

ject and taxing the reader's patience, so I will take up the dropped thread. Having at last concluded to try Central America, for various reasons—the main one of which was its easy access, we took berth in the steamer *Gracia*, a diminutive fruiter of about 1000 tons. The captain, a Mr. Regner, turned out to be an amiable, nice sort of a fellow and I spent a good deal of our voyage on his deck talking and assisting him in taking observations, which latter he had to do twice a day. There were six other passengers on board besides Puss and myself, so that we anticipated a nice trip, but Oh! ye winds and waves. We had scarcely entered the gulf after a nice glide of eight hours along the Mississippi, when dire misfortune befell the majority of our fellow passengers. Puss, I am sorry to say was the first to pay his tribute to old Neptune, then one after another of the poor fellows disappeared into their respective bunks, from which at intervals groans of anguish and heart-rending woe could be heard to issue. The captain looked at me with wonder, thinking it not more than right that I should bear those others company in their distress and help them make the air resound with hideous wails, but after my mentioning another trip of a far rougher nature he desisted from his surprise and congratulated himself on having somebody to help him eat supper, and a hearty meal we made despite the various attempts of the ship to upset our plates and stand us on our heads just at the moment of conveying an artfully speared piece of meat to our mouths. These solitary meals lasted four days, one or the other of the passengers occasionally being a silent and fealous spectator of our enjoyment,

which silence was generally concluded with a rush for the outer railing and a very expressive argument with the fishes.

Puss especially had it bad and became morose, wishing himself anywhere except in heaven or in the boat. But the fifth day brought a perfectly smooth sea, which sparkled and flashed in the sunlight like a million precious gems, lined by a beautiful setting of a tropical vegetation. This beautiful scenery and the perfectly even motion of the vessey induced all the invalids to come on deck and sun themselves, and my private opinion is, that if they would have come up sooner they would have been spared much. I gave expression to this opinion and was answered unanimously that they had come up long ago, every bit of them, and there was nothing left of them.

We caught a glimpse of the Cuban coast; but it was too far off to distinguish anything clearly, even through a powerful telescope. We now sailed, or rather screwed, along a pretty, richly wooded shore, a steep cliff concealing from us our port of landing; at last rounding it, the glow of the setting sun revealed the most natural and undoubtedly one of the prettiest harbors of the Gulf coast. There lay before us a nest of picturesque cottages overshadowed by palms of all varieties, over which the government buildings seemed to hover, as a hen does over her flock; behind all of this there were the mountains in their grand majesty, clothed in the most beautiful robe of state—the spring foliage. The sun now went below our horizon, but still lighted the mountains which threw huge shadows over the bay, and traveling step by step the lord of day lingered with a farewell kiss on the