

(JUST PUBLISHED.)

THE
AWFUL DOOM OF THE TRAITOR;
X OR THE
TERRIBLE FATE

OF THE
DELUDED AND GUILTY:

(BEING) A (FULL) DISCLOSURE OF THE CHARACTER (AND SELFISH
DESIGNS) OF GENERAL LOPEZ, WHO DECOYED A MULTI-
TUDE OF OUR BEST AND BRAVEST CITIZENS
TO AN AWFUL AND UNTIMELY
GRAVE IN THE ISLAND
OF CUBA.

BY WILLIAM BLAND.



CINCINNATI:

PUBLISHED BY H. M. RULISON, NO. 34 EAST THIRD STREET.

1852.



An officer commanded the brave and gallant Oritenden to kneel — "Never," replied he,
"I kneel only to my God."

Engraved, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1851, by

H. M. RULISON,

In the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the District of Columbia.

2645

NARRATIVE

OF THE

ADVENTURES OF WILLIAM BLAND,

ON THE ISLAND OF CUBA.

I LEFT the city of Pensacola, West Florida, upon the 9th day of June, 1851, for the purpose of gaining fame, distinction, and personal popularity, as well as to increase my small amount of this world's gear; for my father had left me but his tools with which he had worked as a carpenter, and a small frame house upon leased ground. My mother died while I was quite young, and my education and care had fallen upon my father, who, dying, left me alone in the world without a single relative. My education and fiery nature of soul made me yearn for a more ambitious course of life than had been my father's lot. I had friends among persons of my own sphere in society, but I felt that they were not the companions of my spirit. Nature had given me a handsome face, and a tall, active person, and I resolved to unite the efforts of my mind and body to distinguish myself beyond the sphere in which fortune had chanced to place me; and paramount to this came a consideration which determined me to make some hazardous effort to be worthy of a being upon whom I had set my soul; this was Inez Ramos, the most exquisite creature in West Florida. She was the daughter of one of the richest planters on the Escam-
ble river; he was a descendant of the old Spanish stock, who originally settled that delightful country. She was a true Castilian beauty, angelic in countenance and of a most graceful and elegant figure. I had first seen her in the streets of Pensacola, and from the moment my eyes rested upon hers, I resolved to earn

a reputation, and be worthy of the glorious creature who filled my constant thought. I met her daily, and although I dared not speak to her, I felt that as we glanced one upon the other that there was a deep mysterious sympathy of soul between us; and this thought grew upon me, as day by day new and unmistakable evidences became visible that my passion was in some sort reciprocated.— With this belief hope became resolve, and at this time I heard that the patriots of Cuba were upon the eve of making an effort for liberty. The very word fired my soul, and collecting all the means which I had in the world, I made my way to New Orleans, where Narciso Lopez had publicly made it known that it was his intention, relying on the assistance and good-will of such troops as could be raised in this country and the state of insurrection which existed among the Creoles of Cuba, to make a descent upon that island, and establish the cause of freedom among a people who were suffering under tyranny, and only waited for aid to revolt and declare themselves a free and independent community. Mr. Segue of the New Orleans Delta, who had through his paper represented the island in a state of revolt, furnished some seventy-five thousand dollars to purchase the steamship Pampero, and sundry cannon, arms, and cartridges had been bought at a sale of United States government remnants. Lopez assured the party, which joined soon after my arrival in New Orleans, that there was a feeling of disaffection throughout the Vuelta Abajo region, which was the principal tobacco part of the island, and that the people were ripe for revolution, and that the discontented spirits were white agriculturists and mechanics, the very classes who in all ages have been the successful men in heading attempts to overthrow tyranny. We were likewise assured by Lopez that the country people would crowd down to the sea-shore to welcome us, and furnish us with provisions and water, and whatever else they could for our aid and comfort.

It was intended to make a revolt in the Vuelta Abajo, in order to divert the attention of the governor of the island from the landing of Lopez and his army, which consisted of six companies of infantry, three of artillery, one of Cuban patriots, one of Hungarians, and one of Germans, under the command of Narciso Lopez.

as general-in-chief, and John Pragay, as second in command, and Wm. L. Crittenden, as chief officer in the regiment of artillery.

Thus we embarked in the steamer Pampero, with a force which amounted to six hundred men, exclusive of several who joined us in the Mississippi river; but the captain having announced that he could not carry us all, a portion returned, leaving on board four hundred and eighty men. We touched at Key West for stores, where we were informed that a revolt had taken place in the *Vuelta Abajo*. Lopez accordingly determined to land in that district of the island; owing, however, to the appearance of certain Spanish vessels, we were compelled to disembark on the shore of Morillo, at eleven o'clock at night, on the eleventh instant, notwithstanding some slight opposition was manifested by those engaged in guarding certain stores at that point. However, these were soon deserted and forsaken, and Lopez, having left Colonel Crittenden, with about two hundred men, in charge of the unnecessary arms and provisions, advanced with the remainder of the expedition to Las Pozas. With this portion of the army I went myself. The few countrymen fled as we came up, and on arriving at Las Pozas we found the place abandoned;—nor would the inhabitants be persuaded to return. The next day we were attacked by the Spanish troops, but although they fought manfully they were repulsed with considerable loss, while our own gain was made very dear by the death of Colonel Pragay, a gallant officer, who had been second in command of the expedition, as well as several other officers and some fifty men killed and wounded.

Finding that we did not meet with the expected sympathy of the people which Lopez had taught us to anticipate, and that we were attacked by the very persons whose co-operation we had relied upon, it was determined upon to take to the mountains—the branches of the Sierra Camirioca, which approach the coast in this region. With this intention we gave up possession of Las Pozas, and started on for Pinar del Rio, but by the treachery of the guide we were conducted to the coffee estate of Frias, where we again encountered the Spanish troops. This resulted in the loss of four or five of our men, which reduced our force at Frias to two hundred and twenty men—twelve or fourteen being

wounded. With these we passed to Brujo, where we spent the night, and the next morning went to Martilorena, where we were surprised, as we were breakfasting, by the Spanish troops, and our whole party entirely dispersed. Over one hundred of us secreted ourselves in the forest, one-third without arms, where we remained for four days with no food but the horse of Lopez, together with some corn and wild plantains.

I, with a party of some eight or ten, finding the forces of Lopez wholly routed, after we had killed, as I said before, the horse of Lopez, and divided it among one hundred and twenty-five wretched men, who had not eaten for forty-eight hours, encamped on one of the highest mountains in the island of Cuba, exposed to all the violence of terrific northern storms. We therefore left the party and wandered through the mountains, unable to extricate ourselves, subsisting on such weeds and roots as we could find. It is impossible for me to describe the sufferings of those nights—heaven forbid I should ever pass such again. The rain fell in torrents, while ever and anon a terrible crash would announce that some massive tree had fallen, either before the force of the wind or the still mightier lightning. Rocky ravines, which had been dry or at best trickling rivulets, rose and swelled until they became roaring rivers, which rushed with terrible rapidity down through the gorges of the mountains, and lost their foaming torrents in the black forests which clothed the steep mountain sides. Here we were without shelter, fire or food, pelted by the pitiless tempest, and our stomachs gnawing with ravenous hunger. We remained in the mountains until the morning of Tuesday the 28th, when having had but one meal in six days, and after eating loathsome snails and other insects, we felt that we could bear it no longer. We, therefore, determined to go into the plains, considering that it would be better to be killed outright than to die a lingering death, which we would certainly do in the mountains. We accordingly advanced to a house where we were treated with a great deal of kindness, and received a most excellent breakfast. The master of the hacienda was absent when we arrived. The mistress of the house, her daughter, and a sly-looking priest were the only white persons that we saw. The daughter was a noble and

beautiful woman. I saw the name "Ramos" upon several pieces of plate as we breakfasted, and seeing the kindness of the young lady toward us, I ventured to ask her, in Spanish, if she had relatives in Florida. She answered in very good English that she had, and that she had visited the United States, and that, in fact, she had been partly educated at the convent of sisters at Nazareth, Kentucky. I mentioned to her the name of Inez Ramos, and in an instant her whole face brightened and glowed with a ruddy gleam of satisfaction, as I unfolded to her, apart from the company, my intimate acquaintance with Inez; but how was my own surprise heightened when she assured me that Inez was her cousin and dearest friend. Here was a link which in a moment united us; I saw in Isabella Ramos an angel come to rescue me, and under the light of her dark eyes hope rose in my heart, and I fondly dreamed, in the sunshine of the hour, to once again set foot upon my beloved home of Florida, and behold the being for whom I had thus periled everything; but darkly was that golden dream clouded, when my companions, refreshed, invigorated, and prepared with a guide and provisions to make their way to the south shore and escape, beheld, just as we were upon the point of leaving, the cunning, villanous priest, with a large body of armed countrymen, who surrounded us in the twinkling of an eye, and immediately bound us securely, after stripping us of half our clothes and rifling our pockets of whatever they contained. Before my hands were bound, Inez stepped up behind me and slipped into one of them a strip of paper, with these words on it in English, written with a pencil: "Young friend, you may rely upon Isabella." As she did this, she gave me a look from her beautiful eyes of such sympathetic meaning as left no doubt in my mind but that I might yet hope. That day we reached San Cristobal, under the impression that we were to be shot, but upon our arrival there we were informed that a proclamation had been issued, ten hours before our arrest, sparing the lives of all "fillibusteros" who had been made prisoners or gave themselves up in four days, except the traitor Lopez.

With forty other prisoners we left San Cristobal for Havana, and on the same night reached Guayamas, the terminus of a rail-

road from Havana. Here an order came from Concha, the captain-general, to proceed to Mariel and embark, he being fearful that we would be torn to pieces by the rabble. We left Mariel in the steamer Almendares, and reached Havana, where we were confined in the city prison, in the rear of the fort called the Punta. We, prisoners, first had our hair cut close to our heads, next passed into the hands of another barber, who deprived us of our whiskers, another provided us with prison uniform, and the whole terminated by a huge negro fastening us together in pairs with a chain similar to a log-chain in size and weight, and firmly secured to the ankle. Shortly after our confinement the city was astir and a mingled mass of human beings crowded on through the main streets toward the gates of the city at the Paseo. This tide of people was made up of negroes, creoles, and Spaniards. They went forth to see fifty-two Americans butchered in cold blood.—The condemned, without a trial, marched forth to die with a firm unflinching step, casting a scornful eye upon the cowardly mob of Spanish, negroes, and officials. They were bade to kneel and receive the fire of the troops. Not one obeyed. An officer stepped up to the brave and gallant Crittenden and commanded him by the authority and order of the governor to kneel. How noble was his reply: "Never! I kneel only to my God!" In a moment more the massacre was complete, and the hot blood of the brave and valiant hearts soaked the earth of that misgoverned island.

I cannot dwell upon the dreadful shock given to our feelings as these heroic men were led forth, ten at a time, and fell before the murderous fire of the Spanish officials. Their hirelings heaved the yet warm bodies into carts and hurried them off from our too much oppressed vision. Oh! this cold-blooded assassination gave a bloody hue to the bright sun which lighted the grim batteries and white walled houses of Havana.

On the night of the 24th of August, Lopez disappeared from the mass of our band with a few Cubans, and endeavored to make his way to the south. In his route he came across a young mountaineer, and offered him a draft for two thousand dollars if he would guide him to the plantation of Diego de Tapia; but Lopez, doubting the fidelity of the person afterward, disappeared



There sat the body which a moment before was alive, but now a ghastly and inanimate corpse.—P. 14.

in the woods, and was captured in the Pinos del Rangel, by Jose Antonio Castaneda, with a force of peasantry, and afterward surrendered to Captain Luis Jarequemada, upon the 29th, just seventeen days after his landing. Lopez was taken to the city of Havana and imprisoned, and upon the day of his execution was brought forth at seven o'clock in the morning in the presence of an immense crowd, in front of the Punta and the vast prison opposite the Moro wherein we were confined, and from a high window in one corner of my cell I witnessed him when he suffered death by the *garrote*; his effigy having been beaten about the streets for two days previous by the inhabitants and afterward burnt. Eight or ten thousand troops were assembled, and as many citizens, when Lopez came forth with a firm and steady step, but a pallid face, and ascended the platform. His person was enveloped in a white shroud—the executioner then removed the shroud—and there stood the general, in his full military uniform, before the assembled multitude; his appearance was calm, dignified, and heroic, not a muscle quivered. He looked upon the preparation for death unmoved; his countenance remained unchanged, and his whole bearing was firm and manly. The executioner now removed his embroidered coat, his sash, cravat, and all the insignia of his military rank, as a token of his disgrace. Lopez, with his hands tightly bound together in front, now stepped forward, and in a clear strong voice slowly spoke to those around, charging upon certain persons the treachery of having compromised him, and asserting that his death would not change the destiny of Cuba. Having spoken for some time, he was interrupted by the executioner, who was standing a little behind him, and who said in a gruff and insulting tone, “Come, be quick, be quick!” Lopez turned his head partly around, fixed his eyes upon the man, and said sternly, gritting his teeth, “Wait, sir!” He then continued, “Adieu, my beloved Cuba! adieu, my brethren!” With this the general stepped back, seated himself on the stool—a priest with the crucifix and burning taper stood on one side of him, and the executioner upon the other—the collar of the *garrote*, which was formed of two steel plates, was then clasped around the prisoner’s neck, and the priest now placed the crucifix between the general’s

hands, and just as he was in the act of inclining his head to kiss it, the executioner sprung the fatal screw, and at that twist the joint of the neck cracked, and the head of the unfortunate man, at the same instant dropped forward, and touching the crucifix he never moved again! There sat the body, which a moment before was alive, but now a ghastly and inanimate corpse!

The execution was conducted in the most orderly manner, and in perfect silence. No shouting or any other exhibition of applause was manifest. Immediately after the execution, Lopez's body was taken down and privately buried.

Thus perished, on the first day of September, 1851, Narciso Lopez, a man that blinded over five hundred men by tales of falsehood, forgery, and deceit, and led them from personal and mercenary motives into one of the most lawless, rash, and fool-hardy expeditions of any age, and by cloaking his damnable design of selfishness and imposing upon the noble souls of chivalrous men, led them, under the nominal pretext of advancing the standard of patriotism and liberty into an unknown snare, which ended in imprisonment, suffering and death! Thus did he deceive us all in our expectations to see the friendly aid of the Creoles of the island, for whose relief and freedom we were ready to risk our lives; but, alas! we found the most bitter enemies where we had been taught to expect the warmest friends, and the promised hospitality was not manifested by a single Cuban, after our landing; on the contrary, the country people were our implacable foes, and not only was no sign of friendship shown by them, but they were the persons who hunted down Lopez himself from his fastnesses, and after binding him hand and foot brought him to Havana a prisoner, and made him pay the penalty of his falsehood upon that murderous machine, the garrote.

We had all been deceived, and by a man whom had we known him, could never have so far imposed upon our credulity and our ardent disposition to give the blessings of liberty to our fellow creatures, the Cubans. The most of our party were well-meaning young men, whose sympathy being aroused, they were ready to render whatever aid they might to an oppressed and struggling people. For the fate of these noble and disinterested men my

heart bleeds—but for the infamous trickster, who led us into peril which cost not only his own miserable life, but the death or capture of upward of four hundred Americans, among whom were some of our bravest and most promising but misguided young men, whose blood now fattens the soil of the Queen of the Islands, while many a hearth has been made desolate, many a heart wrung, and many a family covered with the weeds of mourning in the homes which they have left.

This ambitious traitor's whole history has been wholly against all the principles of liberty or the rights of human nature. He was born in Venezuela, South America, in 1799; his father was once a wealthy land proprietor, and his mother, who is still living, is a woman of rare elevation of mind and character. In the struggles for South American independence, his father was stripped of nearly all his property, and reduced to the necessity of entering into commercial business at Carracas; and as an auxiliary to his main establishment, he established a branch at Valencia, in the interior, under the charge of young Lopez. Here the father, Gen. Lopez, headed the patriot forces of citizens and soldiers, in 1814, and defended the town against the attacks of the Spanish power. After a manly resistance of three weeks the place was obliged to yield and be given up to pillage and massacre. General Lopez was taken prisoner by the Spaniards and executed the next day—and forthwith young Lopez deserted the patriot cause, joined the Spaniards, his father's murderers, almost immediately after the murder, and fought on the side of the royalists throughout the rest of the war, and under that party held the post of Colonel of a regiment of cavalry, and accepted a cross of San Fernando. At the end of the war, he went to Spain, and fought on the side of royalty in that country, and was sent by the Spanish government to Cuba with an appointment to a civil office. Here he married a most amiable and estimable lady of fortune, and by the most cruel course of treatment broke her heart, and spent all her fortune at the cock-pit and gaming-table; and, at last, finding himself out of money and out of power, he conceived the desperate project of enriching himself by getting up a rebellion and revolution in Cuba; and all his movements in the United States, during the last

few years of his infamous career, were directed to the accomplishment of that scheme of self-interest and self-aggrandisement. His first effort was to congregate a band of fillibusters, upon Round Island last year, who were dispersed by order of General Taylor. The next was the inglorious, though not remarkably disastrous, expedition against Cardenas, which led many to doubt the skill if not the courage of Lopez. The last and most tragic of all, was our own Pampero expedition, which resulted so fatally to four hundred brave Americans, and his own end upon the scaffold of the garrote as a felon and a traitor. His last enterprise was at best but poorly planned, and badly, if not ingloriously, executed. We were the sufferers, who received neither countenance nor support from those we went to redeem—a people who do not wish and are unfit to be free.

But I now come to the key of the whole war—the *avarice* of Lopez. Cuban bonds were worth ten to twenty cents on a dollar, when our expedition left; naturally they would increase as the prospect of liberating Cuba became more certain. Lopez with his agents pretended that if the expedition liberated Cuba from Spanish tyranny, that it would place a debt of fifty to a hundred millions upon the island, and at the expiration of the war, and after Cuba should be free, then it was to have been annexed to the United States, and as a matter of course the payment of these Cuban bonds was to be assumed by the United States, and at least fifty per cent. of this fifty or a hundred millions of dollars would have been in the pockets of those would-be philanthropists, who, active as they wished to be thought in the holy cause of liberty, had personal interest alone at heart. Little did they care for the mothers, wives, and sisters of the gallant men who formed this ill-fated expedition, who have been rendered miserable forever. They do not feel the chains, the anguish, borne by those noble fellows doomed to spend years of their lives in Spanish prisons.

I now turn to my own condition. After the massacre of Crittenden and the execution of Lopez, I still remained in prison, opposite the Moro. It was a terrible place, and while there I saw a man in one of the wards who told me that he had been confined

in that horrid place for fifteen years. His hair was white as drifted snow, and his countenance the saddest that my eyes ever gazed upon. He spoke to me, and gave a short account of one of the most awful histories that ever fell from mortal lips. Said he, "I am an old man now, yet by fifteen years my soul is younger than my body! Fifteen years I existed (for I did not live—it was not life) in the self-same dungeon, ten feet square! During six years I had a companion—nine years I was alone. I never could rightly distinguish the face of him who shared my captivity in the eternal twilight of our cell. The first year we talked incessantly together; we related our past lives, our joys forever gone, over and over again. The next year we communicated our ideas to each other on all subjects. The third year we had no ideas to communicate—we were beginning to lose the power of reflection. The fourth, at intervals of a month or so, we would open our lips to ask each other if it were indeed possible that the world went on as gay and bustling as when we formed a portion of mankind. The fifth year, we were silent. The sixth, he was taken away—I never knew where—to execution or to liberty—but I was glad he was gone—even solitude was better than the dim vision of that pale, vacant face. After that I was alone. Only one event broke in upon my nine years' vacancy: One day (it must have been a year or two after my companion left me), the dungeon door was opened, and a voice, I knew not whence, uttered these words: 'By order of imperial majesty, I intimate to you that your wife died a year ago!' then the door was shut. I heard no more—they had but flung this great agony in upon me, and left me alone with it again. Now, you would ask, what was my offense? This only: the archbishop was passing the street, and I refused to bow to him—whereupon one of his menials struck me upon the head, with the back of his sword, split my ear in two, and felled me to the earth. I rose, and snatching a sword from one of the party in the procession, I dealt a stroke that severed flesh and bone and fairly cut off the hand that had stricken me down. For this, and this only, have I suffered these horrors!"

When I had heard this account, my soul was dreadfully shaken. Now, thought I, if they could be so heartless as to confine this

2

man here for fifteen years for such an offense, when shall I, as an invader and rebel, escape from this black den of misery and wretchedness. Day by day my hope darkened; they would not allow me the privilege of writing to my friends in the United States, and our consul at Havana, from some heedlessness or heartlessness, refused to give any attention to our prayers. The gibbet or the galleys seemed to be the only probable change from our loathsome confinement.

At length it was rumored through the prison that we were all to start, in a few days, for Spain. How terrible my condition was at this news, I cannot express; my hopes were crushed, and the thought of being separated forever from home and friends was almost maddening. How sincerely did I curse the hour wherein I left my home upon this wild, ill-digested expedition. I could not sleep; the lone hours of the night were doubly dark from the gloomy prospect of captivity in the Spanish galleys. I wrote to the consul, but no answer came—and I was hopeless. At this desperate hour, when I was daily expecting that we would be shipped for Spain, I was informed that a young Spanish gentleman wished to see me. Being at large in the prison, I went to a room where I found a very handsome young man, with long mustachios; he motioned me to a seat beside him, and the jailer left us alone. The young man smiled, and whispered to me, "You may remember my promise." Upon the instant the lips parted, displaying the exquisitely-formed teeth, and the rich English tone struck my ear, I recognized Isabella Ramos. My heart leaped to my mouth, and I was almost wild with joy; but she bade me suppress my emotion, and proceeded to inform me that the American prisoners would be sent to Spain, but to have hope, and she would make an effort for my escape; and having communicated the stratagem whereby she designed to effect my release, she departed.

Upon the next day, a veiled lady called to see me, in the cell wherein I usually slept—I at once recognized Isabella,—and after some hurried conversation, she displayed beneath her mantle, which she doffed, the suit of a Spanish officer, a full uniform and cap—and the dress and shawl which she herself had worn outside at that time, she gave me, as well as her bonnet and veil, and

informed me of the password. By this time it was after sunset, and the shadows of evening were falling fast, so that a face could not fairly be distinguished. With a beating heart I advanced, after I left my cell, to the door, where the turnkey was idly smoking his cigar. I gave him the password rapidly, and in an under tone, so as not to betray my foreign accent. I passed out, and by the direction of Isabella, I went to a house at some distance and took my seat upon the stone steps. In a few moments, I beheld an officer, in full uniform, approach the guard at the prison door, and the doorkeeper touched his hat to him as he walked out with a bold military bearing. Not a moment was necessary for me to decide that it was Isabella, and in a few moments she joined me, and beckoned me to follow her. We walked rapidly to another quarter of the city, where a negro coachman, with an elegant carriage, was waiting. In a brief period we were without the bounds of the city, and the night had set in. A terrific storm suddenly rose; but we stopped not; the driver laid whip to the horses, and we dashed on at a tremendous rate. Sometimes we found the creek grown to torrents from the sudden, heavy, showering rain, which poured upon the earth—and we were in constant peril from the apparently reckless manner in which the negro who drove (being urged on by his mistress), dashed into gulleys and ravines, and lashed his almost flying steeds through the darkness of the night, which was illuminated every instant by the wild, magnificent gleams of lightning. At length we reached a hacienda in the country, and the moon burst out from the mountain-like clouds in all her white glory; and we alighted in a beautiful grove of leafy trees, and followed a shell-paved alley to the large, old mansion. Here I remained secreted for several days in an upper room of the house, seeing no one but the servant who attended upon me, and brought my meals, and Isabella, who devoted nearly all her leisure to me, and cheered me with the prospect of my escape from the island. She told me that she had written immediately after she had first seen me, to Inez, in Pensacola, and expected an answer in a short time.

Notwithstanding I was confined, my condition was a most wonderful contrast from that of a horrible, dark prison, to a large

apartment overlooking a lovely landscape, where the blue mountains were glowing in the golden sunshine, and the rich groves of green hard by were filled with merry mocking-birds, whose songs were not sweeter than the beautiful black-eyed Spanish maiden's, who daily poured forth her songs upon the guitar, and enlivened with her brilliant conversation my heart, which had lately been almost in the most hopeless state of despair. Her father, I learned, was at another of his estates, near Cano, and there was no person on the plantation, saving Father Anselmo, the priest whom I had seen when I first met her, and the negro slaves of her father.

I had been several days in this room, when, one night about midnight, I heard a shriek, a loud and shrill shriek, and then low, muffled, or stifled cries for help. I listened, and again I heard them, though less distinctly than before. At last, I felt assured I heard my name called. I sprang from my bed, and dressed myself as quick as possible, and hurried down stairs. I heard the noise of a struggle in Isabella's room, and I hastened toward it as fast as I could through the darkness. By the very faint light of the moon through the shutters, I could distinguish one I took to be Isabella in her bed, struggling in the arms of a man, who, by the dim light, I could not recognize, but rushed upon him at once. I grasped the figure firmly, when, instantly, a keen dirk pierced my arm through and through, and the pain compelling me to relax my hold, the figure fled, and in the gloom of the apartment I could not discover it. But a few moments had elapsed, when noises were heard all through the house, and in came rushing the priest, Anselmo, followed by ten or twelve powerful negro men. "Here," cried he, "is a scoundrel in your young mistress' bedchamber—seize upon him, and bind him hand and foot!" Isabella sat upright in her bed, in her night clothes, her black eyes wild with affright—and the priest stood close at hand, and commanded the negroes to seize me.

"It was he, Isabella," cried I, in English, "here is a piece of his gown I snatched from him; he has stabbed me; behold my arm!" but before I could exhibit my bleeding arm fairly to her, she fainted, and the iron-handed negroes bound my arms behind

my back, and the priest gave orders to bear me instantly to the sugar-house. Here I was confined for two days, without water or food. Upon the night of the second day, I was taken out by the priest and negroes, and placed on a mule, with my hands tied behind me, and conveyed through the woods and chapparal thickets toward Mariel, and imprisoned in a house smaller but similar to the sugar-house wherein they had before confined me. I was almost dead when we arrived, from famine, thirst, and the blows which a giant negro had rained upon my back, as from faintness I from time to time reeled in my saddle as I rode.

Shortly after I was shut up in this house, the negroes commenced piling dried sugar-canes and other combustibles around the outside of it, when the horrible thought came over me that they were about to burn me alive! I shrieked and screamed, but the negroes laughed long and wildly at my cries; and through a crack in the wall I could see them, as the day was about breaking, dancing with a fiendish delight around the building—some of them carrying armsfull of the dried canes, and others holding blazing dry-wood torches. After a time I saw the devilish priest, moving among the ogre-like blacks. By the red glare of the torches and the pale streaks of dawn, I could discern his infuriate face. At length he gave the command, and the negroes, like demons, came rushing with their crimson torches, and touched fire to the stalks of cane; they burst into a flame instantly, and I shrieked in the wildest and most soul-startled agony. The smoke, after a while, came creeping up through the crevices of the floor all around the house, as it was encircled by fire—and from the various holes an army of huge rats came rushing into the room; some, singed and mad with pain, flew at me. I ran around the apartment to attempt to escape from them, but they assailed me in every quarter, jumping at me, and attempting to crawl up my legs, and biting me wherever they could lay hold on me. I had no weapon, but struck them off with my hands and feet; but they would not desist, they were furiously mad, and in such innumerable quantities that I could not keep them off. In addition to which, the smoke now became so stifling that I could not breathe except when I put my head near the floor, when the rats flew at

my face. I attempted to rush against the wall and kill myself, but I was stunned only, and was roused from the shock by a severe bite from a rat. But by this time the atmosphere became so heated that it was impossible to respire, and I again swooned from suffocation. As I fainted, I could hear shouts without, and saw the red flames burst through the frame of the building. My next sensation was that I was in the open air; I opened my eyes, and felt the back of my neck scorched, and my hair singed, and around me heard the confusion of arms. In a moment I recognized not only Isabella, but my own Inez, at my side; they had arrived with a party just in time to rescue me from the flames, and disperse the priest Anselmo's party of negroes, when the burning building fell in with a crash, and by the ruddy glare we could see that the enemy were gone.

Isabella briefly informed me that Inez had arrived at her father's hacienda upon the same day that the priest had imprisoned me; and that, hearing of Anselmo's diabolical scheme from a faithful old family servant, they had set about to circumvent his design, and that they had gone to Mariel, where they informed some half dozen American sailors, who instantly agreed, with Isabella and Inez, to rescue their fellow-countrymen. They accordingly hastened up from the port, with my two heroic protectors, under the guidance of the faithful negro who had revealed the damnable plot of the priest against my life. Most heartily did I thank those generous tars for their noble and manly kindness; and still more deep was my gratitude to the high-born heroine, Isabella Ramos, who had overcome so many obstacles for a mere stranger—and my own dear Inez, how cordially did I clasp her to my heart, when I heard how she had hastened to my relief!—and how was my amazement increased to learn that these were the very sailors with whom she had crossed the gulf from Pensacola, and braved the danger of the deep, all for my sake;—and that the bark in which they came was one of her own father's, and now lay in the bay ready to return as soon as we could reach Mariel. I blessed them a thousand times; I even cried—yes, wept like a woman—my tears were irrepressible—tears of joy, snatched out of distress and danger. The enemy was gone. With haste we urged our



INEZ RAMOS.

way to Mariel, and reached there before the sun was up. But Anselmo had forestalled us, and as we were passing the outskirts of the town, we were suddenly surrounded by a band of soldiers, belonging to Captain-General Concha, the Governor of the island. Their numbers disarmed all opposition, and we were all seized upon, and the sailors bound. We were forthwith ordered to march toward Havana; and accordingly we set forth, as prisoners, and pursued our way during a sultry day, with the sun blazing upon us with an intensity of heat which was intolerable. Isabella and Inez were mounted upon mules, and under the immediate charge of the lieutenant of the company, who kept strict guard upon them all day long. Having halted at noon, and sunset, we still pursued our way after night, as there was moonlight. We had journeyed far, and it was late at night, when, as we were passing a heavy skirt of wood, whose tall trees threw their black shadows across the road, an armed party on horseback, with their faces muffled, burst suddenly out from the thicket in advance of our company, when some of our soldiers made preparation to fire upon them; but instantly twenty bright muskets were brought to a level, and flashed in the gleams of the moon, which glanced through the trees. A voice from the party, who had thus suddenly checked our progress, commanded a halt, and in a few minutes, with his broad sombrero decked with a black feather, drawn down over his black-whiskered face, their captain rode up to our lieutenant, and after whispering to him a few words, the whole party of General Concha's men, whom we were under, galloped off, with our sailors behind on their horses, and left Isabella, Inez, and myself in the hands of this new party, whom I rightly guessed at the first glance to be highway robbers in the neighboring mountains. They all were very long hair and mustachios, which almost hid their faces when combined with their broad sombreros. Their dress was a loose blouse coat, with leather belts, in which were stuck a couple of swords and a broad knife. Upon the whole, I had never seen a more wicked or assassin-like set of scoundrels. They bore us rapidly through the valley until we reached the chain of mountains which stretch away toward Bahia Honda from Quanajay.— There, at the foot of a giant peak, in the midst of a dense forest

of ceiba and palm trees, they all dismounted, and entered a huge antique monastery, whose exterior walls were apparently in ruins, and covered with long thick masses or festoons of moss; but when we got within, we found the ancient sanctuary converted into a stand for wines and liquors, which glowed with ruddy tints from a multitude of burning lamps which lighted up the dim aisles of the shadowy old chapel; and here we also found a jolly bacchanalian host of banqueters, of the same robber-like character as those who had captured us. They all rose and saluted our captain as he entered; and shortly after Father Anselmo made his appearance, at which the host sent up a shout or cheer which made the high dark vault of the church echo loudly. At length we were all seated at a very long table, upon which were ranged bottles, glasses, and cigars, in enormous profusion. Father Anselmo entered one of the cloisters, of which there was a long range on either side of the church, and the whole company waited quietly, and in a very short time he came forth in a bishop's robes, and marched up to the head of the table, where he went through with a sacrilegious mockery of a grace, while the whole company responded with a mystical set of mummeries, and preserving the most solemn expression of countenance, until the priest commenced a travestie upon the language of the Holy Eucharist, when they began to break the bread which lay upon the table and break off the necks of bottles. And then began a wild chant in which all the revelers joined, while a grotesquely-dressed robber, with a high sugar-loaf hat, sat down to the time-injured organ and played the most ludicrous strains, as an accompaniment, which made the hollow vault vibrate and resound again. As each chant concluded, the riotous revelers would clink their glasses with high glee, give humorous toasts, and sing amatory songs. At length, Father Anselmo commanded that the nuns be shrived, whereupon each robber drew a cap over his head, in the manner of a friar, and walked from the table to the cloisters, on either hand of the long aisles, and drawing aside a curtain, forth came, from each one, all hooded and in gray gowns, a female figure; each knelt and received from the mock friars a benediction, and the whole procession marched solemnly up again to the table, to a mournful mass-like music

played upon the organ. Suddenly the instrument changed its solemn tones, and began a gay and merry air, while half a dozen violins, hitherto unseen, came out from under the cloaks of the sham monks, and they all struck up the time as Father Anselmo struck with his cross upon the table. Suddenly all the gowns and hoods of the nuns flew off, and the gray sisters became a band of most beautiful women, arrayed in the richest and most costly manner, and their black, glittering eyes and rose-red cheeks burned brightly as they quaffed, one after another, hurried bumpers of the crimson wine. Shouts, laughter, song, and revelry now filled the church with stunning confusion; and the discord of this strange saturnalia was increased four-fold, as they all resolved themselves into a dancing party which reached half way down one of the great aisles. Isabella, Inez, and myself sat near the sanctuary, in silent amazement at these horrible orgies in the sacred precincts of a church. A momentary cessation would occur in the music, and each mock monk would lead one of the false nuns up to the table, and quaff a glass off with her, and in a few moments more be winding his lascivious arms around her voluptuous and yielding waist, and imprinting warm kisses upon her cheeks and lips. The captain of the robbers now ordered me to kneel before the altar and confess my sins, and they would pray for me. I refused. He insisted. I still objected, but he commanded again and again. I peremptorily declared that I would not commit an act which I felt to be sacrilege, and a violation of the holiest feelings of the human heart. He threatened me with the severest punishment if I persisted, but I sternly and resolutely vowed that I would suffer anything rather than do this gross wrong to my education and conscience. No sooner had I uttered these words than Father Anselmo cried, "Away with him to the rack!" and forthwith a couple of the pseudo-monks caught me, one by each arm, when suddenly a heavy jarring sound was heard, and a broad iron door in the wall slid slowly aside, and to my horror revealed a chamber of the ancient Inquisition! There stood all the terrific instruments of torture, racks, wheels, pulleys, and screws. The vault which contained these terrible implements, was dark, but lighted by a glowing furnace, or pot of burning charcoal. They fastened

me down in an iron chair, and baring the soles of my feet, they anointed them with oil, and placed them close to the fire. Of course I shrieked with the intense agony of this blistering pain. At this, Inez sprang from her seat, and rushing to me she clasped her arms around my feet to shield them from the fire, when Father Anselmo ordered the men to release me and put Inez in my place. The moment the men freed me, and laid hands upon her, I felled the first one that touched her with a single blow of my fist, when the captain bade them relinquish the punishment and proceed with the dance; and in a moment more the glasses were clinking, and the music playing the same lively dancing airs. Father Anselmo, despite the remonstrance of Isabella, compelled her to enter one of the sets; and the captain drew Inez with him into an opposite party. Long did they dance and drink, while I sat near the altar in silence. Most of the men were deeply intoxicated and reeled as they went through the dance, and engaged in all manner of voluptuous and amative figures and attitudes—the pretended nuns abandoning themselves into the arms of the robber monks—when Anselmo and the captain clasped Isabella and Inez in their embrace, who struggled in vain to escape; they covered their faces with kisses, and were hurrying off with them in their arms to the cells or cloisters, as fast as their drunken state would permit them to move, for by this time the whole party were steeped in liquor. Anselmo, in his maudlin madness, tore open the bosom of Isabella's dress, as he dragged her to the cell, and clung to her like a satyr, when with an effort she stretched herself back, and plucking a small hidden dagger from her girdle, she planted it full in his breast, and he sank instantly a corse upon the floor. The captain released Inez, and moved as well as his drunken legs would carry him toward Anselmo's body, whither the whole drunken party were crowding in great confusion. In the midst of this Babel-like confusion, I motioned to Inez to follow me, which she did, and we reached one of the windows, or rather side doors, and were escaping, when a pistol shot was heard, and we looked back and beheld that the captain had fired and killed Isabella! This doubly increased the confusion, during which time we got without the church, and fled for life toward the coast. We had not

advanced many miles when day began to dawn; so, seeing a cave whence a spring issued, we entered and remained until night again came, when we sallied forth on our way to the coast. The moon shone beautifully, and I calculated that we should reach the sea-shore either at Mariel or Curacoa. As we wandered we found some wild fruit by the way side, and eat it with a relish which exercise and appetite alone can give. We avoided as much as possible all chance of discovery, by taking by-paths, as would keep us from losing the main road. The atmosphere was soft and mild, and the moonlight silvered the fields and groves by which we passed, and the country was one of enchanting beauty. After several miles progress we heard the heavy hoofs of horses coming down the highway behind us, and we instantly secreted ourselves behind the thick green hedge, which skirted the roadside, with beating hearts and almost suppressed breath; but to our unutterable joy we discovered the party to be our old friends the sailors, who had all been taken by the soldiers when the robbers bore us away.—We heard their clear, round English voices, and our hearts fairly danced for joy. They were delighted to see us alive, and soon informed us that General Concha, the Spanish governor, had ordered the whole of them to be released and discharged, and they were now on their way to their vessel, which lay before Curacoa. So, taking Inez and myself with them, we reached the port about daylight, when a band of villagers came out armed with swords, guns, pikes, sticks, and stones, and attempted to stop our party.—Our captain assured them that we had authority to leave, and showed his passport from General Concha; but, instead of regarding this, they hurled a shower of stones at us, which struck some of our party, whereupon the sailors became furious, and springing from their horses and fastening them as best they could, they dashed into the swarthy group of Spaniards,—men, women, and children fled from the sailors, who were unarmed (save with such sticks as they could pick up), as though death's self were chasing them. Shrieking for life, they ran in all directions, hiding themselves in the houses, making no defense, saving occasionally firing a gun which touched none of us;—so that in a brief space of time a handful of American tars had dispersed the whole vil-

lage, without weapons, and we pursued our way along the wood which skirted the beach, until we saw the stars and stripes of our vessel flapping in the bright gleams of the opening morning.

In a short time more we were on board and in safety; but the moment Inez became assured that we were both out of danger, she fainted. Having borne the scenes of this terrible night with fortitude, her too much excited nerves could no longer bear the racking anxiety.

Day dawned, and we weighed anchor, and were leaving the island fast, when a Spanish vessel at a great distance fired at us; but we put on all sail, and flew from her swift as the gulls that went with us over the gulf. Inez recovered, but could scarce think that it could be reality. It was like some horrible dream; but when I came to speak of the fatal end of her heroic cousin Isabella, neither of us could refrain from kneeling and offering up a prayer to heaven for having delivered us from these strange perils.

We reached our homes. It is useless to say we were united.—My rashness has been taught a bitter lesson, and the sad fate of our companions, whose bones are buried in Cuba, or those whose bodies are buried alive in Spain, in her black dungeons, should be a solemn warning to all young men not to inconsiderately and imprudently venture forth upon any expedition, merely upon the promises of unprincipled and designing men, who are preaching liberty, but ready to barter a brother's blood for gold.

But what shall I say respecting the officer placed by the United States government as our consul at Havana? It was a bold delusion which Lopez led us into—for, though wholly without principle and honor, Lopez was not without courage—but Mr. Owen sits quietly at home, in his country seat near Havana, and allows a ruthless butchery to take place without the slightest interference, and when called upon to account for his conduct, attempts to palliate it by saying that he was so far removed from the authorities of the island that it would have been too late. Why did he not make the effort? Why did he not try, and then see if it were too late? Why did not the English consul not find it too late? He demanded his fellow-countrymen, in the name of the queen of

Great Britain, and they were released; but our own representative officer stands inertly and suffers a massacre of his fellow-citizens without any intervention. In short, his apology is worse than his position, and time itself will scarcely remove from his course of conduct the damning imputation of listlessly and wantonly allowing his fellow-countrymen to suffer a military martyrdom, when the exercise of prompt and determined measures would have saved their lives.

It is a melancholy thing to reflect upon the whole affair—the scheme which played upon the love of liberty within patriotic American hearts, and caused them to rush to the rescue of coward creoles, who were incapable of comprehending liberty, or feared to strike for their freedom. And then, more terrible than all, to think that men could be found, who for the base love of gain—a traffic in bonds—could lead young and generous men, like victims to the slaughter, making the greensward of Cuba grow red with their blood, and leaving their dead bodies to moulder and decay in a land where they were taught to believe that the banners of freedom would be seen glittering thick on the breezy plains—and where, when they planted their feet on the soil, and cried “God and liberty!” a host of republicans would have echoed back an answer, hailing them with acclamations loud as thunder in the storm. Where they had expected to see the alliance of king and church rent asunder, and the barrier which had withheld the people from their rights broken to pieces; but alas! we found a people willingly bearing oppression from tyranny, and the benighting influence of priestcraft resting, like a dark spell of sorcery, upon the whole island. The spirit of northern climes, the high love of liberty was nowhere visible; and this expedition, which went forth with the holy feeling of a crusade for freedom, found an voracious traitor at their head, and all their exertions directed to his aggrandizement, and the aid of a set of wretches incapable of appreciating this generous aid in a struggle for political and religious independence. Poland, Greece, and Hungary have had their martyrs and have shown themselves worthy to be free; but the Cubans are base enough to wear their Spanish chains, and bow

their necks that bigotry, fanaticism, and priestcraft may place the feet upon them whenever and as they please.

God help fair Cuba! her inhabitants are willing slaves to Spanish power, and the graves of the heroic Crittenden and his associates were made in a patriot purpose but for a despicable people.

Once more I point to the dark dungeons of Spain, where our patriot brothers pine in chains, and warn by this sad example the impulsive youth of our land from hastily seizing the sword in behalf of foreign climes, and leaving the weeds of mourning to hang over the homes of widowed wives and broken-hearted mothers.

THE END.