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LETTER I.

To F. B. L.

I RESUME my correspondence with you, and herewith send you a few sheets containing a chronicle of my vernal rambles in New Spain.

The present recital introduces you to the same principal dramatis personæ, and opens, where my last closed,—on board the goelette Halcyon, in the Gulf of Mexico; somewhere about latitude 28° north, longitude 92° west, or within a hundred miles, more or less, of the tropic of Cancer. It was the fifteenth of January, 1834; wind from the eastward, light but steady; sky serene, and every prospect of a fair and fortunate voyage. The distance from the Balize lighthouse at the entrance of the Mississippi, to the Bar of Tampico, towards which the head of our little vessel was directed, is about six hundred miles.

From this date, up to the fourth day at noon,—so favourable were the auspices under which our voyage was continued, always excepting the confined position, sea-sickness, and the bad company on board,—we never

shifted a sail. They may really be said to have been *halcyon* days. We were then by computation, a little more than forty miles from our port. Towards evening it fell calm; and, during the succeeding night, the stars, and the moon in her second quarter, glistened upon the deck, as it swam with the heavy dew of the tropics.

But that you may better enter into the state of our feelings, and of our anticipations at this juncture, I offer you the following description of our position.

The *Halcyon* was a small, two-masted vessel, of but trifling burden, though, in fact, of far too great a draught for the trade in which it was engaged, as will be seen hereafter. The peculiar details of the rig I spare you; first, because you would hardly be the wiser for them, and secondly, because I have forgotten them. Our freight below deck consisted of *notions*, or a mixed cargo of European and American manufacture, suited to the Mexican market. The hold was gorged to the hatches; the forward deck encumbered with two large piles of merchandize and lumber, and the cabins, fore and aft, were all filled to a certain extent, much to the discomfort of the live stock on board, under which head our trio, and about forty passengers,—inclusive of a woman and child, and exclusive of half a dozen hands attached to the vessel,—must be comprised.

The low after-cabin measured about twelve feet by eight. It was furnished with four confined double berths, each containing a dirty mattress, a blanket,

and, on an average, five hundred cockroaches and other creepers. Half a dozen passengers might have been accommodated with some decency in this den; nevertheless, as it was, it was devoted to the free use of five and twenty. In brief, the manner in which the vessel was crammed to repletion with live and dead stock, to the exclusion of any chance of ease, was discreditable to the owners and officers of the ship. But what could we expect from beings such as we now had to deal with!

The day spent at anchor, within the bar of the Mississippi, had given us some foretaste of our position, and of the character of those among whom we were thrown; and during the succeeding days, we had ample time for closer observation.

As to nations and pursuits, there was distinction enough among the forty souls on board: as to character, one term would suffice; they were rogues all,—ourselves excluded. De Vignes, the captain, was a Provençal, the same, who, if report said true, commanded the *Calypso* slave-ship, with three hundred slaves on board, which was captured by an English cruiser off Matanzas. Within sight of his port, his evil star prevailed: he was observed and chased,—was obliged to run his ship aground, and only escaped certain hanging, by leaping overboard, and swimming for his life to the shore. Though a slave-dealer and excessively choleric, he was not without his good points. When not irritated, he might be termed

good-natured, and evinced generous and charitable feelings. He was doubtless an excellent seaman. His general manner, however, gave you the impression of his being soured by adversity, and by a constant struggle with misfortune. Among the crew under his command, you might enumerate probably as many nations as individuals; and nothing could be more amusing than to hear the orders, whenever he was in a bustle, given and responded to in English, Spanish, and French.

Among those who were entitled by right of payment, to the same accommodation as ourselves,—with exception of the special enjoyment of the berths and cockroaches, which we had timely secured,—there were characters such as would have made the fortune of any of the present herd of tale-weavers for the annuals and magazines. I cannot linger, however, with either Don Pablo, a fat old Spaniard, full of conceits and odd scraps of songs, going to Mexico to seek his fortune, with a good chance of being hung as a Guachupin; or Don Garcia, an exiled Mexican officer, of Iturbide's party, repairing secretly thither with reasonable expectation of being discovered and shot;—or Cortina, the captain who had lost his ship;—or Celestina, the *farceur* of the company. Neither can I give you the history of the conjuror on board; nor describe the boisterous singing and gaming, the impure orgies and impious airs of the *mauvais sujets*, French, Spanish, German; nor give the history of the fair Creole emi-

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THIRTY years have now elapsed since the beginning of the presidential campaign which culminated in the most remarkable electoral controversy in the history of popular government. As yet, however, no adequate account of this has been published, and as it has seemed that there is need for a work of this character, the present book is the result of an effort to supply it.

The volume is to a great extent based on material which has been gathered from the richest of all sources, such as the proceedings before the electoral commission and the various investigating committees, as well as the Congressional Debates for the period, and much similar data.

To the handling of this subject the author has devoted an enormous amount of the best work of a specially trained historical student's mind, and while his method is highly complete in a technical way, showing thorough scholarship, his style is also bright, picturesque, and interesting, demonstrating not only that he has collected his materials with the highest degree of thoroughness, but also that he possesses the ability to co-ordinate the same and thus furnish to his readers something more than the mere building materials of history—a finished

historical construction. The author's task was very difficult. It is practically safe to assert that up to ten years ago it would have been impossible, even with the best will in the world, to make so unbiased and thorough a study of the question as Mr. Haworth has done, and it would seem equally certain that at no time in the future will it be possible to secure such *personal* assistance as has been given to Mr. Haworth by a large number of parties directly connected in some way with one side or the other of this controversy.

Some of these men who were consulted by the author have already passed away, and others will soon disappear from the stage, and while to the handling of so important a subject in the strictly historical spirit the *personal* element should not be given undue prominence, yet it is quite certain that much light can be shed by the proper use of such information at the hands of one possessed of the requisite depth of knowledge and the impartiality of spirit to handle it wisely.

In conclusion may we say that we regard this as quite the most important historical monograph that has appeared in many years.

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grating from New Orleans, with her squalling child, under the protection of a fat and portly schoolmaster of Tamaulipas, jealous and suspicious of every man on board. One personage, however, was too striking not to be singled out.

A tall athletic figure, with strongly-marked features; a countenance roughened with the signs of long addiction to a life of passion and adventure; shabby travel-worn habiliments, and a slouched hat, under which he could, when occasion suited, throw his changeful features into shadows,—indicated the bravo, *soi disant* Monsieur le Marquis de Maison Rouge, of the ancient and noble house of Maison Rouge de Perpignan. According to his own account, he had been born and bred in Louisiana, and had been cheated of some hundred thousand million acres of fat and fertile land in that State, his lawful patrimony. He had been compelled by a stern and uncivil guardian to study civil engineering, and, according to his own testimony, with considerable success. Subsequently he had been taken prisoner by the English, when acting as sentinel in the marshes, at the time of the attack upon New Orleans. Whether his brain and his morals had become unsettled by a knock on the head from the butt end of a musket, which he had received on this occasion, and had not yet digested, I cannot say; but it was evident that he had never acted like a man of education, breeding, or noble birth since. He had adopted the creed of Sardanapalus; and at New Orleans, in the Attakapas, at the Havanna, in the Islands and on the

Main, had led, for years, a shameless life of sin and crime. As he acquired gold, he spent it in brawls and violence. His person bore the marks of the cutting and stabbing frays in which he had often been an actor, and not unfrequently a victim. Now, penniless, he was going to Mexico, to make his fortune in some wild speculation, in reference to which he could neither point out the means by which it was to be set on foot, nor the ultimate ends which were to be gained. When not excited, he was good tempered, and his voice was one of the most musical I ever heard. When conversing, which he did at times most agreeably and well, you could hardly have believed that those bland tones were the production of such a stormy machine; or that the same lips could pour forth that uncontrolled torrent of impure language, in hot vehemence of rage, when the possessor was under the influence of passion. Never did I see before me an example like that here afforded, of the wakefulness of conscience, while the body slept. He never gave himself up to rest like other men. It seemed that his nerves were never unbraced, and his muscles never in complete repose,—that the bow was never unstrung. The first impulse of his muscular arm on being disturbed, was to place itself in a position to guard the body; the first expression of his lineaments was that of suspicion. He never seemed to dream of his innocent childhood, but always of the scenes of his mispent and stormy manhood, and they truly were not calculated to lull his slumbers.

Thus crowded together and surrounded, it was a

blessing to be favoured by wind and weather, and to have a reasonable hope of a speedy termination to our voyage. The meals, which occurred twice a day, were hasty and rude repasts, of which, hunger compelling, we all partook, standing round the raised roof of the after-cabin; below decks, it would have been impossible to have assisted at them.

Sunday was, of course, in no wise distinguished from ordinary days, by greater propriety of demeanour or calmer temper of mind. We were quite beyond the Sabbath: and the only thing which marked that such a day was entered on the log, was, a quarrel, knife in hand, between the supervisor of provisions and the cook, arising from a claim to the honour of mixing the Sunday's pudding, upon which each insisted. I forget who gained the victory ultimately, but I remember that the pudding was very badly mixed, and as tough as parchment.

The morning of the fifth day after quitting the Balize, as I have related, it fell calm. A golden mist hovered over the surface of the sea, and the green colour of its waters betokened our having come upon soundings. The weather, as the day advanced, maintained the same character. Portuguese-men-of-war floated by hundreds about the goelette; and whenever the white vapours, in which the horizon was swathed, broke in our vicinity, and the sunlight burst upon us, the air was delicious. The state of inaction, however, was disagreeable, and the constant jar of what our