

My cursory account of Yucatan, and its chief port, Campeachy, concluded, I will proceed to give you some jottings of our perambulations and investigations here, commencing with extracts from H—'s letters; after which, I hope my next accounts will be of Vera Cruz and Mexico.

## LETTER XII.

CAMPEACHY.

*Don Pedro's Hotel.**Campeachy, 3rd February, 1849.*

From the jetty of the Campeachy harbour, we proceeded immediately to the house of Mr. Gutierrez who received us very kindly; and while he got all the accounts of our disaster, etc. from the gentlemen, I was left to talk (?), as best I might, with his handsome wife, whom I like much.

When the gentlemen had concluded their business with Mr. G—, I accompanied them to the only hotel in Campeachy; and leaving others to arrange about beds, I proceeded with Mr. Molesworth to the kitchen, where we found some Creole mulatto as well as Indian women making chocolate. By means of signs and dumb shew, as we sat down among these "yellow gals," we soon got some of the delicious beverage in the highest perfection.



There was a scarcity of beds from all the passengers having come on shore, although the captain and officers slept on board, with a view to keep the men in order. "Don Pedro," the landlord of the hotel, took for us an empty house, just opposite to his inn, and had beds put into it. When I got to my room, I thought it looked rather prison-like: stone floor, windows unglazed, and merely iron bars or grating, with no furniture except my little low camp-bed. Every thing appeared strange; and what with the change to sleeping on land, (for this was the first time I had slept on shore, since I left England)—dogs barking, mosquitos humming, church bells ringing, I was prevented from having much repose. At seven in the morning, a mulatto girl brought me a cup of chocolate, and then I got up. There was a great deal done during the day—luggage to be examined, arrangements for many of our *compagnons de voyage* proceeding to their several destinations, letters to be written, etc. With some difficulty I found pen and paper, and in the midst of hubbub and bustle I just contrived to write a few words home.

Next day, letters were written to Captain Sturdee and others, as you will hear; and that

morning (the 21st) those who were in a great hurry, and did not mind inconvenience, left us by a small vessel sailing for Vera Cruz. In the course of the afternoon, all the officers, who had been most kind and attentive to us throughout, came to take leave. Among them was the doctor, a universal favourite on account of his happy temper and many pleasing qualities. As one instance, he made us laugh by his own account of his letter to his mother (whom he called "a woman of strong mind"), in which, he said, he had simply told her that "he was quite well, quite safe, and very dirty!"

At eight in the evening we walked to the mole with Captain Sturdee, Mr. Lawrence, and Lieutenant Molesworth, to see them off. I was of course sorry to part with friends who had not only done so much towards diminishing our discomforts, and cheering us throughout, but whose friendship we had learned so thoroughly to appreciate.

After watching the boat out, we returned to our now comparatively quiet dwelling-place.

I am afraid, by the time you get thus far,\* you will, like myself, be tired of my long stories, so

\* The long account of Perez accompanied this letter.



I will cut short our last fortnight's doings, leaving you, if dissatisfied, to peruse another full, true, and particular account which now goes forward, although I myself have not seen it.

As soon as we had dispatched our letters, and seen our friends off, we returned to make the salon of a second house (to which we had moved), more comfortable; and, with the help of our kind friends, Mr. and Mrs. Gutierrez, we succeeded *à merveille*. The large front room was furnished with tables and chairs as a drawing room, and the two smaller ones were made much more comfortable, though, even now, my father's dressing table is the half of an old folding-door supported on chairs. This was a contrivance of Mr. Molesworth, and as he put it, so it has remained. The drawing room has *no* window, so that we sit with the door open all day, and at night we sit *at* it, never shutting it up before half past ten. The lower classes here are honest, civil, and obliging. We hear that robberies are unknown. The common orders have another favourable trait, which is their extreme cleanliness. The general dress is entirely white, which, being clean, has a very pretty effect. The women wear a white petticoat, the bottom of

which is embroidered in some bright colour or colours, and *over* the petticoat is a *chemise* embroidered round the edges in the same way. The neck and arms are bare, but when out of doors, a scarf, (*generally* white too,) is worn over the head, the end being crossed on the bosom, and thrown gracefully round the left shoulder. The hair is put off their face, and hangs down the back in one thick plait; they stick a large comb on the crown of their heads, which keeps up the *rebozo* or scarf. When they want to be fine, they wear a coloured muslin petticoat with one small flounce round the bottom of it. Shoes are sometimes, and stockings always dispensed with, while, on grand occasions, they wear white or light coloured slippers. The men have a variety of costumes; but the one most general consists of very loose and rather short white cotton drawers with a little short and generally embroidered shirt *over* them. The the higher classes dress of course more or less like Europeans, except that the former *always* wear low dresses and short sleeves, with a handkerchief, (*generally* a *foulard*,) over their neck. They don't wear anything on their heads when out of doors, but throw a light shawl over their shoulders.



This is a curious-looking town. The low houses (few having more than a ground floor), the bright colours they give them exteriorly, the windows without glass, make the streets look odd to me. There is no beach here, which is a pity; but we have some pretty drives in the neighbourhood. We have walked, too, round the ramparts, whence we got a good view of the whole place.

On the 24th, those of our late fellow passengers who were bound for New Orleans, left in a small vessel sailing for that port, and we embraced the opportunity of writing to England.

25th. We all went to see the Campéché Museum, a collection of natural curiosities, Yucatan antiquities, etc., made by two old priests (brothers), to whom it belongs. The shells are very fine, and most beautifully arranged. I thought the old gentlemen themselves the most interesting curiosities there; but you will hear more of the Padres Camacho and their museum elsewhere.

In the evening we took a walk, and called on Mr. Gutierrez. The ladies here make all their visits after six in the evening, when they dress, as if for a ball, with flowers in their hair, and fans in their hands.

On the 26th we walked to the Alameda, or public promenade, which is just a straight line, with orange-trees on either side. We hardly saw a soul in it; so we continued our walk till we came to a *quinta*, at the great gate of which we knocked, and asked if we might see it. Having received a satisfactory answer, we went in, and found it belonged to a Spanish, or rather *Campechano* gentleman, with the very Scotch patronymic of Mac Gregor! We enjoyed a stroll in the garden very much; had some beautiful flowers given to us; and with these we returned to our "home."

Next day my father was laid up with violent pains, still the lingering effects of his fall. He was confined to bed for two days, but is now better.

On the morning of the 29th, we went to look at the theatre, and were surprised to find it much larger and handsomer than we could at all have anticipated. At present there are no dramatic performances; but a ball once a week is given in it.

On the 30th, we took a drive in a *volante* (an open carriage on two high wheels, the driver



riding postillion), and saw another fine *quinta*. In the evening we had a visit from Madame Gutierrez and her sister-in-law.

Next evening, 31st, we went to the Spanish Consul's, who has two or three pretty daughters. We had some music; and, as they had never seen the Polka in Campeachy, they begged we would show them what it was. So Herr D— and I danced it! after which, we had Spanish waltzes, etc. All this time other visitors kept coming in, making their complimentary calls, and retiring or staying, according as they best liked. We took our departure early, as I could not speak to them, although they were very good-natured, in trying to make me understand them.

Next morning, the 31st, at six o'clock, we drove to a village called Lerma. It is a pretty drive, about three or four miles along the coast, and I much enjoyed the cool morning air. We picked up some shells and sea-weed, and, taking a different road home, returned in time for breakfast.

February 3rd. This morning the owner of the *Rafacla* sent to let us know that she would probably sail for Vera Cruz to-morrow evening, although we are since told that we shall not sail

till Monday morning. We began, however, to make preparations for leaving, packing and making one or two purchases of curiosities, such as hammocks, which they make very nicely here, a Campeachy dress, etc. We had all our packing to do over again, for everything having suffered more or less damage in the wreck, we had taken out all our clothes, to see what we could make of them.

Yesterday evening we went to the theatre, to see the ball, M. Gutierrez having kindly offered us his box. He and Madame G. called for us, and we all *walked* together to the place of amusement. The ladies, in some cases, were really nicely dressed, except that none of them, save those of our own party, wore gloves. They wore coloured dresses, which, I suppose, they preferred to white, which is so very common here. The gentlemen wore gloves, but either black or very dark coloured! The dances were quadrilles, Spanish country dances, and waltzes. What struck me most about the dancing in general was, the total silence that reigned. No one seemed to speak to another, all went through the dance in a grave and serious manner; and, having finished, each *cavallero* handed



his partner to her seat, he himself retiring to have a *cigarette* between the dances. So that it appeared to me pretty clear that the Campeachy young ladies go to balls to dance—but only and exclusively to dance. We retired early; but after being much amused and gratified.

On the whole, we have spent a pleasant time here, and on all sides, but especially from our more intimate friends, Mr. and Madame Gutierrez and family, we have experienced much kindness and received many attentions.

## LETTER XIII.

THE COMMANDER, THE OFFICERS, AND THE  
VOLUNTEER.

*Yucatan, 22nd January, 1849.*

THE day after our arrival at Campeachy, on the 18th instant, a meeting of all our passengers took place, at eleven in the morning, myself in the chair; when I explained, both in English and Spanish, the expediency and duty on our part, before we began to disperse, of coming to a general understanding on three points:—first, Whether we should not address a letter to Captain Sturdee on the loss of the *Forth*; secondly, How we should collect the money necessary to defray the expenses incurred since the loss of the vessel, when the Steam Company ceased to have any responsibility towards us; and thirdly, What steps ought to be taken for the purpose of getting to our respective destinations. I proposed that a Committee should be named to act for the body at large; and this