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LIFE IN A MEXICAN STREET.

PROBABLY no more striking evidence exists of the foresight of that wonderful man who gave Spain an empire in the New World, than the ground plan of the city of Mexico. It was drawn under the immediate supervision of the conqueror, and was intended by him to guide in the construction of a great capital, which "should rise," to use his own language, "to the rank of queen of the surrounding provinces, in the same manner as she had been of yore." Two hundred years after Cortez had laid out his city of straight streets and uniform parallelograms, our ancestors in Boston and New York were still clumsily building their tangled net-work of crooked lanes and narrow alleys. We pride ourselves upon the foresight of Penn, who made Philadelphia a city of rectangles. But the Spanish warrior sketched his city more than a century and a half before the Quaker colony reached the borders of the Delaware, and yet the older plan is as much like the ready-made city of to-day, say Minneapolis or Denver or Pueblo, as though he who designed it had pictured to himself the needs of the railway, the telegraph, the gas-lamp, the electric light, or had reasoned in scientific phrases on the sanitary value of gaseous circulation and direct sunlight.

Almost due east and west through the midst of the town passes one great avenue. The neighboring streets are at times broken by buildings or open squares, or church-yards, or stop where ancient properties stopped or Indian suburbs interposed their walls of mud or their muddy canals. This one great street holds its course virtually, without deviation, from the gate of San Lazaro to the opposite gate of San Cosme, a little more than three miles. It is always broad and open; it sometimes grows

grand in its expansion, even wider than the noble London thoroughfare, Oxford street—which street, by the by, was a muddy way between hedges that harbored woodcock at Regent's Circus, when the new-world avenue was already a street of palaces. The Roman Corso might lie by the side of the Neapolitan Toledo here, and still leave room for the passing travel.

We shall include under the general name of Tacuba street the whole broad way from gate to gate, although it in reality bears this designation but for a limited distance. The inconvenient custom prevails in the city of Mexico of applying to each block in any street a different name, as though we were to say that Fifth avenue extended from Forty-fifth to Forty-sixth streets, Windsor avenue from Forty-sixth to Forty-seventh, Buckingham avenue from Forty-seventh to Forty-eighth, and so forward, changing with each succeeding block.

In the months that followed the victory of the 13th of August, 1521, the conqueror laid out a four-sided area among the shapeless ruins of the Aztec city, and set apart for the site of the new metropolis somewhat more than a mile square of land in the level expanse of salt morass on the borders of Lake Tezucuc. This street, or causeway, of Tacuba was one of the three that extended beyond the limits of the town-site, across a region of canes and reeds, to the firm land. It was the one relied upon to furnish an easy route for the cavalry—that arm of the service most valuable to the invaders in their contests with the half-disciplined native warriors. Beyond the limits of the city the borders of the other two causeways were kept free from obstructions. Only upon this one were the citizens permitted

to build their massive houses, so that it became a sort of fortified entrance and exit for the growing Spanish outpost.

But, apart from its topographical and military significance, the street was already memorable to the pioneer Christian soldiers through many a thrilling episode. Along this line, during the three months of that brilliant siege, the impetuous Alvarado had fought his way eastward, inch by inch, to a junction with his commander in the central portions of the still beleaguered town. Along this then narrow path, but one year before the final success, in the darkness of the dreadful *noche triste*,

"In the lost battle,
Borne down by the flying,"

hundreds of trusted comrades and thousands of trusting allies fell beneath the blows of the obsidian axes of Montezuma's braves.

On the eastern side of the city, and entering at the gate of San Lazaro, on our historic street, we find ourselves this bright morning in mid-winter. Backward, across the low and invisible Lake Tezcuco, the view extends to the purple eastern hills that form the rim of the oval valley; while southward, rising majestically above a multitude of attendant fumaroles, stand against the deep blue sky Mexico's two giant volcanic mountains, piercing with

their silvered peaks the region of perpetual snow. The smooth, sterile plain that widens from the city gate toward the lake is scarcely broken by a tree. Across its level surface, covered with stunted herbage and alkaline inflorescence, I have often galloped in a solitude almost as profound as that which surrounds the saline Syrian sea.

Flowing out from San Lazaro, in a direct line eastward, is the canal of Tezcuco—a black, sluggish current that carries the sewage of the city to the lake, and represents the drainage of a large district of mountain country. If the city of Mexico has a salt-water port, it is formed by this canal.

The primitive passenger-boat has just come in from the village that, some thirty miles eastward, occupies the site of the ancient sister city of the metropolis—the allied Tezcuco, which, more fortunate than other fallen Indian towns, has had its history related and its praises sung by the descendant of its own royal line—the imaginative Ixtlilxochitl. This native author describes, in words worthy of Arabian story, the astronomical, musical, and poetic attainments of his ancestral sultans, the grand palace, surrounded by four hundred abodes of attendant nobles, and the royal magazines, from which were annually distributed six million bushels of corn. The passenger-boat has been seven hours upon its journey



ARRIVAL OF THE PASSENGER-BOAT FROM TEZCUCO, AT THE GATE OF SAN LAZARO.



A CANAL MARKET.

by lake and canal, propelled by six stalwart Indians, whose long poles reach the bottom of the lake, even at its deepest portions. Occasionally that most ancient form of boat, the dug-out, appears, driven forward by a man or woman, who, facing the prow, feathers the light paddle with the graceful motion of the Chippewas of Lake Superior in their birchen canoes. More numerous than all other craft, however, are the flat-bottomed freight-boats, some fifty feet long, of which several are always at the canal-bank, discharging cargoes of straw, Indian corn, wheat and barley, or cut paving-stones from the haciendas and quarries along the eastern borders of the lake. The most conspicuous of the products brought to the city are the great balls of barley straw, packed firmly in nets of stout henequin cord. Each ball is prepared as a load for one man, and weighs from three hundred and fifty to four hundred pounds. Horses are very fond of this

straw, and it comes in a broken and crumpled condition, the result of having been trodden on the wind-swept earthen thrashing-floor by the feet of oxen, sheep, or goats. The heavy grain is collected from time to time during this process by tossing the chaff with great wooden forks high against the wind. The Mexican consumer has become so accustomed to the use of this macerated straw that when Señor Buch, a large farmer near the city, introduced steam machinery to thrash and winnow his barley, he was compelled to add a special crushing-machine to the usual American thrasher, so that his straw might continue to reach market in a condition similar to that which has been current through all the ages since Solomon built his temple where the breezes swept down from the Mount of Olives upon the thrashing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite.

Yellow-legged, muscular Atlases come to the laden boats, and, aided by comrades, lift these

globes of forage, and bury their heads and shoulders beneath them. Forthwith the rotund mass goes wandering off through the crowded thoroughfares to its destination among the stabled animals of draught and burthen.

In addition to the trade of the canal, the products of a fertile district around the base of Popocatepetl reach the city by common roads, carried thither through the gate of San Lazaro, and by a narrow-gauge railway that is being extended to the Pacific port of Acapulco. And here the American sees what to him is a singular spectacle—the collection of a tax in the form of an impost upon various products of the farm, garden, and manufactory, while on their way to market or to the place of consumption. A formidable moat filled with water surrounds the city on all sides, and obstructs the smuggler as did the high walls and picturesque towers of mediæval towns. Through ten gates, opposite as many bridges, all the ordinary trade is expected to pass. These gates are opened at five in the morning and closed at half-past eight in the evening. Once, having been belated in the mountains, I reached a gate at ten o'clock at night. Half an hour elapsed before a keeper could be found to unlock and swing back the heavy wooden structures that prevented my entrance.

Among the officials engaged in superintending the collection of the imposts, I found a gentleman who occupies a position of considerable note in the city of Mexico—no other than the Nast of the political press. The demand for caricatures in this capital, however, is not so imperative nor so continuous as it is in our northern centers of social life, and Villasana publishes chiefly when some period of violent political excitement calls for the expression of strong personal preferences and animosities. During the presidential contests, both before and after the nominations, he sharpens his pencil and starts a short-lived eight-page periodical, which makes the greater part of its inditements without the aid of text. The method of the Mexican caricaturist is perhaps less subtle than ours; his exaggerations often approach the grotesque; his vain-glorious person disturbs the planets in their orbits; his Uriah Heep grovels deep in the dust; he consigns his defunct politician to depths immeasurable to man; but, like our own artists, though he strikes as a partisan, he does so in the name of justice, fraternity, and human progress.

Sitting behind his rolls of tribute-silver, while his deputies weighed the incoming straw, and with long rods of steel searched the interiors of the great bales of straw for smug-

glers' goods, Signor Villasana explained some of the intricacies of the laws of domestic imposts. Upon several hundred articles duty is levied: upon each cow two dollars; each unbroken mule or horse contributes three dollars to the city treasury; each hundred pounds of flour twenty-four cents; the farmer pays fifty cents per hundred pounds for carrying in his potatoes, and eight cents for the same weight of barley straw; but why he should pay thirty-three cents per hundred pounds for milk, while butter and eggs were passed free, even Signor Villasana's experienced mind could not determine.

Beyond this gate, to the right, is a ruined mass of arches, abutments, walls, and domes; strange weeds and flowering shrubs push apart the stones of the deserted courts. This is the great church of San Lazaro, that after secularization was sold by the Government, and by private enterprise was converted into a glass manufactory. Real fires for fusing silix and alumina were kindled in chapels where, heretofore, carved and pictured flames were seen consuming the bodies of saints and the souls of sinners. Now, the old and the new have fallen into dust together, and some future antiquary may find evidence of inquisitorial severity in the annealing muffles beneath the high altar. A few hundred paces to the north rises from among the still scattered houses a mass of rich yellow, red, and brown, forming a characteristic Mexican picture. It is the church of San Antonio of Tomitlan, which in the latter part of the eighteenth century was a chapel at the gate, and which still supplies a place for praise and prayer for the poor of the neighborhood. Its story is told in a straightforward way on the wall near the sacristy-door:—an orphan boy of peasant parentage, born in 1722, grew in worldly possessions, and year by year devoted his means and time to building and endowing this church. He died at seventy, and his portrait, that of a solid, square-shouldered, earnest citizen, who kneels in his red coat, skull-cap, and white stockings, in perpetual thanksgiving, hangs high and honored among the saints. Had this contemporary of Franklin been born on the banks of the Delaware, his energy would probably have taken the direction of libraries or hospitals, and his substance, instead of paying for masses, would have gone to support a chair of intellectual philosophy.

Near the church stands the house of its priest—a cheerful dwelling built around a court upon whose walls are many inscriptions inculcating virtuous living. At the foot of the stairway is the painted full-sized figure of a soldier in complete uniform, with his hand raised

threateningly, and the warning word *cuidado*, "Take care," issuing from his mouth, while over the door of the study, written in highly colored ornamental letters that harmonize well with the brilliant bignonias, geraniums, and heliotropes that glow in the January sunshine and shade the borders of the balcony, we read the following:

Quien á esta casa da luz?
 Jesus.
 Quien la llena de alegría?
 Maria.
 Y quien la abraza en la fé?
 José.*

As you approach the interior of the city, at various places you find "tortillerías" occupying basements on a level with the street. This national combination of the grist-mill and the bakery holds such an important place in the Mexican domestic economy that we may well afford time to examine a typical establishment with care. The tortilla is eaten by all classes throughout the nation, and it is almost the exclusive food of large numbers of the poorer people. I have met with it at the banquets of cabinet ministers and literary men, and the implements for its manufacture are invariably found in the humblest native hut. Visitors to the Centennial will remember in the Government building a large drawing of the interior of a Pueblo Indian house; this drawing, with a very few variations, would represent the interior of a hundred thousand Indian homes, existing from the borders of Colorado to the State of Yucatan. Maize is everywhere; two-thirds of the cultivated ground in Mexico is devoted to raising it. There is a saying that there are but two prerequisites for a household outfit by an Indian couple contemplating matrimony: a *petate*, or mat of reeds, which serves for a carpet and a bed, and a *metate*, a flat inclined stone placed upon the earthen floor, on which to pulverize the corn before forming it into cakes for baking. I concur in the estimate of well-informed natives, that so general and exclusive is the use of Indian corn, that, were this crop to fail, one-third to one-half the aboriginal population would perish of starvation. A single frost that, on the 29th of August, 1784, injured the young plant, it is calculated, resulted in the death of over 30,000 persons. A population of millions is dependent upon the success

of the crop. Ireland is not so dependent upon the potato, and millions in India scarcely so dependent upon rice, as the Mexican people are upon maize,—now the foremost of our cereals, the monarch of our prairie-lands, and the arbiter of stock exchanges; it conceals from all who will trace its ancestry, from even the most persistent botanist, every clue to its native valley and to the form of its tropic progenitor.

The tortilla-shop opens with wide doors upon the street; the citizen may stand upon the flags of the sidewalk, buy his cakes, and not only obey the injunction of the elder Weller regarding veal-pie, but, while making the acquaintance of the chief cook, may see, examine, comment upon, and if needs be, direct the whole process of manufacture.

Imagine a blacksmith's shop from which the Amazons have driven Vulcan, leaving only the grimy walls, the glowing, unchimneyed hearth, and a store of charcoal piled in a corner. The Amazons have rolled back their sleeves to the shoulder (if they possess such incumbrances) and have placed themselves on their knees upon the stone floor, with the inclined rough surface of the lava *metate* before them. Upon this stone they place, from a wooden tray, handful after handful of corn, which has been soaked and heated in water containing quicklime in solution. This alkaline substance has softened and loosened the exterior coating of the grain that in ordinary mills produces the bran. With a long, round stone, held like a rolling-pin, this corn is rubbed to a coarse paste, which is pushed, as fast as it is deemed sufficiently crushed, upon a pine board placed below to receive it. This paste now goes to the cake-maker, who stands near the fire. She takes a small piece, and, holding her hands vertically, pats it rapidly into a thin disk. This is thrown at once upon a hot earthen plate, where it is soon thoroughly baked or roasted. The tortillas thus made are collected hot into closely covered baskets, and are sold at three cents per dozen to the people who flock around, ready to carry them off in their hands or beneath pieces of protecting cloth. Enormous as is the aggregate of this manufacture, each shop is eminently a retail affair. I once asked the proprietress of such an establishment how many tortillas she would sell for a dollar; she threw up her hands and eyes at the visionary immensity of the transaction, exclaiming: "Good Heaven! I could not count—a very great many!"

The northern palate finds the tortilla, while fresh and hot, and if accompanied by a little butter or salt, a pleasant food, suggestive of cakes made of parched corn; but when cold

* Who gives light in this house?
 Jesus.
 Who fills it with joy?
 Mary.
 And who kindles faith in it?
 Joseph.

it is flabby, tough, and tasteless. There are many ways of serving it, but the Indian is usually content with a pinch of salt, or a little pungent *chile*—the native dried red pepper.

The proprietress of the shop that we spe-

the pulverized maize, and boiling the rich remainder to the consistency of "thickened milk." This the Indian drinks as the French or Belgian laborer would drink his coffee. Sometimes it is sweetened with sugar, sometimes beaten to a froth with chocolate. Many



MAKING TORTILLAS.

cially examined was ill-favored and uneducated. She kept her customers in the street, and caused her employés to remain quiet, that their postures might be exactly photographed. As we were leaving I pressed some money upon her, using the excuse learned in European mining and manufacturing districts, that "She must buy something for her work-people to drink." She replied indignantly that none of *her* employés would touch pulque, and that *she* was not in the habit of taking presents. I mention this circumstance to show the undercurrent of self-respect that exists among the Mexican laboring classes. Drawing from a not inconsiderable experience in the industrial centers from Ireland to Syria, I remember no example more noteworthy.

This same shop, like most of its kind, produces and sells *atole*, another national article of food, made by straining the bran away from

other kinds of food are prepared from maize: one, the *tamal*, consists of a thin cake rolled around cooked fruit, or chopped meat, or peppers, and then served smoking hot, inclosed in the soft interior tissue of the corn-husk.

At the door of the tortilleria, and in the kitchens of many houses, stand large earthen jars that are kept supplied with water from the numerous public fountains by *aguadores*, most picturesque of all water-carriers. The Mexican water-carrier adopts a plan for transporting his burden more simple than that of his prototype who gossips over the carved curbs of the Venetian palace. Instead of the yoke with poised copper kettles, he hangs one heavy earthen pot upon his back, suspended by a broad strap crossing his forehead, while another similar smaller vessel, steadied by his hand, hangs by a second strap passing over the hind part of the head. With the two

fragile weights thus balanced, he trots through the crowded streets at a most hazardous pace.

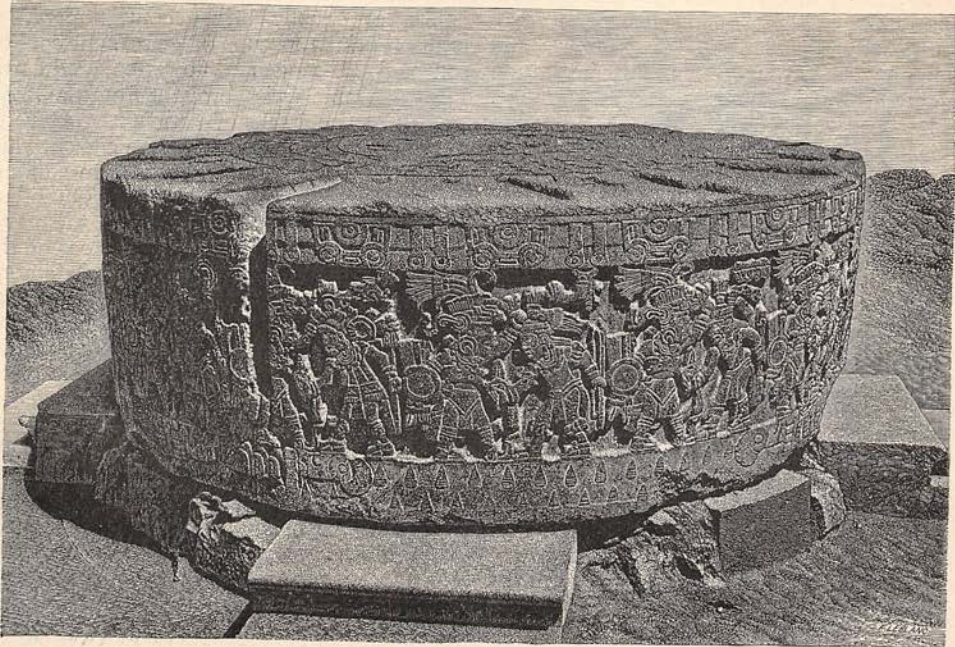
The soil upon which the city of Mexico rests is impregnated with the salts of Lake Tezcuco, whose waters have from time to time risen above the surface of the most crowded streets, but the numerous fountains of the town supply potable water drawn from two sources. From the highlands to the west, a crystal current comes across the meadows in two aqueducts, borne upon many arches—modern suggestions of those grand structures that brought the limpid waters of the Alban hills, over a broader volcanic plain, into imperial Rome. The other source of supply is in the artesian wells, of which hundreds have been bored, and almost invariably with success. At a depth of from one to three hundred feet water-bearing strata are reached which spout a continuous stream several feet above the surface. The large Mexican houses are all furnished with hand force-pumps, by means of which the water is driven into the elevated parts of the dwelling.

Westward, at a point near the geographic center of the city, we reach the site of the great religious structures of the Aztecs, and the palace of their emperors. No trace of these "Halls of the Montezumas" now exists. In 1790 the statue of the War God, which was



FOUNTAIN TERMINATING THE SOUTHERN AQUEDUCT.

the chief object of worship three centuries before, was discovered beneath the pavement of the plaza, where it had remained since the days of the conqueror. A great disk-shaped stone of black porous lava from the same vicinity is preserved in the court-yard of the National Museum. It is believed that upon its broad surface many human creatures were sacrificed at the festivals presided over by the powerful Aztec priesthood. The temple of



SACRIFICIAL STONE IN THE COURT OF THE NATIONAL MUSEUM.

the buried deity stood where the great cathedral now stands, and within a few hundred yards of this spot many of the most thrilling and most decisive scenes in Mexican history have been enacted. Grouped around this wonderful spot were: the seat of the archbishop, who, with an annual salary exceeding a hundred thousand dollars, controlled, through various religious orders and by overdue mortgages, a large proportion of the property of the city; the palace of the Viceroy, whose powers were nearly absolute; the chambers of the Inquisition; the National Museums; the Academy of the Fine Arts; the Seminary of the Jesuits; the Palace of Cortez and his descendants; the Municipal Palace, and, farther back in the centuries, the houses of the great Aztec retainers. So much has been written about these things, and so frequently have the buildings surrounding the great square been described, that the subject may well be omitted here.

But, one institution which, since 1836, has occupied the site of the house of Cortez, opposite the Cathedral, is so peculiarly Mexican in its character, that we will pause to give it a brief examination. This institution, supplying as it does a national need, and serving the rich as well as the poor—the outgrowth of private beneficence and of the most careful financial administration of which the country has been capable—this national pawn-broker shop is the most stable establishment that Mexico possesses. Her dynasties may be subverted; her political rulers may change from conservative to liberal amid the throes of revolution; her various Holy Virgins may wax and wane in popular favor, but this institution steadily grows in usefulness and importance. A hundred years ago Mexico had her "bonanza kings." Few are remembered now except Don Pedro Terreros. A native of Cartagena, in Spain, he left college to come to Mexico to settle the estate of his father. He was quick at accounts, and in due time became a prosperous merchant. Just then the silver regions of Patucha were being actively opened, and one Bustamente had lost so much money in digging the shaft of Santa Brigida that "he was about abandoning it when God put it into his mind to go into partnership with Don Pedro, who furnished more money, and in a short time rich mineral was struck, and unreckoned millions of dollars flowed into the pockets of the miners." Straightway Don Pedro began to do what the highest culture of the age prompted. He spent 90,800 dollars in sending missionaries to convert the heathen savages of Northern Mexico. Perhaps we of Colorado may have to thank him for the peaceful bearing of our

Pueblos and Navajos. He sent out three vessels laden with wheat to succor the expedition for the recovery of what is now our city of Pensacola; he added an eighty-gun ship to the royal marine; but all this generosity would have been forgotten, but for the happy thought that led to the creation of the unique and still active *Monte de Piedad*. Terreros gave into the hands of a board of managers three hundred thousand dollars, with the stipulation that it should be used for making loans on valuables of gold and silver, and upon unused clothing, without interest, provided that any voluntary offering that might be made in return should be accepted. About the time that our colonies were in the midst of the excitement over the tea-ships, a company of dignitaries were assembled in the chapel of St. Peter and St. Paul, in the far-away southern capital, to listen to congratulatory addresses, and read the message of the Spanish king, accepting the generous gift, "made for the public good and for the succor of the poor." The institution has grown and flourished; the plan of the founder, which was drawn with much minuteness, has been adhered to with great fidelity, and although it was soon found necessary to collect some interest on loans, only what is required to cover expenses and deterioration is exacted in return for liberal advances.

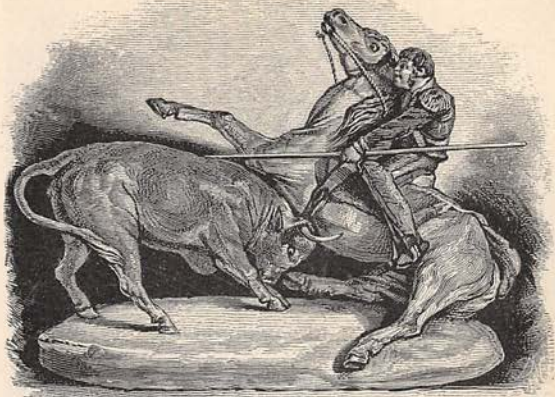
During the Christmas holidays the great square upon which the Cathedral fronts is filled with tents and booths, where traders offer for sale bright-colored calicoes and kerchiefs, or equally bright confectionery, or crimson drinks in cups of glass kept cool on soft banks of moist and flower-covered earth. Piles of tropic fruits, brought from the *tierra caliente* on the backs of patient *cargadores* or more patient donkeys, tempt the citizen, while curious gilded and silvered jars from Chihuahua, or the common clay fabric of Quatitlan, are spread in ordered rows upon the pavement. At night the oval, eager faces of the Indian boys and maidens who sit among their many-hued wares, glow like burnished copper in the radiance of the flaming piles of resinous "light wood" gathered in the fragrant pine-forests on the slopes of Ajusco. Proceeding westward from the square, we pass between the fronts of old palaces, now given up to the uses of trade. From the shields above the wide portals look down the armorial bearings of many a family distinguished in the stirring history of the colonial period. A few blocks from the Cathedral stands the *Mineria*, an imposing structure of dark stone, built from plans of the architect and sculptor Tolsa, for the seat of the National School of Mines. Several hundred feet southward from

this building is the fine church of San Francisco, where center Bishop Reilly's earnest missionary efforts, and near it is the massive structure secured for similar uses by the foresight of Bishop Simpson. A little farther westward we find the Central Park of the city—the Alameda—around which gather the residences of the foreign ministers, among them that of our own representative, from whose flagstaff floats conspicuously the stars and stripes.

Along the southern border of this garden lies the fashionable drive of Mexico. Every afternoon, but particularly upon fête-days, over this route a stream of carriages pours from the city and flows outward to the beautiful avenue leading to the Castle of Chapultepec. Probably no city in the world possesses a drive with grander natural attractions than this *Paseo* of the Mexican metropolis, and when beneath the statue of Columbus the crowded assemblage of well-filled carriages and gayly caparisoned horsemen file past in the evening glow of the tropic sky, the patriotic Mexican may well be pardoned a thrill of satisfaction at bearing part in such a rich and brilliant pageant.

From the gravel walks of the Alameda careful guardians gather the leaves that throughout the winter fall and make way for new growths on the deciduous trees, and children in their muslins play with their nurses upon grass that is always green. Here and there rise palms, but above the other trees tower the gray trunks of the familiar ash or the slender branches of the odorous eucalyptus. In a climate more genial and stable than that which draws the gay concourse to the terrace of the Pincian, the tourist may wander through the dark-shaded alleys and listen to music from a military band whose stirring airs bring back memories of life in European garrisoned towns.

We have now passed the limits of Cortez's city; Tacuba avenue widens and is lined with fine residences surrounded by gardens of roses, myrtle, jessamine, and hibiscus. Occasionally there are secularized convents, now serving for asylums or hospitals. Curious time-worn churches adjoin them whose interiors contain religious pictures and much gilding, and painful painted carvings of the Passion, before which awe-struck Indians fall on their knees and cross themselves. At one point an open vine-covered yardway is shown, where Alvarado, hard pressed, swung himself across the black waters of the canal on that "saddest night" of the most picturesque of all American campaigns.



THE BULL-FIGHTER—A GROUP IN CLAY.

Near this spot I was once accosted by a pale, dark-eyed boy of sixteen, who offered for sale a group modeled in potter's clay, that he held in his hand. It represented with fidelity a scene at a bull-fight. It was so full of spirit that I bought it at once, and asked who was the artist.

"I made it," said the boy.

"Where was it burned?"

"I burned it."

"Who painted it?"

"I did."

"What did you copy it from?"

"I went to Quatitlan and saw the bull-fights, and on the Paseo I saw the horses and the riders."

"Where do you live?"

He pointed to a court near by. I went with him to a low, whitewashed house; a lame, widowed father lived there with his two sons,—the elder was my little friend. There was but one room: it was scrupulously clean; a broad bed of mats and blankets was rolled in one corner of the stone floor. A lump of clay enveloped in a moist cloth lay near. A small square furnace served to bake the clay images and cook the food of the family. Two paint-brushes and some bottles of colors were in the window, and pictures of a couple of saints hung upon the wall. This was the atelier of the artist and the only home of the family. Each group was made and sold, and then another, usually representing a different subject, was begun. I obtained a number of them as they came out, and several are now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art. One of the simplest, photographed from the original and carefully engraved, will tell the story of the boy's genius better than I can.

We have now reached the quarter of the



AMONG THE GARDENS NEAR MEXICO.

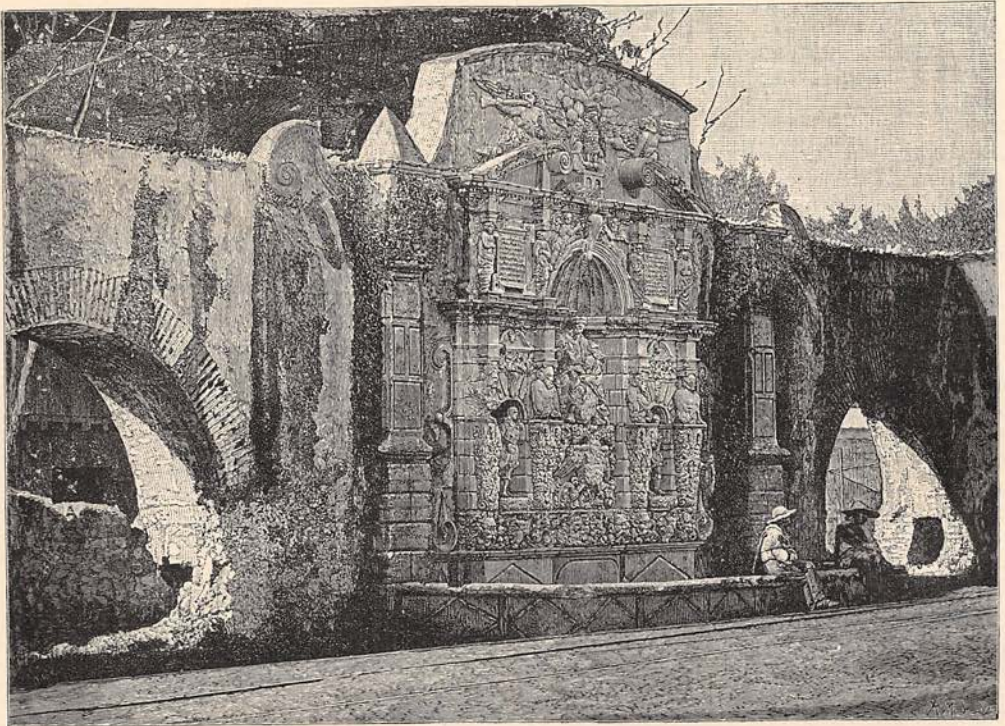
"Tivolis," as the garden restaurants of Mexico are called,—and here some of the best French *chefs* of the capital have established themselves, and with Gallic thrift have gathered fair fortunes. The gardens are often several acres in extent, well shaded with

noble trees and clustered shrubs, and adorned with carefully kept beds, and hanging baskets filled with trailing plants and brilliant flowers.

I shall not soon forget a midwinter dinner served in one of the open lattice-houses, that covers the summit of an artificial mound in the Tivoli of San Cosme. From a rock-work at my table-side leaped a fountain that fell with musical cadence into the rustic basin of porphyry below, or spread itself from frond to frond over semi-tropic ferns until lost among the rich vegetation. Through the wide-open door poured from the western sky a full flood of sunlight; below and beyond the garden limits spread a meadow of emerald alfalfa, where silent Indian women were reaping and gathering the juicy forage into bundles to be carried home to their cattle.

A lark sang merrily from its covert in the grass, or answered its mate

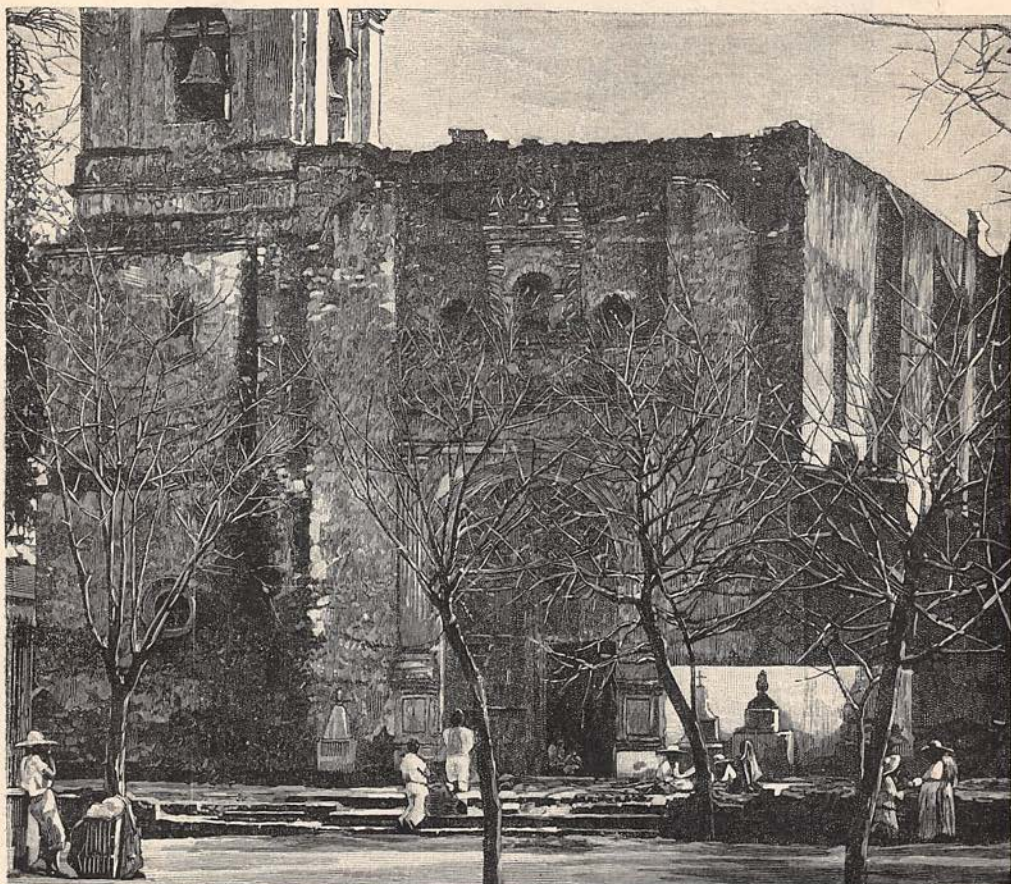
among the branches of a neighboring acacia. Brilliant harmless lizards raced along the sunny sides of the white wall. Golden and brown butterflies flitted noiselessly among the blue blossoms of the periwinkle, and the drone of the honey-gathering bees came from the flower



FOUNTAIN AND AQUEDUCT AT THE SAN COSME GATE.

masses of the climbing solanum that arched us in above. In the gardens of Italy, of Egypt, or of Florida, come together at this season no such delicious combinations of light and shade, of flowers and fruit, of warmth and

Opposite the fountain the toll-gatherers of the Garita de San Cosme are passed, and at once we are in the open fields, among the corn and wheat and pulque-producing plantations of the serrated agave. But the cause-



THE OLD CHURCH AT POPOTLA.

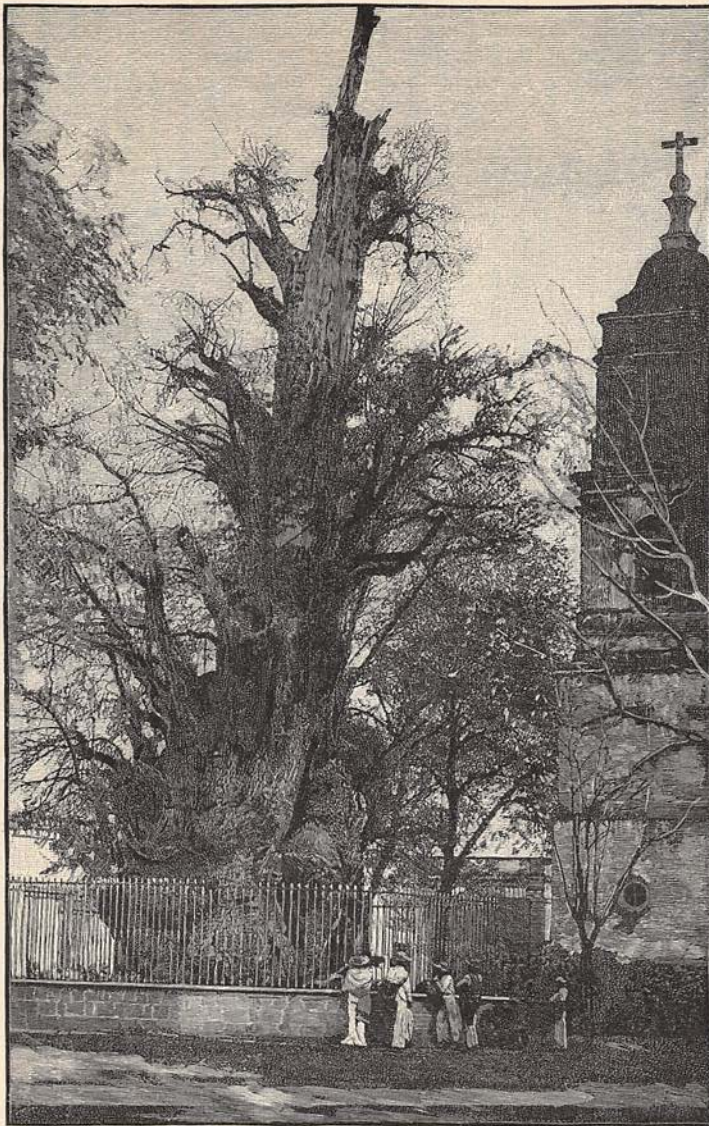
coolness, of spring-time and autumn, of sound and silence, of comfort and strangeness, of action and rest, of grandeur and completeness, as we found that January day, when, sitting over our fragrant Córdoba coffee, we watched the rosy evening change into resplendent night and the moonlight brighten upon the silver summits of the grand southern volcanoes.

Near this garden district ends the long, arched aqueduct that waters this portion of the town, and, as it enters the municipal limits, its mediæval uniformity is broken by a picturesque sculptured fountain dating from Spanish times. Under the cooling shelter of its arches groups of Indians from the country stop to rest, or meet in family parties to eat their tortillas and *chile*.

way extends outward from the city, lined with poplars and bordered by canals, upon the still surface of which a delicate aquatic plant spreads a green, unbroken sheen of minute leaves like an engraved floor of chrysoberyl.

A few hundred yards beyond the Garita, the National School of Agriculture, which occupies an old convent, is entered by an imposing portal. Here I was shown a beautiful Devon bull, called "*El niño*" (the child). He was led out for American eyes, because the professors were proud to show an immediate descendant of an animal that was presented to Mexico by the son-in-law of one of America's most honored professors, poets, and diplomats.

A mile or more farther northward is the partly ruined church of Popotla. Thousands



THE TREE OF CORTEZ.

of Indians pass it daily from the *haciendas* of the fertile plains. They often stop at its door to mutter a prayer and adjust their temporal burthens, or they gossip in front of it beneath the "Tree of Cortez." This venerable cypress is believed to have spread its branches over that sorrowing hero on the morning of the *noche triste*, when he watched his followers toil wounded and exhausted along the embankment which we have just traversed. Within the church is preserved a fragment of the stone upon which he sat.

At Popotlan our street divides and soon subdivides, and pursuing our course northward, we may follow well-worn ways over the vol-

canic soil to the high-walled fruit-gardens of the secularized Carmelite Monastery of San Joaquin, or in an hour's gallop reach the sacred hill of Los Remedios, with its shrine and miraculous image. Or we may turn to the right and pause at the arch-episcopal palace of Tacuba. Here pass continually construction-trains carrying tools and supplies to Palmer's army of dusky laborers—a host half as large as the regular army of the United States. Hourly they are driving their bars of steel farther and farther into the country of silver toward Laredo and the unresting peoples of the North.

Robert H. Lamborn.