

Since my return to the United States, my time has been so much occupied that I have not been enabled to devote due attention and study to the composition and arrangement of my manuscript, but since it has gone forth, I can only regret, that haste has compelled me to publish its imperfections with whatever good qualities it may possess. I fear that my knowledge of the Spanish will be sentenced by the classic eye—yet in apology, I hope I may be excused; and permit me to say, that I have given it in the most grammatical manner that my limited opportunity of learning it would allow.

My feelings of gratitude will not permit me to conclude without expressing my thanks to my friends in Virginia. Their generosity I have often had reason to acknowledge. The Executive to whom I was introduced, distinguished in a nation's confidence and patronage, I shall always cherish.

I am happy in congratulating my fellow citizens on their prosperity; on their possession of a land unequalled in its resources and above all, as they are the only people truly enjoying constitutional liberty and freedom of conscience, where the laurels of victory unrestrained by power, and uncorrupted by gold, deck the brow of the triumphant in the great contention of the field of principle.

ALBERT M. GILLIAM.



TRAVELS IN MEXICO.

CHAPTER I.

My Journal. The plain and unsophisticated narration of facts is of interest to the reader. Incidents as happening the more beautifully and naturally are illustrative of cause and effect. Commission by President Tyler, as Consul of the Port of San Francisco, Upper California in the Republic of Mexico. Embarked Oct. 15, 1843. Three casualties in three months. First day's travel in the Natural Bridge Stage. Arrived, the 18th instant, at Guyandotte, on the Ohio. Voyage down the river, having a view of several States of the Union. Arrived at Cincinnati, on the 23d inst. Yellow Fever in New Orleans. Determined to spend one week in Cincinnati. Entertained by hearing the Rev. Nicholas Cobbs, D. D., preach. On the 29th instant, frost at New Orleans. My departure from Cincinnati. Steamer James Madison. On the 1st November, beheld the magnificent meeting of the Ohio and Mississippi rivers. On the night of the 7th inst., arrived in sight of New Orleans. Splendid view of the city.

HAVING, with care, kept my Journal, from the day of my departure from home, I shall, therefore, give it to the world in the style of the original manuscript.

The plain, unsophisticated narration of facts, as at the moment noticed by the traveller, I have presumed to be not only the more intelligible to all, but of greater interest to the general reader.

The studied system that some have aimed at, by an over-cultivation of elegance of diction and "far-fetched" classical illustrations, have often failed to entertain more than the concise, connected history of incidents, which always the more beautifully and naturally illustrate "cause and effect," and thus, by intuition, guide "the mind's eye" of the peruser to see as the tourist beheld.

With such views I shall endeavour to avoid isolation, not with the hope of pleasing the imagination, and affording a

banquet to the mind—but of offering that solid fund of information and improvement to the examiner, by a detail of facts that he had most fondly hoped for.

Having been commissioned by his Excellency President Tyler, Consul of the port of San Francisco, Upper California, in the Republic of Mexico, and having been presented with the accustomed documents and despatches to the resident Minister of the American Legation at the city of Mexico, I, without delay, bade adieu, on the 15th of October, 1843, to many friends, and the place of my nativity, Lynchburg, Va., for New Orleans, the distant port of my embarkation.

Being by nature of a domestic predominancy of habit, I ever had an aversion to long journeys, the more especially by stage coaches; for it most invariably happened that, whenever I attempted that mode of travel, some misfortune would of consequence befall, for the occurrences of horses by fright running down hills and precipitous mountains, and in some instances upsetting in terrific ways; from which although my life has been spared, yet often left me with bruised and mangled limbs. Indeed, the several casualties of three overturnings in stage coaches, the running off of the cars from a railroad track, and a storm at sea, in a steamboat, off the coast of Cape Hatteras, and that too all in the short space of three months, had almost impressed my mind with presentiments of dangers to be encountered by travelling.

However, my first day's travel on my way to the West, was a very pleasant one, in the Natural Bridge stage: it thus continued until the evening of the 18th inst., when I arrived at the town of Guyandotte, on the Ohio river; and, as I followed my baggage on board of a steamboat that was in waiting for passengers, and ascended its upper deck to take a last look at the distant mountains of my native State, over which I had so recently passed, and which were then, amidst volumes of smoke, and the harsh sonorousness of escaping steam, fast receding from view, my bosom was enlivened with feelings which were never before felt, and my mind could not but be filled with admiration and many reflections, as I voyaged down the beautiful river for the first time, beholding upon both sides different States of the Union.

Upon my arrival at Cincinnati, on the 22nd inst., I was informed by passengers who had just arrived at that place from New Orleans, that the yellow fever, notwithstanding the lateness of the season, was yet raging in that city, insomuch that it would be considered very hazardous for one from so far north as I was, to venture, where disease and death were de-

vastating the place. I therefore determined to spend one week in the pleasant city of Cincinnati, the famed "Queen of the West."

Whilst at Cincinnati, my time was engaged with much interest during my stay; and I may also add that a portion of it was profitably as well as agreeably entertained, by hearing the Rev. Nicholas Cobbs, D. D., of the English Episcopal denomination, preach at his church of St. Paul's. Dr. Cobbs is a native of Bedford county, Virginia, and during his residence there I had often heard his impressive eloquence. But the reverend clergyman having been called to minister in holy things in the city of Cincinnati, without my knowledge, I cannot express my felicitous enjoyment, upon the eve of my embarking to a strange land, seated as I then was, under the voice of one whose piety I so much respected, inviting me in sweet tones, and in manner and language the most persuasive, to the realms of bliss.

On the morning of the 29th instant, news having reached Cincinnati that welcome Jack Frost had visited the city of New Orleans, I found hundreds who like myself had but impatiently awaited tidings of that hoary benefactor of the human species, previous to embarking for that port—for with him for our pioneer, we could with bold hearts penetrate the lower country, as pestilence and death always fled from his cold and purifying touch. I therefore, without delay, hastened on board the James Madison, a boat of the first class, Captain J. Fulton, master, bound for New Orleans, which, by the early hour of 10 o'clock, A. M., had all of its state rooms taken, and when night came, there was scarcely room upon the cabin floor for weary passengers to repose their bodies.

My journey again commenced upon the deep, expansive, and lengthened Ohio. It was with feelings of much gratification that, upon the first day of November, at Cairo, I for the first time beheld one of the sublimest scenes to be witnessed in America—the majestic meeting of the great Ohio and the Mississippi rivers; and, as I looked upon the union of the waters of the West, which were in one common angry and turbulent element beneath me, rushing on with maddening fury to a vast and common home in the mighty deep, my mind could but be, in the spectacle, taught a lesson on the onward tendency of all things; for man, with accumulated years, and with many tributary cares, is too rapidly, with an irresistible career, floating downwards to the vast ocean of eternity.

On the night of the 7th inst., the James Madison arrived in sight of the city of New Orleans, a distance of about two

thousand miles from the port of Guyandotte, Va. I could but consider my arrival at that city, at that late hour, fortunate, as New Orleans cannot be seen under a more favourable aspect, than by approaching it under the cover of darkness. I beheld, as the boat rapidly advanced, an extended quarter of a circle, of about two miles in length, thickly lined with the floating palaces of the West, and then with the shipping from all parts of the world. The steamboats a blaze of light from stem to stern—some letting off their steam with deafening noise, whilst some were extinguishing their fires with hissing sounds, as the water was thrown upon the red hot brands under the boilers; whilst, at the same time, lights from the decks and the cabin windows of the shipping, extended an illumination, until it was lost in distant littleness; from which lurid glare Jack tar, with merry laugh and song, could be seen and heard furling his sail and tackle, above the shouts of porters, and the rattling of drays and hacks; when far above the levee, the innumerable lights of the tall houses of the city, shed a halo of brilliancy over a scene the equal of which I had never before beheld, and which, when taken altogether, really presented to the eye a magnificent crescent, adorned with sparkling scintillating gems. And thus, most apropos, has the city of New Orleans been denominated the "Crescent City."

CHAPTER II.

Visited Collector of the Port. His kind attention. Engaged passage on the schooner Amazon for Vera Cruz. Reception by the Mate. Destined to lodge in the Ladies' Cabin. Confusion of the Mate by the Captain's arrival. His hospitality. Towed by the Arkansas. Detained by a fog. The tow drifted. The Steamer by a backward revolution came stern upon the broadside of the Amazon. Much damage sustained. Captain Harding in a passion. We sail for Baliza. The Captain leaves the Amazon and returns with a pilot. We again set sail. Meeting of the Mississippi and the Gulf of Mexico. Cast anchor at the mouth of the Pass. Departure of the Pilot, and his rescue from drowning. Out of sight of land. The Captain's indisposition. A storm at sea. A man lost. View of the Perote mountain. A calm. Catching Fish. The Orizava. By telescope viewed the port of Vera Cruz. Boarded by a Pilot. Anchored under the walls of San Juan de Ulloa. Disembarked from the Amazon for the Mole. Novel sights. First night in Vera Cruz. Description of Vera Cruz. Health of Vera Cruz. Northers.

ON the evening of the 8th of November I, without delay, visited Mr. Dorsey, the Collector of the Customs at the Port of New Orleans, a gentleman with whom I had to transact some public business. And here I cannot refrain from saying that Mr. Dorsey, who had then been but recently appointed Collector, had, by his indefatigable industry, won the esteem of all who had done business with him; and for the interest he exhibited in forwarding me in my preparation for my journey to Mexico, I shall ever feel grateful.

Through Mr. D. I was informed that the schooner Amazon was the only vessel in port taking in freight, bound for Vera Cruz, and would sail upon the evening of the 9th inst. I therefore did not hesitate, through the house of Messrs. Capdervill & Cucullu, who were owners of the schooner, to secure my passage; and having completed all my other arrangements in the city, I accordingly, upon the evening of the 9th, that having been the appointed time for the sailing of the Amazon, sent my baggage aboard of her, where I soon followed.

Upon my arrival on deck of the little vessel, for it was only of ninety tons burthen, the captain being absent, the mate, a stupid-looking fellow, conducted me into the cabin, a place six feet ten in size; and, as I have since imagined, fearing that he would have to give up his own berth to either myself