

do without it, and remain in peaceful satisfaction with an agreeable neighbour.

Nothing can be so complete in this world but what critics can discover some imperfections. It is said by philosophers, that the earth and sea are diseased, and when the angel of destruction shall descend to the harvest of death, neither physicians nor priests can heal—the destined individual must journey to the tomb.—Every rose must have its thorn, and every sweet its bitter. And notwithstanding fair fancy can picture to the beholder the unparalleled prosperity of the United States, and the before-unseen Temple of Liberty; yet, there is a *canker* within, and the meddling Puritan, who is, by his generous efforts, attempting to leaven the whole lump, will, I am afraid, often make the cake *all dough*. Thus I have spoken—as the Indian chief said when he handed the calumet to his neighbour. And, as the old woman said, when she had no meal to bake a cake—I shall hope for the best, and trust in God; for he can work when the wisdom and cunning of man shall fail.

#### CHAPTER XXI.

A parting word to the Arrieros. Captain of Banditti. The American flag at the mast-head of a schooner. Drive a bargain with the captain. Meeting at the consul's. Contract concluded. Returning home in an American vessel. British steamer. Setsail. Mouth of the river. Custom-house officer. The vessel searched. Officers take leave. Pilot takes us in tow. Narrowly escaped foundering. Captain no gentleman. Injuries sustained by my fellow-countrymen. Unhappy feelings. Resolve. Some way of defending myself at sea as on land. The captain alarmed. Mr. Fulton's enjoyment. Dazzling luminary of the light house. Watched all night. Anchored off the Balize. Embarkation in a small boat. Perilous voyage. The steamers that are met at the Balize. Put to sea. Rudder lost. The Southerner. Consternation. N. E. Pass. Steamer Phoenix.

In the opening of this my last chapter, I will take the occasion of a parting word as to the arrieros who delivered me at Tampico. I was so much pleased with the manner in which the Mexicans had performed their duty, that I mentioned my satisfaction to some gentlemen of Tampico. On informing

them of the name of the Mexican of Matehuala, who had done me the kindness to employ the arrieros for me, they expressed themselves much surprised; and affirmed, that my Matehuala friend was the most renowned captain of ladrones infesting that portion of Mexico. I defended the fame of my friendly Mexican, by expressing the native doctrine, that he was rich, and beyond the necessity of dishonesty. They replied, that his wealth had been obtained by robbery, and that I must attribute my safe deliverance—not to the good company that I was in—but to some freak of fancy in the captain, who had put me under the escort of his well-known and chosen men.

The kindness of the Mexican towards me, I can only account for by my being in company with my nephews, to whom he paid much attention.

On my arrival at Tampico á Santa Anna, it was with great joy that I beheld the American flag at the mast-head of a schooner of an hundred and five tons burthen, which was taking in freight for the United States. She was the same vessel that Mr. Fulton had chartered from New Orleans to that port, and my friend proposed that we should return in her. I had no objections to the proposition, provided that the vessel would take me to the port of New Orleans, which was also the wish of Mr. Fulton.

Understanding that the cargo would be taken in, and the schooner made ready for sailing by the twenty second of July, my friend and self went on board to drive a bargain with the captain; which only resulted in his proposing that, on the following morning he would meet us at the office of the United States' consul, and that he would there abide by whatever Captain Chase would say, as to the price of our passage to the Balize.

At the appointed time, all parties having met at the consul's house, it was agreed that Mr. F. and myself should pay two hundred dollars for our passage to the mouth of the Mississippi river. Captain C. would have nothing to do with the transaction, as the schooner had not been consigned to him. But, in the presence of us all, he inquired of the captain of the vessel if he was aware that his schooner being freighted for New York, he would become responsible to the underwriters should he cast anchor in any other port. The captain promptly responded, that he was not unacquainted with his liabilities, and, as his ship was good, he had no fears of his cargo being damaged; and he could not resist the opportunity of making two hundred dollars, which would not cost him the loss of half a day's time. Thus our contract was closed, in the presence of the American consul.



I have been particular in detailing the above contract in consequence of the after incidents of the homeward voyage. I felt delighted that I had an opportunity of returning in an American vessel—and, notwithstanding that it was small, I was entirely reconciled to undergo all of the inconveniences that such a craft is subject to. I thought of the many hazards through which I had recently passed, in my peregrinations by land, and I felt much gratified that I should be under the protection of the American flag, and have a fellow-countryman for my commander, in my journey at sea.

It was true that, by the delay of a few days more, I should have the chance of a passage in a British steamer by the way of Havana—yet, the more accommodating mode of travel I was unwilling to wait for, as the Mexican vomito had commenced its ravages at Tampico, and was already sweeping off its inhabitants, by giving them but a few hours' notice. Mr. Fulton and myself therefore resolved that, at any cost, and at the first opportunity, we would take our departure from the sickly and devoted port of Tampico á Santa Anna.

Early on the morning of the 22nd instant, our anchor being weighed, and our sails set, we sailed down the river seven miles before we came to the gulf. At the mouth of the river we were hailed by the custom-house officers and boarded by them. The commander of them was the same individual who had escorted me into the city, upon my arrival at Tampico. He inquired if there was not an American passenger, who had two small boys under his charge? I presented myself before him, and he seemed much pleased to meet with me. After some compliments, and a hearty laugh respecting my long beard and travelling apparel, in which he had first beheld me, he and his companions bade me an affectionate farewell, and a happy voyage, without having searched our vessel, as was their duty to do every vessel previous to their leaving for sea.

The captain of the schooner had expressed some apprehensions of an examination of his vessel, and, after the departure of the polite officers, I informed him that he owed all of his thanks for his escape to my little nephews.

The pilots next took us in tow, thirty of whom were seated in a boat behind their oars, to row us across the sand bar at the mouth of the river. Their captain said that the tide was at ebb, and that it was dangerous crossing. However the word was given, and up went the anchor and sails, and we were off to sea, not though without having had a narrow escape from foundering.

As the vessel got over the bar, a sea came and rolled her on her beam, the keel striking heavily against the bottom as she

surged, which motion brought every soul on board to his knees, or prostrate on the deck. The captain shouted out, in a voice of despair, that we were lost; but the good schooner in her next plunge passed the bar, and did not again strike.

The bar crossed, the captain of the pilots informed us that it was customary for captains of vessels to treat the pilots to whiskey or money, after performing their hard task. Our captain said that he had neither money nor spirits, but that there were two passengers on board who had some wine, and perhaps they would treat the pilots. I unhesitatingly replied to the unthinking and penurious commander, that he was certainly unreasonable to suppose that I would deprive myself and my little family of a few bottles of wine which I had procured for a sea-voyage. The request, or hint of the Captain was an ill omen to me of the hands I had fallen into, and the pilots departed without their accustomed beverage or pay.

The disappointment of not finding the captain of our vessel a gentleman, was exceedingly mortifying to me, for the otherwise disagreeableness of my situation was to be enhanced by my being under the command of a man I could not respect, and one whom I had reason to expect would act dishonourably towards me, from the description which Mr. Fulton had given of his performances.

While in Mexico, I anticipated to meet with none but such characters; and indeed I can say that the most serious losses and sufferings which I sustained in that country, were at the hands of my fellow-countrymen, resulting from my over-confidence in them—and that he in particular by whom I suffered most, was a Virginian, who first took the opportunity of deceiving my deceased brother, and then myself. Nothing but the respect that I entertain for their honourable parentage and relatives, prevents me from publishing their names to the world. However my fellow-citizens at home may content themselves with the statement of the fact that, in Mexico, there are but few Americans, comparatively speaking, who have not had the best reasons for flying their country. It is yet to be hoped that they may become virtuous men, and good citizens of their adopted land.

I repeat that, in my departure from a country where I had suffered so much fatigue and excitement, from the continued hazard of my condition, it was with unhappy feelings that I had to be confined to the society of the captain of the schooner, without the prospect of enjoying any pleasure. Emaciated by sea-sickness, I resolved to wile away my time in the cabin by reposing, and leave him as much as possible to himself.

While thus indulging, on the second day of our voyage from



Tampico, Mr. Fulton came into the cabin, and informed me that the captain had said that he would not put me out at the Balize, but would steer for New York. My friend had not more than mentioned the fact, before the faithless man came in himself and abruptly remarked that he did not intend to be plagued with us, but that he would sail direct for New York. I had not expected him to prove so base, and although taken by surprise, I had the same way of defending myself at sea as I had on land. I hastily unlocked my trunk, and took from it a revolver. I then informed my brave captain that he was not to take me to New York, but that he was to make good his contract with me, or else he or I should have to die.

I furthermore explained to him that, as additional reasons for holding him to a strict compliance with his agreement, his vessel was leaking five hundred strokes per hour, in consequence of the fresh water worm having perforated the hull, while at anchor at Tampico; as also, that one half of his crew were sick. I reminded him, likewise, of my having property at New Orleans, and that to that port only I was determined to go, and that I should disembark at the Balize.

My friend resolutely seconded me in all I said, and the captain very quietly for the next two days kept his bed, saying that he was sick—but Mr. Fulton amused himself by exciting his fears, and listening to his appeals to preserve his life. The captain was not aware that, at that particular period, it was dangerous for any man to attempt to wrong me, for my feelings had for the last nine months always been up to the combating point, and to meet with a disappointment and vexation from him was not very agreeable to my unpleasant condition.

On the evening of the eighth day of our voyage, while my friend and self were seated upon the deck of the schooner, about the hour of early candle-light, we discovered the red luminary of the light-house of the south-east pass. So rejoiced were we that we at once determined to sit up all night, to watch that the steersman would not sail the light down. We were induced to do so for the reason that, on the night previous, a sailor had proclaimed that he saw a light-house, when the captain peremptorily denied the assertion, and steered from the object. Mr. Fulton had often been in and out of the Balize, and was impressed with the opinion that the vessel's course had been set for New York, from the position of the light when seen. This explains the fact that vessels bound for New York, or any other northern port, from Tampico, first steer for the Balize, and thence to their destined port. However, we determined that we should not let go our hold upon the light-house of the S. E. pass, and I did not suffer sleep on that night to close my eyelids.

On the following morning, as soon as an anchorage was obtained, we let go our anchor, and six of us in all, with the baggage of myself and friend, was put into the long boat, and I bade the schooner adieu, for a steamboat was in sight up the river of the South East pass. The mate, who accompanied us said that our voyage in the boat was three miles by sea, and about as far over the surges of the river to the steamer Southernner. The toil of the sailors was incessant; they were much exhausted when they reached their destination, prostrating themselves on the deck of the steamer. My friend and self did not follow the example of our captain towards the pilots, but rewarded the poor men for their trouble and sufferings.

So perilous was the voyage we had made from the schooner to the steamer, that it was imagined by all who saw us that we had deserted the vessel, on account of her being in distress, probably foundering—first, because the sea was rolling—and next, in consequence of the great danger of a small boat attempting to stem the Mississippi river. But we were hastened off by the captain of the schooner, he refusing our request to wait until boarded by a pilot. He, no doubt, would have been rejoiced to have seen us go to the bottom, but happily we were safely delivered.

The steamers that are met with at the passes, are tow-boats, employed by the shipping to carry them to and from New Orleans. The Southerner having parted with the ship she had towed to the mouth, on the next day went to sea in search of other vessels. The wind was light, it was slightly raining; and as the land was hardly visible, I was engaged in conversation with a very interesting young lady, when the captain's wife, in much consternation, ran into the cabin, and exclaimed that we were lost! The crew were all in confusion, for the boat was unmanageable, rapidly sheering round in a circle.

It was soon discovered that the rudder was lost, and a temporary fixture having been made by the carpenter, we made for the mouth of the North East pass, and anchored at a wood-yard. The captain of the Southerner informed us that it would require one week's time to repair the damage, and said that if we were in haste, it would be advisable for us to make for a ship about three miles up the river, which would be taken in tow that evening.

Thus again we had to take a small boat, which delivered us on board the ship in time for the steamer. No other unhappy occurrences or misfortune happened to me during the remainder of my journey—and upon the 2d day of August I landed at New Orleans, on, if my memory serves me right, the tow-boat Phoenix.