

CHAPTER XVIII.

Topographical Description—Territory of Bocas del Toro—Province of Veraguas—Province of Panama—Territory of Darien.

THE Isthmus of Panama, formerly belonging to the Crown of Spain, was in the year 1821 incorporated with Colombia, and in 1831, after the division of that state, it became, and still remains, a part of the Republic of New Granada. Politically it is divided into two provinces, Panama and Veraguas,—and two territories, Darien and Bocas del Toro. At the head of the two former is a governor, at that of the latter a prefect. The provinces are subdivided into cantons, these again into parishes. Ecclesiastically the Isthmus is considered as a bishopric, the head of which resides at Panama; and judicially as one of the seven *districtos judiciales* of which the Republic of New Granada is composed. The chief tribunal of justice is in the city of Panama, under the auspices of two “majistrados;” there are besides in every canton one or two judges. In the territories the prefects are charged with the administration of justice.

The Isthmus has one hundred and fourteen electors, who have a voice in the election of the President, the Vice-President, and the higher officers; they also appoint Senators and representatives to Congress, and name their own provincial officers.

The territory of Bocas del Toro extends over the north-west corner of the Isthmus and the islands situated in the lagoon of Chiriqui, and contains about 721 square miles. It is bounded on the north by the Atlantic Ocean, on the west by the Republic of Costa Rica, and on the south and east by the province of Veraguas. Originally its limits were more extended: a law of the 20th of November, 1803, given by the King of Spain, placed the whole coast, as far as Cape Gracias a Dios, under the jurisdiction of the Viceroyalty of New Granada. As such boundaries were generally acknowledged when the Spanish Americans obtained their independence, the Government at Bogotá now claims the whole shore, and has, at least nominally, incorporated it with this territory. Bocas del Toro constituted a part of Veraguas until 1843, when it was formed into a separate territory, and, in order to induce people to settle, all who lived within its limits were, till the 31st of August, 1850, exempted from taxation, and Bocas del Toro, up to the same date, declared a free port. Having a rather unhealthy climate, it is but thinly peopled; indeed, the whole Christianized population amounted in 1843 to no more than 595. It is governed by a prefect, who receives an annual salary of fifteen hundred dollars. The territory will probably soon be in a more flourishing condition. The old road connecting the town of David with the port of Bocas del

Toro being so bad that only pedestrians can traverse it, a new one is about to be commenced by the Chiriqui road company, upon which the commerce of Western Veraguas, and, what is of greater importance, a communication between the Atlantic and Pacific, will be conducted.

Next to Bocas del Toro lies Veraguas, having the Atlantic on the north, the territory of Bocas del Toro on the north-west, the Republic of Costa Rica on the west, the Pacific Ocean on the south, and the province of Panama on the east. Respecting the derivation of the name Veraguas various opinions prevail. Some contend that it is composed of the words *ver*, to see, and *agua*, water, because between the town of David and the port of Bocas del Toro there is said to be a mountain from the top of which both oceans are visible. Others declare it to be a corruption of *virde* and *agua*, the waters of the river Veragua, they say, being at times of a greenish hue; this having been observed by the discoverers, it was termed Virde-aguas, which name was afterwards changed into Veraguas, and extended over the whole district. A third party derives it from "*ver agua*," because when Columbus discovered the northern coast he encountered much rain ("he saw water"), and from the constant dampness of the weather the clothes of the voyagers became "*averaguado*" (mouldy): the verb *averaguar* being a provincialism used only in the Isthmus, this argument, it must be confessed, looks plausible, but, like the others, it is not in accordance with history. We find Ferdinand Columbus mentioning the name Veraguas long before his father had touched at

that province. The name was very well known to the people of Carette who accompanied Columbus as pilots, and the word Veraguas is therefore of Indian, not of Spanish, origin.

Veraguas covers a surface of about 7416 square miles, and contains a population of 45,376 souls : it is divided into two cantons, Santiago and Alanje, the former being situated in the eastern, the latter in the western part of the province. Alanje, or Chiriqui, numbers 15,111 inhabitants, and comprises the parishes of David, Alanje, Boqueron, Bugaba, Dolega, Gualaca, Remedios, San Felix, San Lorenzo, and San Pablo. The town of David is the principal place, or *cabecera*, of the canton. This dignity however was conferred upon it only a few years ago ; it was enjoyed formerly by Santiago de Alanje—or, as it is also called, Riochico—situated a few miles southward. David lies in lat. $8^{\circ} 23'$ north, long. $82^{\circ} 27'$ west, on the left bank of the river of the same name, in a beautiful plain, and is surrounded by the villages of Gualaca, Dolega, Boqueron, and Bugaba, and by mountains of considerable elevation. On the south-west rises the volcano of Chiriqui, a peak 7000 feet high ; on the north the Galera de Chorcha, a flat table-mountain, which, as the first part of its name indicates, has some resemblance to a gallery, or corridor ; from the top a waterfall descends over huge blocks of granite several hundred feet in depth. During the wet season, when great quantities of water are discharged, it is very conspicuous, resembling from a distance a stream of silver, and serving navigators as a landmark in making Boca Chica, the seaport of David.

David has about six hundred houses, built of wood and clay, and generally one story high, and, being all white-washed, they form several neat-looking streets. There is only one church, which stands in the centre of the public square, where also the government offices are situated. The town contained in 1843, according to official statements, 4321 inhabitants; their number is however yearly augmented by immigration. Several French, Italians, and North Americans have settled there, and it is principally owing to their exertions that David has risen within the last fifteen years from a paltry hamlet to a prosperous town. Though the Davidenians are mostly of a mixed race, the number of whites is considerable; their employment consists in breeding cattle, agriculture, and commerce. The exports of the place are rice, coffee, sarsaparilla, pearls, hides, turtle-shells, dried meat, and some gold-dust. Several other natural productions might be advantageously shipped. The Corpachi (*Croton*), the bark of which is highly valuable, grows plentifully in the forests; the Quira (*Platymiscium polystachyum*, Benth.) is found in abundance in the neighbourhood, and the Saumerio (*Styrax*), producing an odoriferous balsam, is seen in extensive groves in the adjacent mountains. At present all the produce has to be carried to Panama, but when the road to Bocas del Toro is completed, and a direct communication with Europe and North America has been established, many productions which at present are not worth sending will be exported with advantage. The climate of David, if compared with that of other parts of the Isthmus, is particularly healthy. Longevity is common; few of the

cutaneous eruptions so frequent in other districts are experienced; the common fever of the country being the predominant disease, and even this malady is only frequent during the change of season. The climate is annually improving: if we may believe the tradition of the country, the rainy season a hundred years ago was most violent, making it necessary to navigate from house to house in canoes.

Among the largest villages of the Canton are San Lorenzo and Pueblo Nuevo de los Remedios. The name Remedios for the latter place is now becoming the general one, as there exists another Pueblo Nuevo on the Playa of Chiru, in the Bay of Panama, which, by way of distinction, is termed Pueblo Nuevo de San Carlos. Remedios is situated on the high road which connects David with Santiago de Veraguas, in a plain, at equal distances from the villages of Tolè and San Lorenzo. It consists of four hundred buildings, most of which are slightly constructed of the bark and leaves of palms; only an inconsiderable number are built more substantially, and furnished with tile roofs and walls made of adobes. Remedios, being the head of the parish, has a church of considerable size, though smaller and inferior to the old building, of which the ruins are still visible. The number of its inhabitants was, in 1843, according to the census then taken, 1235; they are a mixture of the three races usually found in the hotter parts of Spanish America, the Caucasian, the African, and the American, mestizoes and mulattoes being the predominant. Remedios was formerly a place of much more importance, but, as in all places where a mixed population

prevails, rather a decrease than an increase followed when immigration ceased. The exact time of its foundation is unknown ; during the latter part of the seventeenth century it was in prosperous circumstances, so much so, that the Buccaneers, on the 23rd of May, 1680, thought it worth while to assault it. The inhabitants however made a gallant resistance on the river-side ; the commander-in-chief of the pirates, Captain Sawkins, was slain, and Sharp, the second in command, disheartened by his losses, retreated. In another attempt, on the 31st of June, 1685, the rovers were more successful : the village was taken, and shared the same fate as all the places which fell into the hands of that terrible association.

The canton of Santiago, the eastern portion of Veraguas, contains 30,265 inhabitants, and consists of thirteen parishes. Santiago de Veraguas, the capital of the province, is situated in the canton of Santiago, in a plain on the southern side of the Cordillera, eight miles northward of the Port of Montijo, about thirteen miles south-east of the village of Mesa, and forty west of the town of Natà. The exact period of its foundation is doubtful, as most of the old chroniclers confound it with Natà : it is highly probable that, like most of the adjacent places, it was built shortly after the conquest. The houses, nine hundred in number, are chiefly composed of wood, and, with a single exception, are one story high. Except two churches and an hospital, there are no public buildings of any importance. The principal streets run from north to south ; a great part of their pavement is of petrified wood—the *chumicos petrificados*

of the natives. Santiago, as the capital, is the residence of the governor and the chief judge of the province; the former, elected every four years, receives annually eighteen hundred dollars. The number of inhabitants is about five thousand, a great part of whom are whites. Their principal occupation is breeding cattle, manufacturing hammocks, and plaiting the so-called Panama hats. Many of the wealthier people are engaged in mining speculations. There is some nice scenery in the vicinity of the town. In the wet season the river Chorro forms a waterfall, which is overhung by graceful trees and surrounded by bold rocks, and produces a picturesque effect. In the bed of the river there are extensive layers of fossil sea-shells.

The principal villages of the canton are Calobre, Cañajas, Mesa, Mineral, Montijo, Palmas, Rio Jesus, Sonà, and Tolè. Palmas was founded in 1774 by monks, Rio Jesus in 1755. In the neighbourhood of the latter are the celebrated paradise-trees which I have described in Hooker's 'Journal of Botany.' Mineral, about twenty-two leagues from Santiago, was formerly of importance on account of its gold-mines, but has now sunk into insignificance. Calobre is famous for its hot springs. The town of Santafé, described by Herrera, was destroyed in 1805 by the Indians, and several of the other places mentioned by the same historian have disappeared without leaving a trace behind. Near Mesa—or "Mesita de Oro" as the village was called during the last century, on account of its prosperity—are the remains of a beautiful basaltic column. This column stood formerly on an eminence which overlooks

the adjacent country, but about seventy years ago it was thrown down by an earthquake, and broken into several pieces; it is sixteen feet in diameter, and its height when entire must have been about a hundred and fifty feet. The natives call it *Barca de Piedra*,—though it has not the slightest resemblance with a ship,—and believe it to have been built by the Indians in order to serve them as a watch-tower—a belief to which its peculiar formation and former position may have given rise*.

The province of Panama, the most important and populous district of the Isthmus, is situated to the east of Veraguas. The northern boundary is the Caribbean Sea, its western the province of Veraguas, and its southern the Pacific Ocean and the territory of Darien. It extends over a surface of about 9139 square miles, has a population of 10,494 inhabitants, and is composed of the cantons of Los Santos, Parita, Natà, Chorera, Portobelo, and Panama. The name "Panama" is of Indian derivation, and was at first applied to a small fishing village situated where at present the ruins of Panama Viejo are, was afterwards given to the town, and at last extended over the whole country.

The cantons of Los Santos and Parita occupy the little peninsula, of which Punta Mariato and Punta Mala form the southernmost points. Los Santos, having for its *cabecera* the village of the same name, is composed of the

* It is not improbable that the column was originally termed "*Balco de Piedra*," and that the name was afterwards corrupted into *Barca*. The letters *l* and *r* are constantly confounded by the Isthmians.

parishes of Pedasi, Poci, Tablas, and Los Santos, containing a population of 14,539. Parita is formed by the parishes of Macaracas, Minas, Ocu, Pesé, and Parita, and has 15,119 inhabitants; the *cabecera* is Parita. The people of both these cantons are considered the most industrious of the country.

The canton of Natà is that part of the province which touches Eastern Veraguas. It contains 19,610 inhabitants, and comprises the parishes of Anton, Olà, Pene nome, Santamaria, and Natà. The town of Natà, the principal place in the district, is interesting from being the oldest town of the American continent built by Europeans, having been founded as early as 1517 by the Licentiate Gaspar de Espinosa and several other gentlemen. Notwithstanding its age, it is but a small town. It is situated in a plain between the Rio Grande and Rio Chico de Natà, and has about eight hundred houses, two churches, irregular unpaved streets, and contains five thousand inhabitants. At the time of its foundation the surrounding district was occupied by a tribe of Indians, at the head of whom stood a chief called Natà. From this circumstance, and from its being founded by a party of gentlemen, the settlement received the name of Natà de los Cavalleros—an appellation it still retains. The principal villages of this canton are Santamaria and Anton. At the latter coconut palms are so numerous as from a distance to resemble a forest.

The canton of Chorera borders that of Natà, and contains 7559 inhabitants; the parishes belonging to it are Araján, Capira, Chame, Chorera, and San Carlos.

Chorera is the chief village of the canton, and numbers 2500 inhabitants. Having the advantage of a fine river for bathing, and a cool and salubrious climate during the summer, the place is much frequented by families from Panama, who repair thither for the restoration of their health, and rural enjoyment. During the wet season Chorera is very dirty, the mud and water in the streets being ankle-deep. Capira is a village of some extent, and produces coffee of superior quality. San Carlos, or Pueblo Nuevo de San Carlos, is a pleasing little village, situated on the Playa of Chirù. Chame is but a short distance from San Carlos, and has 1300 inhabitants; the name Chame was that of a chief who made some resistance at the time of the conquest. Arraijan is a small village, situated at about equal distances from Cruces and Chorera.

The canton of Portobelo, the north-west corner of the province of Panama, comprises the four parishes of Chagres, Minas, Palenque, and Portobelo. The town of Portobelo, the *cabecera* of the district, is situated in lat. $9^{\circ} 34' 29''$ north, long. $79^{\circ} 43' 40''$ west, close to the sea, at the foot of a high mountain which surrounds the whole port; it consists of a long street, circling round the bay, a few short ones branching off, and two squares, one in front of the treasury, the other before the church; the principal public buildings are the fortifications, the hospital, the treasury, and the church: but these, as well as the private houses, are in a very dilapidated state. Portobelo numbers about 1300 inhabitants, chiefly negroes and mulattoes; it has an excellent harbour, but, with this exception, there is nothing to recommend

it. The climate is the most unhealthy in the whole country, and has proved fatal to many Europeans; there is seldom a fine day,—the place is almost always enveloped in vapour, arising from the rank vegetation of the neighbourhood, or deluged with rain; the heat is so excessive, and the climate so noxious, that few white men have been able to live there for any time, and even some species of animals quickly degenerate. Formerly a paved causeway existed between Panama and Portobelo, but this is at present in a very bad condition; it has been broken up by the violent rains, and, being for the most part overgrown by bushes and high trees, it is with difficulty traversed on foot.

The harbour of Portobelo was discovered in the year 1501 by Columbus, but the town was not commenced until the reign of Philip II. Soon after its foundation it became of importance by being made the port through which all trade between Spain and Western America was carried on, and by the great annual fair held there. On account of these advantages Portobelo was looked upon with envy by other nations, and suffered frequent attacks; the first time by Francis Drake, in 1595, during the war between Philip II. of Spain and Elizabeth of England. It was sacked twice by the Buccaneers, in 1624 and 1673; and again, when in the reign of George II. war broke out between Great Britain and Spain, Portobelo was taken and nearly reduced to ashes by Admiral Vernon, on the 22nd of November, 1739. Nine years later, the Spanish galleon and the great fair were abolished, when Portobelo, which had always been dreaded on account of its climate, was almost deserted:

it fell never to rise again, for after the war of independence the traffic was conducted by way of Chagres, which, though not a regular harbour, has several advantages over Portobelo.

The town of Chagres is, like Portobelo, one of the most miserable and unhealthy in the country; it lies at the mouth of the river of the same name, in lat. $9^{\circ} 18' 6''$ north, long. $79^{\circ} 59' 2''$ west, and is guarded by the castle of San Lorenzo, a dark-looking fortification. This castle is situated on a high rock at the entrance of the river, and was destroyed in 1671 by command of Henry Morgan, but a few years after was rebuilt by the Spaniards. Chagres contains about one thousand inhabitants, nearly all of whom are negroes or people of a mixed origin. From the number of steam and sailing vessels repairing thither, Chagres, during the last few years, has become important, but there is little hope of its becoming a large town, even if the present mode of communication between the Atlantic and Pacific should be continued. The climate commits fearful ravages among new arrivals, especially the whites. The rainy season is prolonged to nine and even to ten months, and this alone will be a barrier against a permanent settlement of the Caucasian race. The houses of Chagres are slightly built,—mostly of the bark and leaves of palms.

The canton of Panama adjoins that of Portobelo and Chorera, and contains a population of 10,494 souls; it is divided into nine parishes, San Felipe, Santa Ana, Cruses, Chepo, Chiman, Gorgona, Pacora, San Juan, and Taboga. The city of Panamá, the capital of the province, and also the *cabecera* of the canton, was built in 1673,

two years after the destruction of the old town. Soon rising into importance through its favourable situation, it continued prosperous till the time of the abolition of the Galleon and Portobelo fair, when it became impoverished almost as suddenly as it had acquired its wealth: all the richer merchants left, most of the buildings fell into ruin, cattle grazed in the streets, the tops and walls of houses were overgrown with bushes and creepers, and several disastrous fires added to the mournful aspect of the city. The first of the conflagrations took place in 1737, the second in 1756, the third in 1781, and the fourth in 1821; the three latter were caused by accident, the first by incendiaries, natives of Guatemala. It is more than doubtful, if the Isthmus had remained under the despotic sway of Spain, whether the city of Panama would ever have risen again after its fall in the eighteenth century. The war of independence, and the great changes produced by it throughout Spanish America, were the causes of its revival: trade was opened, foreigners settled, representatives of different nations were appointed to reside at Panama, education began to spread, and thus the town gradually recovered. Nothing however has raised it more than the establishment of lines of steamers in the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans. Since the first appearance of these vessels, and the subsequent discovery of gold in California, the city has so much improved, and such great alterations have taken place, that one would hardly fancy it the same,—and the Isthmus, which was formerly merely a road subservient to the selfish policy of Spain, became from that period the highway of nations.

The city of Panama lies in lat. $8^{\circ} 56' 56''$ north, long. $79^{\circ} 31' 12''$ west, at the foot of the Cerro de Ancon, on a little peninsula connected towards the west with the mainland. It is divided into two parishes: that within the walls, the city, is called San Felipe; that without, the suburb, Santa Ana. Panama differs considerably from the other towns of Spanish America: its high buildings, tiled roofs, numerous churches, and massive walls, give it an air reminding one, at first sight, of a European town; on a closer inspection however the peculiarity of the old Spanish style becomes evident. San Felipe, the best and most regularly built part, is surrounded by walls and watch-towers, which are at present rather dilapidated; the fortifications are irregular and not strong, though the walls are high, the bastions having been constructed at various times, as the menaces of pirates and other enemies have suggested: the most modern seem to be those on the eastern and southern sides, erected in 1778. The city has four gates, two opening towards the sea, two towards the land; the traveller coming from Chagres enters by the western one, which was formerly strongly defended, and connected with the mainland by means of a draw-bridge. The principal streets run from west to east, and are crossed by others extending from north to south, from sea to sea, preserving a current of air, which greatly adds to the salubrity of the place. The streets are paved and regular, but rather narrow, seldom exceeding more than fifty feet in breadth; the pavements for foot-passengers are covered by the balconies of the houses, and a person may walk almost all over the town during a shower of rain without getting wet. There are

four public squares, three in San Felipe, and one in Santa Ana ; the principal is the Plaza del Catedral, situated nearly in the centre of the city ; its western side is formed by the cathedral and the Jesuits' College, its southern by the Town-hall, its northern by the "*Colegio*," and its eastern by private buildings.

Among the public buildings deserving of notice are the governor's house, the post-office, town-hall, custom-house, college, barracks, hospitals, cathedral, and convents. The buildings devoted—or rather formerly devoted—to religious purposes cover one-half of the superficial area of the city, a strong proof of the former wealth and influence of the place. The cathedral is a fine edifice, occupying nearly the whole western side of the Plaza del Catedral ; it is built in the old Spanish style, and has on its eastern facing two spires, and several statues, representing the Virgin Mary and the Apostles. It is rich in church ornaments ; the decorations are tasteless, and the paintings, excepting the portraits of the Panamanian bishops, which possess some historical interest, without any value. There are seven convents, six of which have partly fallen into decay ; only one, Concepcion, situated in the east end of the town, between San Francisco and San Domingo, is occupied, but in 1848 it contained only four nuns, who were all very old, and as no young ones are received the establishment will soon be discontinued. San Francisco, the most extensive of the convents, was inhabited as lately as 1821 by friars, who converted many of the Indians of Veraguas to Christianity ; at present it is used as store-rooms and stables, and nothing of it is in good

repair save the church. The convent of San Domingo is still more dilapidated, having only a small side-chapel preserved, in which two black women read evening prayers. In its old church, which is quite overgrown with creepers, is a remarkably straight arch, made of bricks, and extending from one side to the other. The old Jesuits' College is the finest ruin in the town; it was commenced in 1739, but was not completed in 1773, when the Society of Jesus was expelled from Spanish America, and it has never been finished; it is two stories high. The church attached to it is now used for public amusements, theatrical exhibitions, rope-dancers. The other monasteries, Merced, San Augustin, and San Juan de Dios, are also, with the exception of their churches, in ruins. The suburb has one church and a small chapel. There are two government hospitals: that destined for males is in the convent of San Juan de Dios, that intended for females is called San Tomas, and is situated in the suburb. During the last few years some American physicians have also established houses for the reception of the sick.

Most of the private buildings of San Felipe are constructed of stone, those of Santa Ana of wood. They are two stories high, surrounded by balconies, and have tiled roofs, the violence of the rains not permitting the use of flat ones. All have large doorways, sufficiently spacious to admit a person on horseback. The halls are small. Near the staircase is a door leading into the courtyard, and to the stables, the bath-room, and the well. In most houses the lower story is let to shop-keepers, spirit-sellers, and tradespeople; the first floor is inhabited by the servants,

and the upper, the most salubrious, by the landlord and his family. All the apartments are large and airy, and the drawing-rooms are generally thirty feet long, twenty-four feet wide, and twenty high. The floor is either of wood, brick, sand-stone, or marble. Every room has one or more folding-doors, opening towards the balcony, the wings having a shutter supplying the place of windows. Sometimes a pane of glass is inserted, but regular windows do not exist, and will probably never be introduced; they prevent a free current of air—an indispensable condition in so hot a climate. Besides the doors there are, higher up, smaller apertures, mostly in the shape of stars, by means of which a further reduction of the temperature is produced. The walls are from two feet to two feet six inches thick; they are decorated with pictures, crosses, figures of saints, etc., and are generally whitewashed, which, though depriving them of that aspect of comfort by which our papered rooms are distinguished, makes them look cool and prevents them from harbouring centipedes, scorpions, and other noxious animals. The balconies are from four to five feet wide, protected from sun and rain by the projecting roof, surrounded by wooden railings, and abundantly provided with flower-pots, containing roses, balsams, and carnations. In a shady corner stands the filtering-stone and several earthenware jars containing water, about which there is a degree of cleanliness not observed in any other part of the house. The furniture, which is very simple, is mostly imported either from Europe, North America, or China. In all the rooms are hammocks, in which the Panamians and the inhabitants of the Isthmus in general

may be seen swinging themselves for hours in succession.

Panama, especially the suburb of Santa Ana, is daily increasing in extent. The number of inhabitants is also augmenting: in 1843 the place counted no more than 4897, only one-tenth of which were white, the rest Indians, negroes, or people of mixed origin; at that time there were but fifteen foreigners. The population now amounts to upwards of 10,000. Their principal occupation is commerce, the transportation of goods across the country, and supplying the wants of passengers.

About a mile west of Panama is the Cerro de Ancon, which, according to Sir Edward Belcher, is 500 feet high. From the summit there is a fine panoramic view, including the city, the islands of the bay, the neighbouring plantations, the mountains towards Veraguas, the elevated chain between Portobelo and Panama, the Rio Grande, and the low lands towards Panama Viejo, the Chepo, and Pacora. At the foot of this hill are the Catholic and Protestant burial-grounds. At the latter only three persons had been interred in 1848; how many more have since been added! The Catholic burial-place is of an oblong shape, and has a high arched gateway, of modern construction and extremely tasteless; the Panamians expended on it a considerable sum, and think it a very elegant piece of architecture. Around the wall are sepulchres, in which the bodies of the wealthier are placed two years previously to being admitted into the churches of the town. Hardly any save the bodies of the rich are enclosed in coffins; most of the poorer inhabitants are merely wrapped in winding-sheets.

The ruins of Panama Viejo (Old Panama) lie about four miles to the eastward, and are at present quite deserted. The principal remains are those of a cathedral, a church, a bridge, and several watch-towers. The vicinity of Panama is very beautiful, especially at the place called Losaria, where many of the wealthier people have country residences.

The principal villages belonging to the canton of Panama are San Juan, Chepo, Gorgona, Cruces, and Taboga. The latter is situated on the island of the same name; Chepo on the river Bayano; while San Juan, Gorgona, and Cruces are built on the left bank of the Chagres. Gorgona is of very recent date; Cruces however was known in the time of Herrera, who calls it a "*venta*." In 1671 the Buccaneers found it a considerable village; since that period it has suffered several times from inundations and conflagrations; in 1828 nearly the whole village was destroyed by fire. Had it not a rival in Gorgona it would soon become a town. The two villages have each a church and several inns. The inhabitants are nearly all either owners of canoes and beasts of burden, or store-keepers, who take charge of goods, or *bogar*, persons working the canoes.

The territory of Darien is the fourth great political division of the Isthmus. It is bounded on the north by the Atlantic, on the south by the river San Juan, on the west by the Pacific and the province of Panama, and on the east by the Atrato. Including the Pearl Islands, which belong to its jurisdiction, Darien covers a superficial area of about 16,941 square miles. It contains the parishes of Chapigana, Islas del Istmo, Molineca, Pi-

nogana, Santamaria, Tucuti, and Yabisa. Yabisa, the *cabecera* of the district, contains 332 inhabitants, and is the residence of the Prefect, who receives an annual salary of a thousand dollars. Darien is principally inhabited by savage Indians, the number of whom is doubtful. Civilization is chiefly confined to the neighbourhood of the Gulf of San Miguel, where Yabisa and the other villages are situated. The number of the entire population now professing the Christian faith amounts to 3148, 1941 of whom belong to the Pearl Islands. Although it was in Darien that the first European settlements were made, yet our knowledge respecting this district is very limited. Since the time of Paterson no scientific man, except Dr. Cullen, has crossed the country, and our knowledge of it is chiefly derived from the writings of Wafer, Dampier, and Ringrove.