

On Board Barque Paul. Harbor of Vera Cruz Nov. 15th 1847.

DEAR CHAMBERS—I am in this hour on board our transport at anchor, about one thousand yards from shore, and four hundred below the wall of San Juan de los Rios. We arrived here on Monday after a voyage of seven days from the Balize. The North wind, called her Norther, has blown furiously for twenty-four hours, and out of all communication with the shore. We will not distinguish until the Norther sleeps, which I am told delays for several days together. I will not attempt a description of Vera Cruz, until I visit it, and take a closer look at the city. I am content to admit of much accurate observation. We are all anxiously to go ashore. Such impatience you never witness, and our anxiety is increased by the capture of Mexico this time, of a train from the City of Mexico under Col. Harvey. But we must wait for the wind and surge, as it is certain they will not wait for us. Our voyage was prosperous—without a single accident. We made the trip to New Orleans in five days—lay there a little more than one. In all we have been out—fifteen days from Louisville.

Did you ever make a voyage at Sea? If not you have but little conception of the character and incidents attending one. You have read a thousand and one descriptions of the Sea. For it is the commonest theme of poetry and diction in nature; and every scribbler imagines he can interest the world by a novel view, on paper, of the great deep. I shall only say that when you imagine yourself surrounded by water, and far as the eye can reach, you have the idea of a calm sea. And when you add the heaving swell which rolls up high above the level of its surface, and breaks into white spray, forming a distance of white foam and falling mist, and creating sheets of white foam, you have the idea of a rough sea. Add to the last the necessary exaggeration, and you have a stormy sea. It is not whether the sea is calm or troubled, fills the heart with an emotion of awe—and reverence—well calculated, in the reflecting mind, to inspire devotion. These sensations arise from the utter inability of human intellect to understand the vastness of the watery element. The idea of depth is so intimately connected with being cast into the deep, that one feels no courage to resist, or hope to subvert it. Hence the resignation with which we must meet the dangers of the deep.

We had no word of consequence for four days after we put to sea; and indeed we became so impatient of slow sailing that we were obliged for an hour to anchor, and "Heave ho!" We got it yesterday—the surges rolled as high as the deck of the vessel, and frequently baptized her in spray. I saw evident signs of the sickness of men and monkeys. I had no confidence which the commander of the vessel had inspired, for the presence of fear, and our confidence was well placed, for about 11 o'clock he ordered us to anchor, and I was firmly anchored under the Cas- tle wall.

You were never seasick I presume; but you have heard much said about it. It is the most distressing ailment which a sailor is liable to experience. I ever experienced. The sensations produced by the motion of the vessel are insufferable. The brain becomes affected, and communicates the disease to the stomach, and the stomach communicates sympathies. The prostrate position which you are compelled to take, allows the bile to flow freely into the stomach, which superinduces the most intolerable sickness, nausea, and vomiting. You have evacuated the stomach, you lie flat on your back, without much distress, till another or two of the sea causes the bile to flow, when the sickness is renewed. In one hour you have vomited the contents of the stomach, and of 300 men, 230 at least were prostrate with seasickness. The berth-deck, which is between the hold and the deck, is covered with sick men. All heaving and vomiting, and my God, sir, it is a sickening and distressing scene. But, knowing that it was not to last, and that I was obliged to make as light of it as possible, I braced my will against it, and resolved if resolution could keep it off never to surrender—and I succeeded for a time admirably. We entered the harbor of Vera Cruz, noon, and I remained on foot till 8 o'clock that night. I went among the men on the berth-deck, and endeavored by laughing at them and raising their spirits to get them up. The officers fell as early as the men, and before 3 o'clock, myself and one Lieutenant, were the only officers, of twelve or thirteen, above a horizontal position. I went to bed about 8, and awoke at 9, and my wife says I looked pale and depressed—I slept little, but the complaints of the men from the decks fell constantly on my ear, and filled me with a deep sadness; I was unhappy because I could not do more for them, but about 3 o'clock I was seized with the disgusting nausea—it almost made me sick to think of it now—and I suffered all its effects from that till six. It, however, soon got on my feet, and I was able to disagreeable sensation produced by the motion of the vessel. I never failed to be able to eat every meal, though I had but little appetite for two or three days.

My health is now good, and I am anxious to get into sight and efficient service. We are here in sight of a Mexican city, whose broken walls, and dilapidated houses exhibit the real effects of war. The low and blue mountains on the shore—the thick chapparal on the more distant slopes—and the high blue mountains far in the distance, remind us that we are in a hazardous way. The roaring and foaming surges surge in and out within a few hundred yards of the shore, although on board a well built modern vessel, teach us that we are completely in the hands of Uncle Sam's navy. We are now within a short distance of the enemy, and the day of trial to our valor may soon arrive. I cannot, but reflect, that while I am writing, the cannon and wily guerrilla, may be springing from the chapparal at our barque, anxious to find out

how many fresh Americans she is about to land upon his native shore—or, at Corral Gordo, Pucua Nacional, or some other point on the *Nacional*,—the escort and slaughter party, the serried ranks—and the blue mountains may be resounding with the crash of musketry and the roar of artillery. Such reflections naturally lead themselves to the mind, and the mind being engaged, anxious wish to leap ashore, and lead my gallant boys to the contest. I am not boasting of any great exploits which we will do, but I am confident that we will do our duty, and a man may be allowed to speak just as he feels. Another of our transports has just arrived and anchored. We think it the *Palmetto*, with Col. Thompson at its head, and the *Comanche* at its tail. When you sit down at home and think of war and its management in the aggregate, you are apt to imagine that all things move as regularly as if one single hand directed the whole. But when you, by actual observation, see the details which compose the whole, managed by a thousand different hands, you will witness a great deal of confusion, and a great deal of error. In general, can never be produced without accuracy in detail. All things on a large scale are but a greater number of things upon a small scale. In science, if you master the details, you master the general principle. So, in my opinion in things military. All tactical manœuvres depend upon the rudiments of the science of operations, and without a knowledge of these rudiments can never be made with accuracy. Besides, the omission of one elementary principle destroys the nature of the compound, and the effect expected is not realized. Mr. Weston moved that the Senator be excused from serving; which motion was determined in the affirmative by yeas 17, nays 10.

On the Motion of Mr. Brees, it was ordered that the vacancy occasioned by the withdrawal of Mr. Hale be filled by the Chair, which motion having been agreed to, the following is the official list:—**On the Judiciary.**—Messrs. Sumner, Webster, Hannegan, and Mangum. **On Finance.**—Messrs. Atherton, Dickinson, Clayton, Hunter, and Phelps. **On the Militia.**—Messrs. Dix, Badger, and Rusk. **On the Militia.**—Messrs. Rusk, Atchison, Greene, Fairfield, and Underwood. **On Naval Affairs.**—Messrs. Fairfield, Taylor, and Johnson. **On Public Lands.**—Messrs. Breese, Ashley, Underwood, and Clark. **On Agriculture.**—Messrs. Sturgeon, Turney, Spruance, Atherton, and Corwin. **On Military Affairs.**—Messrs. Cass, Blair, and Johnson. **On the Militia.**—Messrs. Rusk, Atchison, Greene, Fairfield, and Underwood. **On Naval Affairs.**—Messrs. Fairfield, Taylor, and Johnson. **On Public Lands.**—Messrs. Breese, Ashley, Underwood, and Clark. **On Agriculture.**—Messrs. 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