

All day long we watched the coast to see if our messengers were coming back. Darkness fell, and then we saw some lights on the shore, but after some discussion it was decided not to send in our boats, as those signalling might be bandits. At dawn the next morning we finally saw a large fire, and the boat was sent in, bringing back our two messengers. They had gone to the lighthouse on foot and from there in canoes to Paraiso. In this place they stayed for an hour, sending off telegrams and getting a little food, whereupon they immediately returned. They were not the people who had lighted the fire the previous evening.

By noon the crew had rigged up a new rudder made out of a pipe and some boards, and, steering with this, we again started on our way to Frontera. The rudder worked quite well, but progress was slow. Fortunately for us the sea was quiet, as in case of a storm we would undoubtedly have been swept up on the coast.

Several times we sailed through large schools of porpoises, and once we saw a shark chasing a big fish. It was a great battle, the shark churning the sea and spinning around, the fish sometimes jumping clear out of the water across the shark. We did not linger to see how the struggle ended.

Towards dark a wind began to blow, the waves were crested with white, and as night fell the water was shining with a bluish green phosphorescence. It was very beautiful and strange. The moon rose fiery red, and everybody was on constant lookout for the low coast, as for a long time we could not see the lighthouse of Frontera. At last it came in sight and at about 10:00 p. m. we anchored, as it would be too dangerous to try to enter the river at night.

The following morning we had to wait a long time for the pilot boat to come out, and when it arrived, it was only a small launch. They tried to tow us, but did more damage than good, and finally left us to zig-zag our own way up the river to the town.

Frontera is the only port of the rich State of Tabasco. Formerly it had a large trade in the agricultural products of the State. Its main exports were cattle, cocoa, coffee, bananas, and mahogany and cedar wood. As the State is rich, it has been a "happy hunting ground" for rebels and bandits.

The town is more attractive than Puerto Mexico, having many red tiled brick houses, and a pretty park. Today its trade is small. A few mahogany companies still receive rafts of logs which come drifting down the river from Chiapas, and an oil company has its headquarters here, but the banana companies have all withdrawn, partly due to the uncertain conditions as to delivery of fruit, and partly to the rulings of the labor government of the State.