

**A TRIP TO BRITISH
HONDURAS, AND TO SAN
PEDRO, REPUBLIC OF
HONDURAS, PP. 1-123**

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A Trip to British Honduras, and to San Pedro, Republic of Honduras, pp. 1-123 by Charles Swett

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CHARLES SWETT

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A TRIP
TO
British Honduras,
AND TO
SAN PEDRO,
REPUBLIC OF HONDURAS.

BY CHARLES SWETT,

OF WARREN COUNTY, Miss.

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1868.

P R E F A C E.

As we have stated in "Prefatory Remarks" that we were opposed to emigration to Honduras, it may be necessary for us to say that we have, in the following account, given a description of what we saw, faithfully, and as far as possible without prejudice.

It was our intention to publish "Prefatory Remarks" at the time the article was written, (October 7, 1867,) but we reserved it for publication in connection with what we should see in Honduras, which is done without altering a word, or the erasure of a single line.

Warren Co., Miss.,
April, 1868. }

CHARLES SWETT.

Prefatory Remarks.

Several friends and relatives entertaining the idea of visiting Belize, (British Honduras), communicated their intentions to me and expressed a wish that I should accompany them, which I could not consent to do; but promised to think of the matter and to give them an answer before their departure, feeling satisfied they had not fully determined to go; but being assured that they would go I at last consented to accompany them, provided nothing should occur to prevent. If they go, it is for the purpose of endeavoring to convince themselves that it is a better country than this, and for the purpose of establishing themselves there if they find the country such as they believe it to be. If I go, it will be for the purpose of gratifying those who desire my company, and with no fixed determination to make it my home, but on the contrary, with every feeling of opposition to that portion of the earth's surface. We at present know but little of Belize, and even I may find sufficient inducement to go to that country; but at present, if asked whether I think it would be better to make the change, would answer with a decided negative. We have every reason to believe that country to be covered with jungle and lagoons, from which, the exhalation of phosphuretted and Carburetted hydrogen gas, consequent upon the decomposition of animal and vegetable matter, must be so great as almost to prevent the possibility of strangers escaping its influence, and suffering from a malaria that will produce remittent, intermittent and pernicious fevers. This it is reasonable to expect; and how many of those who must necessarily under-

go this acclimation will ever enjoy in future the health which was theirs in our own country ?

The latitude is further south and nearer the equator, and it is a well authenticated fact that it is more desirable in a Hygienic point of view to remove from a warm to a cold climate, in a majority of instances, than from a northern to a latitude nearer the equator.

Here most of us are acclimated, "and if taken sick we have physicians who are acquainted with the diseases of our section, and our peculiar idiosyncracies, and consequently there would be a better chance of our recovery than would be the case in another latitude, however skillful the treatment of our case might be, if unaccompanied by the circumstances above named. Here we have friends who will rejoice with us in our prosperity, and who will sympathize with us in our misfortunes, which we can not expect in a strange land. In a word, this is home ; a land that is ours ; doubly ours ; having been bequeathed to us by our forefathers, who sacrificed their lives in the war of the revolution, and by those who so recently died in the vain attempt to place our section in a position of independence. Should this country not be dearer than ever to us because of these reflections? Should we not remain here and keep forever green the graves of departed heroes, or should we desert a land that has been bought at such a price, and forget the suffering and privation of those who are now beyond reach of our sympathy, and whom no word of encouragement can reach, but whose memories we should cherish, and whose deeds we should keep forever fresh in our memories? Should we forget the midnight bivouac and scanty meal, with the cold wet ground for our bed and the canopy of heaven our only covering? the long and tiresome marches, through rain, snow and ice, with naked feet and ragged clothing? Should we

banish the recollection of all this from our minds, and leave blank the place now occupied by such hallowed memories? No, let us deliberate well before we leave our homes. It is a serious matter at any time, and particularly so at the present. It is a step that should not be taken without the most careful and exhaustive consideration, and until we are satisfied the change will be greatly to our advantage. Immediately after the close of the war, a distinguished confederate general, in a letter to myself, stated it to be his determination to go to Mexico should it be necessary for him to leave here, yet at the same time stated it to be his determination to remain here as long as he could, and said he would advise all to do so as long as it could be done with honor and safety.

At the time of receiving this letter I contemplated going to Mexico, but the whole current of my thoughts was changed, and I almost came to the positive conclusion to remain here as long as it could be done with "honor and safety." Since then, events have rapidly transpired which have been of a character to almost justify a determination to change, yet such was not my feeling at the time the contemplated trip was made known to me, nor is it at present; though, under a certain condition of things, any land might possibly be better than our own, which condition has not yet arrived, and I sincerely hope it may never be our misfortune to witness. Since the late war, thousands have left this country with the view to bettering their condition, and many more contemplate leaving, notwithstanding the fact that few, if any, of all who made the change have been able to render such an account of their new homes as to induce their friends to follow. Many have gone, and more will go without giving the subject the consideration it demands, but make the leap in the dark, and without calculating the result if they fail to