



COUNTRY BACK OF PORTO BELLO

were of 40 pounds weight each and therefore hard to move, so Drake sought the King's Treasure House where he hoped to find more movable wealth. As the door was being broken down he fainted from loss of blood, and as he lay speechless on the sill the Spaniards rallied and attacked the invaders. Though Drake reviving sought to hold his men up to the fight, they had lost their dash, and despite his protestations carried him bodily to the boats. The men were wiser than their leader because it was the chance arrival of some soldiers from Panama that had rallied the populace of the town, and the English, deprived of Drake's leadership, would certainly have been overwhelmed. That leader however grieved sincerely when a Spanish spy told him later that there was 360 tons of silver in the town and many chests of gold in the Treasure House.

With his appetite whetted for plunder Drake retired to plan

a more profitable raid. This was to be nothing less than a land expedition to cut off one of the treasure caravans just outside of old Panama on its way down the Nombre de Dios trail. Had the Indian population been as hostile to the English then as they became in later days this would have been a more perilous task. But at this time the men who lurked in the jungles, or hunted on the broad savannas

had one beast of prey they feared and hated more than the lion or the boa—the Spaniard. Whether Indian or Cimmaroon—as the escaped slaves were called—every man out in that tropic wilderness had some good ground for hating the Spaniards, and so when Drake and his men came, professing themselves enemies of the Spaniards likewise, the country folk made no war upon them but aided them to creep down almost within sight of Panama. Halting here, at a point which must have been well within the



NATIVE WOMEN OF THE SAVANNAS BEARING BURDENS

Canal Zone and which it seems probable was near the spot where the Pedro Miguel locks now rise, they sent a spy into the town who soon brought back information as to the time when the first mule-train would come out.

All seemed easy then. Most of the travel across the isthmus was by night to avoid the heat of the day. Drake disposed his men by the side of the trail—two Indians or Cimmaroons to each armored Englishman. The latter had put their shirts on outside of their breast-plates so that they might be told in the dark by the white cloth—for the ancient chroniclers would have us believe them punctilious about their laundry work. All were to lie silent in the jungle until the train had passed, then closing in behind cut off all

retreat to Panama—when ho! for the fat panniers crammed with gold and precious stones!

The plan was simplicity itself and was defeated by an equally simple mischance. The drinks of the Isthmus which, as we have seen, the Spaniards commended mightily when they drank, were treacherous in their workings upon the human mind—a quality which has not passed away with the buccaneers and cimmaroons, but still persists. One of Drake's jolly cutthroats, being over fortified with native rum for his nocturnal vigil, heard the tinkle of mule bells and rose to his feet. The leading

muleteer turned his animal and fled, crying to the saints to protect him from the sheeted specter in the path. The captain in charge of the caravan was dubious about ghosts, but, there being a number of mules loaded with grain at hand, concluded to send them on to see if there were anything about the ghosts which a proper prayer to the saint of the day would exorcise. So the Englishmen again



CAMINA REALE, OR ROYAL ROAD NEAR PORTO BELLO

heard the tinkling mule bells, waited this time in low breathing silence to let the rich prize pass, then with shouts of triumph dashed from the jungle, cut down or shot the luckless muleteers, and swarmed about the caravan eager to cut the bags and get at the booty—and were rewarded with sundry bushels of grain intended to feed the crowds at Nombre de Dios.

The disaster was irreparable. The true treasure train at the first uproar had fled back to the walls of Panama. Nothing was left to Drake and his men but to plod back empty handed to Cruces,



A LADY OF THE SAVANNA

where they had left their boats. Of course they raided the town before leaving but the season was off and the warehouses barren. Back they went to the coast and relieved their feelings by plundering a few coastwise towns and hurling taunts at the governor of Cartagena. Shortly thereafter they renewed their enterprise and did this time capture the treasure train, getting perhaps \$100,000 worth of plunder, with but little loss. Some French pirates under Captain Tetu, who had joined in the adventure, suffered more severely and their captain, wounded and abandoned in the forest, was put to death by the Spaniards with certain of their favorite methods of torture.

After a time in England Drake returned to the Caribbean with a considerable naval force, harried the coast, burned and sacked some towns, including Nombre de Dios, and extorted heavy ransom from others. He put into the harbor of Porto Bello with the intent of taking it also, but while hesitating before the formidable fortresses of the place was struck down by death. His body, encased in lead, was sunk in the bay near perhaps to the ancient ships which our dredges have brought to light. The English long revered him as a great sailor and commander—which indeed he was, but a pirate withal. His most permanent influence on the history of the Isthmus was his demonstration that Nombre de Dios was incapable of defense, and its consequent disappearance from the map.

Such greatness as had pertained to Nombre de Dios was soon assumed by Porto Bello, which soon grew far beyond the size attained by its predecessor. It became indeed a substantially built town, and its fortresses on the towering heights on either side of the beautiful bay seemed fit to repel any invader—

notwithstanding which the town was repeatedly taken by the English. Even today the ruins of town and forts are impressive, more so than any ruins readily accessible on the continent, though to see them at their best you must be there when the jungle has been newly cut away, else all is lost in a canopy of green. Across the bay from the town, about a mile and a half, stand still the remnants of the "Iron Castle" on a towering bluff, Castle Gloria and Fort Geronimo. These defensive works were built of stone, cut from reefs under the water found all along the coast. Almost as light as pumice stone and soft and easily worked when first cut, this stone hardens on exposure so that it will stop a ball without splitting or chipping. When Admiral Vernon, of the British navy, had captured the town in 1739, he tried to demolish the fort and found trouble enough. "The walls of the lower battery," he recorded, "consisting of 22 guns, were nine foot thick and of a hard stone cemented with such fine



NATIVE CHILDREN, PANAMA PROVINCE



COPIRIGHT, 1911, BY F. E. WRIGHT

A NATIVE VILLAGE

These villages are now scattered throughout the Canal Zone but will disappear as the order expelling natives from the Zone is more thoroughly enforced.

would have quarter, yet he constantly answered: 'By no means; I had rather die as a valiant soldier, than be hanged as a coward'. They endeavored as much as they could to take him prisoner. But he defended himself so obstinately that they were forced to kill him; notwithstanding all the cries and tears of his own wife and daughter, who begged him upon their knees he would demand quarter and save his life. When the pirates had possessed themselves of the castle, which was about night, they enclosed therein all the prisoners they had taken, placing the women and men by themselves, with some guards upon them. All the wounded were put into a certain apartment by itself, to the intent their own complaints might be the cure of their disease; for no other was afforded them."

For fifteen days the buccaneers held high carnival in Porto Bello. Drunk most of the time, weakened with debauchery and riot, with discipline thrown to the winds, and captains and fighting men scattered all over the town in pursuit of women and wine, the outlaws were at the mercy of any determined assailant. Esquemeling said, "If there could



A TRAIL NEAR PORTO BELLO

have been found 50 determined men they could have retaken the city and killed all the pirates. Less than fifty miles away was Panama with a heavy garrison and a thousand or more citizens capable of bearing arms. Its governor must have known that the success of the raid on Porto Bello would but arouse the English lust for a sack of his richer town. But instead of seizing the opportunity to crush them when they were sodden and stupefied by debauchery he sent puerile messages asking to be informed with what manner of weapons they could have overcome such strong defenses. Morgan naturally replied with an insult and a threat to do likewise to Panama within a twelvemonth.

For fifteen days the revel was maintained, every citizen who looked as if he had money being put to the

torture to compel him to confess where he had hidden it. When all had been extorted that seemed possible the buccaneers made ready to depart. But first Morgan demanded 100,000 pieces of eight, in default of which he would burn the city and blow up the castles. The wretched citizens sought aid of the President of Panama who was as un-



A CHOLO MOTHER AND DAUGHTER



A GROUP OF CUEPA TREES

willing to help them with gold as with powder and lead. In some miraculous way they raised it, and Morgan and his men departed, making their way to that town of revelry, Port Royal, of which I have already spoken, at the entrance to Kingston harbor. Perhaps it is fair to contrast with Esquemeling's story of the exploit Morgan's official report—for this worthy had a royal commission for his deeds. The Captain reported that he had left Porto Bello in as good condition as he found it, that its people had been well treated, so much so that "several ladies of great quality and other prisoners who were offered their liberty to go to the President's camp refused, saying they were now prisoners to a person of quality who was more tender of their honors than they doubted to find in the President's camp; and so voluntarily continued with him."

Captain Morgan's own testimony to his kindness

to prisoners and his regard for female honor impresses one as quite as novel and audacious as his brilliant idea of forcing priests and nuns to carry the scaling ladders with which to assault a fortress defended by devout Catholics. Yet except for little incidents of this sort the whole crew—Spanish conquistadores, French filibusters and English buccaneers were very tenacious of the forms of religion and ostentatious piety. The Spaniards were always singing Te Deums, and naming their engines of war after the saints; Captain Daniels, a French filibuster, shot dead a sailor for irreverent behavior during mass; the English ships had divine service every Sunday and profanity and gambling were sometimes prohibited in the enlistment articles. All of which goes to show that people may be very religious and still a pest to humanity—nor is it necessary to turn to the buccaneers for instances of this fact.

CHAPTER IV

SAN LORENZO AND PANAMA



TWO years of the joys of Port Royal emptied the pockets of the buccaneers. The money that passed from hand to hand over the gambling tables went thence into the pockets of the hordes of women from Spain, France and even England who flocked to that den of thieves, and from them into the coffers of merchants who

took it back to Europe. As the money slowly disappeared the men clamored to be led on another raid. So great a reputation had Captain Morgan won that desperadoes from all corners of the world flocked to Jamaica seeking enrollment in his service. He had but to give out

the tidings that he planned a new raid to have as fine an assortment of picturesque cutthroats begging for enlistment as ever appeared outside the pages of a dime novel.

Designating the south side of the island of Tortuga as a rendezvous, he wrote certain gentry whom Esquemeling in a matter of fact way calls "the ancient and expert Pirates there abiding", asking their coöperation. By the 24th of October, 1670, he had gathered together 37 ships fully armed



MOUTH OF THE CHAGRES RIVER

San Lorenzo stands on the brow of the cliff. The watch tower may be seen faintly uplifted

and victualled, with 2000 fighting men besides mariners and boys. The chief ship mounted 22 great guns and six small brass cannon.

With this force Morgan first attacked the island of San Caterina, expecting to capture there some Indian or Spaniard who would guide him to Panama,



MOUTH OF THE CHAGRES FROM THE FORT

The upper picture shows the sea beach on the Pacific Coast littered with drift-wood

for the sack of that city had been determined upon in preference to either Vera Cruz or Cartagena, because it was richer. The people of the island were in no condition to resist the overwhelming force of the English, but the governor begged Morgan to make a sham attack in order that his credit and that of his officers might be maintained at home, and accordingly much powder was ineffectively burned. It sounds like a cheap device but it was employed again at Manila in 1858, the parties to the agreement being the Spanish governor and certain high officers of the United States army and navy.

Having secured his guides, by the easy process of putting on the rack all the Indians captured until one was found willing to lead the raiders through his native land, Morgan determined to move on Panama

ress, therefore, he sent Col. Bradley (or Brodley as he is sometimes called) with four ships and about 400 men, while he himself remained at St. Catherine to conceal from the Spaniards his ultimate design against Panama.

The visitor to Colon should not fail, before crossing to the Pacific side of the Isthmus, to visit the ruins of the Castle of San Lorenzo. The trip is not an easy one, and must usually be arranged for in advance, but the end well repays the exertion. The easiest way, when the weather permits, is to charter a tug or motor boat and make the journey by sea—a trip of two or three hours at most. But the Caribbean is a tempestuous and a treacherous sea. One may wait days for weather permitting the trip to be made in comfort, and even then may find a stormy

by the Chagres River route, probably in order to take with him heavy artillery which could scarcely be dragged through the jungle. The first step toward the navigation of the river was the capture of Fort Lorenzo which stood on a high bluff at its mouth. Against this famous fort-

afternoon succeed to a calm morning. For this reason it is essential that a seaworthy boat be procured and, if not essential, very desirable that the company be not subject to the qualms of seasickness.

To my mind the more interesting way to visit the ruins is to take the railroad out to Gatun, and there at the very base of the roaring spillway, board a power boat and chug down the sluggish Chagres to the river's mouth where stands the ancient fort. The boats obtainable are not of the most modern model and would stand a slender chance in speed contests. But in one, however slow, you are lost to all appearance of civilization five minutes after you cast off from the clay bank. At Gatun, the canal which has been carried through the artificial lake made by damming the Chagres River, turns sharply away from that water course on the way to the new port of Balboa. The six or eight miles of the tropical river which we are to traverse have been untouched by the activities of the canal builders. The sluggish stream flows between walls of dense green jungle, as silent as though behind their barrier

only a mile or two away there were not men by the thousands making great flights of aquatic steps to lift the world's ocean carriers over the hills. Once in awhile through the silent air comes the distant boom of a blast in Culebra, only an infrequent reminder of the presence of civilized man and his explosive activities. Infrequent though it is, however, it has been sufficient to frighten away the more timid inhabitants of the waterside—the alligators, the boas and the monkeys. Only at rare intervals are any of these seen now, though in the earlier days of the American invasion the alligators and monkeys were plentiful. Today the chief signs of animal life are the birds—herons, white and blue, flying from pool to pool or posing artistically on logs or in shallows; great comorant ducks that fly up and down mid-stream, apparently unacquainted with the terrors of the shotgun; kingfishers in bright blue and paroquets in gaudy colors. The river is said to be full of fish, including sharks, for the water is saline clear up to the Gatun locks.

I know of no spot, easy of access, on the Isthmus where an idea of the beauty and the terror of the jungle can be better gained than on the lower Chagres. The stout green barrier comes flush to the

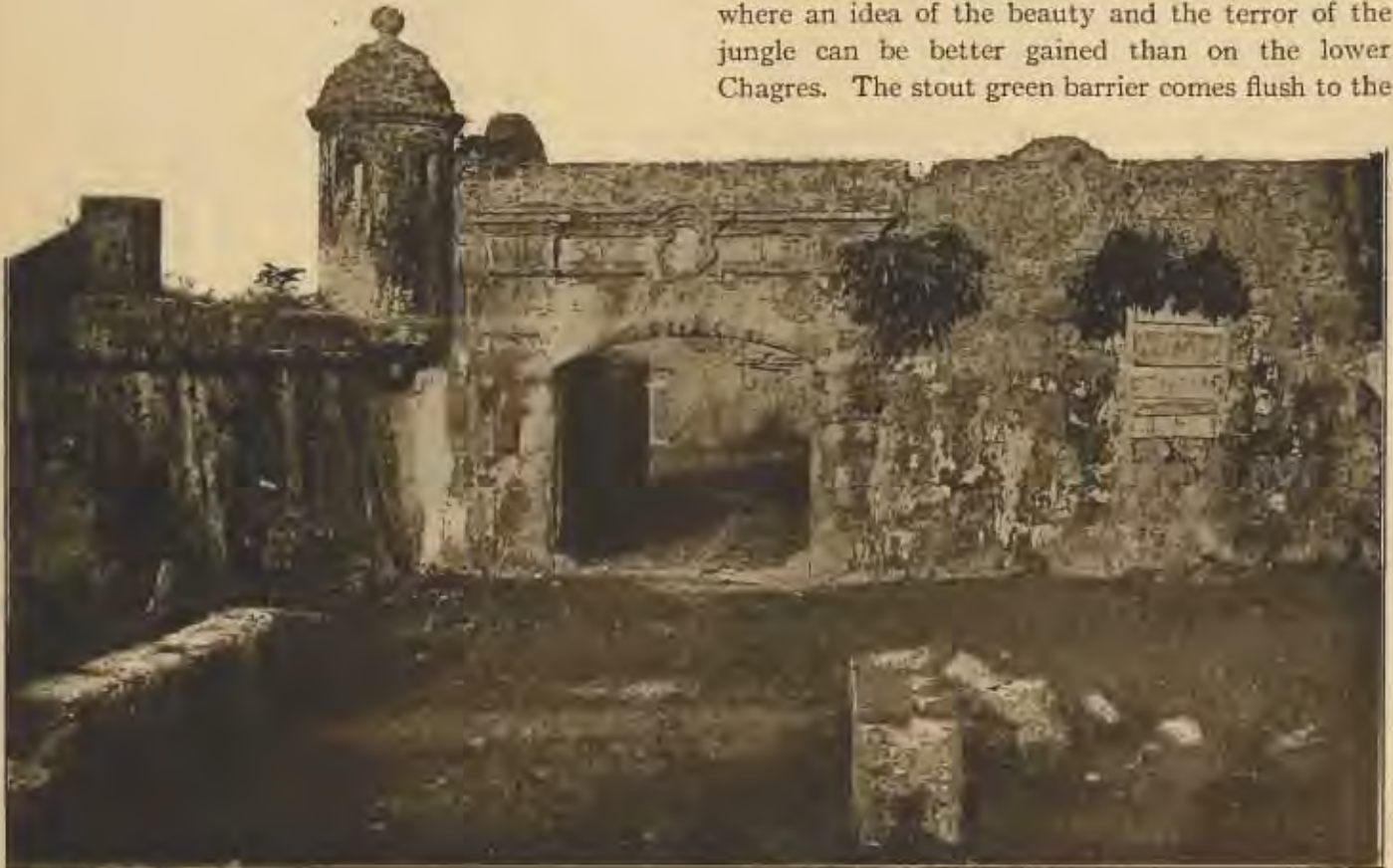


Photo by T. J. Martin

THE SALLY-PORT AT SAN LORENZO

An unusual picture because of the clearing away of the jungle. Ordinarily the walls are hidden

water's edge, the mangroves at places wading out on their stilt-like roots into the stream like a line of deployed skirmishers. That green wall looks light, beautiful, ethereal even, but lay your boat alongside it and essay to land. You will find it yielding indeed, but as impenetrable as a wall of adamant. It will receive you as gently as the liquid amber welcomes the fly, and hold you as inexorably in its beautiful embrace when you are once entrapped. The tender fern, the shrinking sensitive plant, the flowering shrub, the bending sapling, the sturdy and towering tree are all tied together by lithe, serpentine, gnarled and unbreakable vines which seem to spring from the ground and hang from the highest branches as well. There are not enough inches of ground to support the vegetation so it grows from the trees living literally on the air. Every green thing that can bear a thorn seems to have spines and prickles to tear the flesh, and to catch the clothing and hold the prisoner fast. Try it and you will see why no large mammals roam in the jungle; only the snakes and the lizards creeping down below the green tangle can attain large size and move.

And how beautiful it all is! The green alone would be enough, but it is varied by the glowing orange poll of a *lignum vitæ* tree, the bright scarlet of the hibiscus, the purple of some lordly tree whose name the botanist will know but not the wayfarer. Color is in splotches on every side, from the wild flowers

close to the river's brink to great yellow blossoms on the tops of trees so tall that they tower over the forests like light-houses visible for miles around. Orchids in more delicate shades, orchids that would set Fifth Avenue agog, are here to be had for a few

blows of a machete. It is a riot and a revel of color—as gay as the decorations of some ancient arena before the gladiatorial combats began. For life here is a steady battle too, a struggle between man and the jungle and woe to the man who invades the enemy's country alone or strays far from the trail, shadowy and indistinct as that may be.

"A man ought to be able to live quite a while lost in the jungle," said a distinguished magazine writer who was with me on the upper Chagres once. We had been listening to our guide's description of the game, and edible fruits in the forest.

"Live about two days if he couldn't find the trail or the river's bank," was the response of the Man Who Knew. "If he lived longer he'd live crazy. Torn by thorns, often poisoned, bitten by venomous insects, blistered by thirst, with the

chances against his finding any fruit that was safe eating, he would probably die of the pain and of jungle madness before starvation brought a more merciful death. The jungle is a cat that tortures its captives; a python that embraces them in its graceful folds and hugs them to death; a siren whose beauty lured them to perdition. Look out for it."

The native Indian knows it and avoids it by doing



CHURCH AT CHAGRES

Up the steep path in the foreground the buccaneers charged upon Fort Lorenzo

most of his traveling by canoe. On our trip to the river's mouth we passed many in their slender cayucas, some tied by a vine to the bank patiently fishing, others on their way to or from market with craft well loaded with bananas on the way up, but light coming back, holding gay converse with each other across the dark and sullen stream. Here and there through breaks in the foliage we see a native house, or a cluster of huts, not many however, for the jungle is too thick and the land too low here for the Indians who prefer the bluffs and occasional broad savannas of the upper waters. As we approach its outlet the river, about fifty or sixty yards wide thus far, broadens into a considerable estuary, and rounding a point we see before us the blue Pacific breaking in white foam on a bar which effectually closes the river to all save the smallest boats, and which you may be sure the United States



OLD SPANISH MAGAZINE

will never dredge away, to open a ready water-way to the base of the Gatun locks. To the left covering a low point, level as if artificially graded, is a beautiful cocoanut grove, to the right, across a bay perhaps a quarter of a mile wide is a native village of about fifty huts with an iron roofed church in the center—beyond the village rises a steep hill densely covered with verdure, so that it is only by the keenest searching that you can pick out here a stone sentry tower, there the angle of a massive wall—the ruins of the Castle of San Lorenzo.

will never dredge away, to open a ready water-way to the base of the Gatun locks. To the left covering a low point, level as if artificially graded, is a beautiful cocoanut grove, to the right, across a bay perhaps a quarter of a mile wide is a native village of about fifty huts with an iron roofed church in the center—beyond the village rises a steep hill densely covered with verdure, so that it is only by the keenest searching that you can pick out here a stone sentry tower, there the angle of a massive wall—the ruins of the Castle of San Lorenzo.



SPANISH RUINS, PORTO BELLO

“Cloud crested San
Lorenzo guards
The Chagres en-
trance still,
Though o'er each
stone the moss
hath grown
And earth his
moat doth fill.
His bastions feeble
with decay
Steadfastly view
the sea,
And sternly wait
the certain fate
The ages shall de-
cree.”

We land in the co-
coanut grove across



OUR GUIDE AT SAN LORENZO

the river from the ruins we have come to see and the uninitiated among us wonder why. It appears however that the descendants of the natives who so readily surrendered dominion of the land to the Spaniards are made of sterner stuff than their ancestors. Or perhaps it was because we had neither swords or breastplates that they reversed the 16th century practice and extorted tribute of silver from us for ferrying us across the stream in cayucas when our own boats and boat-men would have given us a greater sense of security. Landed in the village we were convoyed with great ceremony to the alcalde's hut where it was demanded that we register our names and places of residence. Perhaps that gave us a vote in the Republic of Panama, but we saw no political evidences about unless a small saloon, in a hut thatched with palmetto leaves and with a mud floor and basket work sides might be taken for a "headquarters". Indeed the saloon and a frame church were about the only signs of civilization about the town if we except a bill posted in the alcalde's

office setting forth the mysterious occult powers of a wizard and soothsayer who, among other services to mankind, recounted a number of rich marriages which had been made by the aid of his philters and spells.

We made our way from the village attended by volunteer guides in the scantiest of clothing, across a little runway at the bottom of a ravine, and so into the path that leads up the height crowned by the castle. It was two hundred and fifty years ago, almost, that the little hollow ran with a crimson fluid, and the bodies of dead Spaniards lay in the rivulet where now the little native boys are cooling their feet. The path is steep, rugged and narrow. Branches arch overhead and as the trail has served as a runway for the downpour of innumerable tropical rains the soil is largely washed away from between the stones, and the climbing is hard.

"Not much fun carrying a steel helmet, a heavy leather jacket and a twenty-pound blunderbuss up this road on a hot day, with bullets and arrows whistling past," remarks a heavy man in the van, and the picture he conjures up of the Spanish assailants on that hot afternoon in 1780 seems very vivid. Although the fort, the remains of which are now standing, is not the one which Morgan destroyed, the site, the natural defenses and the plan of the works are identical. There was more wood in the original fort than in that of which the remains are now discernible—to which fact its capture was due.



THE AUTHOR AT SAN LORENZO



LOOKING UP THE CHAGRES FROM SAN LORENZO

The villagers every now and then cut away the dense underbrush which grows in the ancient fosse and traverses and conceals effectually the general plan of the fortress from the visitor. This cleaning up process unveils to the eye the massive masonry, and the towering battlements as shown by some of the illustrations here printed. But, except to the scientific student of archæology and of fortification, the ruins are more picturesque as they were when I saw them, overgrown with creeping vines and shrubs jutting out from every cornice and crevice, with the walls so masked by the green curtain that when some sharp salient angle boldly juts out before you, you start as you would if rounding the corner of the Flatiron Building you should come upon a cocoanut palm bending in the breeze. Here you come to great vaulted chambers, dungeons lighted

by but one barred casemate where on the muddy ground you see rusty iron fetters weighing forty pounds or more to clamp about a prisoner's ankle or, for that matter, his neck.

The vaulted brick ceiling above is as perfect as the day Spanish builders shaped it and the mortar betwixt the great stones forming the walls is too hard to be picked away with a stout knife. Pushing through the thicket which covers every open space you stumble over a dismantled cannon, or a neat conical pile of rusty cannon balls, carefully prepared for the shock of battle perhaps two hundred years ago and lying in peaceful slumber ever since—a real Rip Van Winkle of a fortress it is, with no likelihood of any rude awakening. In one spot seems to have been a sort of central square. In the very heart of the citadel is a great masonry tank to hold drinking

water for the besieged. It was built before the 19th century had made its entrance upon the procession of the centuries, but the day I saw it the still water that it held reflected the fleecy clouds in the blue sky, and no drop trickled through the joints of the honest and ancient masonry. Back and forth through narrow gates, in and out of vaulted chambers, down dark passages behind twenty-foot walls you wander, with but little idea of the topography of the place until you come to a little watch tower jutting out at one corner of the wall. Here the land falls away sharply a hundred feet or more to the sea and you understand why the buccaneers

they found the garrison reinforced until it nearly equaled the English. So slight was the disparity in numbers that it seems amazing that the English could have sustained the rigors of the assault. It was, of course, impossible to attack the castle on its sea front, and the invaders accordingly left their boats about a league from the castle, making their way painfully through the jungle toward the place of action. Esquemeling describes the fortification which they were to overthrow thus:

"This castle is built upon a high



THE TRUE NATIVE SOCIAL CENTER

were forced to attack from the landward side, though as you were scaling that toilsome slope you wondered that any race of humans ever dared attack it at all.

In their story of the assault on Fort Lorenzo, as indeed in the narrative of all the doings of the buccaneers, the historians have followed the narrative of Esquemeling, a young Dutch apothecary who joined the sea rovers as a sort of assistant surgeon, and wrote a book which has kept his memory alive, whatever may have been the effect of his surgery on his patients. News of the advance of the English had reached the Governor of Panama so that when the assailants reached the battlefield

mountain, at the entry of the river, and surrounded on all sides with strong palisades, or wooden walls; being very well terrepleined, and filled with earth; which renders them as secure as the best walls made of stone or brick. The top of this mountain is in a manner divided into two parts, between which lies a ditch of the depth of thirty feet. The castle itself has but one entry, and that by a drawbridge which passes over the ditch aforementioned. On the land side it has four bastions, that of the sea containing only two more. That part thereof which looks towards the South is totally inaccessible and impossible to be climbed, through the infinite asperity of the mountain.

"The North side is surrounded by the river, which hereabouts runs very broad. At the foot of the said castle, or rather mountain, is seated a strong fort, with eight great guns, which commands and impedes the entry of the river. Not much lower are to be seen two other batteries, whereof each hath six pieces of cannon to defend likewise the mouth of the said river. At one side of the castle are built two great store-houses, in which are deposited all sorts of warlike ammunition and merchandise, which are brought hither from the inner parts of the country. Near these houses is a high pair of stairs, hewed out of the rock, which serves to mount to the top of the castle. On the West side of the said fortress lies a small port, which is not above seven or eight fathoms deep, being very fit for small vessels and of very good anchorage. Besides this, there lies before the castle, at the entry of the river, a great rock, scarce to be perceived above water, unless at low tide."

If the English had hoped to take the garrison by surprise they were speedily undeceived. Hardly had they emerged from the thicket into the open space on which stands now the village of Chagres than they were welcomed with so hot a volley of musketry and artillery from the castle walls that many fell dead at the first fire. To assault they had to cross a ravine, charge up a bare hillside, and pass through a ditch thirty feet deep at the further

bank of which stood the outer walls of the fort made of timber and clay. It was two in the afternoon when the fighting began. The buccaneers charged with their usual daredevil valor, carrying fire balls



Photo. by Dupirey & Son

TROPICAL FOLIAGE ON THE CARIBBEAN

along with their swords and muskets. The Spaniards met them with no less determination, crying out:

"Come on ye English dogs, enemies to God and our King; let your other companions that are behind come too; ye shall not go to Panama this bout."

All the afternoon and into the night the battle raged and the assailants might well have despaired of success except for an event which Esquemeling thus describes:

"One of the Pirates was wounded with an arrow in his back which pierced his body to the other side. This instantly he pulled out with great valor at the side of his breast; then taking a little cotton that he had about him, he wound it about the said arrow, and putting it into his musket, he shot it back into the castle. But the cotton being kindled by the powder occasioned two or three houses that were within the castle, being thatched with palm leaves, to take fire, which the Spaniards perceived not so soon as was necessary. For this fire meeting with a parcel of powder blew it up, and hereby caused great ruin, and no less consternation to the Spaniards, who were not able to account for this accident, not having seen the beginning thereof."

The fire within the fort not only disconcerted its defenders but greatly aided the assailants, for by its flames the Spaniards could be seen working their guns and were picked off by the English sharpshooters. The artillery of the invaders made breaches in the walls and the debris thus occasioned dropped into the ditch making its crossing practicable for a storming party. Though the gallant governor of the castle threw himself into the breach and fought with the greatest desperation, he was forced back and into his citadel. There a musket

shot pierced his brain and the defense which was becoming a defeat became in fact a rout. Spaniards flung themselves from the lofty cliffs upon the rocks below or into the sea rather than trust to the mercy of their conquerors. All but thirty of the garrison of 314 were slain, not one officer escaping, and only a few escaped to steal up the river and through the jungle carrying to Panama the dismal tale of the fall of its chief outpost.

Nor did the English win their triumph easily. Their force was in the neighborhood of 400, of whom more than 100 were killed and 70 wounded. A round shot took off both legs of Colonel Bradley and from the wound he died a few days later. The church of the castle was turned into a hospital, the Spaniards were made to bury their own dead, which was done by dropping them over the cliff into the sea, and word was sent to Morgan that the way was clear for his march upon Panama.

We may for a time turn aside from Buccaneer

Morgan and his ravenous raid to consider the later history of the two strongholds—Porto Bello and San Lorenzo—which lie to the east and west of Colon. It was not the rude shock of war which reduced them to the state of desolation and ruin in which visitors now find them—though of such shocks they certainly experienced enough. Morgan on his return from Panama blew up San Lorenzo and left it a wreck, but the Spaniards rebuilt it stronger than ever and



NATIVE PANAMA WOMAN



ON THE UPPER CHAGRES



A CHARACTER OF COLON

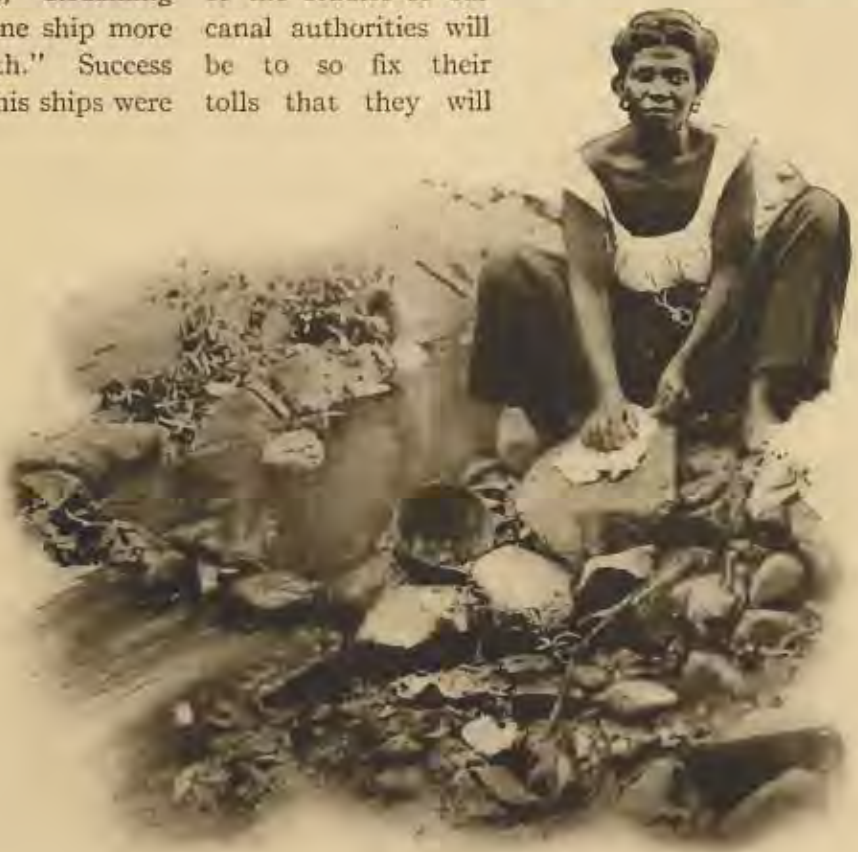
enterprise. Being a gentleman of spirit and a true sport, Admiral Vernon, on approaching the Isthmus, sent one of his ships into other waters, "disdaining to appear before Porto Bello with one ship more than he had engaged to take it with." Success came to him with ease. Only four of his ships were engaged and the only considerable loss was among a landing party which stormed the lower battery of the Iron Fort. The Spaniards showed but little stomach for the fight, and it is worth noting that in the recurrent affrays in the West Indies and Central America the English whipped them with the same monotonous certainty with which the latter had beaten the Indians. Any one desiring to draw broad generalizations as to the comparative courage of nations is welcome to this fact.

After refitting at Jamaica, Admiral Vernon, with a somewhat larger fleet, proceeded against San Lorenzo. Again his triumph was easy, for after a leisurely bombardment to which the Spaniards replied but languidly, the white

flag was displayed and the English entered into possession. The warehouses in Chagres were plundered and the fort blown up. The spluttering war between England and Spain in which these actions occurred became known as "the war of Jenkins' ear." A too zealous guarda costa lopped off the ear of a certain Captain Jenkins who, though unknown to fame prior to that outrage, so made the welkin ring in England, even exhibiting the mummified member from which he had been thus rudely divorced, that Parliament was forced to declare a war in retaliation for his ear or have its own talked off.

The buccaneers and pirates really caused the final abandonment of Porto Bello and San Lorenzo, though not by direct attack. They made trade by the Caribbean and along the Spanish Main so perilous that the people of the Pacific coast found it more profitable in the long run to make the voyage around the Horn or through the Straits of Magellan. The economics of trade are unvarying. It seeks the cheapest before the shortest routes, and one of the studies of our canal authorities will be to so fix their tolls that they will

the economics of trade are unvarying. It seeks the cheapest before the shortest routes, and one of the studies of our canal authorities will be to so fix their tolls that they will



WOMAN OF THE CHAGRES REGION

not, like Morgan, L'Olonais and others, frighten trade away from the Isthmus.

Though the forts were rebuilt to their original strength in 1751, they never regained importance. Porto Bello disappeared when the Royal Road to Panama lost its traffic, and the Chagres only resumed a brief importance in 1844 when the Royal Mail Steampacket Co. made San Lorenzo a port of call. When Colon, however, appeared as a port

and the terminus of the Panama railroad, the fate of all other ports on the Atlantic side of the Isthmus was sealed. Left to brood over the days of their greatness—though indeed they never repelled any serious attack—the Iron Fort and San Lorenzo were abandoned by their Columbian garrisons and given over to the insidious and irresistible conquest of the jungle. Picturesque and dignified, they well repay the visit of the tourist.

“Still standeth San Lorenzo there,
Aye, faithful at his post,
Though scoffing trees in every breeze
Their prime and vigor boast;
His garrison is but the shades
Of soldiers of the past,
But it pleaseth him, alone and grim,
To watch unto the last.”

CHAPTER V

THE SACK OF OLD PANAMA



THE week after the fall of San Lorenzo, Morgan with his full force appeared at the mouth of the Chagres River. Before leaving St. Catherine he had dismantled the forts and burned all the houses for no particular reason except the seemingly instinctive desire of a buccaneer to destroy all that he could not steal.

At once he began his preparations for the ascent of the Chagres to its head of navigation, where, disembarking, he would take the trail for Old Panama. Cruces, which was the point of debarkation, had grown to a considerable town at this time, being the point of transshipment of goods destined for Nombre de Dios, or Porto Bello, from the mules that had brought them thus far, to the boats that would float them down to tide water. The town, an inconsiderable hamlet of thatched huts, remained in 1913, but the rise of Gatun Lake was expected to practically blot it out of existence.

Old Panama, for which Morgan was preparing the grim experience of a battle and a sack, had been founded in 1519 by that Pedrarias of whom we have told as the executioner of Balboa. It had grown rapidly, built up by the trade resulting from the invasion of Peru. At

the time of Morgan's raid Esquemeling writes of the city:

"There belonged to this city (which is also the head of a bishopric) eight monasteries, whereof seven were for men and one for women; two stately churches and one hospital. The churches and monasteries were all richly adorned with altar-pieces and paintings, huge quantity of gold and silver, with other precious things. . . . Besides which ornaments, here were to be seen two thousand houses of magnificent and prodigious building, being all of the greatest part inhabited by merchants of that country, who are vastly rich. For the rest of the inhabitants of lesser quality and tradesmen, this city contained five thousand houses more. Here were also great numbers of stables, which served for the horses and mules, that carry all the plate, belonging as well unto the King of Spain as to private men, towards the coast of the North Sea. The neighboring fields belonging to this city are all cultivated and fertile plantations, and pleasant gardens, which afford delicious prospects unto the inhabitants the whole year long."



NEAR A CONVENT AT OLD PANAMA

Correal fixes the number of private houses as between seven and eight thousand. The pious Thomas Gage whom we have seen haggling for rooms at Porto Bello visited Panama about 1538 and even then credits it with five thousand inhabit-

The country round about Panama was then, and still is, arable and well-fitted for grazing. The rural population was but small, more meager indeed than one would think would have been necessary for raising vegetables for so considerable a town.



CASA REALE OR KING'S HOUSE

Its heavy walls show that it was planned for defense but the Spaniards abandoned it

ants, and at least eight cloisters of nuns and friars. Unfortunately the good evangelist found that "the Spaniards are in this city much given to sinne, looseness and venery," for which reason, or perhaps because he "feared much the heats," he made haste to leave the town and left us none of those graphic descriptions of which his pen was capable.

In the back country were great numbers of Cimmaroons, or escaped slaves who are described as living in communities, ruled over by a black king. They went naked and were armed with bows and arrows, spears, darts and machetes. They lived on plunder and as when captured were they killed, or, at the best, enslaved anew, they fought with great desperation. Merchandise trains were their chief victims, though they often raided cattle ranches, or cut off individuals in the outskirts of the city. The English supplied them with weapons and could always be sure of their aid against the Spaniards, who had been their masters and whom they hated.

The harbor was wretched, useful only for small vessels which at high tide could come straight to the seawall, being left there by the receding tide, high and dry, so that by quick action they could be unloaded before the waters returned. A very considerable part of the food of the town was fish brought thither by Indians from Taboga and nearby islands.

Such was the town which Morgan raided. Because of the colossal disaster which befell it, a disaster without parallel since the days when the Goths and Vandals swept down over the pleasant plains of Italy, there has been a tendency to magnify the size, wealth and refinement of Panama at

the time of its fall. But studied calmly, with no desire to exaggerate the qualities which made it so rich a prize, Panama may fairly be described as a city of about 30,000 people, with massive churches, convents and official buildings of masonry, with many stately houses of the type esteemed luxurious in the tropics, and peopled largely by pure-blooded Span-

iards of the better type. It was too early a date for the amalgamation of races now so much in evidence on the Isthmus to have proceeded far, and the ancient records show that the Spaniards of substance in the town had mainly come thither from Seville.

Morgan started up the river from San Lorenzo, where he left 500 men to serve as a garrison, on the 18th of January, 1761. His force comprised 1200 men in five boats with artillery and thirty-two canoes. The raiders planned to live on the country and hence took small store of provisions—an error which nearly wrecked the expedition. The first day they covered about eighteen miles. This was by nature made the easiest part of their journey, for this stretch of the Chagres is deep, with but a slow current and much of the way they may have been aided by the incoming tide. If the chronicler who fixed their distance covered at eighteen miles was correct, they must have pitched their camp the first night not very far from where Gatun Dam now rears its mighty bulk across the valley and makes of the Chagres a broad lake. Their troubles however came with their first nightfall. Leaving their boats and scattering about the surrounding country they found that the Spaniards had raked it clean of provisions of every sort. The Indian villages were either smoking ruins or clusters of empty huts, the cattle ranches were bare of cattle, and even the banana and yam patches were stripped. By noon on the second day, according to Esquemeling, "they were compelled to leave their boats and canoes by reason the river was very dry for want of rain, and the many trees that were fallen into it." Henceforth at that point the Chagres River transformed into a lake will be in the neighborhood of forty feet deep the year round. Apparently, however, the abandonment of the boats was only partial, the main body of troops marching through the woods while others waded, pushing the boats over the shallows as is done today. The advance was continued in this fashion, partly by water and partly through the jungle, all with the greatest difficulty, at a snail's pace and on stomachs daily growing emptier. Twice they came upon signs that the Spaniards had prepared an ambushade for them, but becoming faint-hearted had fled. Thereat the buccaneers grumbled mightily. They were better at fighting than at chopping paths through the jungle,



Photo by Curtis & Elliott

THE RUINED TOWER OF SAN AUGUSTINE



WAYSIDE SHRINE ON THE SAVANNA ROAD

and were so hungry that if they had slain a few Spaniards they would quite probably have cooked and eaten them. For six days they struggled with the jungle without finding any food whatsoever, then they discovered a granary stored with maize which they ate exultingly. Leather scraps became a much prized article of food, just as in a very different climate Greely's men in the Arctic circle kept alive on shreds cut from their sealskin boots. Of leather as an article of diet Esquemeling writes:

"Here again he was happy, that had reserved since noon any small piece of leather whereof to make his supper, drinking after it a good draught of water for his greatest comfort. Some persons, who

never were out of their mothers' kitchens, may ask how these pirates could eat, swallow and digest those pieces of leather, so hard and dry. To whom I only answer: That could they once experiment what hunger, or rather famine, is, they would certainly find the manner, by their own necessity, as the pirates did. For these first took the leather and sliced it in pieces. Then did they beat it between two stones, and rub it, often dipping it in the water of the river to render it by these means supple and tender. Lastly they scraped off the hair, and roasted or broiled it upon the fire. And, being thus cooked, they cut it into small morsels, and eat it, helping it down with frequent gulps of water, which by good fortune they had near at hand."

Once only did they meet with any resistance; that was near Cruces where several hundred Indians ambushed them in the jungle, and while avoiding any direct combat, killed several with arrows. As the Indians fled they cried out in Spanish, "Ho, ye dogs! Go to the savanna; to the savanna," from which, as from like warnings uttered by stragglers, the invaders concluded that battle was to be given them on the broad plain before the city.

It had taken six days for the expedition to reach Cruces—a trip which could readily be made today by train to Camboa and thence by cayuca in five or six hours. Arrived there they prepared for the last stage of the journey, for there they finally left their boats and took up the Royal Road. Cruces is eight miles from Panama, and at the moment of Morgan's descent upon it, was at the period of its greatest prosperity. Of its rise to greatness and its final disappearance under the rising waters of Gatun Lake I shall have more to say in the chapter concerning the Chagres River. The English found the frame houses already ablaze, and the larders swept clean, the Spaniards having followed their invariable custom of leaving no food for the invaders. Some wretched dogs and cats which hung about the deserted dwellings were killed and eaten, and in the storehouses a number of jars of wine were found, upon drinking which the buccaneers became deathly sick. They claimed it was poisoned, but more probably their stomachs, which had been struggling to digest leather scraps, were in no condition for the strong wines of the tropics.

From this point onward the invaders saw many of