

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.



So we went out in the morning, stayed at home during the heat of the day, walked or drove out in the afternoon, and then, either seated on chairs placed on the *trottoir* at our door, or inside, with our door wide open; we passed the evening till it verged upon midnight.

We had made our "home" of a larger habitation in a quiet corner, near the principal church, and within a stone-cast of Don Pedro's hotel. In two days it was transformed into a somewhat pretentious residence. On Monday (the 22nd) several dark urchins began to pop in upon us, some with chairs, others with *esquineras* (ornamental tables for the four corners of the room); one with plated candlesticks, another with cut crystal shades, and so forth. Then one fellow, stouter than the others, brought a handsome mirror, thus gradually filling our *sala* with necessary as well as ornamental furniture. All was sent by our kind friends Mr. and Mrs. Gutierrez; and then the renowned Don Pedro, our hotel-keeper (we were still an off-shoot of his establishment), felt his *amour propre* touched. So he sent us a splendid marble slab table for the centre of our great room, card tables, more chairs (" *muy lindas! muy lindas!*" as he called them,

"beautiful! beautiful!"), mosquito curtains, etc. We had cut decanters, glasses, silver-lid jugs, plates, "monkeys" (to keep the water cool), bedroom furniture, every thing. And after H— had arranged all in due order (our various vases shewing a magnificent display of flowers, gathered in the open air, "in the depth of winter!"), we felt we had made a wonderful change from Perez Island and the "Bella Isabel" to "our house" in Campeachy.

We were assiduously attended *at home* by Don Pedro's staff of servants. Mrs. Gutierrez sent us many delicacies; among others, every morning, at seven o'clock precisely, a little black page was at our door with a *posillo de chocolate* for the *Niña*.\* At the hotel we only dined; for after the first few days Don Pedro provided breakfast for us at home.

On Monday, still the 22nd, Herr D— prevailed on me to allow him to drive H— and myself in a phaeton two or three miles out of the town. The country all around Campeachy is pretty and picturesque; some parts very highly so: green

\* *Niña*: literally "a female child," but conventionally "a young lady."



trees every where; and thus we found it after passing through the *puerta* or gate of Guadalupe. But the hovels and their inmates squatting about in all directions, as we got to the outskirts of the intramural town, above all the poor and degraded Indians who can scarcely be called better than the beasts of burthen of the country, and whom you constantly meet bending under their loads, are anything but agreeable objects in the picture.

The country was fine—the road was the reverse. The one which Mr. D— chose (for he soon got entangled in crosses and lanes), was an ugly continuation of land reefs, scarcely less dangerous than those of the Alacranes. Up and down, swinging, creaking, bumping, slowly we advanced in our crazy old phaeton, till I veritably began to quake for our limbs, if not for our lives. It grew quite dark upon us, and I could stand it no longer. So I hired an Indian *pilot* on the way, who presently steered us into less dangerous ground, I walking ahead, looking out for the rocks; and under this new guidance, I was glad to get home at eight instead of six o'clock as we had proposed.

On Tuesday, the burning sun kept us within doors till the afternoon, when the ever-attentive

Don Pedro volunteered to procure for us from the commandant, the necessary permission to walk round the rampart of the city, with mine host himself as our cicerone.

The walls were much damaged by the Mexicans in 1842; but we found them completely repaired, and the whole now in good condition. The bastions are mounted with heavy ordnance, and mortars; and altogether, the walls form a handsome fortification.

The walk round the rampart is delightful, and not a little picturesque. The breeze here meets you with all its delicious freshness. At every turn you have a new view: the sea, the ships, the shores, the valleys, the "Cerros," or hills,—the rich foliage, the villas and cottages, the palm trees and acacias form the surrounding and exterior beauties of the panorama: while within, we had a bird's eye view of the streets, rectangular throughout, as, making the circuit of the walls, we obtained an ever-varying aspect of the town. The walk was certainly much to be admired; and Don Pedro was grandiloquent in his praises of what clearly appeared to him to be the *ne plus ultra* of nature and of art: viz., the shores, the



city, and the ramparts of the place of his adoption—Campeachy, in Yucatan. He never ceased pouring forth his eulogiums, during the hour and a half which he employed in our perambulation. At the end of each explanation with which he favoured us, he invariably concluded with “*Oh! es lo mas hermoso, señor; muy lindo! muy lindo!*” (beautiful! beautiful!)

On the 24th, three more of our companions in shipwreck left Campeachy for New Orleans, their original destination. One, with an enormous squint, was an important, but an intelligent bustling Frenchman, speaking good English; his calling that of a respectable shopkeeper. Another, long established there, was a discontented, hard-headed Scotchman; who grumbled at every thing, and jealously watched, with every body, his own importance. The last of the three went, among the Spaniards, by the name of “*El Sucio*” (the filthy); a title which he earned and supported with most disgusting assiduity.

On Friday, we walked to the Alameda, and found it a new-looking straight public walk. But apparently nobody goes near it; at least, not in the depth of winter. Along the whole length,

double rows of orange trees have been planted; under which, at regular intervals, were cool seats made of brick and mortar, whitewashed, and with backs and arms in form of long sofas; *still*, the fashionable Campechanos do not patronize the Alameda as a promenade.

We next went to Señor Macgregor's quinta, or villa, close by. The grounds, although formally laid out in Dutch fashion were pretty, owing to the number of trees and evergreen shrubs, and more especially to the parterres crowded with fine flowers. The *Macgregorés*, as the name is pronounced in Campeachy, are Yucatecos of Scotch-Spanish descent. One of the brothers is the Spanish consul, with whom, as a brother of the craft, I got well acquainted.

During the three following days, I was mostly confined to my bed. However, on the 30th, I was able to take a drive among the pretty *quintas* which lie scattered about the environs. At one of them, H— was presented with two magnificent bouquets, containing, among numerous kinds of beautiful flowers, a profusion of almost every species of the rose; bouquets which “in the depth of winter” would, in Covent Garden, have been worth money.



On Thursday, the 1st of February, we made an excursion to the village of Lerma, two leagues from Campeachy. The road, without interruption, runs close by the beach, and forms a charming drive. On the one side, you are close upon a fine wood all the way; many of the trees with pendant flowers, the shrubs in blossom, and each, and every tree and plant in fresh, green, and luxuriant foliage. The mimosa tribe is here in all its beauty, and in all its interminable variety. Then on the opposite side we had the beach, here and there rocky, but more generally smooth, and running up to a sward, or to patches of trees, whose roots were almost laved by the rippling and subdued waters of the Mexican gulf. The road, altogether, is romantic. Lerma itself is a pretty little village; chiefly inhabited by Creole fishermen and their families, intermixed with a good many Indians. We left our *volante*, and walked about for a couple of hours. We went into the cottages, inspected the handsome nets which the villagers themselves made, and talked, and made ourselves entirely at home, with the simple and primitive inhabitants of Lerma. Then we strolled along the beach, picking up shells, and fine spe-

cimens of sea-weed (to carry to England), after which we took our departure.

Deviating from the sea-side road, in order, on our return, to visit an *hacienda*, belonging to one of the Gutierrez family, we got into the thickest part of the wood, where the sylvan scenery improved at every step we took; the road got more umbrageous, the woodland more luxuriant, till we emerged into an open space, where stood the rustic mansion belonging to the *hacienda*. There were good out-houses, and the place denoted peace and plenty. We walked on the *azotea* of the house; plucked some flowers from the garden, as we retired; and again plunging into the wood, we presently came to the *quintas*, acacias, out-skirt cottages, palm and banana trees. Having started at six in the morning, we got home by eleven to breakfast, highly pleased with our morning's ramble.

The theatre at Campeachy—as handsome a one as you will see in most of the provincial towns in Europe,—having this season, by boarding over the pit, been turned into a ball-room, and that a splendid one, a grand subscription ball was specially got up for us, on Friday, the 2nd,



to bring together the *belles* of Campeachy. La Señora Gutierrez placed her box at our disposal, offering to accompany us, and, well pleased, we accepted her offer. We went, like many others, as mere spectators; but the younger ladies and gentlemen soon sallied forth from the boxes, and mixed in the dance. The space was ample, allowing thirty or forty couples to stand up without crush or inconvenience. All the lower tier, the only *fashionable* tier of boxes, was crowded with the *élite*; and seats were also provided for a proportion of the fair *danseuses*, in what was properly the room. They were all dressed à l'*Européenne*—*très comme il faut*; but then both ladies and gentlemen danced with an imperturbable gravity, and unbroken silence, a formality which had a droll effect in a ball-room. I saw many pretty faces, and fine figures, and, what one would scarcely have looked for, the women in general were of fair complexion; but after all, to my mind, Madame Gutierrez carried off the palm.

As the time was drawing near when we were to leave Campeachy, where, in consequence of the non-arrival of the *Rafaela*, we had been detained so long, we accepted, on Sunday, an invitation

from our kind friends the Gutierrezes to take a family dinner with them. It was a capital one, comprising a variety of novel dishes, all good, and well cooked. Moreover, we had "Sillery" champagne, with other good wines, and prime India pale ale. At the table were Miss Gutierrez, a very pleasing and pretty girl of twelve, and half a dozen of the younger branches, down to three or four years. Mr. and Mrs. Gutierrez were, as may be supposed, fond parents, and, perhaps to my strict notions, somewhat inclined to spoil the little ones. Then we had Mr. Gutierrez's sister, an agreeable, motherly person, and some other pleasant relations. The dinner commenced at four p.m.; and ere the dessert, the *café*, and the *chasse-café* had succeeded the regular courses, seven o'clock had arrived, when we took our departure.

We made some other acquaintances among the kind inhabitants of Campeachy—the *Preciatts*, the other leading family there; and more particularly our "*vecino*," our next-door neighbour, Don N. Casasúz, who showed us many attentions, and introduced us to some of his fashionable friends. It was he who originated the subscription (bachelor's) ball for us. And yet our "*vecino*" claimed no



higher rank than that of shopkeeper and trader. But this class—uniting wholesale and retail business—forms the aristocracy of Yucatan society, as it does in almost all parts of Spanish America. Mr. Casasúz was one of the leaders of the *haut ton*, spoke English and French well; danced well; and as a fashionable, not only danced well himself, but played well to others, when a musician was wanted.

On Monday the 5th, after many leave-takings, Messrs. Gutierrez and Preciatt seeing us into our canoe, at the Mole, we embarked on board the schooner "Rafaela," at 5 p.m., bound for "Vera Cruz." We were 17 passengers, to be stowed away in ten close berths, all in one public cabin; so of course it was the old story of men and women higgledy, piggledy, passing three or four successive nights in their clothes. The skipper, Don José Méstré, was a pleasantly talkative old Catalán, who had been 29 years in the Mexican gulf traffic; and who, notwithstanding, was still timid about its reefs, rocks, and other hidden dangers. These, in fact, abounded in the passage we still had to make; and as "burnt children dread the fire," we were not, in general, without our misgivings, as to a safe arrival. Poor Madame

D—in particular, too naïve ever to disguise her fears, reiterated her inquiries the whole way, always quietly and placidly put to Captain Méstré, "if he thought there was no danger?"

Our old bad luck attended us, in regard to the wind. We fell in with what is called "the tail of a norther"; not precisely the formidable gale itself, but the effect of it on the circle surrounding its heaviest range. The first night we could make little head against it; so honest Méstré came to anchor. We all retired about ten o'clock, some sooner: the floor of the cabin was covered with carpet bags, portmanteaus, trunks, a mattress or two, and other heterogeneous packages, called into requisition as make-shifts for beds. I had a berth, which I found the first night, so disagreeably close, that I abandoned it to one more impervious than myself in pores and olfactory nerves, and I joined those on the floor. Poor H— was also very uncomfortable—smothered during the day, and through the night, in a dirty little cabin, with sixteen men and women (many of them not of the nicest) around her; some snoring, some groaning, and now and then one or other of them smoking a paper cigar in the middle of the



night! What a relief, always, when daylight returned to us!

On Tuesday, the 6th, we made some considerable way; but the rough sea brought much sickness to almost all on board during the day, after little rest through the night; though for myself, I slept on the floor, as comfortably as a prince. On Wednesday it was still rough, but we began to approach Vera Cruz. Thursday, fine weather brought us a dead calm. In the evening, however, a slight breeze set in; and before dusk, we had a distinct view of the peak of Orizáva, and of the "Cofré" of Perote! the tops of the two celebrated mountains in this quarter of the globe. By nine, P. M., we saw the revolving light on the castle of San Juan de Ulloa; but our wary skipper would not venture near the dangerous roadstead. We kept off and on all night; and it was 10, A. M., Friday, the 9th, ere we dropped our anchor under the lee of the castle, and in the midst of the shipping. In a quarter of an hour more, two or three boats came off; one with a gentleman, a native of Vera Cruz, from the house of Messrs. Manning, Mackintosh, and Co.; and with the compliments of Mr. J—, the resident

partner, begging us at once to proceed to his house. Don Pepe (our conductor), soon ordered all our luggage into the boat: in ten minutes more we touched Mexican ground; and in five minutes after, we were in the spacious court-yard of Messrs. M—, M—, and Co's residence.

Such have been our adventures from Southampton to Vera Cruz. They must either have had something of the varied and the stirring in them, or I must have been very prolix—for lo! (with H—'s moderate aid), I have extended the diary of our proceedings to over two hundred pages! I fear I must have been too minute; but as you insisted on knowing everything about us—"all particulars"—you have some part of the blame to lay on your own shoulders, if you have found my account tedious.

Here then finishes the first section of our travel. In our second, you will no doubt find how we get on from Vera Cruz to Mexico. And from Mexico—who knows whither?