## Poetry.

### LASTING IMPRESSIONS.

You may gaze upon an object
Till its likeness you retain, [darkness,
And through distance, and through
You behold that form again;
So I pondered on thy goodness,
Till there grew about my heart
Many never dying feelings,
Which makes up its better part.

You may listen to a measure,
Till the sentiment and tone
Finds a hiding place within you,
And the song becomes your own;
So I treasured up thy sayings,
And now, in my own, I find
The echoes of thy accents,
The reflection of thy mind!

There are perfumes we remember
When their sources are no more;
There are flavors that will linger
When the banqueting is o'er;
So, the charms thy presence yielded
Have outlived thy honeyed breath,
And my soul, that feasted freely,
Will partake of them till death!

## A Narrative.

[From Harper's Magazine for December.]

### AN OLD FILIBUSTER.

*Concluded from last week.*

The listless and dissipated life of the past month had exerted an enervating influence on many of the freebooters, while their intercourse with the women had weakened their ferocity of disposition, and made them pine for their companions and friends on the other side of the Isthmus. As soon as they reached the main-land, therefore, they began to make preparations to retrace their steps. They did not even wait for the promised ransom, but set all their prisoners at liberty. Some of these beautiful women had become so attached to their captors that they wept bitterly at their parting. As the canoes returned from landing them on the deserted shore, the buccaneers gave them a parting salutation and bore away.

The next day they divided their booty, and as the pearls and uncoined gold could not be equitably distributed, they were put up at auction and sold to the highest bidder and the proceeds apportioned. After all their toil and danger for three years, the sum total to each man, in money, was but three hundred dollars.

The next day, the 12th of June, Captain David, in command of the large vessel, sailed away to refit, and then return home by way of the Straits of Magellan. The other vessels were too small to attempt this long and hazardous voyage. They therefore cruised about, hoping to take a ship of sufficient size, occasionally making a descent on a place, until January, when they resolved to abandon their vessels and cross on foot to the North Sea. After much consultation they concluded to go by way of Segovia, which, as near as I can make out, took them across the widest part of Honduras, the passage occupying more than two months.

Many of the men had lost their share of the booty in play on board the ships, and as Lussan had been a great winner, he was afraid some of the desperadoes might make way with him in order to recover their money; and so he took the precaution, in presence of all to divide his wealth among several of his friends to carry for him, they to have a certain portion at the end of the journey. This foresight saved his life.

On the 2d day of January, having burned their ships and said their prayers, this band of buccaneers, to the number of two hundred and eighty, set out on their perilous journey, taking with them sixty-eight horses, which they had captured, to carry their plunder. The first day they loitered along the sea shore, reluctant to turn their faces inland, where so many perils and sufferings awaited them. The next day, however, they struck boldly into the interior, and although the hostile Spaniards constantly hovered on their flanks and rear, no serious demonstration was made. They contented themselves with destroying the provisions on their way, and setting fire to the dry grass in the savannas they crossed, which caused the smoke to blow in their faces, which annoyed them so much that they were often compelled to stop in the deserted houses till the fire burned it out.

Thus, day after day, they kept on, marching in close order, until the eight, when they took a prisoner, who informed them that in a large village a little distance ahead, three hundred mounted soldiers awaited their arrival. This body of troops, however filed away as soon as the head of the little colum of buccaneers appeared in view. After leaving the village they entered an extensive tract of country covered with a dense pine-forest. As they slowly passed through this, they heard martial strains on either side of them, and afterward, all day long, keeping pace with their march, arose the stirring notes of the bugle. These three hundred horsemen had divided into two bodies, and, concealed by the thick pines, moved in parallel lines, with the advancing colum. This invisable music keeping pace with their march, echoing away among the thick evergreens, and rising and falling with the wave-like gusts of wind that swept through their tops, produced a strange sensation. It was like walking through an enchanted palace, with music all around and the performers nowhere to be seen. At night they encamped opposite the encampment of the buccaneers, and at morning roused them with their bugles sounding the reveille. For five days this invisable serenade was kept up.

As they approached the town of Segovia they came upon an ambuscade, and at the first discharge of the enemy two of the buccaneers were killed. The Spaniards not waiting to reload, fled precipitately. This place lay in a deep valley, surrounded on every side by mountains that completely overlooked the place and walled it in like a prison. As the buccaneers descended into it they found it wholly deserted, and the provisions it contained consumed. They rested here until the next day, seeing no enemy, they were occasionally saluted by a musket-shot sent from the thick pines that grew along the slopes which hemmed in the place. Here they were so fortunate as to secure a prisoner who knew the way to the river beyond the mountains whose course they were to follow to the sea.

Twenty leagues of the worst mountain-travel lay before them yet. As they ascended the heights the cold became intense, while impenetrable fogs would wrap them for hours, drenching them to the skin and chilling their frames, which were exhausted with toil, weakened by hunger, and rendered sensitive by their long stay in a tropical climate.

On the thirteenth, as they were picking their way by early daylight along the crest of a high mountain, they espied on the opposite height, from which they were separated only by a deep, narrow valley, what they took to be some twelve or fifteen beeves, which filled the starving adventurers with extravagant joy. A halt was immediately called, and twenty men sent forward to reconnoitre and bring away the cattle. On their return they reported that what they took for beeves were horses saddled and bridled, and, moreover, that on the crest of the mountain was an entrenchment, and still farther down another, and lower yet a third, completely commanding the narrow path that skirted the little stream below, and which at that point was so contracted that two horsemen could not ride abreast. More than a thousand muskets covered this exposed spot, over which the buccaneers, less than three hundred strong, would be compelled, one by one, slowly to defile. A thousand men could not have forced it, and yet there was no other way to go. All around was a matted forest, windfalls morasses, and precipices, over and through which, even if they had been able to pass themselves, they could not have carried their baggage. The enemy had evidently selected this spot from its great natural advantages, on which to make their final stand. The mystery of the long attendance of those invisible horsemen was now solved. They were to fall on the rear when the attack was made in front.

The prospect looked gloomy enough. They must fight—that was clear—but without any possibility of success. In the council of war that was called, Lussan said that the attempt to force those intrenchments was downright madness—they must be turned, and no matter what obstacles intervened, a flanking party must get to the rear, and all their efforts should be directed to that object. To effect this he said the baggage should be left behind under a guard of eighty men to protect it from those three hundred invisible troopers, while the remaining two hundred encumbered only with their muskets and cutlasses, must make the forlorn attempt. A careful reconnoissance was made, and from a more elevated mountain than the one on which they were encamped a road, beyond the highest intrenchment, was discovered, through some breaks in the forest, turning short to the right around it, and winding along the steep ascent. Convinced that this was a continuation of the same road that crept along by the stream under the enemy's guns, they determined to approach by that side, knowing that if it was so they could easily, when once in it, find the rear of the highest intrenchment.

Every thing being arranged, the commander of the eighty, who were to be left to guard the baggage and prisoners, was ordered to set the sentinels, and have them relieved as usual by the firing of a musket, and the drum to be beat at the regular hour, so that the three hundred in rear might suppose that the whole band had encamped for the night. Moreover, if within an hour after he heard the battle cease in the morning he received no tidings from them, he was to know they were defeated, and he and his men must then shift for themselves.

The sun went down, flooding the mountains in light; and as its last rays disappeared from their summits the Spaniards made a simultaneous discharge of six hundred muskets to show the buccaneers their strength. As soon as it was dark those two hundred desperate men solemnly said their prayers, but muttered them in a low tone, so that the Spaniards on the other side might not hear them, and set forth.

An hour after, the tropical moon rose over the heights, casting weird lights and shadows upon summit and abyss. Cautiously and silently that bold band crept forward, and had proceeded about an hour when they heard the Spaniards at their evening prayers. They paused a moment, and listened, and there arose on the night air the Litany of the Saints, and as the responses were sung in the clear mountain air by those strong men's voices, they had a strangely-solemn sound. At every response there was a discharge of musketry, the echoes of which were sent back from every surrounding height. The route taken by the buccaneers would, to ordinary men have been considered impassable, and was rendered still worse by the dim light of the moon which, though it bathed the mountain tops in splendor, sent only fragmentary beams through the dense foliage of the tropical forest. They had more use for their hands than feet, and now pulling themselves up one precipice only to slide down another, they made such slow progress that, though the whole distance they had to go was less than a quarter of a mile it took the whole night to accomplish it. Sometimes the entire two hundred had to be pulled up a ledge of rocks, one by one, and let down in the same way.

At daylight next morning, as they were stretching along the mountain, they came upon the Spanish patrol making its morning rounds. Dreaming, however, of no danger in that quarter, the latter were not on the look out, and passed carelessly on. A thick fog, too, lay on the mountain, which rendered objects very indistinct a few paces off. The buccaneers advised of their proxmity by the sound of the horse's feet, were enabled to make them out while they themselves remained unseen. They knew at once that this patrol was in the road they were seeking, and immediately pushed forward, and, to their great relief, found they were not mistaken. Here they halted for half an hour to take breath and examine their muskets. While standing silently in the road they heard the voices of the Spaniards at their morning prayers. Directed by the sound which way to go they immediately started forward; but had marched but a short distance when they, unexpectedly, came upon two sentinels, whom they were compelled to shoot, to prevent them from giving information of the point of attack. Roused by the sudden firing they shouted, "To arms!" Bugles, sounding the rally, rang through the intrenchments, and the soldiers, seizing their muskets rushed in front, supposing, of course, the single volley was to apprise them of the advance of the buccaneers. Five hundred men defended this first intrenchment; but, standing behind their breast works, they were entirely uncovered in rear. On these the buccaneers rushed, with a shout and a volley. The Spaniards, terrified at the sudden apparition, fled over their works on every side, into the surrounding forest. The victors drew up behind the deserted defenses, and began to pour their volleys into the exposed intrenchments below them. Those within immediately retired to the lowest of all, where a steady fire was kept up. The fog, however, was so thick the buccaneers were unable to see it, and could fire only at the spot from whence the volleys of the enemy proceeded. Finding this produced no effect, they left the barricade, and, with a loud shout, dashed down the mountain, into and over the next intrenchment, upon the third and last. The Spaniards bravely held their ground until they saw the gleam of the advancing bayonets through the fog, when they broke and fled. The fallen trees, and various obstructions which they had placed to impede the buccaneers in the assault, as well as the open spaces in the trees they had made to uncover every approach, now turned to their disadvantage, and the volleys of the victors mowed them down at every step. None asked for quarter; nor, for some time, was any offered. At length, weary with the slaughter, and moved by the rivulets of blood that flowed down the mountain, the pirates refused to slay any more, and made them prisoners in spite of their obstinacy.

Returning to the first intrenchment, they found the five hundred they had driven out fighting the guard they had left behind. These they quickly dispersed; and then, gathering together, chanted "*Te Deum*," in honor of their great victory. "*Te Deum Laudamus*" swelled up there in the mountain solitudes, and over the mangled corpses of the slain that lay in heaps along the crimson slopes.

Sixty men were then mounted on horses and sent back to those in charge of the baggage to announce the victory. They found there an officer, sent from the three hundred Spaniards, who had just told the buccaneers that the battle had gone against them—that their friends had been cut off—and, if they would surrender themselves prisoners of war, their lives should be spared, and they have a free passage to their own country. The sudden arrival of the sixty buccaneers, on Spanish horses, and shouting as they came, changed his tone, and he hastily took his departure. The buccaneers, however, followed so close upon his heels that the troopers had no time to form before they were upon them with their cutlasses and pistols, knocking them over right and left. They also took a great many prisoners. Most of these however, after being relieved of their baggage and horses, were suffered to go free. This leniency they soon regretted; for on questioning those whom they kept, they ascertained that a few leagues ahead was another intrenchment, and they were afraid the fugitives would rally there: and this apprehension was increased when, soon after, they saw a huge beacon-fire blaze up from one of the mountain-tops. They immediately set a strong guard in the road to stop any passing that way; and, as they could take but nine hundred horses with them they hamstrung the remaining nine hundred, to prevent their being used by the Spaniards. Hastily burying the only two of their men who were killed, and dressing the four wounded, they pushed rapidly on. Before night they came up with the intrenchment of which they had been forewarned, but found it deserted. The next day they passed another; and, on the third day after the battle, reached the long-sought-for river.

They set their camp, and commenced building rafts on which to float down the stream. Four or five trees, after being cut down, were peeled, and then lashed together with vines that grew in abundance there. This constituted a raft; but, in the unseasoned state of the timber, it would hold only two men; with this slight load it sank so deep, even in smooth sailing, that the almost helpless navigators stood up to the knees in water, while in the rapids they went to their waists. The horses were killed and salted, and strapped upon those crazy structures, and the whole ninety rafts pushed off. This river plunges with frightful rapidity down the mountains, sometimes leaping in lofty cataracts. The navigation, therefore, was extremely dangerous, for the rafts were at the mercy of the current, especially in the rapids.—Often two or three would strike on a rock, and the rest come tumbling after, making a complete wreck, from which some of the poor wretches would be hurled and carried over the cataracts below to be seen no more. They fortunately found at the top and bottom of all the high falls a still, deep pool, enabling them to steer their rafts ashore. One would then go below, while his companion loosened the raft and sent it over. As it came up from its mad plunge and floated away on the quiet basin, the former would swim in and bring it ashore, when the two would again get aboard and drift downward through the thick forest. If he failed to reach it, it was soon whirled away out of sight, and they were compelled to build another. After three days of this perilous and exhausting navigation, Lussan proposed, as they were out of the reach of the Spaniards, that they should no longer keep together, but move along singly, so that if one was cast away on a rock, those upon it might have time to get off before the others drifted down against them; thus swelling the wreck and increasing the danger. This would also enable those in advance to set up poles or flags to show where the best channel was in the frightful rapids through which they passed. They wanted no beacons to indicate the cataracts, for their heavy monotonous roar could be heard for miles echoing along the gorges.

This arrangement proved to be a wise one, for although they lost some men, they got along much more rapidly and safely.

These nearly three hundred bearded men presented a strange spectacle on their frail rafts drifting down through the mountain gorges and primeval solitudes. Scattered along for more than three miles in length the flotilla of nearly a hundred rude structures was subject to every variety of fortune. Here a raft would be drifting quietly along over a level space; another, all alone, plunging from some high cataract, the strong swimmer below eagerly watching its descent; a third, high and dry on a rock in the middle of the stream; a fourth utterly without control, whirled, like the bubbles of the distracted waters, past jutting precipices, while another lay broken in pieces, the two occupants of it each astride of a single log shooting downward, anxiously looking for some quiet stretch of water where they could paddle ashore and build another raft. Of course their provisions were all destroyed, and their powder being wet so they could not hunt, they were obliged to subsist on plantain that grew along the banks. At length they came to some Indian huts, and chased the occupants to get their food, but the latter were too nimble for them.

Here Lussan was reminded of the prudent course he took in getting rid of his treasures; for to his horror he came upon the bodies of seven Englishmen who were known to have a good deal of money. The murderers had themselves and were not seen again by the party.

It would be impossible to describe a fraction of the perils and difficulties the hardy adventurers encountered, or the fatigues they suffered. At length, a month after they struck this stream, they drifted out of the mountain gorges into a broad river impeded by no falls or rapids. The current, however, was strong, and filled with flood-wood of every description, which the torrents had brought down from the mountains. Against these their crazy rafts would drift, and being sucked under by the current, turn upon their edges, pitching those upon them into the water. Several were drowned in this way. A few leagues farther on the stream became clear and placid, and they concluded to go ashore and build canoes, in which to make the rest of the journey. In nine days they were finished and launched, and in nine days more they reached the mouth of the river which empties into the sea at Cape Gracias a Dios.

Here they heard that an English ship from the West Indies was a few leagues away at the Isle of Pearls, and would soon be there. It was ascertained that she could carry but forty men, and they agreed to cast lots who should go in her; but she had scarcely anchored in port before fifty crowded aboard of her, and among the number Lussan. Unwilling to risk their chances in leaving that inhospitable region by casting lots with those on shore, they compelled the captain to hoist anchor and sail away. They arrived in the West Indies in safety, and Lussan finally reached Paris to the no small surprise of his friends. Of the companions he left on the Mosquito Coast he gives no account; but probably some passing vessel at length took them off.

Thus, in those early times, was the Isthmus of Darien, in almost every part of the northern section of it, probed by adventurers; and we find none of those facilities for a ship canal which Gibson reported, and which set on foot the various exploring expeditions, among which was the one Strain commended. The recent reports contradicting his statements will, we venture to say, prove as groundless as those that misled him, and well-nigh caused the destruction of his entire command.