

affairs. If he had confined his attentions to his own country which had twice confirmed him in the presidential chair, there is no doubt that he would have left it the most firmly established of any of the republics, but his restless ambition prompted him to attempt to form a great confederacy of the republics with Guatemala as its political center, a chaplet of pearls with his own land as the gem of the collection. It was his proud boast that he was of the *puebla*—of the people—and as there was some Indian blood in him he won and retained the undying fealty of the purely native population, which has in recent times greatly deteriorated because of the transmission of African blood, which came of contact with the negroid types of the West Indies, so largely represented throughout the coast population. And he served the *puebla* with a purpose as resolute and as earnest as it was unwise and hazardous, for in propitiating one element he repelled the other, having not the diplomatic savvy and tact to hold a middle course and make both trustworthy and loyal adherents. Such of the aristocrats as he found arrayed against him he put to death or expatriated, and it is said that he even resorted to torture to extract such evidence as would justify his drastic action. And he went about it in a peculiar and original way. If he suspected Juan of plotting against him, he would make enquiries as to who was Juan's most intimate friend or companion. This might prove to be Jose. So he would arrest Jose, hand him over to the torturers, who would mangle him so that he would be glad to sign a paper denouncing Juan as a traitor, or anyone else whom they might choose to name. And upon this evidence Juan would have to go, probably glad to get clear away from a dictator who confronted those who differed from him with a file of soldiers, instructed to make a funeral for the offender with as little fuss as possible. Yet he lived in fear of assassination,

and had always near him a faithful Indian guard, ready to hew down with their keen machetes anyone they might suspect of sinister designs upon their august chief. And he hated the priests. This was a strange trait to reveal itself in one brought up amid surroundings where the Roman Catholic Church is paramount and the priest a power in the land. It was a mongrel civilization the Spanish adventurers and desperadoes, such as Cortez and Pizzaro, brought to these shores, and a mongrel Christianity which they thrust upon the natives with reeking sword and uplifted cross, but it took root and flourished grandly, and produced devout and obedient congregations of image-worshippers and trusted servitors of the Church. It held undisputed and regal sway there with little check for more than three hundred years. It had its palaces, its grand cathedrals, its monasteries and convents, and its holy inquisition. What it could not assimilate it crushed and it ruled by the terror of its power which was un pitying and remorseless. It lived in licentious luxury, and was avaricious, lascivious and mean. The catastrophe at Antigua, which revealed to the light of day the secret subterraneous passages leading from the monastery to the convent but confirmed the knowledge of evil deeds already extant, and such as feared looked upon the earthquake as a visitation of God to punish hidden wickedness. Still the Church continued to flourish and under Barrios its power had not been impaired. But one day the archbishop of Guatemala went wrong. There is a pretty conceit derived from the German, that round about us in the invisible world are good angels who shape our thoughts and direct our steps so that we come not into evil. Whether the archbishop's good angel wearied of his task or not and sought a brief respite from such trying attendance, will never be known. But it must have been during a tem-