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A YEAR

OF

AMERICAN TRAVEL

BY

JESSIE BENTON FRÉMONT

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A YEAR

OF

AMERICAN TRAVEL

BY

JESSIE BENTON FRÉMONT

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A YEAR OF AMERICAN TRAVEL. “Je divague fort, mais j'y retourne.”

—MONTAIGNE.

THERE are some years of our lives that compare with the others as our October days do with those of the rest of the year. They follow the fitful, doubting spring and the heat of summer, and beyond them lie the short cold days of winter; but they themselves are perfect rest, and their still, gentle influence is made perfect by the merciful veil of mist that shuts out past and future, and leaves only the serene present.

In such an October-time we had made our charming visit to Denmark—itself a little mist-enveloped bit of fairy-land to us; for there we had walked upon the very rampart where the buried majesty of Denmark 8 had walked before us. By so much were we closer to Shakespeare's Hamlet—not the Hamlet of the foot-lights, but Hamlet the Dane. And we had heard the low lapping of the waves on the sands of Elsinore, and thought “of them that sleep, Full many a fathom deep, By thy wild and stormy steep, Elsinore.”

And, in short, we had been where centuries of tradition and fancy and fact had blended into an atmosphere that shut out ordinary ideas, and left us in that charmed and dream-like state of mind which I am afraid can only belong with an old country where everything “stays put,” where the word “fixed” has its corresponding meaning in facts.

One of our little party, perhaps because of always living in such an atmosphere, argued against “the good” of this, but she had never known the ordeal of being uprooted and transplanted. My wider experience had taught me “the large grief that these infold.” I knew the good and the 9 necessity

of progress in a nation, but I knew also what it cost the individual to make part of this progress. This question of *haute politique* —whether the nation should be for the good of the individual, or the individual for the good of the nation—was one that often came up for discussion at the “family hearth.” We christened our compartment of the railway carriage by this name, for the hours we were seated there gave us the best opportunity for talking over what we saw and the many ideas suggested.

Just out of Hamburg our train halted at a station where an emigrant train was ready to go off to connect with the steamer for America. The people were all gathered at the village station. The afternoon sun came bright on their uncovered heads as they knelt in a parting prayer; their pastor, standing with uplifted hands, in the dress we know from the pictures of Luther, was giving them his farewell blessing. Back of him was a young woman of better dress and appearance than the more simple class in front, and by her a fine-looking white-haired old man. As the prayer ended, she fell across his breast; it was the helplessness of exhausted, unavailing grief; and hold her and grieve over her as he might, yet the father had to give her up, for the parting hour had come.

We saw this picture as we moved slowly past. It was the constantly recurring domestic tragedy of emigration. I could have called out to her to stay; for in that instant I saw back into the time when I had learned to know how painful is the process of founding a new country. What loneliness, what privations, what trials of every kind, went to the first steps of even that rich and lovely country of California—an experience which made one sure that what cost so much to build must not be broken up; an experience, too, which was in such strange contrast to all that belonged before and since in my life that it stands apart, and never loses its own outlines and color.

The many memories this gave rise to unfolded themselves in long talks constantly renewed, until they crystallized into what we named the year of American travel: 11 something necessarily personal and narrowed to personal experience, but interwoven with a period of governing importance to our country.

When it was first planned that I should go to California, in the spring of 1848, the gold discoveries had not been made. In August of that year was the first finding, and with the uncertain, slow communications then had with that coast, it was nearly winter before the news reached us in Washington. It seems odd to recall now the little vial of gold-dust so carefully brought as voucher for the startling story. A long sail down the coast to Mazatlan, then the crossing through Mexico, then another sailing vessel to New Orleans, made the chance mail-route: only a strong party could risk itself overland, and few ventured into the winter.

For reasons which belonged with the military history of California, our whole plan of life was changed, and I, too, decided to go to the newly acquired Territory and live on some lands we had there. It would be too long here to go into these reasons, but those 12 who may share my wish always to know “why,” and get completed ideas, I would refer to my father's *Thirty Years' View*,* the second volume, and the chapters that treat of the acquisition of California. Judge Black said to me lately that my father's work “had the privilege of standing uncontradicted.” He was exact in facts, and had the habit of a good lawyer “to secure evidence when it presented itself;” and in that way from the best official and personal sources, he gives the exact record of that period. Since then there have been such great events that even important matters of that time have been overlaid and obscured, except to those who lived through them. And lately two works have been published by writers of distinction which show this, as they have just reversed some of the most prominent facts relating to the early history of California.*

Senator Benton.

Colonel Higginson's *Child's History of America*. General Sherman's *Memoirs*.

Nothing could have been more complete than the arrangements which were to make 13 this journey delightful as well as comfortable. By waiting until March my father would be free to go with me after the session of Congress was ended. He looked forward with eagerness to this journey over the track of the early Spanish conquests. His large knowledge of Spanish history upon our continent, aided by his knowledge of the Spanish language, gave this part of the voyage a peculiar interest to him.

My father's French and Spanish clients from the later acquired Territories of Louisiana and Florida became his friends also. He not only comprehended, but strongly felt for, their bewilderment at finding themselves under new and strange laws. He knew that this condition must obtain in California also. He wished to know personally the newly acquired country, its people, and its needs. Should it remain a Territory, he, as Senator from Missouri, had the neighbor's right to look out for its interests; and from many causes, personal, political, and geographical, this friendly representation would have been for him, as a queen of Spain said of something akin to 14 this, *mi privilegio, prerogativa, y derecho*—my privilege, my prerogative, and my right.

But not even my father foresaw how much they would need this, nor the shameful injustice of our government in disregarding its treaty stipulations, and despoiling them.

General Herran, then minister from New Granada, gave us letters to his friends in Panama, although it was not probable that we should be long enough there to use them. Mr. William Aspinwall, who was much in Washington on business connected with his new enterprises of mail steamers to the Pacific and the projected Panama Railroad, was a great favorite with my father, who gave him a standing invitation to dine with us whenever he could, and talk over at that leisure time the large interests opened by these new channels for Oriental commerce.

Coming to us in this familiar way, Mr. Aspinwall entered into the family anxieties regarding my journey with all the sympathies of his kind nature. His experience taught him how to render these sympathies 15 efficient, and he made the most thorough arrangements for my comfort and security. In short, everything that foresight and friendship could do was planned: how events disposed of our well-laid plans was another thing.

I have been reading lately a reprint of the letters of the Hon. Miss Eden, who was with her brother, Lord Auckland, when he was Governor-General of India. She says that although only family letters, they will have more interest on that account, as giving the details of their two years' journey of inspection, and the contrast of that past time—when to seven persons belonged a retinue of twelve thousand people, with elephants, camels, and horses to match—with the present condition of India,

where now railroads have reduced the Governor-General to a first-class passenger with a traveling-bag.

In the same way I look back to my preparations for that voyage into the unknown—all the planning and reading and grief and fears—in contrast with the seven days' pleasure trip of to-day. Mr. Aspinwall, who 16 had so large a part in making things smooth for me on that first journey, was near me at a morning wedding when, quite simply, and in the same tone with which he had been speaking of the bride and the flowers, he said, "Have you any messages for San Francisco? We leave for there to-night to be gone six weeks." Only twenty years had brought about this wonderful change.

It is easy to resume situations into a paragraph when they are ended; to live through them day by day and hour by hour is another thing.

I look up at the little water-color which is my *résumé* of that time of severance from all I held indispensable to happiness—it was made for me on the spot, and gives my tent under the tall cotton-woods, already browned and growing bare with the coming winter winds.

Mr. Fremont was to make a winter crossing of the mountains, and I went with him in October to his starting-point, the Delaware Indian reservation on the frontier of Missouri, to return when he left, and remain 17 at home in Washington until my time came to start in March.

Of everything in the Centennial Exhibition, I think nothing interested me so much as the display made by Kansas. It seemed so few years since I had been there, when only a small settlement marked the steamboat landing where now Kansas City stands. Looking at its silk manufacturers, its produce of not only essentials, but luxuries, it was hard to realize the untracked prairie of my time, with only Indians and wolves for figures.

I had been there before to meet Mr. Fremont on his return from different journeys; this time it was to stay with him until the last preparations were completed.

The party was gone. Major Cummings was to take me the next day to connect with the river steamer at Westport Landing (now Kansas City). He had been annoyed by a wolf, which carried off his sheep to her cubs, and had just succeeded in following up her trail and destroying her young ones; and as the place was not far, the good major took me over for a 18 “pleasant change of ideas.” I was sorry for the wolf, “still for all sins of hers,” with the mother nature, coming back to her ruined place and her dead cubs.

We came back by way of the deserted camp, which did not lessen my sympathy for the wolf; the ashes of the morning's fire were still warm. Altogether nothing alleviated the lonely impression of the evening, which closed in on the old gentleman moaning with a toothache, while the creak of his wife's rocking-chair was the only other break to the silence.

I was glad to go off to sleep. While one is young, that comes with surprising readiness. The house was a succession of log-cabins, set, some gable end on, some facing front, making a series of rooms alternating with open places, having only the connecting roof. These frontier houses grow as the family requirements increase; the timber and the strong willing hands are there, and the getting a new house costs no heart-burnings or cares. This establishment of Major Cummings's, who had been for thirty years superintendent of Indians there, was 19 of many years' growth, and my room was the extreme end of the last added wing. A stone chimney built up on the outside gave an ample fire-place, where the great fire of logs made a cheerful home light in the great clean room.

My good “Aunt Kitty” was in my room, and we were both fast asleep, when I was awaked by a sound full of pain and grief, and wild rage too—a sound familiar enough to frontier people, but new to me. It was the she-wolf hunting her cubs; there followed with it, as a chorus, the cry of the pack of hound puppies—they were young, and frightened. As for me, with nerves already overstrained, a regular panic came on. I knew hunters built fires to scare off wild things; but after Kitty had made a great blaze, a new fear came. The windows were near the ground, and without shutters or curtains. What if the blaze only served to guide the wolf! More than once I had seen dogs go through a pane of window-glass as safely as circus-riders through their paper hoops; so shawls were quickly hair-pinned over the windows, and by that time men's 20 voices and the angry sounds from older dogs

gave a sense of being protected, and sleep came again, to be broken again by a big dark object, rough-coated, and close to me. It was a speaking wolf too, but not exactly like Red Riding-hood's, although it was hungry. Camp had only been moved about ten miles, and a fast ride through and back before sunrise would give us another hour together, "and would Kitty make tea?" And so, with our early tea for the stirrup-cup, "he gave his bridle-rein a shake," and we went our ways, one into the midwinter snows of untracked mountains, the other to the long sea-voyage through the tropics, and into equally strange foreign places.

The question of a servant to go with me to California was a serious one. The elder women could not leave their families, and after much thinking, a younger one was set apart, and each of us was considered a victim selected for a sacrifice. Although I was born and brought up among slaves, the servants in my home were all freed people, their children had grown up with us, and there was great attachment between us. One of these whom I particularly liked was decided upon and agreed to go and remain with me.

Not only had none of us ever been to sea, but we knew but very few people who had made a real sea-voyage. This to California was to be very much like the old journeys to India, and a friend who had been with her husband in China was called in for consultation, while an old-fashioned book, *The Lady of the Manor*, really gave us some most useful details. Only we followed our models too literally, and made absurdly large preparations.

I must remind that this was before sewing-machines, that we were in Washington, and that it was quite before the day of ready-made outfits in our country, so that we busied ourselves with preparations for the heat of the tropics, with refreshing my Spanish, and I, for my part, chiefly in reconciling myself to the fact that in a few months I should be cut loose from everything that had made my previous life.

March came, and the start had to be made. My father came with me to New York, although by this time the original plan had lost its best point to me, for he found himself unable to go from home.

A brother-in-law (Governor Jacobs, of Kentucky), who had been ordered a sea-voyage for his health, and was going to Rio Janeiro and back, changed his plan, and started with me for California instead. At the Astor House, where we were staying, we found a large party of favorite relations, my cousin General William Preston and his family, assembled to welcome back from Europe a member who had been away for years. I was much in the position of a nun carried into the world for the last time before taking the veil. All the arguments, all the reasons, all the fors and againsts, had to be gone over with this set of friends; all the griefs opened up again, and the starting made harder than ever. While we were talking, Mr. Stetson came in and spoke to my father, who went out with him, soon returning to call me out also, and explain a new break in our plans. It seemed my maid, "young Harriot" (to distinguish her from the elder 23 Harriot, who was our dear old nurse), was, at the last, not to be permitted to go with me by her New York friends; and as one of them was the man she was to marry, he spoke with authority. All this had been considered and arranged; but at the last he withdrew his consent.

She stood true to me; she knew that never in my life had I had a strange servant about me, that I was already as much grieved as I could endure, and she would not add to it by leaving me without her care, and as much of home as she could represent to me.

Finding that no argument prevailed on her to stay, he hit upon an idea which was successful. He went off and raised the whole force of people who were allied for rescuing colored people being carried off to the South against their will, and they poured into the Astor House, filling the lower halls, and raising such a commotion that Mr. Stetson came for us to see what could be done. The cry of "carrying off a free colored girl against her will" had the same effect in those days as an alarm of fire.

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Looked at by all of our lives, it seems incredible that a colored mob should have assembled against my father and myself on such a hue and cry, but they would not be reasoned with. It was true that we were Southerners, it was true that Harriot was a free colored girl, although it was not true that she was being carried off against her will. The trouble was that she had no will; she had only

affections, and these pulled her in contrary directions. When she appealed in tears to us to decide what she should do, we told her to stay. So I was not only to be without my father's care, but I had lost my last fragment of home. Mr. Stetson and my father tried at once to find some one going out on the same steamer who would be glad to have the place; and this was done: "a reliable middle-aged New England woman, far more useful than Harriot, who could only sew and dress hair."

I barely looked at her, and saw she was a hard, unpleasing person to my mind; but the steamer sailed next day, and there was no time for any choice. She was only an item in the many griefs that seemed to 25 accumulate on me at this time. My father's going with me would have made it a delightful voyage for both of us; without him, it was, in all its dreary blankness, my first separation from home. I had never lived out of my father's house, nor in any way assumed a separate life from the other children of the family—Mr. Fremont's long journeys had taken him from home more than five years out of the eight since we were married; I had never been obliged to think for or take care of myself, and now I was to be launched literally on an unknown sea, travel towards an unknown country, everything absolutely new and strange about me, and undefined for the future, and without even a servant that knew me.

The first night out, when the numbness of grief was over, I put my little girl to bed; for she would have nothing to do with the new woman, and I myself pretended to be asleep in order not to have to speak to her. Later on in the night this woman came into my cabin and looked at me, to make sure that I was really sleeping. Being satisfied 26 that such was the case, she opened my trunk, and commenced a leisurely examination of its contents, laying aside in a small heap such articles as she preferred; at the same time she lifted off her dark wig, and gave her head a little shake, and stood there, not the dark-haired, middle-aged woman who was to be so much better for me than my Harriot, but a light-haired woman under thirty, with an expression of hardness that puzzled me then, and frightened me too, so that I kept as much asleep as possible, and let her help herself to all she wanted from the trunk. When she left the room, with an armful of undergear, I jumped up and bolted the door after her, and remained blockaded until morning, answering none of her knocks or calls.

When I recognized the clear voice of the stewardess in the morning, I let her in. She was that good Mrs. Young, with the gray hair and fine teeth, that we all knew so well when she was with Captain Lines on the *Humboldt* and *Arago*. Then I was safe, for Mrs. Young brought the captain, and the woman was put into a separate cabin 27 under guard for the journey. In brief, this person should never have been allowed to go with me. She was a *protégée* of an authoress who believed in certain moral reforms, and who thought that by giving her a start in a new country she would carry out her promises of good conduct. This lady, well known in New York, had given her such credentials that Mr. Stetson chose her from other applicants on those recommendations.

My brother-in-law was thoroughly seasick, and I was naturally supposed to be so, because I kept my room and had no appetite.

But the stewardess saw it was not so, and made me go into the air. We were through with the rough weather off Hatteras, and were in the Gulf Stream. I had never seen the sea, and in some odd way no one had ever told me of the wonderful new life it could bring. It stays with me in all its freshness, that first recognition of the ocean which came to me when I went on deck; that grand solitude, that wide look from horizon to horizon, the sense of space, of 28 freshness, the delightful power and majesty of the sea—all came to me as necessities; I loved it at the first look, and I am never fully alive without it; sometimes I cannot get to it when I need it, but when I can, I go there, and am soothed and calmed and comforted if I am in trouble; if I am happy, it is only there that I feel completed by the exultant, abounding vitality and keen happiness which it alone brings to me.

The ship was crowded, but I was too worn down and silenced to care to know strangers. The captain, Captain Schenck, who was a naval officer, was in every way kind, and very wisely so in securing me entire quiet while on deck, so that the “healing of the sea” soon began to revive my health, and the silent teaching of sky and sea lifted me from morbid dwelling on what was now ended.

The young think each thing final—they cannot well see that “I shall outlast this stroke, I know, For man is conquered by the mighty hours,”

must be true for them too. Perhaps the 29 sharpest lesson of life is that we outlast so much—even ourselves—so that one, looking back, might say, “when I died the first time—”

But the sea asserts its mighty power also, and no one ends an ocean voyage in the same state of mind with which he began it.

In this gentle state of mental convalescence I remember how persistently my mind pictured scenes of my childhood and early girlhood. Especially the many charming things belonging with our constantly recurring long journeys to and from our homes. For we had three homes: the winter home in Washington, which was “ours;” that in St. Louis, which was “our father's home;” and that of our grandfather in Virginia, which was my mother's dearly loved home, and my birth-place as well as hers. This was near the beautiful mountain town of Lexington, best known of late from both General Lee's and “Stonewall” Jackson's connection with its great colleges. These were widely apart, and before the day of railways, made travel serious; taking so much time that it divided our lives into 30 distinct parts, but broke up nothing of family life, and did not interrupt, although it altered, the form of our studies. A certain little English valise held the maps and books, and our school-room was improvised anywhere—on the “guard” of a river steamboat or in its cabin, or resting under trees. It trained us to holding on to our thoughts through interruptions; it trained us to much for which I can never be grateful enough, for then my father himself was our teacher—to his real pleasure, and our endless regrets when we had to drop back to regular teachers, who could not enrich and illuminate every topic as he did. He suited the books to his own tastes; and though much was above our comprehension, yet we grew into them. Especially we never got away from Plutarch and the Iliad. The gods and goddesses descended on us everywhere.

The little invalid of our family was not let to brave the harsh prairie winds of early spring in St. Louis, so we took New Orleans first on the alternate years when we went to the West. It was thousands of miles out of our way, but water transportation made it 31 no trouble, while the eight days on the Mississippi was as welcome a rest for my parents as we now find our Atlantic crossing. Ours was a constant changing from an English-Protestant into a French-Catholic atmosphere, to find them blended in Washington through widely various representations, and by the diplomatic

corps, which was a more permanent body than now, when steam and telegraphing have nearly abolished diplomacy.

It had been but few years since the Louisiana Territory had been ceded to us, greatly to the indignation and regret of most of its settlers. It was an article of faith with these to alter nothing in their habits, not even to learn the language of the country of which they had become unwilling citizens: *Je suis francais, et je parle ma langue*, was a common expression among them. Among these we came into an atmosphere thoroughly foreign—dress, cookery, all domestic usages and ideas, as well as their language and religion. St. Louis being a so much smaller place, the American element told there more quickly, especially as it was also the frontier garrison and the head of the fur business. From the broad gallery of my father's house in St. Louis there was always to be seen in my earlier day a kaleidoscopic variety of figures; the lower classes of the French still wore their peasant dress, and its bright and varied colors and the white caps belong as much to the remembrance of that time in St. Louis as they do to my earlier visits in France; now it is hard to find a peasant costume even in their own countries on travelled routes; the sewing-machine has abolished picturesqueness in dress. When I was first in France, even in Paris the streets were animated by the pretty white caps and gray gowns of the working-women; now a pall of black alpaca has hidden all this, though the greatest desecration I have seen is a Tyrolese mountaineer in a ready-made business suit.

There were also long files of Indians stepping silently by, the squaws and babies bringing up the rear—real Indians in real Indian dress, or real Indian want of dress; any number of Catholic clergy in the clerical robe; hunters and trappers in fringed deer-skins; army officers in worn uniforms going by on horseback.

Our house in Washington was a headquarters for the varied interests from all these places, while about my mother there collected and shaped itself a circle which formed for many years really a *salon*, to be broken up only by her loss of health.

This life rubbed out many little prejudices, and fitted us better than any reading could have done to comprehend the necessary differences and equal merits of differing peoples, and that although different, each could be right. The manner in which my father taught us also led us up to the same ideas.

The French language was a necessity, and that we acquired without any trouble, because we had a nurse who began us with it as soon as we could speak; whatever governess or teacher we had, my father always was our real teacher, my mother reserving one day and one line of instruction, which, like the red strand in English navy cables, marked us for her own.

34

While in Washington we had our routine of studies and town life, in New Orleans my elder sister and myself rose to the proportion of members of society, for my father's clients, when on their visits to Washington, were pleased to have us for their little interpreters, and when we would be in New Orleans they would insist on treating us as grown people, inviting us formally to dinners, where we would be taken in formally by grown gentlemen, and sit through the whole entertainment. There was great inherited wealth among these planters; they were generally educated in Paris; and with the combined resources of climate, taste, and wealth, their mode of living was beautiful as well as luxurious.

One detail I have never met since in any country, that of having the dinner and the dessert in different dining-rooms. With us this classic custom has faded into the after-dinner coffee of the drawing-room, but it was completely carried out in these great houses.

One occasion I remember especially. While the earlier part of the dinner was 35 in a spacious and splendid room, and served with plate enough to satisfy even English ideas, the next room was more charming, for its furniture, as well as that of the table, was suited to the grace and fragrance and lightness of the dessert. The crystal service and the wax-lights in their glass shades were reflected in great mirrors on three sides of the room, while the fourth was open to a court of grass and flowers, where the moon shone on the sparkling spray of a large fountain. The *punkah-wallahs*, as they

would be called in India, had great fans of peacock feathers. I do not wonder it fitted into the Arabian Nights' entertainments in my mind.

In St. Louis, where our house stood among its great trees, in a square of its own, we had, to a large degree, a pleasant out-door life: our lessons always were given on the broad gallery running around the house, and in every way we had a great deal of open-air life; but our true delight in out-of-doors was only to be had at my grandfather's place in Virginia. When going there from Washington we used no public conveyances beyond Fredericksburg; there the carriage and saddle-horses met us, my mother as well as my father often making the journey back on horseback, while the carriage was there for us children, and for her to return to when tired—a London-built travelling coach which gave all the rest one looked for—large, high swung, and with so many springs that the jolting from the execrable roads was lessened. Its pale yellow body and scarlet morocco lining made us children christen it “Cinderella's pumpkin;” maybe, too, an underlying consciousness of unlimited indulgence associated with those who sent it.

There was always a sense of freedom and expansion of mind connected with the arrival at my grandfather's. His was one of the crown grants of the colonial time, and had been given, for military service, to his father, an English officer, who was killed in the early Indian wars, but not before he had planted his old-country ideas upon his home. The oaks here were especially beautiful; they had been preserved, and made a noble park. Leading straight through this park to the large hospital-looking house was a planted double avenue of cherry-trees, which had been arched on the inner boughs and trimmed up straight on the outer side; these had grown to the height and thickness of forest trees by my time, and made a lovely vista, whether they were in blossom or red with fruit, or their naked boughs glittering with ice. On the lawn about the house some remarkable oaks had been kept, and some sycamores of really giant proportions. There were beautiful old-fashioned gardens to the south, and masked by the tall hedge of holly and privet were the cabins of the house servants. These were comfortable, clean cottages, but forbidden ground to the children of “the Big House” unless they were with some of the family.

The land patent gave the ownership of all the lands in sight from a certain point in the valley, and we knew, as we crossed the last hill before entering this valley, that we were monarchs of all we surveyed, including the grandparents.

On this travel we rarely stopped at a public place; it was held as an unkindness to pass a relative's home, so our journey was a progress along a cordon of great estates of this kind, where everything had so long been going along in an established way that it was small wonder they believed in predestination and fore-ordination.

Everywhere among them was inherited property—their houses, their servants, the cattle and sheep on a hundred hills, were theirs by descent. Nothing varied much—things were all in the deep lull of secured prosperity.

The life on these estates will not be lived over. With the introduction of railways, the war, and the termination of slavery, this phase of living has completely passed away; it lies back in my memory like a sunny, peaceful landscape, and I am as thankful for having been born in that atmosphere of repose as De Quincey says he was for having been born in the country in England. It was to us what Hawthorne and so many others have found England, “the old home,” with soothing influences that go always with its memory.

When we would return to this place of my grandfather's, each resumed the delights belonging to it.

The grown people would go to the White Sulphur Springs, then the Saratoga for the North as well as the South. I always had the pleasure of being left with my grandmother, and went with her on that daily round of inspection which made one of the necessary duties of a Southern lady. This included not only the immediate household, but the cabins of the house servants, the gardens—to see, in short, that all had been faithfully attended to; and then into the spinning and sewing rooms, and always into the large room used as a day nursery and hospital for the infants of women who were employed about their different work. I can hardly get to the end of all the duties that filled

up the busy mornings. I know that the garden and the nursery are the points that remained most in my memory as the place where my grandmother gave the most time; the dairy was all right under the care of its presiding head, "Aunt Chloe," who was the wife of "Uncle Jack," shoe-maker to the plantation, and Methodist 40 preacher to his own people. It was not considered respectful in us children to address the elder slaves by their name merely; there was always the prefix of "aunt" or "uncle;" to the head nurse always "mammy." Occasionally there were inspections at a longer distance from the house—to the weaving-rooms, the shoe-maker's, etc. Everything that was worn was grown and made on the place, except the finer woollens and linens for family use which came from Richmond.

The various stages of woollen fabrics, from the sheep on the hill-sides, and the dyes taken from the sumac bushes and the green bark of walnuts, all the details of buzzing wheels, and carding wool, and winding hanks, were part of the object-teaching of my childhood.

The interval between the close of the long session and the winter was too short for the long, tedious journey to St. Louis and back. We only made that on alternate years after the short session, when high waters gave us large steamboats and comfortable transportation for our little crowd. What 41 we do now in two days required then several weeks.

My father knew no plan of life that separated him from his family; so we led this charming nomadic existence, with its fixed points in such contrast to the trouble of travel and distance between them. Washington was in one way work, and St. Louis and New Orleans had their sides of political work and his duties as a lawyer. But it was all holiday here, and my father enjoyed it thoroughly. Especially he liked the autumn shooting. The birds were most plentiful in certain large wheat-fields, which, in their warm tints of stubble, undulated over the south face of the hills, the trees of the "little orchard" and the park making a good screen to the north.

Here and there through the fields were good apple-trees; under one of these we would rest, and eat our luncheon of a biscuit and some fruit taken from the tree above us; and then my father would

take a book from his pocket, usually a classic in a French translation, from which he would read aloud for me to translate.

42

There were plenty of ideas, even words, that I did not understand; if it had been a description of the steam-engine, I should have gone through it with equal good-will and docility; but much of it remained in my memory, and I grew into it. Hard words and hard ideas tired my mind as the long tramps and ploughed fields tired my young feet, but with time I grew used to both, and the benefit of both remained with me: these long sunny mornings in the open air were the most delightful phase in which my lessons came. In winter I had my corner at the library table. No matter how good our teachers were, my father had us always prepare our lessons with him.

About a year after I was married, my father sent for me one morning, and pointing to my old place at the end of the library table, said, "I want you to resume your place there; you are too young to fritter away your life without some useful pursuit." So back I went to my mornings of work and readings and translations, which brought with them the scraps of talk and connected interest on all subjects which can only exist where lives are passed together in that pleasant intimacy.

As I have said, the long expeditions which Mr. Fremont made took him from home five years of the first eight after we were married, and I remained in many respects in my old place as one of the children of the family. My mother's long illness deprived my father of her companionship to a great extent, and made him turn to me still more. How great a loss this was to him and to us can only be known to those who knew her; but I do not speak of that life, for it is not, like mine, in a manner public property. For myself, so much good-will and warm feeling have been given me during the public portions of my life that it does not seem more intrusive to talk of myself to my unknown friends than to those I know personally.

As my mind turns back to that time, so much crowds upon it that I can neither tell it in its fulness, nor can I bring myself to leave it a mere skeleton. I think there could hardly have been a happier life than mine as a child, and in all my youth; it would be a full volume, to be bound in white

and gold, and red-lettered throughout, and full of lovely pictures, and everywhere and in all of them my father the prominent figure. He made me a companion and a friend from the time almost that I could begin to understand. We were a succession of girls at first, with the boys coming last, and my father gave me early the place a son would have had; and my perfect health—without a flaw until I was twenty-four—gave me not only the good spirits but the endurance and application that pleased him.

When we reached Chagres, if it had not been for pure shame, and unwillingness that my father should think badly of me, I would have returned to New York on the steamer, as the captain begged, putting before me such a list of dangers to health, and discomforts and risks of every kind, as to kill my courage. One often gets credit for what he does not really deserve, and it would hardly do to tell the whole truth about everything; but I have since confessed that when I first saw land my pleasure in the 45 first sight of palm-trees and the tropical growth was lost in the feeling that I had to make another separation from what had grown to be something of a home. Captain Schenck had made everything as pleasant as possible for me. My large double cabin, which at first seemed like a closet, had grown home-like. Never having been on a ship before, I had only a house to compare it with, and felt choked on first going into it; but I have learned since to know that a double cabin, with a large square port, is a luxury.

The little tender on which the passengers and mails were landed was as small as a craft could well be to hold an engine, and was intended to go as high as possible up the Chagres River. It seemed like stepping down upon a toy. But even this had to be exchanged, after the first eight miles, for dug-out canoes, the shallows and obstructions of every kind making it impossible to use the little steamboat.

Here Mr. Aspinwall's care secured for me what was, by the contrast to what the other travellers had to endure, luxury. While 46 they had to take the dug-out canoes, with their crews of naked, screaming, barbarous negroes and Indians, I was put in the "company's" whale-boat, with a responsible crew in the "company's" service; this was a difference which I learned to appreciate more thoroughly on hearing afterwards of the murder of passengers by their crews. With all our

advantages, we only made a few miles each day, taking three to reach Gorgona, where we were to exchange our boats for mules, on which we crossed the mountains. This travel is so changed by the railroad that it may be interesting to know just how we made the crossing in 1849. The other passengers took their chances of sleeping on the ground or in the huts of the Indians, and in that way contracted fevers from the night air, the tropical mists, and all causes of ill-health that were so well known, while I was protected from all this through Mr. Aspinwall's care. He had sent with me one of his trusted employés, a captain of a vessel in the mahogany trade, who had had his wife with him on his different journeys on that coast, and knew just what to do for the health and safety of a lady. When Mr. Aspinwall told him that he was to see me across, and leave me in safety at Panama, his wife objected, because, she said, I would be a Washington fine lady, and make objections to the Indians having no clothes on, and make him a great deal of trouble altogether, and he had better ask Mr. Aspinwall to have some one else do this; but after Mr. Aspinwall introduced him to me at his house, the captain, as he told me afterwards, told his wife he would take care of me; "that I was not a fine lady at all; that I was a poor thin pale woman, and not a bit of a fine lady; that he would see me through. And she agreed to it."

While the sun was still bright we made our landing. One needs to realize it in the tropics to know how true is the line, "Down dropped the sun, up rose the moon;"

and with the dropping of the sun, rose not only the moon, but the discordant noises of night in the tropical forests; a hideous, confusing rush of sound without, which made more comfortable the pleasant interior of our tent, with its canvas floor and walls, lit up by the great fire outside, which was our protection not only against wild animals, but the deadly dews, which were so heavy that they had obliged the further protection of a fly tent. Persons sleeping on shore even one night forfeited their lifeinsurance. Within, it was ready for us with all the comforts the "company" could provide, and our clean linen cots were very welcome after the fatigue of the day, with all its excitement and new ideas. Among all the passengers there was but one other lady. I invited her to go with me; I could not leave her to meet all the exposures and risks, when I had such care taken of me. I am sorry to say that I was also obliged to have with me my "reliable maid." The captain had treated her "man-of-war" fashion, and put her under lock and key while we were on the steamship,

and intended taking her back to New York; but she refused to go. She claimed not only her rights as an American citizen to travel where she pleased, but to say what she pleased, and created a sort of public opinion for herself among the 49 steerage passengers, who, hearing only her side of the story, looked upon her as an ill-used woman, and it was thought best that I should at least take her as far as Panama. She too had the benefit of all this friendly and delicate care.

Each camping-place was provided for in the same way, always one or two of the army officers connected with the survey that was being made for the railroad were there to see that everything was right, and to have the pleasure of home talk with a lady. It took a long time to make these thirty miles of river travel, for we were only poled along against the stiff current of this mountain river. Though we made but a few miles each day, they were full of novelty and interest. Sometimes for nearly a mile we would go along gently; the men could use oars, and we would be sometimes out in the stream, sometimes close to the bank under the overarching branches of trees, bent into the water, and so matted by masses of flowering creepers that we seemed at times to glide along an aisle of flowers through a great conservatory. There I first saw the white and 50 scarlet varieties of the passion-flower, and many flowers, both fragrant and brilliant, for which I know no name. Then we would have to put out into the stream from under this shade, and the sun *was* hot. At times we would have to get out while the men would be busy with their long knives clearing a little pathway for us through the dense growth, where some point put out in such a shallow that we could not get the boat round it. We hardly felt the heat more than in our own hot weather; but the effects of the sun were very different upon white people. The Indians and Jamaica negroes, of whom our crew was composed, tumbled from the boat into the water, giving it a shove, and leaping back, as much at home in the water as porpoises. We were near to the close of the last day's journey, within an hour of Gorgona, when my brother-in-law, being young and strong and a Kentuckian, in his impatience at the delay on one of those sand spits, jumped into the water and dragged the boat, in spite of the men, who told him that it would kill him. We did get off sooner than usual through 51 his help, and he was very triumphant about it, when suddenly his eyes rolled back in his head and he fell prostrate from sunstroke just as we reached Gorgona; and throughout that whole night the physician with the engineering corps was doubtful if he could live.

I will say here that this deprived me of his care, for the illness that followed was such that he was taken back in the next steamer to the United States, as he could not recover in a hot climate. His illness kept us at Gorgona some days, the officers of the engineering corps all begging me to return to the United States, telling me that I had no idea of what I was to go through. In fact, at each step of my journey I was told, like the young man in "Excelsior," that the thing was impossible; and quite secretly to myself I said so too when I began to see what the emigrants suffered. There were hundreds of people camped out on the hill-slopes at Gorgona in apologies for tents, waiting for a certainty of leaving Panama, from which as yet there was no transportation. There were many women, 52 some with babies, among these; they were in a hot, unhealthy climate, and the uncertainty of everything was making them ill: loss of hope brings loss of strength: they were living on salt provisions brought from home with them, which were not fit for such a climate, and already many had died.

Some pleasant English people, returning from South America, were, like myself, guests at the headquarters of the engineer corps. The alcalde of the village invited us all to a breakfast, where I had a caution given me just in time to prevent my showing my horror at the chief dish, a baked monkey which looked like a little child that had been burned to death. The iguana, or large lizard, of which we had seen so many along the river, was also a chief dish. This is held to be very delicate, and its eggs are esteemed as much as certain eggs are among us. The alcalde's house was a thatched roof on poles, with wattled sides, like a magnified vegetable crate. Unbleached sheeting had been tacked over this, in our honor, and the wall further adorned by four colored lithographs. There 53 were the "Three Marys," and although mere daubs, had at least the garments and attributes of their subjects. The fourth was a black-haired, red-cheeked, staring young woman in a flaming red dress and ermine tippet, and a pink rose in her hand, under all,

MARY,

WIFE OF JAMES K. POLK,

President of the United States.

This, he evidently thought, was the Mary of our worship. When we went back, Mrs. W— said, “We will have our breakfast now,” and had her own tea-pot and tea brought out. When she found that I was too young a traveller to know the necessity of carrying these with me, she gave me hers, with a warning, which I have heeded to my great comfort, never to separate from my own tea equipage again.

The distance from Gorgona to Panama was about twenty-one miles. It was *distance*, not a *road*; there was only a mule track—rather a trough than track in most places, and mule staircases with occasional steps of at least four feet, and only wide 54 enough for a single animal—the same trail that had been followed since the early day of Spanish conquest; and this trail followed the face of the country as it presented itself—straight up the sides of the steepest heights to the summit, then straight down them again to the base. No bridges across the rapid streams. These had to be forded by the mules, or, when narrow, the mule would gather his legs under him and leap it. If one could sit him, so much the better; if not, one fell into the water; and in this way many emigrants got broken bones, and many more bruises and thorough wettings. There was no system about the baggage; people generally had taken the largest trunk they could find, because the journey was to be a long one; there was no provision for taking these across other than by hand; and when the trunk was absolutely too large, mules and cows were pressed into the service. My invaluable Captain Tucker had made all arrangements for me, and I knew nothing of these troubles on my own behalf, but even the civilized “baggage-smashing” of our railroads 55 was nothing compared to the damage done in that Isthmus transfer. The slender Indians bending under the weight of a trunk carried between them on poles, and the thin, ill-fed little mules which almost disappeared under the load of trunks, valises, and bags, both got rid of their load when tired of it. There were very narrow defiles worn through the rock where we could only go in single file, and even the men sat sidewise, because there was not room to sit as usual. At one of these we came upon a cow loaded with trunks and bags. She was measuring her wide horns against the narrow entrance of the defile, as her load prevented her twisting through. There we had to wait until some solution of the difficulty was found, which she reached by rubbing off all her load, leaving us the *débris* of the broken trunks and smashed baggage to climb over. We had two days of this before reaching Panama.

A fine mule is really a delightful animal to ride, especially in a mountain country; but these very small, badly fed, ungroomed, wretched little creatures that we had were 56 full of viciousness, and they resented the unusual work required of them. I had been, as usual, provided with the best—a fine mule belonging to the “company;” and Captain Tucker was exultant that I was neither ill nor tired, nor in any way broken down by the unusualness of the whole thing, and repeated his constant expression, “I told my wife you were not a bit of a fine lady.” He judged, as we all judge, by appearances. As there were no complaints or tears or visible breakdown, he gave me credit for high courage, while the fact was that the whole thing was so like a nightmare that one took it as a bad dream—in helpless silence. The nights were odious with their dank mists and noises; but there was compensation in the sunrise, when from a mountain-top you looked down into an undulating sea of magnificent unknown blooms, sending up clouds of perfume into the freshness of the morning; and thus from the last of the peaks we saw, as Balboa had seen before us, the Pacific at our feet. There I felt in connection with home, for Balboa and 57 Pizarro meant also Prescott's history of the conquest, and family readings and discussions in a time that seemed so far back now, for it lay before the date which should hereafter mark all things—before and after leaving home. Panama, too, was the first walled city I had ever seen; and its land gate and water gate, and its old cathedral, with the roof and spire inlaid with mother-of-pearl, all made me feel that I had come to a foreign countru.

My stay at Panama was not all one-sided; it had its very pleasant aspects. General Herran's letters made his family accept me as one of themselves. One of them, an elderly lady, a widow, made me come to her house and remain with her during my whole stay; there, with her daughters and her nice old servants, I had none of the forlornness which belongs to being in a hotel, and quickly slipped into a routine very much like my ordinary life, only with very different scenery and actors. I learned the reality of Spanish hospitality, and that “La casa y todo que tiene es á su disposicion” is not merely a phrase.

Many of the young people had been educated in London and Paris, but there was no want of topics in common, and of interest, even with those who had never left their country.

I had plenty of books with me; there were interminable letters to be written home, visits to receive and visits to return; and delightful walks on the ramparts in the cool of the day just before sundown, often ending in going to dine or have an evening of music with the ladies of native or foreign consular families, who also had their exercise there.

When I was in Paris in 1852, I thought I recognized in a carriage that passed me in the Bois de Boulogne a beautiful face with those eyelids the Spanish call *durmididos*, a peculiarity I had first seen in one of the most beautiful girls in the Hurtado family. The Empress had those eyelids, and as she was then in the first blaze of her new distinction, Spanish beauty was in fashion. It was among her beauties commented on and praised. This expression, *durmididos*, or sleepy eyelids, is a characterization given to the long, heavily fringed, slowly moving eyelid, where the eye is more open at the inside than at the outer corner, and where the eyelid descends with a sweep, giving that look that we see in a child when it is struggling against sleep.

I ventured a bow, which was quickly returned, and we drew up beside each other and renewed acquaintance. I was so pleased to find I could be of any service to them in Paris, helping to decide on a school for the young girls, and in every way I could think of taking from them in turn the sense of being far from home.

On Sundays we had the service of our own church. Mr. Aspinwall had looked to the starting of the Episcopal Church in California, and sent out the Rev. Mr. Minor to plant it. It was liberal and kind of some Catholic Panama ladies to give the use of their large rooms for a Protestant service. They not only did this, but every Sunday we found the room arranged with as many seats as it could contain placed in aisles, a temporary altar made by a table covered with the finest linen and decorated with flowers, while they themselves, although they could not join our service, stayed just without the door, and made us feel welcome in that way. Some passengers had a melodeon, and

not a bad improvised choir chanted the responses. It was a sincerely religious gathering, and I recall no other service like it for simple, genuine impressiveness.

The best rooms in that climate are always on the upper floor, their only windows being as large as our barn doors, which, in this room, when slid aside, gave us a broad view over the bay. Mr. Minor, in his orthodox robes, at the flower-decorated table, the melodeon with its little choir around it on one side, the space at the other side remaining open for the ladies of the house who were in the doorway of an adjoining room, where they, with their idea of respect, sat in full evening dress—satin slippers, fan, lace mantillas, and flowers in the hair—everything in the old Spanish style; the few American ladies in the front row of chairs in their morning suits and bonnets, while the rest of the room was crowded with men in every variety of dress and want of dress. No one had anticipated such detention, and the small outfit intended for rapid travel was pretty much used up, while at that time there were no means of replacing it; red-flannel shirts and corduroy clothes seemed to be the only thing to be had in Panama, and so made a picturesque though uncomfortable wear for the tropics.

Some observances of the Catholic Church, of which I had only read, I saw here. The house where I was staying was on the great square where the cathedral and customhouse and other large buildings are; my rooms were about twenty feet above the ground, one a corner room; the broad covered balcony that ran around both sides gave me a look out on the whole active life of Panama. Sometimes it was a church procession to the ramparts to bless the waters and pray for a favorable season; very picturesque from the brilliant awnings carried over the heads of the officiating priests, in their splendid lace robes over the red under-dress, and followed by a long array of ladies in the old Spanish costume—lace mantillas on the head, bright silk and satin gowns, and satin slippers, all carrying flowers to be cast in the water; they in turn followed by gentlemen in full European evening dress; and then a long crowd of Indians and women, looking like pictures because of their very odd and scanty garments; these would have not only the music of the church service, as it was chanted by the priests and taken up by the people, but at the end of the procession nearly every man

had a rude form of guitar on which he played, and sang, while women danced along at the end of the procession, reminding one of Miriam's dancing in the early Jewish ceremonials.

On Good-Friday the search for the body of the Saviour made another very striking church occasion; the usual persons were in the formal procession, led by priests, but they were in funeral vestments, the ladies all in the deepest mourning, with black veils over their heads, and every one carrying a lighted candle.

Often and often the Rev. Mr. Minor, our Episcopal clergyman, with white robes and bared head, followed a solitary rough coffin, 63 attended by a few men in red-flannel shirts, making their way to the temporary burial-place just beyond the land gate, where the graves were growing thick. Just by was the entrance to the calaboose. The soldiers on guard, who had muskets, and hats with feathers, but no shoes, whiled away their time by fighting chickens. I became, in spite of myself, expert in judging these; there was a constant bringing in and comparing; it was the high exchange for fighting-cocks. Those, and a shrivelled little man who carried on his business as jeweller in the open air, just as in the *Arabian Nights*, a bench and stool his only shop, I saw all the time. My Panama Tiffany's best effort was the making of filigree crosses with the imperfect Panama pearls interwoven, for which I became one of his customers.

One morning I heard a voice of lamenting, a voice of real sorrow. Looking down, I saw walking to and fro in the shade beneath my balcony, a young Indian man, carrying a child of about three years old, both of them with the least possible clothing on—country Indians, evidently. The 64 face of the child shocked me, and I called to the man that it was very ill; to bring it in and let us do something for it. He interrupted his wailing to say, “No, no; ya se murió” (“It is dying now”). He had been with it to the Cathedral near by. Candelaria, one of the servants of the house, a quick, sympathetic Spanish Indian, ran down to the man at my asking, and brought them in and cared for them; but the child was really in the agonies of death, and only lived a little while.

The next morning the tinkle of the little bell announcing that the Host was passing through the streets drew me to the balcony. I saw for the first time, in action, the theory that the death of an

infant is a cause for thankfulness. People often say this with us; it is the religious belief of the Catholic Church, and here, where the people were simple and acted their belief, it was being carried into practice. It was an Indian funeral, and on a very humble scale. The priest led the way, as usual, preceded by the Host, chanting a service for the dead, but with a quick, glad intonation, which 65 was taken up by the Indian women following. The little child, robed in white, with ruffles and lace and ribbons and wreaths of flowers, lay on an open bier carried by men singing loudly and cheerfully. Next the child was its father, now dressed out in a shirt and pantaloons, with a haggard face, and wistful eyes fixed upon his child, but singing also. Behind them a long crowd of women in their holiday dresses; violins and guitars were playing cheerful, quick music, and they followed them dancing. But for the dead child one would not have known that it was not a marriage procession. When we realize our utter helplessness to shield those we love from the chances of life, can we say that these people are wrong?

This was April of 1849, and only one steamship had preceded ours. Its passengers had been taken up the coast to San Francisco on the *California*, the first of the line sent round the Horn; she was to have returned and been at Panama to connect with us. A second steamship, the *Panama*, 66 had also left New York on her way round, but was not to reach Panama until a month later. It could only be conjectured why the *California* did not return, and it was supposed, as was afterwards proved, that all her crew had deserted to go to the mines, and no men could be induced to take their places. The madness of the gold fever was upon everybody up there, so we were detained in Panama seven weeks before the relief came. Seven weeks of tropical climate in the rainy season was hard upon those who had even the best accommodation, but simply fatal to those who had only tents and no resources against the climate. Another monthly steamer, and sailing vessels from all our ports, brought in accessions, until there were several thousand Americans banked up in Panama, and none of them prepared for this detention. The suffering from it was great, and one of the greatest troubles was that, though the mails continued to arrive, which would contain not only their family and business news from home, but in many cases money remittances which were very much needed, no one was 67 authorized to open them, as they were made up for San Francisco. Our consul, who was, of course, a foreigner, cared more for the technical offence he might give to the

government than for the actual good he might do to the Americans. Our people met the emergency in their national way: they called a public meeting, where it was decided that a committee of twelve should be chosen, to be agreed upon by all present; that these twelve persons before all should open the mails and distribute them. This committee was selected from among the government officials there—the American commissioners for running a boundary line between Mexico and California, the custom-house officers, officers of high rank in the army, and persons of political and personal distinction well known to all who were there. From among these the committee of twelve was made up.

The newspapers brought over by the steamer passengers gave me my first information of the sufferings of Mr. Frémont's overland party, and with these were rumors still more painful than the reality. I knew ⁶⁸ that in those mail-bags were letters from my father giving me the truth, and bringing such comfort as could be sent through letters, yet for want of them I was left to the horrors of imagination. This, added to the effects of the rainy season, began to make me ill. When the bags were opened, they quickly came to letters with my father's well-known frank upon them, which were as quickly brought to me, and passed up to the balcony on the end of a split sugar-cane—the sugar-cane for my little girl, the letters for me. Then I only thought of my letters; now I can see in it the intelligent results of self-government, making our people do the right thing under unusual circumstances. Hundreds were suffering for want of proper food and accommodations, which they could not have without money, while in these closed bags lay the letters containing their drafts, which could be exchanged by the company's agents or express company; so they made their laws as they went.

This was the governing letter brought me by the mails. I do not apologize for ⁶⁹ giving it in full, for it is a necessary “supplement and complement” of this narrative of personal experience of the impediments to reaching California at that period:

LETTER FROM COLONEL FRÉMONT TO HIS WIFE.

“TAOS, NEW MEXICO, *January 27, 1849.*”

“I write to you from the house of our good friend Carson. This morning a cup of chocolate was brought to me while yet in bed. To an overworn, overworked, much-fatigued, and starving traveller these little luxuries of the world offer an interest which in your comfortable home it is not possible for you to conceive. While in the enjoyment of this luxury, then, I pleased myself in imagining how gratified you would be in picturing me here in Kit's care, whom you will fancy constantly occupied and constantly uneasy in endeavoring to make me comfortable. How little could you have dreamed of this while he was enjoying the pleasant hospitality of your father's house! The furthest thing then from your mind was that he would ever repay it to me here.

“But I have now the unpleasant task of telling you how I came here. I had much rather write you some rambling letters in unison with the repose in which I feel inclined to indulge, and talk to you about the future, with which I am already busily occupied; about my arrangements for getting speedily down into the more pleasant climate of the lower Del Norte and rapidly through into California, and my plans when I get there. I have an almost invincible repugnance to going back among scenes where I have endured much suffering, and for all the incidents and circumstances of which I feel a strong aversion. But as clear information is absolutely necessary to you, and to your father more particularly still, I will give you the story now instead of waiting to tell it to you in California. But I write in the great hope that you will not receive this letter. When it reaches Washington you may be on your way to California.

“Former letters have made you acquainted with our journey so far as Bent's Fort, and from report you will have heard the circumstances of our departure from the Upper Pueblo of the Arkansas. We left that place about the 25th of November, with upwards of a hundred good mules, and one hundred and thirty bushels of shelled corn, intended to support our animals across the snow of the high mountains, and down to the lower parts of the Grand River tributaries, where usually the snow forms no obstacle to winter travelling. At the Pueblo I had engaged as a guide an old trapper well known as ‘Bill Williams,’ and who had spent some twenty-five years of his life in trapping various parts of the Rocky Mountains. The error of our journey was committed in engaging this man. He proved never to have in the least known, or entirely to have forgotten, the whole region of country

through which we were to pass. We occupied more than half a month in making the journey of a few days, blundering a tortuous way through deep snow, which already began to choke up the passes, for which we were obliged to waste time in searching. About the 11th of December we found ourselves at the north of the Del Norte Cañon, where that river issues from the St. John's Mountain, one of the highest, most rugged, and impracticable of all the Rocky Mountain ranges, inaccessible to trappers and hunters even in the 71 summer-time. Across the point of this elevated range our guide conducted us, and having still great confidence in his knowledge, we pressed onward with fatal resolution. Even along the river-bottoms the snow was already belly-deep for the mules, frequently snowing in the valley and almost constantly in the mountains. The cold was extraordinary; at the warmest hours of the day (between one and two) the thermometer (Fahrenheit) standing in the shade of only a tree trunk at zero; the day sunshiny, with a moderate breeze. We pressed up towards the summit, the snow deepening, and in four or five days reached the naked ridges which lie above the timbered country, and which form the dividing grounds between the waters of the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. Along these naked ridges it storms nearly all winter, and the winds sweep across them with remorseless fury. On our first attempt to cross we encountered a *poudrierie*, and were driven back, having some ten or twelve men variously frozen—face, hands, or feet. The guide became nigh being frozen to death here, and dead mules were already lying about the fires. Meantime it snowed steadily. The next day we made mauls, and, beating a road or trench through the snow, crossed the crest in defiance of the *poudrierie*, and encamped immediately below in the edge of the timber. The trail showed as if a defeated party had passed by—pack-saddles and packs, scattered articles of clothing, and dead mules strewed along. A continuance of stormy weather paralyzed all movement. We were encamped somewhere about 12,000 feet above the sea. Westward the country was buried in deep snow. It was impossible to advance, and to turn back was equally impracticable. We were over taken by sudden and inevitable ruin. It so happened that the only places where any grass could be had 72 were the extreme summits of the ridges, where the sweeping winds kept the rocky ground bare, and the snow could not lie. Below these, animals could not get about, the snow being deep enough to bury them. Here, therefore, in the full violence of the storms, we were obliged to keep our animals. They could not be moved either way. It was instantly apparent that we should lose every animal.

“I determined to recross the mountain more towards the open country, and haul or pack the baggage (by men) down to the Del Norte. With great labor the baggage was transported across the crest to the head springs of a little stream leading to the main river. A few days were sufficient to destroy our fine band of mules. They generally kept huddled together, and as they froze, one would be seen to tumble down, and the snow would cover him; sometimes they would break off and rush down towards the timber until they were stopped by the deep snow, where they were soon hidden by the *poudrerie*. The courage of the men failed fast; in fact, I have never seen men so soon discouraged by misfortune as we were on this occasion; but, as you know, the party was not constituted like the former ones. But among those who deserve to be honorably mentioned, and who behaved like what they were—men of the old exploring party—were Godey, King, and Taplin; and first of all Godey. In this situation I determined to send in a party to the Spanish settlements of New Mexico for provisions and mules to transport our baggage to Taos. With economy, and after we should leave the mules, we had not two weeks' provisions in the camp. These consisted of a store which I had reserved for a hard day—macaroni and bacon. From among the volunteers I chose King, Brackenridge, Creutzfeldt, and the guide 73 Williams; the party under the command of King. In case of the least delay at the settlements, he was to send me an express. In the meantime, we were to occupy ourselves in removing the baggage and equipage down to the Del Norte, which we reached with our baggage in a few days after their departure (which was the day after Christmas). Like many a Christmas for years back, mine was spent on the summit of a wintry mountain, my heart filled with gloomy and anxious thoughts, with none of the merry faces and pleasant luxuries that belong to that happy time. You may be sure we contrasted much this with the last at Washington, and speculated much on your doings, and made many warm wishes for your happiness. Could you have looked into Agrippa's glass for a few moments only! You remember the volumes of Blackstone which I took from your father's library when we were overlooking it at our friend Brant's? They made my Christmas amusements. I read them to pass the heavy time and forget what was around me. Certainly you may suppose that my first law lessons will be well remembered. Day after day passed by, and no news from our express party. Snow continued to fall almost incessantly on the mountain. The spirits of the camp grew lower. Proue laid down in the trail and froze to death. In a sunshiny day, and having with him means to make a fire, he threw his blankets down in the

trail and lay there till he froze to death. After sixteen days had elapsed from King's departure, I became so uneasy at the delay that I decided to wait no longer. I was aware that our troops had been engaged in hostilities with the Spanish Utahs and Apaches, who range in the North River Valley, and became fearful that they (King's party) had been cut off by these Indians. I could imagine no other accident. ⁷⁴ Leaving the camp employed with the baggage and in charge of Mr. Vincenthaler, I started down the river with a small party, consisting of Godey (with his young nephew), Mr. Preuss, and Saunders. We carried our arms and provisions for two or three days. In the camp the messes had provisions for two or three meals, more or less, and about five pounds of sugar to each man. Failing to meet King, my intention was to make the Red River settlement, about twenty-five miles north of Taos, and send back the speediest relief possible. My instructions to the camp were that if they did not hear from me in a stated time, they were to follow down the Del Norte.

“On the second day after leaving camp we came upon a fresh trail of Indians—two lodges, with a considerable number of animals. This did not lessen our uneasiness for our people. As their trail when we met it turned and went down the river, we followed it. On the fifth day we surprised an Indian on the ice of the river. He proved to be a Utah, son of a Grand River chief we had formerly known, and behaved to us in a friendly manner. We encamped near them at night. By a present of a rifle, my two blankets, and other promised rewards when we should get in, I prevailed upon this Indian to go with us as a guide to the Red River settlement, and take with him four of his horses, principally to carry our little baggage. These were wretchedly poor, and could get along only in a very slow walk. On that day (the sixth) we left the lodges late, and travelled only some six or seven miles. About sunset we discovered a little smoke in a grove of timber off from the river, and thinking perhaps it might be our express party on its return, we went to see. This was the twenty-second day since they had left us, and the sixth since we had left the camp. We found ⁷⁵ them—three of them, Creutzfeldt, Brackenridge, and Williams—the most miserable objects I have ever seen. I did not recognize Creutzfeldt's features when Brackenridge brought him up to me and mentioned his name. They had been starving. King had starved to death a few days before. His remains were some six or eight miles above, near the river. By aid of the horses, we carried these three men with us to Red River settlement, which we reached (January 20) on the tenth evening

after leaving our camp in the mountains, having travelled through snow and on foot 160 miles. I look upon the anxiety which induced me to set out from the camp as an inspiration. Had I remained there waiting the party which had been sent in, every man of us would probably have perished.

“The morning after reaching the Red River town, Godey and myself rode on to the Rio Hondo and Taos in search of animals and supplies, and on the second evening after that on which we had reached Red River, Godey had returned to that place with about thirty animals, provisions, and four Mexicans, with which he set out for the camp on the following morning. On the road he received eight or ten others, which were turned over to him by the orders of Major Beale, the commanding officer of this northern district of New Mexico. I expect that Godey will reach this place with the party on Wednesday evening, the 31st. From Major Beale I received the offer of every aid in his power, and such actual assistance as he was able to render. Some horses which he had just recovered from the Utahs were loaned to me, and he supplied me from the commissary's department with provisions which I could have had nowhere else. I find myself in the midst of friends. With Carson is living Owens, and Maxwell is at his father-in-law's, doing a very 76 prosperous business as a merchant and contractor for the troops.

“Evening.

“Mr. St. Vrain and Aubrey, who have just arrived from Santa Fé on the 15th of February for St. Louis, so that by him I have an early and certain opportunity of sending you my letters. Beale left Santa Fé on his journey to California on the 9th of this month. He probably carried on with him any letters which might have been at Santa Fé for me. I shall probably reach California with him or shortly after him. Say to your father that these are my plans for the future.

“At the beginning of February (about Saturday) I shall set out for California, taking the southern route by the Rio Abajo, the Paso del Norte, and the south side of the Gila, entering California at the Agua Caliente, thence to Los Angeles, and immediately north. I shall break up my party here, and take with me only a few men. The survey has been uninterrupted up to this point, and I shall carry it on consecutively. As soon as possible after reaching California I will go on with

the survey of the coast and coast country. Your father knows that this is an object of great desire with me, and I trust it is not too much to hope that he may obtain the countenance and aid of the President (whoever he may be) in carrying it on effectually and rapidly to completion. For this I hope earnestly. I shall then be enabled to draw up a map and report on the whole country, agreeably to our previous anticipations. *All my other plans remain entirely unaltered.* I shall take immediate steps to make ourselves a good home in California, and to have a place ready for your reception, which I 77 anticipate for April. My hopes and wishes are more strongly than ever turned that way.

“*Monday, 29.*

“My letter now assumes a journal form. No news yet from the party. A great deal of falling weather; rain and sleet here, and snow in the mountains. This is to be considered a poor country—mountainous, with severe winters and but little arable land. To the United States it seems to me to offer little other value than the right of way. It is throughout infested with Indians, with whom, in the course of the present year, the United States will be at war, as well as in the Oregon Territory. To hold this country will occasion the government great expense, and certainly one can see no source of profit or advantage in it. An additional regiment will be required for special service here.

“Mr. St. Vrain dined with us to-day. Owens goes to Missouri in April to get married, and thence by water to California. Carson is very anxious to go there with me now, and afterwards remove his family thither, but he cannot decide to break off from Maxwell and family connections.

“I am anxiously waiting to hear from my party, in much uncertainty as to their fate. My presence kept them together and quiet, my absence may have had a bad effect. When we overtook King's starving party, Brackenridge said that he ‘would rather have seen me than his father.’ He felt himself safe.

“Taos, New Mexico, *February 6, 1849.*

“After a long delay, which had wearied me to a point of resolving to set out again myself, tidings have at last reached me from my ill-fated party. Mr. Haler came in last night, having the night

before 78 reached the Red River settlement, with some three or four others. Including Mr. King and Proue, we have lost eleven of our party. Occurrences after I left them are briefly these, so far as they are within Haler's knowledge. I say briefly, because now I am unwilling to force myself to dwell upon particulars. I wish for a time to shut out these things from my mind, to leave this country, and all thoughts and all things connected with recent events, which have been so signally disastrous as absolutely to astonish me with a persistence of misfortune, which no precaution has been adequate on my part to avert.

“You will remember that I had left the camp with occupation sufficient to employ them for three or four days, after which they were to follow me down the river. Within that time I had expected the relief from King, if it was to come at all.

“They remained where I had left them seven days, and then started down the river. Manuel—you will remember Manuel, the Cosumne Indian—gave way to a feeling of despair after they had travelled about two miles, begged Haler to shoot him, and then turned and made his way back to the camp, intending to die there, as he doubtless soon did. They followed our trail down the river—twenty-two men they were in all. About ten miles below the camp, Wise gave out, threw away his gun and blanket, and a few hundred yards farther fell over into the snow and died. Two Indian boys—young men, countrymen of Manuel—were behind. They rolled up Wise in his blanket, and buried him in the snow on the river-bank. No more died that day—none the next. Carver raved during the night, his imagination wholly occupied with images of many things which he fancied himself eating. In the morning he wandered off from the 79 party, and probably soon died. They did not see him again. Sorel on this day gave out, and laid down to die. They built him a fire, and Morin, who was in a dying condition, and snow-blind, remained. These two did not probably last till the next morning. That evening, I think, Hubbard killed a deer. They travelled on, getting here and there a grouse, but probably nothing else, the snow having frightened off the game. Things were desperate, and brought Haler to the determination of breaking up the party in order to prevent them from living upon each other. He told them ‘that he had done all he could for them, that they had no other hope remaining than the expected relief, and that their best plan was to scatter and make the best of their way in small parties down the river. That, for his part, if he was to be eaten, he would, at all events,

be found travelling when he did die.’ They accordingly separated. With Mr. Haler continued five others and the two Indian boys. Rohrer now became very despondent. Haler encouraged him by recalling to mind his family, and urged him to hold out a little longer. On this day he fell behind, but promised to overtake them at evening. Haler, Scott, Hubbard, and Martin agreed that if any one of them should give out, the others were not to wait for him to die, but build a fire for him, and push on. At night Kern's mess encamped a few hundred yards from Haler's, with the intention, according to Taplin, to remain where they were until the relief should come, and, in the meantime, to live upon those who had died, and upon the weaker ones as they should die. With the three Kerns were Cathcart, Andrews, M'Kie, Stepperfeldt, and Taplin.

“Ferguson and Beadle had remained together behind. In the evening Rohrer came up and remained 80 with Kern's mess. Mr. Haler learned afterwards from that mess that Rohrer and Andrews wandered off the next day and died. They say they saw their bodies. In the morning Haler's party continued on. After a few hours Hubbard gave out. They built him a fire, gathered him some wood, and left him, without, as Haler says, turning their heads to look at him as they went off. About two miles farther, Scott—you remember Scott, who used to shoot birds for you at the frontier—gave out. They did the same for him as for Hubbard, and continued on. In the afternoon the Indian boys went ahead, and before nightfall met Godey with the relief. Haler heard and knew the guns which he fired for him at night, and, starting early in the morning, soon met him. I hear that they all cried together like children. Haler turned back with Godey, and went with him to where they had left Scott. He was still alive, and was saved. Hubbard was dead—still warm. From Kern's mess they learned the death of Andrews and Rohrer, and a little above met Ferguson, who told them that Beadle had died the night before.

“Godey continued on with a few New Mexicans and pack-mules to bring down the baggage from the camp. Haler, with Martin and Bacon, on foot, and bringing Scott on horseback, have first arrived at the Red River settlement. Provisions and horses for them to ride were left with the others, who preferred to rest on the river until Godey came back. At the latest, they should all have reached Red River settlement last night, and ought all to be here this evening. When Godey arrives, I shall know from him all the circumstances sufficiently in detail to enable me to understand clearly

everything. But it will not be necessary to tell you anything further. It has been 81 sufficient pain for you to read what I have already written.

“As I told you, I shall break up my party here. I have engaged a Spaniard to furnish mules to take my little party, with our baggage, as far down the Del Norte as Albuquerque. To-morrow a friend sets out to purchase me a few mules, with which he is to meet me at Albuquerque, and thence I continue the journey on my own animals. My road will take me down the Del Norte about 160 miles below Albuquerque, and then passes between this river and the heads of the Gila to a little Mexican town called, I think, Tusson; thence to the mouth of the Gila and across the Colorado, direct to Agua Caliente, into California. I intend to make the journey rapidly, and about the middle of March hope for the great pleasure of hearing from home. I look for a large supply of newspapers and documents, more, perhaps, because these things have a home look about them than on their own account. When I think of you all, I feel a warm glow at my heart, which renovates it like a good medicine, and I forget painful feelings in a strong hope for the future. We shall yet enjoy quiet and happiness together—these are nearly one and the same to me now. I make frequently pleasant pictures of the happy home we are to have, and oftenest and among the pleasantest of all I see our library, with its bright fire in the rainy, stormy days, and the large windows looking out upon the sea in the bright weather. I have it all planned in my own mind.”

Now friends and strangers both rose to protest against my going any farther; every one was convinced that, after such 82 fatigues and starvation, Mr. Frémont would not succeed in making his way through an unknown country to California, and that I should find no one to meet me when I did reach there. This decided me to go on, for I could not accept that idea.

The ladies in whose house I was were as kind as possible to me, and fortunately I could speak Spanish with them. All this time there was no steamer either from round the Horn or from California, and the only way of leaving the Isthmus was to return to New York, which was insisted upon by friends who thought that I ought not to wait any longer, with such uncertainties of transfer, and the greater uncertainty ahead. It was a forlorn situation. On the yellowed leaf of a “little well-

worn book,” in faded ink, I see now the words, “Alone. Panama, May, 1849,” and the quotation, “On a narrow strip of land, ‘Twixt two unbounded seas, I stand.”

Mr. Gray, one of the Boundary Commissioners, came to me early one morning with a newspaper containing a long letter from my 83 father regarding the expedition, in which he gave, for the benefit of the friends of those with Mr. Frémont, all that was known positively of the expedition, and the most reasonable and reasoning conjectures as to the safety and results of that which had just started again from New Mexico. About sundown Mr. Gray came back with another newspaper, with still more on the same subject. He found me where he had left me in the morning—sitting upon the sofa, with the unopened paper clasped in my hand, my eyes closed, and my forehead purple from congestion of the brain, and entirely unable to understand anything said to me. All the long train of troubled feeling and uncertainties and discomforts, aided by the climate, had culminated in brain-fever.

Now came all the benefit of being in a private family; Madame Arcé cared for me as though I had been her own child, and so conscientiously that she summoned an American, although her own preference was for her Spanish family physician. His course of treatment was to exclude all 84 outer air, and follow the old Spanish practice of bleeding, and hot water internally and externally. The American physician (attached to the Boundary Commission) was for iced drinks, cooling applications to the head, currents of fresh air, and blisters. These two, with their contradictory ideas and their inability to understand each other fully, only added to the confusion of my mind, and became part of my delirium. My lungs were congested, and it was needed to apply a blister all over the chest. No leeches could be had, and croton-oil, which would have answered the purpose without leaving disfiguring marks, was not to be found anywhere. And here I had another of the kindnesses done me, of which I have had so many before and since, from American men, who deserve fully their reputation for disinterested kindness and care towards women. No one ventured willingly into the sun; but a gentleman had himself rowed out to an English man-of-war which lay in the bay, and found in their medicine-chest the croton-oil that was needed. This was no small thing to 85 do. The reef in the harbor at Panama is so far extended that vessels had to lie out about three miles; the tide

rises twenty-five feet, so that not only was it a protracted exposure to the sun, but dangerous from the impetuosity with which the tide came in.

My brother-in-law all this time remained dangerously ill from the effects of his sun-stroke, and as he had to be taken back to the United States, even my new Spanish friends thought I too should return at the same time. I had become well enough to walk as far as the ramparts, which were very near the house. All the Americans came there the hour before sunset, the only cool time of the day. They were an eager, animated set of people when first there, but the failure of the steamers to arrive had told upon every one. They felt, like ship-wrecked people, that there was no escape from there; every sailing vessel that could be chartered had been to carry up the people. Those who had their through tickets still held to the hope that one steamer might come round the Horn if the other 86 did not return. The first time I went to the ramparts after my illness the sight of this discouraged set of people almost decided me to go home, all the more that with the natural kindness of fellow-countrymen in a distant place many of them came up, as I sat upon the old brass gun in an embrasure, to tell me how glad they were I had not died, and begged me not to stay there any longer, but to go back. I was spared the necessity of deciding for or against by the simultaneous arrival of the two steamers, one from California, the other from around the Horn, both getting there in the night within an hour of each other; so that their guns were mistaken for a second fire—it was supposed the first steamer had fired again. Every one had been listening for weeks for these guns. It was a splendid moonlight night, about two o'clock, and in a few minutes all the Americans had crowded to the ramparts, and the native people were up and talking on the streets. All the passengers were landing, but the interest concentrated on those from California. Straightway men 87 forgot all the trials connected with the crossing and the waiting, for there was the stream of returning gold-diggers, bringing with them the evidence that in the new country was more than justification for all the trials they were going through with to reach there. Of course I was up, dressed, and looking at all this busy throng crowding the great square which was in front of our house. I heard my own name, and caught sight of a familiar face and uniform as two gentlemen turned into the entrance below the balcony. One of them was saying, “Mrs. Frémont here! Heavens, what a crib for a lady!” The naval officer^{*} was on his way direct to Washington with official

statements and gold specimens forwarded to the government. Here was the hardest trial for me. This time I was not advised but ordered to go home, and everything short of force was used to make me return, under their care. I had only a few hours to decide, for at the earliest light they had to leave to connect with the returning steamer.

Edward F. Beale, late minister to Austria.

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In the chronicle of the conquest of Mexico there is one night of disaster and massacre which Bernal Diaz records under the head *tristísima noche*; I had had many sad nights since leaving home, but after my old friends left I think I could name this my saddest.

After this I did no more deciding, but let myself go with the current. The *Panama*, having just come round the Horn with but few passengers, and having had for its commander Lieutenant (now Admiral) Porter, was in admirable condition, and I was put upon her. Her sister steamer was in all the disorder and discomfort resulting from the want of a proper crew and servants. Lieutenant Porter left the ship here, and the captain who took charge broke down on the voyage from fever, and died shortly after. There were accommodations at most for eighty passengers; we had over four hundred. The ship's steward gave us scanty fare, reserving the canned provisions to sell for his own benefit. For a piece of gold he would sell a little can of vegetables or preserved meat. As 89 usual, I, however, was thoroughly well taken care of. My cough was incessant and racking, and I saw so many eyes turned to me with pity in them that I left the deck and went to my cabin to be where I would disturb no one. The gentleman in the next state-room became alarmed by the peculiar sound of the cough which he understood better than I did, and getting no answer to his knock opened the door and found me, as he feared, with a broken blood-vessel. After that I was better off than before, for they made me a room on the quarter-deck with the big flag doubled and thrown over the boom. Everybody contributed something to make me comfortable: one a folding iron camp-bedstead—some, guava jelly—some, tea—while one of my fellow-passengers gave me from his own private stores delicate nourishing things which brought back my strength, and personally superintended their preparation. That this was kindly felt as well as well done will be understood by all who know him—Mr. Samuel Ward. There were several ladies, and one of them, the wife of an 90 officer,

shared my deck tent. The ship was so crowded that the whole floor of the deck was chalked out into measured spaces allotted to persons who slept there. My state-room was kept merely for a dressing-room, and I let a good quiet woman who was out of money, and whose husband was working his passage up, sleep there. My “reliable woman” claimed her place in it, but she had to go up in the steerage. I had paid all her expenses in Panama at the hotel, and through to San Francisco, on condition that she never came in my sight. The seven weeks in Panama had proved that new scenes brought no desire for reformation, and by this time there was no popular opinion to sustain her. To dismiss her with a completed record, I will add that one of the great fires in San Francisco in 1851 was traced to her, where she had set fire to her dwelling-house in revenge on Mr. DeLessert for having refused to permit her to remain as his tenant. The Vigilance Committee, as she was a woman, disliked to punish her as they did other criminals; so she was only sent out of the country. It must have been 91 some comfort to her to know that my house was burned in the fire she had started.

The first voyage had only made me know the ocean by day, but on this journey up the Pacific I learned to know it by night also. My flag tent on deck first taught me the luxury of sleeping in the open air, *à la belle étoile*, truly; and the still greater delight of watching the night through all its phases, and seeing the sun rise from the ocean: it was full compensation for all the discomforts of the voyage. As I have said, the deck was parcelled out into sleeping-places; nearest us were the gentlemen of our more immediate party and acquaintance. I overheard among these one night a stir and murmuring which took shape to my mind as the announcement of some impending danger; I caught the sense that the captain would not open his door, that the captain would not answer any one, and then the quick decision to do themselves what was necessary. A new sound was added to that made by the steamer's way through the water—a low, busy, grating, whispering sound of waters—and I could 92 see long broken lines of foamy white, which even my inexperience told me were unusual. Seeing that we were sitting up and listening, we were told not to be alarmed, although we were in sound of the breakers, that there was time yet to work the ship off, and that Captain Ringgold had taken command. I was too ignorant to be alarmed. To me it was only a

beautiful new phase of the sea. It was fortunate for us that we had experienced naval officers on board, for the captain remained ill, and they proved a safe dependence.

As our voyage wore on, the lack of reading-matter began to be felt; we had all exhausted our supply during the long detention at Panama before getting on ship-board, and there was nothing to be exchanged, for each one had the same thing. Everybody had a Shakespeare and not much besides. Something was said among us one day about this: how people inevitably read the same books, thought the same thoughts, and used the same expressions; how rare it was under the sun to find anything new or fresh; whether from want of 93 courage to do our own thinking, or unwillingness to make the breach in received usages, we continually would follow in grooves laid for us. The first school of whales we met illustrated this. I sent different gentlemen about the deck to quietly ascertain what the people were writing in their note-books, for every one had produced a little note-book as soon as the whales were seen. I was sure that the greater number would put it, "This morning, for the first time, we met the leviathan of the deep disporting himself in his native element," or, "Glorious sight! huge monsters at play!" I was sure very few would call a whale a whale, and it proved so. It was a morning's fun for us to watch the different ambassadors on their missions: they would draw out the unsuspecting writer, saying "there was a fine sight;" "something to write home about;" "it was very hard to keep a journal on a monotonous sea-voyage," etc. Then the writer would proudly read out what he had been preparing for home. In almost every case it was the stereotyped sentence. When the returns 94 were in, we found "the leviathan" had it by an immense majority; very few whales.

For myself, I did not miss books. I was in the languid content of convalescence, and it was enough to lie still and take in so much that was new and, as a German friend of mine puts it, "harmonious" to me. From my flag tent on deck I loved to look out, myself in shadow, to the deep blue of the ocean, stretching far, far, to where it joined with the line of the cloudless blue sky—to the calm splendor of the bronze and golden sunset clouds at that grand moment of the sun's setting in the ocean. I had never before seen the stars all through a night. I had not known how close, how animated, they could be. I had never watched the paling of the stars before the coming day, nor that beautiful ripple that, just at sunrise, comes with the first breath of morning. Like nothing else in

nature for its suggestion of freshness and new happy life, except the smile that sometimes comes on the face of a sleeping baby about to wake.

There was no need to keep a journal ⁹⁵ Everything burned itself in its own image on my mind, and all settled there as part of the endless talks I should have when, returned home, like Sindbad, I should relate my voyages.

Against all adverse circumstances was the pure air of the ocean coming into my lungs night and day and healing them. By the time we reached San Diego I was fairly well; but I do not know how it would have been if fresh discouragements had reached me there. At this point I was to learn whether Mr. Frémont had or had not arrived in California. As we dropped anchor, and boats put off to us from the shore, I went below. If I had needed any proof of the universal good feeling and interest in me, it came now, for I think the whole ship's passengers crowded to my door. “The Colonel has come!” “The Colonel is safe!” “It's all right now, madam!” “The Colonel was in the Angeles three weeks ago,” and had gone up overland to meet the steamer, which was overdue. Then their fears and sympathies were openly expressed to me. No one had ⁹⁶ thought it possible that a party so broken down with hardships could force its way in the winter months through the then unknown country, and they dreaded the result for me.

The few remaining days of the journey were completely charming. We had come into bracing cool air, which repaired the damage done by the tropics, and every one was eager and confident of success in the now certain gold country. Major Derby (“John Phoenix”) gave way to his wildest fun and high spirits, and organized a series of *tableaux vivants* and theatricals that were acted every night on deck in a way that would have made the fortune of a theatrical manager—there were many cultivated and charming people among the passengers—and altogether life seemed very bright and full of happy possibilities as we entered the Golden Gate.*

“Called *Chrysopylæ* (Golden Gate) on the map, on the same principle that the harbor of *Byzantium*—Constantinople afterwards—was called *Chrysoceraë* (Golden Horn). The form of the harbor and its advantages for commerce, and that before it became an entrepôt of Eastern commerce,

suggested the name to the Greek founders of Byzantium. The form of the bay of San Francisco and its advantages for commerce, Asiatic inclusive, suggest the name which is given to this entrance.”

This is a foot-note occurring in “Senate Document, Miscellaneous, No. 148, Thirtieth Congress, First Session.” A resolution dated “June 5, 1848,” ordered the printing of this document, which is called “Geographical Memoir upon Upper California in Illustration of his Map of Oregon and California, by John Charles Frémont.”

There have been various versions of the naming of the entrance to the bay of San Francisco. This was the origin of the name given on the map published in June of '48. The first gold was found in August of that year. J.B.F.

97

We found a bleak and meagre frontispiece to our Book of Fate. A few low houses, and many tents, such as they were, covered the base of some of the wind-swept treeless hills, over which the June fog rolled its chilling mist. Deserted ships of all sorts were swinging with the tide. A crowd of men swarmed about what is now Montgomery Street, then the mud shore of the bay. It was Aladdin's old lamp, however, homely as it seemed, and fortune was there for those who had what my father used to call “a 98 stomach for a fight,” or for those who, born lucky, succeed by virtue of the unknown force to which we concede that term.

The mere landing of the passengers was a problem. The crews who took boats to shore were pretty sure not to come back. The *Ohio*, Captain Ap Catesby Jones commanding, was there. Captain Jones very kindly invited me on board to remain until Mr. Frémont should arrive, for I had the disappointment of finding he was not yet here. Mr. Howard, a wealthy merchant, had brought out his boat, and I accepted his invitation, as after so much sea travel the land was best for me.

There were then some three or four regularly built houses in San Francisco, representing the Hudson Bay and the Russian hide business; the rest were canvas and blanket tents. Of course there was no lumber there for building, and there were not even trees to be cut down; nor would any man have diverted his attention from the mines to go to house-building. A little later, when they

found the hardships of mining life too great and the returns too 99 uncertain, the tide turned, and many men came back to make fortunes at steady work in building up the town. Sixteen dollars a day was ordinary pay for carpenters. The young officers of the army and navy there used to lament to me that their business was so far less profitable. One of them turned to profit his having been on the Wilkes surveying expedition, and made really a great sum of money by piloting in the thick incoming fleet of vessels of all sorts.

I was taken to one of these houses, which had been the residence of Liedesdorff, the Russian consul, who had recently died there. It was a time of wonderful contrasts. This was a well-built adobe house one story high, with a good veranda about it, and a beautiful garden kept in old-world order by a Scotch gardener. Luxuries of every kind were to be had, but there were wanting some necessaries. Fine carpets and fine furniture and a fine Broadwood piano, and no house-maid. The one room with a fire-place had been prepared for my sleeping-room, and had French furniture and no end of mirrors, but lacked a fire.

100

The June winds were blowing, and I felt them the more from recent illness, which had left the lungs very sensitive. There was no fuel proper; and little fagots of brush-wood, broken-up goods boxes and sodden ends of old ship timber were all that could be had.

The club of wealthy merchants who had this house together had excellent Chinese servants, but to make everything comfortable to me they added the only woman that could be procured, who accepted a temporary place of chamber-maid at two hundred and forty dollars a month and perquisites. One of the perquisites was the housing of her husband and children as well as herself. She had been washer-woman to a New York regiment, and was already the laundress of these gentlemen. She was kind enough to tell me that she liked my clothes, and would take the pattern of certain dresses, and seemed to think it a matter of course that I would let her carry off gowns and wraps to be copied by her dress-maker, a Chinaman. I declined this as civilly as I could, but the result was that she threw up the situation.

101

The only really private house was one belonging to a young New-Yorker, who had it shipped from home, house and furniture complete—a double two-story frame house, which, when in place, was said to have cost ninety thousand dollars. At this price, with the absence of timber and the absence of labor, it will be seen that it was difficult to have any other shelter than a tent. The bride for whose reception this house was intended arrived just before me, but lived only a few weeks; the sudden and great changes of climate from our Northern weather into the tropics, and from the tropics again into the raw, harsh winds of that season at San Francisco, were too much for her, even with all the comforts of her own beautiful home. At a party given to welcome her the whole force of San Francisco society came out, the ladies sixteen in number.

Visits in the daytime were held as a marked attention. I was told that “time was worth fifty dollars a minute,” and that I must hold as a great compliment the brief visits which were made to me constantly through the day by busy men.

102

There was not only gold to be had at the mines, but a golden shower was falling for whoever had wit to catch it. I heard of many marvellous strokes of fortune, which caused elevated eyebrows when I repeated them on my return.

Our steamer was to have put in at Monterey, but her fuel was so nearly exhausted that we made straight for San Francisco. Mr. Frémont had ridden up from the Angeles to Monterey to meet me, and, after waiting there a little, and no steamer arriving, came on to San Francisco, getting there about ten days after I did—fortunately for me, for I was already getting ill again with morbid imaginings that I had been deceived, and that he had not arrived in the country at all. Now that we have the telegraph and railroad, as well as our steamer connection, only those who experienced the want of all these can realize the dead blank absence created then.

The winds of San Francisco had renewed the trouble with my lungs, and we went down by steamer to Monterey, where there was a very different climate. Bayard 103 Taylor has celebrated the noble pine-trees that border the Pacific here.

There was none of the stir and life here which made San Francisco so remarkable. There was a small garrison of married officers with their families, but no man of any degree voluntarily kept away from the mines or San Francisco; it was their great opportunity for sudden money-making. Domestic matters were even more upset than in San Francisco, where Chinese could be had. Here it was like after a shipwreck on a desert shore; the strongest and the most capable was king, and, to produce anything like comfort, all capacities had to be put to use. The major-general in command of the post, General Riley, was his own gardener. He came to me, proud and triumphant, with a small market-basket on his arm, containing vegetables of his own raising. And as we would bring roses of our cultivation, so he brought me a present of a cabbage, some carrots, and parsley.

The French ships brought cargoes of everything that could be sealed up in tin cans and glass, but the stomach grows very 104 weary of this sort of food. It was barely a year since the gold had been discovered, but in that time every eatable thing had been eaten off the face of the country, and nothing raised. I suppose there was not a fowl left in the northern part of the state, consequently not an egg; all the beef cattle left had been bought up by “Baron” Steinberger in San Francisco; there were no longer vaqueros or herdsmen, and flocks and herds had dispersed.

There were no cows, consequently no milk. Housekeeping, deprived of milk, eggs, vegetables, and fresh meat, becomes a puzzle; canned meat, macaroni, rice, and ham become unendurable from repetition. There were only the half-domesticated Indians as servants—poor cooks at best; and while wood was abundant around here, there was no one to cut it. Mrs. Canby, wife of one of the officers, was fortunate in having an attached as well as capable servant, a Mexican mulatto who had been with General Canby through the Mexican war, and who remained with them against all temptations. This man was a very capable baker, 105 and until I was fortunate enough to chance upon a cook, Mrs. Canby sent me daily a fragrant loaf of fresh bread, wrapped in its clean napkin and on a beautiful china plate. Nor was I the only one who felt the great kindness of this lady; she was kind and thoughtful for all—the children of the soldiers, any one; wherever she could give help, she did so.

General Canby was one of those modest officers whose promotion fell behind his merits. My father was for twenty-eight years chairman of the Senate Military Committee, and while the Secretary of War changed with the changing political fortunes of the day, he remained fixed, the comprehending and thorough friend of the army. Understanding army interests, and having his friendships with officers, he was its intelligent and useful friend. I think it is to him that is due the longevity ration. When, my voyage over and myself safe back at home, I told of this among the many other kindnesses shown to me, my father quietly looked up General (then Major) Canby's position, had him written to, and the result was promotion and a more congenial post. Both himself and his wife were so good and gentle, and thorough in their kindness to others, that it seemed unnatural he should meet a cruel death.

Monterey was quite a town, with many good houses. Their adobe walls looked like rough stone, while the red-tiled roofs gave color and picturesqueness—the finer houses built with a disregard of space, a long front to the street, and short wings running back at either end, while the remainder of the square was a large garden, shut in by high adobe walls with a coping of red tiles.

Travel teaches one that there *is* nothing new under the sun. In all the different countries in which I have been, and in all grades of society, everywhere I have seen certain characteristics inevitably repeated. There are women in all classes upon whom every advantage is thrown away; while there are as certainly to be met with in every grade women who seem to have a creative faculty for embellishing life; they seem to have the power of not only using to the best advantage what they have, but even to create resources about them. I could see this even in the village of Digger Indians who were my nearest neighbors on the Mariposas; one woman would have her baby in a frightful condition of dirt, the coarse black hair matted into its eyelashes; while another would have hers clean, and hung about with necklace and decorations of bits of polished bone, beads, ends of red tape, even wax seals which she had cut from envelopes thrown away, while her shock of black hair was comparatively tidy and in some order. This difference of capacity was eminently noticeable at this time in California, where all usual surroundings were not to be had.

Among the California ladies were some married to Americans, and they came at once to see me; others, who were thoroughly Californian, and to whom my name represented only invasion and defeat, did not come at first, but after a little were among the kindest people I knew there. The only cow in the town belonged to one of these, and she sent me daily a portion of the milk, 108 because I too had a little child. They had very much the life of our Southern people; their household, their children, their domestic surroundings, filled their days busily and contentedly. Their houses were charmingly neat and orderly, and when I made a visit I generally found the lady of the house sitting in the inner court, shaded by the projecting roof, and surrounded by domesticated Indian girls at their sewing.

They seemed to have the passion of Hollanders for the accumulation of household linen; also for satin dresses, which they bought in number, and had made up without any reference to style or fashion, and packed them away in huge Chinese trunks. These trunks were painted bright reds, greens, and yellows, with well-executed wreaths of flowers upon them, and were kept as ornamental pieces of furniture in the sitting-rooms, along with French clocks, no end of chandeliers, and other handsome things. Pictures of church subjects and English hunting-scenes were to be met everywhere.

In making a visit, one of the first 109 attentions was to hand you the cigarette, both made and unmade, in order that you might “consult your habit.” This part of the entertainment was a failure with me, and I had always to explain that I inherited an inability even to endure the smell of tobacco.

As we show a photographic album, they would open these huge trunks and show the satin dresses. The Fourth of July made the occasion for a grand ball; there were some Californians in town, and there was a man-of-war, and the post furnished some dancing men, among them a long thin young Captain, since General, Sherman.

The dressing for this ball was a serious matter to these native Californian ladies. They had already all these expensive gowns, but they wished something absolutely new and in our fashion—as they

expressed it, “as they wore them in the States.” An American who had lived there many years asked me to show her “in strict confidence” my ball dresses; she did not believe me when I told her I had none with me; she said that she would show them to no one else, that only her dress-maker and herself 110 should see them (the dress-maker was the wife of a corporal). I could not convince her that it was not unwillingness on my part to share “the fashions” with her; she looked upon it as an excuse. When I said “really I had no evening dresses with me,” she broke out with “What have you got in all those trunks, then, for I know you have many trunks?” I told her to come and see, and insisted that she should look. When she saw only morning and walking dresses and under-wear, she exclaimed, as though it had dawned upon her that I was a sort of social impostor: “Why, you was *pore* when you left the States! Why, I have thirty-seven satin dresses, and no two off the same piece.”

The evening of the ball was to disclose the secret of the toilets of the native ladies; each had had a new dress that was to be a surprise to the others; the merchant who sold the goods and the dress-maker who made them were each pledged to let no one know about the others' dress. When the company assembled, eight of these ladies had gowns exactly alike: a *café au lait* 111 Chinese satin, with a large pattern on it, making the effect of what we use for furniture covering. On no account would they have worn a low-necked and short-sleeved dress; so while the sleeves were long, the corsage was completely covered by a large Madras silk handkerchief, pinned down Quaker fashion.

The largest and best building in the town was the Governor's residence; it occupied double the usual space, and was really a good building, with very thick walls, and a charming great garden, surrounded by a hedge of roses. I was fortunate to have one wing of this, where I made my first housekeeping. The large window of one room looked into the bay, with its great crescent-shaped sweep towards Santa Cruz; the boom of its long rollers was with me all the time. For furniture we had what could be gathered in San Francisco and shipped down by steamer. Beautiful Chinese matting of varied colors, whole pieces of French and Chinese furniture damask, and Chinese bamboo furniture. An exquisite circular table of carved and inlaid work made a 112 dining-table, and we had beautiful Chinese, French, and English china. There was no toilet china, but a punch-bowl makes a good basin; the best wax candles, but flat tin candlesticks. We had one great luxury, a

large fire-place for a wood fire, but no shovel, tongs, or andirons, and no wood to be had for money. Here friendship stepped in, and supplied me bountifully with wood of the right kind and cut in the right way, for the government teamsters were ordered to supply me as they did the ladies of the Post. I had no servant at all. A woman with a baby in her arms came to the open door one day, and asked me if I wanted a cook; on being told that I did indeed, she asked, "Would you take one from Sydney? Because I am from Sydney, and am off the ship that came in yesterday." She was under the influence of some hurt feeling, and went on: "I have been to the General's and to the Consul's, and they would not have me because I was from Sydney and on that ship. Why are you not, too, afraid to take me?" I said, "Because your baby is so clean, so well-kept, and looks so well" (a 113 child eighteen months old); "he answers for it that you are clean, patient, and kind." "You will not repent taking me," the woman said. And I never did. She went into place at once, and made me wonderfully comfortable as long as I remained. She was a thoroughly trained English servant, who had lived in Australia with the wife of the Chief-Justice. She had all her credentials, and deserved them.

This need of a cook had been provided for in a man who had already travelled with Mr. Frémont, and who had come with him again this time. He had been cook on a man-of-war, and we knew him and all his people, most respectable colored people in Washington. With him, and my own woman Harriot, I had the nucleus of a good household. The mission Indians made good women-servants, as Mr. Frémont had seen in the many California households with which he had been familiar, so we had never foreseen any trouble on this account. In fact, I had grown up to such a fixed order of things in all domestic arrangements that ideas of this kind had never come to my mind. But 114 I lost my Harriot in New York in the way I have told, and Saunders was in the mines. Although a free man himself, his wife and children were slaves, because of the law that children of a slave mother were also slaves. He had now the opportunity of making quickly the money with which to buy their freedom. He had been offered "the lot" for seventeen hundred dollars, and Mr. Frémont equipped him and sent him off to our mines, on their first arrival at San Francisco, to gather this. He really did not like to leave me, but we would not have allowed him to stay under such circumstances.

Up to a certain point everything seemed to be against us. Then the tide turned, and it was indeed a flood of good fortune. When we left home it was on the plan of a seven years' absence, amounting to exile; into an unkwon country, without mail communications; and upon the slow process of the increase of flocks and herds was based the possibility of a journey back to revisit my people. The gold discoveries made rapid 115 the advance in travel and mail facilities which would otherwise have been of gradual, slow growth.

General Taylor was at this time President. His was a direct, brave, and single nature. What he thought just and right he did, irrespective of usage or politics. His brother, Colonel Taylor, had been upon the court-martial which made the decision upon which Mr. Frémont refused the promotion given him, and resigned from the army.

Colonel Taylor was one of the four officers who said that the oldest officer in the army would have been puzzled how to act upon the question which Mr. Frémont had been called upon by his superior officers to decide for them—the question of the relative rank between a commodore and a general.

Quite without my father's knowledge, the President offered to Mr. Frémont a government employment of dignity, and one for which his past life had fitted him—the place of Commissioner for the United States to run the boundary line with Mexico under the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. This, the 116 President told my father, was intended to express his personal feeling in regard to that harsh finding of the military court.

As may be imagined, the arrival of the mail was *the* event to all. This was among the things we learned by the first mail that reached us after my arrival. Mr. Beale, a young naval officer, was sent out with special despatches from the government, and was also given this commission to bring to Mr. Frémont. We thought we had nothing more to ask of fate when we found that we too had our proportion in the great stream of wealth, which meant for us independence, and its first use the return home; but this unlooked-for and gracious act of justice crowned our content.

My father was especially touched by it. Apart from personal gratification, he had been too long a leader in the triumphant and fierce Democratic party not to feel the full value of this unlooked-for giving of a high post outside of the President's party. The commission sent in such a way had to be accepted for a time at least; but as it would have involved some years of stay out 117 there, there was no hesitation about not holding it. Our new independence was too complete and too sweet to be given up for any cause. That long white envelope, with its official stamp in the corner, which brings such terror into officers' families, and sounds the note of separation to so many, was not again to come to us; henceforth we were to direct our own movements. That was what *we* proposed.

Mr. Beale was from Washington, and a young favorite of my father's. He, too, had had his part in the early California conquest. For the few months he remained on that coast he made part of our little household. With a friendly captain (also from Washington), and really no service to be done, as his ship lay at anchor in the bay, renewed leaves of absence were very easy to get.

All our plans had been made before the discovery of gold. We had expected to live the usual life of people going to a new country, and had sent round all manner of useful things, from a circular saw to a travelling carriage. All these, except the latter, were 118 stored in the company's warerooms in San Francisco.

While the fine weather lasted I travelled wherever wheels could go, and lived night and day in this carriage. Mr. Aspinwall had it built under his own directions in New Jersey, and a sliding bottom to the seats and double cushions made an excellent sleeping-place. We had this and double and single harness in quantity, but no horses, no one to drive, and no made roads to drive upon; we just followed bridle-paths among the trees, and where the ground was very sloping the Indian men put their “*riatas*” around the carriage, keeping it up until we came to level ground again. Mine was the first carriage that had ever been in the country, and horses had not been used in harness there. Low-hung wagons with solid wooden wheels, drawn by oxen, made the transportation for ladies who wished to go by wheel—*carretas*, they called them. Our experiences in gathering a team were unusual and rather trying to a woman's nerves; an Oregon mare, warranted gentle, was harnessed in with a rather 119 old California riding-horse, which was supposed to be tamed by time and work.

Mr. Beale, who had in him the traditions of his boyhood in Maryland, and the remembrance of reins handled there, felt sure that he could drill these into an efficient pair of carriage-horses: he was very strong, and he had that confidence in himself which belongs under twenty-five. I wonder now, when I remember, that I got into that carriage with those horses. The Oregon mare rose straight on her hind-legs, while the California horse, slower to understand, stood quiet for a little, and then commenced the favorite local habit of “bucking.” And this they kept to, getting frightened and obstinate. I too was frightened, and begged for mules, which we tried. There were only pack-mules, and these considered harness as an unpleasant pack, and tried to rub it off against every object—trees and whatever offered them a surface to rub against. I do not know what we should have done, but we came upon a camp of Texans who had just arrived, and were a short distance out of Monterey; they had 120 with them a number of fine-looking mules, which Mr. Frémont found had been used in wagons, and he tried, at first quite in vain, to buy some of these for me. They were men of means, “liked their animals, and had no reason to part with them.” I caught the name of one of the party as they spoke to each other, and told Mr. Frémont to ask him if his mother was not from North Carolina, and if her name was not Caroline; the young man came up to the side of my carriage, very much astonished, and we found he was the grandson of old friends of my father's; so I had again, through friendship, what money alone could not have bought me—a comfortable pair of harness mules. They were mismatched in size; the larger was white, slow, and a very patient creature; we named him Job; while his companion, which was small enough to deserve the name of Picayune, was a brisk little animal that made up in work and nerve force for lack of size.

Mr. Frémont had with him two of the better class of Mission Indians, who had been with him for years, coming and going 121 between the United States and California. These men, Juan and Gregorio, were the most graceful horsemen I have ever seen, even in their country of graceful horsemen. When we came to a good bit of open country, and could go at speed, they would fasten to the carriage the long *riatas*, which were always carried at the saddle-bow, and in this way I would have two postilions riding abreast in front of my mules. The men wore the old picturesque California dress, and their regular rythmed movement as they moved gracefully with their horses made it a picture I always loved to watch. How I enjoyed that out-door life! In this way we went

from Monterey to San Francisco and back again from San Francisco to Monterey, stopping at different ranchos and farms to see and be seen by the people who wished Mr. Frémont to bring me to them. We would turn out of our way to accept the invitation of some of the old Californians to visit them at their ranchos. At one of these we came to where the whole family connection had assembled to meet me. Families of fourteen, eighteen, 122 even to twenty, children were not uncommon. And one Madame Castro had twenty-six children, nearly all sons. At this rancho, which belonged to one of the many Castros, they had collected in force, the married members coming in also, while the grandmother was the one to bid me welcome. There was nothing about these homes or people to remind us that we were in a new country, nor was anything lacking to comfort and well-being. The buildings were spacious and beautifully clean, while the physical advantages of the people were beyond doubt. The old lady, though herself past eighty, was like the portraits of Catherine of Russia. Her thick snow-white hair was turned back in a natural cushion upon her head, while her bright eyes, fine teeth, and clear color belonged to youth.

It was very agreeable to me to make these visits. They had learned that my father understood and protected the new citizens of the United States in Louisiana and Florida, and that they could rely upon him as a friend at the seat of government; and already there was sufficient evidence that the 123 Americans who were coming in were to be the source of great trouble to them. They would also tell me of their gratitude to Mr. Frémont—"Don Flemon," as they called him—for having protected them from all rudeness or unnecessary loss of any kind during the progress of his battalion through the state when it passed from their ownership to ours. Our own war has taught us there was a difference in commanding officers in that respect.

As Mr. Frémont neared California he met a large party of Sonorians, some twelve hundred, including women and children, who were going up into California to the mines; from these he first knew of the discoveries of gold. The American crowds pouring in looked very unfavorably upon these as Mexicans, and resented any nation but ours having the good of the gold. Mr. Frémont joined his little party to theirs to protect them from this feeling, and arranged with them to work upon his lands at the Mariposas, from which they could not be driven off, as it was private property: he knew the gold must be found there as well 124 as farther north in the same mountain range.

The Sonorians were accustomed to mining-work, particularly gold-washings, and he arranged that they should work for him, giving the lands and the protection, and they giving him half the results. Already we had had the astonishment and pleasure of receiving buckskin bags filled with gold-dust and lumps of gold as an instalment on this arrangement. I remember the first came to us at San José where we had stopped over. Our means and our surroundings were in sharp contrast. It was good fortune to get even one room in a house, and I had one room *pour tout partage*, but I had learned by this time that it was great good luck to have a whole room. One bedstead and one table made the furniture, each the simplest and crudest construction of rough wood; the bed was at least clean, as it was fresh straw sewed up in clean cotton cloth. I had my large grass hammock, which not only made a sleeping-place at night, but in the morning it was triced up higher, while Mr. Frémont and our midshipman coachman, with their high 125 boots drawn outside of their trousers, deluged the room with hot water to put an end to that day's supply of fleas.

Our food, such as it was, was supplied by a man who kept a restaurant in the town, and who, having once been cook on a whaler, considered himself equal to any occasion.

We were at this place when our first convoy of gold reached us. The buckskin bags, containing about a hundred pounds of gold, were put for safety under the straw mattress. There were no banks nor places of deposit of any kind. You had to trust some man that you knew, or keep guard yourself. We sent this back to Monterey, and it accumulated in trunks in our rooms there.

When those Sonora people wanted to go back to their country, at the end of some months, they sent one of their number to say to Mr. Frémont that they were going, and that their share came to a certain amount. We were in San Francisco then, and it was not convenient for Mr. Frémont to go back to Monterey, so he sent them the keys of our rooms and of the trunks, leaving it to them to make the division. This they did with scrupulous honor, not taking an ounce more than their stipulated portion.

Sydney Smith tells of a merchant who bought a lottery ticket for himself and one for a friend, and, marking on them their names, put them by in a drawer without further thought. Some time after,

he saw that one of these numbers had drawn a great prize, and going to look, found that it was his friend's ticket, and turned over to his friend the prize.

Sydney Smith said he never thought of this without feeling an emotion of gratitude and pride that such an act could be done. I think that our Sonorians take rank with the London merchant.

We were in the most delightful season of the year; no rains, no heavy dews; the wild oats were ripe, and gave the soft look of ripe wheat-fields to all the hill-sides; the wild cattle were feeding about or resting under the evergreen oaks, which looked so like orchard trees that one was disappointed not to find the apples on the ground 127 beneath them; the sky was a deep blue, without a cloud. We were young and full of health, and in all the exhilaration of sudden wealth which could enable us to realize our greatest wishes. The continued life in the open air night and day in this balmy climate completely healed my lungs. Mr. Frémont knew the country thoroughly well, and we made our camp each evening at some place where he was sure of good water, as well as trees and a good view. I am very sorry that in the burning of my father's house all my letters home at this time were lost with everything else: one cannot give afterwards the freshness of impression that belongs with the actual day's experience. But I was charmed with every detail of my camping-life. To be sure, it was in an unusual form, with most unusual people, in a most unusual country and climate.

Knight, one of Mr. Frémont's old guides—a man almost the equal of Carson in fine qualities—came down from his ranch to see him again, and we took to each other so kindly that it was nearly two months before 128 he left us. Like Captain Tucker, he had thought I would prove “a fine lady,” and unable to live in an unusual way; but he too gave me his hearty approval.

These, with myself and my little girl, made the party. We had two Indian men, Juan and Gregorio, who knew exactly what to do, as they had crossed and recrossed the continent with Mr. Frémont. They were Indians, but they were men, and the presence of a lady in the camp kept them all the time in their best clothes and best behavior. The old California dress was very like that that we know in Spanish pictures, and made them look like figures out of the scene of an opera. They rode well ahead, following Mr. Frémont; then came the carriage, all its curtains rolled up, freighted with

youth and health and happiness and hopefulness; after us, at a little distance, was our baggage train—a string of mules packed with our cooking apparatus, our grass hammocks, and such clothes as we could pack in those square leather panniers which the Spaniards call *alforjas*.

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Mr. Frémont and Mr. Knight—“Old Knight” every one called him—rode ahead, looking out the best road for the carriage, or going back to ride beside it. We used to make a very early start. My early cup of tea was brought to the carriage to me at dawn. We always camped by the side of a brook, and a dressing-tent was quickly made for me with a pair of blankets; I had a tin basin, plenty of towels, plenty of French soap and Cologne-water, and running water in plenty. Diana never had such advantages. We were usually on our way as the sun rose, and we travelled along, very often at a good gait, until eleven, when we always stopped for the long noon halt. Then was our breakfast, and this we made exceedingly good, notwithstanding the scarcity of fresh provisions in the country. “An army travels on its stomach.” Many years of camping experience taught our chief how to provide for this. From the ranches we passed near would be procured half a sheep and green corn, some of the large Spanish onions, and such vegetables as could be had, and always an abundance of sweet red 130 pepper; of these the *guisada* of the country would be made, which answers to the *pot au feu* of the French, only more warmly flavored with this pepper. The grass hammocks would be spread out on the ground, on them the morocco carriage cushions piled into a good seat for me. My share of the duty was to take the result of all the others' preparations—to eat with all the appetite I could gather, to grow well, and be happy. After some hours of rest we would go on, stopping before sundown to make our camp for the night. This was always well chosen in advance.

Here the carriage made an admirable sleeping-place for myself and my little girl, while the gentlemen stretched their hammocks to the trees, and the supper was a duplicate of the breakfast. They had excellent claret and coffee and tea, and the best French sweet things for the little one. The camp-fire lit up the whole scene with a beauty that only those who have seen it can realize. What talks we had around those camp-fires! Knight was a mighty hunter, and Mr. Beale, midshipman as he 131 was, had the same vocation. Each of the three had had large experience of a kind only known to me through books: from Indians, from wild animals, and from war; while I gave the

element of society. About nine o'clock all would be still; only the sounds of the logs and boughs as they crackled and burned, and the steady munching of the animals over their feed, with occasionally a disturbance from a coyote that would come and try to steal his supper; but a coyote is only a little wolf at best, and though they would stay off at a little distance and howl and bark, yet the noise was only laughable, not like that strange howl of the wolf of the prairies: and how changed the circumstances!

I was left at San José for a week at one time, as it was found that each visit to San Francisco renewed the irritation of the lungs. It was here I saw something of the local life of the people. Before we brought taxes and litigation upon them, the Californians were a wholesome and cheerful people, going about their pleasures not sadly, as is 132 the inherited wont of our nation, but making a joyful noise.

I found in their folk-music a connecting link between themselves and the Panama street people; in the swift yet plaintive airs so characteristic, which the Spaniards kept, together with many other things belonging to the Moors—irrigation, for example, which they did not originate, but for which they get credit.

The voices of the Panama street people had a slow, almost melodious, accent that was very agreeable. They used to collect on the square in the nights and sing, accompanied by a sort of tambourine, which kept up a low drumming rhythmical movement. One air and some of its words I heard so frequently that they fixed themselves in my memory as part of Panama, evidently of Moorish origin, coming through Spanish channels across to this people. In the *Traviata* Verdi has introduced a Spanish folk-song, which is the polished twin of my Panama street song. I only know the words of one verse, for I could get no one to give me the rest, the servants saying that it was not for a 133 lady to know the words.* (Evidently there was no *opéra bouffe* there to educate that public.) It is a minor key, and its abrupt turns and vague untermated effects are eminently Oriental.

“á los frailes no me quiere confesar, Porque se enojan que me guste bailar, Bailar! Bailar! Con Francico, mi Francico, Francico Cumaña.”

Even the educated people in South America countries drop much of the Castilian nicety of pronunciation, giving the hard sound to the *d* and *c*, which so altered the language to me that I had almost to acquire another in order to feel at home with the Spaniards I met there. In addition to that, the illiterate people drop and misplace the *s* exactly as a London cockney does the *h*; for example, the first line of this verse, “á los frailes no me quiere confesar,” they give, “á lo fraile no me quiere confear.” This was evidently their favorite song, to which their strongest expression of excitement fitted itself. The night the two steamers got in 134 together, not only the Americans flocked to the ramparts, but the whole Indian population were out in the bright moonlight, and the sound of the deep rub-a-dub-dub and that constantly recurring chorus of “Cumaña!” Cumaña!” filled the air until sunrise. Another of these Moro-Spanish airs, not so vivacious or clean in its outlines, had grafted itself among the Californians, and had, as all gypsy music has, the governing qualities of swiftness and sadness combined. This last I could not choose but learn: I heard it whistled, sung, played upon guitars and violins, wherever Californians were. During this time I was in San José I saw in perfection the good riding of the country. From my hammock, swung under the open gallery of the house where we were fortunate enough to have a room, I heard and saw the festivities of a California wedding. These lasted three days. It was a wedding among the vaqueros, and attended, therefore, by good riders. The bride's house was not much of a building, but extensive 135 temporary shelter had been put up for dancing-rooms, covered over with green boughs—a *ramada*. But the point of rivalry among the guests was more in riding than in dancing, though after riding all day they would dance all night; and all day and all night that one air was repeated by violins, guitars, and voices, until the drone of it got into the air, and made as much part of it as does the whirl of locusts in the autumn months. The first day the procession started for the church where the marriage was to take place—to go down and along the Alameda, a beautiful double avenue of willows, three miles in length, planted by the early fathers. The first day was to go to the church for the marriage ceremonies; the second, to take out the bride for a general *pasear* through the town; and the third, a series of contests and rivalries in feats of horsemanship. There were about five hundred horses; the riders were more. In many cases they had with them a woman

mounted on the horse; the woman sat on the man's saddle, while behind her, with his arm around her waist, and holding the reins, sat the man—just 136 the reverse of our country habit. They advanced in regular order, eight abreast, the musicians, also on horseback, playing their violins and guitars as calmly as though they had a floor under them. The bride sat alone on her horse, under an arch of flowers and ribbons, which was carried by a groomsman on either side, the ends of the arch resting on their saddles, and on either side of them her bride-maids; the bridegroom, on an exceptionally fine horse, surrounded by his friends; and then the rest of the company, most of the men riding singly, but many riding as I have described, with a girl on the saddle—a bright glittering mass of ribbons, flowers, bright beads, gold-lace; the women in satin dresses and slippers, the men in the dress of the time in California, which is exactly that we see in Spanish pictures—short velvet jackets covered with braid and gold embroidery, the velvet trousers open over full white drawers, while a string of bells down the seam jingled even more than do the bangles of ladies in church. The starting-point was almost facing my place of observation. They would form in 137 great order and quiet, the horses knowing the order of the proceedings evidently as well as their masters, and the signal for starting was the exploding of fire-crackers by the hundred boxes under the feet of the horses. What with the sparks and noise, it looked as if the whole thing had gone up like the close of a pantomime. It was a point of honor to show which horse behaved best under these circumstances. The horses were trained in the way that has always been favorite with Spanish people, to make any number of dancing movements in imitation of progress, while in reality they do not go forward at all. I think they are trained to this by having weights tied to their legs. Each one was a perfect horseman. Each man did not simply ride his horse, but was in the habit of living with it and upon it, and was consequently in perfect *rapport*. Each one of these put in force every art known to him exhibit the spirit and the beauties of his horse. As they passed down the one street of the town the correct thing was for people from the side to 138 advance and throw fire-crackers in mass under the horses' feet; the firing of pistols was of course; no end of little shrill screams, laughter, voices in every varying intonation, couplets sung to the air which was being played, and taken up with shouts of laughter; the chorus by every one who took the local allusions. With all this the musicians played with as much steadiness and animation as though seated on a platform instead of the saddle. The third day I feel myself incompetent to describe. They had their field-sports for

that day on the large open green just by my perch in the hammock. And here the evolutions in a small space—the rush with which they would go, as though shot from a bow, across the plain; the bringing-up all standing, without any slacking of the speed, leaving them motionless as an English Horse-guard on duty; the continuous whirls in a small circle, winding nearer and nearer in towards the central point, until it seemed as though man and horse must fall from sheer dizziness; the mounting of a vicious, screaming young horse, which would 139 spring like a cat into the air, with all its legs stiffened out and its back bowed, making one jump this way, another that, until it would seem as though everything would dislocate in its rider—were a part of the exhibition which perfectly fascinated me. We travelled about in this delightful manner, putting into San Francisco for news, or San José for soft weather. We made one halt at San José to get our clothes washed. We thought this could be done there because there were a number of emigrant families; but they were rolling in their own money, and none of ours was a temptation to them. Juan and Gregorio undertook to find some Mission Indians who could do it for us. When these women brought the things back, they came in a body as a family, the relations and men of the family lounging in the rear and looking on; they were evidently proud of the work, and wanted to see the impression it should make. It made a decided impression on me. Their only method of washing was to put the clothes in a brook and pound them between flat stones, using as soap a native 140 bulb called *amole*. Everything looked very white and smelled fresh, but they had been merely washed and dried; there was no starching, no ironing, and a very distorted-looking lot of garments they were. I made the women my compliments, seeing that was expected, and asked when the linen would be ironed, and found that ironing was neither known nor would it be attempted. “Everything was clean,” that was enough in their ideas; nor could any bribe or persuasion make any difference. They accepted their fee and went off gravely, with the usual “Dios te le paga, señora” (God will repay you, madam). Rough-dried *lingerie* is not comfortable, nor is it pretty. We looked so crumpled and askew that we could not forget the subject, and it was with delight that we accepted the offer of a negro woman to wash and iron for us; but when with this was coupled the obligation to buy her, we gave her up. It required no thinking or effort to make this decision: it was simply following out the habit of mind which came from my education and the example shown me at home. All the 141 necessary thinking and deciding had been done a generation before, when my mother gave freedom

to her slaves because of her conscientious feeling on the subject. I have always thought it one of the most unusual of the many unusual high qualities in my father, that while he did not share these ideas from the same religious and logical thoughts that made them obligatory on my mother, he yet made it thoroughly easy for her to carry out her feelings. My father himself had refused two large inheritances because he would have had to take the slaves with the lands. It was not an open question, but one that had been settled, and I merely followed in the home ideas and example; and it was not merely as a domestic, but a political question that I had often heard it gone over. The more intimate friends, John Randolph, Chief-Justice Marshall, and many Virginia gentlemen of great estates, were united in their intention to bring slavery to an end. Some, as the Fairfax family and my mother, put this intention into force, and not only gave freedom to their inherited slaves, but maintained 142 them and their children until they were self-supporting, sending others to Liberia and maintaining correspondence with them. I go into this laundry incident a little fully because, simple as it seemed, it soon after became of political importance. The Convention had met at Monterey to settle the Constitution of the state, and the question whether slavery should or should not be admitted was, as every one remembers, the exciting feature. With slave labor there would be no delay in opening up the mineral wealth of the country, and to the fabulous profits of the owners. Slave-holders and speculators in slaves only waited the decision to bring them overland in great droves. Paid labor must necessarily be scanty in numbers, very expensive, and equally unreliable. There was also the consideration, which is strong when you are made to feel it, that it would put an end to the great discomfort of being without a class to attend to the daily necessities of life. The want of proper food, proper clothing, were the sources of ill-health as well as discomfort, and there seemed no 143 way to get at a class to attend to this where no one would work for wages, for they could be too independent in other ways. Of course, with time, this would be righted, but to people suddenly possessed of great wealth the impatience to enjoy it without care is equally great. These were a troublesome class in the Convention. To these might be added nearly every woman in the country, who lifted up her voice and wept over her discomforts. The government patronage was on the side of slavery. Every one knows the important part of a good dinner in diplomacy. The great Napoleon knew and acted on this. The very badly prepared food with which the members of the Convention had to be content during their work made them ready

to cry out for cooks at the price of any principle. Here it was my good fortune to be of service, and come in aid to the serious work being done by men opposed to slavery. Our rooms in the Castro house were very pretty, with their French and Chinese fittings. My army and navy allies helped me to keep them orderly; and although I 144 had then only the two Indian men, we managed to be very comfortable. We had the grand wood fires; everybody sent me birds and squirrels of their shooting, and these are never so good as when broiled on the coals. Each of our travellers was capable of directing, and the men of making, the Spanish *pot au feu* “guisada.” We had every good thing in fruits, vegetables, and sweets that France puts up for transportation, and all served on beautiful Chinese and French china and glass (I had to get used to Juan and Gregorio breaking a great deal of this). Old Knight, who believed in me, brought in his friends to be convinced from myself, by talking with me, that I really did not want slaves, and would never own them. Our house and table were open, after the hospitable fashion of a new country, to all who had been, or would like to be, friends, and they saw for themselves that it was quite possible for the most cheerful hospitality to exist without the usual working forces. Here, again, I got credit for what was no effort. I was not let to do anything that would fatigue me. Ideas and 145 decorative touches I was allowed to give—draperies and “effects” were my department—and the two Indian men had perfect good-will and eagerness to serve me in every way. I should have liked my clothes ironed, otherwise I felt the need of nothing. In short, my pretty rooms were the headquarters of the antislavery party, and myself the example of happiness and hospitality without servants. I did not mind about the housekeeping, for all that would right itself, and I was really let to have no cares and no fatigues. But we did think and consult over this question of slave labor because of a far greater which it involved. Our property was chiefly in mines, by this time proved to be of the richest quality. The difficulties of working them by paid labor or bodies of men working on shares had been experienced and were fully understood. Only a slight portion of the gold taken out could be counted on as ours in this way of working them. We could not often hope for such honor as our Sonorians had shown. With slaves in the 146 mines, as our Southern friends constantly urged upon us, we would have certain and immediate wealth by millions. We had just come through the ordeal of want of income. It had involved separation from each other, from home, exposure to many forms of danger to health and life. This *was* a subject for serious consideration. Our decision was made on the side of free labor.

It was not only the question of injustice to the blacks, but of justice to the white men crowding into the country. Here was a field where labor was amply repaid, where man's energy, his physical as well as mental strength, could bring him a great return. We were in the rebound from our own plan of patient waiting and slow gains to all the immediate happiness and power given by the new order of things. Slave labor would shut off this happiness from those who had only their labor to depend upon. It would have been a very poor return for the good fortune that had come to us if we had taken part in shutting it out from these. I was going over this with an English 147 officer whom I knew very well when I was at Nassau; it came up in connection with our talks over the war. He was thoroughly English, thoroughly antislavery; but when I finished, he sprang up and walked about the room, exclaiming, "He ought not to have done so! He ought to have let the blacks wait another thirty years; they were used to it!" With Mr. Frémont it was the abstract idea of justice and equal rights, but with me only the following a habit of mind in which I had been nurtured. I think I may claim—as I have said to our Northern friends—to belong to the "aristocracy of emancipation," for with my people it has always entailed voluntary sacrifices—moneyed, political, and social; not as with most emancipationists at the North, where it was a local strength and advantage. We went into San Francisco shortly before the rainy season—about three months after I had first seen it. Already it was changed out of recognition by the crowds of people added, and the buildings which 148 had gone up. Houses were rapidly going up for the winter; night and day and Sundays the sounds of hammers never ceased. Ready-made houses were to be had, and some very pretty little ones from China. One of these was bought and put up for me on a lot we had in what was then called Happy Valley, next to where is now the Palace Hotel. It was put up without nails, except the shingling on the roof, all the rest fitting in together like a puzzle, and was of pretty smooth wood, making a very good temporary lodging. Forty-eight hours at the chief hotel had convinced us that it was neither a pleasant nor safe place for a lady. The partitions between the rooms were only of thin cotton cloth stretched on a light frame, yet thirty-six thousand a year was given as rent for this building. Our little house had but two rooms, but they were large and clean, and we had what were luxuries—a wood fire burning in front of the cottage, and clean food well cooked. We did not attempt furniture, for we were only going to stay ten days. Two bundles of unused shingles made a very good table, 149 while I was absolutely clear of unpleasant sights and sounds inevitable from such a crowd as

there was in the town. A friend thought this was too rough for me, and much to my regret made us exchange it for a house he had recently built and furnished in the usual expensive, commonplace way. Now my open fire was a luxury counter-balancing carpets, curtains, and finery, and our men, who knew exactly how to roast meat on sticks before the wood coals, or between hot stones, and in hot wood ashes, and who were at home in making guisada—swinging in its kettle from a tripod of green sticks in true gypsy style—were lost when confronted with a cooking-stove. There was a great slamming and banging of the iron doors, and many a “*caramba!*” So we fell back on supplies from a French restaurant. We were all pleased when the word was given for another start. The drive back from San Francisco to Monterey in the loveliest October weather, through a country now so familiar to San Francisco people as the San Matteo Road, was the last of our charming out-door life. After the 150 rains began I had to remain at Monterey; not only the rainy season, but the approaching elections, interfered with our ownership of our time. We lingered over this part of our travelling, knowing it was to be the last, for the political duties claimed now the first place. *Rien n'arrive que Vimprévu*. We had planned to stay in California about seven years, the world forgetting, by the world forgot, our first object to live our lives in independence, and with the animating motive and object, to me, that in about seven years I should return to my people. The “unforeseen” in this case was the discovery of gold. That delightful factor changed our calculations, abolished all our plans, and substituted a power to live where we pleased and do as we pleased, when close upon this came another unforeseen force which made it impossible to put our own will and pleasure first. What we had done in Monterey when the State Constitution was being framed there had enrolled us on the antislavery side. It would have been deserting not to go through with the work. Mr. Frémont could have been either Governor or first Senator from the state. As Governor he could have overlooked his private interests to the greatest advantage—in certain ways have been of most use to the state; but, on the other hand, as Senator he could defend the interests of the state in Congress. To me the overruling consideration was that what I so much wished myself would be rendered obligatory, and that we should have to return to Washington, and our old home life be restored. It was foreseen that the antislavery clause would be opposed, and need a positive defender, but no one foresaw the prolonged opposition and bitterness of the contest which did follow, Mr. Calhoun leading the opposition. The first Legislature met in San José, but I was taken

back to Monterey because of my comfortable rooms there; they and the climate there would keep the good health I had gained. Some rain had already fallen, and the creeks were up on the broad plains, so broad that there would be 152 scarcely an undulation in twenty miles, but occasionally seamed by a creek-bed or “gulch.” Even in the dry season these dry creek-beds and gulches had been a trial to nerves only accustomed to regular roads. The last camp we made was on the Salinas River, after crossing the Salinas plain. There was not much timber here, and we had only a thicket of tall brush for shelter. The carriage was well closed with its strong leather curtains, and made an admirable shelter; but they were wise in leaving me in Monterey, for camping in wet weather is very different from the summer travel we had had, and this was not yet heavy weather, only the gathering for rain. But it had its own picturesque elements, and I remember giving them that night the substance of George Sand's *Mare au Diable*, of which the place reminded me. Even the little rain that had fallen during the night had so swollen the Salinas River that it was found I could not cross it in the carriage. The animals and the pole were taken out, the harness and cushions securely lashed on the roof, and strong ropes 153 passed around the carriage to lower it properly into the stream. Other strong ropes were attached to it, together with the men's lariats; the men themselves, swimming their horses across, took their places on the opposite bank, which was nearly upright, ready at the word given to start the horses off. The carriage lowered, off galloped the horsemen, shouting and cheering their horses, and so the equipage was whipped through the stream and up the bank. So few horses swim level that I was not put upon one to cross. Our midshipman took soundings by walking across the river at a point that promised something of a ford, and found the water nowhere above his waist. Fortunately I weighed but little then, and Mr. Beale carried me across on his outstretched arms; and we accomplished our object of outriding the storm, and were safe in the comfortable rooms at Monterey before night, housed, dry, warm, and well-fed—the four luxuries of travellers. Our Englishwoman was a most efficient housekeeper: we had sent an Indian ahead, and she had had some hours to prepare. We 154 found everything thoroughly warm; a great wood fire; dry clothes laid out for each one; the round table, with its gleaming damask and glass and china and delightful good food, ready for us. We thought this the best camp we had made yet. After a little rest I was left alone here; politics and business belonged in the busy American towns to the north. The rains set in furiously, and I was completely house-bound; but I could see the bay,

and even through the closed windows I could hear the delightful boom of the long rollers falling regularly and heavily on the beach. Near by I had my wood fire, and plenty of reading, such as it was: a collection of the *Merchant's Magazine*, five bound volumes of the *London Times*, including the period of the Spanish marriages and the political history of Europe for as many years, and an “unabridged Byron”—the whole library of a great flour merchant, who said he “had no time to read himself, but thought I might find some of those interesting.” The *Merchant's Magazine* was tough reading at first, but I did read it, 155 and gained a great deal of knowledge that has since fitted itself into more than one occasion of my life. Also, I had the first solid experience in the more usual feminine pursuit of sewing. A large part of my wardrobe had been left in San Francisco at the company's warehouse—all the heavier things that had been needed in leaving New York and would be required again for the return voyage; in one of the many fires this warehouse went, and while my loss was comparatively small, it was important to me, for it obliged me to make up some warm dresses. That I had never made a dress did not trouble me; I had done so many things that I had never done before that a new sense of power had come to me, and I had no hesitation in undertaking that. But the only stuffs to be had were Chinese satins and the harshest English merinoes. I got these in the darkest colors that could be found, and ripping up a faithful old black silk, made a *fac-simile* of it in the new stuffs. We knew an old lady at home who never shaped the stockings she knit, but knit straight in one size to the 156 heel, saying it was a badly shaped leg that could not shape a stocking: I think my dresses were somewhat on this plan. But I was in the happy age when figure graced the dress, and queer as they must have been, they looked very well when once on. And I gained another warm gown by cutting off the extra length of my riding-habit. But even with reading and sewing and writing, the time would have been too still, if there had not been some human voice to break it. The heavy rains made getting about impossible, and I had practically no carriage, as there was now no one to drive me. Mrs. M'Evoy, my cook and prime-minister, had lived in Australia with the wife of the Chief-Justice; it interested me very much to have her tell in detail the domestic life of that new country. She was an intelligent woman, who had been in a position to see a great deal, and when the evening closed in I made it a regular custom that she should bring in her own sewing, and her pretty, clean baby had its evening roll on the great grizzly bear skin that was stretched in front of the fire; my own 157 little girl played herself into early sleeps. The

other wing of the house was occupied by Madame Castro herself, and her very nice little girls made charming playmates for mine. Some years before, I had read in *Littell's Living Age* the account of a trial before Sir Joseph Forbes, the Chief-Justice with whose wife my woman had gone out to Australia. The sentence of the judge reviewed the case, and dwelt especially upon one statement of the man who was being sentenced, and whose own chief view of his crimes seemed to be that they were so easy to commit that therefore they were matter of course. We had talked this over at our dinner-table at home—"a table round" over which everything of interest was discussed. Among us it was the family habit to keep for the diner-table subjects of interest, and equally forbidden ever to allow any disagreeable topic to come up; this was a law of my father's to which we had complied so long that the mind obeyed it unconsciously. The man under sentence had committed 158 eleven murders before being detected; there was no escape for him, and he confessed, and described the first murder. He had a way-side stopping-place, and victims easily came in his way. He said that this first man he meant to rob only; but he let him leave his house and get to a certain point on his journey, where he knew he would have to stop and water his horse. He was there before him, in hiding, and as the man leaned over to get water for himself, he gave him a blow on the back of the neck; this quite killed him. He made no movement, and was dead. Then this murderer said he "*had not known before how easy it was to kill a man; he didn't think it was so little trouble.* After that he always killed them when he found they had money with them." But eleven such murders brought on the investigation which terminated his career. Mrs. M'Evoy knew all about this case, and many incidents belonging to it and to the great excitement it created. It is one of the odd things that come up in life that I should have found here a living link with what had been heretofore only a matter of reading and family discussion. The time was monotonous, and seemed long. The *Merchant's Magazine* is instructive, but not exciting or amusing when one is young. One evening of tremendous rain, when we were, as usual, around the fire, Mrs. M'Evoy, with her table and lights, sewing at one side, myself by the other, explaining pictures from the *Illustrated Times* to my little girl, while the baby rolled about on the bear-skin in front of the fire, suddenly Mr. Frémont came in upon us, dripping wet, as well he might be, for he had come through from San José—seventy miles on horseback through the heavy rain. He was so wet that we could hardly make him cross the pretty room; but "beautiful are the feet of him that beareth glad tidings," and the foot-marks were

all welcome, for they pointed home. He came to tell me that he had been elected Senator, and that it was necessary we should go to Washington on the steamer of the 1st of January. At daylight the next morning he was off again, having to be back in San José. A 160 young sorrel horse, of which Mr. Frémont was very fond, brought him down and carried him back this one hundred and forty miles within thirty-six hours, without fatigue to either. The few intervening weeks went by quickly now, and we were all ready for the 1st. Mrs. M'Evoy grieved to lose me, but Saunders was there, happy, with more than money enough to buy the freedom of his family and secure them a home also. When we heard the steamer's gun, Newyear's night, the rain was pouring in torrents, and every street crossing was a living brook. Mr. Frémont carried me down, warmly wrapped up, to the wharf, where we got into a little boat and rowed out. I have found that it changes the climate and removes illness to have the ship's head turned the way you wish to go. 161 We had on board some of our fellow-passengers who had made the journey up with me in June, six months before—Dr. Gwin, who was elected the other Senator from the state, and Mr. Ward. Our first stop was at Mazatlan. At Chagres, at Panama, at San Francisco, the getting to and from the steamers was very unpleasant and even dangerous: queer boats with undisciplined boatmen, no wharves or steps; but at Mazatlan we found the solid stone pier with proper steps, such as the English are sure to build wherever they establish themselves. An English man-of-war was at anchor, and learning that the newly elected Californian Senators were on the steamer she paid us the compliment of a salute of honor, and put the captain's gig at our service. In place of the dangerous landing and heavy swell, as at the mouth of the Chagres, or being carried through the water on the back of an Indian over the reef, as at Panama, or in the same way up the mud bank, as at San Francisco—here the tide being so out 162 that the boat could not quite reach the steps—the sailors jumped into the water and laid their oars in a compact bridge from the bow of the boat to the steps, standing on either side with their elbows out, making a living parapet to the improvised bridge. I felt that we had already returned to civilization. On the pier waited the barouche and fine horses belonging to the English consul-general. His were orthodox harness horses, and I could enjoy my drive. His house was interesting. There were accumulations made during many years' residence of beautiful things, modern as well as old Mexican curiosities, and interesting things from both shores of the Pacific. Even the well-served dinner and trained servants had their own charm, from my long absence from such things.

The house was of stone, and the walls many feet thick, making it delightfully cool. We had felt the heat before reaching Mazatlan, and to do honor to Mr. Forbes (and also because I distrusted the effect of my Monterey gowns on ladies) I took off warmer clothing, and dressed myself in one of my best white gowns, in which 163 I felt orthodox, as my English woman had put these and all my “frills” into lovely condition. We met a norther in coming out of the Gulf of California, and had some days of great discomfort—waves breaking on deck, every one having to remain below under closed hatches. Each of us had taken cold from the imprudent change of dress at Mazatlan. Added to this was the bad air from the necessarily closed hatches. As I am fortunate enough not to be subject to sea-sickness, I have the corresponding disadvantage of being awake to everything that goes amiss; in this case the consequence was an illness which took a form that put me in danger of dying. Here again my usual good fortune showed itself. There was a regular ship surgeon, for whom I could have no deference; but among the passengers was a really good physician—a navy surgeon who had made his studies in Paris. Dr. Bowie had me immediately moved up to the captain's state-room on deck, where his skill, aided by the great physician, pure air, kept me alive. 164 There was no stewardess, and only one woman passenger; no ice. Perfect quiet and freedom from all motion was the first requisite for me. This was, of course, impossible; but, against all disadvantages, I lived on, although when we reached Panama I was too exhausted to make the land crossing. There was only a monthly steamer at that time. No one would tell me that I should have to miss this and stay in Panama over the next month; on the contrary, little sketches were made of ships' hammocks on stretchers, and all devices for getting me across without danger or fatigue were constantly talked over to me, and I believed that I should go straight through. “English Tom”—a big quiet-faced old man-of-war's man—carried me down the gang-plank, and took me ashore without a rough motion. I noticed that Saunders was not about, nor Mr. Frémont, and asked for them; but my physician had taken the precaution to give me an opiate, and I slept for a long time, waking to find myself again under the hospitable roof of Madame Arcé, who claimed me as hers. 165 Mr. Stephens (generally known as “Central America Stephens”) was in Panama attending to the affairs of the future Panama Railway, of which he was vice-president. We had known him well in Washington. On learning that I was on board and so ill, he knew I would be unable to cross, and had at once told Madame Arcé, who said that I belonged to her by right. When I waked it was to find myself again on a sick-

bed, with her kind face near me; but in the next room was another sick person, over whom the doctor was standing; and then I learned for the first time that Mr. Frémont was perfectly crippled with rheumatic fever. The thorough chilling he had received in Mazatlan had brought on rheumatic fever in the leg which had been frost-bitten the winter before. This turned my mind from my own disappointment. Our good friend and physician remained with us until the last moment in which he could connect with the steamer at Chagres, and would have remained the month if we had needed him. It was hard every way to give him up, but we were where we could 166 have very good care, medical and personal. Madame Arcé had moved into the house of a daughter who had recently died, and the views were quite different this time, looking across the garden of an adjoining convent to the open blue sea. The early church buildings in Panama were in keeping with the wealth of the Spaniards and their need for repentance; but many were now roofless, and all except the cathedral itself in a state of decay. The roof and spire of this great building were completely inlaid with mother-of-pearl shells, which gave out wonderful colors under sunlight, especially when sunshine followed rain, and they had the added beauty of water in the shells. The convent buildings, which made the nearest foreground, were only the more picturesque from being in decay. The bell tower, with its crumbling arched openings around the bell, through which showed the background of deepest blue sky, made a beautiful frame for the picture one saw when the bells had to be rung, especially at vespers, the time at which I saw it 167 oftenest. The machinery for ringing the bell was gone, and it was sounded by striking it with stones. The laughing young Indian girls who went up to do this wore the usual fluttering loose ruffled garments of Panama, and they were near enough for us to see the glitter of their eyes and teeth as they were pounding away at the bell in their unorthodox and unmusical fashion. This was a picture of which I never got tired, and it grew to be a mixture of reading and realities which, when the fever was on me, would take shape; the “unabridged Byron” which had been lent me at Monterey had given me the story of Parisina, and the execution of Hugo framed itself in this convent tower. In California we were well off when we had one room, and luxurious with two. Here Madame Arcé had given us the largest and coolest rooms in her house, and my cot was placed in the large ballroom, which opened from the bedroom where Mr. Frémont lay. In that warm climate very little furniture is used. This ballroom was eighty feet long, and high and wide in 168 proportion, and the chairs and sofas were set in compact rows

around the room. The floor was of dark polished wood, and the walls and ceiling painted darkish blue, to which the furniture corresponded. There was one sofa, or rather a sofa-divan, on which I lay in the day, while a linen cot, with one sheet under and one sheet above, made all that was necessary for the night. There were no glass windows; great doors, like barn doors, slid back and left huge openings which let in the view, and, from the height we were above the ground, I was in the neighborhood of the bell in its tower, and of the tops of the thicket of young cocoanut-trees, which kept waving and fanning to and fro between me and the waters of the bay. Stephens was the first to notice the effect of these trees upon me, seeing my eyes follow their balancing movements from side to side. He came everyday, and often during the day, to be with us; sometimes putting his chair where he could command both of our positions, saying, in his cheerful way, "I have come to take my chill with you," and proceeding to shake 169 with those violent chills which he had contracted there, and which not long after killed him. I astonished them one day declaiming the execution of Hugo, which had gradually come out from its place in my memory, and embodied itself with the vesper ringing of this bell and the general sunset and tropical effect of the whole view before me: "The convent bells are ringing, But mournfully and slow; In the gray square turret swinging, With a deep sound, to and fro. Heavily to the heart they go! Hark! the hymn is singing— The song for the dead below, Or the living who shortly shall be so!"

My illness had taken the form of intermittent fever, as most things do in the ague climates, and regularly as the fever hour came, Hugo came up with it.

Although not well enough to sit up, we saw very pleasant people, among them the Governor of New Granada, and the officers of one of our men-of-war, while the old servants Narcissa and my former favorite, Candelaria, doted and petted us and brought 170 us nice things, as though we were babies that had to be brought back to life by unremitting care.

Every day the kind nuns from the convent sent me over some delicate preparation of fruits. A smiling Indian girl, with soft drawling accent, would give the little message with it, which was always to the same effect, "that they prayed I might not die so far from my own country." It was some delicate preparation of preserved fruit, and the pretty china plate on which it was sent was

always surrounded by blossoms of some white flower, orange or jasmine; from these they would take away every green leaf and stem, and set the flowers around thickly, one against the other. We saw here a flower called the “variable,” or “mujercita” (young woman), because it changed three times a day—in the morning pure white, at noon rose color, and at sundown deep red, which a botanist once told me was nature's mourning.

There was a man-of-war in the harbor, and its captain planned for me a palanquin in which I could be taken across in perfect 171 safety from any jarring or the weather; this was a ship's cot swung to two poles, and carried by four men, with a light awning over a frame, and its white duck curtains could roll up or lower at pleasure.

Stephens, the Governor, and Mr. Frémont had many talks over the Isthmus railway which was just then being built, and over the future railways across the continent, which are now completed, but which then were only believed possible by the few who were working for them. I had seen enough of the suffering of the emigration, when I crossed the Isthmus in going out, to be able to realize the terrible loss of life required to build this Isthmus road. The first eight miles go over marsh ground which gave very poor foundation. The difficulty of planting the piles was just then the uppermost subject. I remember Stephens saying that as yet they stood only on human bones. This was not literally, but figuratively true, for the climate cost many lives. The terms of agreement on which laborers came out were three months' work and their free passage back to New York or to California, as they 172 chose. Only about thirty per cent claimed this passage, and almost all of those went back to New York; the rest were buried where they had fallen, from the climate; and Stephens himself contracted such a deadly form of chills and fever that he lived but a few years after this. He is best known by his writings and travels in Arabia and Central America; but his friends knew also how far-sighted he was in practical matters. His was one of the impelling minds towards building the Croton Aqueduct. When we were first in New York, in '48, he drove us to what was then a country spot surrounded by trees and open meadows—the reservoir on Forty-second Street—and from the top of it pointed upward to the fields and rocks that lay beyond, telling us that he was so convinced that the near future of New York lay there that he had invested in lands which would make the fortune of some one else; that he would not live to see it, because, naturally

delicate, his health was too broken for him to look forward to any length of life. He told us of the contempt with which his belief was received by the wealthy citizens 173 of his acquaintance, who scouted the idea of entering into any such “wild speculations” as that; told us of calculations they had made how the interest on the money which he had expended would overbalance any profits before those lots could be built upon. He said that he had made his will, giving that property to young relations, who would certainly have the benefit of his foresight—as they have had.

The steamers were then a month apart. We were both comfortably well long before the time for starting came. I was not strong enough to leave my room, but Mr. Frémont, in spite of prophetic warnings in regard to the influence of the climate, made daily excursions in the neighborhood with Saunders, searching about the country, with its new and interesting botany. We had not a bad time at all. February is one of the best months in the tropics. We had lots of books, and saw intelligent and pleasant people; everything about us was beautiful and comfortable, and our minds were entirely content with our own affairs, and it was a novelty to be quietly together, without a separation in prospect.

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My palanquin was ready and was brought up for me to see. It looked like the illustration to “Madagascar” in an old-fashioned geography. We had to time starting so as to avoid being detained in Chagres, and we had also to have a sufficiently strong party to meet a new danger which had grown up with the travel on the Isthmus—a regular banditti force, which waylaid and robbed, and sometimes murdered, passengers; this was recruited from our country, Australia, and especially Jamaica.

It had never come in my way to meet a man entirely without personal courage. It was such a matter of course to me that men took care of women, and could not be frightened by anything, that it came to me, as a young friend of mine says, “a rev'lution, a perfect rev'lution,” to come upon such an instance of want of courage as we met at this time. Our party had been carefully chosen; competent persons had looked out for every belonging—good men to carry my hammock, and good reliable men for the baggage; and, in short, a good fighting as well as travelling force had been put together.

The California steamer was in, and one of its passengers, having his gold with him in a small trunk, actually came to us not only to ask us to take him across in our party to protect this gold, but to keep it for him until the following day, when we were to start. He was an entire stranger to us, but was an educated man, and appeared to be, what he said he was, a physician. He said he heard of my being ill there, and of the strength of our party, and that he thought he could go as my physician, and not be suspected of having treasure with him. He was in an anguish of terror about his gold. Mr. Frémont let him join us. We were only to cross the plain a few miles, and make our camp at the foot of the hills that first night. I was put in my hammock and carefully carried down into the street, after a leave-taking with our dear, kind friend which left me shaken. Her hospitality and motherly goodness and care had been vital to me now on two occasions, and she herself was so intelligent and charming that it had been a pleasure to know her, apart from this. Mr. Frémont 176 and herself had had long talks on all subjects, and it was a pain to each to lose the other. My men were very proud of my new equipage, the first of its kind ever seen there, and the people flocked around to look at it as they would to any other show; the men would halt to explain it, and expatiate upon its merits, while equally free explanations of myself were asked and given at the same time. Among a colored race I would have seemed fair at any time, but now, whitened by long illness, they thought me dying, and said so. They hardly offered bets that I would not reach the other side, but something to the same effect, while the compassionate women would make prayers over me that I might at least get to my own country before dying. “La pobrecita! morir tan lejo de su pais!” (Ah, the poor young thing—dying so far from her own country!)

When we came to our halting-place for the night, I was already so excited that an opiate was given me; this had only the effect of making me quiet and dumb, but did not make me sleep. I lay in my hammock watching all things; I wanted to 177 rouse some one to take care of a white horse which had a great vampire bat upon its neck, fanning it with its wide wings and sucking its blood, so that next day we could not use it, but I was tongue-tied.

The next day we had a longer pull, and here the physician who had asked our protection could in turn have been of some use by keeping near me, and seeing that I received at once any care that might be needed; this he offered to do, and so was put nearest me in the file when we started. I fell asleep, and they made a little halt that I might have my sleep unbroken; the baggage escort was at some little distance, so as not to disturb me. "The doctor" thought too much time was being lost, and that his dear trunk would be exposed to more evil chances as dark fell, so he gave an order to the men to go on with the baggage; and they not doubting his authority, went on, leaving us just the palanquin and its bearers, with Mr. Frémont and my little girl, to follow through the most dangerous part of the route, all defiles and thickly wooded mountain-sides; also, he carried off 178 with him my medicines. Saunders had been charged not to lose sight of the baggage, and, suspecting nothing, was giving his whole attention to that, so was off with it.

Our punishment to the doctor was not to let him have our care on the descent of the river. We left him to take his chance there. They told us at Gorgena of the recent murder of thirteen persons, the whole of a party, by the Jamaica negroes who had brought them up. We took care this story should be repeated, with details, to him, and then refused him the protection of our boat, which he shamelessly begged for.

Going down the river was much easier than coming up it; we had only to float, and keep the boat off from the sunken trees and points of land; occasionally the men used their long sweeps. It took but two days, as we went with the stream, and we had in that way but one night on the river. We took all the best precautions of thorough shelter from the night dews, and a great fire to purify the air about us, and kept to our quinine and coffee. The heat did not seem very great, and I was absolutely 179 comfortable in my hammock, which made a sort of gondola of our canoe, and the Scotch plaid stretched over it made a cool shade beneath. We were in such content that the beauty of the tropical growth, with all its strange shapes and splendid coloring, its giant creepers and masses of blossoms, gave us the delight that we ought to have had in them, but which I could not feel fully when I was going up the river. I saw it all now with new eyes.

Towards the close of the second day, as we neared the mouth of the river, across a bend which stretched before us green and feathery with its palm-trees, I caught sight of a dark straight line pointing upward. If I had known what I was doing, it would have been unpardonable, but too much fever had unhinged me; and in my excitement at recognizing the mast of a steamer, I sprang up, crying there was the ship that was to take me home, and so undid all the good work that had been done by the month of quiet at Panama. This time the fever set in for good. The climate had told on us too, and even the one night on the river 180 was sure of bad results. But here I came on one of my best pieces of good fortune. At that time this steamer line was officered from our navy. The percentage on the treasure carried gave them each month more than their usual year's pay, while the owners of the steamers and treasure had the certainty of brave as well as honorable men to protect their property. After all, it was not so long since the Gulf had been the scene of a great deal of piracy, and with this new stream of gold pouring into that lonely region, there were rumors of a renewal of the old pirate business.

Commodore Porter, father of the admiral, had distinguished himself so much in the Mediterranean by his services in helping to put down piracy there that he was sent to the West Indies to stop it in those waters. Lafitte's men were then (1824) the terror of commerce. He succeeded in doing this thoroughly. There was more than suspicion that it was connived at by the Spanish authorities in the West India Islands, and at one of these ports—Porto Rico—the resentment for disturbing their profits 181 took the form of an insult to our flag; this Commodore Porter compelled them to atone for. But even then we had a habit of studying Spanish feelings first, and our national feeling after; so Commodore Porter was court-martialled on some point involving the letter of the law. The finding of the court-martial was against him.

One can imagine the feeling of an officer who knew that he had performed unparalleled services, and been of greatest benefit to his country. He must have looked at this sentence by the light of the eighty odd whale-ships which he had burned in the Pacific Ocean, inflicting immense loss on British commerce, and making the streets of London “burn dark for a year,” as was said in Parliament; there must have crowded on him the memories of years of isolation and separation from

home, all the weary, unshared hours that go to make up the hardest side of a naval officer's life, his joy and pride in his service to his country; and then to strike, as it were, on a sunken rock in this cold, bloodless interpretation of a treaty stipulation discriminating in favor of the 182 enemy! It was no wonder that the old officer broke his sword and threw it away, vowing never to draw it again in defence of a country that would let him be treated in that manner. This was under the administration of Mr. Adams.

Diplomatic relations were opened with Turkey in General Jackson's administration. It was necessary to send some one who should be suitable in all respects. Commodore Porter's name was already known there from his exploits in his young days; it was synonymous with the power and the dignity of our flag. This led to looking into the reasons for his resigning from the navy, and renewed the indignation which those who had followed the court-martial at the time felt at its cold, ungenerous treatment of one of the country's most efficient officers.

My father was a born redresser of wrongs, and General Jackson was not the man to bother over a technical detail where the honor of the flag was concerned. With him the honor of the flag came first, after that the sensibilities of other nations.

Commodore Porter, then living on the 183 Mediterranean, was old and broken with exile and many cares when there reached him the respectful and flattering request to be our first representative to the Turkish Empire. He made the long journey to the United States—by sail then—to give his thanks in person to those who had done him this late act of justice. Finding that my father, who had never seen him, had most information regarding, and the keenest interest in redressing, this wrong, he gave him his warm friendship. During the time he remained in Washington he was constantly with my mother as well as my father, and in this way an intimacy was commenced which lasted through his life.

It was his eldest son who had command of this steamer, with a staff under him of his young naval friends, among them a good surgeon, who said I must have at least some hours of absolute repose. The ship was light, and out of coal, and rolled heavily in the swell off the mouth of the Chagres.

The coming on board of the passengers would necessarily make a great noise. The captain was not then, any more than now, a 184 laggard in his decisions. He steamed down to Portobello, where the waters were calm, and gained for me the freedom from all motion and quiet on the ship. The passengers were furious at being delayed, and having to come that distance on the little tender. After the fashion of our people, they immediately held a public meeting, passed a vote of censure on the captain, and adopted resolutions recommending the company to remove him, under penalty of the displeasure of the California travel. Having done this in their haste, they immediately undid it as soon as they learned the reason for the captain's conduct, and followed another and better fashion of our people in undoing an injustice, and did all in their power to help him take care of me. In every part of my journey I came upon proof upon proof of this manly kindness and care for women among our American men. To travel alone in Europe is impossible; even travelling with one's children and a maid you do not receive the respect or attention that you have if there is a gentleman in the party. But in our country 185 it is exactly different. The need of attention or assistance draws out that instinctive sense of protection which seems to be innate in our people. To be in mourning, or look ill or sad, or to be encumbered with children, is a sure appeal to the exercise of this instinct.

A part of the main cabin had been portioned off with sheets and table-cloths tacked to the ceiling and floor, and to keep me from being thrown off I was lashed to the sofa, for it was now March, and we were already in a norther, and continued in one gale after another until we reached New York. When I was able to understand again, I found myself tightly lashed to this sofa, the ship rolling and pitching tremendously. The officers would come to look after me often—sometimes in their “rain clothes,” icicles on their beards and eyelashes, and very glad at last to find me not only alive, but able to ask questions and understand everything again. I have been told since that by all the laws of medicine I should have died then, but the greatest physicians maintain that there are more 186 resources in nature than are yet dreamed of in their philosophy, and this was a case in support of that idea. Mr. Frémont also was extremely ill; perhaps we had all been undermined by the month's stay on the Isthmus and the river travel, and the anxieties about my illness added the feather's weight.

A beautiful English copy of Lane's translation of the *Arabian Nights*, with fine English illustrations, was among the books that had been put up for my little girl. Grown people were very thankful for it on the ship going up from Panama, and then, and later in our camping-life, when it was read aloud to her, fragments of it interwove themselves with our daily experience, and it was the child's idea that when we reached home we should relate to her grandfather our voyage, as Sindbad related his; we too had had our dangers by sea, and seen strange beasts and birds; we had found our "valley of diamonds," and the alternations and sudden transitions in climates, languages, people of every varying rank and dress, our unusual modes of travel—all seemed nearer to fiction than to the formal 187 routine life to which we had belonged, and which shortly before had been to us the only way of living.

During the Mexican war, a Mexican who had brought through secret despatches at great risk, in telling my father of the difficulties he encountered, said he had to leave ordinary travelled routes, and make his way as he best could by mule or horse, or at times on foot, through to Vera Cruz—as he put it in his broken English, "on horse-back or mule-back, and many times on foot-back." We could include this last mode of travel among the many ways in which our year's journey had been made. Starting by railway from Washington, then the ocean steamer, then the little whale-boat on the Chagres, then the mules of the land crossing, with again a steamship, followed by such experiments in carriage-horses that driving became a novelty, always walking in hard, troublesome places, and then with my ship's hammock as a palanquin; on the return across the Isthmus, together with the varied peoples we had seen, ranging from the highest to the lowest in intelligence 188 and cultivation, differing languages, color, and any number of new and startling phases. Of social observances and want of observances we had a great deal to tell—talks that were never to end, for we were not to go back to California; *that* was settled. The risks to health were too certain and too great; the trial of separation unnecessary, now that Mr. Frémont's place as Senator would keep him in Washington through the winters.

Having just gone through the experience that all our "best laid plans had gone agley," and that it was of no use for man to propose when the whole chapter of accidents lay open to dispose of

you otherwise, I would lie contentedly making plans for the long peaceful time ahead of me in Washington. This was early in March. In October of that year I was again at sea, had again a touch of fever at the Isthmus in crossing, and it was three years before I again saw any of my home people. But it is only the Immortals who read the Book of Destiny. Fortunately for us, we live our lives only as we see the days.

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We were a sorry-looking lot when we landed; even my little girl had had some of the fever of the Isthmus. Her splendid hair had been cut close, and its loss, with a silk handkerchief knotted about her head to take its place, altered her almost beyond my own recognition. When we reached our rooms at the Irving House, we laughed at our own appearance: we looked as though we had been taken off a wreck, so thin and haggard were we, and in such odd dress. Jenny Lind was in her progress through the country at that time, and we had the rooms that had been beautifully fitted up for her at the Irving House, then a fashionable up-town hotel opposite Stewart's Chambers Street warehouse. How good it was to get to regular things again!—the warm, carpeted rooms, the large bath, the white roses and my dear violets, with which Mr. Howland never failed to welcome me to New York.

Of all my carefully prepared outfit, fire and the accidents of travel had left me only this ridiculous toilet which I saw reflected in the long mirrors on every side—my dark blue cloth riding-habit, cut short, and 190 hanging as straight and shapeless about my ankles as the clothes on the women in a Noah's ark; black-satin slippers; a Leghorn flat, tied down with a China crape scarf; doubled and folded about me, the faded Scotch plaid which had served as a carpet in camp and an awning on the river Chagres. Just opposite, at the door of Stewart's we saw a match-girl dressed very much in this way, except that her shoes were better for the weather.

We took two days of needed rest and refitting. There were not the resources in New York then that we have now, but forty-eight hours restored us, and sent us on our way equipped like other people.

As in the old ballads, I “Had been gone but a year and a day,” when I was again back in my father's house.

THE END.

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