

whose deportment was most strictly decorous.

Of the Spanish merchants I can say nothing: it is very natural that, situated as they are, the arrival of so many English, and the consequent injury to their trade, cannot be pleasant to them.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Departure from Vera Cruz.—Number of Birds in the Bay of Campechy.—Havannah.—Azores or Western Isles.—Arrival at Portsmouth.—Medical Advice.

FOR several days after that fixed for our departure the wind had not been favorable for our leaving the anchorage, but on the morning of the 31st of August a gun announced the raising of the anchor, and the Phaeton was under sail before we were on board. What a change do ten minutes make in the situation of an Englishman, in a place like this, when he feels himself transported suddenly from the pestilential air of the most unhealthy place in the world, where he was surrounded by people by no means his friends, saw none but

Spaniards, Creoles, Indians, and Negroes, and heard nothing but their various jargons; but no sooner does he tread the deck of an English man of war and find himself in the midst of his countrymen, than distance and danger, black vomit and pirates, vanish in an instant, and he is already half at home in the sound of his native language, the welcome of the officers, and the rough jokes of the jovial crew!

A few days brought us off Campechy, but, owing to the shallowness of the water, we were obliged to cast anchor twenty-five miles from the town. Our captain, with some of the officers, went on shore on business, and to procure a supply of fresh provisions for the voyage. During their absence we were visited by great numbers of the smaller kinds of land birds, principally warblers and fly-catchers, which reached the ship in a very

exhausted state, on their migration from the north side of the Gulph of Mexico to the coast of Yucatan. The cabin was never without these pretty creatures, which entered the windows in pursuit of the flies, that were in great plenty. Some of them became familiar, remained undisturbed for many hours, and took the small chopped meat and water placed for them, affording me a better opportunity of observing their habits than I could have obtained on shore. The boys caught me twenty-five different species on the deck and rigging; but the attempts to keep them alive were unsuccessful, and I preserved them on the spot. Many were of great beauty and variety, and some undescribed. Among those known were the purple heron, common snipe, pigmy sandpiper, the lesser spotted rail, American chatterer,

orange and black warbler, and two kinds of swallows.

Not expecting the immediate return of the captain, I was employed in dredging for shells about a mile from the ship, accompanied by one of the officers, when to our surprise we observed her under way, in consequence of a signal from him, made at such a distance that his boat was not visible to us. He was on board in the evening, when we proceeded for the Havannah, and a few days' fine wind brought us under the guns of the celebrated Morro Castle, and we cast anchor in the beautiful harbour opposite the capital of Cuba, at which I landed in the evening with Dr. Mackie, and remained on shore ten days. The Havannah is so well known, that a description of it is unnecessary. I shall only say that the place itself, and the

manners of its inhabitants, present a very different appearance from those of any part of Mexico, although peopled from the same country. Its churches and public buildings must not be compared with those of the capital of New Spain, but its shops and streets exhibit more opulence. The ladies, elegantly dressed, are constantly seen at the windows on the ground floor, and in the evenings many hundreds of excellent one-horse carriages, like our covered gigs, driven by negroes in handsome liveries, are sported in the public rides and on the roads in the vicinity, filled with fashionably dressed persons of both sexes. The Botanic Garden near the city is a new establishment, finely laid out; and, although not yet finished, contains many curious plants and trees. On passing some low bushes, in a wet situation, my attention was attracted by the singular carved or

embossed appearance of the leaves; but on endeavoring to reach one, to examine it, I was greatly surprised at the whole disappearing in an instant, and discovering that the raised ornament was occasioned by a numerous family of beautiful little frogs, which had attached themselves to the foliage, and on my approach had leaped into the water.

The Bishop's Palace is recommended as deserving the attention of strangers. It is about three miles in the country, the situation very fine, and the road, through plantations of the cabbage tree, cocoa, date, and a species of bread-fruit, is delightful to an European; but the house and garden, with the exception of some noble clumps of bamboos, are not worth seeing. The markets produce many of the Mexican fruits, and a great variety of curious birds, but, unfortunately, all of them so much muti-

lated as not to be fit for preserving. The fishes are numerous; dolphin is commonly sold for the table, and considered a delicacy; land crabs are abundant in the market, and are good eating, and so is that elegant shell-fish the great *angel's wing pholas*, which is sold by the dozen, like oysters, at a very low price.

The slave trade is still continued here, but the slaves in the town appear to be well treated. The market for them is just without the city gates; and ships for procuring new captives from Africa are openly fitted out at Regla, a small town in the harbour. Several sailed during our stay, avowedly for that purpose, but we were informed that piracy was most probably their object—indeed many of the merchants here are very much slandered if they are not deeply concerned in both these kinds of transaction. The heat of the climate is excessive,

and a residence in the city considered very dangerous to Europeans. The streets are close, ill ventilated, and unpaved; during the heavy rains they are so flooded as to be almost impassable, except for the carriages before mentioned. The theatre is large, and in every department better than that of Mexico; and it was well attended on the only night I saw it. On the 28th we sailed for England, but meeting with contrary winds, and calms, we were obliged to put in at the Island of St. Michael's, one of the Azores, where we remained two days, taking in water, live oxen, and vegetables. St. Michael's is really a most charming place, and its principal town contains a number of English families. My reception here was very gratifying. Englishmen meet with the greatest hospitality and attention, the climate is like the finest part of Italy, and the markets abound with every thing

requisite for the enjoyment of life. I visited some of the extensive gardens, which produce the celebrated oranges for the supply of the English market. The wines made here nearly equal those of Madeira. I went to several of the Portuguese convents and monasteries. The nuns are celebrated for their artificial flowers, composed entirely of feathers; our young gentlemen purchased largely of them, and had much amusement in their bargains with the holy sisters, who received their coarse jokes on the state of perpetual celibacy with great good humour. Much as I longed for home, I could have spent some time here with pleasure. On leaving St. Michael's, we passed over the Island of Sabrina, which only a few years since rose suddenly out of the sea, to a considerable height, and after a short time again disappeared; it has now forty fathom water upon it. An English

gentleman, who was at St. Michael's at the time, told me that he went near it in a boat when it was rising, and that the heat of the water was so intense, that a great number of fishes killed by it were floating in all directions. We arrived at Spithead, and landed at Portsmouth on the 8th of November, after a delightful voyage, during which we had not lost a single man: the same good fortune attended my voyage out. I cannot close this little account without acknowledging the obligations I am under to Captain Sturt and the officers of H.M.S. Phaeton, to whose uniform politeness and attention I am indebted in a great degree for the safety of my collection, as well as for my personal comfort and convenience. Previous to my leaving England, I applied to my medical adviser, whose residence and experience in tropical climates I knew to be such as to warrant

implicit confidence in his instructions: from him I received general directions for the preservation of health and prevention of disease in the region I was about to visit.

These directions so fully answered the purpose intended, and were so much approved of by medical practitioners in the country, that, considering they may be beneficial to persons going out, I have no hesitation in giving them publicity; observing, that by attention to the simple rules recommended, both myself and son enjoyed uninterrupted good health, although I visited Vera Cruz and the Havannah in the sickly season.

MY DEAR SIR,—The instructions which I would wish you to observe have chiefly the two following objects in view—to pre-

serve your health, and to recover it if you become indisposed. To the former I will first draw your attention.

First,—*Your clothing* ought to be light, but not too cool, in a country which presents so great a variety of climate as the one you are about to visit. You ought to wear flannel next your skin, and your feet should be always kept dry and warm. A light, broad-brimmed hat will be the pleasantest to wear; but even with it you ought never to expose yourself to the sun. Wear always a light silk umbrella, as a shade from the sun's rays. Exposure to the sun in an intertropical climate is always hurtful to an European. If, owing either to the effects of a warm climate, or to the warmth occasioned by the flannel, the prickly heat should appear on the surface of your body, use no means to cure it, further than taking an aperient dose of

salts; for as long as it remains out, you have little chance of being seized by any other complaint. Remember always to change your clothes after the least degree of wet. If this precaution should at any time be out of your power, instead of it, or even in addition to it, drink large quantities of hot diluents, made still hotter with the addition of cayenne pepper.

Secondly,—*Sleep*.—You ought most carefully to avoid sleeping in low, damp, or marshy places. Sleep always, if you can, in the most elevated and dry situations and apartments; and never, if you can avoid it, in bed-rooms, the windows of which are in a direction that admits the *land wind*, more especially if that wind blow over neighbouring marshes or swamps. During the rainy season you should have a fire at night in your room. Always take care that the bed on which you rest is dry and well