

James Williamson
Falmouth Packet Surgeon, 1828-1835.

*Company
of the
Duke of York Packet*

April 1830

<i>Names</i>	<i>Quality</i>
<i>Robert Snell</i>	<i>Commander</i>
<i>John Geach</i>	<i>Master</i>
<i>James Williamson</i>	<i>Surgeon</i>
<i>Charles Williams</i>	<i>Mate</i>
<i>August Glasson</i>	<i>Carpenter</i>
<i>James Evenet</i>	<i>Boatswain</i>
<i>John Waitcoat</i>	<i>Steward</i>
<i>John Pashbee</i>	<i>Steward's Mate</i>
<i>Edward Tourer</i>	<i>Cook</i>
<i>John Stevens</i>	<i>Sailmaker</i>
<i>John Stevens</i>	<i>Joiner</i>
<i>Joseph Stevens</i>	<i>A. B.</i>
<i>Philip Waistcot</i>	<i>A. B.</i>
<i>John Richards</i>	<i>A. B.</i>
<i>Francis Hawkins</i>	<i>A. B.</i>
<i>Alexander Webb</i>	<i>A. B.</i>
<i>James Waistcoat *</i>	<i>A. B.</i>
<i>John Coplin</i>	<i>A. B.</i>
<i>James Rowe</i>	<i>A. B.</i>
<i>William Poulson</i>	<i>A. B.</i>
<i>Dyer Williams</i>	

** Joseph Bradley was discharged – and shamefully trying to inform upon the Master to Capt.ⁿ King was treated as he deserved*

*Journal
of a
Voyage to S.^t Domingo, Mexico & Havanna*

Sailed Sat.^y 24th April – Returned Sun.^y 12th Sept.^r 1830

It being usual to detain the Mexican packet from the Saturday her appointed time to the Monday following, all of us had fully expected that we would be no exception to that general practice. For my own part so sanguine had I been in my hopes, that I had actually accepted of an invitation to dine with M.^r Pearce at Penryn on Sunday. You may then readily imagine our disappointment, when no order for a detention arrived, and we were compelled the most reluctantly to prepare immediately for proceeding to sea. What added much to our vexation was, that the weather which for nearly 4 weeks had been uninterruptedly bad became fine, and filled us with regret at being unable to take advantage on shore of this long-looked for glimpse of a clear sky.

Owing to the high wind and badness of the roads [?] the Mail on the morning of Saturday 24th April 1830 did not arrive till an hour and a half beyond the usual time. In consequence of this, it was 1 P.M. ere we had received our Mail & proceeded to sea. As I have said, the weather was fine, and the wind, which many days together had been foul, this day changed in our favour, and we would have made considerable progress, but for the tide which set against us.

Sunday 25th April - wind unfavourable – Weather fine.

Monday 26th - wind more favourable – weather variable

Tuesday 27 - winds nearly favourable but variable weather cloudy in forenoon but fine in the afternoon.

Wednesday 28th April – wind and weather variable.

Thursday 29th – cloudy weather – wind nearly favourable.

Friday 30th – wind favourable – Squally weather.

Saturday 1 May – wind variable – squally w.^r in the forenoon but very fine in the afternoon.

Sunday 2nd – foul wind – Weather generally fine sometimes squally.

Monday 3rd – in the morning squally with slight showers – day beautiful – wind foul.

Tuesday 4th – very squally unsettled weather – wind foul and very fresh.

Wednesday 5th – very squally and unsettled weather with frequent showers – wind foul & fresh.

Thursday 6th – weather very squally & showery – wind foul till 3 P.M. when it changed into the NW & was consequently fair for us.

Friday 7th – weather squally with much rain. Wind fresh and favourable.

Saturday 8th – cloudy but pleasant weather – fresh and favourable breeze.

Sunday 9th - in the morning weather hazy with rain - in the afternoon cloudy but pleasant - light variable but favourable breezes all day. At 9 A.M. came in sight of Porto Santo and in the afternoon, of Madeira, both at a considerable distance.

Monday 10th - fine weather and favourable breeze from the NE, In sight of Madeira this morning.

Tuesday 11th - fine weather and same favourable breeze.

Wednesday 12th – cloudy but pleasant weather – fresh & favourable breeze.

Thursday 13 – very cloudy weather with slight showers – fresh and favourable breeze.

Friday 14th May – wind favourable – Weather very cloudy with rain in the morning – in the afternoon fine.

Saturday 15th – very fine weather – light but favourable breezes.

Sunday 16th – beautiful weather – light favourable wind.

Monday 17th – beautiful weather – light favourable winds but variable.

Tuesday 18th – d.^o W.^r – and winds.

Wednesday 19th - d.^o W.^r – and winds.

Thursday 20th – weather squally with heavy showers of rain – winds extremely variable but favourable – much sea weed.

Friday 21st – weather cloudy in the morning – very fine in the afternoon – wind light but favourable.

Saturday 22nd – very fine W.^r – wind favourable.

Sunday 23rd – most beautiful weather – wind steady and favourable.

Monday 24th – fresh and favourable breeze – fine weather.

Tuesday 25th – fine weather – cloudy and rainy at night – fresh & favourable breeze.

Wednesday 26th – pleasant weather – wind favourable – much seaweed.

Thursday 27th – fine weather and favourable wind.

Friday 28th – in the morning weather sultry and hazy, in the afternoon beautiful. Wind moderate & favourable.

Saturday 29th May - weather squally with occasional showers of rain - Wind fair.

Sunday 30th - early this morning we came in sight of Deseada the first of the West India Islands discovered by Columbus. It appeared to be a pretty large island and of moderate elevation - but owing to the great haziness of the weather, we could make out nothing more. From the same cause too we could merely decry the islands of Guadeloupe, Antigua & Monserrat. The former is the largest of these, and on the north side which we saw first, the lands seemed to be very low, while that on the West rose to a considerable height. Monserrat is rather a small island, - it is nearly double the size of Deseada. Whilst we were passing these islands the wind was right aft, and the weather very pleasant.

Monday 31st - hazy and changeable weather, with occasional heat - wind extremely variable, sometimes lulled into a calm and at other times roaring in squalls.

Flying Fish, Bonitos and Boobies

Tuesday 1st June - in the morning heavy squalls, but during the rest of the day fine weather, Wind moderate and favourable. Saw large numbers of Bonitos, flying fish & birds (chiefly noddies & boobies). The scene was interesting and curious. We could easily trace the progress of a large shoal of the flying fish, from the constant ripple produced in the water by the Bonitos, who were eagerly bent upon the satisfying of their own voracious maws and the destruction of the poor flyers. Every time they caught one, they leapt out of the water almost perpendicularly or oblique, as if to gulp down the delicious morsel. If the flying fish succeeded in escaping from their merciless pursuers by using the power God had given them, of rising into the air - their hard case was not mended - their threatened danger was not eluded - and the sight we saw of afforded an ample illustration of the old wise saw 'out of the frying pan into the fire.' For upwards of 30 or 40 large birds kept perpetually hovering over the tracks of the shoals and no sooner did the '*pisces volehantes*' in obedience to the instincts which self preservation enjoined them, emerge from the sea, than the noddies & boobies &^c. pounced at once upon them in that fate which they had hoped to have escaped.

Wednesday 2nd June - hazy and cloudy weather - wind fresh and favourable.

Thursday 3rd - hazy weather and very hot. Saw the island of Domingo at times. Wind moderate and favourable.

Jacquemel - Appearances

Friday 4th - during the night we had heavy squalls, with a deluge of rain. At 2 A.M. we passed Alto Vela, a small island about 70 miles from Jacquemel, the first point of our destination. At 8 A.M. we had the satisfaction of seeing the clouds surcharged with rain dispersed, and also the pleasant prospect of entering our port with fine

weather and a fresh breeze. Our expectation[s] of the first were not disappointed, but just as we had reached the entrance to the Bay of Jacquemel, the wind became very light, and our progress consequently slow. Ever since day light we were sailing along the coast, at no great distance, which enabled us to observe the island was very mountainous, and that its mountains were exceedingly lofty. The whole appeared covered with trees and the luxuriant vegetation of tropical climates, except where here and there (not far from the town) patches of cultivation presented a break in the uniformity of the scene and shewed where man had rescued from the grip of nature whatever he had deemed necessary for his profits or necessities.

It is considered rather difficult to make Jacquemel, from the narrowness of the access to it, and its own obscure & concealed situation. A remarkable white cliff, and the sudden sloping down of a hill near it, are the marks which guide navigators, and by these, we gained our object. The Bay of Jacquemel is of small extent, and surrounded by a semi-circle of hills and mountains, which covered almost entirely like other parts being lines as it were by/with wood & formed a picture at once picturesque and grand. Abeduly [?] at the entrance, are two batteries tolerably mounted, one on each side, and on that on the right, which was the largest and best appointed, the banner of Hayti (viz. a strip of blue and red placed horizontally as thus [sketch – blue stripe over a red stripe]) floated in the breeze.

Observations at Jacquemel

At the termination of the Bay, but considerably to the dexter side of it was descried the Town of Jacquemel, which was, I believe, a considerable rank among the towns of Domingo. Before this place at half past two P.M. we came to anchor in 7½ fathoms, close to a large brig, the *Amazon* of Leith,¹ and one of a much smaller class, belonging to the United States. As soon as possible after anchoring the Captain went on shore with the Mail accompanied by a M.^r Lloyd, our passenger and myself. We landed at a tolerable wooden wharf projecting into the water some way. On it was saw several black & mulattoes, and a Haytian sentinel in the national livery of blue turned up with red, who appeared to me to be the best specimen which I had seen of a black soldier. The Captain was welcomed by a M.^r Frith I think, who acted as his proxy, in the absence of the Vice Consul at Port Au Prince the capital of the island. By this gentleman we were conducted to pay our respects to a black Colonel the general commanding being indisposed. Here I was much struck with the easy freedom of his manners, and his knowledge of politeness, which would have done no discredit to persons who pretend to despise millions of their fellow creatures merely because of their colour. He wore a very neat and simple uniform, with a cocked hat and his dress really became him well. His house, the far from being imposing or elegant in its external appearance, was very comfortable within, and very handsomely furnished. From the Colonels we proceeded to the house of M.^r Frith which is one of the best and largest in Jacquemel. As a matter of course we were immediately requested to partake of something - for such is the hospitality practised in the West Indies that you are in far greater danger from the importunate kindness of the inhabitants, who wish to satisfy their own feelings by cramming you with meat and drink, than from the climate.

American Doctor at Jacquemel

¹ *Amazon* of Leith, a 4 year old, 195 tons brig, J. W. Blews, master – *Lloyd's Register* 1829.

In a short time several gentlemen came in to see M.^r Frith and hear the news: and among these was an American Doctor who speedily made acquaintance with me and requested me to accompany him to his domicile for the purpose of having a chat together. I easily readily agreed, upon which we adjourned to his 'mansion,' which was of respectable order, and convenient, with abundance of mahogany articles, the produce of S.^t Domingo. I there spent several hours very pleasantly and instructively both giving and receiving information. He appeared eager to learn the latest medical news from Europe, and was well acquainted with the discoveries and improvements made in medicine of late years. I made several enquiries of him relative to the prospects of Surgeons settling in Hayti, and the picture which he drew was any thing but encouraging, at least with respect to Jacquemel. He told me that he was almost the only practitioner in that town and was obliged to act in the manifold capacities of Apothecary, Physician, Surgeon and Accoucheur - and that he is sometimes required to go a distance of 20 or 30 miles. This superabundance of employment and trouble is, however, by no means compensated by the receipt of large fees - on the contrary such is the low estimation in which medicine is held, and the comparative poverty of the people, that his service[s] are rewarded by a very inadequate remuneration. Speaking to him of the state of the bowels, he confirmed the common opinion that, when deranged in their functions, they become very costive and require very large doss of purgatives - as of calomel, salep, croton oil (6 or 7 drops). He told me also that he seldom met with acute cases of disease, because the blacks are so careless of themselves, that they rarely apply for assistance, until the sub acute or chronic form had commenced.

At 6 P.M. we returned to M.^r Frith's and at ½ past, sat down to a plain and substantial dinner, where there was no affectation of style, or great display, altho' he is said to be of the possession of great wealth. At 10 we returned on board, when we immediately tried to sail, but we made very little progress all night, as the land breeze was exceedingly light.

I shall close my mention of Jacquemel with a few observations, which of course were hastily made, and very incomplete.

Description of Jacquemel

The Town of Jacquemel is situated, as I have said, at the bottom of the Bay of the same name and rather to the right side of it. In size it is small, so small indeed that when at the entrance of the Bay, it is difficult to see it, except with a glass. It consists of two or three streets at right angles to each other, with several straggling collections of houses, built on the higher ground. I saw one house abuilding - but I cannot say whether all the others are on the same plan. Large long and thick posts of wood were driven into the ground, and other[s] were raised again on these to the height of two stories. These perpendicular posts again received support, and security from strong transverse beams. All the interstices between these would, I imagine be filled up with brick or thin strips of wood - covered with plaster - thus you see that they do not build so substantially as we do - and in my opinion, they have their advantage over us, that they can make alterations and additions with less trouble and expense - that they can easily destroy their habitations on the approach of an enemy, and lastly that they can enjoy greater comfort in their climate from this construction.

Most of the houses are of two stories, the lower of which is occupied as a shop or store-house, the upper as the proper dwelling place. Those which are only of one

story have one door towards the sea breeze which is open during the day shut at night and a second door behind, where the family at night can enjoy the refreshing coolness of the land breeze. All the houses, without exception are furnished with piazza verandahs in front, which afford protection against the force of the sun. Taking everything into consideration, I would say that the houses of Jacquemel are cool, comfortable and clean - but I am sorry that I cannot say so much of the streets, which are unpaved and unequal.

There are few buildings of any note - the custom house is but so so, and one of the best is one situated on an eminence of large size, which is the residence of the President Boyer, when he visits Jacquemel.

Manners of the Jacquemelites

Jacquemel is a town, where very little trade is carried on - and that is chiefly coffee, cotton & Mahogany. There were only two large vessels in harbour while we were there, and only two very small ones. The appearance of the interior of the town too plainly indicates this. An almost deathlike stillness prevails - very [few] people seen on the streets - no bustle or activity whatever. I confess I was agreeably disappointed in my opinions - for in other places, where I had seen blacks there was sure to be noise and talking - here on it is contrary, the men were equally pursuing their several employment and the women quietly seated in the front apartments and conversing together. The manners also of the Haytians were extremely civil & shewed that they had not been so long the slaves of the politest people in the world, without having imbibed some portion at least of their '*politesse*.' Every thing I observed gratified me much, and gave me an incontrovertible proof, that the capabilities of the black man's mind are as great as those of the men who so unjustly asperse them - and if they do not make these rapid strides in refinement and knowledge, which the native of cold climate have done in a short time, this is to be attributed to the indolence produced by the climate, and to the fact, that being satisfied with their present acquirements and state of existence, not seeking after many foreign luxuries, while they have abundance of good food, they are not called upon to make those efforts, which the possession of these implies to be necessary.

Restrictions on the Whites

The revolution, which secured the independence of Hayti, under the form of a republic, is of so recent a date, and the cruelties which they endured under the power of hard task-masters are so fresh in the memories of many that certain restrictive enactments have been made respecting the whites, shewing their jealousy of them, which it is probable will be cancelled in the progress of time. Of the precise nature of all these regulations I am not aware - but I have been assured by our passenger M.^r Lloyd, long resident in the Island that they do exist. No white man can hold any office in the influential departments of government.

No white man can retail any goods, but is at liberty to dispose of as much as he pleases by wholesale. This law is I believe often evaded, by procuring a native man or woman to transact the retail business for you (but in his own name). But there is a danger in this which is that the black or mulatto may prove treacherous, and refuse to refund his gains, whilst you, knowing how the law stands, cannot enforce your right to your property. Whatever, then, is retailed by a native as his own cannot be taken

from him, and thus as a punishment for an infringement of the laws, you are completely espoused.

The basis of all the Haytian laws is the Code Napoleon - and to all appearances under their laws order and peace are every where maintained.

M.^r Lloyd

I have now only to mention that we brought to Jacquemel as passenger a M.^r Lloyd a Welshman and head of the firm Lloyd & Milne established at Port Au Prince. We all found in him a pleasant & well informed gentleman - and notwithstanding his long absences from home, in various parts of the world, full of clannish feelings. He has been long in S.^t Domingo and seems to possess great influence with the President Boyer. He was somewhat of a Hypochondriac - for, altho' he boasted of his strong constitution & excellent general health, he had got some crotchets into his noodle, such as that he was apoplectic - dyspeptic & I know not what. I suspect it has happened to him, as to many others, who having lived in good health, without much reflection in a hot climate for many years and being often spoken to on this subject comes to think more of the matter themselves and finally become exceedingly nervous. M.^r Lloyd & I had many long conversations together and he invariably turned them upon medical subjects, with a particular reference to himself. If I am not mistaken he will not long remain in Hayti - but will return to settle in some of the branches of the house in England. He wished me much to come & reside at Port au Prince, and held out very flattering prospects - but I was afraid that I would at all like a permanent residence in so hot and unhealthy a country, and that the chances of making incompetence were small and uncertain, where there are so many Frenchmen settled among Frenchmen and where all speak the Gallic tongue.

Saturday 5th June - this morning found us only as far as the mouth of the Bay of Jacquemel, and we made no way until the sea breeze set in fresh at half past ten. Weather hazy and cloudy but cool. In sight of Jacquemel all day.

Sunday 6th - fine weather - and fresh breeze came in sight of Jamaica in the evening.

Monday 7th - we had a fine breeze all night, which brought us in to Port Royal at 8 A.M. Shortly after coming to anchor, the Captain having first paid his respects to the naval Commanding Officer, proceeded to Kingston. It had been my intention soon to have followed him but the state of the weather put an end to all thoughts of it. The season destined to be unfortunate in the weather whenever we expect to derive pleasure in Harbour - for About 10 o'clock A.M. the rain began to pour down in torrents and continued almost without intermission the whole day & night. This has been the first rainy weather for some months and we have been the Harbingers of it. Our time consequently was spent very dully - and I had a thousand times rather [been] at sea than before Port Royal.

Find M.^r Drummond - Acc.^t of M.^r Barlow our passenger

Tuesday 8th - Early this morning the Steward being obliged to go to Kingston to market I assertedingly to take a passage with him. The weather tho' much better than yesterday was still threatening, and it was not without several heavy showers, that we at length reached Kingston, 2 hours and half after leaving the Packet.

I remained [in] Town the whole of the day, and visited several different parts of it, but I did not remark anything additional to what I mentioned last voyage. As I had promised I waited upon a M.^r Drummond, whom from all accounts, I thought to be the person about whom I had been directed to enquire - and to my great satisfaction found that I had not been mistaken. He received me very kindly, and drove me in his gig to his house about 2 miles, up the country, where I was introduced to his lady and family. There also I dined and [had] a long conversation about mutual acquaintance and family members.

At 4 P.M. we returned to town and M.^r D.rd accompanied me to the wherry to see me embark for our Packet.

We left at Kingston as passenger M.^r Barlow - Apothecary and Druggist from Truro. He was a young man of very quiet habits, and of a staid and sober disposition. His visit to the West Indies was entirely a speculation and he did not at all agree with the sage remark of Shakespeare - "That it is better to bear the ills we know, than fly to those we know not of" for he came an utter stranger, and without any positive prospect of employment. His History was certainly a melancholy one. Having about nine years ago married a woman of impeccable moral character, and whom he preferred, but who was also acceptable to his friends on account of her want fortune, he was exposed to the anger and persecution of all those who ought to have, bound by natural ties to adventure his interest. Altho' before his ill starred marriage he was succeedingly remarkably well in a shop at Truro, and was likely in a few years to have the best business there, such was the malice of his parents & brethren, that by their insinuation, completely blighted his fair prospect of obtaining an honourable competence. When one plan of life failed, he tried another, but still he met with misfortune, till, at last after the lapse of nine years, his friends somewhat relented and agreed to fit him out for the West Indies. From some conversation I had with him I understood that his views were to go into a situation of the manager of one instant, and then by degrees to endeavour to be employed as a Surgeon - but he seemed little aware how difficult a matter it will prove to obtain such a birth, and that a good knowledge of crops, management of estates &.^c must [be] preliminary and indispensable qualification for it. His case will be truly pitiable, if he is long without some means of support and it is probable that like most Europeans, he must undergo a "seasoning" as an attack of the fever is called, which if he escapes fatal consequences, will considerably augment his difficulties. He appeared to be a good Chemist & in that capacity had been employed in one of the London Hospitals.

Le Abbe Cendra

The only other passenger whom we left at Kingston, was a young Catholic priest whom we had taken onboard at Jacquemel. His name was L' Abbe Cendra, and his whole appearance was as unclerical as possible. He was a native of Old Spain, had come from Port Au Prince in S.^t Domingo, which place either thro' lenity or disgust he soon left, and took his passage with us to Jamaica. There was another priest along with him, well advanced in years, who communicated some stories respecting the youth, which showed that he had from luck adopted his profession, not his profession him.

[hear he breaks into Latin? for half a page]

Vetus saceretos mehi Litine discit Juvenem rote animo milreribre de-ditum esse, et se effrenata cupidui gessisse et in Hispania et apua Haytianos. Ex hoc accideret, quod

hoc curriculum vitae dier vie pune non percurrisset – nom mulenes malae corpus venerco vene-no magnepere infecisent. Ad hoc ocuerdotem shum pene onisis pecunias in scorti suis gratificum-ae quas ob usus religious accepisset expendisse.”

He was very fortunate for soon as he reached Kingston, he obtained an appointment, for which, besides his lodgings and sustenance he was to receive one dollar a day.

Wednesday 9 June - early this morning we attempted to weigh anchor, but several teeth of the wheel of the windlass having given way we were longer than we expected ere we left Port Royal for Honduras. His M. S. **Victor** and **Slaney**² preceded us by a short time, the one for Carthage and the other for Port au Prince. In consequence of two Charts of Jamaica being missing from the Atlas, M.^r Geach would not undertake the responsibility of navigating the Packet out by the South Channel, (as he would have done had we been going out by the East Channel) - and consequently we had a pilot, a most unusual thing with us. The weather during the day was hazy and we kept the Island of Jamaica in sight till evening shrouded everything in darkness. Wind fresh and favourable.

Thursday 10th June - weather hazy and cloudy with one shower of rain. Breeze favourable

Friday 11th - pleasant weather & fav.^{bl} wind.

Saturday 12 - cloudy & hazy w.^r favourable wind.

Sunday 13th - passed the island of Bonacca at 1 A.M., and by day light we saw the island of Rattan but at a distance. These two islands are always made by those bound up to Belize - for unless they take their departure from them, they are apt to incur great danger, from the uncertain direction of currents. As the day advanced we were sorry to see that the weather was hazy, as it was of the utmost importance to us to get down to Half Moon Kay before night, and take a pilot on board. But altho' the wind was fresh & favourable, and the distance between Rattan and Half Moon Kay not very great, such was the strength of the current setting us to the Norrard, while we wished to make southing, that whereas our Master had expected to see the land by noon, we vainly hoped till past six P. M., at which time the cry of land was heard. Knowing well our very ticklish situation, and that the slightest mistake would be followed by the risk of our lives, M.^r Geach had been seated on the topgallant yard for several hours - and of course no music would have sounded half a sweet inn our ears as the announcement that our object was in sight. Immediately all eyes were directed to the quarter pointed out - and the eyelids of not a few were raised to their utmost extent in the vain hope of taking into their scope of vision, what hazy rather than distance rendered impossible to perceive from on deck. The more anxious among us mounted aloft and all of them declared that they could plainly distinguish Half Moon Kay with the light house upon in - so that not the slightest doubt was entertained but that we were all right & tight. For my own part, what with the extreme haziness and the red gleams of the sun, which set almost right over the island, I could see neither land, nor lighthouse - not even when the Captain & others saw it from on deck, was I more

² **Victor** (18) Sloop, Com. Richard. Keane; **Slaney** (20) Sloop, Com. Joseph O'Brien – *Navy List*, April 1829.

fortunate - a circumstance which convincingly proves, that the eye of a sailor at sea acquires a power, of vision, which is denied to the mere landsman, who frequently cannot discover what is seen by others for a considerable time.

It now being clearly decided that the land before us was the same on which there were a lighthouse and a pilot, the next consideration was, what was best to be done. The Master and Captain were of different opinion - the former wished to bear down for the island and receive a pilot on board; the latter considering that there might be danger in this, and that even if we got a pilot we could do nothing that night, determined to lay off & on all night, and to make for Half Moon Kay at dawn of day.

The resolution of our Capt.ⁿ not to proceed proves our safety.

In this determination, which might have been questioned by some, it was the will of providence to shew us that we had been saved from imminent and inevitable danger = and it ought to be a lesson to every one of us that he guides & protects us by these very means which we would have been inclined of ourselves to reject. It appears now, and indeed had been conjectured before, that a strong current was setting us to the Northward, but of the exact force of this current we were entirely ignorant. In consequence of this when we made the land, we mistook a small Kay situated amongst awful rocks for Half Moon - and the mistake was confirmed by the sight of a white house on it which was considered *nem: cont:* to be the light house. Had we proceeded as the Master had advised we must have gone ashore on a long reef and had we miraculously been able to preserve our lives, every thing else must have been lost. I say miraculously - for supposing us to have escaped drowning, which we might easily done as the water within the reef was smooth, and not more than waist deep, what great chance was there, that we should all have escaped the merciless maws of the innumerable sharks & alligators, which there swarm. The suddenly formed resolution of the Capt.ⁿ - a resolution not formed because he doubted the correctness of the Masters reckoning - for he himself said that he could see the light house - but because he thought a pilot could do nothing that night - was thus made the means, in the hands of providence of our preservation.

At daylight perceive our danger. -

You are not, however, to imagine that we were fully sensible of our danger, the same night - far from it, we continued tacking backwards and forwards, totally unconscious of our narrow escape. It was not until the morning had well dawned, that we thus discovered the danger which we had escaped last night and likewise which menaced in the morning. Depending on the accuracy of his observations, M.^f Geach steered a course in the direction in which he had discovered the supposed lighthouse and entertained not the slightest suspicion of his error. As however he was a person, whose character is highly and honourable marked by extreme care and attention to the safety of the ship, he early resumed his former post at the mast head - and it would require no particul[ar] flights of imagination to conceive his alarm, when he discovered that we were running right into the mouth of the lion or in other words that instead of making out proper course to Half Moon Kay, we [were] steering for a wrong island which with its dreadful encircling breakers, was not much more than a mile ahead of us. The first impression of alarm was so great and so instantaneous, that he had almost dropped off the topgallant yard into the sea - Another ten minutes and we might have been struggling for life amidst reefs, and sharks more to be dreaded

than these. Not a moment, you may be sure, was lost - instant orders were given, which were as promptly obeyed, so that in a very short time, we were beyond the reach of all danger, and to enhance our satisfaction and gratitude, we saw plainly the true Half Moon Key with its light house. It might naturally be supposed that we must have found out our mistake from the circumstance of our not having seen the light at all - this thing was taken into consideration and it was thought, that the island being very small and having but few inhabitants, the lamp either had not been lighted at all or had been allowed by neglect, to go out.

Causes of the Danger in going to Belize

Monday 14th - the storm of impending danger having thus happily blown over, it must have been no small joy to the Master to receive on board a pilot for Belize at 10 o'clock, who of course relieved him of all further responsibility. Being secured from all danger under his care, we had full leisure to cast our eyes around and contemplate the manifold dangers which beset the passage to Honduras, in the form of reefs, rocks, kays & c. And, as I shall now shew, the unfavourable opinion entertained by Captain King, who scrupled not to affirm that many Packets would be lost or irremediably damaged was not wholly without a reasonable foundation. One of the principal causes of danger is the current, which again is dependant upon the wind. The force and positive direction being unknown, vessels are often hurried to destruction at a time, when from their reckoning, they ought to be 30 or 40 miles distant from any cause of alarm - and thus the greatest skill in navigation, and the most scrupulous care and attention are placed on a par with ignorance and carelessness. Again, the most dreadful consequences may ensue from your mistaking the different Kays and reefs, which you may see - a mistake which a stranger is exceedingly apt to commit from their very great similarity. Thus supposing the Master of a vessel to see land (and the land is generally low), he will probably look to his courses & reckoning and imagine himself near a certain Kay, from which, he is told in his book of directions, to steer a particular course, whereas in sad reality, the strong current has carried him in sight of a very different Kay, from which if he follows the course laid down for another Kay, he rushes unwittingly into inevitable destruction. Many, many have been the vessels which have been lost in this manner, and several of the most dangerous Kays, exhibit melancholy proofs of the fact in the shape of the hulls, spars, and rigging of ill fated vessels.

A third and equally important, cause, with the two I have mentioned, of danger is the incorrectness and disagreement of all the charts. In some for instance Half Moon Kay is placed to the Westward instead of the Eastward - and the lighthouse in a totally wrong position. In some, certain places are put down 30 or 40 miles out of their position, which is thereby a great hardship, in so much as this add[s greatly ?] to the difficulties and dangers of the Navigator, who has already too many to contend with. It is astonishing that Government in consideration of the great commerce carried on with Honduras, does not order an accurate survey to be made especially as in this time of unusual peace, they have many unemployed vessels - and what more noble undertaking could be asked upon than to save so many lives and so much British Property, which will continually be endangered until the navigation of the Bay is simplified & ascertained by each Kay, reef and flat being accurately laid down in the Charts. I am told that a Captain, who has traded much to Honduras, has this year published a Chart of the Bay - and that it is admitted to be the most accurate of any yet published. This is well - but we unfortunately had not the advantage of it.

In going to Belize almost all vessels make the Island of Bonacca, next the island of Rattan, from the middle of which she taken their departure very early in the morning, and shape their course for Half Moon Kay which, it is well for them if they can reach early in the day, as then they are always sure of having a pilot. This as I have already mentioned, was the plan we adopted, but having a strong current and light winds, we did not see Half Moon Kay till 7 P.M. - by which we were nearly involved in the same fate as thousands who had gone before.

After the pilot had been received on board and the bright light of day disclosed to our view the horrors we had providentially escaped, you may easily imagine that it [was] with, a spirit of gratitude to the almighty as well as of curiosity, that we contemplated a remarkable reef of great extent but a few miles distance from us. We could easily observe the sullen waves breaking over the rocks, which scarcely showed their heads above water - and that whilst on our side of the breakers the sea rose in billows on the other it lay calm and tranquil as the sleep of an infant. The colour too of the water within and without the rocks was totally different - the former being of a beautiful light green and the latter of the deepest blue - presenting a contrast, which a knowledge of the dreadful cause, alone prevented us from admiring with pleasure. The reason of the light and peculiar colour of the calm water was its shallowness - and the nature of the rocky bottom. Its depth was not more than 3½, 4, or 5 feet - and consequently had we been wrecked drowning would have been the least of our dangers. There sharks and alligators innumerable disported themselves in the clear waters, and it is probable that we would have met our fate from these voracious animals, long ere assistance could have been rendered to us from Half Moon Kay.

At different intervals on this sea of green, were descried several insulated rocks of greater or less extent, and seeming from their grotesque appearance like ancient castles - inaccessible to all human means.

Right before us lay Half Moon Kay, one of the four Southern Kays, and not far from it was the rock which from a white house on it we had mistaken for the other. Half Moon Kay is an island of very small extent - is covered with trees & has a Light House upon it, which may be truly said to be invaluable. The number of inhabitants is about 30 some of whom are pilots, while others employ themselves in turtling and fishing. Nothing is grown upon the island, and all their supplies must come from Belize & the sea. Within the compass of a very few miles the other Southern Kays lie, /as present nothing remarkable. Leaving these we found the whole way to Belize interspersed with numerous Kays, which are all of them low and nearly covered with wood. With a fair wind and a clear sky, and smooth water, we seemed as if on a party of pleasure - and I was strongly reminded of Loch Lomond with its many islands. We passed Sournef, apparently a cluster of 15 or 20 separate islands, but in reality connected - we saw English Kay - Gaffe's Kay - and many others of dissimilar sizes and forms, but all beautiful. The approach to the mainland was slow and gradual, but our view of it was obstructed by the bright beams of the setting sun - and at 5 P.M. we came to anchor in front of the town of Belize, which is the only English Settlement here.

Tuesday 15th June - this morning I have full leisure to contemplate the appearance of Belize, as it presented itself to our view from the situation of our anchorage - and it was not difficult to come to the conclusion that it resembled no place which I had yet seen. The site of Belize is very low, with no high land in its neighbourhood to impart to it that specie of beauty, which a town acquires solely from being embosomed

amongst hills, or built at the foot of a range of mountains. But nevertheless it is not by any means destitute of pleasing qualities - and it possesses advantages which some might prefer in it to the more imposing aspect of other Cities. Far to the South you can just discern several peaks of mountains dimly espied thro' the haze - but every where in the immediate vicinity of Belize, the country is low and covered with umbrageous trees, brushwood &.^c

In front of the Town lay an open Bay of the waters of which are seldom disturbed in their usual calm tranquillity by any wind, since they are sheltered by the numerous Kays, reefs & flats, which I have mentioned. The appearance of Belize itself from our deck was prepossessing and picturesque in the extreme - the descent, and comfortable-looking houses, clean as are our homes, and thickly interspersed with the cocoanut, the orange and the tamarind trees, which seemed to conceal, and yet artfully to show off the half hidden dwellings, recalled many pleasing recollections to my mind of native rural scenes. But alas I found that to view this picture at a respectable distance, and close at hand gave origin to very different feelings and opinions - just as the spectator in a theatre, deceived by the effect of distance, is enchanted with the exquisite beauty of scenery, which if he were permitted to get behind the scenes, he would pronounce to be most unnatural, and execrable.

Houses in Belize

Our Master having occasion to go on shore for freight I gladly accompanied him. As we gradually gained the shore my favourable opinion as gradually began to change. All indeed that belonged to nature remained unaltered, but the work of man sunk rapidly in my estimation. We landed at a miserable wharf, close to a very tolerable wooden bridge, thrown over the river - and found ourselves in a part of the world comparatively little frequented and little known. Those habitations which had looked so nice in the Bay and which we had supposed to have been handsomely built of stone, proved to be nothing else than wooden erections, painted over. They resembled almost in every respect the description of houses which I mentioned as having seen at Halifax. Some of them consist of three stories, most of two, and many of only one. The lower flats are used as store-houses or shops, the upper as the residence of the family. There is one circumstance in which the Houses of Belize differ from those of Halifax and that is in the foundations which in the former are constructed in two ways. Very many of the houses have foundations of brick work, carried to the height of 4 or 5 feet above the ground - while all the rest of the building is of wood, - in others again you have the whole superstructure of the house supported entirely on thick unhewn pillars of mahogany, placed at each corner, so that you can easily creep under the house, and perhaps in any case of emergency, it might be possible to walk off with the house, and all. This mode of architecture is not adopted without a reason - it is one which the nature of the place, and every regard to comfort calls for - for during the rainy season, the whole of the town is one entire puddle, thro which you have often to wade knee deep. All the houses in Belize are separate from one another, and have a common wooden paling in front, exactly such as you see before many of our gentlemen's Cottages in the country. Between each house you have different fruit trees growing, such as the Mango, orange, & Tamarind. These serve the double purpose of a shade from the solar heat, and of giving a fine effect to an otherwise dull and uninteresting town. I think the Belizeans might with much advantage borrow an improvement in their houses from the Kingstonians, and that is in the matter of piazzas or verandas. Not a single dwelling is provided with these conveniences so

general and so grateful in Jamaica, and in consequence the hapless stranger has no shelter in walking the streets from the downwards rays of a tropical sun. For my own particular part I suffered much from this evil, and would be well content to concede greater praise to the place, if they would only consult their own; as well as the comfort of others, by furnishing themselves forthwith with piazzas and verandas.

Altho I dare say almost all the houses are comfortable to the inhabitants, and admirably adapted to the climate by their numerous windows &.^c still there is hardly a single fine building, which indeed is not to be expected. The Governor's dwelling is tolerably large - by no means elegant - but I understand he designs to make a total alteration. The house in which the Secretary resides is a very fine one considered one of the best and belongs to a M.^r Bennet one of the wealthiest members of the community here. The only other very good house is the post office, which is large and handsome.

In such an out of the way place as Belize I did not expect to find the streets good, nor was I mistaken. They were miserable, unpaved concerns and are rather cart roads than Christian footpaths. I observed a good deal of stagnant water, which no one took the trouble to remove, altho' it totally impeded your progress in that direction and obliged you to make a long detour to gain a certain point. What must be the state of the streets in the rainy season.

The inhabitants of this important town of 350 or 300 houses are principally English, with a large admixture of Blacks, Spaniards and a few Mosquito Indians. I was surprised to see so many black people, many of whom are free and all of them enjoy much comfort and liberty. The Mosquito Indians are a wild savage looking race, but I believe perfectly peaceable.

[Exports] and Climate of Honduras

The chief export, as you must be aware, from Belize is the Mahogany, called the Honduran. This valuable wood is brought, or floated down the River Belize, even as far as 300 or 400 miles from its commencement. The wood-cutters are strong hardy men, who proceed to the heart of the woods at certain seasons, and labour incessantly amidst wet and dry - rain or sunshine, until they have, as they think, cut down sufficiently. The wood season was just beginning, while we were there, and before we left several small rafts had been sent down. There are sometimes thirty or forty sail waiting for a cargo and in scarce or severe seasons many are obliged to return empty. But mahogany is not the only article of exportation - altho it is certainly the principal - there are large numbers of the hawkbill Turtle caught, the shell of which affords what is so well known among us by the name of Tortoise-shell. The price which this article bears generally affords a handsome remunerating return to the fishermen - it is determined by the greater scarcity or plenty of the Turtle, and varies from 5 or 6 dollars a pound to 11 or 12. Besides Mahogany and Tortoise-shell there are several other articles of minor importance, as different dye woods &.^c

The climate of the Honduras is esteemed very healthy, and it is said that West Indians who go thither for their health, speedily recover. The yellow fever & black vomit are unknown, and the most common disease is intermittent fever, which a first might be conjectured to prevail from the marshy nature of the country. The cause of the healthiness of Belize is the circumstance that they have no land breeze which would bring in its train all the noxious vapours and disease spreading particles, which are always generated in a hot climate. The cooling and refreshing sea breeze almost

always prevails, and by its genial influence proves a proficient preservative of the health.

I have now concluded my remarks which I could collect respecting Belize, and there is only one thing which I ought to have mentioned, whilst speaking of the Blacks, and that is, that I for the first saw a company of the 2nd West Indian Reg.^t consisting of Black men. They had a very soldierly appearance, and I am told, show themselves as expert at drill and parade as the best disciplined of our white troops.

Wednesday 16th - the whole of this day was occupied in inspecting the town, and environs - and I could find nothing farther to add to what I have said. At night the Master, Mate and myself were invited to be present at a dance given by a mulatto, and his black wife, named Wilson - and as I was anxious to see as much as possible of the manners and amusements of the people we willingly accepted the invitation. The dance was given in their house, which consisted of one large room which was cleared of every encumbrance to give as much space as possible to the dancers. At 8 o'clock when we arrived we found every thing prepared for eating, drinking, and dancing. On a large sideboard were disposed glasses and bottles containing brandy, Rum, and wine, with abundance of cake to eat. At one end of the room was the band, which I must say was superior to what I had ever expected to see among blacks. It consisted of a flageolet, flute, tambourine, and drum. From all these instruments the performers elicited most excellent music which would not have disgraced many a ball room at home - and no wonder since they had all been in a regimental band. Around the room were placed chairs for us & a few equally privileged persons, and benches for the commonalty or canaille - the large centre space being left open for those who designed to trip it on the light fantastic toe. Shortly after our arrival, the company invited began to assemble - and no sooner was the sound of the drum and the fife heard, discoursing most enlivening music, than the doors, which in this hot climate are obliged to be left open for the admission of air, were blocked up as it were with the bodies of numerous eager spectators who by their involuntary movements of their hands, heads & feet, shewed how much they longed to join the merry throng within. Nay more three or four window places destitute however of glass, which were not far from the ground, were crowded altho I will not say with a galaxy of beauty, but certainly with a galaxy of eager black and brown genial faces.

The dance was opened by what seemed to be a foursome reel, in which the actors displayed much skill and activity - which one would have imagined to have [been] incompatible with the excessive warmth on an atmosphere rendered doubly warm by the breathing of so many human bodies. Then followed a great variety of dances Spanish & English, as the fandango, the Bolero, the waltz and a Quadrille. I confess I was completely taken by surprise, when I saw so much good & elegant dancing performed by negroes & mulattoes - and that moreover they kept the most perfect time to the music. Many of the negroes have come from Jamaica & Barbadoes, there having learnt the English mode, they have communicated it to the native blacks here - and on the other hand so much intercourse taken place with the Spaniards here that the peculiar dances of that nation are equally well known. It is impossible to describe the excessive fondness of the coloured people for this article of amusement - no age is an exception from it - I witnessed the tender infant hardly able to steady its feeble steps, inspired by the music endeavouring to imitate the movements of its mother - and I have seen a very old woman engaged with heart and soul in the enrapturing mazes of the Banjee, and yielding to none of her youngest competitors in activity of feet & buoyancy of spirit. All ages spend night after night in

disallowing the musicians draught of salutatory pleasure without becoming weary of it - and indeed some have confessed that they find it absolutely necessary to fatigue themselves with active exercise ere they can hope to procure any sleep. With such a predisposing or innate love of dancing it may easily be supposed that none were awkward in accepting an invitation to dance at the house where we were. If the room would have allowed it, all would have been moved with the spirit of Terpsichore, and no where would she find more ardent votaries - for it is considered that he or she who can foot it longest, is entitled to claim the merit of being the best dancer. That you may be fully sensible by how severe an act of penance this honour is obtained, imagine yourself to be in a room heated to 120 or 130 degrees of Fahrenheit, there you perspire freely without motion and then imagine how incalculably hotter one must feel when great bodily exertion is made, and that exertion kept up intermittently for the space of an hour. You cannot, I am persuaded, conceive even a distant approximation to such melting heat - unless you were put into an bakers oven for the space of an hour. I myself made the experiments, and performed a few pirouettes in such a place - once and only once did I or shall I say - in a second I was bathed in a perfect float of perspiration - the action of heart was vehement and irregular, and my respiration - impeded and laborious for some minutes - and in short I experienced such a train of uneasy feelings, as to make me more cautions for the future.

In the midst of dancing, eating, drinking, talking and laughing the night wore on and the bell of the Town had chimed the midnight hour ere all the guests and spectators had taken their departure, and we among the rest had bid adieu for a time at Belize and gone on board.

Thursday 17th June - received the Mails on board at ½ past 9 A.M. and started immediately. Weather variable, occasionally squally - wind fresh and against us. At 20 minutes past 6 P.M. came to an anchor off Kay Bokel, which is but a short distance from Belize. This we were obliged to do because the Pilot would not venture to advance during the night, amidst the numerous Keys & reefs, with a foul wind, and an unknown force of current.

Friday 18th June - left our anchorage at 4 A.M. Weather cloudy with squalls and accompanied with rain. Wind unfavourable. At 7 p.m. the Pilot left us, not far from Half Moon Kay.

Saturday 19th - weather cloudy, rainy and squally - foul wind.

Sunday 20th - miserable squally weather with rain. W.^d foul.

Monday 21st - fine weather - foul wind.

Tuesday 22nd - very fine but hot weather - light variable wind and calms. In sight of the island of Cozumel, off Yucatan, which appeared to us very long and low.

Wednesday 23rd - almost a dead calm, there being according to an old song "not a breath of air the blue waves to curl." Weather tremendously hot.

Thursday 24th - a stark calm all day - And yet notwithstanding the current carried us 70 miles to the northward in our favour. In the evening a moderate breeze sprung up,

which tended greatly to allay the dreadful heat by which both mind and body are affected. Caught a shark today.

Friday 25th - beautiful weather - light and favourable breezes.

Saturday 26th - beautiful weather. On the Bank of Campeche and in sight of the low land of Yucatan - very light but favourable breezes until the afternoon, when the wind freshened much.

Sunday 27th - beautiful weather - fresh and favourable breezes.

Monday 28 - much rain in the morning with light winds - but at 10 A.M. the weather cleared up & proved pleasant & cloudy - winds favourable

Tuesday 29th - rainy & cloudy weather which prevented us from seeing the land. Wind favourable and so fresh that we were obliged to shorten sail, as our distance to run to Vera Cruz was short.

Wednesday 30th June - this morning we were not far from our Port, the land in the neighbourhood being very distinctly seen. The weather at first was cloudy but soon cleared up & became very fine. We then saw the celebrated Peak of Orizaba & several other high mountains, of which I shall defer the mention, till our return from Tampico, as we shall then likely remain several days here, and I think it best not to give accounts piecemeal, but consecutively that you may find them more interesting & say nothing of Vera Cruz, its castle &.^c until a residence if some days permits me to throw all my observations into one connected narrative. It however will be sufficient for the present to say, that we arrived at this Port at noon - that M.^f Geach went ashore with the Mail - and that we started from Vera Cruz, without having come to anchor, at 6 P.M. for Tampico.

At this place, a Reverend Gentleman passenger left us, whom we had taken on board at Jacquemel. As he has been so long with us - as he had some peculiarities of character - as he belonged to an order of men, whose character I have always been anxious to investigate, to wit the Popish priesthood - and finally as he communicated to me some particulars of his history, I consider that he is worthy of a page in my Journal, both in his individual & public capacity.

History of L'Abbe Sgiarte

Wenceslaus Michael Antoine Sgiarte had the misfortune to be born in Biscaya, in Spain of a French father, by a Spanish Mother and to spend 18 years of his life as a priest in Bayonne. I say had the misfortune - for in the event of a rupture between the two countries, he would probably be denied the rights of citizenship by his townsmen, and of nationality by his countrymen, in consequence of his long residence among the French: while, on the other hand, the French would look upon him with an eye of coldness and suspicion, founded on the opinion, that a man always prefers his native to his adopted country, and her interests to that of any other, however strong might be the ties of gratitude which might bind him. If I mistake not, the exact place of his birth was Victoria, and there he passed his childhood, boy hood and part of his youth - there he received his education for the priesthood, and from thence, as soon as he had

received the tonsure, and consequently the power of performing all the holy functions of religion, he emigrated to Bayonne in France.

As a priest in charge of a small parish, he resided at this place for 17 or 18 years. By his own account, he spent that long time in great contentment and peace; having a comfortable house, plenty to eat, servants to tend him, and a horse to carry him - beloved by his parishioners - respected by strangers, and discharging his duties to the entire satisfaction of his superiors. In this state of moderate independence & happiness he might have passed all his days, had it not been for an unfortunate circumstance which all at once dashed the cup of joy from his lips and forced him to seek in his latter days a new home and a new flock. If his story is to be credited, I learned from him that the Great little Man in his parish, who is possessed of much wealth and consequently of great influence, wished to arrogate to himself as much dictatorial authority in the matters of the Church, as he exerted in the affairs of civil life. This profane & infamous design the worthy Abbe strenuously opposed - and his opposition, (in which I consider he was perfectly justifiable) brought down upon his devoted head the enmity and ill will of the Lord of the Manor; and these malevolent passions were not locked up within his own breast, but had free and full vent given to them in public and in private, in the Street and in the Church. At length the irritated feelings of opposition operated so far upon the big little Man (big in spirit and pretensions but extremely little in person), that even in the very domicile of the priest he twice collared and shook him like a dog (*conume un chien*). The patience of the Abbe could stand out no longer against this direct insult, and besides his feelings were so completely outraged by the verbal abuse which accompanied the action that, at last regardless of every thing but the suggestions of his inflamed passions, he lifted up his hands and knocked my gentleman down like an ox. I could not at first conceive how he could have knocked him down like an ox, as his own appearance by no means indicated the strength of an Hercules, but he explained the matter by saying that his opponent was a very diminutive puny insignificant hop-o-my thumb and of so delicate a constitution that he was confined to his Chamber for three weeks from the effects of Sgiarte's chastisement.

Well then considering what I have told you of the influence of the Richman, it was not to be expected that such an instance of violence would pass unnoticed or unpunished. Nor was it. An exaggerated account of the assault and its consequences, and an explanation of the offensive words and treatment, which led to it, so softened down and modified as to impress the mind that no provocation had been given, was soon transmitted to the Bishop - who, being but a mere man, decided in favour of friendship riches and influence against poverty, an irreproachable character, and talent well adapted to the discharge of every required duty of the holy function. In other words Monsieur L'Abbe was severely censured, and ordered to resign his parish - since he who could give way to his violent passions, under whatever provocation, was no longer worthy, under him (the Bishop) of being the messenger of that Saviour whose religion is for - tolerance and peace with all men. Many opinions might be entertained with regard to this sentence - some applauding and others highly reprobating its extreme severity - so for my own part - I think it best to say nothing - but this much is certain that the Old Padre was dissatisfied with it and appealed to the Bishop of Paris. This prelate hears his case favourably, and would have used his influence to have him reinstated - but he thanked his Lordship and declared his reluctance to return to a place where he had been so grossly insulted and also his wish to be appointed to some other parish. Not having any vacancies there the good Bishop gave Wenceslaus quarters in some college near Paris & there he remained 14 months.

By this time he had heard from a friend in Hayti, that if he could come thither, he would procure him a parish worth £800. Being disgusted with his treatment in France, and if I may venture to say it, allured by the prospects of so large a stipend, for he was by no means averse to making money, he became very anxious to proceed to this 'El Dorado' and after cogitating how he might accomplish his wish, he went to the Bishop and acquainted him to the desire - whereupon he recommended him to the Minister of the Marine and of the colonies. By him he was most graciously received and a short time afterwards was favoured by a note saying, that no vessels were required to go to Hayti on Government account but that one would sail soon from Brest for Martinique, in which he (the Abbe) would have a passage - and that from Martinique he would easily find the means of being conveyed to S.^t Domingo. Furnished with this letter M.^r Sgiarte went to Brest - was received onboard *atrapport* and sailed for Martinique. There he found no vessel ready to sail for Hayiti - and therefore for his support in the meantime, he engaged to assist another priest in the duties of an extensive parish.

In this situation he found himself very happy & received at the rate of £400 per annum - and had not his mind been filled with the vision of the £800 which awaited him at Port au Prince he would have been content to have remained there. At length a vessel was to sail to S.^t Thomas from which island he could easily pass over to Hispaniola. No persuasions of his friend could induce him to remain, notwithstanding that he assured the Abbe, that if he went to his proposed place, he could not be allowed to return to Martinique. In a few days he arrived at S.^t Thomas, and left it again after fourteen days, in a vessel which carried him safe to Port au Prince the Capital of Hayti. Here his full blown hopes of wealth were destined to be crushed - he did not find his friend and he was under the necessity of enjoying as an assistant to the Vicar General with the rank of a Sub-Vicar General, which he shared with another Spaniard of the name of Ricos. Instead of £800, as he had anticipated, his actual income was much less than what he had enjoyed at Martinique, while at the same time his comforts were much curtailed. Besides, his place was no sinecure, for altho' he was enjoined with two others in the duties of the church, yet being the only one of them who could speak fluently the French, which alone was understood by the people, he had all the drudgery of hearing confession, visiting the sick, and administering the sacraments, while his colleagues merely went thro' the Church service in Latin. The Vicar General was a Columbian - an ignorant pretender, and a scandal to his sacred profession by the irregularity and immorality of his life. Notwithstanding all these drawbacks M.^r Sgiarte would probably have remained but for the ill treatment of the Vicar General, who was moreover a Mulatto.

On one occasion they had to celebrate some high festival, in which the services of all would be required. One was to read the prayers in Latin - another the evangelia, and a third the Lectio in the same language. Now it so happened that there was another priest there, for whom they could find nothing to do - and this person was no less than our old passenger, from Jacquemel to Jamaica, the Abbe Cendra. This Abbe was rather favoured by the Vicar General, who at last proposed, that he should officiate as Master of the Ceremonies. The idea of so young & ignorant a man acting in such a capacity, to such old & experienced Padres as Sgiarte and Rios appeared so farcical that in ridicule the latter suggested that Cendra should be furnished with an official rod, the propiacion [?] which gave great offence. The day at last arrived and the young priest, dressed in his canonicals, soon seized an opportunity of reprimanding his older brethren, till at last Rios told him to hold his peace, and not pretend to teach two who knew much better than himself - Cendra retorted - the other

rejoined and Sgiarte agreeing with his colleague, such a hubbub arose after the service, that all were by the ears together. The Vicar General sided with Cendra against his two Sub-Vicars, and became so warm as to call both the Spaniards vagabonds and thieves, while they in return cast up to him his own immoralities, and the notorious vices of his two brothers. Incensed by meeting with opposition and recrimination, where he had expected to find only the most servile submission, he at once suspended them from their office, and they likewise, altho' they considered such an act to be illegal, refused to officiate. When the Vicar General began to cool and had time to reflect that he had no one to assist him but Cendra, who being almost totally ignorant of the French language could do little. He made certain overtures towards a reconciliation, which were accepted by Rios, but rejected by Sgiarte, who declared that he would never again serve in that church, where his character had been so much lowered, and his usefulness so much abridged by the gross insult offered to him, before the assembled people. The more difficult His Reverence found it to effect a reunion the more eager he became to secure the services of so independent a priest - and to shew his desire for a reconciliation he procured from President Boyer that Sgiarte should be appointed to the small Parish of the Mole, with the promise of a much better one when a vacancy should occur. This preferment also the Abbe contemptuously rejected, tho' already conveyed to him in an official form - and after only three months residence in Port au Prince came to Jacquemel and took his passage with us for Mexico in the hope of obtaining a rich Parish in that land of silver.

I have already mentioned that along with him we received on board the Abbe Cendra, but when I wrote my notice of him, I was ignorant of the cause of his being forced to leave Port au Prince. During our voyage, Sgiarte let me into the secret of the affair - and it was thus. Upon the first breaking out between the Vicar General and Sgiarte, the latter in disgust left the house of the former, where he had hitherto resided, and returned to an Inn, leaving behind him Cendra & Rios not on the best of terms. A few days afterwards Rios visited him, mad with passion, and related that he & Cendra having had some high words, Cendra drew a knife from his side and but for the interference of some persons present, would have murdered him. Sgiarte was not surprised at this story, knowing the passionate & proud character of the young padre - but he lamented the circumstance as he would probably have his company longer than he wished. As he feared, so it happened. Cendra was discharged with disgrace, and, as I have said, left Port au Prince and came with us to Jamaica.

Such is the History and adventures of Wenceslaus Michael Antoine Sgiarte up to the period when he joined us - and of course he has been his own biographer, giving in his own way the various events which befell him and applying to the picture on the canvass his own colours. Now however I shall take up the tale and endeavour to convey to you some idea of the character, which he presented to us during nearly four weeks daily intercourse. But that you may know the person of my hero (for such from the space he has occupied in my Journal he has become, but yet alas how remote from the heroes of Romance) - he was a man 44 years old, about or rather a little under the middle size, with short brown hair intermixed with struggling grey, which was arranged on his forehead, so as alternatively to advance & recede. His eyes were grey and twinkling - & his face and hands much freckled. His dress on shore was very respectable, consisting of a surtout (how unclerical) & trowsers of black Florentine & a black cloth waistcoat - ordinary black hat & invariably a silk umbrella with an ivory handle: There was nothing that bespoke the clergyman & you could not have discovered him to be such for he had also destroyed the mark of the tonsure by allowing his hair to grow over the consecrated place. Again on board he was no ways

particular - generally he went about without any hat, coat or waistcoat & with nothing but his shirt & trowsers on account of the excessive heat.

When, however, he went down to meals, he always paid us the Compliment of putting on his coat, and in the cool of the evening he always wore it together with a silk night cap, from the top of which a tassel of the same material dangled most gracefully. You might also have suspected him of a Jewish liking for a beard, for, if you let him alone, he would be content with shaving once a week - and this I attributed to the difficulty a stranger feels in shaving on board, until he told me, when we happened to discuss the number of times necessary, that it was his custom to do so 3 times a week in Town or country - and no more !!!

Thus have I described the outward man of Monsieur L'Abbe, so as to enable you to see him with your mental eye, and to accompany me satisfactorily in my further description of his deposition and character.

Partly from his mixed descent & partly from his long residence in France; he seemed to possess a disposition, which was allied to the characteristics of both nations and peculiar to none. With the French he was generally lively, talkative and bustling - a stranger to Senussi, and flying like a butterfly from one subject to another. As with them too he was constantly uttering with an air of frivolity "*Diable*" "*Mon Dieu*" &^c and in his whole movements and actions he was ever on the fidgets, now here, now there. If you wanted him, you could never exactly tell where to find him - for if one moment he would be in the after Cabin & in another in the cooks galley - sometimes he would descend the Companion ladder and ascend by the main or fore hatchways. On some occasions he would sit down quietly with us and chat, chat away, and when tired of our company and conversation he would enjoy himself exceedingly with the humours of Jack between decks, where he would be regularly quizzed or [touched ?] without taking offence, as he did not understand one word of English.

Again in some parts of his character he resembled the Spaniard, for sometimes, under the influence of despondency, for which he had some cause as I shall afterwards mention, he lost all his French vivacity, and assumed then the gravity and reserve, tho' not the morbidness of the Spaniard. His native spirit also broke out when relating his history, at some parts of which, his words, his actions, and his whole appearance indicated anew the extremity of rage and the desire of vengeance for the insults he had met with. In his habits he resembled more the grossness of the Biscayans than the polish and cleanliness of the politest people in the world, heaping upon one plate, different meats, and using his fingers in a way disgusting to anyone but a subject of Ferdinand.

In his clerical capacity, if I were asked what was my opinion of him, I should feel much puzzled for an answer. He was neither very learned, not very ignorant - very superstitious, bigoted, nor yet very liberal in his sentiments. I believe that he was fully competent to the discharge of his duties in that church, and would prove, if not a bright, at least a very useful pastor to such a congregation as were truly sincere and persuaded of the truth of their religion, eschewing all discussion of abstruse and doctrinal points. In short I am convinced that he would make an excellent village pastor but no more. For if he were to be called upon to enter the lists against the meaning of his peculiar faith, whether Protestants, Deists, or Materialists, I am truly persuaded that he would be a most unfit champion to uphold the cause of Papistry. I speak this not unadvisedly, or ignorantly, for on various occasions we have had discussions on different religious topics, sometimes introduced by me, sometimes by himself - which discussions however were always conducted with moderation and good feeling. From the arguments employed in these contests with the priest I judge

of his particular abilities. The essence of almost every argument he brought forward was that all things were possible with God, and from this stronghold I could not force him to retreat, and to reason on other grounds. For example, once talking to him of the doctrine of the real presence in the sacrament, I advanced the common objection urged to us to it viz. that Christ could not at one and the same time be sitting at the table with his disciples and actually changed into the bread which he held in his hands. The Abbe at this shrugged up his shoulders and said "all things are possible with God," tho' he readily admitted that the circumstance was [totally/utterly ?] incomprehensible to human reason. Well then, said I, as God is truth, and truth is one and immutable, it is impossible for God to make 2 and One to be six, granting that our ideas of the true power of numbers continue to be unchanged - Yes he replied, as nothing is impossible with the almighty, this also he can do!!! On the subject of modern miracles he urged the same argument - so what can be said of the talents of him who used this as the whole burden of his cause and thereby rendered himself invulnerable to all the shafts of reason & rationality, however skilfully arrived.

Conversing with him of the subject of the holy Virgin, he maintained that she had always remained a virgin, and had never been the mother of any but Christ. He was totally ignorant that Joseph and Mary had a family, and when I pointed out the Chapter and verse wherein the names of the brothers of Jesus are expressly mentioned he seemed much surprised - but said these were adopted children, altho' he could produce no passage, where such adoption is stated or even hinted at. He could give me no other reason for his belief in purgatory, penance, extreme unction, &.^c other Popish ceremonies, than that he thought that the traditions of the Christian fathers & the practices of the Church were established to receive as much credit & observance, as the doctrines established in Holy Writ - and consequently believing this all argument was vain.

The worthy Abbe did not seem [sic] to have attended to much extraneous literature. Once he took one of the most celebrated and most generally read among French authors, Racine to be an Italian - and to a question I asked, he could not even tell me the name of a single one of those reformers, who have nearly caused the total overthrow of his religion. To sum up - his religious character, I consider him to be but an indifferent specimen of the learning and abilities of the Church of Rome and one who had imbibed certain dogmas, not from reason and conviction, but from his mothers milk and a contracted passive education.

All the particulars which I have mentioned above, I, as already stated, I received from Sgiarde himself - but as [he] did not understand one word of English the French and Latin languages were the medium of our conversations. His French was very bad, being a patois or vulgar dialect of Bayonne. When he came to Paris, he did not understand the Parisian dialect, and his lingua was equally unintelligible to them. He spoke very fast and I experienced great difficulty I following him in his sentences. Indeed from my very partial acquaintance with his tongue, - from the rapidity of his utterance, and mispronunciation I desried but little information from that source. Latin therefore was our established medium, and in it I understood him perfectly well. You are not to suppose however, from this, that his fluency was the voice [of] an elegant [?]. Far from it! Being unused for so many years to conversation in that language he has forgot all his syntax, shewing also utter disregard of all tenses, cases, & genders & conjugations. It was sufficient that he put together certain parts of words, by which he wished to express his thoughts - and I found not the smallest difficulty in comprehending him. A little Spanish also assisted us much in our

colloquies - and hence it was no uncommon thing to commence a sentence in French, carry it thro' in Latin and conclude in Spanish. But after all we came on bravely and were mutually satisfied with the successful efforts of each other - he good naturedly laughing at many false French & Spanish, and I at his Latinity - both meanwhile referring ourselves to the Captain, whenever a knotty point, which we could not untie, presented itself.

I have said before that in his disposition the Abbe was sometimes desponding and that he had some cause for it. His object was to obtain a rich settlement in Mexico - and he was dreadfully afraid that the circumstance of his birth would operate as a complete bar to prevent him. You are aware that since the revolution in Mexico and establishment of a republic, all the old Spaniards have been expelled from the country, with the exception of a very few - and that those few are strictly excluded from all official situations. Of course as the Mexicans have indiscriminately expelled the Natives of the old Spain, they are especially careful not to admit them again. - and hence Sgiarte being in this predicament, and coming under this banner, he had very just reason for alarm. How to get over this serious difficulty was the question - he evolved many plans but could resolve upon nothing. What he chiefly depended for concealment was his passport calling him a French priest - several official letters addressed to him as being a Frenchman by naturalization - and his perfect knowledge of the French language. But again, when he conversed in Spanish, he used the pure Castilian accent - and was afraid lest this should lead to his detection. Amidst so many contending reasons, sometimes his fears, sometimes his hopes predominated. He would for the most time repeat to me that he was naturalized in France - and endeavour by so frequent repetition to convince himself, that the same plea would be equally ~~convincing~~ efficacious with others. - then he would begin to give way to fear, and with utter despondency - I tried to keep up his spirits, and succeeded pretty well, until the day of our arrival at Vera Cruz, when he became exceedingly anxious. He went on shore with the Master, from whom when he returned I learned that no difficulty has occurred, to his entrance into Mexico, and that on the strength of his good fortune, he had plentiful libations of wine and strong drinks. This indeed was the greatest failing I observed in the worthy gentleman - and was particularly observable wherever we landed, as at Jamaica, Belize and Vera Cruz. It is probable when we return, I shall see the old Padre again and learn his further prosperity, and I have undertaken to carry a letter to Tampico and he expected an answer.

At 6 P.M. of Wednesday 30th June - we left the harbour of Vera Cruz and made all sail for Tampico.

Thursday 1st July - cloudy but pleasant weather - winds fresh and favourable.

Friday 2nd - at 7 A.M. we came to anchor off Tampico - and the Mail was immediately got ready to be landed. Tampico lay about 6 or 7 miles from our anchorage, and I had no expectation of visiting it - but thro' the kindness of the Captain, I was asked to accompany him, which you be sure I did with pleasure. All things being prepared, we shoved off in the gig, and I was soon all on the "*qui vive*" to observe any thing new. The land on either side of us was very low and covered with trees and the creeping plants of a Tropical climate, very different from the bare sandy appearance of the country near Vera Cruz. Right ahead of us, and at the entrance of the river Tampico, we saw the appearance of a surf breaking high, and the huge waves

as they rolled majestically on, stopped in their even course by some banks. This was the Bar of Tampico, over which there is 15 feet of water only.

Bar of Tampico - Beautiful appearance of the River

When we passed over it, tho' sufficiently alarming, it was in a state of peace, comparable with its appearance in a fresh breeze, or in a storm. I hear it is awfully terrific, with its mountainous billows and tremendous surge. I hear it is attended with eminent danger to attempt to pass thro', many having been lost there, - and if you have advanced rather far and perceived in to be impossible to proceed, you must not on any account try to put your boat about, but keep her head to the waves and back astern - otherwise your destruction is inevitable. The best time for crossing the bar is very early in the morning, before the sea breeze has set in.

But to return we having safely passed this dangerous bar, found ourselves at the commencement of a river, I should think not more than half a mile in breadth, and exchanged turbulence of the bar for the restful calmness, as of pool or pond. At a very short distance up, the Captain stopped for a short time to wait upon the Captain of the Port. This necessary piece of duty being completed we resumed our voyage, which we did for four or five miles more. I was highly delighted with our progress - it was so novel a thing to be sailing on the bosom of a narrow river, with all the peculiarities of river navigation in view. The banks for the most part were lined with trees of good height and size - occasionally you came to a part rather naturally destitute of trees or deprived of them by the hand of man. Sometimes the ground was elevated - sometimes low - sometimes both banks presented the same appearance, at other parts the one wooded & high, the other low - bare. Nor were the devious courses of the river less pleasing, which brought before us new and different scenery. If instead of its numerous and irregular meanderings or winding, it had been straight as the flight of an arrow, a great part of its beauty would have been lost from the tree lined uniformity.

Plenty of Alligators Sharks &.^c - Reach Tampico

Another source of pleasure and gratification of my curiosity was the innumerable tribe of animals which we saw disporting themselves in and out of the water. Here were alligators of immense size, lifting their monstrous heads and bodies above the water as if to espy, who it was that dared to disturb them in their native element, and perhaps to look out if they could obtain their revenge upon the invaders by devouring them all whole. Not far from these another enemy to man, and far more dangerous was just visible - the voracious shark, with his dorsal fin constantly raised above water, followed in the wake of our boat, preceded by the faithful pilot fish. Truly, however pleasant and laudable it is to view these inhabitants of the deep preserved in museums, it cannot but cause a cold shudder to come over you, to think what might be your probable fate, should you fall over board by accident, or the boat be capsized by a sudden squall, as nearly happened to me in returning. In such an event you have but very little chance of escape, as the whole river swarms with them.

Much more, sincere and safe was our pleasure in beholding the various specimens of the feathered and winged creation. Numerous birds of beautiful plumage hovered among the woods and the whole banks covered with the long necked & legged stork. Countless butterflies also crossed our path - and I sincerely declare that I had no previous conception of the large size and incalculable variety of these insects.

All the colours, both simple and compounded found their counterpart in one or other of them - and some as to size, seemed as large as birds at a distance. The Painter might find in the different combinations of light and shade some new ideas for disposing of his colours and the poet many similes adapted to express elegance and beauty.

With so many new and beautiful objects to attract my attention, I was not sensible of the slightest ennui, during our close progress to Tampico. At last reached our landing place, disembarked, and proceeded with the Mail to the house of M.^f Crawford, the British Consul established here. In him I found a countryman, being a native of Port Glasgow and a relative of D.^f Wishart of Edinburgh. From him and his lady I received much attention, and lived and messed at his house all the time I was on shore.

Account of Tampico - Its Products

The Town of Tampico, of which I shall now proceed to give you a very imperfect account, from observations made two days ago, is situated on the right bank of the River. It is not of more than 7 years date, and from its considerable size and increasing population presents a most memorable proof of the rapidity of growth in cities, where great advantages in trade hold out inducements to settle. The present is not the original site of Tampico, which was indeed almost opposite on the left bank, where you can still observe the traces in the shape of huts and ruined houses. The cause of this removal was the greater facility of trade, and a more elevated stance. Where Tampico now stands, vessels can discharge close to the wharf, and if I might venture to offer an opinion, in respect both of health and utility the change is decidedly for the better. There is little doubt, but that, if we judge, from the progress made in the short space since its foundation, and suppose this to go on increasing, Tampico will soon be ushered into importance and become one of the very first marts in Mexico This will more probably be the case, since it is proposed to have a steamboat, which will convey in a very short time the produce of the interior of the country for near 200 miles (the extent of the river as navigable) as I was told. Should the experiment succeed, its success will naturally encourage several other similar speculations and thus by means of a fine river, & a rapid conveyance, an increasing inter-change of produce will [be] the consequence, and Tampico from its situation will naturally be made Emporium of commerce between Mexico and foreign parts.

I can not exactly describe what effect the appearance of Tampico produced upon me, and at first if asked what I thought of it could hardly have given an answer. After I had been there two days, and traversed the Town several times, I said to myself what is [it] like to? I can give you no better idea of the opinion I have formed of it than as saying that it seemed to me to resemble a watering place which it has just become fashionable to frequent. And before it becomes a populous place where no relics of its primeval poverty and simplicity remains. To explain myself better, Tampico contains a great number of neat commodious houses, the stores or habitations of the richer and more respectable class of society. Close to these, and in many bye lanes are the poor miserable wigwams of the indigent, contrasting powerfully with the better habitations, as the comfortable country boxes of the gentlemen - frequenting the waters, so with the small confined abodes of the villagers. I do not think that I was every so much pleased with any place of the same size as I was with Tampico. In general the houses (that is the better sort) consist of one story, built of stone, faced with white plaster, and having flat roofs, with numerous gutters for the escape of the rain. Of these there

are whole streets, uniform, neat and clean, which with few exceptions for the store houses of the merchants here. Almost all the doors are, as I mentioned with regard to Carthagena, are large and covered first with tin and afterwards painted green. Very few of the houses have two flats - and I think only one has three. The latter is not yet completed: it is in the English style, and has windows raised above the sloping roofs, as in York Place.

Progress of Building - People - Amusements at Tampico

As a remarkable contrast you can see the huts of the poor, which are merely boughs of trees or stakes driven into the ground & interwoven with pliant shrubs, and thro' the interstices, the wind and the rain can drive at pleasure - the one of which is an inappreciable benefit in so hot a climate the other a great evil. The roofs of these huts are securely protected from the weather by being well thatched with the broad leaved of the palmetto. It is probable that these miserable habitations will soon be forced to be cleared away, to make room for ones more elegant and imposing. Every day new houses are being commenced - and so rapid hitherto has been the growth of the Town that the stumps of trees are still left unrooted up, and hardly more than one or two streets have any thing like a foot pavement.

There are no fine public buildings, as you may readily imagine. The Church is a decent homely building. The custom house so so, and the jail apparently small, which speaks something in favour of the good conduct of 6000 or 7000 inhabitants. There is also a billiard room.

Very few of the People are perfectly white, and these consist chiefly of foreigners, as Englishmen Americans and French. The generality have the slight Indian cast of countenance, or softened down by the admixture of Spanish blood. I did not see more than a very few negroes. The dress is the same as among us, with the exception that almost all here wear the ~~Jaquet~~ Jacket and seldom the long coat except on occasions of ceremony. The Tampicans may be considered a fine race of men, among whom I saw some whose well defined thews and sinews would make them a valuable study to the sculptor or the painter. The common class are very indolent and never work, unless when necessity compels them - and even after all, the moderate labour of one day will procure them the means of subsistence for a whole week, as their wants are few and their pleasures simple. They have few or no amusements - and as far as I could remark, the dance & gambling are the only legitimate ones. I had an opportunity of witnessing a weekly meeting for the purpose of enjoying the fandango. It was Saturday and I was struck with the sight of a small red flag, hoisted on a flag staff above the roof of one of the better sort of poor houses. I asked the meaning of it, and was told that Saturday night it was customary to give this public intimation, where a fandango was to take place. I immediately determined to be present, if possible, and accordingly, at proper time I went accompanied by the Clerk of Crawford, who of course was quite familiar with such things. If what I saw had not been somewhat different from the same kinds of meeting I had already seen, I would [have] passed my visit to it over in silence - but as there's some difference I shall endeavour to give you some idea of it. I found a very large assemblage indeed collected - I should imagine several hundreds - and amidst so large a multitude the utmost order and propriety prevailed. To speak correctly, there were two collections of people, each differently employed in gambling & dancing.

Description of Gambling at Tampico

Among the first of these were placed a great tables, with all the implements of Gambling as dice, balls &.^c On each on the tables was placed one or more lights, and a square box of 5 or 6 inches in depth & filled with shining tinsel and having a glass over all. On this glass at one end was painted in six compartments, 6 cards with one, 2, 3, 4 &.^c marked on them and represented by the figures of dice. At the other end of the glass next the proprietor was exhibited a tempting heap of glittering dollars, which the simple gull was made to believe would soon be transferred to his pocket, if he would only try his luck. The principle of the game was exceedingly simple, and the gain or loss depended upon the chance of the die. You had only to put what you liked upon any of the six cards - and when this had been done, the dicer, after an appropriate invitation to more to try their fortune, rattled his box and announced the number of three dice - of which there were three - and if the turn up should be two or three of the same number, upon which you had staked your money, you would then receive double or triple the amount of your stake. Of course, as in all these games of chance, a decided advantage was on the side of the proprietor - the number of dice permitting him to have a double chance of success. Of such tables as I have described there were 7 or 8 - and besides these, there were two of a very superior pretensions and where the stakes, instead of being *rial medios* (3.^d) *rial* (6.^d) or *half a dollar*, as at the former, were *dollars*, 2 or 6 *dollars*. Here too all was chance, and I am not sure but that their might have been some underhand deception. It consisted of a circular sloping table, and along the slope were a dozen hollow tubes of tin, proceeding from the centre like the radii of a circle. One person, after all had staked took eight small balls and threw them round the table with a rotary motion. Some of these passing right between the spaces of the hollow tubes, fell into a pool in the centre, while others, acted upon by the powers of gravity dropped into the open mouths of these tubes. According to the number of ball thus caught, whether they were even or odd, you gained or lost - that is, if you had risked any sum upon the evens, you lost if the number was odd & vice versa. Over these two tables was a net & fanciful canopy, from the interior of which was suspended a handsome light.

All these gambling tables were much frequented, and the fruits of days & weeks labour squandered in a few hours. The excitement which gambling invariably & necessarily produces, possessed more attractions than the slow and measured steps of the fandango. Here in a small scale was exhibited all the eagerness and interest, which mark the play of those who put their large fortunes on the throw of the dice - here among the distant Mexicans you can see the same excessive joy in success and the same overwhelming despair, when utter ruin stares them in the face, as with Us, but still you see these passions in a modified degree.

Fandango at Tampico

Passing thro' the dense and highly interested crowd of Gamblers, we came to the place where the brown sons and daughters of Tampico footed it slowly to the music of a guitar, a flageolet, and a rude drum. There a large circle was formed of benches upon which were seated almost solely a most numerous, decent, and quiet congregation of women - behind whom again crowds of male spectators of the dance were standing. The centre of this circle was occupied by 10 or 12 couples, who went thro' the steps of the fandango, much to their own and the satisfaction of the beholders. When one set had finished they were succeeded by a fresh and in this manner the amusement would be kept up till far in the morning. To give light to this

assembly, three large candles, covered with proper glass covers to prevent them from being blown out, were suspended from a _____, which crossed the circle - and these lights were furnished by the keeper of a public house, who found his advantage for this expense in the increased sales of his liquors by the thirsty dancers. After remaining a very short time, I left the place, most pleasingly impressed with what I had seen.

Excessive Heat - Mosquitoes at Tampico

Tampico, even in its present situation is accounted very unhealthy - and great numbers die every year. This is owing to the excessive heat and the presence of extensive marches near to it, together with heavy rains. Of the excessive heat, I can speak with feeling from personal experience. Once or twice I left the cool and open gallery in M.^r Crawford's to traverse the town, amidst the scorching heat of a midday sun. At first, so strong was the glare and reflected heat, that I felt oppressed with faintness, and could not for a few moments keep my eyes open. I did not prolong my walk far - but soon returned with a determination in future to confine my peregrinations, till the cool of even time should permit me to perform them with pleasure. As for the unhealthiness of the place, I luckily experienced none but enjoyed perfect health - both eating & sleeping well.

Often the heat of the atmosphere does not cease with the departure of the sun, for when there is no sea or land breeze, you find little relief from the approach of evening. Then the oppression in the small houses is insupportable even to the natives who as a remedy bring out a simple pallet & pillow or even a movable bed, and spread these out in the open air and even in the midst of the street. They cannot even bear the weight of a sheet - but retain merely their light trousers & shirts - and entirely take their chance of being deluged with rain for the present comfort which they feel. And when the cooling breeze would permit poor mortals to enjoy exemption from heat and sweet repose, another enemy appears to torment. I mean the mosquitoes, which are small flies, whose numbers are immense and whose annoying buzzing and stings are dreadful. In every place where they bite, they leave a smart, and soon inflammation taking place, a tumour of the size of a small pea is produced. If you have suffered much during the day or evening, the intolerable itching which is the consequence will make sleep a stranger to your couch, and next morning awake with a harassed mind & unrefreshed body. You may consider yourself fortunate if you escape with a few marks, say 40 or 50 - but very often, the bites of these pests are so numerous that you can hardly put a pin head between them. In this case your arms and legs swell - your eyes are completely bunged up, and the rest of your face and neck puffed up like a patient ill of emphysema. Some degree of inflammatory fever frequently attends which of itself prevents all sleep or enjoyment. Last ~~year~~-time our Steward suffered so much that he could only advance by crawling on his hands and feet - and at present ~~most~~ one or two of our boats crew, by their frequent and furious scratching and clawing, would lead you to suppose, that they were labouring under an inveterate itch.

For my own particular part I escaped pretty well with only a few favours - which is the more fortunate for me, as the mosquitoes are either more fond of or more virulent against newcomers, than against natives or long residents. In the day I kept them at a distance, when I saw them - and in the night, they might have attacked me with impunity and disturbed my sleep, had I not been protected by a mosquito curtain, of very thin gauze, and completely enveloping the bed. Such an article is

indispensable in hot climates, however strange it may appear to us.

Leave Tampico for the Ship

I spent two days very agreeably on shore, during which we had fine weather and generally a breeze. I would have remained at Tampico for three more, had not ~~illness of our Steward~~ I been called on Sunday morning the 4th July to see our Steward, at the place where he had slept all night. I found him labouring under the hot stage of fever, peculiar to the country and I recommended that he should immediately be conveyed on board. On board then I went and remained there till the Captain came onboard with the Mail. On Sunday the morning was very rainy and we were unfortunately caught in the deluge on our way to the ship. The afternoon was fine.

Monday 5th July - same kind of weather, as also on Tuesday 6th. At 3 P.M. of this day, the Capt.ⁿ came on board, and we were fully occupied in taking out of the shore boats and stowing away in our own vessel, a freight of about 325000 dollars, till 9 P.M., when a little breeze having sprung up, we set sail for Vera Cruz.

Wednesday 7th - nearly a calm all day, that, in consequence of a strong current setting to the Northward, we were carried far out of our way. In the afternoon the lead was tried and soundings in 40 or 50 fathoms, found. Immediately all the lines and hooks in the vessel were put into requisition - and we were well rewarded with upwards of 30 large red fish, averaging 10 or 12 lbs each, and of excellent flavours.

Thursday 8th - pleasant weather - moderate but unfavourable breeze.

Friday 9th - fine weather - light and unfavourable wind, with a strong current setting us back.

Saturday 10th - fine weather - winds moderate but foul.

Sunday 11th - d.^o weather and wind - land in sight, low and completely sandy.

Monday 12th - fine weather - wind still foul. The current has carried us 30 miles out of our course since yesterday.

Tuesday 13th - unsettled weather - wind variable with calms.

See a Waterspout

Wednesday 14th July - calm all night. Disagreeable squally weather. During almost the whole day we had a deluge of rain with sudden shiftings of the wind. Not far from us was one of those phenomena, so common in these parts, viz. an immense waterspout. Altho' I had seen them before, I had never had an opportunity of contemplating one so large and so near to me. Its base seemed much broader than the body of the pillar (for such was the form of the spout), which indeed passed towards the other extremity. This difference of breadth was produced by the descent of a stupendous volume of rain continual and heavy, which spread diffusively and created a horrible turmoil resembling the bubbling, but on a magnificent scale, of boiling water. From this base arose almost perpendicularly the body of the waterspout. It might be, to our

view, about 20 or 30 feet in circumference, and was composed of the globules of rain succeeding each other so fast as to form a continued but small stream about the size of a cord - at least it appeared to me, as if I could perceive that the jets of water were distinct and separate, composing en masse the pillar. The upper extremity of the spout, which originated at an immense height in the clouds, assumed a form conical gradually attenuated, and bent considerably from the perpendicular, until it was lost in the dark mass of clouds which were sailing awfully and majestically above. The spectacle was at once grand and exceedingly interesting to me - and I imagined to myself what a splendid effect would result if the arch of a brilliant rainbow could be made to traverse the spout - when then we would see the various colours still more gloriously reflected, and seeming to dance and be alive with instinct, with the rapid motion of the rain drops. Such were my first thoughts - but to change the old proverb a little, second thoughts were widely different. According to an ancient part "*Suave mari magno, turbantibus.*" i.e. tis delightful to see objects and spectacles of grandeur and sublimity, when you are in no danger of suffering from these qualities - but suppose the case to be reversed, and immediately all our perceptions of abstract sublimity are deadened in the soul, which is now alive only to the imminency of the peril, which threatens it from the Avalanche, the Volcano, the Earthquake, & the Shipwreck. So was it with us. In a few moments the wind acted upon the water spout, and carried it to and fro without breaking it. At first its direction was uncertain but at last it began to move with great rapidity towards us - and had it broken over our decks, as would have been the events from the passage of so large a body as our vessel thro' it I think that our destruction would have [been] inevitable, because so vast a volume of water must have sunk us at once or we would have been involved in its vortex, and be lost. To prevent the threatened danger, the Capt.ⁿ gave orders to keep the ship away, and a loaded musket to be ready to be fired, as in general the sound of a gun or cannon is the readiest & most efficient way of dispersing these spouts - and this, I imagine is caused by the great vibration of the air separating the connection of the drops, and breaking them. As it was the first precaution of keeping away was sufficient. It followed us for some time but at last, taking a contrary course, was soon lost to view.³

Thursday 15th July - weather very unsettled - nearly a calm all day and when we had wind it was variable.

Friday 16th - fresh and nearly favourable wind in the morning - calm all the forenoon - and a very fresh and favourable breeze in the afternoon. In the evening wind changed against us. Fine w.^r Land in sight, high & mountainous.

Saturday 17th July - calm and fair wind alternately all day. Very fine weather - High land in sight with several distinct and lofty mountains.

Sunday 18th - got a fresh and favourable breeze this morning, which continued all day. Passed along the coast which in some parts was elevated, and others very low. Anchored in front of Vera Cruz at 2.30 P.M. a 12 days passage from Tampico or 7 times as long as it took to go to that place. Weather cloudy and pleasant with occasional showers.

³ It's intriguing that throughout his observations James perceived the column of the waterspout to be descending, not ascending.

A few hours after we came to anchor, M.^f Bariere, whom we brought from Tampico went on shore - he was a young man of 30 or 31, a native of Toulouse, and at present a merchant in Mexico the Capital of the Republic. He was what you may call a pleasant, if not a very instructive mess mate - and as he spoke pretty good English we had many conversations with him. In the course of one of these I learned that in his earlier years he had attended a theological seminary for 5 years, being intended by his fond father for no less than a Cardinal. As is often the case and outward excess of religion, where the heart and affections had no share, produced in the mind of young Bariere first a dislike to his intended profession, and afterwards, when he had mixed much with the world, a total disbelief in religion at all. In short he became a materialist, and proved the truth of an well known observation, that there is but one step from fanaticism to Infidelity.

Mons.^f Bariere has been 7 years in Mexico, and during that time has if we may believe a Materialist, experienced immense losses, as well as gained very large profits from different speculations. He has come from Mexico to Vera Cruz to make a purchase of some articles, which are more wanted there and expects to make very handsome returns. However much he lost by his rejection of religion he certainly gained no equivalent from the spirit of philosophy or reason - for he bore very ill the petty evils of our short voyage - and was least of a philosopher, when most preaching about the dictates of philosophy.

Go on shore at Vera Cruz - Meet Mon.^s Sgiarte

Monday 19th - wet morning but fine day. Went ashore to see the Town and fell in with our old friend Mons.^f L'Abbe Sgiarte, who showed himself exceedingly attentive and accompanied me wherever I wished to go. I was curious to know how his affairs were coming on and in answer to my inquiries he related the following particulars. That very shortly after his arrival, several evil designing persons stirred up an inquiry concerning him, which led to his being ordered to quit the country as an old Spaniard. The Abbe immediately waited upon the French Consul and shewed him his documents of naturalization. Upon this the Consul took his part and insisted that he should be allowed to remain in the Republic as a subject of France. No further proceedings took place - Sgiarte was engaged as assistant of the celebration of the mass in the principal Church - and this he continued to do for 15 days. At the end of that time a letter was received from the Mexican Minister, requiring him to transmit all his papers to the Bishop, who would determine upon them. When I saw him he had already sent his papers and was in the daily expectation of an answer. In the meantime he was interdicted from celebrating mass until the final decision of his case should be made known to him. He seemed to be very doubtful of success but said that if he were permitted to reside here he could make a good sum by teaching supposing that he should be prevented from officiating as a priest.

During nearly the whole day we paraded the streets - popped into very pleasant churches, convents, shops &^c and finished by going to his *Sanctum sanctorum* in a Convent of the Franciscan Order - there we rested ourselves after intervals broiling in the rays of a midday sun - and partook of some refreshments. After this the old Padre accompanied me on board to see our Captain, and remained till 5 P.M. when he went ashore. Having understood that there was to be an exhibition of fireworks at some religious fete, the Master - Mate and myself went on shore. Under the guidance of our old French passenger, who was intimately acquainted with the Town, we soon

reached the Church, where the Fete was to take place. We found there a large assembly of people in the streets, chiefly of the common order, and the interior of the Church where certain religious ceremonies were a-performing, crowded to the door with females alone, who were all on their knees. The Church was splendidly lighted up, shewing every object to advantage. While we were there they were chanting some psalms, the first part being given out by a priest with a loud & finely tuned voice, who was then answered by the united voices of all the females - and thus an effect was produced both solemn & pleasing.

Fete at Vera Cruz

As if utterly regardless of the sacred service performed in the Church, the canaille outside were enjoying themselves to the full noise and fun the orders of the night. Large barrels set on fire cast a light around, almost equal to noon day, while numerable squibs were thrown about. The whole was concluded by a figure in the shape of a male bull, which was composed of fireworks. Underneath it was a man, who ran up & down with it on his head, and endeavoured to make the actions of an enraged animal. I must confess that the exhibition, altogether was a very poor one to my sight - but was highly applauded by the people. This is the first time, I believe, that I have been witness of the combination of devotional exercise with amusement, which even now forms so marked a feature of the Catholic religion, and I felt persuaded that all the beneficial impressions produced on the mind by the solemnity of religion are liable to be subverted & effused by so immediate transition, if I may so express myself, from heavenly thoughts, to the vanities of earth.

Description of Vera Cruz

I shall now proceed to fulfil the promise which I made when last at Vera Cruz, of giving you some account of that city - but I must necessarily be brief and imperfect since instead of having 5 or 6 days to remain there, our stay was limited to 24 hours.

Long before you come in sight of Vera Cruz there are three remarkable objects, which attract your attention, and which serve as landmarks to vessels bound for that port. To the Southward and Eastward you perceive a mountain of moderate elevation which is Volcanic, and emits a strong effluvia of sulphur. This is called the Volcano of *Tuxtla* and is still in active operation at intervals. Again to the Westward of Vera Cruz two immense high mountains are visible viz. the *Pico Orizaba*, and the *Coffre de Pirote*. The former of these is 17,371 feet, and the latter is 13,514 feet above the level of the sea. Heights exceeding that of the far famed Peak of Teneriffe. Both these mountains are volcanic, but they have not been in a state of inflammation for a considerable period. The appearance of *Orizaba* is beautiful, its shape being that of a nearly perfect cone. Its summit or cap, looks black, and a little below is the region of eternal snows. In clear weather it is seen at a[n] immense distance, and when you are in the Harbour of Vera Cruz, you would imagine yourself to be close at hand to it - altho' in reality it lies 80 miles inland, when the clouds of whitest hue form themselves into a crown around the centre, leaving the superior portion prominently elevated in the air. The *Coffre de Pirote*, tho' very high, by comparison seems as nothing - it does not taper to an extremity, but it broad all the way, and its distance inland is about 53 miles.

Such are the grand objects which you descry when approaching Vera Cruz, and the contemplation of their magnitude & grandeur but ill prepares to entertain a high

opinion of Vera Cruz. From them the translation is too great to a low sandy beach, with old looking houses and is the nature of the country around Vera Cruz. The access to Vera Cruz is very difficult and dangerous from the numerous reefs and shoals, which surround it, particularly to the Eastward, and when entering the Harbour, vessels pass to the Westward of the Town, where the entrance is safe & open from the sea.

The City is of a semicircular form, with a sandy beach on either side. It is surrounded by a wall of moderate height, and defended at each extremity by strong forts. But the chief defence of Vera Cruz is the very strong castle of *San Juan de Uloa*- which lies to the East end of the town, and commands it and the whole harbour. It is built on a small island, and it is said is mounted with 300 pieces of cannon - and if these were properly manned and served, it would be impossible to capture it. During the late war between Spain and Mexico, the Mexicans were unable to dispossess the old Spaniards, who were in the occupation of the castle, by force, and they only succeeded after a considerable time by the sure operation of starving them out. I doubt not but that the greatest part of the difficulty lay in the inefficiency & insignificance of the means which the Mexicans employed - and I dare say, that had the castle been battered by British cannon, it would have yielded in a much shorter period. At present, tho' they have reason to expect an invasion on the part of Spain, it has only 100 artillerymen & a few regulars - because their army is in such a wretched condition, that they cannot do more. Upon the castle is an excellent revolving light, and behind it is the best place you can anchor in, since it is only there you can be safe from the North wind which at certain seasons blows with tremendous force and destroy[s] every vessel in the Harbour which is not sheltered from it.

Vera Cruz is a city of no very great extent, and has fallen off from its former importance, when the capital of the Province of La Vera Cruz, and a great mart of merchandise from all parts of the world. Its very aspect ~~tells~~ expresses the character of age - the houses are crumbled, and covered with the livery of time. Compared with its size, you are struck with the numerous domes, spires, and square towers, which project beyond the general mass of the buildings - and these expressively shew you what ample provision has here been made for the public services of religion in Churches and the accommodation of recluses in convents & nunneries. All these too are time-worn - not one of them is visible which you could pronounce had been laid under a century. Your opinion as to the antiquity of the place is confirmed, when you land at an old shattered pier, and have a close view. The encircling walls and the ancient portals, under which you must pass to enter the city, smack of age - being black and mouldy. Over the gateway you perceive numerous perforations, which were made by the Spaniards from the castle of *San Juan de Uloa*, when they made this their firing mark. Soon as [you] pass the gate you find yourself in the City, and if traverse it all over, you will discover, that the principal streets are broad all paved, with an excellent footpath. The bye streets or lanes are very good indeed and on the whole Vera Cruz presents the best appearance of comfort in the streets of any town I have yet seen. In many of them, however, the grass is growing ungrubbed and all around, & inside of the walls the rank weeds flourish luxuriantly & unchecked indicating with many crumbling houses the progress of age and decay. The houses are of stone and in general are excellent. I was told that there was only one parish Church, and that all the other domes & spires indicated the situation of convents and nunneries. This church I visited along with the Old Padre. It was of large size and handsome within, containing besides our saviour, the shrines of many saints. I was rather disappointed in my preconceived ideas of magnificence - you would call it superb, but I who had seen

much finer hardly cast a glance on the immense candle sticks & vessels of silver, which were displayed in abundance. This Church is especially dedicated to our Saviour, who is represented larger than life, as a black Indian, with long lank hair, suspended on the cross - and close to the cross is another representation of him as lying in the tomb. I think I mentioned in my Brazil Journal, that I had met with a negro Christ - but I had never seen the same reason assigned for the strange transformation, as I [found] here, contained in the following inscription *Haud factus taliter omni nationi*. i.e. not represented in the same manner by all nations. In this Church our old friend the Padre Sgiarte officiated for 15 days, and such is the rarity of properly qualified priests, that his service[s] were a valuable acquisition. It was the great policy of the Spaniards to keep up their influence by filling the vacancies in the Church with the natives of Old Spain. The natural consequences of such a plan was, that when the Mexicans came to the revolution of expelling all belonging to the Mother Country, the convents & churches were suddenly deprived of their religious members - and too short a period has elapsed to enable them to supply the deficiencies. As an instance of this, I may tell you that I found L'Abbe Sgiarte domiciled in the very large convent of S.^t Francisco, which might contain upwards of 50 or 60 brethren - and yet besides himself there was only one superior and one solitary monk. There was similar fallings off among the other orders - and I was told that there was no anxiety expressed to have their complement completed.

I shall only add to this very imperfect description of Vera Cruz, that from its sandy beach and neighbouring marshes it is extremely unhealthy and frequently visited by that most dreadful of all diseases the *vomito prieto* or black vomit. But what will not the desire of gain lead men to encounter - one generation is cut off after another - and still the vacancies are filled by a constant succession of new settlers, who heedless of the fate of their predecessors pursue their own speculations as cheerfully as if they possessed an antidote against the general malady.

Leave Vera Cruz

Tuesday 20th July - having received all our freight on board (amounting in all to 700,000 dollars) we left Vera Cruz at 9 A.M. light winds with thunder, lightning and rain. Fine afternoon with moderate and pretty favourable wind. Land in sight all day.

Wednesday 21st - fine weather - calm all night and day till 2 o'clock when an unfavourable breeze sprung up. Land in sight which appears high.

Thursday 22nd - calm all day till 4 P.M. at which time a light and pretty favourable breeze got up - land in sight, which was the mountain of San Martin and adjacent country. Weather very fine but very hot.

Friday 23rd July - very fine weather - calm all morning, till we had the sea breeze at 11 A.M. Land in sight.

Saturday 24th - very fine weather - moderate breezes in the morning - calm in the forenoon & favourable wind in the afternoon.

Sunday 25th - very fine but exceedingly hot weather, light and variable winds nearly favourable.

Monday 26th – very cloudy weather – wind fresh and favourable until towards evening when it became variable and moderate with a head sea.

Tuesday 27th – at 3 A.M. we were overtaken in one of those sudden tornados which you often meet with in these latitudes. Very cloudy weather. Fresh but unfavourable breezes with heavy sea.

Wednesday 28th – cloudy but pleas.^t weather – strong unfavourable breezes.

Thursday 29th – changeable weather. Wind variable with squalls. Land in sight.

Friday 30th – fine weather all day – evening cloudy – wind variable. Land in sight low and sandy.

Saturday 31st – very fine weather – wind moderate and variable, nearly favourable till night, when we had to tack about from the land.

Sunday 1st August – very fine but hot weather. Nearly a calm till 2 P.M. when a favourable but light breeze sprung up and continued till 9 P.M.

Monday 2^d – very fine weather – calm till morning at 9 A.M. we got a light & favourable breeze from seaward which carried near the land then the land breeze began, but unfortunately fell away, so that we had a calm all night.

Tuesday 3rd - it being a calm in the morning out men employed themselves successfully (as they had done for several mornings past) in fishing on the bank of Campeachy. No sooner was the line down than it was requisite to draw it in with a fish at the end, so that in a very short time, we had more fish than we knew what to do with - and we were obliged to throw away a large quantity as in this hot region nothing could preserve them. James Rowe caught the strangest fish that ever was seen at the end of a hook, viz. a large Turtle of about 400 lbs weight [335 *lbs* – in the margin] - which it is supposed had been hooked in the breast as the line dragged along the ground. It was strange that such an immense body should have been held so long by so slight a hold and that it should not at once have broken hook & line and all. But imagine that as he felt the pain of the hook, when the line was tautened, he followed it of his own accord, till he came to the surface of the water, where he was secured with ropes and hoisted on board.

About 11 A.M. we had a moderate breeze which had we been more to the Northward would have carried us on well but being near the land we were forced to tack about - go to the Northward. Fine weather all day. Evening cloudy with occasional rain.

Wednesday 4th August – cloudy weather with occasional showers – Wind very variable in strength and direction. From the appearance of the water we are suddenly within the influence of a current.

Thursday 5th – by observation this morning it was found that the current had been setting strongly to the Northward and Westward, so that when we had expected to be

far to the Eastward we were badly deceived. Very fine weather. Moderate and unfavourable breezes.

Friday 6th – weather generally fine occasionally cloudy with rain. Found ourselves today within the influence of the current at the rate of 2½ miles per hour. Wind fresh and favourable.

Saturday 7th – cloudy, hazy weather - wind first part of the day fair - in the evening foul. At 9 this morning the island of Cuba came in sight, and we continued coasting along all day. Land partly high partly low, but on account of the haziness not very distinctly seen. At night we were only a short distance from Havana, which we could have reached in an hour, but the favourable sea breeze ceased, and was succeeded by that from the land, which obliged us to lay off and on all night.

Sunday 8th August - at 4 A.M. we were close to the Morro or Castle of Havana, and owing to the very rare circumstance of the land breeze continuing all day, it was not until 2.30 P.M. when we saw that all chances of a change of wind was vain, that we came to anchor close to the Castle. Immediately afterwards the Master was sent up to the Town for water, and I accompanied him. He was ordered to wait upon the Admiral (or Commandante of Marine) to present our Commander's compliments and request the favour of being supplied with water. When we reached the House, we delivered our message thro' means of one who understood English and were told that the Admiral was asleep - taking his siesta, and that it would be best to wait upon him after the lapse of two hours. Accordingly at the end of that time we returned - but there being no one who spoke English, we were only laughed at for our attempt to explain our wishes and at last were compelled to go in search of a M.^r Smith, who acts as interpreter to the Admiral. After a great deal of search, we could not find him and thinking it useless to waste more time, we returned on board. There all was activity - the captain had altered his intention of remaining at his present anchorage and determined to warp up to the City. Darkness came on before the operation could be fully completed - and what remained to be done was left until day light next morning. W.^r cloudy with occasional showers.

Description of Havana

Monday 9th August - at 4 A.M. I went onshore with the Steward's mate (the Steward himself being confined by a fracture of the ribs) to see the vegetable & flesh Markets at Havana. I was much pleased with [the] excellence and abundance of the different articles - but they were, with a few exceptions rather dear. You could procure green peas, turnips, potatoes, onions & indeed most European vegetables - besides several others, the growth only of a tropical climate. The flesh market was also well supplied with good beef &.^c and both markets were crowded with buyers and sellers from the earliest dawn of day till 7 or 8 in the morning. The place itself is large but paltry, not at all corresponding to the elegance, which you might expect in so large and populous a city as Havana. Having completed all the necessary purchases we returned to the Packet, which now lay a long distance from the Morro & opposite the Town. During the whole day, I was off & on - and indeed was so much occupied with my private affairs, as to leave myself but little time to perambulate the streets and look around more. Such observations however, as I did make, I shall now submit to your attention.

Havannah, the Capital of the island of Cuba, is a place of great strength, and equal importance. When Spain was Master of Mexico &.^c it was considered the key to their possessions there, and every means were taken to fortify it in the strongest possible manner. A very narrow access leads you into the Harbour, and this entrance is completely commanded by two very strong forts on each side - by the Morro on the East, and the Punta on the West. No number of ships would have the hardihood to advance to the town in the face of such formidable dangers - and their only chance would be first to silence these batteries before attempting any thing further. But again supposing that these forts have been destroyed success is far from being certain - for a little beyond them are others equally strong, equally well manned and mounted. Thus it would be extremely problematical, whether Havannah could be taken by main force.

The City is built on the Western side of the Harbour, and tho' at a distance it presents one whole uniform appearance, it in reality consists, of what is properly so called and a large suburbs. The city is quite detached from the environs, being encompassed all round with thick walls, which have gates for ingress & egress, with regular sentinels to each. From the descriptions which I had received, I had formed higher notions of Havannah than were justified by actual inspection. It is indeed a fine but not a grand City - containing many good houses - but few noble looking. The suburbs are of very diversified character, containing houses good, bad, & indifferent - but in truth I had not an opportunity of visiting them by day light. The houses being very high and the streets very narrow, and ill paved, all the appearance of the town is destroyed and many objects are passed unobserved because they are seen in this light..

I went into one or two of the churches and was much pleased with their grandeur of their proportions, unadorned as they were with gaudy finery, fit only to please children. This was particularly the case with the Cathedral, which is a noble pile, and its very simplicity and want of gold and silver showed the good taste of those who had the charge of erecting it, more than the poverty of the people. Tho' deficient apparently in images of gold, silver & jewels it was richly furnished with what to a man of taste was infinitely preferable, viz. fine paintings. I cannot say, what were the painters - but the pictures are by far the best which I have seen out of Europe. Another instance which I remarked was that it had none of those large dolls decked out in faded silk and tinsel, miscalled Saints, with which most Churches are in general abundantly supplied.

Havannah is a place of universal trade and is indeed the richest of the West Indian islands. There is a greater bustle and a greater number of ships than I have yet seen abroad. The population is calculated to amount to about 180,000 exclusive of the suburbs, & hence the streets always present a lively appearance.

Tuesday 10th Aug.^t - at 4.30 A.M. we weighed anchor and set sail for England. Fine weather - wind moderate.

Wednesday 11 - fine weather - variable winds - strong current in our favour. Today a curious appearance was presented to our sight. When first seen it was supposed to be a reef of rocks with the water breaking over them - and it lay directly in our path. As we came closer, it was known to be an effect of the Gulf Stream, where the water rushed more violently than in other parts, produced a turmoil & noise like waves breaking on the sea shore. This phenomenon did not extend more than a few yards in breadth, but was of a considerable length; Immediately beyond it the water lay calm;

as in a pond - then came a similar current - then a calm & so on - but whatever was the state of the sea, we were always carried on, on our way at a rate now accelerated, now moderated. This current is produced by an immense volume of water from the Mexican Gulf, rushing out by the narrow outlet of the Florida Channel - and is continued they say, as far as the Western Islands in a NE direction. What is curious you can know the water of the stream from the surrounding water, by its increased temperature.

Thursday 12th August - nearly a calm all day, with fine W.^r In the evening cloudy W.^r with moderate breezes.

Friday 13th - very fine weather - wind variable & light. At night breeze rather favourable.

Saturday 14th - pleasant weather - Fresh and nearly favourable breezes.

Sunday 15th - weather generally fine, sometimes squally. In the forenoon wind fresh & nearly favourable - in the afternoon favourable - very heavy sea all day which impeded us much.

Monday 16th - cloudy but pleasant weather. Strong & favourable breezes. Current in our favour a 4 miles an hour.

Tuesday 17th - very cloudy weather. Strong & favourable wind. In the afternoon the breeze continued to increase in force, until it blew a perfect hurricane. In my first Journal to Brazil, I attempted to give you some idea of a storm - but on this occasion the appearance was very different. Then it was from the NW now it was from the SW and we supposed that it was not an ordinary tempest but as it were the tail of a hurricane of the West Indies. The clouds lowered, till they almost reached the water - a heavy sleet drizzle of rain Came drifting on and the wind began to roar amidst the rigging. All preparations were immediately made for the gale. The small rain now rendered the atmosphere so dense, that you could not see the sixth part of a mile around you - the wind came by fits and starts, now furious, now lulled into a perfect & treacherous tranquillity. I find it impossible by any language to describe to you the tremendous violence of the gale - it seemed when you thought that it was impossible that it could be increased to be striving to out do all that it had yet done - first lulling as if to gather fresh strength and then returning with redoubled fury. Meanwhile the sea dashed over decks & the *Old Duke* rolled to and fro like a man in the last stage of intoxication and communicated a momentary alarm, to our minds by the occasional vibrations of all her timbers. In one of the heavy cross seas, which took us on the larboard quarter, our second gig which was slung up there and which had been 10 or 12 years in the Packet, after being repeatedly filled with water, was at last struck with so tremendous a sea, that she went to pieces. Fortunately for us the hurricane ceased at 3 o'clock in the morning and we had no further damage done than the loss of our boat and the splitting of one of our sails.

Wednesday 18th August - cloudy W.^r in the morning, very fine during the rest of the day. Wind fair but with a heavy swell from the Northward.

Thursday 19th – beautiful bracing weather. Light & unfavourable breezes from the Eastward.

Friday 20th - this morning passed a Yankee ship steering to the Westward which seemed to have suffered from the late gale, for she had lost her main top mast & mizen topgallant mast. Beautiful weather but unfavourable wind from the East. In the afternoon spoke the *Commerce* of Philadelphia from Rotterdam, bound to New York, out 56 days. Gave us the first tidings of the King's death. In the evening fell to a calm and we had a good view of a brilliant Aurora borealis or Northern lights, which last some time.

Saturday 21st – beautiful weather all day with light but favourable winds. Afternoon thick and foggy.

Sunday 22^d – fine weather – Wind variable.

Monday 23^d – very fine weather – Wind rather unfavourable with strong current which impedes our progress to the Eastward.

Tuesday 24th - foggy weather in the morning, fine all day- cloudy at night - Wind nearly favourable but strong westerly current. We are now so far to the northward, as to be only 80 miles from Halifax. Spoke the *Ellen Gray* out 6 weeks from Liverpool - Gave us the news of King William being proclaimed.

Wednesday 25th Aug.^t – very cloudy damp weather – strong unfavourable current still. The wind would be favourable if we had no current, and id Sable island had not been right in our way.

Thursday 26th – damp disagreeable weather. Wind same as yesterday – Still in current.

Friday 27th – variable weather – fresh unfavourable breeze.

Saturday 28th – very cloudy, damp W.^r – fresh and favourable breeze.

Sunday 29th - beautiful weather. Light and favourable breeze. On the Banks of Newfoundland.

Monday 30th - very fine W.^r - nearly calm all the morning - in the afternoon light & favourable wind. Several vessels seen at anchor: fishermen on the Banks.

Tuesday 31st – fine weather – moderate & favourable breezes.

Wednesday 1st Sept.^r – thick foggy weather – fresh & favourable wind.

Thursday 2^d – very cloudy W.^r – Strong and favourable wind. Saw the eclipse of the Moon at times very distinctly, at other very imperfectly, being distant 3 hours or 45 degrees from Greenwich.

Friday 3^d – cloudy and damp w.^r – Strong & favourable breezes.

Saturday 4th – the wind shifted this morning against us. Weather cloudy. In the evening thick foggy w.^r with a fair wind.

Sunday 5th – thick damp w.^r – moderate & favourable breezes.

Monday 6th – cloudy morning – fine day – fresh and favourable brezes from the Westward.

Tuesday 7th – thick foggy w.^r – very little breeze all day but freshened at night.

Wednesday 8th Sept.^r – very cloudy Weather – strong and [?] breezes.

Thursday 9th – cloudy weather – fresh & favourable wind.

Friday 10th – cloudy, squally w.^r – favourable breeze.

Saturday 11th - variable weather - Saw Scilly at 3 P.M. strong and favourable breezes.

Sunday 12th - at 4 A.M. came to anchor in Carrick roads, the wind not permitting us to go to our former anchorage.

Finis

Account of Expences
In the
Mexican Voyage.

Jamiaca

30 th June.		
	2 lbs preserved Ginger -	£0. 8. 6
	1 lb pine apple Jam -	0 3 0
	Boat hire from Kingston to P. Royal -	0 4 0
	Washing -	0 4 0
	3 Gallons Rum (lost by one of our men) - and therefore I got -	0 12 0
	3 Gallons more -	0 12 0
	2 Bottles of Castor oil -	0 6 0
	2 Bottles of Cayenne pepper -	0 3 0
	Medecine -	0 0 6
	Belize in Bay of Honduras	
16 th	To imitation panama Hat -	0 12 0
	To Spanish Hammock -	0 12 0
	To Refreshments -	0 2 0
	At Tampico	
July 3.	To Refreshment &. ^c -	0 2 0
4 th	To Coffee – medicine &. ^c -	0 2 6
	At Havanna	
Augs. ^t 9		
	1 Pot of Preserved limes -	0 4 8
	1 Pot of preserved Pines -	0 4 8
	4 Boxes of Guava Jelly -	0 8 6
	100 limes -	0 1 0
	1 half Box of Calanas Cegars (500) -	1 6 0
	1 half a quarter Box (125) -	0 6 0
	Carry over	£6 14 4
Augs. ^t 9		
	1 lb of Sul: Carbon: Sodae -	0 3 0
	Rhubarb 3iz. -	0 2 0
	Coffee -	0 4 2
	Refreshment -	0 4 0
		£7 7 6
	Pines, 14 in number -	0 6 0
		£7 13 6

Havanah 9th Aug.st 1830

Received from Capt.ⁿ Snell one Doubloon Spanish Money which I repaid on the 23^d Sept.^r 1830 Vide below.

Account between Capt.ⁿ Snell and myself. –

Thursday 23^d Sept.^r 1830

Salary paid me by Capt. ⁿ Snell -	£10	0	0
Back money from M. ^r Geach -	6	0	0
To receive in London, as duty on cigars and part of my pay -	11	4	0
Doubloon which I borrowed at Havanna -	3	3	0
Amount receiv. ^d -	£30	17	0

Now my pay being due from 3^d April 1830 to

Saturday 18 th Sept. ^r 1830 (24 weeks) makes the sum of -	£48		
From which -	30	17	0
Being subtracted leaves -	£17	3	0
Still unpaid -			

Buenos Ayres Ria de la Plata

12th February 1831

Received from Captain Snell the sum of ten sovereigns, which subtracted from £17 3, leaves £7 3/- due to me when we came to Falmouth 9th June 1831.

Plymouth

N.B. I have not the particulars of my boarding expenses - because as there were three of us living together, our expenses were put down in a House Book in common - and this House Book belonged to M.^r Robert Symons.