LETTER THE FIFTY-FOURTH


HAVANA, February 27th.

It has been very agreeable for us to return here as private individuals, and to receive the same attentions as when we came in a public situation, but now with more real friendliness. Having arrived at the time of the carnival, we have been in the midst of masked balls, which are curious to see for once; of operas, dinners, and every species of gaiety. But returning so soon, I shall enter into no details. The weather is beautiful, and this house, situated on the bay, receives every sea-breeze as it blows. The Elssler is still attracting immense and enthusiastic crowds; and is now dancing at the theatre of Tacon, where she is seen to much more advantage than in the other. We have been breakfasting in the luxurious Quintas in the neighbourhood, driving in the Paseo every evening in an open volante, attending the opera; in short, leading so gay a life, that a little rest in the country will be agreeable; and we have accepted with pleasure the invitation of Count and Countess F—a, to spend some time at La Angosta, one of his country places; a sugar and coffee estate. General Bustamante arrived in the Jason, a few days after us, they having sailed later. They had been very anxious concerning the fate of the Tyrian, in these northern gales off Tampico. We have received letters from our Mexican friends, and learn, with great sorrow, the death of the Dowager Marquesa de Vivanco, and of the Señora H—a of Pascuar—also the murder of a Spanish physician, with whom we were intimately acquainted,—at his distant hacienda.

LA ANGOSTA, 13th March.

We have spent a most agreeable fortnight at La Angosta, and have also visited the Count and Countess V—a, in their plantation near this. General Bustamante was here for a day or two. Lord Morpeth also passed a few days with us; so that altogether we have had a pleasant party. We have been delighted with the elegant hospitality, without ostentation or etiquette, which
we have met with here. But we shall now return so soon, that I shall reserve all particulars till we meet.

On board the Steam-Ship Medway, April 28th.

With a warning of only three hours, we came on board this splendid steamer, eight days ago, after taking a hurried leave of our kind friends, at least of all those who are now in Havana; for the Count and Countess de F——a, and the Count and Countess de V——a are still in the country. Don B——o H——a and his family accompanied us to the ship in the government jalu. General Bustamante, with his young aide-de-camp, together with Señor de Gutierrez Estrada, and various other gentlemen, hearing of our sudden departure, came out in boats to take leave of us. Alas! those leave-takings.

We had the agreeable surprise of finding that we were acquainted with all our fellow-passengers. There are our particular friends the E——s, the padre F——n, and Mr. G——s, all from Mexico; M. D——s de M——s, who was attached to the French legation in Mexico, and is now returning from a mission to California; Mr. and Miss —— of Boston, etc. We came on board on the evening of the twentieth, but did not leave the harbour till the morning of the twenty-first. The day was beautiful, and as we passed out, we could distinguish the waving of many handkerchiefs from the balconies. In this floating palace, with large airy berths, a beautiful cabin, an agreeable society, books, a band of music, ices, etc.; not to mention that important point, an excellent and good-hearted captain, we have passed our time as pleasantly as if we were in the most splendid hotel.

On the twenty-third we went out in a little boat, in the middle of the night, to Nassau, in New Providence, to buy some of those beautiful specimens of shell-flowers, for which that place is celebrated. We set off again at three in the morning of the twenty-fourth, on which day, being Sunday, we had prayers on board. The weather was beautiful, and even with contrary wind, the Medway went steaming on her course at the rate of nine knots an hour.

On the twenty-fifth we lay off Savannah. A pilot came on board, and we went up the river in a boat to the city, where we passed an agreeable day, and in the evening returned to the ship. Crowds of people from Savannah went out to see the steamer. The next day we cast anchor
off Charleston, and again a pilot came on board; but the
day was stormy and gloomy, and only two of the pas-
sengers went on shore. We have now had several days
of bad weather; wind and rain; and one night a storm
of thunder and lightning; yet down in the cabin there is
scarce any motion, and we have been sitting reading and
writing as quietly as if we were in our own rooms. After
two years and a half of spring and summer, we feel the
cool very much.

29th.—We are now passing the Narrows. Once more
the green shores of Staten Island appear in sight. We
left them two years and six months ago; just as winter
was preparing to throw his white shroud over the dolphin
hues of the dying autumn; the weather gloomy and tear-
ful. Now the shores are covered with the vegetation of
spring, and the grass is as green as emeralds. I shall
write no more, for we must arrive to-day; and I shall be
the bearer of my own despatches.

The day is bright and beautiful. The band is playing
its gayest airs. A little boat is coming from the
Quarantine. In a few minutes more we shall be at home!

THE END