

# The Daily Morning Astorian.

VOL. XXIII, NO. 83.

ASTORIA, OREGON, TUESDAY APRIL 7, 1885.

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## IN GUATEMALA.

Assumption and Death of Barrios.  
GUATEMALA CITY, March 11, 1885.  
Since the declaration of independence in 1821, when the five states of Central America followed the example of their South American sisters and threw off the Spanish yoke, there has not been so much of sensation in this narrow continent as now. On the 25th of February, while the aristocracy were gathered at the theater witnessing the performance of "Boacaccio" by a French opera bouffe company, a man mounted the stage and read a proclamation issued by Rufino Barrios, president of Guatemala, declaring himself dictator and supreme commander of Central America, and calling upon the citizens of all the five republics to acknowledge his authority. They are accustomed to earthquakes here, but no terrestrial commotion ever created so much excitement as this political eruption. The actresses and ballet dancers fled in dismay to their dressing-rooms, and the audience at once organized into an impromptu mass meeting to ratify the audacity of their president. Few eyes were closed that night in Guatemala. Those who sought sleep were kept awake by the explosion of fireworks, the firing of cannons, the music of bands and the shouts of the populace, who, crazed with excitement, thronged the streets and forming long processions, promenade the principal thoroughfares, sending the air with shouts of "Long live General Barrios" and "Vive la Union!" A people naturally enthusiastic, as inflammable as powder, with whom excitement is recreation and repose a burden, suddenly and unexpectedly confronted with a sensation, went almost insane and turned the town into a bedlam. So few beings seldom made so much noise, and never were so much excited.

Although everybody knew that President Barrios aspired to the rulership of five republics instead of one, no one seemed to be prepared for the coup d'etat, so secretly and silently fell upon them with a force that made the whole country tremble. The next morning as if by the power of magic, the town seemed filled with soldiers. Where they came from and how they got there so suddenly the people did not appear to comprehend, and when the doors of great warehouses were opened to disclose vast stacks of arms and vast supplies of military stores, the eyes of the public were distended with amazement. All these preparations were made so secretly and so silently that the surprise was complete. But for three or four years Barrios had been preparing for this day, and his plans were carried out with a success that challenged even his own admiration. He ordered all the soldiers in the republic to be here on the 1st of March. The commands were given secretly, and the captain of one company was not aware that another was expected.

But if there was a sensation here, what must the commotion have been in the other states over which the president of this republic assumed uninvited authority? The same night the official announcement was made here, telegrams were sent to the presidents of Honduras, Salvador, Nicaragua and Costa Rica, calling upon them to acknowledge the supremacy of Dictator Barrios, and to send delegates to a convention which should frame a constitution for a Central American union.

Guatemala has a population of 1,500,000, is rich and prosperous, has a standing army of 40,000 men, commanded by officers who have been educated abroad or imported from France and Germany, organized on the German plan, which requires so much military service from every citizen, armed with the Remington repeating rifles and equipped with all modern appliances for war. The leader is, as has been said, the ablest man in Central America, who has never failed in anything he has undertaken, with an unlimited ambition, an iron will, a hand that crushes whatever it grasps, and an energy which is phenomenal in these countries, where people never do to-day what can be postponed until next week or next year.

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to the United States government, through Minister Hill, invaded San Salvador. As Barrios approached El Coto, keeping up a heavy fusillade of musketry, the Salvadoreans replied to his fire hotly. The firing on both sides was wild and ineffectual, save that it rendered the advance of the Guatemalans slow and difficult.

Hostilities were virtually suspended during the night, but at daylight the Guatemalans made a desperate rush in attempting to carry the San Salvadoran position by storm. Only the superior position of the Salvadoreans force saved them from annihilation by the almost overwhelming numbers of Guatemalans. Toward the middle of the day firearms to a great extent were thrown aside and a terrific hand-to-hand fight begun, in which the troops on both sides did terrible execution with the sanguinary and favorite weapon of the Indians—the machete. This is a long and heavy knife, or sword, which serves the Central American alike in peace and war, being an implement constantly used in agriculture here and as a great favorite in fighting.

After nearly ten hours of fighting, in which, as is usual in Central America, quarter was neither given nor taken, the Guatemalans were completely routed, leaving about 1500 of their number on the field dead or wounded. They retreated across the frontier in haste and disorder. Although greatly exhausted by the engagement, the Salvadoreans troops, who showed a determined spirit throughout, in great contrast to the frequent instances of half-heartedness among the Guatemalans, were anxious to pursue the enemy across the border, but they were restrained.

A Galveston special from El Paso del Norte, Mexico, says official information was received there via the Mexican Central telegraph line, that General Barrios had been killed in the battle on the San Salvador frontier.

As a means of suicide the small venomous serpents of Oriental countries have always been in vogue—the asp of Cleopatra recurring to every one's memory as a prominent example. In certain parts of Bengal there is said to be a race of gypsies, one of whom for a fee will furnish a small cobra to any applicant, "and no questions asked." A man who desires to commit murder procures one of these reptiles and places it within a bamboo just long enough to let the head protrude a trifle at one end and the tail at the other. Armed with the deadly weapon the murderer creeps softly to his enemy's tent at dead of night, cuts a hole in the wall and introduces the bamboo. The tortured reptile, careless upon whom it wreaks its animosity, strikes its fangs into the sleeper, then is withdrawn, and the assassin steals silently away.

Be it remembered that Brown's Iron Bitters cannot be bought at the tavern, the gin-mill, or any resort of drunkards. It is not the sort of "bitters" that old toppers want. It is the greatest iron tonic in the world, testing the system, enriching the blood, and invigorating the life. No body was ever made to like liquors by using this great family medicine. It cures dyspepsia, indigestion, weakness and malaria.

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In referring recently to a performer alluded to by a bystander as an alleged actor, John A. Mackey, the comedian, observed: "Oh, no; he is no longer alleged. He was tried and acquitted."

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