

gress. We shopped and rambled about undisturbed by the hot sun, having fortunately several cavaliers who knew Spanish, acquaintances formed on ship-board, and who were bound for various parts of South and Central America. In the evening a band played before the hotel, and we sat out till late on the balcony, enjoying the coolness and stillness that came with dark.

The next day we took ship again, a voyage of three weeks, relieved by calling at numerous ports, at several of which we got the natives to row us ashore, and strolled about under lime, orange and bay trees, wrote letters in the cantinas, scanned the contents of the little one-storied shops with tiled roofs, studied domestic life in Central America, through very hospitably open doorways, marvelled at the dexterity with which the bare footed women carried burdens on their heads, and tasted various native drinks and dishes. We had perfect weather, and beautiful moonlit nights. The natives—many finely formed and comely—often brought their wares, including parrots valued at \$3.00 each, over to the ship, and lively bargaining followed. I have now quite a collection of the silver coinage of the different Republics.

Oranges—green, luscious fruit, beside which Californian ones are insipid were sold 50 for 25cts. The cookery on board was very Spanish in seasoning, and the menu was in the two languages, for the majority of the passengers were Spaniards returning from Europe or U. S. Universities. At Guatemala we passed several volcanoes, one alive, a fine sight by night, and as we approached Mexico, the coast became very mountainous.

There, before being allowed to land, a native doctor came out and examined us all to ascertain that we had no yellow fever on board. The arrival of the commandante was always quite a ceremony. He was rowed out by his own sailors, flying the national flag, to graciously give us permission to enter port. Such procrastinating people as they are. Often we had to wait some hours after all the cargo was taken on, for the clearance papers, the commandante indulging either in a siesta or a feast, and quite oblivious of time and tide.

In Mexico, the houses were of coloured adobe, and we saw many picturesque muleteers in serapes and sombreros. At one place where we dined, on my indicating I wished some ice in my tumbler, the boy who was waiting, calmly emptied part of the water it contained on the marble floor! When we approached the Californian coast it became very stormy. San Francisco disappointed me rather, it is not so clean, not so pretty as Toronto. Of course we went through "China town" where they have lovely things, and did a considerable amount of shopping.

Christmas Day seemed strange to me here, with roses and chrysanthemums flowering in the garden, and all the house doors standing wide open.

Our nearest Church is five miles away, and we are a mile from the village of Soquel, which lies among hills, with the ocean half a mile away. We can plainly hear the surf thundering on the shore, and have once or twice walked over and spent an hour on the beach. To day the thermometer stood at 65° in the shade. I am intending to spend the winter here with friends on a ranche, it would be