Viva Isthmian Brotherhood,
Viva the Army and the valiant Isthmian people!

The Commander-in-Chief,

ESTEBAN HUERTAS.

He wrote a number of epistles in this strain. Huertas threatened to upset the Panamanian apple-cart. The United States said if Panama did not behave better there must be intervention for the sake of the peace of the world. Huertas would have to go, and his army of 250 be disbanded. They were got rid of, Huertas all the time behaving like a swaggering buffoon. He scorned a salary in retirement—for, said he, it would cast on his dignity an indelible stigma—yet he took it.

But there is still a Panamanian Army. It consists of three men and twenty officers, the most comical army in the world.

Those were the spacious days of President Roosevelt. He decided to send his well-beloved Secretary for War, Mr. Taft, to Panama to assure the Panamanians, that, despite rumours, the intentions of the United States were dovelike. Mr. Taft announced that full justice should be done to Panama. He said the United States " has no intention, in being on this Isthmus, to do other than to build a canal, and no desire to exercise any power except that which it deems necessary under the treaty to insure the building, maintenance, and protection of the

canal." Then negotiations began—broken only by banquets and flamboyant oratory—and everybody hurrahed at the future sunshine. The United States removed what the Panamanians considered grievances in regard to tariffs and the postal service.

But what about the Canal? That was the purpose for which the United States had gone to the Isthmus. President Roosevelt set up the Isthmian Canal Commission. The gentlemen composing it, with General Davis as Governor, went to Panama. The work of construction was parcelled out. Mr. John Wallace was appointed chief engineer. The first thing he did was to urge a sea-level canal, and not a high-level canal with locks. There was delay in getting out material. Sickness broke out amongst the workers. Colonel Gorgas was hurried to the Isthmus to take sanitation in hand. Dissension was going on, but there was no decision whether the Canal should have locks or be on the sea level. There were ardent partisans for each. But how much it was all going to cost the United States was doubtful.

The sea-level champions wanted to make a Straits of Panama, and they argued how easily an earthquake could destroy elaborate locks. The lock adherents maintained a sea-level canal was impossible, that at least one tidal lock would be necessary, for whilst the tide on the Pacific side rose ten feet,

that in the Caribbean Sea rose only ten inches. The answer was that as the Pacific was higher by ten feet at high tide than the Atlantic, the fall would cover forty-seven miles, or about two and a half inches to the mile, a sluggish flow which would not interfere with shipping.

Let me say that originally I was an upholder of the sea-level plan. But careful investigation has convinced me that had it been attempted it would have been a failure. It would have meant that in places the cut would have had to have been nearly a hundred feet deeper than it is. The poor crumbling volcanic soil is so unstable that there have been terrible experiences with "slides" in the Culebra Cut. If another hundred feet had had to be removed the inevitable consequence would have been that the sides would have tumbled in quite as fast as the "dirt" was removed. I know there are many men who believe a lock canal is a mistake; they have a vision of an unimpeded channel between the two oceans. Theoretically they are right. Practically they are wrong. A lock canal, with as little cutting as possible, is the only thing possible through such a soil.

Splendid though America's achievement is to-day, the beginning of the work by the American Government was almost in as much muddle as when the French were there. Washington red tape hampered

progress, and it took months to get out not only necessary machinery, but simple things that could easily have been obtained. The likelihood of the cost being far greater than had been conjectured caused a cheese-paring policy. The men on the spot were in despair. Houses had to be built, water supply had to be arranged, and appeals to Washington for aid met with tardy response. Members of the Commission were at loggerheads.

At last it was realised that some other Board of Control would have to be established. But Congress and the Senate could not make up their minds. President Roosevelt, on his own authority, dismissed the old Commission and appointed another. Fresh rules were drawn up. The original intention was to buy all supplies in the United States. That was dropped, and low price and quick delivery was allowed to decide from which country the goods should come. The American manufacturers growled. They objected to the foreigner having the same chance as themselves; besides, what was the good of a tariff if it was going to be removed? They were told, to their open surprise, that Panama was not part of the United States, that it was a foreign land, and the Canal would be "by the most sacred guarantees open impartially for international and universal use." And the Commission showed it was acting up to this by employing British coloured

labour from Barbados and Jamaica. Incidentally it may be mentioned that this labour was cheaper and better than could have been obtained from the southern States. Further, it would not rouse resentment amongst the white agriculturists of the South at their best coloured men being drawn away for higher pay. American manufacturers did not concern themselves with that. They did not mind foreign labour being utilised to cut the Canal, but they boggled at foreign machinery. As a matter of fact very little foreign machinery was purchased. The decision to keep open market was to check a ring of manufacturers forcing up prices. There was the usual political pressure, and at the end of a couple of years' agitation Congress passed an order that supplies should be purchased in America unless, in the President's opinion, the prices were extortionate. The United States purchased the Panama Railroad, and so secured control of rail and water way across the Isthmus.

Suddenly there was a flare-up. Just when all the muddle and confusion, and acrimony and wire-pulling, were expected to come to an end, Mr. Wallace, the chief engineer, resigned. He had been receiving £5,000 a year, and he was off to New York to be president of a company at £12,000 a year. Mr. Taft whipped him for abandoning a national work for "mere lucre." Mr. Wallace hotly retorted that

finance had nothing to do with his resignation; he had intended to resign in any case, and the New York offer simply came at the "psychological moment." There was open quarrelling. The Wallace supporters said he had been forced out of his position because justice had not been done to his reputation as an engineer. His critics said he had been animated by sordid motives which ought not to influence a true American. Later on Mr. Wallace acknowledged that it was impossible for him to get on with his colleagues on the Commission, and he even charged one of them with engineering the Revolution, which the United States denied it had anything to do with. He objected to Mr. Shonts because of the authority he exercised, whereas Mr. Wallace thought he himself was to be director-general. So, in regard to the Canal, Mr. Wallace "thought it better to sacrifice my ambitions regarding that work, which was to be the crowning event of my life, than remain to be humiliated, forced to disobey orders or create friction." As to Mr. Cromwell, he had too much influence with President Roosevelt and Secretary Taft, for "he was the man who brought about the sale of the Canal to the Government, and who brought about the Revolution in Panama."

Another chief engineer was found in Mr. John F. Stevens. Then there was appointed a Board of Consulting Engineers to advise the Commission.

THE PEDRO MIGUEL LOCKS: THE WEST CHAMBER, VIEW LOOKING NORTH FROM THE LOWER MAIN GATES, MARCH 29, 1912.

They recommended a canal at sea level. Mr. Stevens was in favour of a lock canal. The members of the Commission, with one exception, decided on the latter. Secretary Taft considered this decision. President Roosevelt considered it. Congress considered it. A high-level lock canal was approved.

The Commission plans, revised and revised again, did not work. Indeed, members trenched on one another's authority and jurisdiction. It was natural when strong men, holding decided opinions, came into conflict that the sparks should begin to fly. Things which ought to have been settled locally were referred to Washington, and the decision made by men who had less knowledge. Whatever the decision was, it was certain to be felt by those against whose views it had been cast that there had been undue influence and favouritism. President Roosevelt put an end to all the mischief by an imperial act. He sent out Colonel Goethals to be in absolute, unquestioned, supreme command. Mr. Stevens went home. The Zone has been under the dictatorship of Colonel Goethals. What he has said has been law. There is no court of appeal. Autocracy is un-American, but it has proved the better way.

So at last, having journeyed long through the valley of vexation and tribulation, the path was cleared of obstructions. The work done during the past five years has been one of the greatest of

American monuments. It is rarely that a huge undertaking of a public character is set on foot in the United States without plenty of stories gaining currency about "boodle" and "graft" and wholesale corruption. I expected to hear this in Panama, and subsequently when I was making inquiries in the States. Not a tittle of foundation could I find for any story of underhand financial procedure.

Indeed, once the machine of construction was fairly set running, no work was ever carried on more cleanly, straightforwardly, or with more scrupulous financial integrity. The building has been in the hands of honourable men. I write this because there is a lingering idea in some British minds that all American public works are both sown and reaped in corruption. And I write it gladly, because I am by no means convinced that American political cleverness had not much to do with the secession of Panama from Colombia.

If the end justifies the means, then America has justified itself. The work which the United States set out to do is almost done. But we had better drop all picturesque and nonsensical talk about the independence of the Republic of Panama. Independence is but a name to save the Panamanians from having unhappy dreams. Panama is in the pocket of the United States, and Panama has to do

what it is told. Panama belongs as much to the United States as Egypt does to Great Britain.

The American grip on Panama has tightened. That was the obvious sequence of the Revolution, the treaty and the purchase price. Panamanians with whom I spoke sometimes referred to American "oppression." I saw no oppression, except that the Americans will not stand any nonsense. Panama is enormously benefited by the coming of America. But the Panamanian wants to have his cake and to eat it at the same time. Panamanians are sensitive but not industrious. I found many of them bitterly complaining that the real object of the United States was to annex their country. I am quite sure that the States will not formally do that for a long time unless a Revolution should provoke such an action.

Panamanians can talk as much as they like about being an independent Republic so long as it keeps its independence passive. The United States Government is acting strictly to the letter of the agreement with Panama. But I saw plenty of evidence that individual Americans in the Isthmus regard the Panamanians with contempt as a lazy, slouching, intriguing lot. The ill-feeling is returned by the people of Panama looking upon Americans as noisy, grabbing bullies. It is unfortunate that this spirit should prevail.

The domination by the United States in Panama has created much uneasiness in the Spanish-American mind. It is all very well for America to raise the Monroe Doctrine, which is "hands off" to European Powers so far as the American continent is concerned. What Spanish-Americans object to is a policy of "hands on" so far as the central and southern Republics are concerned. Of course none of these Republics would be a match for the United States in a tussle of strength.

But though the various Latin Republics hate one another, they have a bond of sympathy in that they all hate the United States. Some of them have navies. Move amongst the American Spaniards, get them to discuss freely their situation, their ambitions, the realisation of the place which South America is going to hold amongst the wealth-producing countries of the world, and it is not long before you hear of the A., B. and C. combination—an understanding between Argentina, Brazil, and Chile that they will act together to resist United States oppression. I do not discuss the possible conclusion of such a conflict. Sufficient it is for me to point out that the possession of Panama by the United States, giving the States a quick ship-way to south-western America, has made Spanish-America realise some of the possibilities of the future.

Meanwhile the baby Republic of Panama is

independent in name only. It exists on sufferance. The most important part of its territory is as much under United States control as Michigan. America can have the rest by taking it. Panamanians—easy, slothful and greedy, have realised that. But they have brought the existing condition of affairs upon themselves. And in their hearts is deep and bitter dislike of their new masters.

CHAPTER XV

FOR GOD AND GOLD

Now, if you search the world over you will find it hard to light upon a country with a history so luridly romantic.

Had the aboriginal Panamanian been left alone in his primitive commonwealth of five hundred years ago, had not the wandering spirit of the celebrated Christopher made him the first among the adventurers of the West Indies, had he not spread marvellous tales about Panama's hoards of treasure, in this way firing the ambition of his countrymen, we should probably never have heard of Balboa or Pizarro or Cortez or Pedrarias. Nor would Drake and Morgan have secured quite the place they hold in England's maritime story.

There is no doubt that Columbus, so far as the interests of the natives were concerned, was much too effusive. The Arcadian innocence of the natives was no match for his diplomatic courtesies. He took some gold ornaments back to Spain, and enlarged upon the unimaginable wealth of the new world, and at once roused the latent cupidity of Spaniards whose

desire was to get rich without unbecoming procrastination. So reaching Santa Maria it was easy to excite quarrels with the natives. Immediately began a long and red record of blood and brutality, crime and conquest, wellnigh unparalleled in history.

Helped by the authorities at home, the Spaniards were eager to possess the treasures of this El Dorado. The glittering cargoes sent to Spain exhilarated the Castilian imagination. It was easy to move from one development to another. Holy Mother Church bestowed its blessings and its encouragement. All classes were one in thought and action. Henceforth Panama was to come under the new dominion.

There was no delay. The prize was tempting. That dashing sprig of Aragonic gentility, Alonzo de Ojeda, and the royal carver of Madrid, Don Diego de Nicuesa, were sent out to administer the government and enlighten the natives. But rebellion broke out. The two gentlemen quarrelled about precedence and power, but took good care to be united on the question of acquisition. The Catholic Church, seeing in this new land a field for extending the faith, blessed the adventurers who went forth for God and gold. These sons of Spain were duly blessed. They deserved well of their country. Priests sang their praises. Holy Church drew up a proclamation. Stripped of its circumlocutory phrasings, it told all and sundry that Panama was for the

future in charge of Saint Peter, and hinted in the polite and subtle language of the day that there were such things as punishments, not only studiously appropriate, but eminently effective, to bring the heathen within the arms of Mother Church. The natives did not respond with the joy that was anticipated. They were ill-treated and they retaliated.

The drama was gradually unfolded. Some sort of administrative principle was observed, but all the arts of duplicity and a free use of the sword were employed to advance the majesty of Spanish dominion. Brutal and unrestrained passion, horrible in its ferocity, decimated the people. Native chiefs were either made slaves or, to instil the value of submission, had their ears cut off, while their new-found masters—King, Church and People—were gathering great stores of golden plate, golden tablets, golden bracelets, and golden chains in order to fill the Spanish treasury and satisfy the exactions of ease and indolence.

Conquest so profitable became infectious. The Spanish yoke was safely fastened round Panama and its Isthmus. When Balboa was conquering the land he took with him a pack of bloodhounds. They gave him valuable assistance when he desired to assail the natives and bring them into a condition to respect him. One dog was so mighty in action and performance that his name is handed down to

posterity. It was Leoncico, which means "Little Lion." Red in colour, he had a tremendous black snout. He was so efficient with this snout that he drew a captain's pay.

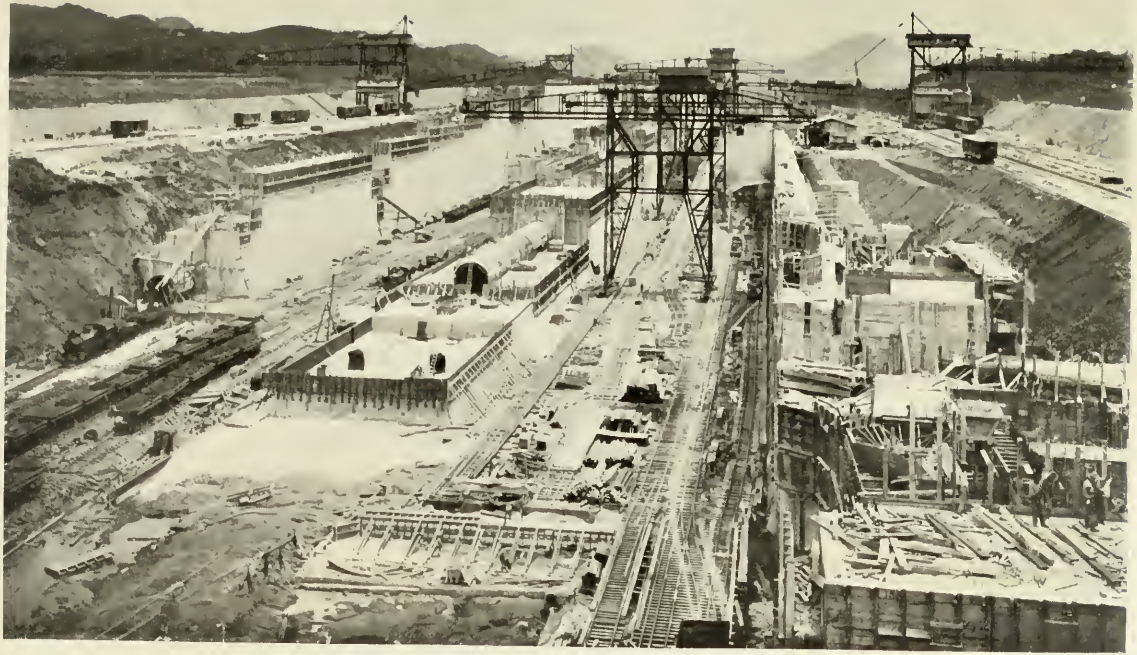
After Balboa was killed by his rival Pedrarias anarchy prevailed. Hunger for treasure was rampant. Sacking and torture went on without stop. Melted gold was poured down the throats of the obstinate Panamanians. Christianity, lust and slavery went together. The Spanish king, placated with presents, was too far off to understand matters even if he wished to. In 1521, however, the bishopric was taken from Santa Maria and conferred upon Panama.

The conquest of Peru, which was of such immediate interest to Panama, the search for the fabled El Dorado in the interests of the "Holy Trinity and Our Lady the Blessed Virgin," the episcopal blessing bestowed upon Cortez and his captains, the authority given them to "discover and subdue the countries and provinces belonging to the Empire of Peru," strengthened by the public administration of the sacrament in Panama, struck the public imagination.

By what means could the conquest be made? Any means. Cortez and company stuck at nothing. Panama (said they) was poor. Peru was rich. That excited cupidity. The pessimists had to stand down. Cortez went to Spain. Charles the Fifth, delighted to see him, granted him authority.

With only 180 men and 27 horses his little fleet left Panama, after a religious service in the cathedral. They took with them a ready-made bishop for the Peruvians. He called himself "Protector of the Indians of Peru." Others followed. Peru was captured. Fabulous riches were secured. Panama, as the Spanish centre, enjoyed prosperity. More than that, it developed luxury. Thousands of Panamanians regretted they had not gone with the expedition. In Peru there were the jealousies usual among the Spanish leaders on such occasions. But the King and Church settled all that. Peru had come within the dominion. God and gold had triumphed.

It can well be imagined that anyone in the general flush of such a conquest who asked by what means it had been attained would not be exceedingly popular. It required a firm and steadfast courage to talk about Christian mercy under such circumstances. Don Fray Bartholomé de Las Casas took the risk. Bitter enemies surrounded him. He had accompanied expeditions against the natives. He had seen things for himself. He protested. He appealed. Men raged against him. On all hands he was threatened. He went to Spain and converted the Cardinal. The result was a code of laws for the Indies. This code did not satisfy Las Casas, but slavery it practically abolished.



MIRAFLORES LOCKS, LOOKING NORTH, JUNE 14, 1912.

The truth gradually came out. Reports of massacres, of cruelties, of atrocities harried the minds of men. The Church was touched. The old order of things had a rude shock. It trembled, and the more it trembled the more did those who supported it abuse Las Casas.

Atrocities had been unspeakable. Women and children were fastened with chains, then scalped, then beheaded. One high official was accustomed to travel about on an ass. The animal amused the Spaniards, but frightened the natives. Whenever he brayed, which he did loud and often, they fell down in appalled wonderment. They were taught to believe that when he brayed he was asking for gold. Simple children, they accepted the statement. Not only did they give the ass all the gold ornaments they had, but they robbed the graves of their ancestors to satisfy the animal's cravings.

Things, however, were soon to change. The crimes of which the Spaniards had long been guilty were not lost upon Europe. England, particularly, had watched Spain's growing power in the West Indies. Englishmen cast longing eyes on this richly laden country. Trying to open up trade, they found the Spaniards repudiated any desire for commercial intercourse. They had a monopoly and wished to keep it.

England was determined to upset the arrange-

ment. The resolve was not unmixed with religious motives. Protestantism versus Roman Catholicism lost nothing as a cry in those days amongst people whom the Spanish monarch tried to annihilate by means of the abortive Armada. The famous Drake started the ball. He had taken his trading vessel to Vera Cruz, Mexico, in about the year 1560, and tried to trade, with the Governor's permission. Induced by the Governor, he dropped anchor, but with his crew was put into prison, and his ship and goods confiscated. When liberated he did all he could to obtain compensation from Spain. The refusal he met with was an act for which Spain had every reason bitterly to repent. Filled with a deep-rooted hatred against a system which appreciated robbery and injustice as a first quality, Drake set to work to avenge his wrongs. First he sailed to the Indies to get information. Then he got Queen Elizabeth to favour his enterprise. She was nothing loth. He not only received letters of marque empowering him to act against the Spaniards, but encouragement from the Court and its influential followers. He became a "privateer." The difference between that title and "pirate" is small. It is only social. It gave him the right to appear at Court.

The people of Plymouth turned out to wish him good-bye and good luck. He had seventy-three men

and boys on board, as well as artillery and all requisites. Arriving at the Isthmus, he attacked Nombre de Dios. After very little fighting, mostly done by night, the place fell into Drake's hands. There was practically no defence. In the King's treasure-house the invaders were amazed to find enormous bars of silver. While arranging to take them away Drake fainted from a wound he had received, and his men had to hurry him on board, and left the silver behind. Cartagena then received attention, but being too strongly fortified for capture by assault Drake contented himself with doing damage to shipping.

These two enterprises created great excitement all over the Isthmus. Spain had to reckon with a new power. Indians and negroes, animated by hatred of the Spaniards, made an alliance with Drake, and with their assistance he attempted the capture of a treasure train coming from Panama. When everything was propitious the scheme was spoilt by a drunken native. Another visit to Cartagena followed. More shipping met with destruction. Cruising up and down the coast various depredations were committed.

Soon afterwards, with the assistance of some French pirates, a raid was made on a treasure train near Nombre de Dios. Drake sailed away with a large haul of gold. On his journey back to Plymouth

he mastered over a hundred Spanish merchant ships, following up his enterprise later on by returning to the Isthmus and sacking several towns and going home with the booty.

When war broke out between England and Spain he became an Admiral of the English Navy, made some heavy exactions on San Domingo and Cartagena, failed to take some fortified places, and was particularly unsuccessful in trying to take Panama. This he tried to do from Nombre de Dios. His men lost themselves in the jungle. His sudden death when he was on the point of attacking Puerto Bello, in January, 1596, disheartened his band. They sailed home. One of the Spanish priests, describing his death, wrote: "His tongue congealed, his mouth became scarlet, giving issue to that lost soul that hastened direct to hell."

Still the Caribbean Sea continued to be swept by these "heretical pirates." Captain William Parker took Drake's place. Like Drake he started from Plymouth, and off the Isthmus caught a pearl ship and ransomed a Portuguese slaver. Following with the capture of Puerto Bello, he removed great spoil and just missed intercepting a treasure-ship.

All these enterprises greatly disconcerted the Spaniards. Even the Pacific was not proof against the presence of the English. Oxenham, who had been

an officer with Drake, crossed the Isthmus with a chosen band, sailed about in the Pacific, and, capturing a small sailing vessel, was able by its means to annex one of the "gold ships" which carried the bullion from the mines of Peru. His daring seems, however, to have come to nothing. Some of his crew were executed in Panama. Others soon inhabited Spanish prisons.

Pearl fishing was carried on under the protection of a Spanish man-of-war. It was necessary, for pirates were busy and pearls were profitable. Sometimes the pirates got the worst of it, and the result was summary extinguishment. All nationalities found the life attractive because it was lucrative if they took care of the spoil—English, French and Portuguese. One pirate, under the assumed name of Brasilliano, hated the Spaniards with a frenzied hatred. Whenever he caught any of them he had a habit of roasting them alive!

The whole system of piracy seemed to be regarded by the majority of those who took to it as a means of devilry and debauchery. Brasilliano's crew, for instance, dauntless in a fight, and capturing enormous booty, threw most of it away in a few days' drinking and in most foolish extravagance. They were known to spend in one night as much as 3,000 pieces of eight, which is £500 in English money, and be destitute the next morning. They had no regard for property.

Their good qualities were shown in their readiness to help each other in all respects. Laws or customs were curious in regard to them. A man to whom a pirate owed money could sell him in discharge of the debt. This actually happened in Jamaica in the case of a master. He was Dives in March but Lazarus in May.

As time went on piracy increased. It was a sad torment to the Spanish kingdom. Not only had the Spaniards fewer ships sailing, but their routes were changed. The traffic which had gone to Panama via Puerto Bello was now taken by way of Cape Horn. But where the traffic was there went the pirates. With fewer ships to catch they robbed and attacked the towns, burnt many, and took the leading inhabitants on ransom. Consequently the Spanish were continually changing their plans. But whatever their arrangements were, there bobbed up the pirates and the buccaneers.

These buccaneers were held in greater terror than the ordinary pirate. They were mere vagabonds, the riff-raff of the lowest class of the northern nations. Detesting all Spaniards with an inborn hate, they harried the commerce of Spain and terrorised the coast towns. Some of the Spanish Governors swore they would give no quarter if they caught them; but the people often represented they would never

be safe, for the buccaneers would surely have their revenge. The hate thus engendered was fiendish on both sides. The French buccaneer, Francis L'Ollonais, who commenced life as a slave, treated his Spanish prisoners with inhuman cruelty. He beheaded the lot. He told the Governor of Havana his countrymen need not expect any mercy from him, and that he hoped to have the pleasure of dealing with him some day. A Spaniard who did not confess where his treasure was hidden was cut to pieces with a cutlass. Others were put to the rack. At Puerto Caval L'Ollonais cut one prisoner's heart out before his companions, threatening to do the same to all of them if they did not do as he wished. He and his crew killed 500 Spaniards at Maracaibo, and took 650 prisoners, including slaves, women and children. Many of them were starved to death. L'Ollonais's practice was to put all the bodies in boats, take them out to sea and sink them. His end corresponded with his own practices. He was captured at Darien by some Indians, torn limb from limb, and thrown in pieces into the fire! Some of his band shared the same fate. On one occasion they had to kill and eat the monkeys they found in the woods in order to satisfy their hunger. On another occasion their shoes and the sheaths of their knives and swords had to do duty for a meal.

Amid all these troubles Panama went on her course free from the storms and stress which swept over other parts of the Isthmus. Her wealth had leaped up with enormous bounds. She became the envy of the East. Treasure from her poured into Spain. The last attempt to rifle her treasury had failed ingloriously. A handful of desperate men, all Englishmen, tried it, but the jungle, the rivers, and the ever-present fever decimated them. They even got near enough to challenge the city, but on the stroke of triumph they failed. "Under whose orders are you acting?" wrote the Governor when he heard they were coming; to which Captain Sawkins replied, "All my company are not yet come together, but when they are we will visit you at Panama, and bring our commissions on the muzzles of our guns, and then you shall read them as plain as the flame of gunpowder can make them." Captain Sawkins met with his death at a breastwork. Many of the band dispersed, and the majority wandered down as far as the Straits of Magellan, eventually returning to the Caribbean Islands. There they met with some other corsairs, gave them their boats and broke up. Some returned to England disgusted with the sum total of their enterprise. On the complaint of the Spanish Ambassador, Captain Sharp and his comrades were tried for conspiracy, but they succeeded in convincing the court they were

THE LOWER MAIN GATES IN THE PEDRO MIGUEL LOCK, SHOWING OUTLET IN THE WALL, MARCH 28, 1912.

perfectly honourable, and so escaped legal consequences.

And then a master mind arose, more skilful and determined than most of his kind, and crushed the old city at the very summit of her prosperity.

CHAPTER XVI

THE SACK OF PANAMA

To read about Panama in the olden days is like recalling the dreamy imaginings of Eastern tales. Its mule trains bearing gold and silver and precious stones, its bullion-laden ships, its gay markets, its rich merchants, its colour, its life, make a fascinating, changing, phantom picture. Panama in those distant times was characterised by what wealth often brings—luxury and licentiousness.

Friars and priests sang their Kyrie eleisons and chanted their paternosters in its primitive chapels. The elementary trappings of justice and equity gave the city a sense of comparative dignity. Precious ornaments adorned its churches and helped to give a meretricious display to its festivals. Houses of the rich, though insignificant in size, exhibited a refinement which indicated prosperity. Tropical gardens with gorgeous colourings, and blossoms loading the air with heavy fragrance, gave entertainment to its people. Cool and pleasant breezes from the southern seas made its brilliant starry nights mindful of some Eastern Eden.

Yet there brooded over it the horrible monster of disease and death. Fever sprang from its swamps like an avenging Nemesis. The pestilential heat which was Panama's summer affliction swept away thousands. The noisome, unhealthy streets fitly matched the gambling and the crime of unrestrained viciousness.

Can it be wondered at that such a spirit as Morgan, the Welsh pirate, the very embodiment of the gentleman in the picture-book, should have looked with envious eye upon this unsuspecting treasure-house, and at one fell swoop have wiped it out? And with all its treasure, Panama made little preparation to defend itself. The soldiers it housed—and they formed a considerable portion of the population—possessed the enervated qualities of their race. The castles and forts were weakened by the perpetual corrupt practices of the governors. There was no one to restrain them, and as for Madrid, the authorities of that distant city cared little so long as they could feast their eyes with dancing delight upon the heavily-laden flotillas which sailed up the Tagus with the wealth of the Indies.

It was a daring conception of Morgan's, for it involved enormous dangers by land and sea. But this dauntless chief of buccaneers was the very man to face and overcome them. He possessed the cool caution of a general and the pluck of a sailor

desperado. It was done, too, with a mere pigmy band, fearless, no doubt, but small enough to excite amazement and almost incredulity that it could have accomplished so much.

Morgan was a man of action and of decision. First he gathered together ships and boats to the number of nine, and 460 military men, under promise of obtaining riches beyond their wildest dreams. Keeping to himself the object he had in view, he made for the coast of Costa Rica, and on landing declared his intention to capture and plunder Puerto Bello. It was a doubtful enterprise, inasmuch as the place was one of the strongest of all the coast towns in the West Indies. Morgan's band expressed fears lest it should fail. Encouraged, however, by Morgan's determination, they entered upon the task with loyal enthusiasm.

Thirty miles to the west of Puerto Bello they landed on this desperate enterprise, and proceeding up the river by night in boats and canoes, reached the outposts of the city, guided by an Englishman who had been a prisoner there for some time. Cunningly capturing the sentry, they extracted the information they wanted from him under various threats. Coming to the Castle of Puerto Bello, they surrounded it in order that no one should escape.

The place was garrisoned by 300 soldiers. Morgan threatened to slaughter all of them if they did not

submit. They refused, and, beginning to shoot, they started a desperate conflict which ended in their complete defeat. As good as his word, Morgan placed all of them in one room—officers and men—and blew them to pieces with a keg of gunpowder. Then, turning to the city, one party ransacked the churches, finding rich stores of ornament and precious jewels, and various treasure concealed by the inhabitants; and another party commenced a tremendous assault upon one of the other castles. Vigorous resistance was offered, and for a time, the result being uncertain, Morgan despaired of success. As a last resort he commanded fireballs to be used. The Spaniards replied with stones, powder pots, and various combustibles. The turning point came when he ordered a number of priests and nuns from the city to fix against the walls of the castle some hastily contrived ladders, and then called upon the Governor to surrender. The priests and nuns prayed the Governor by all the saints in Heaven to do so, and thus save his life and their own. But he indignantly refused, and, continuing to fire, killed several of the invaders. Whereupon Morgan's men ran up the ladders with fireballs and powder pots, took the castle, and killed the Governor, who preferred to die as a soldier rather than be hanged as a coward. Having gathered the prisoners together, Morgan's band took to debauchery, as was their custom, and

became so helplessly drunk that the garrison could have killed the whole of them had the least courage been left to them.

Then the city was ransacked for booty. Some of the prisoners were tortured so cruelly that they died. Others, on pain of death, surrendered all they possessed. Threats were issued that Puerto Bello would be burnt if ransom were not forthcoming. The Governor of Panama sent a small relief force which was ambushed and ran back to the City. The Governor, safe at a distance, sent a warlike message threatening the buccaneer with " no quarter." Morgan replied in terms of ridicule, and repeated his threat, whereupon the Governor, thinking it expedient not to be counted as obstinate, left it to Morgan and the Puerto Bellonians to settle it among themselves. The city did so with alacrity. Morgan was paid 100,000 pieces of eight, in other words, £25,000.

His success is said to have filled the Governor of Panama with admiration and astonishment—admiration at his courage, astonishment that a stronghold like Puerto Bello should have fallen into his hands. " Let me see a sample of the weapons you have used," he wrote in a message to the buccaneer. A pistol and some bullets were forwarded in reply, with an intimation from Morgan that the Governor could keep them until he called upon

him in Panama City, which would be very soon. In answer to the threat the Governor presented Morgan with a gold ring, accompanied by the assurance that if he really meant to try his hand at Panama he would receive a very warm reception, and warned him not to make the mistake of thinking that his city was anything like Puerto Bello.

Morgan sailed away with his booty to Cuba, and in a quiet nook counted his capture to be 250,000 pieces of eight, or £60,000 in English money, besides silks and other things, most of which vanished in the usual debauchery.

While this extraordinary exploit produced trembling fears and quaking doubts throughout the Spanish dominions, in piratical and other quarters Morgan won the reputation of a hero. The Welshman's name was on everybody's tongue. All the wandering desperadoes on those seas found in him the lodestone of their inclinations. They clamoured for fresh enterprises. He promised to lead them. Which was it to be—Cartagena, Vera Cruz, or Panama? It fell upon Panama.

Soon getting to work, the buccaneer succeeded in collecting the biggest pirate fleet that ever sailed the seas—nearly forty ships of all kinds. Men flocked in from all sides. More than two thousand of the boldest, most bloodthirsty and most brutal pirates

came under his admiral's flag, all inspired by the bitterest hate against Spanish authority.

On October 24th, 1670, he was ready to move. Events quickly developed. Unprotected places near Cartagena were rifled for corn and meat. Horrible tortures were practised on the inhabitants to compel them to disgorge their hidden wealth. Robbery and cruelty were unrestrained.

Off Cape Tiburon Morgan called his men together and gave them an address which was lurid in its frenzied dislike toward the Spaniards. It was received with zeal. An agreement was drawn up. He himself was to have a hundredth part of all the band got, and according to rank so would the booty be. The price of losing two legs was fixed at 1,500 pieces of eight (£375) or fifteen slaves; one leg or a hand at 600 pieces of eight (£150) or six slaves; one eye, 100 pieces (£25) or one slave. A special act of bravery was worth 50 pieces, or £12 10s.

The cry was then for Panama. It was difficult to get at, being so far from the Atlantic, and no one in the fleet quite knew the best route to take. But hoping to find help on the Caribbean Island of Old Providence, the pirates sailed thither, only to meet with disappointment and to find that the Spaniards barred the way.

This was the first check to their progress. The Spanish battery plied them with shot. The weather

becoming of the worst possible description, the task of capturing the garrison was of enormous difficulty. Those who had landed found food scarce. They were wet to the skin. Had they not been accustomed to the roughnesses and hardships of such enterprises the expedition would have collapsed there and then. Seeing it was a time for prompt decisive action, Morgan frightened the Governor into submission by threats of torture and death ; and, in order to please his vanity, actually engaged in a mock assault upon the castle. Thus the Governor preserved unsullied his reputation for a soldier's bravery, which, to his countrymen, had only given way to invincible pressure.

A quantity of powder and ammunition came into Morgan's possession. The fortifications, which in other hands than the Spaniards would have been impregnable, were destroyed. Finding some Spanish pirates in the prison who knew the way to Panama, they were added to the band. So the expedition moved on.

Keeping his object as secret as possible, Morgan reached the Spanish castle on the banks of the River Chagres. To take it was a difficult job. It was well fortified and could not be approached under cover. Nothing could be done except a furious frontal attack. Fireballs were used. The assault was desperate. It was defeated. But accidentally the castle was fired,

and amid the flames the band clambered over the walls and engaged in a hand-to-hand fight with the defenders, some of whom jumped into the water. The success of Morgan so far was assured.

In Panama the news created a sensation. To all Spaniards Morgan was a terror. They knew what to expect from him. The Governor had not forgotten the threat he received after the fall of Puerto Bello. Now that Morgan was only a few miles from the city his anxiety was great. He had heard from a deserter when the expedition started that Panama was Morgan's object, and he had arranged to protect the city with over three thousand men, which was a large force in those days. He had ordered a number of ambuscades to be placed in the trails in the jungle. Ammunition and provisions had been brought into the city. Every preparation was made for a determined resistance if the famous bandit did come. Could he come? That was the momentous question. Could he pass through the jungle—that place of mystery and horror which had long defied man's efforts and refused to yield to him its hidden treasures?

No place could be better termed "the receptacle of men's hopes." If its swamps did not kill, its storms, its insect life, its vegetation, and its tantalising trails stood as a warning against ill-directed ambition. Its natural tropical beauties—tree and fern, vine and

creeper, orchids and daffodils, moths and beetles—supplied a charm of colour, yellow and green, crimson and white, which inspired the fascination of awe and worship. But to Morgan physical obstacles were of small account. Leaving his ships in the Chagres he moved towards Panama in command of 1,200 men, on January 8th, 1671, with five boats and over thirty canoes. Difficulties in getting food were experienced. Every likely place where it could be found was deserted by the Spaniards, who carried away all provisions. At Cruz de Juan Galligo the waterway was obstructed by trees. The difficulties of progress by the river increased, and it was resolved to take to the land.

Getting into the jungle they found it almost impossible to go on. There was every danger of an ambuscade. The vegetation was so dense they were in the sore strait of being completely lost. They had to take to the river again, and succeeded in getting as far as Cedro Bueno. Their sufferings from hunger could only be relieved by either smoking or chewing tobacco.

Reaching Torna Cavallos, they found that place was deserted. So driven were the band for food that they had to eat some leather bags which the Spaniards had left behind. Their sufferings became intense. It required all the tact and courage of Morgan to induce them to proceed. Coming to

Barbacoas they found some meal and wheat, and, thus exhilarated, moved on courageously. Next day they were compelled to devour the leaves of the trees and the rough grass of the jungle to satisfy their hunger. They were in a desperate plight. Then a large quantity of maize was discovered, which many of the men ate dry. An hour or two afterwards they met Indians, who jabbered at them defiantly and then vanished as quickly as their legs could carry them.

At last, after much doubt about going farther, they arrived at Cruces, only eight miles from Panama. That place, too, being abandoned, they fell to eating the cats and dogs which had been left behind. It was either that or nothing. Wine and bread were afterwards found in the royal stables, but wine and cat, or wine and dog, associated together in the human stomach not agreeing, scores of the pirates became ill.

Being now so near Panama it was necessary to observe caution. It was known that Spaniards and Indians were in concealment. As the paths were difficult a catastrophe might take place at any moment. The wisdom of wariness was at once proved by a sudden Indian attack with arrows. Farther on there was a desperate encounter.

Still Morgan's band went on, driving the Indians before them, encountering tropical rainstorms, en-

during the sun's suffocating rays, wandering through the tangled vegetation of the jungle, until at last from a hill they beheld the western sea and shouted with joy.

They had accomplished the almost impossible. They had crossed the Isthmus.

Picture the state of things in Panama. The scorn poured upon "those dogs" (*perros Ingleses*), the inflamed indignation of the unfortunate Governor, the dazed and stony fatalistic apathy of the flabby inhabitants, the haste with which riches were huddled away in ships and warehouses, in cellars and tanks, the awful apprehensions of the ecclesiastics, the priests and the nuns, in whose view a pirate was a monster as immeasurably bad as five thousand imps from Erebus.

Conceive how the Governor marshalled his forces—400 cavalry and 2,500 infantry, all true Spaniards. How valiant they looked when drawn up on parade, and after an eloquent appeal to their patriotism how they waved their plumes and cried "*Viva el Rey!*" Whereupon the populace went home and felt that they were safe. Sixty Indians and a number of negroes were a squad unto themselves. In addition there was the medley *posse comitatus*, who, never having attended a drill in their lives, could muster more in numbers than they represented in military knowledge.

And all the while Morgan and his men were dining as they never had before during the expedition. They had come across a quantity of cattle and were killing and roasting and eating them. They danced a flippant fandango, safeguarded their camp, played the trumpets, beat the drums, and went to sleep dreaming of Panama and plunder in the morning.

The night passed, and the day of trial dawned heavily. The forces of Panama were early astir. Drawn up in battle array they had a formidable appearance. If Providence is always on the side of the biggest battalions they were invincible. But that kind of philosophy Morgan was not accustomed to. He started the fight with volley firing, and having succeeded in parting the enemy's cavalry from the infantry, he had really decided the issue before the Spaniards were aware of it.

They, on the other hand, tried the ancient trick of driving the wild bull at the pirates. But the bullet was too much for the bull. As the music of battle had no charms to soothe the savage beast, the bull ran away and met with a sad, inglorious termination. Still the fight went on furiously. The greater part of Panama's forces being killed, the rest made themselves scarce. The determining conflict shifted to the city entrance. Here the pirates met with resistance. They suffered severely from the battery which had been erected. Coming to close quarters,

however, their desperate valour was too much for the Panamanians. They inflicted great slaughter, leaving 600 dead and numbers wounded on the field as they marched into Panama with the pomp of triumph.

Thus after only ten days Morgan conquered, and though the world was electrified when it heard of the fall of Panama and the means by which it was done, it was still further astounded when the sack of the city was told. It will probably never be known at whose feet this crime of destruction should be laid. The chaotic life-conditions of those days, and the disturbing elements of almost daily revolutions, upset all plans to settle such a doubt. All that is known is that Morgan lost no time in laying his schemes and carrying them out relentlessly. He knew the weaknesses of his men, their inclination towards debauchery, and the certainty of violent reaction from the starving life they had been leading. He knew of Spanish treachery. He feared poisoned food and poisoned wine. He saw that if these fears were realised he might after all fail in his object. Issuing strict orders to stop drunkenness, he felt he was guarding against the only danger that confronted him. He called his men together, and placing the city under a kind of martial law, immediately began to exercise the control of a despot and the invincibility of a Red Rover Republican.

Every means of leaving the city was stopped. Ships in the harbour were seized. Large bodies of the pirates ranged round the country to find those who had fled. Woods, mountains, and the jungle were searched. Scores were brought in — men, women, children and slaves. They were examined. They were tortured. If the poor creature could not or would not tell where his treasure was hid, no man escaped the risk of the rack. Anarchy reigned.

Despite Morgan's orders, the pirates succumbed to Panama's temptations. They got drunk. They recognised no orders. Vice held them. When the fit wore away, and Morgan's became again the supreme master mind, the search for riches started afresh. Torture upon torture; old and young, rich and poor, nobody suspected was spared. It was the pirates' sport, their recreation. A special object of contempt, priests and nuns were subjected to all sorts of indignities. No woman was safe. Morgan became as bad as the rest. The story of his treatment of the wife of a leading city merchant stands out prominently, if only as an illustration of her impregnable opposition to his blandishments.

The horrors of those days, when the lurid light of fire illuminated the city, can only be imagined. The meagre houses of the poor, the warehouses of the merchants, the palatial residences of the rich,

provided substance for a bonfire. For days these timbered structures burned. Men tried to stop the ruthless destruction. With that object houses were blown up. Others were pulled down; but all to no purpose. Food, treasures and life all went together. Hundreds of slaves hiding in the cellars were burned to death. The priceless ornaments of the churches went the way of destruction. Amid the smoking ruins the pirates found large quantities of gold, silver and precious stones to add to their booty.

It was now time for Morgan to go. He would have been better pleased had he captured all the gold and plate, altar pieces and paintings which decorated the churches. But much of these riches had been shipped away while his men were drunk. He sent a ship after them, but failed to find them. He contented himself with ravaging the islands of Taboga and Taboguilla. Packing away an enormous spoil, and checking an attempt of numbers of his men to start a big expedition on their own account, he left the ruins of Panama after three weeks' stay. He was accompanied by a long procession of men, women, children and slaves. Only for ransom would he liberate them. If they failed to get the money they would go into slavery in Jamaica. No money meant no mercy. Some paid. The others went on with him to the castle of Chagres. What became of them is left in doubt, for Morgan, quarrelling with

his men over the division of the spoil, left the place secretly and most of the band had to look out for themselves.

The feeling of horror which crept over Europe when the sack of Panama became known could only have one result. Piracy and buccaneering had to stop. When he returned home Morgan, however, was honoured because of the injury he had inflicted on Spain. When the English Government raised Morgan to knighthood, he was set to the work of extirpating those of whose machinations none knew better than he.

Panama was left in its ruins. Nature has covered them up. Its spirit appears in the new city seven miles away from the site of desolation. But, build Panama where they would, the flavour of romance seemed to be interwoven in its very life. It had lavished upon it the best accommodations and embellishments of a modern city. Great sums were spent to make it impregnable against such gentlemen as Morgan—Sir Henry Morgan. Corruption and intrigue, peculation and speculation, and dramatic revolutions of startling suddenness, wormed into its life and made it the centre-spot for all sorts of schemes, either designed for the good of mankind, but more likely for the benefit of a more limited coterie.

Take the case of William Paterson, already men-

tioned in earlier pages. He came from Scotland, where he ministered to the faithful. He had ideas, schemes, visions, and he tried to carry them out. One of his conceptions was to encourage trade with foreign parts. He wished to utilise the resources of the Isthmus and make it the centre of a great eastern trade. There were to be great ports, and all the necessities of a big commercial enterprise.

Paterson was before his time. He found all Europe lagging behind him. The world was against him. But at home in London this man of forty helped, in 1691, to found the Bank of England—a testimony to his financial ability which it would be hard to excel. And his foreign scheme was always bobbing up. The Scottish Parliament helped him by passing an Act to encourage foreign trade, and afterwards another measure giving " The Company of Scotland " power to trade in Africa and the Indies, with a monopoly for over thirty years, exemption from taxation for twenty-one years, in return for an annual presentation to the Scottish Crown of a hogshead of tobacco. Money for the scheme rolling in, the East India Company became alarmed. The English Parliament outlawed Paterson's company in England, and the subscriptions from England had to be sent back. All Scotland came to Paterson's aid, and the money he required was soon found. But a serious hitch occurred. The banker failed.

ears in denouncing their ungodliness. Fever raised its head. One fine morning, when a Spanish squadron appeared off the harbour, and landed troops and invested the colony on both sides, matters were indeed serious. It was worse than that. The end had come. It was a forced surrender.

Only 360 out of the 1,300 who left Scotland lived to tell the tale. Most of them wandered to the English settlements in America. The scheme of Paterson ruined the company. A quarter of a million of money had gone, and Paterson, like his countryman Scott, devoted his remaining days to meeting his responsibilities.