

the convolvulus and the lily, the fuchsia and magnolia, oleanders as large and full of blossom as an apple tree, the rose, pansy and orchis of our own summer, with the rhododendron, the passiflora, the orange, the lemon, the cocoa, the palm and the mango, all in a profusion and luxuriance such as no Northern mind can imagine; the trees are not only large, lofty and crowded, wonderful parasites hang from every bough and twist and twine all into one forest; and then trees filled with Birds of Paradise, Cockatoos, Parrots and humming birds—so dense is the growth that a man cannot penetrate it, but with long knives and bill hooks, a way must be opened; at the first station I was astonished to see a long arched avenue that had been opened into the heart of the wood through which the cord wood cut up as stove wood is all brought out on horses, in paniers piled three feet above the pony's back.

There I first saw the natives and half breeds, the women are bare headed, a loose wrapper trimmed with red is their only covering, it is low necked and down off the left shoulder—their skin is a beautiful mahogany colour, clear, smooth and clean—the children up to at least twelve years of age go perfectly nude, the houses are of cane and bark covered with plantain and palm, open and airy, the food plantain and bananas, the former being indigenous and as wholesome as our potato, this is said to be the curse of the country for all can live without work, they are like potato, but the Bananas like bread.

But to describe everything curious would occupy the night, so, with but a mention of the splendid oranges at 5 cents a dozen, bunches of palm nuts 30 inches long and 18 through which hang from the tree by an arm a yard long, the Boa Constrictors, the Alligators, the Chameleons, the Parrots, the Cockatoos, the painted Calabash, the prickly pear, and other varieties of cactus used for fencing, but we must pass on to Panama.

From Panama we ascended rapidly over granite crags, span of mountains and the famous Basaltic ledge. The descent from the summit level is about a grade of 60 feet to a mile, and it terminates on the shore of the gulf of Panama.