

smoked their cigars while he declaimed, with his vehement but expressive gesticulations. The priest, — who affirmed he had nearly three hundred doubloons (£1,000) abstracted from his portmanteau, after the wreck—was, I fancy, a *rich* priest, and both he and his companion (they came on board at Havana, you may recollect,) being greatly addicted to taciturnity, is all I can say, for I know nothing farther of either. They were quiet and resigned during the shipwreck.

Thus were the Forth's passengers gradually dispersed. By the *Rafacla*, berths were taken for Monsieur and Madame D— and child: Monsieur A— and his *factotum*, Pedro; Monsieur M— (from Havana); the celebrated Herr F. von Kriesmar; Herr D—, one of our pleasantest friends; young Jenkins, who had enlisted himself under our banners; Mr. P—, a steerage passenger; and finally, for H— and myself. Mr. C—, the German Daguerreotype artist, with his wife, determined to settle, for a season, at Campeachy; he himself, in the first place, returning to the Island of Perez and the wreck, in the hope of recovering from it part of his property, which, unfortunately, constituted his whole stock in trade.

## LETTER XV.

THE BROTHERS CAMACHO.

*Campeachy, 28th Jan. to 3rd Feb., 1849.*

I wish to separate from my further account of Campeachy, in this short letter, some notice of two remarkable brothers, whose acquaintance I made there, considering that they are well entitled to stand out in broad relief among the other "lions" of the place. They appeared to me certainly to constitute the most remarkable social feature of the city wherein they have fixed their final abode on this side the grave.

These brothers—I mean brothers by blood—are *monks*, and Spanish-born. In them, however, we find no trace of the austerity of the cloister. The eldest, about fifty, is the more entertaining; the younger, somewhere about forty-five, the more interesting of the two. Their fraternal affection

forms the most beautiful trait in their characters; and I do believe that the demise of the one would be the death-blow of the other. The elder we found to be overflowing with animal spirits. In his person, he is somewhat plump, and of a clear, ruddy complexion. Then he is amazingly good-tempered, inclining to be garrulous; facetious in his matter; animated in his manner. The younger forms a striking contrast to the elder—tall, thin, and pale; his face, though emaciated, is of an expression so full of meekness, gentleness, and thoughtful intelligence, that you could not contemplate his features, without secret pleasure. And, in low, soft tones, he speaks so mildly and quietly; his saddened eye beams with so much innate goodness, that, when a smile lights up his countenance, your first impulse is inwardly to say—Behold a saint indeed!

The brothers Camacho had travelled over the greater part of Europe, and throughout were favourably known as scientific and learned men. But they apparently became tired of a wandering life; they came at last to Campeachy, and, pleased with the fine climate, and with the character of the kind-hearted and unsophisticated inhabitants,

there they resolved to plant their fig-tree, and sit under it for the remainder of their lives.

Their worth was very soon appreciated in Campeachy. The cure of a limited number of the faithful, with a small chapel, was immediately given to them, and an old mansion hard by was provided for them: there they have remained, beloved by their flock, and esteemed by all, for years; and there they mean to end their days. Indeed, it would be a mournful day for Campeachy, were the brothers Camacho to take their departure, otherwise than in the ripeness of years, by the common course of nature.

Such, in hasty sketch, are "*los buenos Hermanos los Padres Camacho*"; and their pursuits are analogous to their respective characters. They equally attend to the service of their little church; they equally care for their little flock; and they are equally zealous in tending the poor, the sick, and the broken in spirit. But all this done, a great deal of spare time still remains on their hands for instruction and amusement, and good use they always make of it; the principal result of their labours being a museum—"the Museum of the Padres Camacho," a very beautiful collection of Yucatan antiquities and objects of Natural History.

The elder Camacho is the principal collector; the younger passionately pursues the science of mechanics. The senior is an indefatigable antiquarian, archæologist, and naturalist. The junior is an enthusiastic mechanic, and a votary of science. The one runs about collecting shells, coins, anatomical remains, antique specimens, minerals, ancient implements of war, skulls (he is a phrenologist), books and bindings, medals, fossils, everything he can lay his hand on that is curious, rare, or antique. The other sits at home (except when his religious and charitable duties, or his brother's collecting mania call him out), poring over mechanical and scientific inventions. Among a variety of labours, I may mention a complete printing press (which he made himself), types, and all, without aid and with rough tools; and from his press (the Padre being of course his own printer), issue homilies, prayers, and instructive pieces, which are distributed among the people, and gladly received.

Some two or three years ago an artist came to Campeachy, to take Daguerreotype likenesses, and he refused to show the Padre Camacho the *interior* machinery, alleging that it would amuse him to

find out the secret of it himself. The Padre's first attempt was on an old Havana cigar-box; and he showed us all his successive efforts, ending in mahogany, from which, at last, he obtained capital likenesses. He made an eight-day clock, of complicated machinery, with curious figures to strike the hours and chimes. And in this way he is constantly engaged in mechanical or scientific pursuits.

The collection of shells in Padre Camacho's Museum is rare, beautiful, extensive, and picturesquely arranged. The shells are worked into a grotto-like conformation, occupying about one-half the room (the Museum is fitted up in two rooms of the Padre's rumbling old house); and they consist of an immense number of specimens, of every class and kind, each forming a compact section or bed of its own, and harmonising prettily with the whole. Round about, on the walls and shelves, are dessicated fish, beetles, and other objects of natural history. Many of the shells have been gathered by the Padres themselves (for their pleasure excursions are in canoes along the shores of the bay, or beyond it); many are presented by numerous sub-contributors; still more

are brought to them by grateful Indians and poor fishermen; the elder Padre *buying* from these classes, whenever the generally scanty state of his exchequer will allow.

The other specimens are not on so extensive a scale as the shells; but they are, notwithstanding, various, interesting, and original; nay, some of them very valuable. They have many highly-curious architectural remains from the celebrated ruins of Uzmál, in Yucatan, and Palénqué, in Tabasco. With such specimens, the English archæologist has been made well acquainted, by Mr. Stephens, in the popular volume which, a few years ago, he published. Still more interesting and complete is the collection illustrative of the arts and religion of the Indians of the whole peninsula, extending to Guatemala and Mexico; and the pleasantest part of all is, that each relique, image, coin, or other object of antiquarian research, has its own particular history, which Padre Camacho (the elder) gives with the greatest *gusto*. Among other things lately sent to him, is a small box, containing some of the calcined bones of an unhappy man who was publicly burnt alive by the Indians, in the course of the war last year; whence

the Padre was led to give me many details of an appalling nature, touching the cruelties which had, during the course of the rising, been perpetrated by the Indians on the whites. These barbarities were, most probably, not without anterior provocation, and certainly have led to subsequent retaliations.

I have only to speak farther of the parsonage in which the brothers Camacho are located. When they took up their abode in it, the house wanted many repairs; but it received none, and it has never been touched since. It is half a ruin, an antiquarian ruin, dear to the brothers as it now stands. The elder will not have the cobwebs removed from his museum, and the younger does not like his *atelier* to be disturbed. Then we saw lying in the back court huge stones, part of the thick and once massive, but now mouldering, walls which ought to protect the house. The padres like to see the stones lying in their place, among a little wilderness of shrubs, undisturbed by the gardener's pruning hook. A favourite monkey disports among the ruins; and no house-dog's bark disturbs their rest at night.

One more trait of these singular, but amiable and interesting brothers. They affect, with pleasant raillery, to laugh at each other's tastes. They tell you of their *petites misères*. "If my brother," says the eldest, "wants to boil some glue, he seizes hold of one of my ancient Indian pots, or of some beautiful, large, strong shell, and these he mercilessly destroys for me, and all for some foolish piece of mechanical work which nobody cares a straw for." The younger smiles. "Well, brother," he answers, "what are your bits of coarse Indian baked clay, or your big shells good for, if not as kitchen utensils? But when you take my best tools to clean out an oyster, or scrape some barbarous image, I may indeed feel some pain."

I stood, towards the close of our pleasant visit, alone with the senior brother Camacho. "Ya veo, padre," I said, "que V. y su Señor Hermano se quieren mucho."—"Es tanto," he replied with vivacity, "que ya toca en debilidad."—That is—the two brothers loved each other so much, that their affection, as the elder would have me believe, bordered on weakness. How amiable

such a weakness! And, at their age, or indeed of any other age, how rare also, and how beautiful!

"Why, Señor Robertson," continued the padre, "if my brother were to say to me: 'Cast your museum into the street,' in a moment there it should go! We have here but one *cōfré* (trunk); we use its contents, so far as they mutually suit us, in common. If my brother has any money, I go to the *cōfré*, take what I want, and never think of telling him. He does the same with mine. We have neither affections nor interests in this world, separate from each other."

We spent four hours with the padres at this our first visit, and they pressed me to make their "*pobre casa*"—their poor house—my own. I was delighted with them, and with every thing around them; and I must observe that they not only gave me all their details in Spanish, but rendered them to H—in French, as good humouredly as if they were doing it for the first time.

Long may these best of brothers and of men live—respected and beloved! Long may they enjoy the delights which flow from so hallowed a

friendship as is theirs for each other! And long may they live to show to others, as they did to us, that it is not always under the gaze of the busy world, that the highest vocations of man may be brought into the most perfect action; that it is not impossible that the nearest approach to happiness may be found, by cultivating, unseen, the best and purest affections of the soul!

## LETTER XVI.

CAMPEACHY CONCLUDED.

*Campeachy, 28th January,  
to 3rd February, 1849.*

My twelfth letter brings my memoranda down to the 21st of January, when we parted with the greater, and (with one exception) the better part of our fellow-passengers.

I have said that the nights at Campeachy are beautiful, and as far as I saw, so were all the days: rather uncomfortably warm from 10 A.M. to 2 or 3 P.M., even when we were there; and considering that that was, as a lady most seriously said to me, "*en el rigor del invierno*"—in the depth of winter, I am led to conclude that at "the height of summer," the heat during the middle of the day must be something terrific. But all the year round, I understand, the mornings and evenings are pleasant; in winter they are certainly delicious.