleasure in life some of the lower animals can enjoy; how much more reasonably the same question may be asked with respect to these barbarians! At night five or six human beings, naked and scarcely protected from the wind and rain of this tempestuous climate, sleep on the wet ground, coiled up like animals. Whenever it is low water, winter, or summer, night or day, they must rise to pick shell-fish from the rocks; and the women either dive to collect sea-eggs, or sit patiently in their canoes and with a baited hair-line without any hook jerk out little fish. If a seal is killed, or the floating carcass of a putrid whale discovered, it is a feast; and such miserable food is assisted by a few tasteless berries and fungi.

They often suffer from famine: I heard Mr. Low, a sealing-master intimately acquainted with the natives

of this country, give a curious account of the state of a party of one hundred and fifty natives on the west coast, who were very thin and in great distress. A succession of gales prevented the women from getting shell-fish on the rocks, and they could not go out in their canoes to catch seal. A small party of these men one morning set out, and the other Indians explained to him that they were going a four days' journey for food; on their return Low went to meet them, and he found them excessively tired, each man carrying a great square piece of putrid whales' blubber with a hole in the middle, through which they put their heads, like the Gauchos do through their ponchos or cloaks. As soon as the blubber was brought into a wigwam, an old man cut off thin slices, and muttering over them, broiled them for a minute, and distributed them to the famished party, who during this time preserved a profound silence. Mr. Low believes that whenever a whale is cast on shore, the natives bury large pieces of it in the sand as a resource in time of famine; and a native boy, whom he had on board, once found a stock thus buried.

The different tribes when at war are cannibals. From the concurrent, but quite independent, evidence of the boy taken by Mr. Low, and of Jemmy Button, it is certainly true, that when pressed in winter by hunger, they kill and devour their old women before they kill their dogs; the boy, being asked by Mr. Low why they did this, answered, "Doggies catch otters, old women no." This boy described the manner in which they are killed by being held over smoke and thus choked; he imitated their screams as a joke, and described the parts of their bodies which are considered best to eat. Horrid as such a death by the hands of their friends

and relatives must be, the fears of the old women, when hunger begins to press, are more painful to think of; we were told that they then often run away into the mountains, but that they are pursued by the men, and brought back to the slaughterhouse at their own firesides!

After having been detained six days in Wigwam Cove by very bad weather, we put to sea on the 30th of December. Captain Fitz Roy wished to get westward to land York and Fuegia in their own country. When at sea we had a constant succession of gales, and the current was against us: we drifted to 57° 23′ south. On the 11th of January, 1833, by carrying a press of sail, we fetched within a few miles of the great rugged mountain of York Minster (so called by Captain Cook, and the origin of the name of the elder Fuegian), when a violent squall compelled us to shorten sail and stand out to sea. The surf was breaking fearfully on the coast, and the spray was carried over a cliff estimated at two hundred feet in height. On the 12th the gale was very heavy, and we did not know exactly where we were: it was a most unpleasant sound to hear constantly repeated, "Keep a good look-out to leeward." On the 13th the storm raged with its full fury; our horizon was narrowly limited by the sheets of spray borne by the wind. The sea looked ominous, like a dreary waving plain with patches of drifted snow; whilst the ship laboured heavily, the albatross glided with its expanded wings right up the wind. At noon a great sea broke over us, and filled one of the whale-boats, which was obliged to be instantly cut away. The poor *Beagle* trembled at the shock, and for a few minutes would not obey her helm; but soon, like a good ship that she was, she righted and came up to the wind

again. Had another sea followed the first our fate would have been decided soon, and for ever. We had now been twenty-four days trying in vain to get westward; the men were worn out with fatigue, and they had not had for many nights or days a dry thing to put on. Captain Fitz Roy gave up the attempt to get westward by the outside coast. In the evening we ran in behind False Cape Horn, and dropped our anchors in forty-seven fathoms, fire flashing from the windlass as the chain rushed round it. How delightful was that still night, after having been so long involved in the din of the warring elements.

January 15th, 1833. The *Beagle*. anchored in Goeree Roads. Captain Fitz Roy having resolved to settle the Fuegians according to their wishes, in Ponsonby Sound, four boats were equipped to carry them there through the Beagle Channel. This channel, which was discovered by Captain Fitz Roy during the last voyage, is a most remarkable feature in the geography of this, or indeed of any other country; it may be compared to the valley of Loch Ness in Scotland, with its chain of lakes and friths. It is about one hundred and twenty miles long, with an average breadth, not subject to any very great variation, of about two miles; and is throughout the greater part so perfectly straight, that the view bounded on each side by a line of mountains, gradually becomes indistinct in the long distance. It crosses the southern part of Tierra del Fuego in an east and west line, and in the middle is joined at right angles on the south side by an irregular channel, which has been called Ponsonby Sound. This is the residence of Jemmy Button's tribe and family.

On 19 January, a party of twenty-eight persons in four

boats, under Captain Fitz Roy, set out up Beagle Channel to take the Fuegians to their native haunts. They noticed that fires were lighted on every point to attract their attention and spread the news of their coming. (Tierra del Fuego means the "Land of Fire.") They reached the mouth of Ponsonby Sound on the night of 22 January.

At night we slept close to the junction of Ponsonby Sound with the Beagle Channel. The small family of Fuegians, who were living in the cove, were quiet and inoffensive, and soon joined our party round a blazing fire. We were well clothed, and though sitting close to the fire were far from too warm; yet these naked savages, though farther off, were observed, to our great surprise, to be streaming with perspiration at undergoing such a roasting. They seemed, however, very well pleased, and all joined in the chorus of the seamen's songs; but the manner in which they were invariably a little behindhand was quite ludicrous.

During the night the news had spread, and early in the morning (23rd) a fresh party arrived, belonging to the Tekenika, or Jemmy's tribe. Several of them had run so fast that their noses were bleeding, and their mouths frothed from the rapidity with which they talked; and with their naked bodies all bedaubed with black, white, and red, they looked like so many demoniacs who had been fighting. We then proceeded (accompanied by twelve canoes, each holding four or five people) down Ponsonby Sound to the spot where poor Jemmy expected to find his mother and relatives. He had already heard that his father was dead; but as he had had a "dream in his head" to that effect, he did not seem to care much about it, and repeatedly comforted himself with the very natural reflection—"Me no help it." He was not able to learn any particulars,

regarding his father's death, as his relations would not speak about it.

Jemmy was now in a district well known to him, and guided the boats to a quiet pretty cove named Woolya, surrounded by islets, every one of which and every point had its proper native name. We found here a family of Jemmy's tribe, but not his relations; we made friends with them, and in the evening they sent a canoe to inform Jemmy's mother and brothers. The cove was bordered by some acres of good sloping land, not covered (as elsewhere) either by peat or by forest-trees. Captain Fitz Roy originally intended, as before stated, to have taken York Minster and Fuegia to their own tribe on the west coast; but as they expressed a wish to remain here, and as the spot was singularly favourable, Captain Fitz Roy determined to settle here the whole party, including Matthews, the missionary. Five days were spent in building for them three large wigwams, in landing their goods, in digging two gardens, and sowing seeds.

The next morning Jemmy's mother and brothers arrived; there was no demonstration of affection, for they simply stared at each other, and then his mother went to look after her canoe.

Three days later, two boats were sent back to the *Beagle*, and the two others went on up the western part of the channel to make a survey, returning to Ponsonby Sound on 6 February. They had left Mr. Matthews, the missionary, alone with the Fuegians meanwhile, at his own request.

February 6th. We arrived at Woolya. Matthews gave so bad an account of the conduct of the Fuegians that Captain Fitz Roy determined to take him back to the *Beagle*; and ultimately he was left at New Zealand,

where his brother was a missionary. From the time of our leaving, a regular system of plunder commenced; fresh parties of the natives kept arriving; York and Jemmy lost many things, and Matthews almost everything which had not been concealed under-ground. Every article seemed to have been torn up and divided by the natives. Matthews described the watch he was obliged always to keep as most harassing; night and day he was surrounded by the natives, who tried to tire him out by making an incessant noise close to his head. One day an old man, whom Matthews asked to leave his wigwam, immediately returned with a large stone in his hand; another day a whole party came armed with stones and stakes, and some of the younger men and Jemmy's brother were crying; Matthews met them with presents. Another party showed by signs that they wished to strip him naked, and pluck all the hairs out of his face and body. I think we arrived just in time to save his life.

Jemmy's relatives had been so vain and foolish, that they had shown to strangers their plunder, and their manner of obtaining it. It was quite melancholy leaving the three Fuegians with their savage countrymen; but it was a great comfort that they had no personal fears. York, being a powerful, resolute man, was pretty sure to get on well, together with his wife Fuegia. Poor Jemmy looked rather disconsolate, and would then, I have little doubt, have been glad to have returned with us. His own brother had stolen many things from him; and as he remarked, "What fashion call that?" he abused his countrymen, "all bad men, no sabe (know) nothing," and, though I never heard him swear before, "damned fools." Our three Fuegians, though they had been only three years with civilised

men, would, I am sure, have been glad to have retained their new habits; but this was obviously impossible. I fear it is more than doubtful whether their visit will have been of any use to them.

In the evening, with Matthews on board, we made sail back to the ship, not by the Beagle Channel, but by the southern coast. The boats were heavily laden and the sea rough, and we had a dangerous passage. By the evening of the 7th we were on board the *Beagle* after an absence of twenty days, during which time we had gone three hundred miles in the open boats. On the 11th, Captain Fitz Roy paid a visit by himself to the Fuegians, and found them going on well; and that they had lost very few more things.

A year later, 28 February, 1834, the *Beagle* returned to Beagle Channel, and Captain Fitz Roy sailed the ship up the channel to Woolya, a remarkable feat of seamanship especially as the wind was contrary.

On the 5th of March we anchored in the cove at Woolya, but we saw not a soul there. We were alarmed at this, for the natives in Ponsonby Sound showed by gestures that there had been fighting; and we afterwards heard that the dreaded Oens men had made a descent. Soon a canoe, with a little flag flying, was seen approaching, with one of the men in it washing the paint off his face. This man was poor Jemmy—now a thin, haggard savage, wirh long disordered hair, and naked, except a bit of a blanket round his waist. We did not recognise him till he was close to us, for he was ashamed of himself, and turned his back to the ship. We had left him plump, fat, clean, and well dressed;—I never saw so complete and grievous a change. As soon, however, as he was clothed, and the

first flurry was over, things wore a good appearance. He dined with Captain Fitz Roy, and ate his dinner as tidily as formerly. He told us he had "too much" (meaning enough) to eat, that he was not cold, that his relations were very good people, and that he did not wish to go back to England; in the evening we found out the cause of this great change in Jemmy's feelings, in the arrival of his young and nice-looking wife. With his usual good feeling, he brought two beautiful otter-skins for two of his best friends, and some spear-heads and arrows made with his own hands for the Captain. He said he had built a canoe for himself, and he boasted that he could talk a little of his own language! But it is a most singular fact, that he appears to have taught all his tribe some English; an old man spontaneously announced "Jemmy Button's wife." Jemmy had lost all his property He told us that York Minster had built a large canoe, and with his wife Fuegia, had several months since gone to his own country, and had taken farewell by an act of consummate villainy; he persuaded Jemmy and his mother to come with him, and then on the way deserted them by night, stealing every article of their property.

Jemmy went to sleep on the shore, and in the morning returned, and remained on board till the ship got under weigh, which frightened his wife, who continued crying violently till he got into his canoe. He returned loaded with valuable property. Every soul on board was heartily sorry to shake hands with him for the last time. I do not now doubt that he will be as happy as, perhaps happier than, if he had never left his own country. Every one must sincerely hope that Captain Fitz Roy's noble hope may be fulfilled, of being rewarded for the many generous sacrifices which he made for these

Fuegians, by some ship-wrecked sailor being protected by the descendants of Jemmy Button and his tribe! When Jemmy reached the shore he lighted a signal fire and the smoke curled up, bidding us a last and long farewell, as the ship stood on her course into the open sea.

ON THE RIVER PARAGUAY

1913

Colonel Theodore Roosevelt, twenty-sixth President of the United States, who died in 1919 at the age of sixty-one, was co-leader with Colonel Rondon, Brazilian Army, of an exploring party which discovered in 1914 the course of a large tributary of the Madeira River, itself a tributary of the Amazon. The Brazilian Government christened this new river, River Roosevelt.

Colonel Roosevelt travelled north up the River Paraguay, to the little town of Cáceres on the outermost fringe of civilisation, and from there the party set out on their notable expedition.

The following extracts are taken from Colonel Roosevelt's narrative of his journey up the River Paraguay, which runs through the middle of the country of that name.

[General Map No. 1, p. 6.]

(*Through the Brazilian Wilderness*, T. Roosevelt. John Murray, 1914. (Chap ii, pp. 40–43, 49–52 with some passages omitted, and chap. iii, pp. 60, 61, 74–77 and 82, 83 with passages omitted.)

LATE on the evening of the second day of our trip, just before midnight, we reached Concepcion.[1] On this day, when we stopped for wood or to get provisions—at picturesque places, where the women from rough mud and thatched cabins were washing clothes in the river, or where ragged horsemen stood gazing at us from the bank, or where dark, well-dressed ranchmen stood in front of red-roofed houses—we caught many fish. They belonged to one of the most formidable genera of fish in the world, the piranha, or cannibal fish, the fish that

[1] A town in Paraguay.—ED.

eats men when it can get the chance. Farther north there are species of small piranha that go in schools. At this point on the Paraguay the piranha do not seem to go in regular schools, but they swarm in all the waters, and attain a length of eighteen inches or over. They are the most ferocious fish in the world. Even the most formidable fish, the sharks or the barracudas, usually attack things smaller than themselves. But the piranhas habitually attack things much larger than themselves. They will snap a finger off a hand incautiously trailed in the water; they mutilate swimmers —in every river town in Paraguay there are men who have been thus mutilated; they will rend and devour alive any wounded man or beast; for blood in the water excites them to madness. They will tear wounded wild fowl to pieces, and bite off the tails of big fish as they grow exhausted when fighting after being hooked. Miller, before I reached Asuncion, had been badly bitten by one. Those that we caught sometimes bit through the hooks, or the double strands of copper wire that served as leaders, and got away. Those that we hauled on deck lived for many minutes. Most predatory fish are long and slim, like the alligator-gar and pickerel. But the piranha is a short deep-bodied fish, with a blunt face and a heavily under-shot or projecting lower jaw which gapes widely. The razor-edged teeth are wedge-shaped like a shark's, and the jaw-muscles possess great power. The rabid, furious snaps drive the teeth through flesh and bone. The head, with its short muzzle, staring malignant eyes, and gaping, cruelly armed jaws, is the embodiment of evil ferocity; and the actions of the fish exactly match its looks. I never witnessed an exhibition of such impotent, savage fury as was shown by the piranhas as they

flapped on deck. When fresh from the water and thrown on the boards they uttered an extraordinary squealing sound. As they flapped about they bit with vicious eagerness at whatever presented itself. One of them flapped into a cloth and seized it with a bull-dog grip. Another grasped one of his fellows; another snapped at a piece of wood, and left the teeth-marks deep therein. They are the pests of the waters, and it is necessary to be exceedingly cautious about either swimming or wading where they are found. If cattle are driven into, or of their own accord enter, the water, they are commonly not molested; but if by chance some unusually or big ferocious specimen of these fearsome fishes does bite an animal—taking off part of an ear, or perhaps of a teat from the udder of a cow—the blood brings up every member of the ravenous throng which is anywhere near, and unless the attacked animal can immediately make its escape from the water it is devoured alive. Here on the Paraguay the natives hold them in much respect, whereas the caymans are not feared at all. The only redeeming feature about them is that they are themselves fairly good to eat, although with too many bones.

At daybreak of the third day, finding we were still moored off Concepcion, we were rowed ashore, and strolled off through the streets of the quaint, picturesque old town; a town which, like Asuncion,[1] was founded by the conquistadores three-quarters of a century before our own English and Dutch forefathers landed in what is now the United States. The Jesuits then took practically complete possession of what is now Paraguay, controlling and Christianising the Indians, and raising their flourishing missions to a pitch of prosperity they

[1] The capital of Paraguay.—ED.

never elsewhere achieved. They were expelled by the civil authorities (backed by the other representatives of ecclesiastical authority) some fifty years before Spanish South America became independent. But they had already made the language of the Indians, Guaraný, a culture-tongue, reducing it to writing, and printing religious books in it. Guaraný is one of the most widespread of the Indian tongues, being originally found in various closely-allied forms, not only in Paraguay, but in Uruguay and over the major part of Brazil. It remains here and there, as a *lingua geral* at least, and doubtless in cases as an original tongue, among the wild tribes. In most of Brazil, as around Para and around Sâo Paulo, it has left its traces in place-names, but has been completely superseded as a language by Portuguese. In Paraguay it still exists side by side with Spanish as the common language of the lower people and as a familiar tongue among the upper classes. The blood of the people is mixed, their language dual; the lower classes are chiefly of Indian blood, but with a white admixture; while the upper classes are predominantly white, with a strong infusion of Indian. . . .

The Guaraný-speaking Paraguayan is a Christian, and as much an inheritor of our common culture as most of the peasant populations of Europe. He has no kinship with the wild Indian, who hates and fears him. The Indian of the Chaco,[1] a pure savage, a bow-bearing savage, will never come east of the Paraguay, and the Paraguayan is only beginning to venture into the western interior, away from the banks of the river. . . .

They steamed on up the Paraguay, and at the Brazilian frontier, met Colonel Rondon and the Brazilian members of the party.

[1] A great plain, west of the River Paraguay.—ED.

The steamers halted; Colonel Rondon and several of his officers, spick and span in their white uniforms, came aboard; and in the afternoon I visited him on his steamer to talk over our plans. When these had been fully discussed and agreed on, we took tea. I happened to mention that one of our naturalists, Miller, had been bitten by a piranha, and the man-eating fish at once became the subject of our conversation. Curiously enough, one of the Brazilian taxidermists had also just been severely bitten by a piranha. My new companions had story after story to tell of them. Only three weeks previously a twelve-year-old boy who had gone in swimming near Corumbá was attacked and literally devoured alive by them. Colonel Rondon during his exploring trips had met with more than one unpleasant experience in connection with them. He had lost one of his toes by the bite of a piranha. He was about to bathe, and had chosen a shallow pool at the edge of the river, which he carefully inspected until he was satisfied that none of the man-eating fish were in it; yet as soon as he put his foot into the water one of them attacked him and bit off a toe. On another occasion, while wading across a narrow stream, one of his party was attacked; the fish bit him on the thighs and buttocks, and, when he put down his hands, tore them also; he was near the bank, and by a rush reached it and swung himself out of the water by means of an overhanging limb of a tree; but he was terribly injured, and it took him six months before his wounds healed and he recovered. An extraordinary incident occurred on another trip. The party were without food and very hungry. On reaching a stream they dynamited it, and waded in to seize the stunned fish as they floated on the surface. One man, Lieutenant Pyrineus, having his hands full,

tried to hold one fish by putting its head into his mouth; it was a piranha, and seemingly stunned, but in a moment it recovered, and bit a big section out of his tongue. Such a hæmorrhage followed that his life was saved with the utmost difficulty. On another occasion a member of the party was off by himself on a mule. The mule came into camp alone. Following his track back, they came to a ford, where in the water they found the skeleton of the dead man, his clothes uninjured, but every particle of flesh stripped from his bones. Whether he had been drowned, and the fishes had then eaten his body, or whether they had killed him it was impossible to say. They had not hurt the clothes getting in under them, which made it seem likely there had been no struggle. These man-eating fish are a veritable scourge in the waters they frequent. But it must not be understood by this that the piranhas—or, for the matter of that, the New World caymans and crocodiles—ever become such dreaded foes of man as, for instance, the man-eating crocodiles of Africa. Accidents occur, and there are certain places where swimming and bathing are dangerous; but in most places the people swim freely, although they are usually careful to find spots they believe safe, or else to keep together and make a splashing in the water.

During his trips Colonel Rondon had met with various experiences with wild creatures. The Paraguayan caymans are not ordinarily dangerous to man; but they do sometimes become man-eaters, and should be destroyed whenever the opportunity offers. The huge caymans and crocodiles of the Amazon are far more dangerous, and the colonel knew of repeated instances where men, women, and children had become their victims. Once while dynamiting a stream for fish for his starving party,

he partially stunned a giant anaconda, which he killed as it crept slowly off. He said that it was of a size that no other anaconda he had ever seen even approached, and that in his opinion such a brute, if hungry, would readily attack a full-grown man. Twice smaller anacondas had attacked his dogs; one was carried under water—for the anaconda is a water-loving serpent—but he rescued it. One of his men was bitten by a jararaca; he killed the venomous snake, but was not discovered and brought back to camp until it was too late to save his life. The puma Colonel Rondon had found to be as cowardly as I have always found it,[1] but the jaguar was a formidable beast, which occasionally turned man-eater, and often charged savagely when brought to bay. He had known a hunter to be killed by a jaguar he was following in thick grass cover.

All such enemies, however, he regarded as utterly trivial compared to the real dangers of the wilderness —the torment and menace of attacks by the swarming insects, by mosquitoes and the even more intolerable tiny gnats, by the ticks, and by the vicious poisonous ants which occasionally cause villages, and even whole districts, to be deserted by human beings. These insects, and the fevers they cause, and dysentery and starvation and wearing hardship and accidents in rapids, are what the pioneer explorers have to fear.

After reaching Corumbá, farther up the River Paraguay, some of the party spent some days at a ranch on the Taquary River, a tributary of the Paraguay, and whilst here went after jaguar.

In the afternoon of this same day one of the jaguar

[1] The reader should compare Mr. Hudson's account of this animal.—ED.

hunters—merely ranch hands, who knew something of the chase of the jaguar—who had been searching for tracks, rode in with the information that he had found fresh signs at a spot in the swamp about nine miles distant. Next morning we rose at two, and had started on our jaguar-hunt at three. Colonel Rondon, Kermit,[1] and I, with the two trailers or jaguar-hunters, made up the party, each on a weedy, undersized marsh pony, accustomed to traversing the vast stretches of morass; and we were accompanied by a brown boy, with saddle-bags holding our lunch, who rode a long-horned trotting steer, which he managed by a string through its nostril and lip. The two trailers carried each a long clumsy spear. We had a rather poor pack. Besides our own two dogs, neither of which was used to jaguar-hunting, there were the ranch-dogs, which were wellnigh worthless, and then two jaguar hounds, borrowed for the occasion from a ranch six or eight leagues distant. These were the only hounds on which we could place any trust, and they were led in leashes by the two trailers. They were lean, half-starved creatures with prick ears and a look of furtive wildness.

As our shabby little horses shuffled away from the ranch-house, the stars were brilliant and the Southern Cross hung well up in the heavens, tilted to the right. At the first shallow ford, as horses and dogs splashed across, an alligator, the jacaré-tinga, some five feet long, floated unconcernedly among the splashing hoofs and paws; evidently at night it did not fear us. Hour after hour we shogged along. Then the night grew ghostly with the first dim grey of the dawn. The sky had become overcast. The sun rose red and angry through broken clouds; his disc flamed behind the tall

[1] Colonel Roosevelt's son.—ED.

slender columns of the palms, and lit the waste fields of papyrus. The black monkeys howled mournfully. The birds awoke. Macaws, parrots, parakeets, screamed at us and chattered at us as we rode by. Ibis called with wailing voices, and the plovers shrieked as they wheeled in the air. We waded across bayous and ponds, where white lilies floated on the water and thronging lilac-flowers splashed the green marsh with colour.

At last, on the edge of a patch of jungle, in wet ground, we came on fresh jaguar tracks. Both the jaguar hounds challenged the sign. They were unleashed and galloped along the trail, while the other dogs noisily accompanied them. The hunt led right through the marsh. Evidently the jaguar had not the least distaste for water. Probably it had been hunting for capybaras or tapirs, and it had gone straight through ponds and long, winding, narrow ditches or bayous, where it must now and then have had to swim for a stroke or two. It had also wandered through the island-like stretches of tree-covered land, the trees at this point being mostly palms and tarumans; the taruman is almost as big as a live-oak, with glossy foliage and a fruit like an olive. The pace quickened, the motley pack burst into yelling and howling; and then a sudden quickening of the note showed that the game had either climbed a tree or turned to bay in a thicket. The former proved to be the case. The dogs had entered a patch of tall tree-jungle, and as we cantered up through the marsh we saw the jaguar high among the forked limbs of a taruman-tree. It was a beautiful picture—the spotted coat of the big, lithe, formidable cat fairly shone as it snarled defiance at the pack below. I did not trust the pack; the dogs were not staunch, and if the jaguar came down and started I

feared we might lose it. So I fired at once, from a distance of seventy yards. I was using my favourite rifle, the little Springfield with which I have killed most kinds of African game, from the lion and elephant down; the bullets were the sharp, pointed kind, with the end of naked lead. At the shot the jaguar fell like a sack of sand through the branches, and, although it staggered to its feet, it went but a score of yards before it sank down, and when I came up it was dead under the palms, with three or four of the bolder dogs riving at it.

The jaguar is the king of South American game, ranking on an equality with the noblest beasts of the chase of North America, and behind only the huge and fierce creatures which stand at the head of the big game of Africa and Asia. This one was an adult female. It was heavier and more powerful than a full-grown male cougar, or African panther or leopard. It was a big, powerfully-built creature, giving the same effect of strength that a tiger or lion does, and that the lithe leopards and pumas do not. Its flesh, by the way, proved good eating, when we had it for supper, although it was not cooked in the way it ought to have been. I tried it because I had found cougars such good eating; I have always regretted that in Africa I did not try lion's flesh, which I am sure must be excellent.

. . . . .

An interesting incident occurred on the day we killed our first jaguar. We took our lunch beside a small but deep and obviously permanent pond. I went to the edge to dip up some water, and something growled or bellowed at me only a few feet away. It was a jacaré-tinga, or small cayman, about five feet long.

I paid no heed to it at the moment. But shortly afterward when our horses went down to drink, it threatened them and frightened them; and then Colonel Rondon and Kermit called me to watch it. It lay on the surface of the water only a few feet distant from us and threatened us; we threw cakes of mud at it, whereupon it clashed its jaws and made short rushes at us, and when we threw sticks it seized them and crunched them. We could not drive it away. Why it should have shown such truculence and heedlessness I cannot imagine, unless perhaps it was a female, with eggs near by. In another little pond a jacaré-tinga showed no less anger when another of my companions approached. It bellowed, opened its jaws, and lashed its tail. Yet these pond jacarés never molested even our dogs in the ponds, far less us on our horses.

The same day others of our party had an interesting experience with the creatures in another pond. One of them was Commander da Cunha (of the Brazilian Navy), a capital sportsman and delightful companion. They found a deepish pond a hundred yards or so long and thirty or forty across. It was tenanted by the small caymans and by capybaras—the largest known rodent, a huge aquatic guinea-pig, the size of a small sheep. It also swarmed with piranhas, the ravenous fish of which I have so often spoken. Undoubtedly the caymans were subsisting largely on these piranhas. But the tables were readily turned if any caymans were injured. When a capybara was shot and sank in the water, the piranhas at once attacked it, and had eaten half the carcass ten minutes later. But much more extraordinary was the fact that when a cayman about five feet long was wounded, the piranhas attacked and tore it, and actually drove it out on the bank to face

its human foes. The fish first attacked the wound; then, as the blood maddened them, they attacked all the soft parts, their terrible teeth cutting out chunks of tough hide and flesh. Evidently they did not molest either cayman or capybara while it was unwounded, but blood excited them to frenzy. Their habits are in some ways inexplicable. We saw men frequently bathing unmolested; but there are places where this is never safe, and in any place if a school of the fish appear, swimmers are in danger; and a wounded man or beast is in deadly peril if piranhas are in the neighbourhood. Ordinarily it appears that an unwounded man is attacked only by accident. Such accidents are rare, but they happen with sufficient frequency to justify much caution in entering water where piranhas abound.

CLIMBING CHIMBORAZO
1879, 1880

Mount Chimborazo, 21,420 feet high, is in Ecuador, about halfway between Quito, the capital, and Guayaquil, the principal port, of that country.

The famous traveller Humboldt made an attempt to reach its summit in 1802, but was driven back by mist and snow, though he claimed to have attained the greatest height ever before reached by a human being.

Edward Whymper, a mountaineer of great experience and the first to reach the top of the Matterhorn, had for his object in climbing Chimborazo the desire to make observations on the effect upon the human body of the rarified air at great altitudes, and he chose this mountain, Chimborazo, as being the most suitable for his purpose. He brought out with him from Europe two Alpine guides, the cousins Carrel, and procured an English assistant, Mr. Perring, at Guayaquil, to act as interpreter and general aide.

Upon attaining a height of about 16,000 feet the whole party suffered very badly from mountain-sickness, with the curious exception of Mr. Perring, who was the least robust of them all, and the least experienced as a mountaineer. After thirty-six hours, however, the two guides were sufficiently recovered to make a preliminary exploration of the intended route to the summit—or summits, for Chimborazo has two peaks, and it was not certain which was the higher. Mr. Whymper remained in camp, getting his instruments in order; we can now turn to his own account of his first reaching the summit (he did so again the following June, in order to verify his observations) as given in his book *Travels among the Great Andes*.

[General Map No. 1, p. 6.]

NOTE: The Arenal mentioned in the narrative is a sandy plain at a height of over 14,000 feet, giving a means of approach to the mountain; a "schrund" is a deep cleft in the mountain-side.

(*Travels among the Great Andes of the Equator*, Edward Whymper. John Murray, 1892.)

OUR camp was situated on the southern side of a rather conspicuous gap in the ridge, and a large rectangular mass of lava against which the tent was placed made a good landmark, which was rendered still more apparent by one of our long poles that was fixed up as a signal. Below us, our ridge spread out considerably as it approached the Arenal, and above us it led for a long distance towards the western dome.

On our right or east, looking towards the summits, there was a basin occupied by a glacier terminating in a *vallon* leading down to the Arenal. On the farther or eastern side of this glacier there was another ridge that carried, opposite to our camp, a rather prominent secondary peak, which we dubbed—from its situation and from a fancied resemblance to the Mont Blanc aiguille—the Aiguille du Midi. This, and another smaller one that we called the Aiguille du Géant, being higher than our station, shut out much of the vista to the east. The ridge of which they formed part did not extend to so great a height as our own. It became lost amid the snow and scattered rocks and over its higher extremity, in the early morning, we could occasionally see some of the tumultuous glacier which covers a great part of the eastern side of Chimborazo, with its numerous crevasses and gigantic schrunds. Over these slopes and schrunds clouds gathered ceaselessly, tantalising us when they were whirled aloft and torn into shreds, only to be replaced in a few seconds by equally impenetrable mists manufactured from invisible vapours.

On the left or west of our ridge there was the Vallon de Carrel, up which we had come; and at the head of this there was a glacier that has its origin in the crown of the western dome (Glacier de Thielmann). The farther or northern side of this glacier was bounded by

a long and serrated ridge which terminated the view in that direction.

Above the camp, rising 500 feet higher at an angle of about 34 degrees, our ridge was covered with disintegrated lava mingled with patches of sand; a stony waste, easy enough to traverse—Mr. Perring, indeed, could ascend or descend it by himself. Up to this elevation (nearly 17,200 feet) Chimborazo could be ascended in the month of January without touching snow! The crest or *arête* of the ridge then rose for some distance at a less abrupt angle, and was occupied by jagged blocks or pinnacles of lava which concealed its continuation in the rear. Except by looking at the ridge in full front from Guaranda, I did not know what was behind. The Carrels had disappeared amongst the craggy lavas, and as I had selected this as the line of ascent, and could not see a practicable route either to the right or left, I awaited the return of my assistants with some anxiety. Night had almost set in before they were descried coming down the slope that rose from the camp, and it was quite dark when they arrived at the tent, almost breathless, scarcely able to keep on their legs, staggering under their own weight! They threw themselves down and went to sleep without either eating or drinking, and I did not hear their report until the next day.

Misled by the time that had been occupied, they believed they had reached a very great height. (I found subsequently that they had got to about 19,300 feet above the sea.) "The thing is certain," said Jean-Antoine joyously, by which he meant Chimborazo could be ascended. However that might be, their condition, and the length of time they had been absent, led me to the conclusion that our present location was not high

enough as a starting-point, and that another move upwards must be made, though they said that there was no other place at which we could properly encamp.

On the morning of the 30th (December, 1879) Jean-Antoine was crippled by inflammation of the eyes, and had to submit to be doctored with a solution of sulphate of zinc, but his cousin was sufficiently revived in the afternoon to be sent with Perring down to the depot to fetch the tent which was to be advanced to the third camp. They returned at nightfall, having found it as much as they could carry, though it weighed only thirty-five pounds, a load which the athletic Louis would have thought a trifle at lower elevations. . . .

On the 31st, the Carrels and I (each carrying a few small things) went up the ridge to select a camping-place; and finding that no protection could be obtained at a higher point, decided to plant ourselves amongst the broken lava, close to the crest of the ridge on its eastern side, at a height of 17,285 feet. The position was a bad and exposed one, and it was a troublesome matter to clear space sufficient even for our small tent. That done, we returned to the second camp, and shortly afterwards our arriero-courier arrived, convoying three Indians who had been sent by the authorities at Guaranda, in response to my application, to replace the others who had bolted. After feeding them well, to give them a little confidence, they were at once despatched, under the care of the Carrels, carrying baggage to the third camp.

The arriero (F—) also brought intelligence that the depot had been broken into and robbed, and I accordingly sent him back to watch the stores, and Perring to Guaranda, with a written request to the Jefe-politico to supply a guard for the baggage so long as we remained

on the mountain. When the Indians returned at the end of the afternoon particular pains were taken to keep them in a good humour. They were well fed and petted, provided with wraps, had shelter rigged up for them, and a good fire made. Yet I fully expected they would desert us, and was quite surprised in the morning to find that they were remaining. The minimum temperature in this night was 20.5° Fahrenheit.

It will be inferred from the last paragraphs that we were now in a somewhat better condition. The more disagreeable symptoms of our mountain-sickness had disappeared, the gaspings had ceased, and headache nearly gone. Still, although improving, we found ourselves comparatively lifeless and feeble, with a strong disposition to sit down when we ought to have been moving, and there was plenty at that time to keep us moving—mainly owing to the unpleasant discovery that some of our tinned meat had gone bad.

I had invested in a quantity of ox-cheek, and one tin of it had been placed in each case. Upon opening the very first case it was noticed that the ends of the ox-cheek tin were *convex*, and knowing what this meant, I had it thrown away at once. With one after another we found the same and acted similarly; but at last, upon opening another case, a most appalling stench rushed out, and we found that the ox-cheek had burst its bonds, and not only become putrid itself, but had corroded the other tins and ruined almost the whole of the food in the case. It then became necessary to examine each case seriatim, to know exactly how we were off for food, and the end of the matter was, we found ourselves obliged to hurl over the cliffs a mass of provisions which had cost endless trouble to prepare.

On January 1st, 1880, leaving the Carrels to continue

this repulsive work, I went down to inspect the depot, where F— was remaining as watchman, and took the three Indians to collect firewood, as our stock was getting low. The majority of the boxes were too solid to be broken open, and pilfering I found had been confined to a wine case (from which six bottles were abstracted) and to a flimsy trunk belonging to Perring. Having despatched the Indians upwards with their loads of wood, I followed them leisurely, searching in the Vallon de Carrel for treasures that had no attractions for the authorities at Guaranda.[1] The Indians saw their opportunity, and upon return to camp I discovered that they had dropped their loads and brought up no wood whatever; and having stealthily picked up their little bundles of belongings under the very noses of the Carrels, had vanished like the others.

The labour of porterage was again thrown upon Jean-Antoine and Louis, who bore their burdens cheerfully, and started off at an early hour on January 2nd with a couple of loads to the third camp. About 10 a.m. Perring made his appearance, accompanied by two persons in uniform, carrying rifles, and a muleteer and boy with a load of wood. I recognised "the guard," but desired an introduction to the others, and found that Mr. Perring had suspected that F— was the thief, and had thoughtfully engaged a fresh arriero as courier, before arresting our late one, who was now a prisoner and on his way to Guaranda in charge of two of my guards; whilst the other pair had taken the earliest opportunity to wait upon me, not to pay their respects, but to state that unless they were paid eightpence each

[1] i.e. insects, plants, etc. The Ecuadorians were convinced that Whymper must be looking for hidden treasure on Chimborazo!—ED.

per day, *punctually every day*, they would take themselves off. I assured them that it would give us the greatest pleasure to see one of them every day, punctually, at the third camp, to receive the four eightpences, and appointed Mr. Perring paymaster; but they took themselves off, I neither know when nor where, and relieved us from all trouble on their account, except the settlement of a bill from the authorities at Guaranda for services which had not been rendered.

They did not, however, depart from the second camp until we had shown them the way to the third one. Their unexpected visit was too good an opportunity to be lost. I impressed every one to assist in the move, and at the end of the afternoon we had got three weeks' provisions at the upper station. The second camp was then left to take care of itself, with the tent standing, and a good supply of food and firing alongside. However bad the weather, we could always retreat upon the second camp, and from it to the depot near the first one, scarcely more than two hours from Tortorillas, where we could communicate with Guaranda; and the word was given the same afternoon that Chimborazo was to be assaulted on the next morning.

At 5.35 a.m. on January 3rd, we left the tent, and, scrambling through the shattered lava behind it, crossed the *arête* and emerged on the western side of the ridge. The western dome, which had been hidden during part of the ascent, again became conspicuous; crowning wall-like cliffs of lava, that grew more and more imposing as we advanced. As regards the western summit, there are two series of these cliffs—the upper ones immediately underneath the dome, surmounted by sheer precipices of ice, and the lower ones at the end of a spur thrown out towards the south-west. These

lower cliffs are neither so extensive nor as perpendicular as the upper ones, and they are crowned by snow, not by glacier. Our ridge led up to their base, and at the junction there was a want of continuity rather than a distinct breach in the walls. This was the spot which, when examining the mountain on December 21st, at a distance of sixteen miles, we had unanimously regarded as the critical point, so far as an ascent was concerned.

Up to this place the course was straightforward. In the immediate foreground, and extending upwards for 500 or 600 feet, large beds of snow in good condition covered the ridge. The pinnacle or aiguille near at hand was upon the *arête* or crest of it, and two others were higher up on the right hand or eastern side. The ridge itself appears to be fundamentally an old flow of lava. . . .

After these convenient snow-beds were traversed our ridge steepened—both as regards its *arête*, and the angles of the slopes on each side; and became in part covered by pure ice, and partly by ice mingled with small stones and grit. When this conglomerate was hard frozen, it enabled us to ascend without step-cutting; but the débris often reposed uncemented on the surface, and rendered caution as well as hard labour necessary. . . .

At 7.30 a.m. we arrived at the foot of the lower series of the Southern Walls of Chimborazo, and the termination of the south-west ridge. Then the axes went to work, and the cliffs resounded with the strokes of the two powerful cousins, who lost no time in exploration, as they had already passed this place on December 29th. The breach in the walls (for so it must be termed from want of a better expression) rose at an angle exceeding fifty degrees, and here, for the same reason as upon the *arête* we had quitted, snow could not

accumulate to any depth, and the major part of the daily fall slid away in streams, or tiny avalanches, down to the less abrupt slopes beneath; while the residue, dissolved and re-frozen, glazed the projecting rocks, and filled their interstices with solid ice. Thus far and no farther a man may go who is not a mountaineer. To our party it caused only a temporary check, for the work was enchanting to the Carrels after the uncongenial labour in which they had been employed, and during a short time we made good progress—then, all at once, we were brought to a halt. Wind had been rising during the last half-hour, and now commenced to blow furiously. It was certain we could not reach the summit on that day; so, getting down as quickly as possible, and depositing the instruments and baggage in crannies in the cliffs after reading the barometer, we fled for refuge to the tent, holding ourselves, however, in readiness to start again on the next morning. . . .

We again started from the third camp on January 4th at 5.40 a.m. The morning was fine and nearly cloudless, and profiting by the track made on the previous day we proceeded at first at a fair rate, and finished the escalade of "the breach" at about eight o'clock. Then bearing away to the left, at first over snow and then over snow-covered glacier, we mounted in zigzags to ease the ascent. The great schrunds at the head of the Glacier de Thielmann were easily avoided; the smaller crevasses were not troublesome; and the snow was in good order, though requiring steps to be cut in it. Jean-Antoine Carrel led and my orders to him at starting were that we were to go slowly—the rest was left to his discretion. I noticed at this stage, that his paces got shorter and shorter, until at last the toe of one step almost touched the heel of the previous one. At about 10 a.m., at a

height of 19,400 feet, we passed the highest exposed rocks, which were scoriaceous lava, apparently in consolidated beds, and for some distance farther we continued to progress at a reasonable rate, having fine weather and a good deal of sunshine.

At about 11 a.m. we fancied we saw the Pacific, above the clouds which covered the whole of the intervening flat country; and shortly afterwards commenced to enter the plateau which is at the top of the mountain, having by this time made half the circuit of the western dome. We were then twenty thousand feet high, and the summits seemed within our grasp. We could see both—one towards our right, and the other a little farther away on our left, with a hollow plateau about a third of a mile across between them. We reckoned that in another hour we could get to the top of either; and not knowing which of the two was the higher, we made for the nearest. But at this point the condition of affairs completely changed. The sky became overclouded, the wind rose, and we entered upon a tract of exceedingly soft snow, which could not be traversed in the ordinary way. The leading man went in up to his neck, almost out of sight, and had to be hauled out by those behind. Imagining that we had got into a labyrinth of crevasses, we beat about right and left to try to extricate ourselves; and, after discovering that it was everywhere alike, we found the only possible way of proceeding was to flog every yard of it down and then to crawl over it on all fours; and, even then, one or another was frequently submerged, and almost disappeared.[1]

Needless to say, time flew rapidly. When we had

[1] Louis Carrel could not touch bottom with a twelve-foot pole that he was carrying. It would have continued to descend by its own weight if he had left hold of it.

been at this sort of work for three hours, without having accomplished half the remaining distance, I halted the men, pointed out the gravity of our situation, and asked them which they preferred, to turn or to go on. They talked together in patois, and then Jean-Antoine said, "When you tell us to turn we will go back; until then we will go on." I said, "Go on," although by no means feeling sure it would not be best to say "Go back." In another hour and a half we got to the foot of the western summit, and, as the slopes steepened, the snow became firmer again. We arrived on the top of it about a quarter to four in the afternoon, and then had the mortification of finding that it was the lower of the two. There was no help for it; we had to descend to the plateau, to resume the flogging, wading, and floundering, and to make for the highest point, and there again, when we got on to the dome, the snow was reasonably firm, and we arrived upon the summit of Chimborazo standing upright like men, instead of grovelling, as we had been doing for the previous five hours, like the beasts of the field.

The wind blew hard from the north-east, and drove the light snow before it viciously. We were hungry, wet, numbed, and wretched, laden with instruments which could not be used. With much trouble the mercurial barometer was set up; one man grasped the tripod to keep it firm, while the other stood to windward holding up a poncho to give a little protection. The mercury fell to 14.100 inches, with a temperature of 21° Fahrenheit, and lower it would not go. The two aneroids read 13.050 and 12.900 respectively. By the time the barometer was in its case again, it was twenty minutes past five. Planting our pole with its flag of serge on the very apex of the dome, we turned to depart,

enveloped in driving clouds which entirely concealed the surrounding country.

Scarcely an hour and a quarter of daylight remained, and we fled across the plateau. There is much difference between ascending and descending soft snow, and in the trough or groove which had already been made we moved down with comparative facility. Still it took nearly an hour to extricate ourselves, and we then ran—ran for our lives, for our arrival at camp that night depended upon passing the "breach" before darkness set in. We just gained it as daylight was vanishing, and night fell before it was left behind; a night so dark that we could neither see our feet nor tell, except by touch, whether we were on rock or snow. Then we caught sight of the camp fire, twelve hundred feet below, and heard the shouts of the disconsolate Perring, who was left behind as camp-keeper, and stumbled blindly down the ridge, getting to the tent soon after 9 p.m., having been out nearly sixteen hours, and on foot the whole time.

THE "CHRISTIAN'S FRIEND"

Those vast plains, the pampas, that constitute by far the greater part of the Argentine Republic, are, unlike the tropical forests of the Amazon and Orinoco, singularly free from dangerous animals. It is true that they possess a lion, the puma, and the puma is very much addicted to horseflesh and fresh mutton, but that is the only way in which it injures man, namely through his pocket! Some encounters with this animal are taken from the pages of that wonderful observer of wild life, the late Mr. W. H. Hudson, who spent his early years in the Argentine.

[General Map No. 11, p. 67.]

(*The Naturalist in La Plata*, W. H. Hudson. Dent, 1922. Chap. ii. extracts.)

In pastoral districts the puma is very destructive to the larger domestic animals, and has an extraordinary fondness for horseflesh. In Patagonia I heard on all sides that it was extremely difficult to breed horses, as the colts were mostly killed by the pumas. A native told me that on one occasion, while driving his horses home through the thicket, a puma sprang out of the bushes on to a colt following behind the troop, killing it before his eyes and not more than six yards from his horse's head. In this instance, my informant said, the puma alighted directly on the colt's back with one fore-foot grasping its bosom, while with the other it seized the head, and, giving it a violent wrench, dislocated the neck. The colt fell to the earth as if shot, and he affirmed that it was dead before it touched the ground.

Next to horseflesh sheep is preferred, and where the

puma can come at a flock, he will not trouble himself to attack horned cattle. In Patagonia especially I found this to be the case. I resided for some time at an estancia close to the town of El Carmen, on the Rio Negro, which during my stay was infested by a very bold and cunning puma. To protect the sheep from his attacks an enclosure was made of upright willow-poles fifteen feet long, while the gate, by which he would have to enter, was close to the house and nearly six feet high. In spite of the difficulties thus put in the way, and of the presence of several large dogs, also of the watch we kept in the hope of shooting him, every cloudy night he came, and after killing one or more sheep got safely away. One dark night he killed four sheep; I detected him in the act, and going up to the gate, was trying to make out his invisible form in the gloom as he flitted about knocking the sheep over, when suddenly he leaped clear over my head and made his escape, the bullets I sent after him failing to hit him. Yet at this place twelve or fourteen calves, belonging to the milch cows, were every night shut into a small brushwood pen, at a distance from the house where the enemy could easily have destroyed every one of them. When I expressed surprise at this arrangement, the owner said that the puma was not fond of calves' flesh, and came only for the sheep. Frequently after his nocturnal visits we found, by tracing his footprints in the loose sand, that he had actually used the calves' pen as a place of concealment while waiting to make his attack on the sheep. . . .

How strange that this most cunning, bold, and bloodthirsty of the Felidæ, the persecutor of the jaguar and the scourge of the ruminants in the regions it inhabits, able to kill its prey with the celerity of a

rifle-bullet, never attacks a human being! Even the cowardly, carrion-feeding dog will attack a man when it can do so with impunity; but in places where the puma is the only large beast of prey, it is notorious that it is there perfectly safe for even a small child to go out and sleep on the plain. At the same time it will not fly from man (though the contrary is always stated in books of Natural History) except in places where it is continually persecuted. Nor is this all: it will not, as a rule, even defend itself against man, although in some rare instances it has been known to do so.

The mysterious, gentle instinct of this ungentle species, which causes the gauchos of the pampas to name it man's friend—"amigo del cristiano"—has been persistently ignored by all travellers and naturalists who have mentioned the puma. They have thus made it a very incongruous creature, strong enough to kill a horse, yet so cowardly withal that it invariably flies from a human being—even from a sleeping child! Possibly its real reputation was known to some of those who have spoken about it; if so, they attributed what they heard to the love of the marvellous and the romantic natural to the non-scientific mind; or else preferred not to import into their writings matter which has so great a likeness to fable, and might have the effect of imperilling their reputation for sober-mindedness. . . .

I was told by a person who had spent most of his life on the pampas that on one occasion, when travelling in the neighbourhood of Cape Corrientes, his horse died under him, and he was compelled to continue his journey on foot, burdened with his heavy native horse-gear. At night he made his bed under the shelter of a rock, on the slope of a stony sierra; a bright moon was shining, and about nine o'clock in the evening four pumas

appeared, two adults with their two half-grown young. Not feeling the least alarm at their presence, he did not stir; and after a while they began to gambol together close to him, concealing themselves from each other among the rocks, just as kittens do, and frequently while pursuing one another leaping over him. He continued watching them until past midnight, then fell asleep, and did not wake until morning, when they had left him.

This man was an Englishman by birth, but having gone very young to South America he had taken kindly to the semi-barbarous life of the gauchos, and had imbibed all their peculiar notions, one of which is that human life is not worth very much. "What does it matter?" they often say, and shrug their shoulders, when told of a comrade's death; "so many beautiful horses die!" I asked him if he had ever killed a puma, and he replied that he had killed only one and had sworn never to kill another. He said that while out one day with another gaucho looking for cattle a puma was found. It sat up with its back against a stone, and did not move even when his companion threw the noose of his lasso over its neck. My informant then dismounted, and, drawing his knife, advanced to kill it: still the puma made no attempt to free itself from the lasso, but it seemed to know, he said, what was coming, for it began to tremble, the tears ran from its eyes, and it whined in the most pitiful manner. He killed it as it sat there unresisting before him, but after accomplishing the deed felt that he had committed a murder. It was the only thing he had ever done in his life, he added, which filled him with remorse when he remembered it. This I thought a rather startling declaration, as I knew that he

had killed several individuals of his own species in duels, fought with knives, in the fashion of the gauchos. . . .

One of the very few authentic instances I have met with of this animal defending itself against a human being was related to me at a place on the pampas called Saladillo. At the time of my visit there jaguars and pumas were very abundant and extremely destructive to the cattle and horses. Sheep it had not yet been considered worth while to introduce, but immense herds of pigs were kept at every estancia, these animals being able to protect themselves. One gaucho had so repeatedly distinguished himself by his boldness and dexterity in killing jaguars that he was by general consent made the leader of every tiger-hunt. One day the comandante of the district got twelve or fourteen men together, the tiger-slayer among them, and started in search of a jaguar which had been seen that morning in the neighbourhood of his estancia. The animal was eventually found and surrounded, and as it was crouching among some clumps of tall pampas grass, where throwing a lasso over its neck would be a somewhat difficult and dangerous operation, all gave way to the famous hunter, who at once uncoiled his lasso and proceeded in a leisurely manner to form the loop. While thus engaged he made the mistake of allowing his horse, which had grown restive, to turn aside from the hunted animal. The jaguar, instantly taking advantage of the oversight, burst from its cover and sprang first on to the haunches of the horse, then seizing the hunter by his poncho dragged him to the earth, and would no doubt have quickly despatched him if a lasso, thrown by one of the other men, had not closed round its neck at this critical moment. It was quickly dragged off, and eventually killed. But the discomfited hunter

did not stay to assist at the finish. He arose from the ground unharmed, but in a violent passion and blaspheming horribly, for he knew that his reputation, which he prized above everything, had suffered a great blow, and that he would be mercilessly ridiculed by his associates. Getting on his horse he rode away by himself from the scene of his misadventure. Of what happened to him on his homeward ride there were no witnesses; but his own account was as follows, and inasmuch as it told against his own prowess it was readily believed: Before riding a league, and while his bosom was still burning with rage, a puma started up from the long grass in his path, but made no attempt to run away; it merely sat up, he said, and looked at him in a provokingly fearless manner. To slay this animal with his knife, and so revenge himself on it for the defeat he had just suffered, was his first thought. He alighted and secured his horse by tying its forefeet together, then, drawing his long, heavy knife, rushed at the puma. Still it did not stir. Raising his weapon he struck with a force which would have split the animal's skull open if the blow had fallen where it was intended to fall, but with a quick movement the puma avoided it, and at the same time lifted a foot and with lightning rapidity dealt the aggressor a blow on the face, its unsheathed claws literally dragging down the flesh from his cheek, laying the bone bare. After inflicting this terrible punishment and eyeing its fallen foe for a few seconds it trotted quietly away. The wounded man succeeded in getting on to his horse and reaching his home. The hanging flesh was restored to its place and the ghastly rents sewn up, and in the end he recovered; but he was disfigured for life; his temper also completely changed; he became morose and morbidly

sensitive to the ridicule of his neighbours, and he never again ventured to join them in their hunting expeditions.

I inquired of the comandante, and of others, whether any case had come to their knowledge in that district in which the puma had shown anything beyond a mere passive friendliness towards man; in reply they related the following incident, which had occurred at the Saladillo a few years before my visit: The men all went out one day beyond the frontier to form a *cerco*, as it is called, to hunt ostriches and other game. The hunters, numbering about thirty, spread themselves round in a vast ring, and advancing towards the centre, drove the animals before them. During the excitement of the chase which followed, while they were all engaged in preventing the ostriches, deer, etc. from doubling back and escaping, it was not noticed that one of the hunters had disappeared; his horse, however, returned to its home during the evening, and on the next morning a fresh hunt for the lost man was organised. He was eventually found lying on the ground with a broken leg, where he had been thrown at the beginning of the hunt. He related that about an hour after it had become dark a puma appeared and sat near him, but did not seem to notice him. After a while it became restless, frequently going away and returning, and finally it kept away so long, that he thought it had left him for good. About midnight he heard the deep roar of a jaguar, and gave himself up for lost. By raising himself on his elbow he was able to see the outline of the beast crouching near him, but its face was turned from him, and it appeared to be intently watching some object on which it was about to spring. Presently it crept out of sight, then he heard snarlings and growlings and the sharp yell of a puma, and he knew that the

two beasts were fighting. Before morning he saw the jaguar several times, but the puma renewed the contest with it again and again until morning appeared, after which he saw and heard no more of them.

Extraordinary as this story sounds, it did not seem so to me when I heard it, for I had already met with many anecdotes of a similar nature in various parts of the country, some of them vastly more interesting than the one I have just narrated; only I did not get them at first hand, and am consequently not able to vouch for their accuracy; but in this case it seemed to me that there was really no room for doubt.

ORCHID HUNTING
1887

The extremely interesting country of Colombia, the New Granada of the Spaniards, occupies the north-western corner of South America. Like Peru and Mexico, it was the home of an ancient civilisation, that of the Chibchas, who were overcome by the Spaniards under Quesada in 1539.

A country of great natural resources, it is a happy hunting-ground of the orchid-hunters, of whom Mr. Millican was one when he visited it in 1887; in his case, the hunter became the hunted! The Latin names appearing in his narrative are those of different varieties of that exotic plant.

It may be added that the capital, Bogotá, can now be reached by rail, so that it is no longer necessary to take to the mule-track at Honda, as it was at the time of his visit to the country.

Map, p. 93].

(*Travels and Adventures of an Orchid Hunter*, by Albert Millican. Cassell, 1891 (out of print). Chap. xi, all.)

THE *Cattleya Trianae* has been found for years near the town of Ibague in the State of Tolima—a little more than one hundred miles from Bogotá in a south-westerly direction. The *Cattleya* is found under much the same circumstances as the others of its family, at an altitude of about four thousand feet above sea-level. To reach it, it is necessary to ascend the river Magdalena for a considerable distance, and then land on the west bank. There is little of interest in the mule-ride except the sight of the majestic snow-capped mountains, called the Paramo de Ruiz. These tower up to the height of 16,000 feet, with a glistening top of eternal snow, which makes them conspicuous at a great distance from many parts of the road.

Cattleya Trianae is found over a wide area, but all the plants taken from these parts must be brought to a small town called Honda; this is the principal port of the Magdalena river, about six hundred miles from the sea. Swift-running rapids prevent the larger steamboats going farther up the river than Honda, but another line of boats has been built above the rapids. These vessels navigate the river for three hundred miles more to a place called Neiva. Hundreds of mules carrying every imaginable class of produce, throng the road from Bogotá to Honda. On arriving on the banks of the Magdalena everything in the way of cargo, animals, and human beings that would reach the town must embark in a curious kind of raft, attached to a strong chain stretching across the river; immediately the raft is loosened from the side, the force of the water carries it across the river, the pulley running along the supporting chain; this raft is worked from six o'clock in the morning, until six in the evening, the small fee of twopence-halfpenny being charged for passing a horse and his rider, three-halfpence for a mule-load, and a penny for a foot passenger. A line of railway connects this place with the town of Honda, and runs to the part of the river where the steamboats land, called Yeguas, about four miles from Honda. At this point the mountains which wall in the valley of the Magdalena are very near to each other, and there seems to be no breeze which ever reaches the town; it is proverbially known all over the country as being very hot, and I have seldom seen the thermometer fall below 95 degrees Fahrenheit in the shade. It is a curiously-built little town, with neither system nor design in the architecture. It was at one time large and important, but earthquakes have proved its ruin, and now the

fine churches, convents, hospitals, and even a beautiful stone bridge, have all been destroyed. Travellers to the interior must inevitably pass this way, and everyone will find lodging-houses and facilities for hiring mules, etc. to help him on his way to the capital.

When I got on board the steamboat here to descend the Magdalena river, I practically said good-bye for the time being to four States of this magnificent country—Boyaca, Cundinamarca, El Cauca, and El Tolima. No pen or picture has, or ever will be able to, give more than a faint idea of the glories of this part of Colombia—of its riches in mines of emeralds and gold and silver; of its agricultural products of coffee, cocoa, and grain, of its trackless forests, with their exhaustless supply of timber and choice woods, its wealth of ornamental and medicinal plants, its bevies of gaudy-coloured birds and curious animals, its snow-capped mountains and boundless prairies where the Indians have always roamed with perfect freedom; or of its commercial cities, with their rich and cultivated inhabitants. Even the most stoical Englishman who has travelled here and seen its beauties cannot help but regret that so many thousand miles divide this paradise from our own little island.

The descent of the river Magdalena was made quickly and agreeably, and we very soon arrived at the port called Puerto Berrio. This is the port by which travellers reach the prosperous city of Medellin, one of the most important centres of the country, and the home of *Cattleya Dowiana Aurea* and *Cattleya Warscewiczii*.

Puerto Berrio has a special interest to all English orchid collectors. A rough cross of wood on the edge of the forest, on the higher bank of the river, marks the last resting-place of Chesterton, the well-known orchid-

collector, who did such good service for the firm of James Veitch and Sons, long before the wholesale plunder and extermination of the plants brought about by modern collectors.

A small mountain town, called Frontino, has given, up to the present, all the *Miltonia Vexillaria*, but the woods in the vicinity have become already pretty well cleared. I had heard much about the plants to be found between the river Opon and the river Carare. These are two rivers which together drain the southern part of the State of Santander, and the land lying between them is a narrow strip less than one hundred miles wide. I descended the river to a place called Barranca bermeja, with the object of getting a canoe to navigate the river Opon. This, I was told, would require at least six men, well armed. The river is not navigable for more than fifty miles, and the distance is intercepted by fallen trees, while the forest between the two rivers is infested by hordes of hostile Indians. The first two days nothing extraordinary happened; the banks of the river were thick forest, and we saw no tracks of the Indians. Each night we camped on a sand-bank. I saw no orchids, the land being too flat; but on the third day we passed many tracks of the Indians, and some abandoned huts. About mid-day, as we suddenly made a curve of the river, a shower of arrows whistled past us and fell far ahead; they had been aimed too high and shot with too much force. In the direction the arrows came from we saw nothing—not even a rustling of the foliage. We fired several times into the bush, and proceeded more cautiously. My companions would have turned back, some of them becoming afraid, but an unconquerable curiosity possessed me to see what there was in the way of plants

on the higher ground. It was evident that the Indians knew by this time, all along the river, of our ascent, and more than once I saw dusky forms creeping stealthily away from the banks as the canoe glided into sight. I had been informed that the Indians were very much scattered over the country, and although they maintain a deadly hatred against all civilised human beings, the fact of our ascending the river would not be sufficient to make them congregate in numbers, and the stragglers along the banks, although hostile in the highest degree, are cowardly and afraid of fire-arms.

On the fourth day, proceeding with the greatest difficulty on account of the fallen trees, we came to some three or four small sheds, with plantations of maize in front of them; a few animal skins were lying about, but every one of the inhabitants had taken to the woods. The very emptiness of the huts showed that their manner of life must be of the most primitive kind. However warlike they are towards outsiders, there are accounts that they live together in the greatest friendship and good faith. We left the huts very much as we found them, and proceeded up the river. I had seen several very pretty Oncidiums on the banks, and I had begun to hope we were clear of the Indians. On the night of the fourth day, we camped as usual on a sand-bank, not being able to proceed farther on account of the bad state of the river. Knowing that we were in the very middle of the Indian territory, where, if they chose, they could overpower us with numbers at any moment, we passed the night somewhat nervously, with a very small fire, but with our rifles loaded, and while three slept the other three kept watch. Nothing happened to us that night, and early in the morning, after breakfasting, I started into the forest with four

of the men, leaving the other two in ambush to watch the canoe, for fear the Indians should take away our only means of getting back to the Magdalena. I was delighted to find the trees on the rising ground from the banks of the river hung with fine clumps of *Miltonia Vexillaria*, intermixed with *Oncidium Carthaginense* and several smaller orchids, and I was priding myself upon reaping a glorious harvest. But that night all my plans were destined to be crushed. Everybody was in good spirits at our evening meal, but we had scarcely finished and lighted our roll of tobacco when the twang of an arrow, as it whistled past my head, startled everyone to his feet. In another moment one of our number was pierced with three of the deadly poisoned arrows, and mortally wounded. The moon was on the wane, and shed a miserable light for us to shoot by, while the savages could see us perfectly well by the light of our fire. Not a moment was lost in hiding ourselves behind the nearest trees, and we were scarcely placed when another shower of arrows showed us the position of the Indians. Seeing us retreat, they had advanced more into the open; at the same time a blaze of fire poured out of five trusty rifles, and a terrible howl rose from the throats of the surprised and wounded Indians, who up to the present had not uttered a sound.

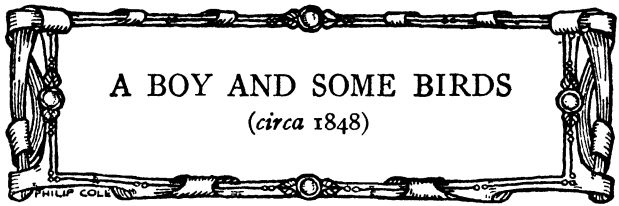
In a moment every mark for us to aim at had disappeared, but we fired another volley in the direction they had gone. For some time after the rushing sound in the forest informed us that they were retreating and taking away their dead or wounded.

I thought they would return, but my companions believed that the report of fire-arms was so little known to them that one encounter would be enough—and they proved right. As soon as day dawned we carefully

reconnoitred in all directions. However, on that side we found nothing but the trail of the Indians and the pools of blood left by the victims of our bullets. I had been anxious to capture one of the Indians, so as to see what sort of people they really were, as up to the present I had caught nothing of them but the faintest glimpse; in this I was quite unexpectedly gratified. Two of the men were reconnoitring along the bank of the river near the canoe, when they came upon one of the Indians alone—probably a scout; he offered no resistance, but cowered on the ground as if to beg for mercy. I was surprised the two men had not shot him at first sight, but perhaps they were moved with pity, or were actuated by the same curiosity as myself; at any rate, I was as much surprised as the Indian when the two men brought him to me. He was a young man, apparently about twenty-two years of age, tall, and of a fine physical form; his skin was a rich bronze. I had heard that these Indians adorn themselves with feather head-dresses, but this one wore no ornaments, his only clothing being a small piece of grass-cloth tied around the loins. He was armed with the usual native bow, some arrows, and a lance. In the short time he was with us we were not successful in getting any communication whatever from him, even by signs, and he refused all food. I succeeded in getting a photograph of him; which operation I supposed he thought was to be the end of him, he appeared so frightened.

Apart from the vacant air of the untaught man of the woods, he had no savage look, and when left to himself in his own native haunts I should think he was good-natured. We took away his weapons, and then left him to return to his companions. In a moment he was off with a bound like a deer, and that was the last

I saw of the Opon Indians. We quietly made a suitable resting place for our dead companion, and however loath we were to leave him there, we had no remedy. Loosing our canoe from its moorings, less than two days in the rapid stream landed us in the waters of the Magdalena; and for the future, however much I may covet the orchid gems of the head waters of the Opon, they must remain there for my part until the last red man has disappeared from his territory.



A BOY AND SOME BIRDS

(*circa* 1848)

The late Mr. W. H. Hudson, already referred to, began his observations of birds and animals at a very early age. Here we have some reminiscences of his boyhood in the Argentine which indicate the eagerness with which he sought to learn something of the habits of his feathered neighbours at an age when most of us, it is to be feared, regarded a bird as something to throw a stone at. It was this genuine love for all the creatures of nature which sharpened his powers of accurate observation; so that among all naturalists, past and present, it is doubtful if he was ever surpassed as an interpreter of the motives and habits of the creatures he studied.

[General Map No. 11, p. 67.]

(*Far Away and Long Ago*, W. H. Hudson. J. M. Dent, 1928. Chap. vi with parts omitted.)

Just before my riding days began in real earnest, when I was not yet quite confident enough to gallop off alone for miles to see the world for myself, I had my first long walk on the plain. One of my elder brothers invited me to accompany him to a water-course, one of the slow-flowing shallow marshy rivers of the pampas which was but two miles from home. The thought of the half-wild cattle we would meet terrified me, but he was anxious for my company that day and assured me that he could see no herd in that direction and he would be careful to give a wide berth to anything with horns we might come upon. Then I joyfully consented and we set out, three of us, to survey the wonders of a great stream of running water, where bulrushes grew and large wild birds, never seen by us at home, would be found.

It was for me a tremendously long walk, as we had to take many a turn to avoid the patches of cardoon and giant thistles, and by and by we came to low ground where the grass was almost waist-high and full of flowers. It was all like an English meadow in June, when every grass and every herb is in flower, beautiful and fragrant, but tiring to a boy six years old to walk through. At last we came out to a smooth grass turf, and in a little while were by the stream, which had overflowed its banks owing to recent heavy rains and was now about fifty yards wide. An astonishing number of birds were visible—chiefly wild duck, a few swans, and many waders —ibises, herons, spoonbills, and others, but the most wonderful of all were three immensely tall white-and-rose-coloured birds, wading solemnly in a row a yard or so apart from one another some twenty yards out from the bank. I was amazed and enchanted at the sight, and my delight was intensified when the leading bird stood still and, raising his head and long neck aloft, opened and shook his wings. For the wings when open were of a glorious crimson colour, and the bird was to me the most angel-like creature on earth. What were these wonderful birds? I asked of my brothers but they could not tell me. They said they had never seen birds like them before, and later I found that the flamingo was not known in our neighbourhood as the water-courses were not large enough for it, but that it could be seen in flocks at a lake less than a day's journey from our home.

It was not for several years that I had an opportunity of seeing the bird again; later I have seen it scores and hundreds of times, at rest or flying, at all times of the day and in all states of the atmosphere, in all its most beautiful aspects, as when at sunset or in the early

morning it stands motionless in the still water with its clear image reflected below; or when seen flying in flocks—seen from some high bank beneath one—moving low over the blue water in a long crimson line or half-moon, the birds at equal distances apart, their wing-tips all but touching; but the delight in these spectacles has never equalled in degree that which I experienced on this occasion when I was six years old.

. . . . .

The *carancho* is not a true vulture nor a strictly true eagle, but a carrion-hawk, a bird the size of a small eagle, blackish-brown in colour with a white neck and breast suffused with brown and spotted with black; also it had a very big eagle-shaped beak, and claws not so strong as an eagle's nor so weak as a vulture's. In its habits it was both eagle and vulture, as it fed on dead flesh, and was also a killer of animals and birds, especially of the weakly and young. A somewhat destructive creature to poultry and young sucking lambs and pigs. Its feeding habits were, in fact, very like those of the raven, and its voice, too, was raven-like, or rather like that of the carrion-crow at his loudest and harshest.

Considering the character of this big rapacious bird, the *Polyborus tharus* of naturalists and the *carancho* of the natives, it may seem strange that a pair were allowed to nest and live for years in our plantation, but in those days people were singularly tolerant not only of injurious birds and beasts, but even of beings of their own species of predaceous habits. On the outskirts of our old peach orchard there was a solitary tree of a somewhat singular shape, standing about forty yards from the others on the edge of a piece of waste weedy land. It

was a big old tree like the others, and had a smooth round trunk standing about fourteen feet high and throwing out branches all round, so that its upper part had the shape of an open inverted umbrella. And in the convenient hollow formed by the circle of branches the *caranchos* had built their huge nest, composed of sticks, lumps of turf, dry bones of sheep and other animals, pieces of rope and raw hide, and any other object they could carry. The nest was their home; they roosted in it by night and visited it at odd times during the day, usually bringing a bleached bone or thistle-stalk or some such object to add to the pile.

Our birds never attacked the fowls, and were not offensive or obtrusive, but kept to their own end of the plantation farthest away from the buildings. They only came when an animal was killed for meat, and would then hang about, keeping a sharp eye on the proceedings and watching their chance. This would come when the carcass was dressed and lights and other portions thrown to the dogs; then the *carancho* would swoop down like a kite, and snatching up the meat with his beak would rise to a height of twenty or thirty yards in the air, and dropping his prize would deftly catch it again in his claws and soar away to feed on it at leisure. I was never tired of admiring this feat of the *carancho*, which is, I believe, unique in birds of prey.

The big nest in the old inverted umbrella-shaped peach-tree had a great attraction for me; I often used to visit it and wonder if I would ever have the power of getting up to it. Oh, what a delight it would be to get up there, above the nest, and look down into the great basin-like hollow lined with sheep's wool and see the eggs, bigger than turkey's eggs, all marbled with deep red, or creamy white splashed with blood-red! For I

had seen *carancho* eggs brought in by a gaucho, and I was ambitious to take a clutch from a nest with my own hands. It was true I had been told by my mother that if I wanted wild birds' eggs I was never to take more than one from a nest, unless it was of some injurious species. And injurious the *carancho* certainly was, in spite of his good behaviour when at home. On one of my early rides on my pony I had seen a pair of them, and I think they were our own birds, furiously attacking a weak and sickly ewe; she had refused to lie down to be killed, and they were on her neck, beating and tearing at her face and trying to pull her down. Also I had seen a litter of little pigs a sow had brought forth on the plain attacked by six or seven *caranchos*, and found on approaching the spot that they had killed half of them (about six, I think) and were devouring them at some distance from the old pig and the survivors of the litter.

But how could I climb the tree and get over the rim of the huge nest? And I was afraid of the birds, they looked so unspeakably savage and formidable whenever I went near them. But my desire to get the eggs was overmastering, and when it was spring and I had reason to think that eggs were being laid, I went oftener than ever to watch and wait for an opportunity. And one evening just after sunset I could not see the birds anywhere about and thought my chance had now come. I managed to swarm up the smooth trunk to the branches and then with wildly beating heart began the task of trying to get through the close branches and to work my way over the huge rim of the nest. Just then I heard the harsh grating cry of the bird, and peering through the leaves in the direction it came from I caught sight of the two birds flying furiously towards

me, screaming again as they came nearer. Then terror seized me, and down I went through the branches, and catching hold of the lowest one managed to swing myself clear, and dropped to the ground. It was a good long drop, but I fell on a soft turf, and springing to my feet fled to the shelter of the orchard and then on towards the house, without ever looking back to see if they were following.

That was my only attempt to raid the nest, and from that time the birds continued in peaceful possession of it until it came into some person's mind that this huge nest was detrimental to the tree, and was the cause of its producing so little fruit compared with any other tree, and the nest was accordingly pulled down, and the birds forsook the place.

In describing our old peach trees in their blossoming time I mentioned the paroquets which occasionally visit us but had their breeding-place some distance away. This bird was one of the two common parrots of the district, the other larger species being the Patagonian parrot, *Conarus patagonus*, the *Loro barranquero* or Cliff Parrot of the natives. In my early years this bird was common on the treeless pampas extending for hundreds of miles south of Buenos Ayres as well as in Patagonia, and bred in holes it excavated in cliffs and steep banks at the side of lakes and rivers. These breeding-sites were far south of my home, and I did not visit them until my boyhood's days were over.

In winter these birds had a partial migration to the north; at that season we were visited by flocks, and as a child it was a joy to me when the resounding screams of the travelling parrots, heard in the silence long before the birds became visible in the sky, announced their approach. Then, when they appeared flying at a

moderate height, how strange and beautiful they looked, with long pointed wings and long graduated tails, in their sombre green plumage touched with yellow, blue, and crimson colour! How I longed for a nearer acquaintance with these winter visitors and hoped they would settle on our trees! Sometimes they did settle to rest, perhaps to spend half a day or longer in the plantation; and sometimes, to my great happiness, a flock would elect to remain with us for whole days and weeks, feeding on the surrounding plain, coming at intervals to the trees during the day, and at night to roost.

I used to go out on my pony to follow and watch the flock at feed, and wondered at their partiality for the bitter-tasting seeds of the wild pumpkin. This plant, which was abundant with us, produced an egg-shaped fruit about half the size of an ostrich's egg, with a hard shell-like rind, but the birds with their sharp iron-hard beaks would quickly break up the dry shell and feast on the pips, scattering the seed-shells about till the ground was whitened with them. When I approached the feeding flock on my pony the birds would rise up and, flying to and at me, hover in a compact crowd just above my head, almost deafening me with their angry screams.

The smaller bird, the paroquet, which was about the size of a turtle-dove, had a uniform rich green colour above and ashy-grey beneath, and, like most parrots, it nested in trees. It is one of the most social birds I know; it lives all the year round in communities and builds huge nests of sticks near together as in a rookery, each nest having accommodation for two or three to half a dozen pairs. Each pair has an entrance and nest cavity of its own in the big structure.

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These rough plains were also the haunt of the rhea, our ostrich, and it was here that I first had a close sight of this greatest and most unbird-like bird of our continent. I was eight years old then, when one afternoon in late summer I was just setting off for a ride on my pony, when I was told to go out on the east side till I came to the cardoon-covered land about a mile beyond the shepherd's ranch. The shepherd was wanted in the plantation and could not go to the flock just yet, and I was told to look for the flock and turn it towards home. I found the flock just where I had been told to look for it, the sheep very widely scattered, and some groups of a dozen or two to a hundred were just visible at a distance among the rough bushes.

Just where these farthest sheep were grazing there was a scatered troop of seventy or eighty horses grazing too, and when I rode to that spot I all at once found myself among a lot of rheas, feeding too among the sheep and horses. Their grey plumage being so much like the cardoon bushes in colour had prevented me from seeing them before I was right among them. The strange thing was that they paid not the slightest attention to me, and pulling up my pony I sat staring in astonishment at them, particularly at one, a very big one and nearest to me, engaged in leisurely pecking at the clover plants growing among the big prickly thistle leaves, and as it seemed carefully selecting the best sprays.

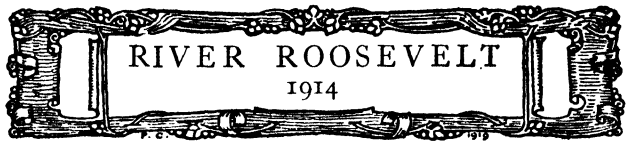
What a great noble-looking bird it was, and how beautiful in its loose grey-and-white plumage, hanging like a picturesquely-worn mantle about its body! Why were they so tame? I wondered. The sight of a mounted gaucho, even at a great distance, will invariably set them off at their topmost speed; yet here I was

within a dozen yards of one of them, with several others about me, all occupied in examining the herbage and selecting the nicest-looking leaves to pluck, just as if I was not there at all! I suppose it was because I was only a small boy on a small horse and was not associated in the ostrich brain with the wild-looking gaucho on his big animal charging upon him with a deadly purpose. Presently I went straight at the one near me, and he then raised his head and neck and moved carelessly away before to a distance of a few yards, then began cropping the clover once more. I rode at him again, putting my pony to a trot, and when within two yards of him he all at once swung his body round in a quaint way towards me, and breaking into a sort of dancing trot brushed past me. Pulling up again and looking back, I found he was ten or twelve yards behind me, once more quietly engaged in cropping clover leaves.

Again and again this bird, and one of the others I rode at, practised the same pretty trick, first appearing perfectly unconcerned at my presence and then, when I made a charge at them, with just one little careless movement placing themselves a dozen yards behind me.

But this same trick of the rhea is wonderful to see when the hunted bird is spent with running and is finally overtaken by one of the hunters who has perhaps lost the bolas with which he captures his quarry, and who endeavours to place himself side by side with it so as to reach it with his knife. It seems an easy thing to do: the bird is plainly exhausted, panting, his wings hanging, as he lopes on, yet no sooner is the man within striking distance than the sudden motion comes into play, and the bird as by a miracle is now behind instead of at the side of the horse. And before the horse, going at top speed, can be reined in and turned round, the rhea

has had time to recover his wind and get a hundred yards away or more. It is on account of this tricky instinct of the rhea that the gauchos say, "El avestruz es el mas *gaucho* de los animales," which means that the ostrich, in its resourcefulness and the tricks it practises to save itself when hard pressed, is as clever as the gaucho knows himself to be.



Colonel Theodore Roosevelt, twenty-sixth President of the United States, who died in 1919 at the age of sixty-one, was co-leader with Colonel Rondon, Brazilian Army, of a party of exploration which discovered, in 1914, the course of a large tributary of the Madeira River which is, in turn, a principal tributary of the Amazon.

This new river—"new" in the sense that it was not previously known to the map-makers—was christened after Roosevelt by orders of the Brazilian Government; the actual fact of its existence had previously been discovered by Colonel Rondon when exploring the Gy-Parana, and he had entered it on his sketch-maps as Rio da Dúvida, the River of Doubt. It was with the intention of exploring it thoroughly that the expedition set out.

Colonel Roosevelt travelled north up the River Paraguay to the little town of Cáceres at the northern extreme of the settled portion of that district of Brazil, the Matto Grosso; thence, with his party, he made his way by canoe and mule-train to the River of Doubt upon whose waters they launched their canoes on 27 February, 1914, and proceeded downstream into the unknown with no knowledge of where or when, if ever, they would eventually come out. The extract here given from Colonel Roosevelt's book *Through the Brazilian Wilderness* deals with the latter part of their journey on the River of Doubt—now called River Roosevelt—after they had lost one of their "camaradas" (canoe-men and porters) in some rapids where Kermit Roosevelt had a narrow escape from drowning, and had suffered many casualties to their canoes and stores.

Later, another of the camaradas was shot by one of his companions, a surly, ill-natured fellow named Julio, referred to in the passage here given.

On 15 April, when the whole party was in a very sorry condition, they came, to their joy, to a rubber-plantation,

and thenceforward till their arrival at Manaos, the worst of their troubles and adventures were over; though Colonel Roosevelt himself spent a great part of this return to civilisation stretched out with fever at the bottom of a canoe, under the torrid sun and drenching rains of the tropics.

The party that travelled down the unknown river consisted of Colonel Roosevelt and his son Kermit; Colonel Rondon and Lieutenant Lyra of the Brazilian Army; Mr. Cherrie, the ornithologist of the party, and Dr. Cajazeira its medical member; and sixteen camaradas.

[General Map No. I, p. 6.]

(*Through the Brazilian Wilderness*, T. Roosevelt. John Murray, Albemarle St., 1914. Chap. ix, pp. 271–305, with omissions.)

THE mightiest river in the world is the Amazon. It runs from west to east, from the sunset to the sunrise, from the Andes to the Atlantic. The main stream flows almost along the equator, while the basin which contains its affluents extends many degrees north and south of the equator. This gigantic equatorial river basin is filled with an immense forest, the largest in the world, with which no other forests can be compared save those of western Africa and Malaysia. We were within the southern boundary of this great equatorial forest, on a river which was not merely unknown but unguessed at, no geographer having ever suspected its existence. This river flowed northward toward the equator, but whither it would go, whether it would turn one way or another, the length of its course, where it would come out, the character of the stream itself, and the character of the dwellers along its banks—all these things were yet to be discovered.

One morning while the canoes were being built, Kermit and I walked a few kilometres down the river and surveyed the next rapids below. The vast, still forest was

almost empty of life. We found old Indian signs. There were very few birds, and these in the tops of the tall trees. We saw a recent tapir-track; and under a cajazeira-tree by the bank there were the tracks of capybaras which had been eating the fallen fruit. This fruit is delicious, and would make a valuable addition to our orchards.

On the morning of March 22nd we started in our six canoes. We made ten kilometres. Twenty minutes after starting we came to the first rapids. Here everyone walked except the three best paddlers, who took the canoes down in succession—an hour's job. Soon after this we struck a bees' nest in the top of a tree overhanging the river; our steersman climbed out and robbed it, but, alas! lost the honey on the way back. We came to a small steep fall, which we did not dare run in our overladen, clumsy, and cranky dugouts. Fortunately we were able to follow a deep canal which led off for a kilometre, returning just below the falls, fifty yards from where it had started. Then, having been in the boats and in motion only one hour and a half, we came to a long stretch of rapids which it took us six hours to descend, and we camped at the foot. Everything was taken out of the canoes, and they were run down in succession. At one difficult and perilous place they were let down by ropes; and even thus we almost lost one.

We went down the right bank. On the opposite bank was an Indian village, evidently inhabited only during the dry season. The marks on the stumps of trees showed that these Indians had axes and knives; and there were old fields in which maize, beans, and cotton had been grown. The forest dripped and

steamed. Rubber-trees were plentiful. At one point the tops of a group of tall trees were covered with yellow-white blossoms. Others bore red blossoms. Many of the big trees, of different kinds, were buttressed at the base with great thin walls of wood. Others, including both palms and ordinary trees, showed an even stranger peculiarity. The trunk, near the base, but sometimes six or eight feet from the ground, was split into a dozen or twenty branches or small trunks which sloped outward in tent-like shape, each becoming a root. The larger trees of this type looked as if their trunks were seated on the tops of the pole-frames of Indian tepees. At one point in the stream, to our great surprise, we saw a flying-fish. It skimmed the water like a swallow for over twenty yards.

Although we made only ten kilometres we worked hard all day. The last canoes were brought down and moored to the bank at nightfall. Our tents were pitched in the darkness.

Next day we made thirteen kilometres. We ran, all told, a little over an hour and three-quarters. Seven hours were spent in getting past a series of rapids at which the portage, over rocky and difficult ground, was a kilometre long. The canoes were run down empty—a hazardous run, in which one of them upset.

Yet while we were actually on the river, paddling and floating down-stream along the reaches of swift, smooth water, it was very lovely. When we started in the morning, the day was overcast and the air was heavy with vapour. Ahead of us the shrouded river stretched between dim walls of forest, half seen in the mist. Then the sun burned up the fog, and loomed through it in a red splendour that changed first to gold and then to molten white. In the dazzling light, under the brilliant

blue of the sky, every detail of the magnificent forest was vivid to the eye: the great trees, the network of bush-ropes, the caverns of greenery, where thick-leaved vines covered all things else. Wherever there was a hidden boulder the surface of the current was broken by waves. In one place, in mid-stream, a pyramidal rock thrust itself six feet above the surface of the river. On the banks we found fresh Indian signs.

In the morning, just before leaving this camp, a tapir swam across a stream a little way above us; but unfortunately we could not get a shot at it. An ample supply of tapir beef would have meant much to us. We had started with fifty days' rations; but this by no means meant full rations, in the sense of giving every man all he wanted to eat. We had two meals a day, and were on rather short commons—both our mess and the camaradas'—except when we got plenty of palm-tops. For our mess we had the boxes chosen by Fiala, each containing a day's rations for six men, our number. But we made each box last a day and a half, or at times two days, and in addition we gave some of the food to the camaradas. It was only on the rare occasions when we had killed some monkeys or curassows, or caught some fish, that everybody had enough. We would have welcomed that tapir. So far the game, fish, and fruit had been too scarce to be an element of weight in our food supply. In an exploring trip like ours, through a difficult and utterly unknown country, especially if densely forested, there is little time to halt, and game cannot be counted on. It is only in lands like our own West thirty years ago, like South Africa in the middle of the last century, like East Africa to-day, that game can be made the chief food supply. On this

trip our only substantial food supply from the country hitherto had been that furnished by the palm-tops. Two men were detailed every day to cut down palms for food.

A kilometre and a half after leaving this camp we came on a stretch of big rapids. The river here twists in loops, and we had heard the roaring of these rapids the previous afternoon. Then we passed out of earshot of them; but Antonio Correa, our best waterman, insisted all along that the roaring meant rapids worse than any we had encountered for some days. "I was brought up in the water, and I know it like a fish, and all its sounds," said he. He was right. We had to carry the loads nearly a kilometre that afternoon, and the canoes were pulled out on the bank so that they might be in readiness to be dragged overland next day. Rondon, Lyra, Kermit, and Antonio Correa explored both sides of the river. On the opposite or left bank they found the mouth of a considerable river, bigger than the Rio Kermit, flowing in from the west and making its entrance in the middle of the rapids. This river we christened the Taunay, in honour of a distinguished Brazilian, an explorer, a soldier, a senator, who was also a writer of note. Kermit had with him two of his novels, and I had read one of his books dealing with a disastrous retreat during the Paraguayan war.

Next morning, the 25th, the canoes were brought down. A path was chopped for them and rollers laid; and half-way down the rapids Lyra and Kermit, who were overseeing the work as well as doing their share of the pushing and hauling, got them into a canal of smooth water, which saved much severe labour. As our food supply lowered we were constantly more desirous of economising the strength of the men. One day more would complete a month since we had embarked on the

Dúvida—as we had started in February, the lunar and calendar months coincided. We had used up over half our provisions. We had come only a trifle over 160 kilometres, thanks to the character and number of the rapids. We believed we had three or four times the distance yet to go before coming to a part of the river where we might hope to meet assistance, either from rubber-gatherers or from Pyrineus,[1] if he were really coming up the river which we were going down. If the rapids continued to be as they had been it could not be much more than three weeks before we were in straits for food, aside from the ever-present danger of accident in the rapids; and if our progress were no faster than it had been—and we were straining to do our best we would in such event still have several hundreds of kilometres of unknown river before us. We could not even hazard a guess at what was in front. The river was now a really big river, and it seemed impossible that it could flow either into the Gy-Parana or the Tapajos. It was possible that it went into the Canuma, a big affluent of the Madeira low down, and next to the Tapajos. It was more probable that it was the headwaters of the Aripuanan, a river which, as I have said, was not even named on the excellent English map of Brazil I carried. Nothing but the mouth had been known to any geographer; but the lower course had long been known to rubber-gatherers, and recently a commission from the Government of Amazonas had partway ascended one branch of it—not as far as the rubber-gatherers had gone, and as it turned out, not the branch we came down.

[1] An officer whom Colonel Rondon had directed to ascend the Aripuanan, on the chance of that river being identical with the River Roosevelt. (See Map.)—ED.

Two of our men were down with fever. Another man, Julio, a fellow of powerful frame, was utterly worthless, being an inborn, lazy shirker with the heart of a ferocious cur in the body of a bullock. The others were good men, some of them very good indeed. They were under the immediate supervision of Pedrinho Craveiro, who was first-class in every way.

This camp was very lovely. It was on the edge of a bay, into which the river broadened immediately below the rapids. There was a beach of white sand, where we bathed and washed our clothes. All around us, and across the bay, and on both sides of the long water-street made by the river, rose the splendid forest. There were flocks of parakeets, coloured green, blue, and red. Big toucans called overhead, lustrous green-black in colour, with white throats, red gorgets, red-and-yellow tail coverts, and huge black-and-yellow bills. Here the soil was fertile; it will be a fine site for a coffee-plantation when this region is open to settlement. Surely such a rich and fertile land cannot be permitted to remain idle, to lie as a tenantless wilderness, while there are such teeming swarms of human beings in the over-crowded, over-peopled countries of the Old World. The very rapids and waterfalls which now make the navigation of the river so difficult and dangerous would drive electric trolleys up and down its whole length and far out on either side, and run mills and factories, and lighten the labour on farms. With the incoming of settlement and with the steady growth of knowledge how to fight and control tropical diseases, fear of danger to health would vanish. A land like this is a hard land for the first explorers, and perhaps for their immediate followers, but not for the people who come after them.

In mid-afternoon we were once more in the canoes;

but we had paddled with the current only a few minutes, we had gone only a kilometre, when the roar of rapids in front again forced us to haul up to the bank. As usual, Rondon, Lyra, and Kermit, with Antonio Correa, explored both sides while camp was being pitched. The rapids were longer and of steeper descent than the last, but on the opposite or western side there was a passage down which we thought we could get the empty dug-outs at the cost of dragging them only a few yards at one spot. The loads were to be carried down the hither bank, for a kilometre, to the smooth water. The river foamed between great rounded masses of rock, and at one point there was a sheer fall of six or eight feet. We found and ate wild pineapples. Wild beans were in flower. At dinner we had a toucan and a couple of parrots, which were very good.

All the next day was spent by Lyra in superintending our three best watermen as they took the canoes down the west side of the rapids, to the foot, at the spot to which the camp had meantime been shifted. In the forest some of the huge sipas, or rope vines, which were as big as cables, bore clusters of fragrant flowers. The men found several honey-trees, and fruits of various kinds, and small cocoanuts; they chopped down an ample number of palms for the palm-cabbage; and, most important of all, they gathered a quantity of big Brazil-nuts, which when roasted tasted like the best of chestnuts, and are nutritious; and they caught a number of big piranhas,[1] which were good eating. So we all had a feast, and everybody had enough to eat and was happy.

. . . . . .

[1] See description of this fish in the chapter entitled "On the River Paraguay."

Next morning we went about three kilometres before coming to some steep hills, beautiful to look upon, clad as they were in dense, tall, tropical forest, but ominous of new rapids. Sure enough, at their foot we had to haul up and prepare for a long portage. The canoes we ran down empty. Even so, we were within an ace of losing two, the lashed couple in which I ordinarily journeyed. In a sharp bend of the rapids, between two big curls, they were swept among the boulders and under the matted branches which stretched out from the bank. They filled, and the racing current pinned them where they were, one partly on the other. All of us had to help get them clear. Their fastenings were chopped asunder with axes. Kermit and half a dozen of the men, stripped to their skin, made their way to a small rock island in the little falls just above the canoes, and let down a rope which we tied to the outermost canoe. The rest of us, up to our armpits and barely able to keep our footing as we slipped and stumbled among the boulders in the swift current, lifted and shoved, while Kermit and his men pulled the rope and fastened the slack to a half-submerged tree. Each canoe in succession was hauled up the little rock island, baled, and then taken down in safety by two paddlers. It was nearly four o'clock before we were again ready to start, having been delayed by a rain-storm so heavy that we could not see across the river. Ten minutes' run took us to the head of another series of rapids; the exploring party returned with the news that we had an all day's job ahead of us; and we made camp in the rain, which did not matter much, as we were already drenched through. It was impossible, with the wet wood, to make a fire sufficiently hot to dry all our soggy things, for the rain was still falling. A tapir was seen

from our boat, but, as at the moment we were being whisked round in a complete circle by a whirlpool, I did not myself see it in time to shoot.

Next morning we went down a kilometre, and then landed on the other side of the river. The canoes were run down, and the loads carried to the other side of a little river coming in from the west, which Colonel Rondon christened Cherrie River. Across this we went on a bridge consisting of a huge tree felled by Macario, one of our best men. Here we camped, while Rondon, Lyra, Kermit, and Antonio Correa explored what was ahead. They were absent until mid-afternoon. Then they returned with the news that we were among ranges of low mountains, utterly different in formation from the high plateau region to which the first rapids, those we had come to on March 2nd, belonged. Through the first range of these mountains the river ran in a gorge, some three kilometres long, immediately ahead of us. The ground was so rough and steep that it would be impossible to drag the canoes over it and difficult enough to carry the loads; and the rapids were so bad, containing several falls, one of at least ten metres in height, that it was doubtful how many of the canoes we could get down them. Kermit, who was the only man with much experience of rope work, was the only man who believed we could get the canoes down at all; and it was, of course, possible that we should have to build new ones at the foot to supply the place of any that were lost or left behind. In view of the length and character of the portage, and of all the unpleasant possibilities that were ahead, and of the need of keeping every pound of food, it was necessary to reduce weight in every possible way and to throw away everything except the barest necessities.

We thought we had reduced our baggage before, but now we cut to the bone. We kept the fly for all six of us to sleep under. Kermit's shoes had gone, thanks to the amount of work in the water which he had been doing; and he took the pair I had been wearing, while I put on my spare pair. In addition to the clothes I wore, I kept one set of pyjamas, a spare pair of drawers, a spare pair of socks, half a dozen handkerchiefs, my wash-kit, my pocket medicine-case, and a little bag containing my spare spectacles, gun-grease, some adhesive plaster, some needles, and thread, the "fly-dope," and my purse and letter of credit, to be used at Manaos. All of these went into the bag containing my cot, blanket, and mosquito-net. I also carried a cartridge-bag containing my cartridges, head-net, and gauntlets. Kermit cut down even closer, and the others about as close.

The last three days of March we spent in getting to the foot of the rapids in this gorge. Lyra and Kermit, with four of the best watermen, handled the empty canoes. The work was not only difficult and laborious in the extreme, but hazardous; for the walls of the gorge were so sheer that at the worst places they had to cling to narrow shelves on the face of the rock, while letting the canoes down with ropes. Meanwhile Rondon surveyed and cut a trail for the burden-bearers, and superintended the portage of the loads. The rocky sides of the gorge were too steep for laden men to attempt to traverse them. Accordingly the trail had to go over the top of the mountain, both the ascent and the descent of the rock-strewn, forest-clad slopes being very steep. It was hard work to carry loads over such a trail. From the top of the mountain, through an opening in the trees on the edge of a cliff, there was

a beautiful view of the country ahead. All around and in front of us there were ranges of low mountains about the height of the lower ridges of the Alleghanies. Their sides were steep and they were covered with the matted growth of the tropical forest. Our next camping-place, at the foot of the gorge, was almost beneath us, and from thence the river ran in a straight line, flecked with white water, for about a kilometre. Then it disappeared behind and between mountain ridges, which we supposed meant further rapids. It was a view well worth seeing; but, beautiful although the country ahead of us was, its character was such as to promise further hardships, difficulty, and exhausting labour, and especially further delay; and delay was a serious matter to men whose food supply was beginning to run short, whose equipment was reduced to the minimum, who for a month, with the utmost toil, had made very slow progress, and who had no idea of either the distance or the difficulties of the route in front of them.

There was not much life in the woods, big or little. Small birds were rare, although Cherrie's unwearied efforts were rewarded from time to time by a species new to the collection. There were tracks of tapir, deer, and agouti; and if we had taken two or three days to devote to nothing else than hunting them we might perchance have killed something; but the chance was much too uncertain, the work we were doing was too hard and wearing, and the need of pressing forward altogether too great to permit us to spend any time in such manner. The hunting had to come in incidentally. This type of wellnigh impenetrable forest is the one in which it is most difficult to get even what little game exists therein. A couple of curassows and a big monkey

were killed by the Colonel and Kermit. On the day the monkey was brought in Lyra, Kermit, and their four associates had spent from sunrise to sunset in severe, and at moments dangerous, toil among the rocks and in the swift water, and the fresh meat was appreciated. The head, feet, tail, skin, and entrails were boiled for the gaunt and ravenous dogs. The flesh gave each of us a few mouthfuls; and how good those mouthfuls tasted!

During this portage the weather favoured us. We were coming toward the close of the rainy season. On the last day of the month, when we moved camp to the foot of the gorge, there was a thunder-storm; but on the whole we were not bothered by rain until the last night, when it rained heavily, driving under the fly so as to wet my cot and bedding. However, I slept comfortably enough, rolled in the damp blanket. Without the blanket I should have been uncomfortable; a blanket is a necessity for health. On the third day Lyra and Kermit, with their daring and hard-working watermen, after wearing labour, succeeded in getting five canoes through the worst of the rapids to the chief fall. The sixth, which was frail and weak, had its bottom beaten out on the jagged rocks of the broken water. On this night, although I thought I had put my clothes out of reach, both the termites and the carregadores ants got at them, ate holes in one boot, ate one leg of my drawers, and riddled my handkerchief; and I now had nothing, to replace anything that was destroyed.

Next day Lyra, Kermit, and their camaradas brought the five canoes that were left down to camp. They had in four days accomplished a work of incredible labour

and of the utmost importance; for at the first glance it had seemed an absolute impossibility to avoid abandoning the canoes when we found that the river sank into a cataract-broken torrent at the bottom of a canyon-like gorge between steep mountains. On April 2nd, we once more started, wondering how soon we should strike other rapids in the mountains ahead, and whether in any reasonable time we should, as the aneroid indicated, be so low down that we should necessarily be in a plain where we could make a journey of at least a few days without rapids. We had been exactly a month going through an uninterrupted succession of rapids. During that month we had come only about 110 kilometres, and had descended nearly 150 metres—the figures are approximate but fairly accurate. We had lost four of the canoes with which we started, and one other, which we had built, and the life of one man; and the life of a dog which by its death, had, in all probability, saved the life of Colonel Rondon.[1] In a straight line northward, toward our supposed destination, we had not made more than a mile and a quarter a day; at the cost of bitter toil for most of the party, of much risk for some of the party, and of some risk and some hardship for all the party. Most of the camaradas were downhearted, naturally enough, and occasionally asked one of us if we really believed that we should ever get out alive; and we had to cheer them up as best we could.

There was no change in our work for the time being. We made but three kilometres that day. Most of the party walked all the time; but the dugouts carried the luggage until we struck the head of the series of rapids

[1] The dog was out with Colonel Rondon in the forest, when it was killed by two arrows, discharged by concealed Indians.—ED.

which were to take up the next two or three days. The river rushed through a wild gorge, a chasm or canyon, between two mountains. Its sides were very steep, mere rock walls, although in most places so covered with the luxuriant growth of the trees and bushes that clung in the crevices, and with green moss, that the naked rock was hardly seen. Rondon, Lyra, and Kermit, who were in front, found a small level spot, with a beach of sand, and sent back word to camp there, while they spent several hours in exploring the country ahead. The canoes were run down empty, and the loads carried painfully along the face of the cliffs; so bad was the trail that I found it rather hard to follow, although carrying nothing but my rifle and cartridge-bag. The explorers returned with the information that the mountains stretched ahead of us, and that there were rapids as far as they had gone. We could only hope that the aneroid was not hopelessly out of kilter, and that we should, therefore, fairly soon find ourselves in comparatively level country. The severe toil, on a rather limited food supply, was telling on the strength as well as on the spirits of the men; Lyra and Kermit, in addition to their other work, performed as much actual physical labour as any of them.

Next day, April 3rd, we began the descent of these sinister rapids of the chasm. Colonel Rondon had gone to the summit of the mountain in order to find a better trail for the burden-bearers, but it was hopeless, and they had to go along the face of the cliffs. Such an exploring expedition as that in which we were engaged of necessity involves hard and dangerous labour, and perils of many kinds. To follow down-stream an unknown river, broken by innumerable cataracts and rapids, rushing through mountains of which the exist-

ence has never been even guessed, bears no resemblance whatever to follow even a fairly dangerous river which has been thoroughly explored and has become in some sort a highway, so that experienced pilots can be secured as guides, while the portages have been pioneered and trails chopped out, and every dangerous feature of the rapids is known beforehand. In this case no one could foretell that the river would cleave its way through steep mountain chains, cutting narrow clefts in which the cliff walls rose almost sheer on either hand. When a rushing river thus "canyons," as we used to say out West, and the mountains are very steep, it becomes almost impossible to bring the canoes down the river itself, and utterly impossible to portage them along the cliff sides, while even to bring the loads over the mountain is a task of extraordinary labour and difficulty. Moreover, no one can tell how many times the task will have to be repeated; or when it will end, or whether the food will hold out; every hour of work in the rapids is fraught with the possibility of the gravest disaster, and yet it is imperatively necessary to attempt it; and all this is done in an uninhabited wilderness, or else a wilderness tenanted only by unfriendly savages, where failure to get through means death by disease and starvation. Wholesale disasters to South American exploring parties have been frequent. The first recent effort to descend one of the unknown rivers to the Amazon from the Brazilian highlands resulted in such a disaster. It was undertaken in 1889 by a party about as large as ours under a Brazilian engineer officer, Colonel Telles Peres. In descending some rapids they lost everything—canoes, food, medicine, implements—everything. Fever smote them, and then starvation. All of them died except one officer and two men, who

were rescued months later. Recently, in Guiana, a wilderness veteran, Andre, lost two-thirds of his party by starvation. Genuine wilderness exploration is as dangerous as warfare. The conquest of wild nature demands the utmost vigour, hardihood, and daring, and takes from the conquerors a heavy toll of life and health.

Lyra, Kermit, and Cherrie, with four of the men, worked the canoes half-way down the canyon. Again and again it was touch and go whether they could get past a given point. At one spot the channel of the furious torrent was only fifteen yards across. One canoe was lost, so that of the seven with which we had started only two were left. Cherrie laboured with the other men at times, and also stood as guard over them, for, while actually working, of course no one could carry a rifle. Kermit's experience in bridge-building was invaluable in enabling him to do the rope work by which alone it was possible to get the canoes down the canyon. He and Lyra had now been in the water for days. Their clothes were never dry. Their shoes were rotten. The bruises on their feet and legs had become sores. On their bodies some of the insect bites had become festering wounds, as indeed was the case with all of us. Poisonous ants, biting flies, ticks, wasps, bees, were a perpetual torment. However, no one had yet been bitten by a venomous serpent, a scorpion, or a centiped, although we had killed all of the three within camp limits.

That day we got only half-way down the rapids. . . . Next day Lyra, Kermit and Cherrie finished their job, and brought the four remaining canoes to camp. . . .

The men were growing constantly weaker under the

endless strain of exhausting labour. Kermit was having an attack of fever, and Lyra and Cherrie had touches of dysentery, but all three continued to work. While in the water trying to help with an upset canoe I had bruised my leg against a boulder; and the resulting inflammation was somewhat bothersome. I now had a sharp attack of fever, but thanks to the excellent care of the doctor, was over it in about forty-eight hours; but Kermit's fever grew worse, and he, too, was unable to work for a day or two. . . .

The next day we made another long portage round some rapids, and camped at night still in the hot, wet, sunless atmosphere of the gorge. The following day, April 6th, we portaged past another set of rapids, which proved to be the last of the rapids of the chasm. . . . Our men were disheartened, weak and sick. Most of them had already begun to have fever. . . .

However the hills gradually sank into a level plain, and the river carried us through it at a rate that enabled us during the remainder of the day to reel off thirty-six kilometres. . . .

They were not yet clear of rapids, however, and had another week of terribly hard work, until on the afternoon of 13 April they ran into smoother water.—ED.

The following day, April 14th, we made a good run of some thirty-two kilometres. . . . The river ran in long and usually tranquil stretches. . . . Different members of the party caught many fish and shot a monkey and a couple of jacú-tinga—birds akin to a turkey, but the size of a fowl—so we again had a camp of plenty. The dry season was approaching, but there were still heavy, drenching rains. On this day the men found some new nuts of which they liked the taste; but the nuts proved unwholesome and half

of the men were very sick and unable to work the following day.

Accordingly, it was a rather sorry crew that embarked the following morning, April 15th. But it turned out a red-letter day. The day before, we had come across cuttings, a year old, which were probably, but not certainly, made by pioneer rubber-men. But on this day —during which we made twenty-five kilometres—after running two hours and a half we found on the left bank a board on a post, with the initials J.A , to show the farthest-up point which a rubber-man had reached and claimed as his own. An hour farther down we came on a newly-built house in a little planted clearing; and we cheered heartily. No one was at home, but the house, of palm-thatch, was clean and cool. . . . Another hour brought us to a similar house where dwelt an old black man, who showed the innate courtesy of the Brazilian peasant.

In mid-afternoon we stopped at another clean, cool, picturesque house of palm-thatch. The inhabitants all fled at our approach, fearing an Indian raid; for they were absolutely unprepared to have anyone come from the unknown regions upstream. They returned and were most hospitable and communicative; and we spent the night there. Said Antonio Correa to Kermit: "It seems like a dream to be in a house again, and hear the voices of men and women, instead of being among those mountains and rapids." . . . We, had come over 300 kilometres in forty-eight days, over absolutely unknown ground; we had seen no human being, although we had twice heard Indians. It was astonishing before, when we were on a river of about the size of the upper Rhine or Elbe, to realise that no geographer had any idea of its existence. But after all, no civilised man of

any kind had ever been on it. Here, however, was a river with people dwelling along the banks, some of whom had lived in the neighbourhood for eight or ten years, and yet on no standard map was there a hint of the river's existence.

A MODERN JOURNEY IN BOLIVIA

1921

Bolivia is in the unfortunate situation of possessing no seaport. This is due to the fact that as the result of a long-standing quarrel between Chile and Bolivia as to the dominion over territory to the north of the Chilean province of Atacama, Chile finally declared war in 1879 upon Peru and Bolivia and defeated them, the actual *casus belli* being her discovery that the two countries had formed a secret alliance. As a result of her victory she remained in possession of the Bolivian province of Antofagasta and the Peruvian districts of Tarapacá, Arica and Tacna, thereby enormously increasing her wealth as the new territory comprised the whole of the "nitrate" zone. (It may here be noted that the question of the final ownership of Arica and Tacna, which has been a cause of ill-feeling between Chile and Peru for some forty-five years, seems now, in 1929, to be on the verge of settlement between the two countries.)

This lack of a seaport, together with a certain shortage of manual labour, is holding back Bolivia's development; yet the mountainous part of the country is rich in mineral wealth, particularly tin, copper, silver, gold, and wolfram, whilst the fertile plains to the eastward of the Andes are undoubtedly suitable for the production of coffee, sugar, and grain, and, in some parts, for cattle-raising on a large scale.

La Paz, the capital, stands very high, the railway thither climbing to a height of 14,000 feet above the sea; it lies at one end of Lake Titicaca, and is reached from the Chilean ports of Arica and Antofagasta and from the Peruvian port of Mollendo. It is by no means everybody who can stand such an altitude, which is very conducive to pneumonia; the only chance of saving the life of a person attacked

by that complaint is to get him down to the coast within three days.

Mr. Guise, from whose book the following extract is taken, spent six years in the country as a mining engineer, spending the first part of this period in the mountains at a height of 15,000 feet and the latter part in the Quebrada which is, to quote his own words, "the broken country—the semi-tropical and tropical regions where the eastern slopes of the Cordillera merge into vast *llanos* or plains," and this account of his return journey from there to La Paz, on his way home, gives an excellent idea of travel conditions, which have changed very little throughout the centuries.

[General Map No. 1, p. 6.]

(*Six Years in Bolivia*, by A. V. L. Guise, published 1922, by T. Fisher Unwin. Chap. xvii, pp. 231–240)

THE Quebrada was looking its loveliest as my raft slowly made its way up-stream. The trees that lined the gorges were masses of white, yellow, pink, and purple blossoms, and the river banks were aflame with the scarlet flowers of a creeper that festooned the canes and bushes. Sun, sky, forest, and river had combined to lure me from my purpose to leave the region where I had spent so many years. They were in so far successful that the knowledge that I was seeing each familiar bend and landmark for the last time, in all probability, did not fill me with the elation which he should feel who is homeward bound, his course set for the land of policemen, starch, and income-tax. The natives say "He who has drunk of the waters of the Kaka will return to the Quebrada before he dies." *Quien sabe?* (Who knows?)

From Guanay, I went up the Mapiri river, two days' journey, to the village of Mapiri, where ends the mule trail from Sorata across the Andes. Here I had to remain a couple of days, awaiting the saddle mule that had been sent out from La Paz to meet me, in the care

of a *fletero* (transport-agent) whose team was bringing in cargo consigned to river traders.

Mapiri was a more-dead-than-alive place, a collection of palm-thatched houses beside sandy roads—a fever-stricken spot, whose listless and pallid inhabitants seemed to have very little interest in life. When, therefore, on the afternoon of the second day, the mule-team tinkled in to the dusty *plaza* (square), I thanked my lucky stars that my sojourn there was to end on the following morning.

The first day's journey was one of almost uninterrupted ascent. By mid-day, we had left the last tree behind us—a lonely outpost of the Quebrada. From the knife-edge crest of the ridge along which we were travelling, we had a last glimpse of the green Mapiri valley, many thousands of feet below. And now there were only stunted scrub and thick moss growing beside the trail, which frequently resembled a roughly-hewn giant staircase, where the mules leapt and scrambled from step to step.

The next day, the scenery became more wild and rugged, the mules walking cautiously along the outside edge of the stony paths that were bounded by walls of rock on the one hand and on the other by space. That day we rode in a steady downpour, for we had entered the region of almost perpetual rain, where the warm winds of the tropics encountered the chilly Andean barriers and shed their moisture.

It was late in the afternoon when one of the *arrieros* (muleteers) galloped up to the head muleteer and reported that a mule was missing. The team was halted whilst two or three men were sent back to search for the strayed animal. Anxious to arrive as soon as possible at the rest-house where we were to spend the

night, I pushed on alone with José, my Indian "boy," who had been stolidly tramping along just behind me. At sundown we arrived at the little mud-walled hut which had been constructed in this desolate place for the use of wayfarers. All day we had travelled without seeing another house.

There was only one other occupant, when I entered, of the single room that comprised the hut—an Indian whose bundle, José soon discovered, contained small loaves of bread baked in Sorata, which he intended to peddle in Mapiri, where bread is regarded very much as cake is at home. This was a stroke of luck, for the "chop box" containing my food was on the back of one of the pack mules that we had left with the team an hour or more before, and in my saddle-bags I had only an alcohol-lamp and some sugar and tea. Hot tea and an appalling number of loaves took the edge off an appetite rendered sharp by the long ride in that keen air. It was very cold, and of fuel of any sort there was none, on which account the merchants of Sorata and Mapiri who were interested in maintaining this rest house, found great difficulty in keeping the roof in repair, for travellers were in the habit of using the grass thatch and the rafters for making fires.

Long we waited for the pack animals, till the demands of sleep made me forego the prospect of any more supper that night, so, rolled up in my saddle blankets, I slept soundly in spite of wet clothes and the cold. Several hours later I was awakened by the arrival of the belated mule team, whose weary *arrieros* were still recommending to eternal perdition the mule that had caused the delay.

At break of day we were again on the road, and at the end of a couple of hours stiff climbing we reached a point above cloud-level. We were now travelling along

the eastern flank of the Cordilleras, and to the right, looking westward, lay a great stretch of cloud bank, pierced here and there by black peaks, like islands in a sea of cotton-wool. Once more the trail turned westward, and presently we were passing beside a high wall, constructed of enormous boulders. On the other side of the wall ran a small stream, now almost dry. It was from the bed of this mountain torrent that the boulders composing the wall had been extracted, and this not by present-day engineers with their mechanical appliances, but by Indian gold-miners of Inca times. To work the bed of the stream, they had diverted the water into another channel. These are the old workings of Ingenio. Gold is still to be found in the locality, and that very day I passed the outfit of a New Zealand prospector who was about to start work there. There were a few houses at Ingenio, where dwelt natives who maintained themselves by the gold that they washed out from among the rocks in this dreary place, situated at the entrance to the pass across the Cordilleras.

A few miles farther on we reached the summit of the pass, the altitude of which is in the neighbourhood of 16,500 feet, and commenced the steep descent on the western side. We now came to the end of the corridor across the range, and before us lay a stretch of tortured and twisted country—narrow, gloomy ravines, thousands of feet deep, surmounted by bare ridges; and over-shadowing all lay the majestic mass of Illampu, or Mount Sorata, its snow-clad peaks glistening in the strong sunlight. This is the highest mountain in the Bolivian Andes, rising 21,490 feet above sea level. From now on the descent was continuous, but, owing to the roughness and steepness of the trail, progress was slow.

It was early afternoon when, on reaching the lip of a deep valley, the *arriero* pointed to a little white town nestling deep down in its folds, and said that it was Sorata, our destination that day, still a long way off.

The road that wound around this cup in the mountain was broad and tolerably smooth. The day was hot, and there was a strong glare from the white, dusty track, along which we met groups of Indians going from one to another of the hamlets that stood beside the way. It was Sunday afternoon, and the tinkling of church bells mingled with the piping of flutes and the melancholy chant of some drunken Indian.

I had just passed one of these wayside settlements, its whitewashed chapel its most prominent feature, when I heard the sound of a horse galloping behind me. I turned in the saddle and beheld a white-robed figure on horseback, tearing down the track "all out." When he reached me, the horseman pulled his steed up on its haunches and I saw that it was Padre Vincencio, the friar who, two years previously had baptized the dredge at Maquiqui. He told me that he had just been celebrating mass at the hamlet above us, and had learned from the arrieros the identity of the *gringo* who was riding ahead—meaning me. He was flatteringly overjoyed to see me and, reaching behind him, pulled out of his saddle-bag a half-full bottle of brandy and an enamelled iron mug, and insisted that we should have a drink on the spot to celebrate this happy meeting. In how far his pleasure at seeing me again was due to real regard, or to previous helpings from this and other bottles, I cannot say. Anyhow, we had a drink there and then, and it was not long before he suggested that another one was in order. This I accepted purely out

of politeness, for it is considered bad manners to refuse an offer of a drink. Though the dust and heat made liquid refreshment very acceptable, had I been given my choice it would have been anything rather than raw and undiluted spirit. When, half a mile or so farther on, the good *padre* again drew rein and once more withdrew the brandy bottle from his saddle-bag, I jibbed, and in defiance of accepted custom, declined the proffered mug. My companion was somewhat taken aback. but took my refusal in good part, and, with a hearty *Salud*! drained the cup himself.

It was late in the afternoon when we trotted up the narrow streets of Sorata and dismounted at the door of the ramshackle hotel that stood at one corner of the large *plaza*. When the *padre* had recommended me to the care of the hotel's proprietor, he remounted and galloped off. I was conducted to the best bedroom—a large, unkempt apartment in which stood a bedstead with doubtful-looking bedding, a small ricketty table supporting a cracked basin and a handleless jug, both of midget proportions, and a chair which was better adapted to give way than support. When soap and water and a brush had removed some of the grime collected during the day, I went out for a stroll.

Sorata was a pleasing little town of whitewashed houses and tortuous streets. There were several commercial firms with headquarters here—one or two of them owned by Germans chiefly engaged in trade with the rubber country. There was nothing of any special interest to see in the town, yet, when I returned to the hotel I made up my mind to break my journey here, for I was not sure what effect the altitude of the High Plateau would have on me after three years spent in the Quebrada without a break.

That evening I had a visit from the only English-speaking resident of the town, an Australian, the manager of a rubber forest, whom I had met before. On learning that I was remaining in Sorata the following day, he asked me to lunch with him on the morrow.

I had heard others who had stayed in Sorata describe it as an infamous place, where sleep was out of the question, because it was infested by fleas—and fleas of a peculiarly active breed who revelled in making night dreadful to the stranger. There was one man I knew who, whenever passing through this town, always slept in a "flea-bag"—a large cotton sack, the opening of which he could close tightly about his neck. The recollection of these tales of suffering, however, did not disturb me. Of the few attributes of which I can be proud, one is that fleas leave me severely alone. I slept that night through in complete tranquillity, though I could picture legions of ravenous fleas marching up to the attack, but, on discovering the identity of their intended victim, turning tail and hopping away, baffled and disgruntled.

After a day spent in idleness, sitting in the shade of a tree in the *plaza* watching the inhabitants leisurely go about their business, I resumed my journey alone, for I had sent José ahead with the mule team the day before.

From Sorata the road climbs up the side of the valley to the edge of the plain that lies between Lake Titicaca and the Cordilleras and stretches southward to Oruro and beyond. It was a stiff climb of some four thousand feet, and it was nearly mid-day before I reached the level of the plain. Twelve leagues now lay between me and the village of Achacachi—no great journey for a fast and fresh mule, but my animal was still somewhat

weary after its recent journeying. So it came about that night fell with still two long leagues to do.

The Indians of this district were notoriously an ill-disposed lot, surly and truculent. The track did not pass through any villages, though now and again, far to one side, could be seen a forlorn little *estancia* (hamlet), and I covered many miles of that dreary plain without meeting anybody. Late in the afternoon, when within measurable distance of Achacachi, several groups of Indians going in the opposite direction passed me. They were for the most part bigger men than the average Indian, but what struck me most was their morose looks and uncivil demeanour. The Indian, as a rule, when he passes you on the road takes off his hat and says *Asquiturata, tata* (Good day, father). These fellows, however, ignored me altogether and passed on in sullen silence without even glancing in my direction. That the natives of this locality stood in bad repute I knew, but the behaviour of these bands surprised me, none the less. After sundown it was very dark; as I jogged along I could still make out the forms of people passing me and hear the scuffle of sandalled feet, but there was no sound of voices.

I had just entered the gate in the high mud wall that surrounds the little town of Achacachi when a body of horsemen galloped towards me along the sandy street and passed out on to the dark plain. I made my way through the dimly-lit streets to the *tambo* (inn), where I found several people talking excitedly. It transpired that the horsemen I had seen were cavalry who had been despatched to quell a battle that had raged all day between the inhabitants of two villages that lay a league or two away. A feud had existed for a long time between these two villages, with occasional outbursts into

open warfare such as had occurred on that day. That very morning a band of Indians had pursued a villager belonging to the other faction into the reeds of the lake and, having captured him, had killed him in a barbarous manner. Then followed a horrible orgy, in which the top of the victim's skull served as a loving-cup.

News of these events had flashed to the rival village, whose inhabitants, fortified by alcohol, sallied forth to avenge this insult. They met with a luckless Indian woman belonging to the enemy, and when they had gleefully killed her they went on to where the men of the other camp awaited them. A pitched battle then ensued, with slings and stones as weapons. At intervals hostilities ceased by mutual consent, and the combatants devoted themselves to eating and drinking, after which fighting was resumed with renewed vigour. What the casualites had been I could not discover.

The strange behaviour of the Indians I had met on the road that evening was now intelligible. They had probably taken an active part in the fighting, which nightfall had interrupted; warriors with the lust of killing still strong within them were going to their homes till the return of daylight enabled them to begin the battle afresh. Small wonder that they were lacking in civility towards belated wayfarers.

The following evening, after an uneventful day's ride, I put up at a little *tambo*. It was very cold and I shivered on my bed of straw, though I endeavoured to eke out the scantiness of my saddle-blankets by piling straw upon them. For the first time since I had been in Bolivia I suffered from *soroche* (the palpitations and difficulty in breathing which make these altitudes impossible for some people to live in). Altogether, it was an uncomfortable night; in consequence, I was in

the saddle again at the first peep of dawn, just as the sky began to pale.

At sunrise I was riding close to the edge of Lake Titicaca, its cold grey-blue waters beyond its fringe of emerald reeds stretching far to the west, where it ended in a low line of copper-coloured hills. On the other hand, a few miles away, rose out of the plain the Andes range, a dark mass, crowned by lofty snow-peaks glowing crimson as though they blushed beneath the ardent glances of a sun whose boisterous return had taken them unawares. It was a scene which well repaid the early start that the discomforts of the preceding night had occasioned.

Towards noon I clattered into La Paz, after an absence of three years.

GAUCHOS

1832; 1920

No account of South America would be complete without some reference to the gaucho, the cowboy of the great plains or "pampas" of the Argentine, Uraguay, and Paraguay.

So much a horseman as to be very much more at home on horseback than afoot, he is an essential feature of those plains, even now when the motor-car and modern methods of handling cattle are tending to reduce his numbers; though probably the gaucho of to-day is not the horseman his father and grandfather were.

The late Mr. W. H. Hudson, who knew the Argentine gaucho well, tells us that half a century ago or so he was by no means averse to cutting a throat, and is not inclined to agree with Mr. Darwin who said that if he *did* cut your throat he would do it like a gentleman!

On the other side of the Andes, the cowboy of Chile is known as the *huaso*; the gaucho is essentially a horseman of the plains, but the *huaso* is a hill rider as well and is available, as the true gaucho never is, for field labour, yet his feats of horsemanship are no less astonishing.

Some idea of South American horsemanship may be gathered from Mr. Darwin's account here given; whilst Mr. Franck's description tells us of the dress and habits of the Uruguayan gaucho as they are to-day.

[General Map No. 11, p. 67.]

(I. Darwin's *Voyage of H.M.S. Beagle*, chap. viii, pp. 148–151. Harmsworth Library Edition, Amalgamated Press, 1905. II. *Working North from Patagonia*, Harry A Franck. T. Fisher Unwin 1921. Chap. vi. pp. 132–137, with the omission of part of one sentence.)

I.

ONE evening a *domador* (a subduer of horses) came for the purpose of breaking in some colts. I will describe the preparatory steps, for I believe they have not been

mentioned by other travellers. A troop of wild young horses is driven into the corral, or large enclosure of stakes, and the door is shut. We will suppose that one man alone has to catch and mount a horse, which as yet had never felt bridle or saddle. I conceive, except by a gaucho, such a feat would be utterly impracticable. The gaucho picks out a full-grown colt; and as the beast rushes round the circus, he throws his lazo so as to catch both the front legs. Instantly the horse rolls over with a heavy shock, and whilst struggling on the ground, the gaucho, holding the lazo tight, makes a circle so as to catch one of the hind legs, just beneath the fetlock, and draws it close to the two front legs; he then hitches the lazo so that the three are bound together. Then, sitting on the horse's neck, he fixes a strong bridle, without a bit, to the lower jaw; this he does by passing a narrow thong through the eye-holes at the end of the reins and several times round both jaw and tongue. The two front legs are now tied closely together with a strong leathern thong fastened by a slip-knot. The lazo which bound the three together being then loosed, the horse rises with difficulty.

The gaucho now holding fast the bridle fixed to the lower jaw, leads the horse outside the corral. If a second man is present (otherwise the trouble is much greater) he holds the animal's head whilst the first puts on the horse-cloths and saddle and girths the whole together. During this operation the horse, from dread and astonishment at thus being bound round the waist, throws himself over and over on the ground and, till beaten, is unwilling to rise. At last, when the saddling is finished, the poor animal can hardly breathe from fear, and is white with foam and sweat. The man now prepares to mount by pressing heavily on the stirrup,

so that the horse may not lose its balance; and at the moment he throws his leg over the animal's back he pulls the slip-knot binding the front legs, and the beast is free. Some *domadors* pull the knot while the animal is lying on the ground, and, standing over the saddle, allow him to rise beneath them. The horse, wild with dread, gives a few most violent bounds and then starts off at full gallop; when quite exhausted, the man, by patience, brings him back to the corral where, reeking hot and scarcely alive, the poor beast is let free. Those animals which will not gallop away, but obstinately throw themselves on the ground, are by far the most troublesome. This process is tremendously severe; but in two or three trials the horse is tamed. It is not, however, for some weeks that the animal is ridden with the iron bit and solid ring, for it must learn to associate the will of its rider with the feel of the rein before the most powerful bridle can be of any service.

Animals are so abundant in these countries that humanity and self-interest are not closely united; therefore I fear it is that the former is here scarcely known. One day, riding in the Pampas with a very respectable estanciero, my horse, being tired, lagged behind. The man often shouted to me to spur him. When I remonstrated that it was a pity, for the horse was quite exhausted, he cried out, "Why not?—never mind—spur him—it is my horse." I had then some difficulty in making him comprehend that it was for the horse's sake, and not on his account, that I did not choose to use my spurs. He exclaimed, with a look of great surprise, "Ah, Don Carlos, que cosa!" It was clear that such an idea had never before entered his head.

The gauchos are well known to be perfect riders. The idea of being thrown, let the horse do what it likes, never

enters their head. Their criterion of a good rider is, a man who can manage an untamed colt, or who, if his horse falls, alights on his own feet, or who can perform other such exploits. I have heard of a man betting that he would throw his horse down twenty times, and that nineteen times he would not fall himself. I recollect seeing a gaucho riding a very stubborn horse which three times successively reared so high as to fall backwards with great violence. The man judged with uncommon coolness the proper moment for slipping off, not an instant before or after the right time; and as soon as the horse got up, the man jumped on his back, and at last they started at a gallop. The gaucho never appears to exert any muscular force. I was one day watching a good rider, as we were galloping along at a rapid pace, and thought to myself, "Surely if the horse starts, you appear so careless on your seat, you must fall." At this moment a male ostrich sprang from its nest right beneath the horse's nose; the young colt bounded on one side like a stag; but as for the man, all that could be said was that he started and took fright along with his horse.

In Chile and Peru more pains are taken with the mouth of the horse than in La Plata, and this is evidently a consequence of the more intricate nature of the country. In Chile a horse is not considered perfectly broken till he can be brought up standing, in the midst of his full speed, on any particular spot—for instance, on a cloak thrown on the ground; or, again, he will charge a wall, and, rearing, scrape the surface with his hoofs. I have seen an animal bounding with spirit, yet merely reined by forefinger and thumb, taken at full gallop across a courtyard, and then made to wheel round the post of a verandah with great speed, but at so equal a

distance that the rider, with outstretched arm, all the while kept one finger rubbing the post. Then making a demi-volte in the air, with the other arm outstretched in a like manner, he wheeled round with astonishing force in an opposite direction.

Such a horse is well broken; and although this at first may appear useless, it is far otherwise. It is only carrying that which is daily necessary into perfection. When a bullock is checked and caught by the lazo it will sometimes gallop round and round in a circle, and the horse, being alarmed at the great strain, if not well broken, will not readily turn like the pivot of a wheel. In consequence many men have been killed; for if the lazo once takes a twist round a man's body it will instantly, from the power of the two opposed animals, almost cut him in twain. On the same principle the races are managed; the course is only two or three hundred yards long, the wish being to have horses that can make a rapid dash. The race-horses are trained not only to stand with their hoofs touching a line, but to draw all four feet together, so as at the first spring to bring into play the full action of the hind-quarters. In Chile I was told an anecdote, which I believe was true; and it offers a good illustration of the use of a well-broken animal. A respectable man riding one day met two others, one of whom was mounted on a horse which he knew to have been stolen from himself. He challenged them; they answered him by drawing their sabres and giving chase. The man, on his good and fleet beast, kept just ahead; as he passed a thick bush he wheeled round it, and brought up his horse to a dead check. The pursuers were obliged to shoot on one side and ahead. Then instantly dashing on, right behind them, he buried his knife in the back of one

wounded the other, recovered his horse from the dying robber, and rode home. For these feats of horsemanship two things are necessary: a most severe bit, like the Mameluke, the power of which, though seldom used, the horse knows full well; and large blunt spurs, that can be applied either as a mere touch or as an instrument of extreme pain. I conceive that with English spurs, the slightest touch of which pricks the skin, it would be impossible to break in a horse after the South American fashion.

II.

Mr. Harry A. Franck, in the course of his South American wanderings, stayed at the estancia, or ranch, of an Uruguayan gentleman familiarly known as "Pirirín," and here gives us a description of the gauchos he met there.

The gauchos of the estate had been ordered to *rodear*, to round up a large herd of cattle, and soon we came upon them riding round and round several hundred on the crest of a hillock. On the backs of some of the animals, chingolos [1] still sat serenely picking away at the *garrapatas* or the flesh left bare by them. The latter are the chief pest of an otherwise almost perfect ranching country, for thousands of these aggresive ticks burrow into the hide of the animals and suck their blood so incessantly that great numbers of cattle die of anemia or fever. All but the more backward estates now have a big trough-like bath through which the cattle are driven several times a year as a protection against *garrapatas*, but even so it is one peon's sole duty to ride over the estate each day to *curear*, or skin the

[1] A small bird resembling a sparrow that lives on cattle-ticks.—ED.

animals that have died, carry the skin home, and stake it out in the sun to dry.

More than two hours of riding brought us to the *almacén* or *pulpería*, the general store that is to be found on or near every large estancia in Uruguay. As the day was Sunday scores of gauchos, with that half-bashful, laconic, yet self-reliant air common to their class, ranging all the way from half-Indian to pure white in race, with here and there the African features bequeathed by some Brazilian who had wandered over the near-by border, silently rode up on their shaggy ponies one after another out of the treeless immensity and, throwing the reins of the animal over a fence-post beside many others drowsing in the sun, stalked noiselessly into the dense shade of the acacia and eucalyptus trees about the *pulpería*, then into the store itself. Most of them were in full regalia of *recado*, *pellones*, shapeless felt hat, shaggy whiskers and poncho. With few exceptions the "Oriental" gaucho ("Banda Oriental," a name for Uruguay) still clings to *bombachas* or *chiripá*,[1] the ballooning folds of which disappear in moccasin-like alpargatas, or into the wrinkled calf-skin boots still called *botas de potro*, though the custom that gave them their name has long since become too expensive to be continued. These "colt boots" were formerly obtained by killing a colt, unless one could be found already dead, removing the skin from two legs without cutting it open, thrusting the gaucho foot into it, and letting it shape itself to its new wearer. A short leather whip hanging from his leather-brown wrist, a poncho with a long fringe, immense spurs (so cruel that the ready wit of the pampa has dubbed them *nazarinas*), a gay waistcoat, and last of all a flowing neckcloth, the last word

[1] Loose trousers—ED.

of dandyism in "camp" life, complete his personal wardrobe. It is against the law to carry arms in Uruguay, yet every gaucho or peon has his *cuchillo* in his belt, or carries a revolver if he considers himself above the knife stage. Every horseman, too, must have his *recado*, that complication of gear so astonishing to the foreigner, so efficient in use, with which the rural South American loads down his mount. An ox-hide covers the horse from withers to crupper, to keep his sweat from the rider's gear; a saddle similar to that used on pack animals, high-peaked fore and aft, is set astride this, and both hide and saddle are cinched to the horse by a strong girth fastened by thongs passed through a ringbolt. On the bridle, saddle, and whip is brightly shining silver; over the saddle quilts and blankets are piled one above the other, the top cover being a saddle-cloth of decorated black sheepskin or a hairy *pellón* soft, cool, tough leather, and outside all this is passed a very broad girth of fine tough webbing to hold it in place. With his *recado* and poncho the experienced gaucho has bedding, coverings, sun-awning, shelter from the heaviest rain, and all the protection needed to keep him safe and sound on his pampa wanderings.

As they entered the *pulpería* the new-comers greeted every fellow-gaucho, though some two-score were already gathered, with that limp handshake peculiar to the rural districts of South America, rarely speaking more than two or three words, and these so low as to be barely audible, apparently because of the presence of Pirirín and myself. The rules of caste were amazing in a country supposed to be so far advaned in democracy. Though the gaucho, in common with most of the human family, considers himself the equal, if not the superior,

of any man on earth, he retains many of the manners of colonial days. Pirirín and I, as lords of the visible universe and representatives of the wealth and knowledge of the great outside world, had entered the *pulpería* by the family door, and were given the choicest seats—on the best American oil-boxes available—behind the counter. The sophisticated-rustic *pulpero* greeted us each with a handshake, somewhat weak, to be sure, because that is the only way his class ever shakes hands, but raising his hat each time, while we did not so much as touch ours. To have done so would have been to lower both the *pulpero's* and the by-standing gauchos' opinion of us. Then he turned and greeted his gaucho customers with an air nicely balanced between the friendly and the superior, offering each of them a finger end, they raising their hats and he not so much as touching his.

Yet these slender, wiry countrymen, carrying themselves like self-reliant freemen, with a natural ease of bearing and a courtesy in which simplicity and punctilio are nicely blended, take the stranger entirely on his merits and give and expect the same courtesy as the wealthy *estanciero*. If the new-comer shows a friendly spirit, his title soon advances from "Señor"—or "Mister," in honour of his foreign origin, be he French, Spanish, Italian, English, or American—to the use of his first name, and he will be known as "Don Carlos," "Don Enrique," or whatever it may be, to the end of his stay. Later, if he is well liked, he may even be addressed as "Ché," that curious term of familiarity and affection universally used among friends in Uruguay. It is not a Spanish word, but seems to have been borrowed from the Guaraní tongue, in which it means "mine," and probably by extension "my friend." To be called

"Ché" by the Uruguayan gaucho is proof of being accepted as a full and friendly equal.

In theory the *pulpero* establishes himself out on the campana only to sell tobacco, *mate*, strong drink, and tinned goods from abroad; in practice these country storekeepers have other and far more important sources of income. They are usurers, speculators in land and stock, above all exploiters of the gaucho's gambling instinct. Thanks perhaps to the greater or less amount of Spanish blood in his veins, he will accept a wager on anything, be it only on the weather, on a child's toys, on which way a cow will run, on how far away a bird will alight, or on whether *sol ó número* ("sun or number," corresponding to our "heads or tails") will fall uppermost at the flipping of a coin. This makes him easy prey to the *pulpero* who is usually a Spaniard, Basque, Italian or "Turk," and an unconscionable rogue without any other ideal than the amassing of a fortune, yet who somehow grows rich at the expense of the peons and gauchos, instead of meeting the violent death from the quick-tempered *hijo del pais* [1] who despises yet fears him.

The gauchos were originally called "gauderios," that is lazy, good-for-nothing rascals. To-day that word is an exaggeration, for they have a certain merit of industry and simple honesty. There is considerable vendetta among them, gambling rows and love affairs especially, much of which goes unpunished. . . . Punishment for fence-cutting or sheep-stealing is surer; as in our own West [2] in earlier days the loss of a man is largely his own affair, while the loss of a flock of sheep or a drove of cattle is serious. To make matters worse, the country *comisarios*, or policemen, are often sub-

[1] "Son of the country."—ED.

[2] Mr. Franck is an American.—ED.

sidized by certain *estancieros* to the disadvantage of others, and the *juez de paz* [1] is quite likely to be a rogue, in either of which cases the friends of "justice" usually get off and their enemies get punished.

According to Pirirín, the average gaucho is an incorrigible wanderer. Paid but ten or fifteen pesos a month and "found," and satisfied with quarters which most workmen in civilized lands would refuse with scorn, he is given to capricious changes of abode and is likely to throw a leg over his faithful horse at the least provocation. Among these incurable pampa wanderers there are not a few "poor whites," often with considerable Anglo-Saxon blood in their veins, its origin lost in their Spanicized names. Hospitality is the first of the virtues of the *estanciero*, and any genial horseback tramp who turns up may remain on the estancia unmolested for a day, a week, or a month, as the spirit moves him. There was a suggestion of our own cowboys among the group that finally overflowed the *pulpería*, though the gauchos were less given to noisy horseplay and had far more dignity and courtesy. Some of them could read without having to spell out the words, and while "Orientals" in the mass are not a nation of readers, and there is considerable illiteracy, these countrymen were much more in touch with the world's affairs than the same class in the countries of the West coast.

The gaucho may still occasionally be heard thrumming a guitar and wailing his sad, Moorish, genuinely Oriental songs, invariably sentimental and deeply melancholy, with never a comic touch, like a lineal descendant of the wandering troubadour of the Middle Ages or the street-singers of the Mohammedan East.

[1] Magistrate.—Ed.

When he is not making music or love, he is sucking *mate* and talking horses. He has more than a score of words for his equine companion, running through every gamut of colour, behaviour, and pace. His obsession for this topic of conversation is natural, for he has an instinctive horror of going on foot and the horse is to the resident of the pampas what the ship is to the sailor; without it he is hopelessly stranded. Yet his interest is entirely of a utilitarian nature. He is racially incapable of any such affection for his mount as causes other races to spare it unnecessary suffering; if he coddles it at all it is merely for the selfish motive of his own safety or convenience. Among the picturesque types of the campaña and the pampa is the *domador*, the professional horse-breaker. His customary fee is five pesos a head, "with living," and his methods are true to his Spanish blood. Instead of being broken early, the colts are allowed to run wild until they are four or five years old; then a drove of them is rounded up in a corral and the victims suddenly lassoed one by one and thrown to the ground. With half a dozen peons pulling on the rope about his neck until he is all but strangled, his legs are tied and a halter is put on and attached to a tree, where the animal is left to strain until he is exhausted, often hurting himself more or less permanently. Then his tongue and lower jaw are fastened in a painful noose that forces him to follow the peon, who rides away, jerking at the rope. Finally, when the weary and frightened animal is trembling in every limb, the brave *domador* mounts him and, with a horseman on either side to protect him, and pulling savagely at the colt's sore mouth, the *potro* is galloped until he is completely worn out. It used to be beneath gaucho dignity to ride a mare, and to this day no self-respecting *domador*

of the old school will consent to tame one. Sometimes the female of the species draws carts, with her colt running alongside, but on the larger estancias she is allowed to roam at large all her days.

In the evening, with the gauchos departed and the *pulpería* officially closed to the public, we added our bonfire to the sixteen others in honour of St. Peter and St. Paul, which we could count around the horizon, and gathered about the table with the *pulpero's* family to play "lottery," a two-cent gambling game. It was long after midnight when Pirirín shook off the combined fascination of this and the *pulpero's* amenable daughter. From my cot behind the *pulpería* counter I saw the day dawn rosy red, but clouds and a south wind promised rain before my companion roused himself. We got into an *araña* (spider), a two-wheeled cart which did somewhat resemble that web-weaving insect, and rocked and bumped away across the untracked campaña behind two half-wild young horses. Never was there a let-up from howling at, and lashing the reeking animals all the rest of the morning, an English education not having cured Pirirín of the thoughtless cruelty bequeathed by his Spanish blood. Through gullies in which we were showered with mud, up and down hill at top speed we raced, until the trembling horses were so weary that we were forced to hitch on in front of them the one the *mucamo* [1] was riding.

In Tacuarembó this owner, or at least prospective owner, of thousands of acres and cattle, went to the cheapest hotel and slept on an ancient and broken cot in the same room with two rough and dirty ploughmen, while I caught the evening train for the Brazilian border.

[1] Groom.—ED.

ALLIGATOR YARNS

The alligator is the American first cousin to the crocodile of the Old World; the two animals are much alike in general appearance and are best distinguished from each other by the fact that in the crocodile the lower canine teeth fit into *notches* in the edge of the upper jaw, and there is, in consequence, a contraction of the muzzle just behind the nostrils, whereas the canine teeth of the alligator fit into *pits* in the edge of the upper jaw so that no contraction is needed.

The alligator, or cayman, is unpleasantly common in the rivers of tropical South America; its main food is fish which it captures by driving a shoal of them into a creek and then rushing at them with open jaws, but it also takes every suitable opportunity of catching animals (including human beings) that venture too near the bank of the river.

There are several species, the smallest only some five feet long when fully grown, whilst the largest kind may grow to a length of twenty feet and attain an enormous bulk. It should be added that two species of the crocodile proper are to be found in the Orinoco and north-western rivers of South America.

The first of the two following narratives is taken from *The Naturalist on the River Amazons* by Henry Walter Bates, the distinguished naturalist, who spent eleven years (1848–1859) in Brazil, studying the natural history of the Amazons; the second is from *Wanderings in South America*, by Charles Waterton, and the exciting episode here described took place on the Essequibo River in British Guiana, about 1820.

[General Map No, 1, p. 6.]

(*Naturalist on the Amazons*, Henry Walter Bates. Dent, pp. 320–323. *Wanderings in South America*, Charles Waterton Dent, pp. 177–181. [Both in Everyman's Library Edition.])

MR. BATES'S ACCOUNT

THE natives at once despise and fear the great cayman. I once spent a month at Caiçara, a small village of semi-civilised Indians, about twenty miles to the west of Ega. My entertainer, the only white in the place, and one of my best and most constant friends, Senhor Innocencio Alves Faria, one day proposed a half-day's fishing with net in the lake—the expanded bed of the small river on which the village is situated. We set out in an open boat with six Indians and two of Innocencio's children. The water had sunk so low that the net had to be taken out into the middle by the Indians; whence at the first draught, two medium-sized alligators were brought to land. They were disengaged from the net and allowed, with the coolest unconcern, to return to the water, although the two children were playing in it, not many yards off. We continued fishing, Innocencio and I lending a helping hand, and each time drew a number of the reptiles of different ages and sizes; the lake, in fact, swarmed with alligators. After taking a very large quantity of fish, we prepared to return, and the Indians, at my suggestion, secured one of the alligators with the view of letting it loose amongst the swarms of dogs in the village. An individual was selected about eight feet long: one man holding his head and another his tail, whilst a third took a few lengths of a flexible liana, and deliberately bound the jaws and the legs. Thus secured, the beast was laid across the benches of the boat, on which we sat during the hour and a half's journey to the settlement. We were rather crowded, but our amiable passenger gave us no trouble during the transit. On reaching the village we took the animal into the middle of

the green, in front of the church, where the dogs were congregated, and there gave him his liberty, two of us arming ourselves with long poles to intercept him if he should make for the water, waddling like a duck. We tried to keep him back with the poles, but he became enraged, and seizing the end of the one I held in his jaws, nearly wrenched it from my grasp. We were obliged, at length, to kill him to prevent his escape.

These little incidents show the timidity or cowardice of the alligator. He never attacks man when his intended victim is on his guard, but he is cunning enough to know when this may be done with impunity; of this we had proof at Caiçara a few days afterwards. The river had sunk to a very low point, so that the port and bathing-place of the village now lay at the foot of a long sloping bank, and a large cayman made his appearance in the shallow and muddy water. We were all obliged to be very careful in taking our bath; most of the people simply using a calabash, pouring the water over themselves while standing on the brink. A large trading canoe, belonging to a Barra merchant named Soares, arrived at this time, and the Indian crew, as usual, spent the first day or two after their coming into port in drunkenness and debauchery ashore. One of the men, during the greatest heat of the day, when almost everyone was enjoying his afternoon's nap, took it into his head whilst in a tipsy state to go down alone to bathe. He was seen only by the Juiz de Paz, a feeble old man who was lying in his hammock, in the open verandah at the rear of his house on the top of the bank, and who shouted to the besotted Indian to beware of the alligator. Before he could repeat his warning, the man stumbled, and a pair of gaping jaws, appearing suddenly above the surface, seized him round

the waist and drew him under the water. A cry of agony "Ai Jesús!" was the last sign made by the wretched victim. The village was aroused: the young men with praiseworthy readiness sezied their harpoons and hurried down to the bank; but of course it was too late, a winding track of blood on the surface of the water was all that could be seen. They embarked, however, in montarias, determined on vengeance: the monster was traced, and when, after a short lapse of time, he came up to breathe—one leg of the man sticking out from his jaws—was despatched with bitter curses.

A RIDE ON A CAYMAN[1]

About half-past five in the morning the Indian stole off silently to take a look at the bait. On arriving at the place he set up a tremendous shout. We all jumped out of our hammocks and ran to him. The Indians got there before me, for they had no clothes to put on, and I lost two minutes in looking for my trousers and in slipping into them. We found a cayman ten feet and a half long fast to the end of the rope. Nothing now remained to do but to get him out of the water without injuring his scales: "hic opus, hic labor." We mustered strong: there were three Indians from the creek, there was my own Indian Yan, Daddy Quashi, the negro from Mrs. Peterson's, James, Mr. R. Edmonstone's man, whom I was instructing to preserve birds, and lastly myself.

I informed the Indians that it was my intention to

[1] Mr. Waterton was anxious to secure a cayman alive and uninjured; so his Indian assistant set a baited hook to catch one.—ED.

draw him quietly out of the water and then secure him. They looked and stared at each other, and said I might do it myself, but they would have no hand in it; the cayman would worry some of us. On saying this, "consedere duces," they squatted on their hams with the most perfect indifference.

The Indians of these wilds have never been subject to the least restraint, and I knew enough of them to be aware that if I tried to force them against their will they would take off and leave me and my presents unheeded, and never return.

Daddy Quashi was for applying to our guns, as usual, considering them our best and safest friends. I immediately offered to knock him down for his cowardice, and he shrunk back, begging that I would be cautious, and not get myself worried, and apologising for his own want of resolution. My Indian was now in conversation with the others, and they asked him if I would allow them to shoot a dozen arrows into him, and thus disable him. This would have ruined all. I had come above three hundred miles on purpose to get a cayman uninjured, and not to carry back a mutilated specimen. I rejected their proposition with firmness, and darted a disdainful eye upon the Indians.

Daddy Quashi was again beginning to remonstrate, and I chased him on the sandbank for a quarter of a mile. He told me afterwards he thought he should have dropped down dead with fright, for he was firmly persuaded if I had caught him I should have bundled him into the cayman's jaws. Here, then, we stood in silence like a calm before a thunderstorm. "Hoc res summa loco. Scinditur in contraria vulgus." They wanted to kill him, and I wanted to take him alive.

I now walked up and down the sand, revolving a

dozen projects in my head. The canoe was at a considerable distance, and I ordered the people to bring it round to the place where we were. The mast was eight feet long, and not much thicker than my wrist. I took it out of the canoe and wrapped the sail round the end of it. Now it appeared clear to me that, if I went down upon one knee and held the mast in the same position as the soldier holds his bayonet when rushing to the charge, I could force it down the cayman's throat should he come open-mouthed at me. When this was told to the Indians they brightened up, and said they would help me to pull him out of the river.

"Brave squad!" said I to myself. "'Audax omnia perpeti' now that you have got me betwixt yourselves and danger." I then mustered all hands for the last time before the battle. We were four South American savages, two negroes from Africa, a creole from Trinidad, and myself a white man from Yorkshire. In fact, a little tower of Babel group, in dress, no dress, address, and language.

Daddy Quashi hung in the rear. I showed him a large Spanish knife which I always carried in the waistband of my trousers: it spoke volumes to him, and he shrugged up his shoulders in absolute despair. The sun was just peeping over the high forests on the eastern hills, as if coming to look on and bid us act with becoming fortitude. I placed all the people at the end of the rope, and ordered them to pull till the cayman appeared on the surface of the water, and then, should he plunge, to slacken the rope and let him go again into the deep.

I now took the mast of the canoe in my hand (the sail being tied round the end of the mast) and sunk down upon one knee, about four yards from the water's

edge, determining to thrust it down his throat, in case he gave me an opportunity. I certainly felt somewhat uncomfortable in this situation, and I thought of Cerberus on the other side of the Styx ferry. The people pulled the cayman to the surface; he plunged furiously as soon as he arrived in these upper regions, and immediately went below again on their slackening the rope. I saw enough not to fall in love at first sight. I now told them we would run all risks and have him on land immediately. They pulled again, and out he came—"monstrum horrendum, informe." This was an interesting moment. I kept my position firmly, with my eye fixed steadfast on him.

By the time the cayman was within two yards of me I saw he was in a state of fear and perturbation. I instantly dropped the mast, sprung up and jumped on his back, turning half round as I vaulted, so that I gained my seat with my face in a right position. I immediately seized his fore-legs, and by main force twisted them on his back; thus they served me for a bridle. He now seemed to have recovered from his surprise, and probably fancying himself in hostile company he began to plunge furiously, and lashed the sand with his long and powerful tail. I was out of reach of the strokes of it by being near his head. He continued to plunge and strike and made my seat very uncomfortable. It must have been a fine sight for an unoccupied spectator.

The people roared out in triumph, and were so vociferous that it was some time before they heard me tell them to pull me and my beast of burden farther inland. I was apprehensive the rope might break, and then there would have been every chance of going down to the regions under water with the cayman. . . .

The people now dragged us above forty yards on the sand: it was the first and last time I was ever on a cayman's back. Should it be asked how I kept my seat, I would answer, I hunted some years with Lord Darlington's foxhounds.

After repeated attempts to regain his liberty the cayman gave in and became tranquil through exhaustion. I now managed to tie up his jaws and firmly secured his fore-feet in the position I had held them. We now had another severe struggle for superiority, but he was soon overcome and again remained quiet. While some of the people were pressing upon his head and shoulders I threw myself on his tail, and by keeping it down to the sand prevented him from kicking up another dust. He was finally conveyed to the canoe, and then to the place where we had suspended our hammocks. There I cut his throat; and after breakfast commenced the dissection.

AN ASCENT OF ACONCAGUA

1898

Aconcagua, 23,100 feet high, the giant of the whole American continent, is in the Andes on the Argentine side of the frontier of that country with Chile in latitude 32.30 S.; so that it lies just to the northwards of a line drawn across the map of South America from Buenos Aires to Valparaiso. It was first climbed by Matthias Zurbriggen on 14 January, 1897, and a few weeks later by Mr. Stuart Vines, both members of Mr. E. A. FitzGerald's expedition.

Sir Martin Conway, whose narrative is here given, and who had recently ascended Illimani and Sorata in the Bolivian Andes, made his ascent in December 1898. He was accompanied by two Alpine guides, Antoine Maquignaz and Louis Pellissier, the latter of whom, as will be seen, was forced to return before reaching the summit.

On 6 December the three climbers camped at a height of some 19,500 feet and started early next morning on the final spurt to reach the top of the mountain.

[General Map No. 11, p. 67.]

(*Aconcagua and Tierra del Fuego*, by Sir Martin Conway. Cassell, 1902. Chap. iii, pp. 89–99.)

WE did not, indeed, start at 2 a.m., which would have been unnecessarily early, though that was the hour desired by Maquignaz, but we were off by 3.30. The temperature was 5° Fahrenheit, and fell perceptibly as we went up. The night was brilliantly starlit. The constellations most familiar to me were all upside down in the north. The moon in its last quarter had not yet risen, and did not come over the

mountain's crest till the grey light of dawn had crept upon our side of the world. With a lantern to search the way, we trudged across a nearly level patch of snow, stumbled up a gentle slope of large stones, and so came on to the long slope of debris. We kept as far to the right as possible, where the stones were larger and a little firmer than they are in the middle of the slope. The lantern was not required for much more than an hour. Soon after we had put it out we could see our camp below, apparently but a stone's throw distant, and the foot of the final gullies above, likewise seeming near at hand. In actual fact they were probably more than half a mile away. I was conscious of allowing a large margin on the right side for self-deception when I estimated that we should reach these rocks in three hours; in my own heart of hearts I thought we should reach them in one. But when three hours had passed they seemed no nearer.

It is impossible to exaggerate the toil we underwent upon this slope; once only did a small patch of snow give momentary relief. It became apparent that the work was too heavy for Pellissier. He lagged farther and farther behind, and we had to make repeated halts for him to come up. He complained of pains in his inside, of indigestion and like derangements, from which he had been suffering for three days. His strength was thereby impaired, yet nothing would induce him to turn back. The higher we rose the more we were driven to the left and the looser the stones became. As they gave way beneath our feet we often fell violently to the ground, and lay panting like wounded men, unable to rise. Our breathing became louder and louder. It was a relief now and again to empty the

lungs with a groan, and refill them with a more than ordinary volume of thin air. Arms had to be kept well away from the sides to leave the lungs more free for expansion. The left hand was generally tucked into a waist-belt, while the right grasped the head of the ice-axe and used it as a walking-stick. The desire to halt frequently was intense, but the ever increasing cold as imperatively urged us to movement. With a warm fur-lined coat my body did not suffer severely from the cold, but my hands were in constant agony, each finger causing torture as acute as toothache; yet I was wearing the thickest gloves I have ever seen—a pair made of wolf fur, not inappropriately lined with lamb's wool. Moreover, they had long gauntlets of double wolf fur reaching right up to the elbow. Such gloves are found quite warm enough for the coldest weather of the long Arctic night. Above 21,000 feet with a temperature near zero Fahrenheit, they seemed absolutely incapable of protecting the hands against the biting frost. Presumably the fault lay not in them, but in the impaired circulation.

The coming of dawn was hidden from us by the interposing mountain, so we lost all sight of the rich unfolding glories of the east. But from the moment the sun peeped above the invisible horizon we were magnificently recompensed, for it poured forth upon the world beneath us a flood of fiery radiance, save where interposing mountains flung out their long shadows. Its effulgence visibly permeated the air over the Pacific. Standing as we did on the shaded side of Aconcagua, and at no very great distance from the summit, we saw its great cone of purple shade reach out at the moment of sunrise to the remotest horizon, more

than two hundred miles distant—not, be it observed, a mere carpet of shadow on the ground, but a solid prism of purple, immersed in the glimmering flood of the crystalline sky, its outer surface enriched with layers of rainbow-tinted colour. We could see upon the ground the shadows of other mountains; but Aconcagua's shadow, in which we stood, alone revealed itself as substantial—not a plane, but a thing of three dimensions. With the rising of the sun, the remotest point of the shadow slowly dropped upon the ocean and travelled towards us, till it reached the Chilean shore, hurried over the low hills, dipped into the Horcones Valley, climbed the slope up which we had come, and finally reached our feet. Then as we raised our eyes to the crags aloft, lo! the blinding fires of the Sun God himself burning upon the crest and bringing to us the fulness of day!

Pellissier's condition had been growing worse. We now sat down and waited for him. On coming up with us he regretfully acknowledged that he could go no farther. The light load was transferred to Maquignaz's shoulders, and Pellissier turned back. It was 7 a.m. I thought him looking ill, but for my own part actually realised no more than himself his real peril at that moment—the loss of his feet. He was perfectly confident of his ability to descend alone—itself a prospective cure-all.

Maquignaz and I now plodded on alone, choosing each his own way, but generally remaining pretty near together. We seldom spoke, unless it were to exchange a word of sympathy or to inquire how much longer the other one thought it would take to reach the foot of the rocks. At last Maquignaz burst out: "We shall

never get there. Never, never, never!" "Oh yes, we shall," I replied, "if we have to stay and live on the mountain." To our right the rocks came down lower than the openings of the gullies, so about eight o'clock, or a little later, we actually touched them, and thence-forward climbed along the top edge of the debris with an occasional firm hand-hold on solid rock. This, however, was little help, for the higher you get on debris the looser they are. Where they lean against the rock-wall their readiness to slip away is superlative.

Another hour passed. The first irregular summit gully was left behind, and we turned the corner at the foot of the next. Its mouth was filled with a cone of smaller and looser stones than we had anywhere found. We sank into them as into sand. It was our intention to cross them diagonally, pass beneath the rocks beyond, and turn up the farther gully, by which Zurbriggen and Vines made their ascents, and which stretches up almost to the highest peak. But the debris cone fairly beat us, so we hugged the rock on our right and turned up the gully. Before very long we came to larger rocks firmly wedged together and had rest from back-sliding.

Searching out a kind of cave in the side wall, a hundred feet up the gully, we halted to eat a little food. The view from this point, though restricted, was most striking. Walls of rock shut us in closely on either hand. The last slope rose steeply behind, and the only outlook upon the wide world was through the narrow cleft by which we had entered. Even that was partially blocked up by a natural obelisk, wonderfully slender. I photographed it, but destroyed the negative by making a second exposure on the same film, a sign of high altitude stupidity.

The cold, or our sense of cold, was more keen than ever. Though the labour of scrambling was perhaps lessened, we suffered agonies in the struggle to breathe, and every inch of elevation was only conquered by extreme toil. But the culminating ridge of the mountain was now near at hand, and the desire of seeing over supplied a powerful incentive to advance. Leaving at this spot our provisions and every thing but the little camera, we pushed on. The wall on our left had now shrunk to insignificance; we could see over into Zurbriggen's gully. At last I heard a shout, looked up, and saw Maquignaz a yard or two above my head standing on the crest of the bed of snow that crowned the *arête*. In a moment I was beside him, and Argentina lay at our feet.

The southern snow face, delusively precipitous though actually as steep as snow can lie, dropped in a single fall to the glacier two miles below. It was not so deep a drop nor so precipitous as that down which we had looked from Illimani a few months before; but whereas then only the moon shed its vague illumination into the profound gulf, now bright sunlight illumined the hollow and made even more obvious its appalling profundity. To right and left for over a mile there stretched, like the fine edge of an incurved blade, the sharp snow *arête* which reaches from the slightly lower southern summit almost to the northern. It forms the top edge of the great snow slope down which we were looking, and is only visible from the Horcones side as a delicate silver crest edging the rocks. At many points it overhung in big cornices, like frozen waves about to break.

The day had thus far been fine, but clouds were now

gathering in the east. Fearful lest the view might soon be blotted out, I took a few photographs before moving on. We were not, be it observed, at or indeed very near the lowest point between the peaks. A blunt rib of rocks descending eastward close beside us, which is visible from the Inca road, identifies our position as about half way between the saddle and the top. The view abroad at this point differed little from that which we finally obtained. To the south was Tupungato, a majestic pile of snow, over which even more majestic clouds were presently to mount aloft. To the north was the still grander Mercedario, beheld round the flank of the final rocks. In the west were the hills dropping lower and lower to the Chilean shore, and then the purple ocean. To the north-east, like another ocean, lay the flat surface of the Argentine pampas. Elsewhere the Cordillera, in long parallel ridges running roughly north and south, stretched its great length along, crowding together into an inextricable tangle the distant peaks, partly hidden by the two near summits which alone interrupted the completeness of the panorama.

We attached ourselves to the rope, turned to the left, and proceeded to cut steps along the *arête*. I had left my ice-axe in the gully, and regretted its absence, for balancing on the narrow knife-edge, with a drop of two miles on one side and three hundred feet or so on the other was by no means easy without a pole to help, and with a stiff wind blowing. The *arête*, to be sure, was neither steep nor difficult, and the snow yielded easily to the axe—if any step-cutting at 23,000 feet, our approximate altitude at this point, can be called easy. We made steady progress, however, passing over

one or two undulations, and finally mounting a stable summit fifty or sixty feet higher. The actually highest point (not to be neglected in a first ascent) was a little distance away, the snow ridge gave place to rocks flat and easy, and nothing was to do but pass along them perhaps a hundred yards, scramble up some debris and a few feet of firm rock to be at that point.

I again halted to photograph, but the view was almost blotted out by clouds, and wholly disappeared when the work was done. The cold was so intense that my fingers refused to do their work. I must have been in a rather stupid condition, too, as in fact I constantly forgot whether the film in the camera had just been exposed or made ready for exposure. The result was that when these negatives came to be developed there was nothing on three of them, and two views superimposed and mutually destructive on each of the other three. The panorama from this point was complete in all directions save for a small angle in the now wholly overclouded north-west. As I was preparing to push on a little farther before going down, Maquignaz said: "If this wind rises any higher we shall not be able to return along this *arête*, and so you will lose your ice-axe."

I did not know then that Vines, when he made his second ascent of Aconcagua, had left with his ice-axe a self-recording minimum thermometer in his cairn, else I fear the temptation to abandon my own trusty implement, which had companioned me since 1876 in the Alps, the Himalayas, Spitsbergen, and the Bolivian Andes, might have been too much for my share of human frailty. Obstacle there was none, and to know how cold it had been the two past years on Aconcagua,

23,100 feet above the Pacific tides, would have been well worth an ice-axe. Other considerations were moving me, thankless now to record; so, after just one more sweeping gaze around the vast panorama, I turned and made haste to retrace our steps.

We reached the top of the gully without incident, descended to where the food had been left, ate a mouthful, picked up my ice-axe, and set forward down the stones. The descent was nothing to be compared with the ascent; not that we did not toil and suffer exceedingly, but that each step carried us so far down, all the slipping being in our favour. If the stones had seemed loose on the way up, they seemed far looser now. Not only did they give way under our feet, but a whole area of several yards square, and apparently to a considerable depth, was moving, or, as it were, flowing around us all the time. I have never seen screes in a position of such unstable equilibrium. Maquignaz and I were fairly afraid that we should start an avalanche of them and become engulfed. To lessen the disturbance and danger we separated at least a hundred yards from one another and followed independent lines of descent. There is nothing to relate about this expeditious down going. One five minutes was like another. We often fell, and sometimes stuck fast, through the stones overflowing round our legs almost to the knees and holding us down. The tents, at first only visible through the glasses as little specks of green, presently became visible to the naked eye. It was an immense relief to make out Pellissier moving between them. Seeing him walk to a patch of snow and return, I concluded he had caught sight of us and was well enough to set about making a brew of soup.

In two hours and forty minutes from the top we rejoined him at camp once more.

They were only just in time, for by the following morning the weather had broken and a violent gale was blowing. Pellissier had found, on getting back to camp, that his feet were frost-bitten. He rubbed them with snow for five hours, but it was several weeks before they recovered.—ED.

THE END

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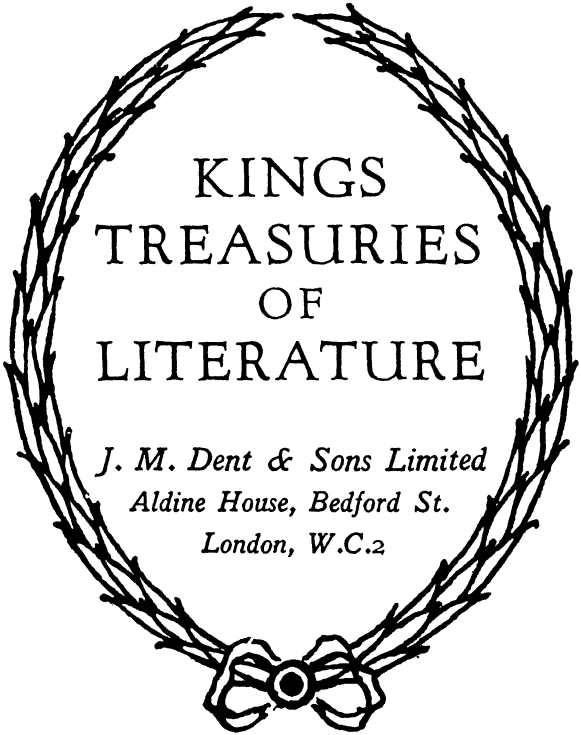
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