

"Hardly that."

"Uncle?"

"Perhaps; I never had an uncle. But, after all, it is more like—" Here she stopped again.

"Guardian?" suggested Dexter; "they are always remarkable persons, at least in books. Never mind the name, Anne; I am content to be simply your friend."

During the evening he made one allusion to the forbidden subject. "You asked me to tell you nothing regarding the

people who were at Caryl's, but perhaps the prohibition was not eternal. I spent an hour with Mrs. Heathcote this afternoon (never fear; I kept your secret). Would you not like to hear something of her?"

Anne's face changed, but she did not swerve. "No; tell me nothing," she answered. And he obeyed her wish. In a short time he took leave, and returned to the city. During the remainder of the winter she did not see him again.

WITH THE VAN-GUARD IN MEXICO.



THE CATHEDRAL, CITY OF MEXICO.

ONE may go to Mexico from New Orleans, or Galveston, or Morgan City—all places feeling very much the new stimulus lately given to Mexican trade—by steamers which are comparatively small as yet for the rough usage they are apt to meet with in the Gulf, or he may sail to Vera Cruz by the line which touches, after Havana, at Progreso, Campeachy, and other points on the tropical coast, and so proceeds to its journey's end with

considerable deliberation. It is possible, too, to cross the frontier at Matamoras, and traverse the whole length of the country by diligence; but that is only for the very adventurous, and those who deliberately choose to mix their pleasure with the greatest amount of risk and hardship. I shall not be guilty of the egotism of insisting, as the vice of some travellers is, that my own route was the best possible, but only that it was laid out

with the design of combining comfort with expedition, and, above all, as much novelty of a sort allied with the main object of the journey as possible. I took the Cuba Mail Line's steamer *Newport* to Havana, spent somewhat more than a week at that capital and in the island, and took there the French mail-steamer, which calls on her way across the Atlantic to Vera Cruz.

They allowed us to sail out from the foot of Wall Street, and even blockaded us on the way down to it, as though there were nothing whatever of unusual moment under way. In the Babel of colossal interests there the new invasion of Mexico has its place, but it is a modest enough one as yet. It is seen through the small end of the telescope. The stocks and bonds of the new enterprises are being prepared in back offices, the loans cogitated over in bank parlors. Nothing is yet upon the market; no sign of the "boom" which is likely to attend upon further stages of a development which is phenomenal in its inception and character among the histories of peoples. It so happened that the *Newport* was not only a swift sailer, but the only American something or other—perhaps the only American-built ocean steamer sailing out of New York—so that we were allowed to take a patriotic pride in her merits. We had a heavy blow off the capes of Hatteras, but not more than sufficient to enable us to test the trustworthiness in adversity of our ship, without which that thorough-going respect which it would be desirable to pay to so much elegance of upholstery and expedition of movement could not have been had. As I am a voracious narrator, there was served to us off the Pan of Matanzas, with the thermometer at ninety degrees in the shade, a dish which called itself baked ice-cream, and was in fact an ice frozen as solid as one could demand, while a crust above it was brown and smoking.

It is of use to have seen Cuba, the mother colony, to note afterward the differences and resemblances in the old Spanish tradition which essentially possesses both countries. Havana, until the beginning of the present century, was hardly more than a stopping-place for Mexico, and was helped much by the independence of 1810. The Havanese still speak with great respect of what was once the richest and most populous of the Spanish possessions,

and dwell upon the treasures of fine arts and the like to be found there. There is a fitness, too, in approaching for the new conquest of Mexico which each must make for himself—for there is no civilized country in these later times less written about and understood—by the same route as Cortez. It was in Cuba that the extraordinary man who is known in all traditions connected with the event as *El Conquistador*—the Conqueror—passed some years of a reckless youth not yet known to fame; and from Havana, like ourselves, that he dropped down with preparations still incomplete for the expedition which never ceases when contemplated to cause thrills of amazement.

The French mail-steamer has come a long journey of twenty days from St. Nazaire, touching at all sorts of alluring places such as Porto Rico and St. Thomas. All is as different as possible from an English steamer, and that is precisely the reason we have come aboard. The sailors go about in garments of two shades of blue cotton, and white canvas hats, as if equipped for some charming nautical opera. There was among the passengers a young Frenchman who had been back to his own country to marry a wife, and had brought her with him. There was a French engineer coming to report for his principals in Paris on Mexican mines; another who was the agent of a scheme for the establishment of a national bank. A young Italian of Novara, who had "Student" printed on his visiting card, had made an engagement in the capital for three years. An elderly Spaniard was coming over to look into the subject of forgotten heritages; another had obtained a position in the mines at Guanajuato; and there were commercial men, and a well-to-do Mexican family coming back from its travels. The stir of interest was by no means confined to Americans of the United States, it appeared; and it was possible in such a company to procure not a few details about the country in advance.

On the night of the third day out we had a "norther," and before sunset on the evening of the next were at Vera Cruz. The norther has a special importance in that when it blows, the Mexican harbors—so to call them—of the east coast can not be entered. The sea was still running down toward Vera Cruz as if it would overwhelm it. The sky was of an opaque gray above the low sand-hills, and afford-



DOMES OF VERA CRUZ.

ed us no glimpse of the snow-clad peak of Orizaba, which is said to greet travellers at a distance from the coast on favorable occasions. The city itself, compact and solid, with a line of domes and steeples blackened with time, roofs of substantial red tiles, plentiful balconies, and bits of wall tinted blue, green, and pink, is like a little Venice. A large crane hangs out from the end of an iron pier, and the fancy hooks on to it at once—the terminus of the English railway which is to bear us away up the extraordinary slopes from the hot lands—the *tierras calientes*—to the mysterious interior and the capital.

There is a pleasant astonishment with the looks of the place, reputed so incorrigible a haunt of pestilence; one had expected very little from the land at this point. On the other hand, he had expected a good deal more from the water at the ancient port which receives nine-tenths of the commerce of a republic of ten millions of people, backward though they have been. No, there is no shipping under cover behind distant sand points; it is useless to search for it. All there is is a little cluster of sailing ships and steamers, of which we immediately proceed to make ourselves one, lying to buoys in a wide strait quite open to the north, and tolerably screened otherwise by the coral reef on which stands the fortress of San Juan d'Ulloa, half blackened with time and powder, and half newly white-washed. Down to the south instead, on the sand, the sea is breaking over an English steamer, the *Chrysolite*, torn from her moorings and beached in the

gale of the night before; and near by us is heard the painful creaking of the pumps, which barely keep afloat an American bark come disabled into port with logs from Alvarado. We meet the captain of this latter the next day, half disconsolate, half desperate, by turns, that there is no dry-dock for repairs. He can not procure the steam-pump with which he might proceed on his way, but must sit and see ship and cargo sold for a song where there are no bidders.

Not a year passes without a number of such instances, which justify the underwriters in charging five times as much insurance to Vera Cruz as to almost any other port. The price of a very few of them would pay the cost of the works needed to make the inhospitable roadstead a harbor. There are a few rudimentary preparations of absolute necessity before Mexico can enter upon the expected new period of prosperity, and this of the creation of harbors commensurate with the increase of routes of transportation, from which it is to arise, is one of them. A system of piers and breakwaters will no doubt have to be adopted, like those in use on the channel coasts of Europe and our own great lakes. At present, while those of the Pacific are too difficult of access from the interior for considerable use, of all the ports in use on the Atlantic side there is not one where a vessel can lie in safety, and where she is not obliged to transfer her effects, as we immediately proceed to do, to shore by lighters and small boats. It is gratifying to know that the importance of some measures of

relief has impressed itself upon two of these places, Tampico and Vera Cruz, to the extent that they have very lately sought plans from our countryman Captain Eads, who finds himself in the country in connection with his unique scheme of the Tehuantepec ship railway.

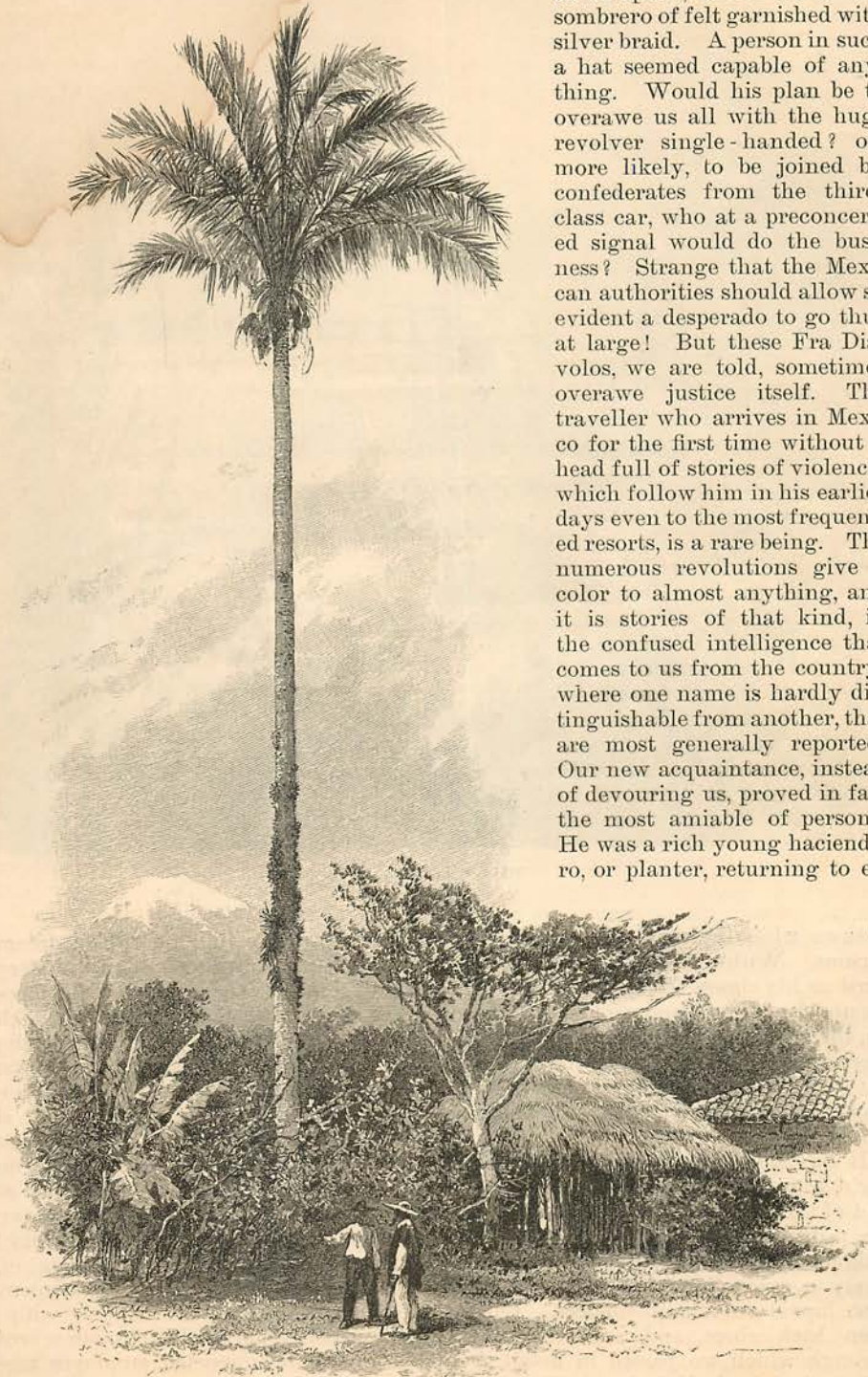
In an existence of going on four hundred years, Vera Cruz has arrived at a population of seventeen thousand. The interior view of the place does not belie the promise of the first glimpse. The churches are of irregular, picturesque shapes, with nice bells. The principal one, in a little shaded plaza, has a dome of colored mosaic tiles, which shine in the sun—a style we shall see plenty of farther on. The principal shops have a well-furnished air, especially in the branches of groceries and heavy hardware, and the custom-house square is stuffed to repletion with cotton bales, railroad iron, and miscellaneous goods waiting transportation. The principal street is called De la Independencia, and leads to a short concrete promenade bordered with stone benches and palm-trees. It is early discovered that the Mexican is very patriotic. He names his streets after his battles, as particularly the Cinco de Mayo, fought at Puebla against the French, and even has a way of joining the names of his heroes to those of cities. Thus Puebla is Puebla de Zaragoza, commandant in the same great battle of the 5th of May; and Oaxaca is Oaxaca of (President) Juarez.

Grass grows in the joints of the stones in the minor streets, and open gutters run in the centre. One might be in some such Italian city as Mantua. The *zopilotes* of which travellers have written sit on long straight water-spouts projecting from the houses. They are large, raven black, dignified, and aloft there against the deep blue sky have an appearance of carved architectural ornaments. There are street-cleaning departments elsewhere which are far less ornamental, at any rate. Notices of a bull-fight for the coming Sunday are posted on the dead-walls. A tram car of a peculiar pattern runs out to the open fields, where there is a dancing place and ball ground. There is a view, in passing, of the cemetery, which should be a leading institution indeed at Vera Cruz; and yet when one is on the ground, as is apt to be the case, there are mitigations to be found even of the terrors of yellow fever. Pall-bearers in

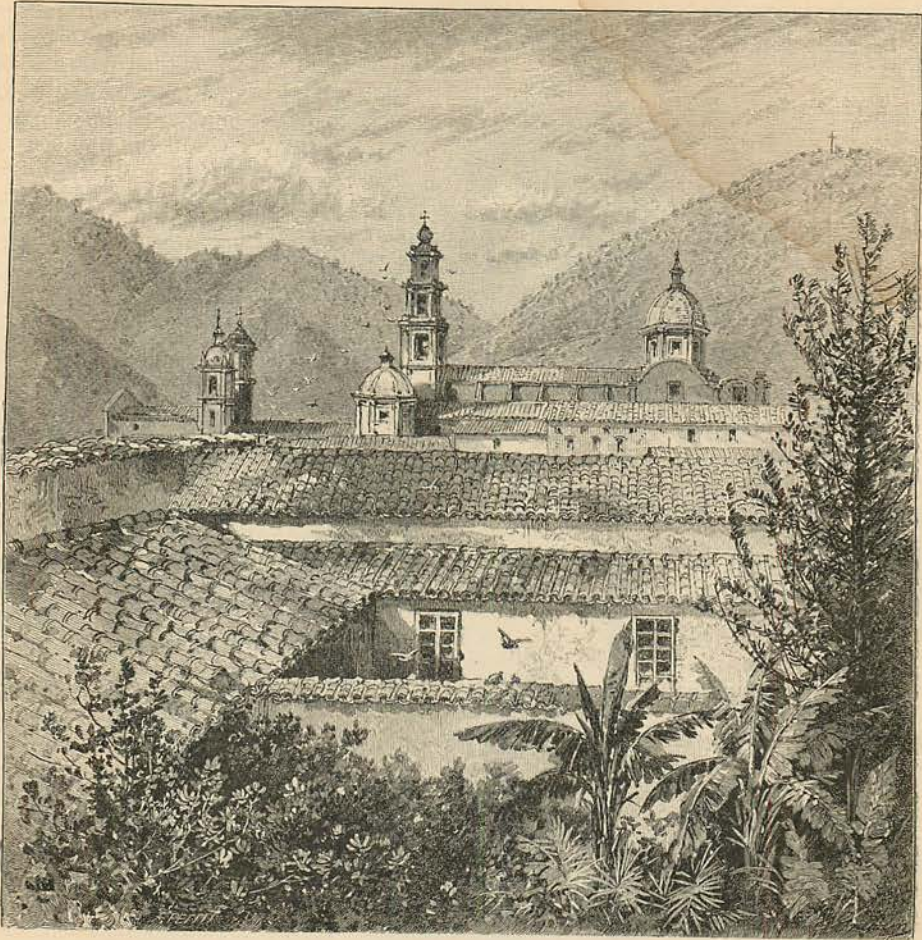
gloomy weeds are naturally expected to form a considerable part of the population, just as murderers and kidnappers of all sorts are expected to abound elsewhere. But an American resident assured me that in four years he had known but one of our countrymen to die of the *vomito*, as it is called, and very few to have it. Its chief havoc is among the poor and badly nourished. The American consul, himself a physician, and a resident of twelve years' standing, is strenuous in his views as to the harm done to the commercial interests of both countries by ignorance and misrepresentations on the subject. It is certain that the local authorities do not regard the disease as contagious, putting those afflicted side by side with surgical patients in the hospital; from which it seems that if the case were really looked into, there may be as little need of the annoying quarantine against yellow fever, at least of this variety, as if it were simple ague.

The train on the English railway puts out at eleven at night. There is but one train each way a day, and the journey consumes twenty hours. This journey over the first railway in Mexico, which rises 7500 feet in a total distance of 260 miles, has been sufficiently described as a great engineering feat to stimulate, but by no means to allay, curiosity. One may be a person of some intelligence, and yet not have the faintest idea of the character of the events that await him. The passengers in the third-class car began the night with singing and playing a harmonica. A car containing an escort of half a company of dusky Indian soldiers in dark blue uniform was coupled on. There climbed into the coach, divided into compartments and comfortably padded on the English plan, in which I had found a place with the French engineer come to examine mines, and the young Frenchman returning with his bride, so lawless and bizarre looking a person that the French engineer come to examine mines thought it the part of prudence to descend hastily and seek other quarters. It was the first glimpse of a personal aspect much affected by young Mexicans who aspire to a dashing air of fashion of a wholly national kind.

Our new friend wore a short black jacket, under which appeared a huge revolver; a red handkerchief knotted about his neck; tight pantaloons with broad



stripes of silver coins; immense silver spurs; and an enormous sombrero of felt garnished with silver braid. A person in such a hat seemed capable of anything. Would his plan be to overawe us all with the huge revolver single-handed? or, more likely, to be joined by confederates from the third-class car, who at a preconcerted signal would do the business? Strange that the Mexican authorities should allow so evident a desperado to go thus at large! But these Fra Diavolos, we are told, sometimes overawe justice itself. The traveller who arrives in Mexico for the first time without a head full of stories of violence, which follow him in his earlier days even to the most frequented resorts, is a rare being. The numerous revolutions give a color to almost anything, and it is stories of that kind, in the confused intelligence that comes to us from the country, where one name is hardly distinguishable from another, that are most generally reported. Our new acquaintance, instead of devouring us, proved in fact the most amiable of persons. He was a rich young haciendero, or planter, returning to es-



HILL OF EL BORRAJO.

tates on which he employed six hundred persons. Within no long time he had offered us his cigars, given us details upon his novel costume; and we had even tried on, the bride and all, the formidable sombrero, and learned that the price of such a one in the market (a favorite piece of Mexican extravagance) is from twenty to thirty dollars.

It was moonlight, and sleep on such a night seemed out of the question. Not a foot of the country ought to be lost. But the padded coach was comfortable; the fatigues of the day had been severe; the lively conversations became fitful, and then lapsed into long silences. I have been back since, and seen the places through which we passed in detail; but this first night, half dozing, half waking, sometimes even alighting, driven by cu-

riosity, is wholly like a troubled dream, the waking part stranger than the sleeping. Palms and bananas and the dense coffee shrubbery, with hamlets of thatched cottages sleeping peacefully among them; a glimpse of cataract; an Indian mother singing to her baby; perfumes coming in at the window; statuesque, silent men in blankets, and Moorish-looking women offering fruits; stations from the outer door of which when reached no town was visible, but only an immense darkness; persons taking coffee in lighted interiors; the dusky soldiers laughing with loud guffaws in their compartment; a few startling words in English, with a Southern or even a good Hibernian accent, as some of the imported employés meet casually and exchange a comment, generally unfavorable, upon their situation

in the country—these are the petty incidents that fix themselves in the memory.

As soon as the first gray of daylight appears, it seems incumbent on us to begin to admire the country. We are not far past Cordova, the centre of the most important coffee-growing interest.

"*Pouf!*" says our friend the hacien-dero.

He will not take the trouble yet to look out of the window. It is apparent that he expects something very much better. We have, in fact, passed some remarkable things in the night, but the best is still before us, and presently it begins.

At a little station called Fortin we commence to wind along the side of one of the vast sudden gorges which impede travel in the country, the *barranca* of Metlac. There are horseshoe curves which almost permit the traditional feat of the brakeman on the rear car lighting his pipe at the locomotive. We pass tunnels and trestle bridges, see our route above and below us on the hills in such parallel traces that it is hardly possible to understand that these are not so many different roads instead of the same. There is a point above Maltrata which is distant but two and a half miles in a direct line, but must be reached by twenty miles of zigzagging by rail. The history of this road, from the political point of view, presents hardly fewer obstacles and vicissitudes than those opposed by nature to its engineers. It passed under the rule of forty different presidencies, lost and recovered its charter, and, though of so moderate a length, required thirty years and thirty millions of dollars to build it.

The passengers are seen running out at the small stations for flowers, of which the hedges are full. We give the bride in our carriage roses, sprays of fragrant jasmine, and the splendid large scarlet tulipan, which may well pass as the type of tropical beauty. The sun came up and lighted Orizaba, rearing its 17,375 feet of altitude beside us to the right, making it first rosy red, then golden. The peak is

a perfect sugar-loaf in form, with nothing splintered and savage about it as in the mountains of Switzerland. It seems almost too tame at first, a sort of drawing-master's mountain, but by degrees one takes it from its own gentler point of view. Its white top above the tropical prospect is like snow in sherbet. Orizaba itself is an important small city, the scene of a dashing surprise of the Mexicans by the French at the hill of the Borrajo. It has charming torrents, which furnish water-power for cotton and paper mills. One of them, conveyed on the arches of an aqueduct, turns the machinery of the sugar *ingenio* of Jalapilla, which was once a summer residence of Maximilian.

A delegation of relations who had come down the night before awaited our bridal couple here. What embracing and chattering! A Mexican embrace is of a character of its own. The parties to it fall upon each other's breasts as we are accustomed to see it done on the stage. It takes place, too, between mere acquaintances, almost with the commonness of shaking of hands. A vivacious sister-in-law gives the new-comer an idea of what is before her in her future home. "I have such flowers growing in the court," she said; "oranges, camellias, azaleas, all that you have there, and more. Ah! yes, indeed. I should think so!"

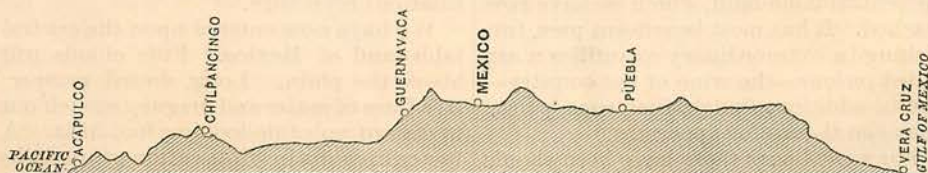
"And Jack?" inquires the husband, who is addressed as Prosper, "how always goes it with Jack?"

"Ah! he is dead, the poor beast!" replies the vivacious informant. "I regret to have to tell you that, but so it is."

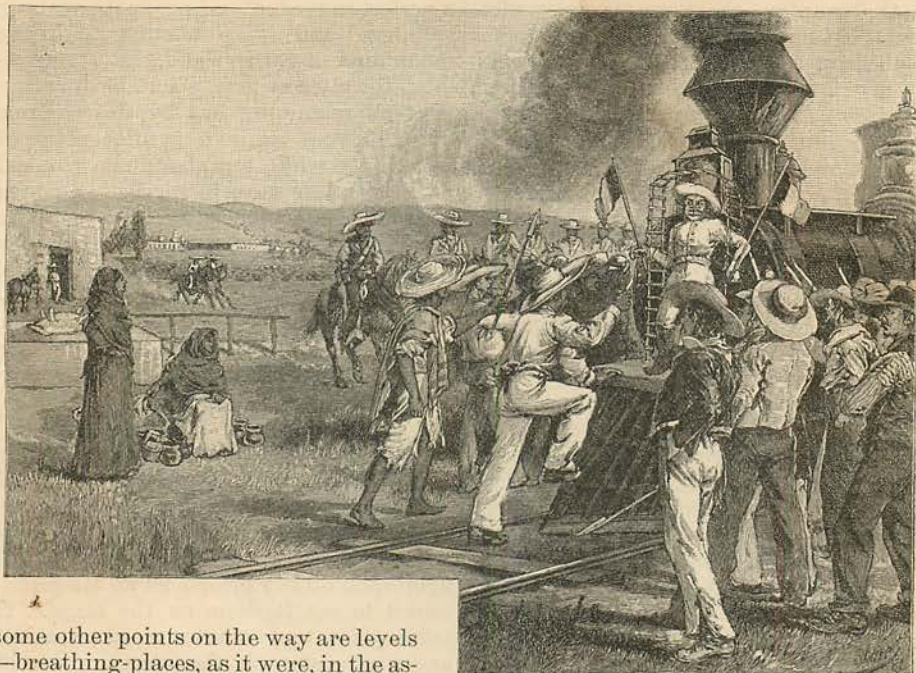
It appears that Jack was a favorite monkey, and for a moment his untimely fate casts a shade of sadness over the company.

From the heights villages and their garden patches in small valleys nestled below appear like those plans in relief prepared for international exhibitions.

Mexico is one long mountain slope from the sea to the capital, and down again to the sea on the other side. At the top and



TRANSCONTINENTAL PROFILE OF MEXICO.



THE RAILWAY JUDAS.

some other points on the way are levels—breathing-places, as it were, in the ascent. These are the table-lands, the chief seats of population, and they are utilized as far as possible by the projected new railways. This steep formation accounts for the absence of navigable streams and for the existence of climates verging from tropical to temperate, so often adverted to, so nearly side by side. The sharpness of the contrasts of climate is to be appreciated better by the more leisurely voyager. Besides, the really tropical vegetation is succeeded by a kind which to the eye of the American of the North is quite as exotic. Banana and cocoa-nut are followed by a hardy kind of date-palm; nopal or prickly-pear, as large as apple-trees with us; the tall, straight organ-cactus, greatly in use for hedges; and particularly the remarkable maguey, or century plant. What would American conservatories give, or a certain famous New York club, to possess some of these splendid specimens of the century plant eight and ten feet high! It is the typical production of the central table-land, which we have now reached. It has most beneficent uses, furnishing in extraordinary quantities a sap called *pulque*—the wine of the country—and in addition, thatch, fuel, rope, paper, and even tissues for apparel.

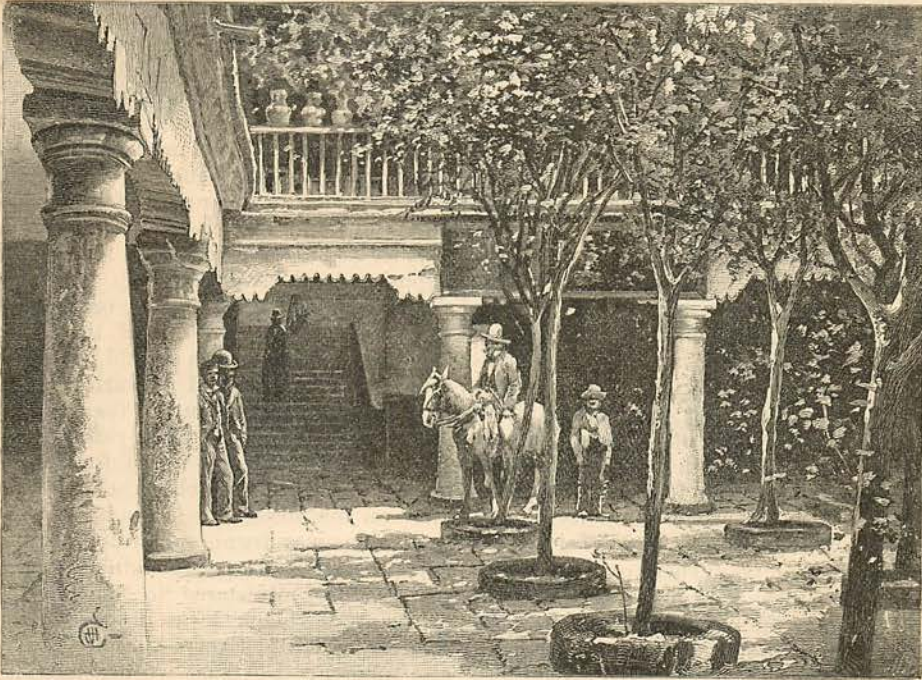
For some hours there have been shouts and a fizzing of crackers from the commoner cars, and we see mule teams and

their loads fantastically decorated. We learn that it is the *Sabado de Gloria*, the day preceding Easter, and an occasion of importance. It is devoted by custom to the particular revilement of Judas, who is made a Guy Fawkes of, and caricatured in every possible way. Venders parade the streets, and children at this time estimate their good fortune by the number of grotesque Judases they possess, just as at the season of All-Souls the object is to procure cakes, gingerbread, and even more substantial viands, moulded into the forms of death's-heads and cross-bones and coffins. We meet at the junction of Apizaco a merry excursion train for Puebla, flying with rosettes and streamers, and provided with two mammoth Judases stuffed with fire-works, one on the locomotive, the other on a baggage-car. The former is blown up in our presence amid hilarious rejoicings.

We have now entered upon the central table-land of Mexico. Fine clouds roll above the plain. Long, dotted, perspective lines of maize and maguey stretch out to distant volcanic-looking foot-hills. A few cultivators in white cotton are ploughing with wooden ploughs. At the stations squads of mounted rural police, in

leather uniforms and sashes which make them a reminiscence of Cromwell's cavaliers, salute the train. The sparse towns consist of a nucleus of excellently designed old churches in environments of mud-colored unburned brick. A thousand dollars' worth of whitewash would work a miracle in each one of them. Neither these plains nor the valley of Mexico

where vestiges remain of an ancient city that was ruined even in the time of the Aztecs, a glimpse is had of the first real pagan teocallis—the pyramids of the Sun and Moon—though we have been continually thrilling with the discovery of them all along in the symmetrically shaped foothills, which imitate their forms perfectly. Evening draws on. We are travel-



COURT-YARD OF HOUSE OF THE LATE PRESIDENT JUAREZ.

are the verdant terrestrial paradise that has been represented, but parched and brown, which is accounted for by our being at the end of the rainy season. Columns of dust whirled up like water-spouts are a regular feature in the landscape. A stage-coach going along the road is marked by its dust as a locomotive by its steam. Isolated houses there are none, with the exception, at long intervals, of a gloomy, square, fort-like hacienda, with straw-stacks and some flocks and herds near it. At Apam, the Bordelais, as it were, of the *pulque*, new-comers are accustomed to essay and make grimaces at this beverage, poured out for them from a sheep-skin bag in its natural shape. It does not commend itself to favor on a first acquaintance. At San Juan Teotihuacan,

stained and weary, but the great moment approaches. Can it be possible that these shallow pools, without sail or skiff, are the lakes on which Cortez launched his brigantines? And where are the floating gardens? Deposits of salt and alkali whiten the lonesome shores. Well, everything in due time. We shall see. We run out upon a low causeway between marshes. Other causeways, a bit of aqueduct, and dilapidated adobe walls are seen. It is a disillusionment like approaching Venice at low tide. We are at Mexico.

There is another custom-house, which is partly municipal, at the Buena Vista station. Every State charges dues at its frontiers, and the towns still collect revenue at their gates. Hackney-coaches are

one of the few things that are cheap in Mexico. One of them conveys us by what seems a long ride to the principal hotel. This was once the palace of the Emperor Iturbide, and should have something stately about it, and so it has. There is a high sculptured doorway, with an Aztec touch in the design, though not in the details, and long grotesque water-spouts project into the street. Within is a large dark arched court, with a café and billiard-room, the leading resort of the leisurely youth of the town. The office is a dark little box of a place, with two serious men in it, who have no idea of welcoming the visitor. The gorgeous and affable hotel clerk of Northern latitudes is unknown. In the rear are more courts, not arched, and around all of these the rooms are ranged.

It is not so late on the evening of our arrival but that the traveller, after dining, may still take a stroll. He will be apt to fancy at first from the quietude that reigns that his hotel is not on a principal street; but it is in fact in the most central part of the city, and on the street on which, with three others running parallel say for half a mile, and the included cross streets, the principal retail traffic is transacted. One of the early discoveries is that Mexico is a serious and by no means a gay city. There are no crowds upon the sidewalks, no eating of ices in public, no *cafés chantants*, nothing Parisian. By nine or ten o'clock the good people appear to have retired already, to be up betimes in the morning for the work of the day. A military band plays three evenings in the week, but even this, except on Sundays, is so sparsely attended that the men seem to be discoursing their music for their own amusement. Policemen are found stationed at short intervals in the quiet streets, with their lanterns set in the middle of the roadway. They are obliged by the regulations to signal their whereabouts every quarter of an hour, and the sound of their whistles, which have a shrill, doleful note, like November wind, may be heard repeated from one to another all the night through.

As the place does not expect tourists, there are almost none of the appurtenances for their enlightenment to be met with elsewhere. While this may have its annoyances, if the demands of an ardent curiosity remain too long unanswer-

ed, the freedom from responsibility to a Baedeker or a Murray has advantages of its own. The visitor with an eye for the picturesque dips into a delicious feast of novelties, makes discoveries on every hand, and may have the pleasure of testing the value of his own unaided conclusions. By daylight, with its bright colors upon it, and its normal stir of life, the famous remote capital is a very different place. By little and little the misapprehensions of the night are shaken off. From the first moment of disappointment we like it always more instead of less.

Here at length is the great central plaza, in which events of much moment have been transacted. We may actually sit down upon an iron bench at a corner of a little garden in the midst of it, the Zocalo, and make ourselves as comfortable as if we had always been used to it. The imposing cathedral piles up pyramid-shape from this point of view on the spot where stood the pyramid of the Aztec war god. These stones should be ankle-deep for all the blood of various sorts that has been spilled upon them. For the moment we are fanatic reactionists. One would gladly see again for a brief instant old Hutzilopotchli, the war god, aloft on his terrace, hear the beat of the lugubrious war-drum, and watch the dismal procession of captives winding up to the sacrifice, ministered to by the wild priests with black locks flowing upon their shoulders. Except that at the precise moment—we trust we are merciful enough for that—before it was too late, we think we should insist upon charging up the steps of the edifice with Cortez, sword in hand, to their delivery. "San Jago and Spain! when was it ever known that Castilians turned their backs upon a foe?" Down goes old Hutzilopotchli, broken into a dozen fragments, and howl as our Aztec adversaries may at the unheard-of desecration, those captives are saved.

But really it is hard to imagine desperate conflicts in this bright sunshine, with the multitudes of pretty, novel sights and sounds about. At one side is a beneficent institution, the National Loan Establishment, where once was the palace of Cortez; on another, the long white monotonous National Palace, which is on the site of that of Montezuma. The cathedral, like most of the earlier architecture, is of the Renaissance style, run far



A FLOWER SHOW IN THE ZOCALO.

into the vagaries of rococo; but it is saved by its massiveness, except in respect to the terminations of its towers, which are in the shape of immense bells, from any appearance of finicality. Adjoining, and forming now a part of it, is another church, in a rich dark red volcanic stone, with a front that recalls the fantastic façades of Portuguese Belem. What a water-color the mass would make, and especially if it could be taken on one of the perfect moonlight nights, which bring out every line of the sculpture softly, and display it all like a lovely vision! There are book-stalls about the foot of it, and gay booths devoted to the sale of refreshing drinks—*aguas nevadas*. The large simple jars and pitchers in which these are contained are fine specimens of ceramic ware. With a characteristic taste in decoration, the Indian occupants frequently cover the whole front with flowers. Dusky Juanas and Josefás, with straight black braids of hair down their

backs, are seen forming inscriptions in letters of pink and blue corn-flowers.

Figures go by whose blankets one burns to take from them for portières. The men of the poorer sort wear or carry universally the *serape*—a blanket with a slit in the centre for the insertion of the head. Apart from its artistic patterns, it is a useful garment in many emergencies. It is not the most improbable thing in the world that, in the course of the Mexican revival, we may yet see it introduced in the States, and running the course of popularity of the Ulster. The corresponding national garment of women is the *rebozo*, a shawl or scarf, generally of blue cotton, which, crossed over the head and lower part of the face, gives a Moorish appearance. The background of life is more like opera than sober existence. Two other sides of the square are occupied by long arcades, among the merchants of which, protected from the sun and rain, one may wander by the hour, watching the shrewd de-

vices of trade, and picking up those knick-knacks, trifling in the country of their origin, which are certain to be curiosities elsewhere. From time to time pass across the view, dark and Egyptian-like in appearance, in a peculiar dress of their own, and trudging under heavy burdens, Indians who have best preserved the traditions of their race. These have affected me as the most impressive of all. Followed to their homes, they are found to dwell among ruined walls in the outskirts, in adobe huts which can have changed very little in aspect since the Conquest.

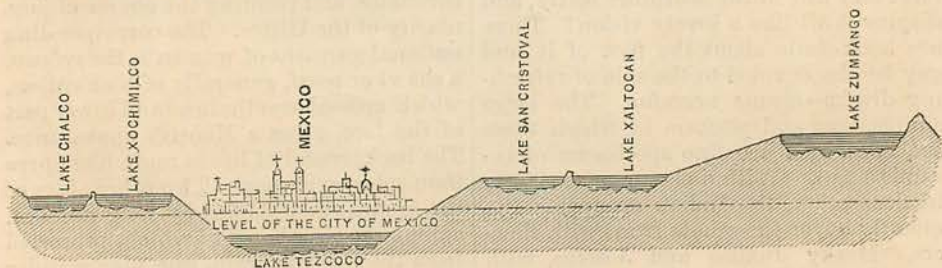
These Indians have peculiar, pleasant voices, rather in contrast to the Spanish voice, which is apt to be harsh. Their manners, too, are above their surroundings. It is a favorite Mexican expression to say, "This is your house," and I have had them on being introduced say, "Well, remember number so-and-so of such a street is your house." So, in the same way, it happened to me once, on looking with curiosity into one of these abodes, to ask an elderly woman who stood near by, by way of making talk, if it were hers. "Yes," she replied at once; "and yours also, sir."

The trees neither in the Zocalo nor the Alameda (a park occupying somewhat the position of the Common in Boston) have the hoary antiquity one would expect in such time-honored places. But it appears that the setting out of the trees, and the formation of the Zocalo entirely, is largely of modern date, and the work of Maximilian, a monarch who in his short, ill-fated reign had many excellent ideas. The centre of the Zocalo is occasionally allowed to be inclosed, for some select festivity orations were delivered there on the national festival of the 5th of May. Again there was a charming flower show, to which came the ladies of the upper society, the young ones in charge of their

chaperons, and almost all in the graceful mantilla instead of the bonnet.

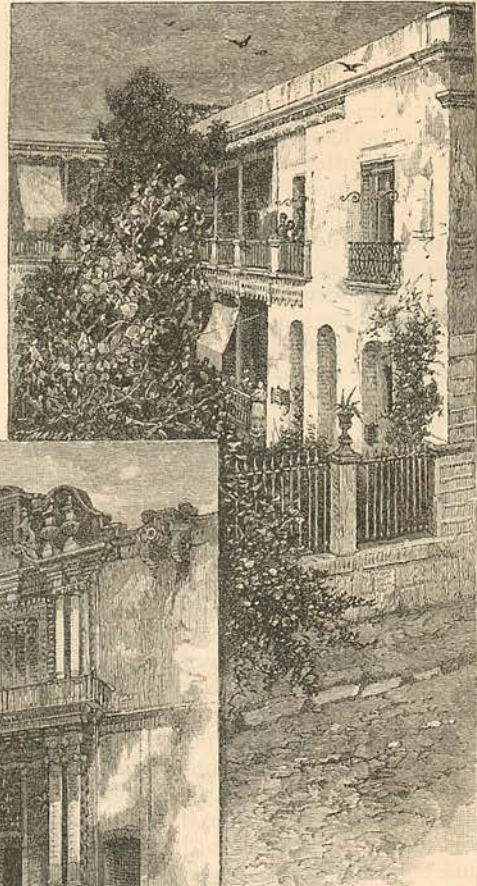
Tramways run out of the plaza in many directions. The city early utilized this invention, and boasts of having one of the most complete existing systems. Their inscriptions have an attractive look. One is enticed to take all the different routes at once. Patience! it is all accomplished in time—to Guadalupe Hidalgo, with its treasures and its miraculous virgin; Tacubaya, with its villas; Dolores, with its cemetery; La Viga, with its picturesque canal giving access to the *chinampas* of flowers and vegetables—the floating gardens, which after all really do exist; the gates of Belem and Niño Perdido, familiar in the story of the American capture of the city; and particularly—yes, above all—to Chapultepec, theatre of vaunted exploits of American valor, and of moving events in every historic epoch.

Mexico is extraordinarily flat, and its streets laid as regularly at right angles as in our own most symmetrical town. At the ends of all of them, in whatsoever direction, the view is closed by mountains. Its flatness, together with its position in reference to the adjoining series of lakes, is one of the circumstances which have occasioned the greatest solicitude in the past, and still call for almost as much. Bad odors beset the nostrils, and stagnant gutters, neglected heaps of garbage, the sight, of the wayfarer about the interesting streets. The situation in this particular is a crying shame. The citizens of Mexico should stop, as if an enemy were at their gates, and devote themselves to its remedy. Not another railroad should be built, not another dollar voted to any public purpose, till it is attended to. Rich Americans and others who are expected to make their winter residence here will not do it under such conditions. It is neither merciful nor politic to any one to mince the matter.



SECTION OF COMPARATIVE-LEVELS OF LAKES.

The drainage problem of the city, divested of the mystery with which it has been surrounded in learned treatises, is simply this. When the vast slope from the sea has been surmounted, and the Valley of Mexico—of the height of the Swiss pass of St. Gothard—reached, it is found to form a shallow cup-like depression containing six lakes. These are of many different levels. Tezcoco is the lowest. On the edge of this, or even in the midst of it, like another Venice, with canals for streets, the ancient Mexico was built. Tezcoco as the lowest formerly received the drainage of the others. On the slightest accession of water, therefore, the city, which is even now, after a considerable shrinkage in all the lakes, but a little more than six feet, at its central portion, above the mean surface of Tezcoco, was inundated. To obviate this the waters of the three upper lakes, San Cristoval, Xaltocan, and Zumpango, were turned backward (as has been done to the river at Chicago in these



SEMI-VILLA ON THE PASAD OF BUCARELLI.



THE SPANISH PALACE IN THE CALLE DE JESUS.



THE MODERN STYLE.



PORCELAIN HOUSE IN SAN FRANCISCO STREET.

late years) by a great Spanish work of the early seventeenth century—the Cut of No-chistongo—through the mountains, and got rid of in the direction of the Atlantic.

But Tezcoco itself has no outlet, and, as experience has proved, with only Chalco and Xochimilco to be taken care of, is liable to flood the city yet. With the desired relief from this peril is inseparably bound up also the drainage problem. The fall is so slight at best that even with Lake Tezcoco preserved at a normal level, and kept from backing up into the sewers, there is no destination for the refuse received by it but to lie a festering mass of corruption in the stagnant water. With all the rest is complicated also the question of irrigation for the valley. No end of plans have been offered to resolve the whole or a part of these difficulties. The history of them would make an interesting chapter in itself. Some have proposed to pump out the lake by steam; others, to intercept the waters running into it, and allow it to dry; another, to exhaust it by a great siphon, built of stone and cement. But the judgment of most has been in favor of establishing a current by means of a direct canal to some point lower than the lake itself. The mountains in the neighborhood have been ransacked for the most favorable point of exit. Such a plan was officially adopted, in fact, and a considerable beginning made, under the direction of an able engineer of foreign education, Don Francisco Garay. But the works were allowed to languish. Neither government nor community seemed more than half-hearted in the effort to get rid of evils to which they had so long been used, and at present all is at a stand-still.

Choosing streets at random where all are attractive, and proceeding to their terminations in this direction and in that, you arrive now at a *cul-de-sac*, now at a city gate, now at vestiges of adobe fortifications, and a moat. Few vehicles apart from the coaches are seen, but plenty of troops of laden donkeys, and everywhere the cotton-clad natives themselves bearing loads the beasts of burden might refuse. There is a story that when wheelbarrows were first introduced on the railroads, the peons filled them in the usual way, and then carried them on their backs.

Each separate establishment of the minor traffic has its distinctive marks. The butcher, who is elsewhere a personage with no great taste for ornament, here has

crimson banners, and his brass scales bedecked with rosettes. A mule trotting along with quarters of beef or carcasses of mutton on each side hung from hooks brings him his supplies. But it is especially the *pulque* establishments, corresponding to our corner liquor stores, which devote themselves to decoration. Not one so poor as to be found without its ambitious fresco of a battle scene, or subject from mythology or romance. They delight in such titles as "The Ancient Glories of Mexico," "The Famous St. Lorenzo," "The Terrestrial Paradise," and even "The Delirium."

On the tramways pass not only passenger-cars, but platforms carrying freight—moving the household goods of a family, for instance. There are impressive catafalques and mourning-cars also, running smoothly along, for funeral processions. Both of these might be advantageous ideas for suburban lines of our own. Presently comes by a more expeditious funeral yet—a couple of peons at a jog-trot bearing a black coffin on their shoulders. Battered old churches and convents on a great scale, and of a grandiose architecture, now for the most part devoted to other purposes, are encountered with extraordinary frequency. But for the sequestration acts, Mexico must have become, if it were not already, one vast ecclesiastical edifice. Supposing only the operation of common causes, it is easily seen how the Church corporations—repositories of the gifts of the faithful, moved by no feverish haste of speculation, and with no reckless heirs to spend their gains—must in the lapse of time become possessed of an enormous share of the goods of the communities in which they exist.

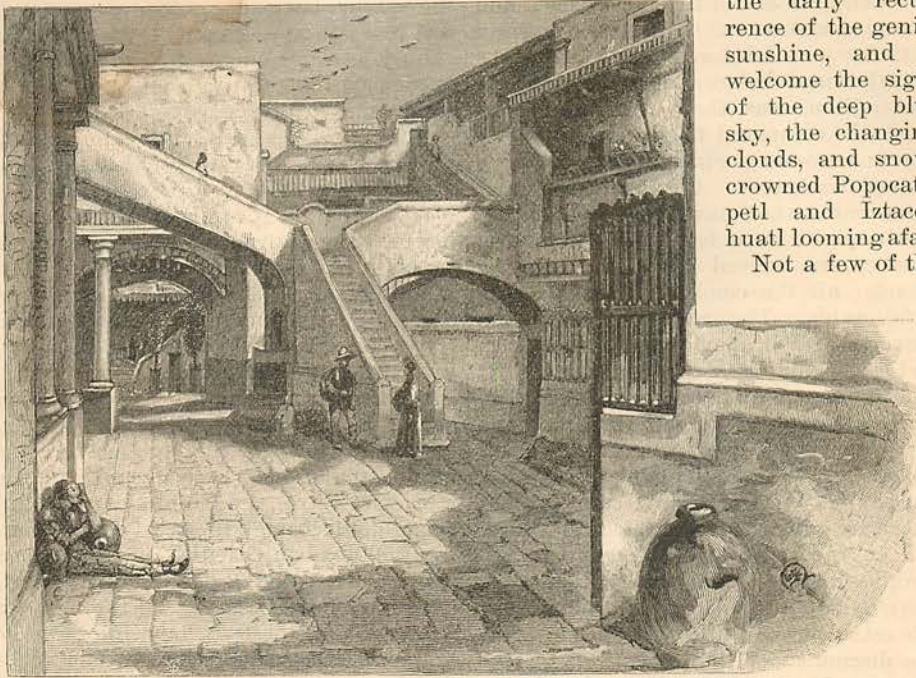
There is no lack of sculptured old rococo palaces of the conquerors and their near successors either. Many of these are in the peculiar rich red stone before mentioned. Many have carved escutcheons. There is one with immense water-spouts in its cornice, cut in the shape of field-pieces, with half the diameter of the wheels projecting. But infinitesimal quantities of vacant building land exist within the circuit of the city. All is compact. The Continental system of *portes cochères* and interior court-yards prevails. How many glimpses, both pleasing and curious, we get into these interiors, through the open doors! What a pity that the severity of our winters prevents some essays in build-

ing in a style which would be so admirably adapted to our summers! At the entrances of some, which are apparently tenement-houses, are placed pious dedicatory signs, as "Casa de la Santisima," "Casa de la Divina Providencia." From

are best worth having—only gradually and by easy stages. Noting for a considerable time—since a few agreeable days are to be had anywhere—the extraordinary evenness of the temperature, one begins to appreciate, first with wonder, then

with admiration, the daily recurrence of the genial sunshine, and to welcome the sight of the deep blue sky, the changing clouds, and snow-crowned Popocatepetl and Iztaccihuatl looming afar.

Not a few of the



ENTRANCE TO TENEMENT-HOUSES.

our hotel is visible a mansion entirely faced (inside as well as out) with colored tiles—a china house as piquant as if it belonged in a fairy tale.

Back at the hotel, meanwhile, the courtyard of the deceased Emperor Iturbide is full of Americans or of English-speaking foreigners, sitting about, discussing their projects. For the most part, when off duty, they grumble a little. They do not find themselves exactly right in health. They have dizziness and loss of appetite, owing to the rarity of the atmosphere. They accommodate themselves ill to the delays interposed by lack of familiarity with the language, and to the different manners and customs. But this is only a temporary stage, and it is a pity that any should go away before the month or so is past which is necessary in order to become used to the peculiarities of the climate. Mexico extends her friendship and favors—like all those friendships perhaps which

figures in these gossiping groups have a national and even more than a mere national reputation. Most familiar among them is Grant, who has certainly done nothing unworthy of his great fame in lending a part of it to the development of the resources of a much-suffering people. Does he ever reflect in these historic halls, one wonders in passing, on the meteoric career of the Emperor Iturbide? Has all the talk on Cæsarism ever put the idea the least in the world in his head? Rumors, mischievous to the cause of amity and progress, run of late that it is in Mexico, not in the United States, that he desires to found his empire. Certainly it would be difficult to imagine so unmelodramatic a figure in the robes and stars and crosses in which Iturbide caused himself to be arrayed, after the pattern of Napoleon. Iturbide wrote in his memoirs—which for a naïve display of egotism are highly interesting reading—one sagacious sentence:

"Devotees of theories are apt to forget that in the moral as in the physical order only a gradual progress can be expected." But the fallacy was in the application. The empire can never educate the citizen for the republic.

The projects in the mouths of the circle of foreigners are of the most varied and sweeping character. It is a phenomenon with few parallels, as has been said.

Only once before, on the coming of Maximilian, was there something that might be compared to the present stir of life in a country which the century has seemed to ignore. Could a permanent government then have been established, much might have been done. But the new-comers arrived as masters, not as friends; all the conditions were wholly unfavorable. The real substantial improvements, too, apart from the mere glitter for the comfort of the throne, were but a faint presage of those proposed to-day. Here the more efficient lighting of the city is discussed; here the working of coal mines; here the establishment of sugar refineries, shoe factories, and cotton mills. There are constructors of telegraph lines, and engineers about starting out on reconnoissances. This person has come down to look into coffee plantations; that, into establishing a line of steamers. This one discourses of the tranquillity of the country. He asserts that three ploughs are now sold to one revolver, and names prominent bandits who have become peaceable hacendados. Another has come up from the interior with a great scheme of a colony and mines, much too rose-colored, one would say, with which he will start back to New York to organize a syndicate. Of mines of gold and silver there is no lack. These are one of the specialties of the country. But it is to be said of them that they present fully the uncertainties by which mining is characterized elsewhere, and are perhaps the least promising of the investments offering. But it is the business of railroad-building and of procuring charters and subventions from the government that as yet throws all else into the shade. Five great lines, two of which have already made long strides forward, are to traverse the country from north to south, and more than twice as many from east to west, connecting the oceans. There were said, a short time ago, when but a portion of this work was laid out, to be six hundred American engineers in Mexico.

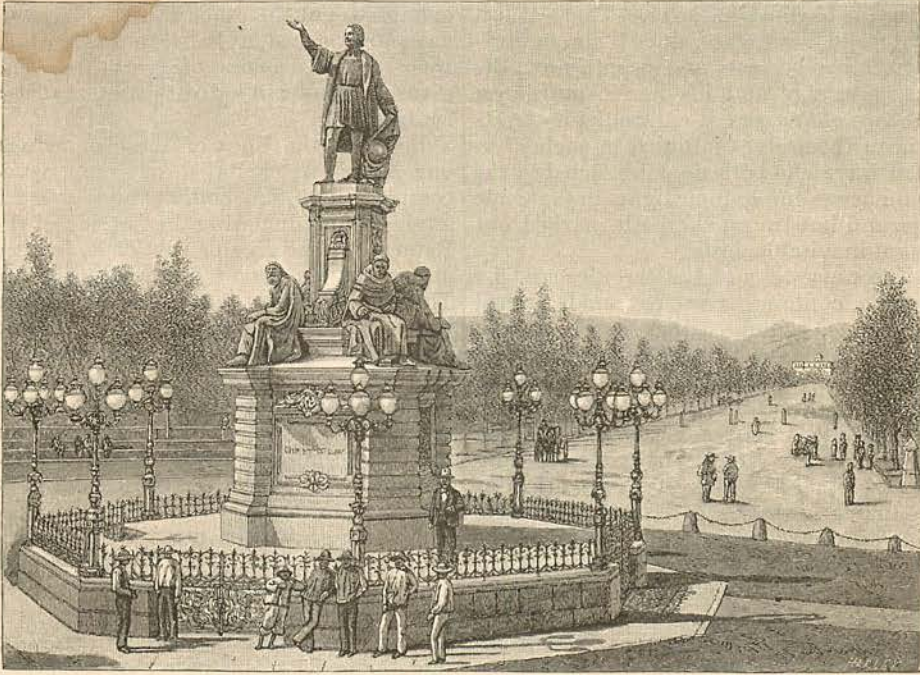
These are often young graduates of Cornell and other well-known polytechnic schools. In the capital the engineers and employés form settlements in boarding-houses of their own; make resorts of certain economical restaurants where little but English is heard. They associate little with the natives, but go about their work rough and ready in appearance, postponing finalities of adornment till the heat and burden of the campaign are over, and a respite may legitimately be taken.

The point is, or one of the leading points at least is, whether the capital itself is going to be a great city. It seems impossible to doubt it. It can be seen what cities have sprung up from nothing at the mere junction of railroads. Here is one with a population of 250,000 people already, a seat of government and of schools, colleges, museums, and galleries of fine arts, with three hundred and sixty years of existence and traditions of great fascination behind it, an admirable climate, and extraordinary scenery. There are to come into it (and already built in portions) the Mexican Central, the National, and the International through the heart of the country, the Mexican Oriental on the eastern sea-board, and the Occidental on the western, and General Grant's road, the Mexican Southern—all these to have interoceanic branches and feeders; the Morelos road, the Acapulco road, the English road to Vera Cruz, another, now constructing, to the same point by Puebla and Jalapa, and a number of shorter lines of only relatively less importance. But a small portion of this would be sufficient to create a new metropolis outright, while Mexico, as we have seen, has grown to a certain greatness with no advantages at all, not even tolerable wagon-roads. It seems its manifest destiny, with its central position in the country, and on the transcontinental line, and its existing prestige, to become the central depository and place of exchange for the products of the whole country. It ought to become a favorable point, too, for manufactures, and the metropolitan residence of the wealthy from the cities of the interior, who have come rarely to the capital heretofore, and, like the Senators and Deputies, never even thought of bringing their families, owing to the barbarous state of the roads. The existing difficulties in the way of communication can hardly be conceived. There are perfectly authentic accounts of persons having

gone down from Mexico to Vera Cruz, from there to New York, from there across the plains to San Francisco, and thence by Pacific mail-steamer to Acapulco, rather than make the direct journey of 300 miles on muleback over the sierra.

One shrewd American among the rest, at any rate, sitting about with our much-

spur. This was the intelligent forecast of Maximilian, a ruler more gifted in the elegant arts of life than in the ferocities of Mexican war and statecraft. He made Chapultepec his summer palace also, and laid out to it the handsome Calzada, or Boulevard, of the Reform, which has become the afternoon drive and promenade,



THE DRIVE TO CHAPULTEPEC.

occupied friends in the Iturbide arcade, counting upon some such development, has bethought him of an enterprise almost at the very door which seems more promising than many of the gold mines and railway charters. When the map is studied, there appears, owing to present compactness of building, and the low and undesirable character of the land on the other sides, but one direction in which the city can progress. The city of the future, the new Mexico, must, on all accounts—drainage, scenery, convenience of access—advance up the gentle rise toward the west, to the slope of the foot-hills of which the famous Chapultepec, ex-palace of the Montezumas and of the viceroys, ex-military school, ex-fortress, and now observatory, commanding one of the most charming views of the valley, is the foremost

the Central Park and Bois de Boulogne, of fashionable Mexico. It is an avenue nearly two miles long, from a certain famous equestrian statue of Charles IV. of Spain, which was the first bronze statuary cast in this hemisphere—and excellent work it is still—and 200 feet wide, with double rows of trees—eucalyptus and ash—shading its sidewalks. The Mexican equestrian dandy should be observed as he curvets his horse along it of an afternoon among the fine carriages. He wears not only his weighty spurs and silver-braided sombrero now, but a cutlass at his saddle-bow, and a larger revolver than before. It is not that there is need of them, since a couple of mounted carbineers, of whom there is no great need either, are stationed at nearly every hundred yards, but as a part of his peculiar form of display. And

in this, too, some of our young Americans, of those who have become residents of the country, out-Mexican the Mexicans themselves, carrying all their customs to an exaggerated extreme.

There are to be six great circles spaced at intervals along the way. The first, containing a fine Columbus, is finished; and Guatemozin, for the second, is in progress. The next, it is said, by a singular irony, is to contain Cortez. There at last will stand face to face, since their countrymen have become one people now, the heroic savage and his heroic murderer, the two characters of contradictory traits within themselves mingled in such a human way, who both no doubt acted in the main according to their lights in that rude age, and but traced the path marked out by an inevitable destiny.

The causeways of La Veronica and La Romita, containing ancient small arched aqueducts, which bring water to the city, branch off from Chapultepec, and form two sides of an obtuse triangle, which has the Calzada de la Reforma in the middle. It was along these causeways that the Americans came running in that other invasion of a very different character in 1847. It is told that when Shields was charging along that to the right, after the fall of the castle, Scott, fearing imprudent haste, sent to detain him. The aide had got as far as, "General Scott presents his compliments—" But Shields, apprehending the unwelcome purport of the message, cut him short with, "I have no time for compliments just now," and hurried on where he could not be overtaken. Do the Mexicans bear us a grudge for all this? They seem amiably to have forgotten every trace of it; and far be it from us to revive such memories in any boasting spirit. It was a wretched piece of business at best. There is a behind-the-scenes to it here, when one is upon the ground. It is almost pathetic, and by no means calculated to, add to self-complacency, to read the Mexican account of what took place, in the small history, for instance, studied in the schools. The almost unbroken series of rebuffs, after which they went up time after time without a hope of success to the slaughter, are frankly admitted. The country was torn by internal dissensions. The generals went back from the field to put down or sustain the government, refused to aid one another in their operations, and avail-

ed themselves of the troops given them to combat the Americans to put themselves in power. There were not less than eleven changes of government, chiefly violent, during the short course of the war. In February and March of the year in which the invaders made their entry there was fighting in the streets of the capital for well-nigh a month between the forces of two Presidents, neither quite strong enough to put the other down. Want of gallantry is not a Mexican failing. It was want of leaders, of everything that gives steadiness in a great crisis, that was against them.

Between the lines of these aqueducts our American capitalist, or company, if company it be, has bought the whole triangle of land, inclosing the Calzada of the Reform for the greater part of its length, at one sudden swoop, for building upon. There it lay vacant, except for use as pasture, and nobody had thought of taking it for such a purpose. For one reason, it has not been safe, till the establishment of the excellent law and order which all concede to prevail under the last and the present administrations, to live too far remote from the thickly settled districts. For another, the city itself has furnished room enough till the present for most of those who desired to find a place in it. But what accommodations will be needed now that these days of effervescence have arrived, and imaginations are regaling themselves with the vision of so great a future, is not at all an easy matter to determine.

Villas are spoken of, to be built by the company, and restricted rights, so as to preserve a select and park-like aspect. The surveyor has already begun his imposing maps, and districting into blocks and streets. There are to be more than enough front lots on the fashionable Calzada alone to pay the absurdly modest first cost. By the Mexican law property is not taxed, except upon such revenue as it produces. A piece of land, or a house or shop, might be improving in value, if untenanted, till it was worth an immense sum without paying one cent—a condition which would seem to make Mexico, for real estate speculation, the most glorious country in the world. There are already Artesian wells for fountains and gardens; excellent building stone from the old Spanish quarries—with the old Spanish towers upon them still standing—is so

near to the proposed extension of the city that it may be drawn upon the ground with the greatest expedition. A grand hotel, to eclipse anything on the continent, is also talked of in the enthusiasm of the moment as one of the features of the scheme.

If it do but surpass, or even equal, some of our better hotels of the second grade, it will be a boon to the place to be heartily thankful for. It will receive the American travellers, whose tastes are now so little consulted, to a unit; and it may expect by no means a few of the Mexicans themselves, who are not slower than the rest of the world in recognizing a good thing when it is presented to them. Here in their grand hotel, or in their villas among their gardens, watching the equipages of wealth and fashion drive by, and looking off to the vast snow volcanoes on the horizon, it is promised that the well-to-do Americans who come to pass the

winter, the magnates who have made great fortunes in the new enterprises, and those of the country who will have learned how better to enjoy those they already possess, will be found.

Ten years is about the period allotted, within which we shall see what we shall see. There are probably 30,000 men working on railroads throughout the country, and the first American line will be completed to the frontier in two years. What clouds may come over the smiling prospect in a decade! This mysterious Mexican character, so different from our own, who can say of what it will yet be capable? These are the schemes that greet the observer on every hand. One might be in Chicago or Omaha. This is the new wine; this is the fresh turmoil of ideas amid the old, old scenes and traditions, that makes it worth while to be with the van-guard of the American movement in Mexico.

 JOURNALISTIC LONDON.

Fourth Paper.

IT is only about twenty years since my father laid down one of the first printing-machines and started the first penny newspaper in Derbyshire, in sight of George Stephenson's windows at Tapton. I ought, therefore, not to have been surprised, one day this year, to find the founder of the cheap press alive and well. Almost my first recollections are of country barns and pastoral gateways bearing the printed legend, *Lloyd's Newspaper*. Recently, as I made my way to Salisbury Square, dim visions of a boyhood when reform riots and bread riots and Chartist riots were talked about by grown men filled my mind and started many speculations as to the author of the *Lloyd's Newspaper* which those same grown men used to speak of, some with admiration, some with contumely and contempt. It was always a strong, outspoken, Liberal paper, this pioneer of the cheap press. Had the originator written to me, or was "Edward Lloyd" his son? Should I really see the mutilator and idealizer of the king's penny in the flesh, or merely the inheritor of his penny property? Was ever the power of pence so splendidly demonstrated as in the penny press? After inquiring for Mr. Lloyd at the palatial offices of *The Daily Chronicle*,

I was directed to 12 Salisbury Court, and there in an unpretentious little room I found Mr. Edward Lloyd, a hale, hearty, middle-aged, florid-complexioned, white-haired gentleman. He introduced me to his son, a stalwart young fellow, who was amused at the surprise I expressed at not finding the head of the firm a tottering old gentleman of the aspect usually thought characteristic of Father Time and the venerable Parr. Mr. Lloyd is old enough to have originated the cheap press, and young enough to be vigorously occupied in establishing the newest daily paper. Responding to a remark about the literary interest of the locality in which I found him, he said, "This house was Richardson's printing-office; in this room he wrote *Pamela*, and here Oliver Goldsmith acted as his reader." The old familiar story: you are treading on historic ground every foot you move in London, historic not in a mere antiquarian sense, nor in the narrow meaning of age being historic, but in the breadth of human interest and universal fame. There is not a court hereabouts but it is linked with the history of all that is great and glorious in English letters, from Shakspeare to Hood, from Fielding to Thackeray, from Caxton, the first printer, to his great successors, and



HOMES OF THE POOR.

COMMERCIAL, SOCIAL, AND POLITICAL MEXICO.

IT is perhaps thought that the work of improvement in Mexico is to be effected by foreigners entirely, the Mexican remaining passive, and allowing everything to be done for him. The view is supported by the extent to which the business of the country already is seen to be in the hands of foreigners. The bankers and manufacturers are English. Germans control hardware and "fancy goods." French and Italians keep the hotels and restaurants. The Spaniards have groceries and pawn-shops, and deal in the products of the country. They have a somewhat Jewish reputation for thrift. They are enterprising, too, as administrators of haciendas, often marrying the proprietors' daughters, and possessing themselves in their own right of the properties to which they were accredited as agents. Whether it be due to this rivalry in shrewdness or not, it is worth noting that there are very few Jews in Mexico. Finally, the Americans build their railroads for them. The Mexican proper is a retailer in a small way, an employé, or, if rich, draws his revenues from his haciendas—which in many cases he never sees—where his money is made for him. These are on an enormous scale. The chief part of the

land of the country is comprised in great estates, on which the peasants live in semi-serfdom. Small farms are scarcely known. For his fine hacienda in the State of Oaxaca ex-President Diaz paid over a million of dollars; and this is not the most valuable, since there is another on which the appliances alone cost a million. But the revenues of Mexican proprietors have been heretofore devoted to the purchase of more real estate, loaned out at interest, or at any rate "salted down" in such a way as to be of no avail in setting the wheels of industry in motion.

Before adopting the conventional conclusion, however, that this state of things is due to inferiority of race or to enervating climate, considerations of importance on the other side present themselves. Notably the revolutionary condition of the country, which until a very recent date has subjected the citizen who had ventured to place his property beyond his immediate recall to the risk of a thousand embarrassments from one or another of the contending parties. Such immunities and advantages as were enjoyed were for foreigners alone, under the protection of their diplomatic representatives. The

traditional inequalities of fortune, by which classes have been created either too abject at one extreme or too leisurely circumstanced at the other to greatly aspire, and the difficulties of travel and communication with foreign parts experienced by the small middle class, from the bosom of which financial ambition so often springs, are other influences of a repressive sort. The climate of the central table-land of Mexico at least is not enervating. One must put his ideas of climate as depending upon degrees of latitude aside, and comprehend that here it is a matter of more or less elevation above the sea. Individual Mexicans are to be met with who, under the stimulus of the new feeling of security, have embarked their capital boldly, have plenty of irons in the fire, and appear to handle them with skill. The street railways of the capital—a very extensive and excellent system—are under Mexican management. They are successful in mining. It was only when the interests of the great Real del Monte Company at Pachuca, which had formerly been English, passed into Mexican hands, under the presidency of Señor Landero y Cos, a brother of the present Secretary of State, that they became profitable.

I should be strongly of the opinion that the backwardness of the Mexican of European extraction was not the result of native incapacity or lack of keen appetite for gain, but of his physical circumstances. In the mule-path, traced like a vast hieroglyphic over the face of the land, may be found the key to the Mexican problem as it is—the lack of transportation.

But, the zealous advocate of race and northern energy may object: "How long is it since we had no railroads ourselves? And yet we had arrived at a very pretty pass of civilization without them."

Mexico not only had not railways, but no rivers, and scarcely even ports. It would be recalled that it was waterways that made the prosperity of nations before the age of steam. It is hardly credible the completeness of the deprivations to which this so interesting country has been hitherto subjected. The wonder is, to one observing the horrors—no milder word fitly expresses it—of the diligence traveling, and the dreary slowness of the journeys, chiefly at a foot-pace, by beasts of burden, not that so little has been done, but so very much. Populous cities of a

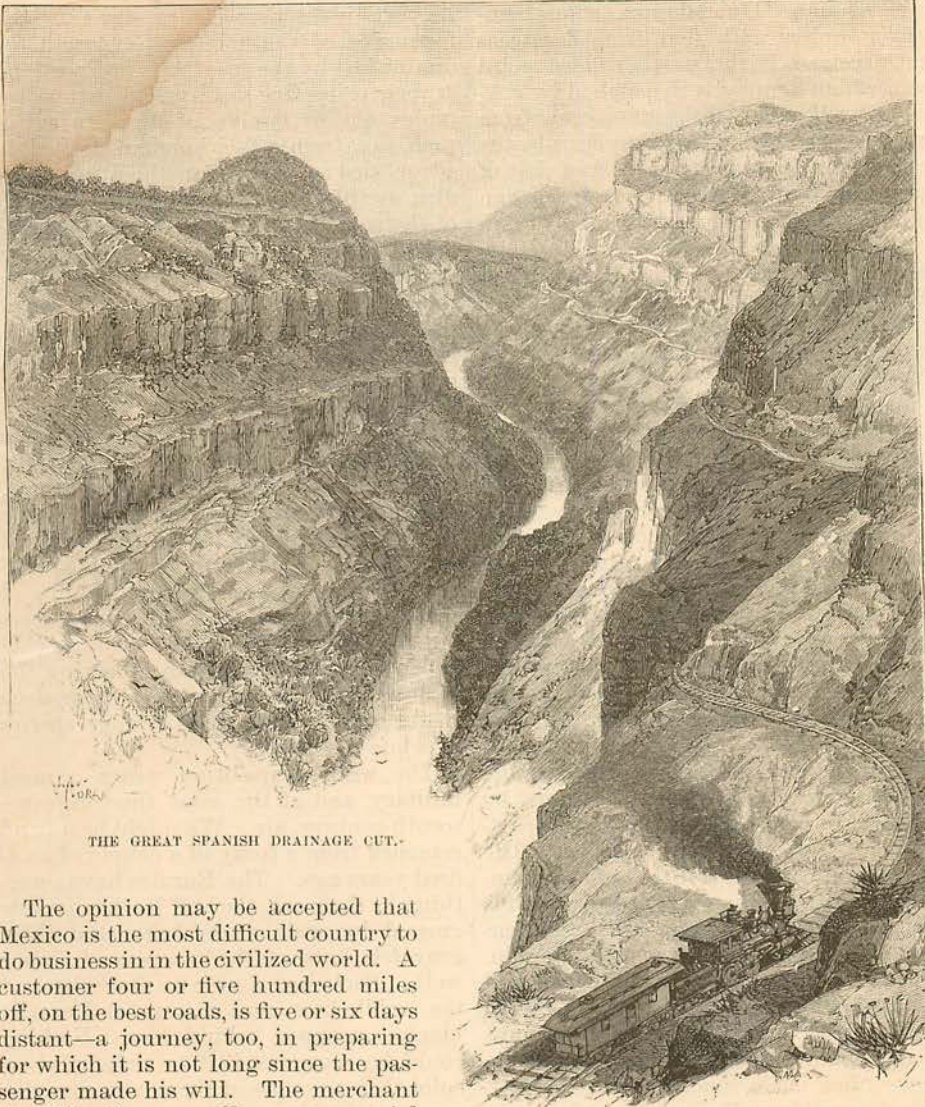
beautiful construction dot the land. On the trail to Acapulco—a mule-path, which in the popular expression is only a *camino de pajaros* (a road for birds)—without even wagon-roads of any kind, have grown up some charming towns, like Iguala, the scene of the Emperor Iturbide's famous proclamation, and Chilpanzingo, which, it seems to me, the Anglo-Saxon race under the circumstances would never have originated.

Commerce and trade in such a land naturally have their peculiar conditions. There is, in the first place, a complicated tariff, construed quite often, in the effort to prevent the chronic bane of smuggling, with an unreasonable severity. The most innocent irregularity in a label or the form of a package is punished with fines and confiscations. Americans should be warned not to let a new-born enthusiasm for a promising market hurry them into consignments without a thorough understanding of the premises. As to engaging in undertakings in the country itself, an American who had tried it assured me that the new-comer should make his residence there for six months or a year, and acquaint himself with the people and their customs, and somewhat with the language, before he touched a thing.

"Better make it two years," said my interlocutor, who was not of a sanguine cast, "and then he will go home again without doing anything."

Without going so far as this, the importance of a preliminary acquaintance can not be too strongly insisted upon. The great inertia of customs and ways of looking at things so different from our own is to be appreciated more and more as time goes on.

The most promising openings at present would seem to be, for persons of capital, in manufactures to work up the raw material with which the country abounds into supplies. These opportunities will increase with the growth of transportation facilities. Labor is cheap. The peons, with little inventive but sufficient imitative talent, make excellent mill hands, at twenty-five and thirty-seven cents a day, and have no trades-unions nor strikes. There is little as yet that persons of small means can undertake. Toward an immigration to engage in agriculture, the government has taken but its first rudimentary steps, and the path is beset with difficulties.



THE GREAT SPANISH DRAINAGE CUT.

The opinion may be accepted that Mexico is the most difficult country to do business in in the civilized world. A customer four or five hundred miles off, on the best roads, is five or six days distant—a journey, too, in preparing for which it is not long since the passenger made his will. The merchant has friendly as well as commercial relations with his customer. He is more or less his banker at the same time, not for the profit, but because it is expected of him. If he does not offer accommodations, some other house will. Credits are long, and it is not expected that interest will be charged on often quite liberal overlaps of time.

Payment is made in the bulky silver currency of the country; and this is sent in large sums by the guarded convoys, the *conductas*, which converge upon the capital four times a year, in the months, namely, of January, April, August, and November. There are no banks of issue except two in the city of Mexico—one a

private establishment, the other the national pawn-shop, the *Monte de Piedad*. These put out bills to a small amount, which are only receivable at short distances from town. The visitor becomes early acquainted, to his sorrow, with the Mexican "dollar of the fathers." Sixteen of them weigh a solid pound. It is obviously impossible to carry even a moderate quantity of this money concealed, or to carry it at all with comfort. The unavoidable exhibition of it, held in laps, chinking in valises, standing in sacks, and poured out in prodigious streams at the banks and commercial houses, is one of the fea-

tures of life. Guadalajara, whose contingent unites with that from Zacatecas at Queretaro, is the northernmost point from which money is dispatched by *conducta* to Mexico. A portion even from here is dispatched to San Francisco by the port of San Blas, just as a part of that of Zacatecas goes to Tampico through San Luis Potosi. The country north of San Luis to the east ships its funds to Matamoros. The payments of Durango are divided between Matamoros and Mazatlan; while Puebla, Oaxaca, and the rest of the south find their natural outlet in Vera Cruz.

The importance of the *conducta* in these latest times is diminished by the growing safety of the transport of money by private hands. Its days are numbered, too, through the progress of the railways, which are nearing exactly the central cluster of cities in which it has its origin. Even now it no longer comes into town, but takes the train at the first feasible point, Huehuetoca, site of the famous Spanish cut for the drainage of the valley—the greatest enterprise of the kind in the world—through which the Central road has laid its tracks.

Its place as a picturesque show, more easily accessible, is taken at present by the weekly *conductas* of the pay departments of the railroads themselves. The most striking of these is that of the Palmer and Sullivan (national) road, which is pushing forward to connect with the Denver and Rio Grande system at Laredo. This is the pioneer line in the new era of railroad building. Its history is a record of pluck and perseverance for years most creditable to its projectors, and its notable success has made much of what has followed possible. The great feeder it is constructing, to the port of Manzanillo by way of Guadalajara and Colima, is only second in importance to the main line itself. Most of the typical difficulties of the country are presented in a brief space at the very beginning of its course. One passes the foundation of no less than seventeen bridges necessary to be thrown across a single stream, the Rio Hondo, in a distance of two miles and a half.

Over this rugged route starts out every Saturday morning, from the well-appointed office in the capital, a money train, to pay off the army of hands. It proceeds some twenty miles—or half the distance to the important city of Toluca, which in

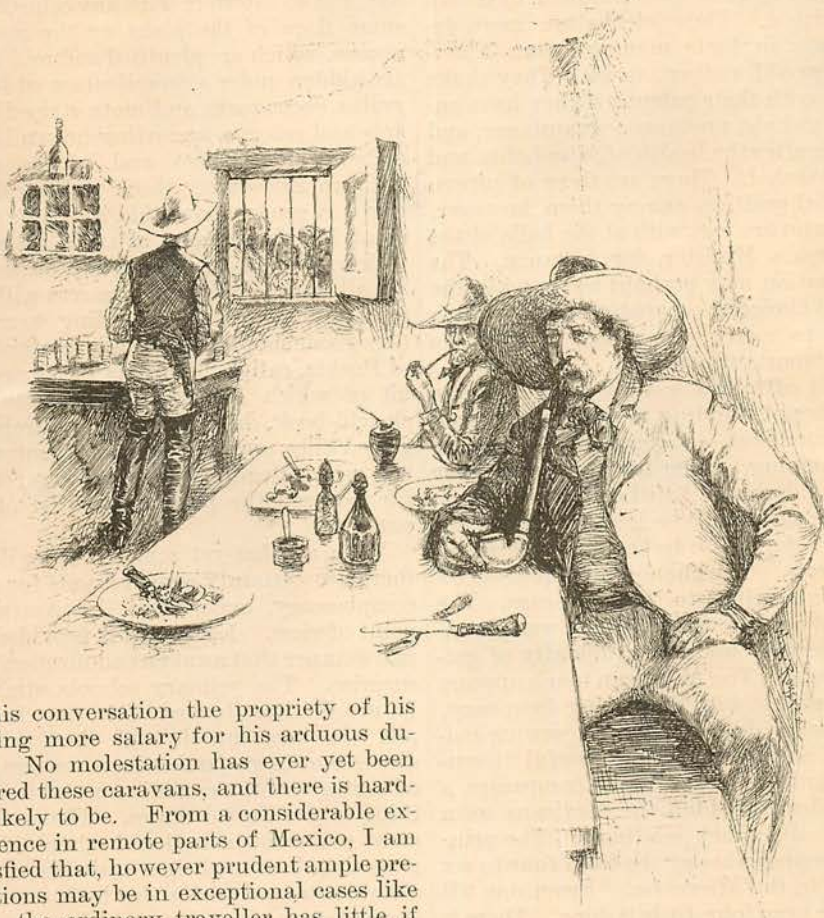
its turn is another centre—up into the fastnesses of the mountains, gradually diminished by the leaving off of portions at their respective stations. The treasure mules, ten or twelve of them, carrying each, say, twenty-five hundred dollars in silver, tied in bags upon their pack-saddles, are placed in the centre. A guard, of the soldiers known as *Rurales*—an efficient force organized by Porfirio Diaz for the better protection of the rural districts—takes the van. A numerous retinue of the *mozos* (native servants) of the company, hardly less effectively equipped, bring up the rear. The paymasters, with perhaps a contractor, and a young engineer or two going back to their posts, are well mounted, and in their long boots, with revolvers on hip, have a handsome, semi-military air. We ride up among the *barrancas*. Prickly-pear is the principal vegetation. In places the ground is blasted, volcanic, divided by an infinity of seams. The white tents of the engineers dot the valleys. Gangs of the cotton-clad peons are seen at a distance delving the road-bed into the mountain-side or deep in the gulches, like some strange species of white insects.

The whole expedition wears a most military, and at the same time un-nineteenth-century, air. We might be a band returned from a foray of a couple of hundred years ago. The *Rurales* have something in their cut, the buff leather jackets crossed by wide sword-belts, and their gray felt hats, of the troopers of Cromwell. Each has a rifle in its holster at the saddle-bow, and a gray and scarlet blanket strapped behind him. Nothing could be more spirited or delightful as color than a couple of these costumes, dismounted beside a cactus-tree, or thrown out, as they often are, against the blue wall of distant mountains, as the cavalcade winds over the high rolling barrens. On the harness of some of the mules, in the prevailing taste for decoration, are embroidered in red and blue their names, or that of the hacienda, as Santa Lucia, to which they have belonged. It is understood that an individual with a crimson handkerchief around the back of his head, under his silver-bordered sombrero, claims to be titular *cacique* of San Bartolito by virtue of descent from the ancient chiefs. He precedes us—is employed by the company to look out for plots and ambushes in advance. When we have

passed what he considers the dangerous points—these are generally in the neighborhood of elevations, whence the intending bandit could spy the road for a long distance in both directions, and where also there are convenient ravines on either side for concealment and escape—he rejoins the troop, and makes the burden

small articles reap advantage from the new supply of funds. In the adobe huts about, women, in the dark blue, Egyptian-looking costume we have seen examples of in the city, do a flourishing business in the enticing beverage of pulque.

At these stations the engineers lead a sort of barrack life. There are beds, a



of his conversation the propriety of his having more salary for his arduous duties. No molestation has ever yet been offered these caravans, and there is hardly likely to be. From a considerable experience in remote parts of Mexico, I am satisfied that, however prudent ample precautions may be in exceptional cases like this, the ordinary traveller has little if any more danger of robbery to apprehend than at home. Impressions commonly entertained on this subject are greatly exaggerated.

At the pay stations we breast our way through crowds of the peons so thick that the horses can hardly be prevented from trampling upon them. They have narrow foreheads, bristling black hair, staring wild eyes, and large undecided mouths. Their money is jingled expeditiously out into the shabby straw sombreros they deferentially hold in waiting, through a pay window. Venders of

“NOT HERE FOR HIS HEALTH.”

dining-table, a safe; and outside a storehouse of picks, shovels, and barrows. Whether here, in their construction car, or the tents, they extend to the stranger a cheery hospitality. They are hearty, robust fellows, for the most part, “not here for their health,” as their saying is, who have seen service in many climes, and whose company is both amusing and instructive.

Shops and shopping, of the upper sort,

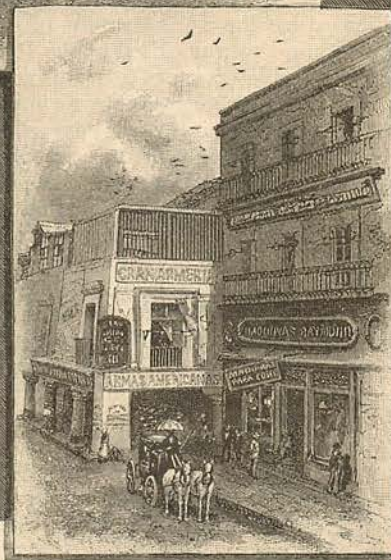
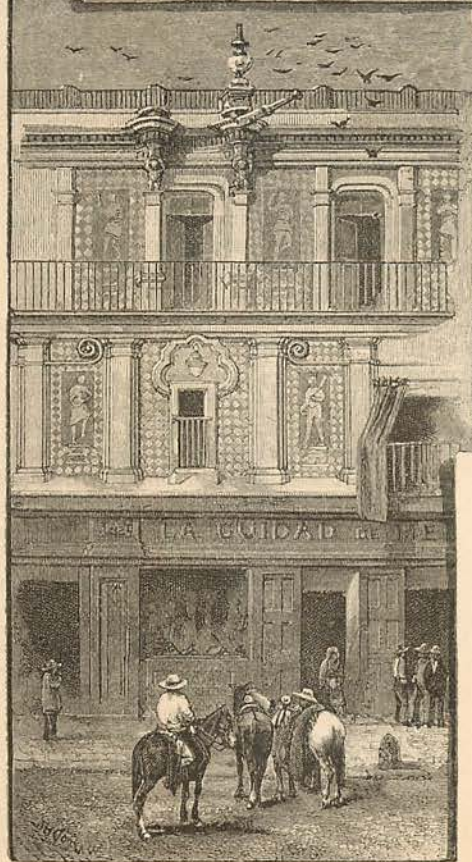
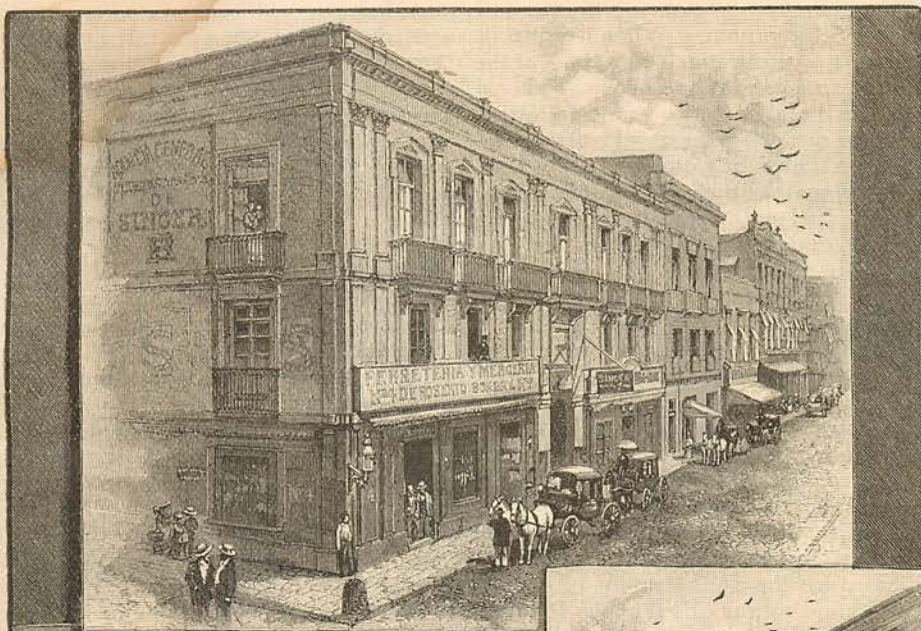
in Mexico follow French or European traditions more than American. Fanciful titles over the doorway are adopted instead of a firm name. A dry-goods store is "The Surprise," "The Spring-Time," "The Explosion"; a jeweller's, the "Pearl" or "Emerald"; a shoe store, "The Azure Boot," and "The Foot of Venus." The windows are tastefully draped, and a large force of clerks is seen shoulder to shoulder within. These clerks are more democratic in their manners than Americans would venture to be. They shake hands with their patrons if they have enjoyed a slight previous acquaintance, and inquire after the health of Miss Lolita and Miss Soledad. There are those of superior social position among them, however, some who are met with at the balls of the Guatemala Minister, for instance. The explanation may perhaps be found in the limited choice of occupations open, which leaves to many who desire to work no more important places.

Until of late it has not been etiquette for ladies of standing to shop except from their carriages—a considerable part of the shopping, as for furniture and other household goods, is still conducted by the men of the family—just as it was not etiquette for ladies to be seen walking in the streets. The change in both these respects is ascribed to the horse-cars. The point of ceremony, it appears, was founded somewhat upon the difficulty of getting about. The American touch appears in the streets with increasing frequency, in signs of dealers in arms, sewing-machines, and other of our useful inventions, and of the insurance companies, a novel idea, to which the Mexicans seem to take with much readiness. The principal shopping hours are from four to six o'clock in the afternoon. From one till three, or even four, little is done. There is a general stoppage of affairs for dinner. It is but a short time since that interesting person, the commercial traveller, has been known in the country. The profits of favorably situated houses, in the absence of keen competition, have been very large, and methods of doing business in some instances correspondingly loose. The Mexican merchant does not necessarily go into a fine calculation of the proportionate value of each detail of a foreign invoice, but "lumps" the profit he thinks he ought to receive on the whole. Some articles, in consequence, can be

bought at less than their real value, while others, in compensation, are exorbitantly advanced.

It is the smaller trade, however, and that most removed from metropolitan influences, that is the gayest and most entertaining as a spectacle. How many picturesque market scenes does one linger in! Each population has its own market-day, not to interfere with any other. The stone flags of the plaza or the market-houses, which are plentiful and well built, are hidden under a complication of fruits, grains, cocoa sacks and mats, striped blankets and *rebozos*, sprawling brown limbs, embroidered bodices and kirtles, as if with an excessively thick, richly colored rug. A grade above this is the *Parian*, as at Puebla, a bazar of small shops, in which goods, sales-people, and customers are all to be put upon the canvas with the most vivid hues. The leading *merceria* (dry-goods shop) of the same important city of Puebla, called "The City of Mexico," a bit of which I hastily transfer to my sketch-book, has a façade entirely in glazed tiles upon an unglazed ground of red, with allegorical figures larger than life between the pilasters as part of the pattern.

With all that yet remains to be done, there are certainly some reasons for self-complacency, even from the American point of view. Education is provided for in a manner that awakens admiration and surprise. The primary schools, strangely, are the least looked after, but the pupils who come up through these with a disposition to go farther have an array of advantages at the capital superior to anything in the United States. The government maintains a national school of engineering, law, medicine, agriculture, mechanic arts, and trades (for both sexes), a conservatory of music, an academy of fine arts, library (now being placed in a new edifice that New York well might envy), museum, institutions for the blind, the deaf and dumb, the insane, for orphans, young criminals, and a long list besides of the usual charities of enlightened communities. These are open without money and without price to all, and there are even funds to provide board, lodging, and pocket-money to students from a distance, selected on certain easy conditions. The students in agriculture pass some months of the year at the haciendas to observe different crops and climates. The grad-



SHOPS AND DECORATED TILE FRONT.

nates of the Arts and Measures go out into the world prepared to make their way in it as carpenters, photographers, electroplaters, etc. The neat uniforms of the pupils of the blind institute should be seen; the noble building erected in the last century for the School of Mines; the beautifully clean, wide corridors, sunny class-rooms, embroidery-rooms, dormitories, and drawing-rooms of the *Viscaynas*, the national college for girls; the arcades and charming central gardens of the National Preparatory School of the professions for young men.

There is a fountain among the tropical foliage of this garden. When I visited it, there was a young lion, "Chacho," of the country, in a cage at one side, who played with a ball and with the young fellows—the latter not differing very greatly in aspect from under-graduates of Yale or Harvard—preparing their recitations there. The principal text-books are studied in the original French or English, as the case may be, in which they are apt to be written, and the recitations conducted in the same languages; so that, what is so rare with us, students emerge from these schools already very tolerable linguists. Are all other nations brighter than our own in this matter of languages? Or is it only that we have lacked the stimulus of profit, in intercourse with foreigners, to make their acquisition a necessity?

These institutions are housed for the most part in the vast ancient convents, which, since the sequestration of church property in the war called of the Reform, furnish ample quarters to whatever is in need of them, from barracks to hospitals, post-offices, prisons, railway stations, foundries, and cotton mills. In the same way, each State of the republic has its free college, though, judging from that of the State of Hidalgo, which I saw at Pachuca, where the internal arrangements were in a very filthy condition, all do not follow as closely as they might the example of the capital. In the department of jails there is a deficiency. As at present arranged, they can present but moderate terrors to evil-doers. The really fine penitentiary at Guadalajara is the only one in which modern ideas of penal discipline are followed. There is by law no death penalty. The number of the most nefarious criminals is kept down by semi-official lynchings—as the shooting of certain kinds of offenders on capture—into which nobody ever inquires, and by transportation to Yucatan; but there still remain sufficient to make one look with uneasiness on the slightness of the means of restraint employed. The bolts and bars are only lattices of wood much more often than iron. At the great central prison of Belen, where some two thousand persons are confined, it seemed to me that a very large part of them were more comfortable than they could have been at their own squalid homes. They make a strange spectacle indeed as one looks down upon them in large courts, of what again has

once been an old convent, where, of all ages, and for sentences of all durations, they eat, sleep, and work at various light occupations together. No attempt is made to prevent their communicating with one another, or staring about. They have good air, light, and food, and are paid a part of their earnings. They take their siestas at noon, play at checkers, gossip, and even bathe luxuriously in a central tank.

The liberality toward education is the more creditable since the condition of the Mexican treasury is notoriously not flourishing. A yearly deficit is a more common circumstance than a surplus. I should not wish to be understood as holding that the same thing is best for us, where private enterprise is so much more efficacious, and the proportion of educated persons to the mass so much greater; but here the expenses named appear to be regarded as among the essentials, and attended to, whatever else suffers. It is the more creditable, too, since the heads of government do not indulge themselves in expensive surroundings. The American legislator, who is not himself without his lordly colonnades, his black walnut, and Russia leather, would look with contempt upon the threadbare carpets in the rooms of cabinet ministers. The chamber of the Senate is a modest, narrow little hall; and the Deputies sit in a shabby place, in another part of the town, which was once the Theatre Iturbide.

The museum of Aztec antiquities is not of the extent or informing character that might have been expected, and is under stupid, obstructive management. Its greatest charm is an arrangement of some of the larger fragments, particularly the great sacrificial stone from the ancient temple of the war god, in a court-yard garden where the light strikes upon them with beautiful effects.

The school of fine arts, on the other hand, the Academy of San Carlos, preparing to celebrate this year with a special exhibition the one-hundredth anniversary of its foundation, produces, both in the character of its collections and the manners and high order of abilities of its directing professors, a very different impression. We enter galleries whose sentiment carries us back at once to those of Europe. It might be again the Louvre or the Uffizi. They used bitumen as a pigment in those times, and in its darken-

ing it has left only isolated lights upon faces and bits of drapery to glimmer out of a sometimes almost midnight gloom. It is an artificial taste, no doubt, as for olives and caviare, but one likes it all the same when it is acquired.

The walls recall particularly perhaps those of the galleries at Bologna in the uniformly liberal scale of the works displayed. With such models before them, there is no reason why the students of the place should fall into a niggling and petty style. As a matter of fact, they do not. They are excellent in bold, large composition and the rendering of grandiose ideas, which, rather than color, is their strong point. If our New York schools are able to equal a portfolio of drawings one sees as some of the products of their fortnightly exercise, they are certainly not in the habit of doing so. And they were not at all approached by those of the prize competition of the students at the British Royal Academy as I saw them in the first year of the presidency of Sir Frederick Leighton. This devotion to large academical ideas, to the fortunes of Orestes, Regulus, and Belisarius, it is true, is a source of weakness rather than strength from the money point of view. The market of the time is for a domestic, *genre*, realistic art, and not for great ideas. The market for art of any kind in Mexico is extremely small. There are no government commissions further than an occasional portrait, and enlightened patrons hardly exist. There are no pictures of consequence in the best Mexican houses. The abundance of talent in this direction receives little encouragement. Many a bright genius is forced to painting his inventions on the walls of pulque shops, and finally to quit the profession entirely for lack of support.

The general visitor to the works of the earlier Mexican school will be prepared to enjoy them rather for the genuine artistic qualities than for interest in the subjects. The subjects are, for the most part, severely religious, in consonance with the ideas of the wealthy convents, almost the sole patrons of art at the time, for which they were originally painted. The series presented is in a declining order of merit chronologically. The earliest Mexican masters are the best. They came from Europe, contemporaries of Murillo, Ribera, the Caracci, trained in all the perfections of the splendid Renaissance pe-

riod at its best, and left here works which do it no discredit. Mexico was a hundred years old already, and it was high time, when the first flowering of art began, under the hand of Baltazar Echave, somewhat after the year 1600. There is a romantic tradition that it was his wife who taught him to paint instead of the European masters.

The genius of this early school is very decorative. It is marked by refinement of sentiment, and by breadth and vigor. They delight in rich stuffs, and the patterns upon them, the glitter of plate, fill up all portions of their canvases symmetrically, and color with a subdued harmony. I recall particularly a St. Ildefonso, by one Luis Juarez, as an exquisite work. The saint, in a rich damask mantle, at a praying desk, and by a nail-studded carven chair, both draped with a cover of the same color, is receiving from angels the paraphernalia of the rank of bishop. The mantle of the nearest angel is in burnt sienna, and these two hues, relieved by cool whites, are repeated throughout. The group of six heads below is composed in a perspective ellipse of small inclination. In the air is the Virgin, with that bevy of fluttering angels that take the place of clouds in landscape in this kind of composition. The minor heads, though painted chiefly from the same model, all convey sweetness and intelligence. Arteaga has a noble St. Thomas; José Juarez, a quaint pair of child martyrs, Saints Justo and Pastor, who trudge along hand in hand in front like a couple of little burgomaster's children, while the scenes of their martyrdom are shown in the background, and angels rain down single pinks, roses white and red, and forget-me-nots upon them. A younger Baltazar Echave, Juan and Nicolas Rodriguez, and some others, are of almost equal excellence.

A new period begins with Ibarra and Cabrera—of whom the latter is very much the better—at the end of the same century. They are without the same distinction. Their figures have a bourgeois touch, as it were. They aim at being pictorial instead of decorative. The crude red and blue garments with which we are monotonously familiar in religious art have come in; and the draperies, without mediæval patterns now, are in smooth large folds, apparently made up out of their heads. The foreign gallery boasts

many excellent works of the school of Murillo, and an original each of Murillo, Ribera, Carreño, Leonardo da Vinci, Teniers the elder, and Ingres, with probable Vandycks and Rembrandts.

A biennial exhibition is held, and a collection has been formed of works of merit, purchased by the Academy at these times, to illustrate the modern Mexican school. The religious tradition still prevails to a large extent, though the subjects are now taken from the Scriptures instead of the Bollandists—Hagar and Ishmael, the good

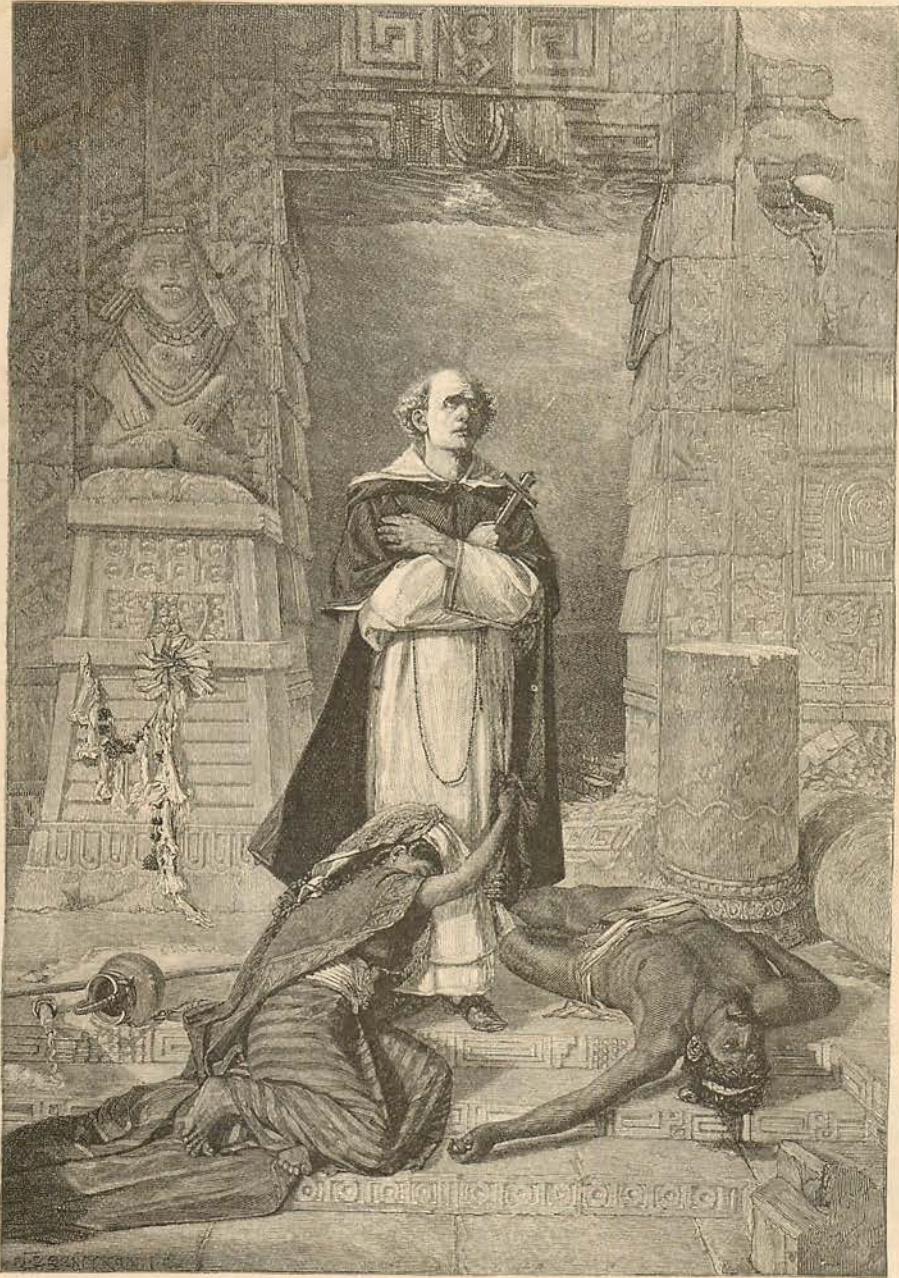
The works of the most recent period, under the able direction of Señor Salome Pina, a pupil of Gleyre, are much more virile. The subjects, too, are more secular. There are Bacchus and Ariadne; the death of Atala; the slaying of the sons of Niobe by Apollo (it is the old school-day, Homeric line, "and terrible was the clang of his silver bow"); a most dainty Cupid poisoning a flower, by Ocaranza; an equally charming fisher-boy, by Gutierrez; and the like. Some of the artists have had the advantage of study



"DEATH OF ATALA."

Samaritan, the Hebrews "by the waters of Babylon," Noah receiving the olive branch in the ark. I should find the general fault of an overdelicacy and smoothness in the painting, while the design remains excellent, and furthermore a lack of realism. These voyagers in the ark have not experienced the woes of a universal deluge, and the shepherds in the sun have the complexion of Lady Vere de Vere. Rebull, who studied at Rome in the school of Overbeck, repeats here the ethereal dove-colors, violets, and lemon-yellows seen in the modern decorations in the Vatican.

abroad also, it is true; but the strongest of them all, Felix Parra, who is now enjoying a grand prize of Rome in consequence, produced his great canvas—the good friar Las Casas protecting the Aztecs from the slaughter of the Spaniards—a work in sentiment, drawing, and harmonious color worthy to hang in any exhibition in the world—before he had seen any country but his own. Few as yet have followed the powerful lead set them by Velasco, the preceptor in landscape. He is a master of distance. His favorite theme is the curious, sienna-colored, volcanic Valley of Mexico, which he



"LAS CASAS PROTECTING THE AZTECS."

graphically realizes. In sculpture there is corresponding ability. For other pictures, there are some few of the ancient school in the houses of one or two amateurs at the capital, and at Puebla, and—scarcely possible to be seen, from their

positions—in the cathedrals of the same places. They need not be looked for in the churches. The greater part of those that once existed have been sacked from the country by foreign hands.

There is not the same improvement to

be got from Mexican literature as from Mexican art, but it is by no means without interest. Indeed, I have found it of very great interest, both for its entire novelty and as an aid to knowing what the people think and feel. The journals are numerous. They are started upon slight provocation, as easily disappear, and attain, as a rule, a circulation of but a few hundreds. It is thought that the *Monitor Republicano*, by far the most important, may have from six to eight thousand. The problem of existence for many of them would be insoluble if they did not receive government aid, which is extended—without objection, so far as I have observed—to the greater part of those managed with any ability. The system of subventions to the press was begun by our old friend in history the irrepressible Santa Anna. It has been continued ever since by the weakness of governments which could not afford to have anything more than the truth told about them. It is an encouraging sign, however, that the *Monitor* is not a subventioned organ, and yet speaks its mind temperately and without apparent malice. There is probably no very efficacious law of libel, since extreme violence of language is often indulged in by the periodicals in their controversies with each other, and toward individuals outside. The duel, which still survives, is somewhat of a corrective upon this. The newspaper is about such a one in appearance and contents, including the daily section of a serial story, as is found in Paris.

Actual literature as such is poorly paid. The reading public is small; a thousand copies is a good edition for a popular book. The chief contemporary literary lights, however, are found, quite as a rule, not of the shy, scholastic sort, but possessing talents in oratory and political affairs, and taking posts in the houses of Congress and as cabinet ministers. General Riva Palacio, Juan Mateos, Prieto, Paz, Altimirano, Justo Sierra, Peza, are Deputies; Payno, Senator; Cuellar, secretary of legation at Washington—these are the native writers whose works are more frequently in the hands of the public than any others. Prieto, who is chiefly poet, has written a book of travels in the United States. It is of a very light order, with only the most conventional of reflections. He finds that with us "the totality [*lo colectivo*] is grand and admirable, but the in-

dividual egotistic and vulgar." He saw, besides the hotel, our establishment called a Boarding (*el Boarding*). The Hudson and East rivers are two arms of the sea, which freeze in winter. Even the immense quantity of ice collected from these, ensconced in warehouses for the summer, does not suffice for the city's demands.

There is an abundance of poetical facility, and with it not a few sparks of something more. In the *Lyra Mexicana*, Prieto is a poet of occasions—the unveiling of statues and the like—and sings to steam and the telegraph; Carpio finds inspiration in Biblical themes like Belshazzar and Pharaoh; Altimirano in different times of the day, and bees and poppies, making very tolerable descriptions of an artificial flavor in the manner of Horace, but with no particular thoughtfulness. Cuenca, De Castro, Zaragoza, Gustavo Baz, however, have charming conceits of a pensive cast, and touches of limpid purity of description. Gustavo Baz, brooding in the bare winter on some incurable sorrow, foresees the joyous return of spring. But in that very return, in the new rippling of the brooks, and melodious songs of the birds, his sadness by contrast is to be increased. "Then most will break forth my grief. Then heaviest will your zephyrs be laden with my sighs." Zaragoza, in his "Armonias," compares passing illusions to the flying away of the swallows. The swallows return with the spring, but "the illusions, the swallows of the heart, return, alas! never."

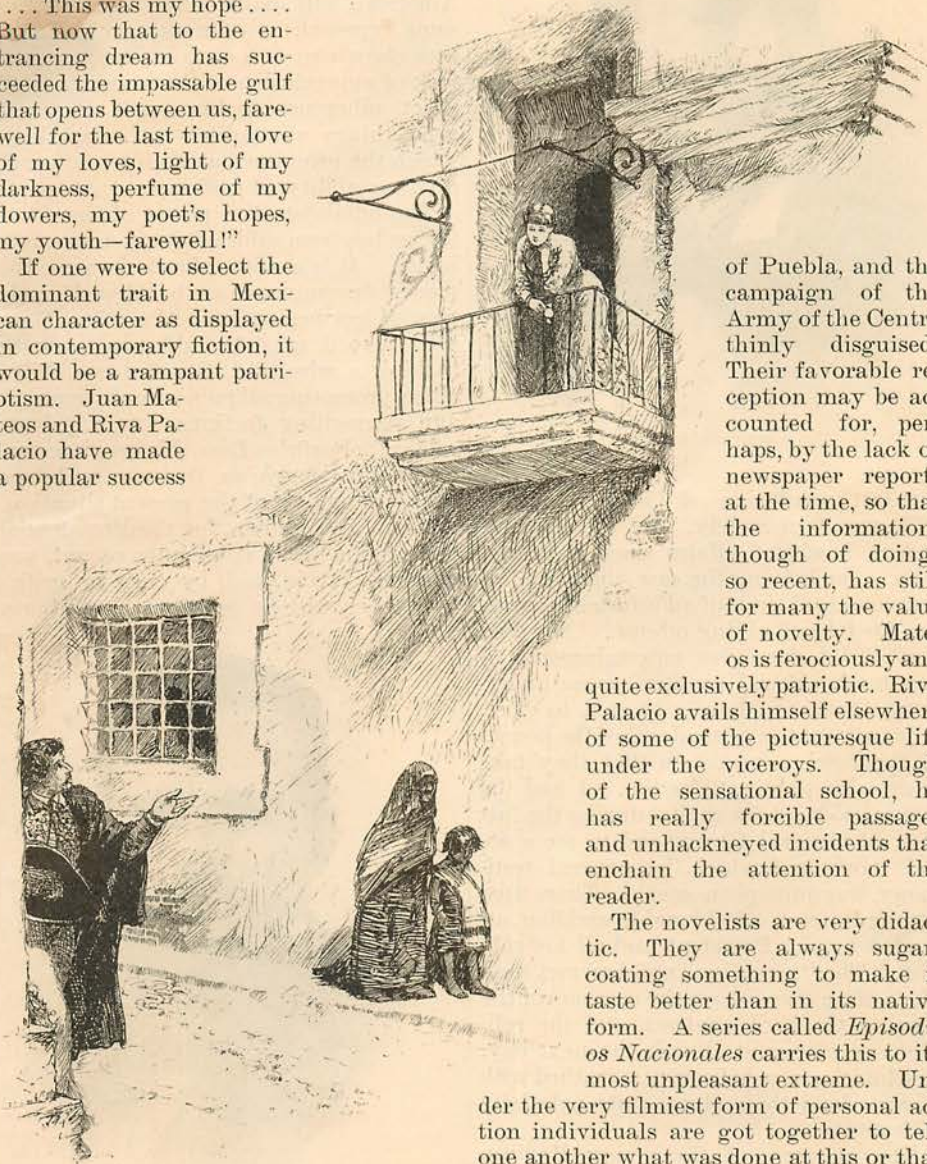
But the gem of the collection is a sonnet by a certain young poet, Acuña, who proved his sincerity by taking his own life shortly after it was written. In it the charming ideals of a young man of fine nature, and the unendurableness of a great disappointed affection are expressed with a vividness which has rarely if ever been equalled elsewhere. He addresses one who had been his betrothed, upon finding her, on his return from an absence, married to another who had been his friend.

"Well, then," he says, "I have to tell you that I love you still; that I worship you with all my being. . . . I understand that your kisses are never to be mine; that into your dear eyes I am never to look. . . . Sometimes I think to sink you into oblivion, to hate you. . . . But, alas! how vain it is! my soul will not forget you. What will you, then, that I should

do, O piece of my life! what will you that I should do with such a heart? . . . Oh, figure to yourself how beautiful might have been the hours of such an existence, a journey thus together!

. . . This was my hope . . . But now that to the entrancing dream has succeeded the impassable gulf that opens between us, farewell for the last time, love of my loves, light of my darkness, perfume of my flowers, my poet's hopes, my youth—farewell!"

If one were to select the dominant trait in Mexican character as displayed in contemporary fiction, it would be a rampant patriotism. Juan Mateos and Riva Palacio have made a popular success



MEXICAN COURTSHIP.

with a curious class of bulky novels—to call them so—devoted to incidents of the war against the French, of which numbers of the characters are living persons, to be met with actually walking about. *The Hill of Las Campanas*, and *The Sun of*

May, by the former, and *Calvary and Tabor*, by the latter, are merely more or less authentic accounts of the fall and execution of Maximilian. Zaragoza's defense

of Puebla, and the campaign of the Army of the Centre thinly disguised. Their favorable reception may be accounted for, perhaps, by the lack of newspaper reports at the time, so that the information, though of doings so recent, has still for many the value of novelty. Mateos is ferociously and

quite exclusively patriotic. Riva Palacio avails himself elsewhere of some of the picturesque life under the viceroys. Though of the sensational school, he has really forcible passages and unhackneyed incidents that enchain the attention of the reader.

The novelists are very didactic. They are always sugar-coating something to make it taste better than in its native form. A series called *Episodios Nacionales* carries this to its most unpleasant extreme. Under

the very filmiest form of personal action individuals are got together to tell one another what was done at this or that battle of the war of Independence.

The descendants of the old Spanish titles of before the Independence are much esteemed. There are persons pointed out to you who by right should be marquises and counts. It appears that Lerdo, spoken of as probably the President of the best intellect the country has ever had, who was expelled in



PORFIRIO DIAZ.

the last revolution of Porfirio Diaz, in 1876, was "in society," but the administrative heads of affairs since have not been. Such being the case, there are few reunions, and these of an informal character, for fear of giving offense. Nor does the official class give entertainments of any kind. Social gayeties, as we understand them, can hardly be said to exist. It is only on the neutral soil of the houses of the foreign ministers that they take place with some satisfaction. I had the fortune to be at the capital during the last visit of General Grant, and to see a social movement which, by general testimony, was quite phenomenal. There was, among the rest, a fashionable wedding, attended by the President and all his cabinet. The "reception" and banquet took place of an evening on the occasion of the signing the civil contract, and the religious ceremony at church the next day. The interior arcaded courts, wreathed with flowers, lend themselves quite palatially to festivities.

The manners of the young Mexican ladies, kept apart as they are from the other sex, and made love to chiefly on their balconies in good old-fashioned romantic style, are not so different from those of our own as might be expected. Their dancing is not easy. The favorite step is the *danza*—a waltz so slow as hardly to be a dance at all, which is chiefly an excuse for conversation. In general I

should say of the manners of the country that those of the lower classes are infinitely better, and of the upper not so good—not so considerate, and based upon real kindness of heart—as ours. The American will make of the Mexican the same reproach as of most of the Latin race elsewhere, of a certain slipperiness, a lack of appreciation of the importance of strict adherence to his word. A thousand things are politely promised here which the promiser has no intention, and often no ability, of performing.

The administrative power of the country, as has been said, is in very democratic hands. It is a reign of rude force. The places of prominence are held by self-made men of low beginnings. President Gonzales, who, it must be said, appears to be making a wise and dignified use of his office, promoting all public improvements, and reconciling factions, was a private soldier. Porfirio Diaz, his predecessor, the *deus ex machina*, the man on horseback, the sphinx of the present situation, aspirant, it is known, for the Presidential chair again when it becomes vacant, was another. It is said by carping critics that there will be no more revolutions.



M. GONZALES.

because all the revolutionists have got themselves places in power. Without joining in this caustic view, it is certain that the chances of revolution are diminished by the progress of the railroads,

which furnish work to the floating thousands who might otherwise be enlisted under the banners of discontented chiefs, and will be further diminished by the opportunity their completion will afford of massing troops at points of risings.

There is a weariness of fighting. A saying is current that "a bad government is better than a good revolution." It is actually the case that in the revolution of Porfirio Diaz many people joined him in disgust because they could not be protected by the legitimate authority. The country is savoring the little-known luxury of peace with a positive gusto. Such quaint items as the following are of daily occurrence in the papers: "*Michoacan*.—According to the Official Journal of that State, public peace reigns in the districts of Huetamo, Pascuaro, Zinapécuaro, Zamora, Puruandiro, Uruapam, Ario, Apatzingan, Zitacuaro, and Maravatio." A fear begins to grow, too, of what foreign nations might be disposed to do in the way of taking things into their own hands in case the new enterprises in the country, by their citizens or subjects, should be left a prey to spoilers.

Still there are great administrative abuses. The civil service is notoriously corrupt. It is by no means purely through the sentiment of patriotism and desire for the public good that the liberal railway concessions have been secured. There are opportunities for galling oppressions by both State and federal governments, while—most ominous and certain source of

danger—opportunity of redress by the ballot is not possible. The anomaly is here presented of a so-called republic in which there is no census or registration of voters, no scrutiny of the ballot-box but by one party—that already in power—and hardly a ray of interest in their political machinery by the people themselves. The number of votes cast at elections is pitifully small. It is "not worth while" to vote. The lower classes read no informing journals, have no public speakers. No organized opposition party exists. Such weak opposition as there is is personal, and all contests for office are simply personal, instead of on principles. The government—that of the centre influencing the States, and these in turn the communities—sustains and counts in what candidates it pleases. There are no data for objection. Nobody can point to the real number of voters in a place, or give their names.

When this is known, it seems to account of itself for almost all that has happened. There is absolutely no remedy for an oppressive domination but in rebellion. With the most wary of dispositions and the most entire patience, there must come moments when what has happened in the past will happen again. If there be any statesmanship in Mexico, surely some champion will arise who will make it his business to remedy this, to instruct the masses in their political rights, to enumerate and register them, and to assure to them the very first essential of free government—an honest suffrage.

A N N E .

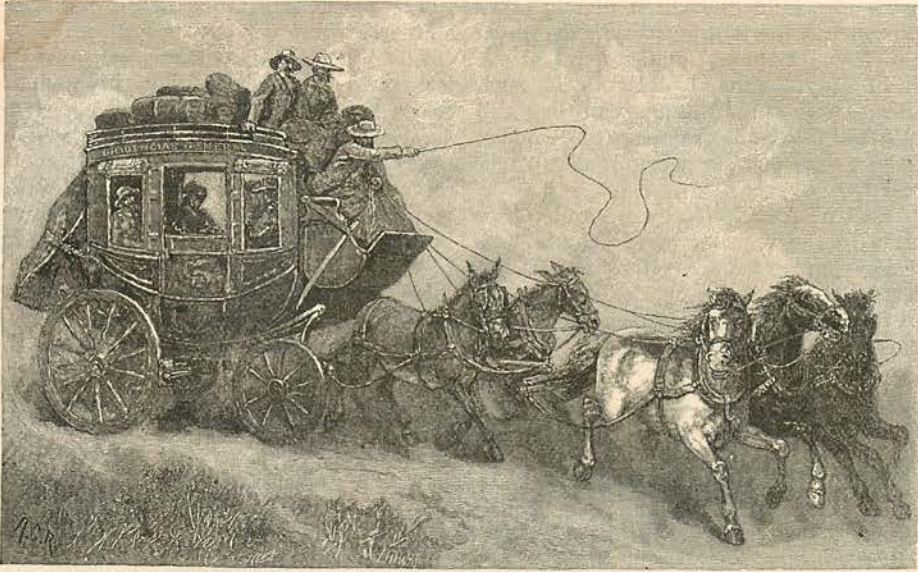
CHAPTER XXIX.

"Sick, am I sick of a jealous dread? . . .
A wounded thing with a rancorous cry, . . .
Sick, sick to the heart of life, am I . . .
Jealousy, down! cut off from the mind
The bitter springs of anger and fear, . . .
With the evil tongue and the evil ear."
—TENNYSON.

IN the middle of wild, snowy March there came a strange week of beautiful days. On the Sunday of this week Anne was in her place in the choir, as usual, some time before the service began.

It was a compromise choir. The dispute between the ideas of the rector and those of the congregation had been ended by bringing the organ forward to the cor-

ner near the chancel, and placing in front of it the singers' seats, ornamented with the proper devices: so much was done for the rector. To balance this, and in deference to the congregation, the old quartette of voices was retained, and placed in these seats, which, plainly intended for ten or twelve surpliced choristers, were all too long and broad for the four persons who alone occupied them. The singers sat in one, and kept their music-books in the other, and objecting to the open publicity of their position facing the congregation, they had demanded, and at last succeeded in obtaining (to the despair of the rector), red curtains, which, hanging from the high railing above, modestly concealed



THE DILIGENCE.

TYPICAL JOURNEYS AND COUNTRY LIFE IN MEXICO.

“ALL outside of Mexico is Cuatitlan” is a proverb that shows that the capital entertains quite a Parisian esteem for itself, and contempt for the rest of the country. Cuatitlan is a little village twenty-five miles to the northward, reached by a narrow-gauge railroad, once the property of a Mexican corporation, but now American. It was at Cuatitlan that I saw my first bull-fight. It is one of the two places in the vicinity where the city thus amuses itself, the sport being prohibited nearer; just as in some States—as Zacatecas—it is abolished entirely. There were five bulls killed that day, and three horses, but no men—unfortunately, the novice thinks, whom the exercise impresses as quite as cowardly and disagreeable as it has been represented. The bull came in at first (each ignorant of the fate of his predecessor), and ran at the streamers with a playful air. One felt like scratching his back and calling him “good old fellow,” instead of seeing his pained astonishment at his tortures, his glazing eye and staggering step, his death like that of an actor in a melodrama. The horses were wretched hacks, allowed to be gored purposely as part of the spectacle, and driven around the ring afterward till they dropped, with their life-blood pouring audibly, like the patter of a rivulet.

The gray battered walls of the parish

church, immense, and of excellent design, as they all are, rise above the amphitheatre. Within it are figures of saints grotesquely adorned, or realistically horrible in the depiction of their sufferings, in the usual taste. The devout Indians are not archaeologists, and have an idea of paying honor as they understand it. I have it on good authority that when left to themselves they have been known to equip the Saviour of the world in a twenty-dollar hat, *chapereras* (a kind of riding breeches), spurs, sabre, and revolver, making of him a cavalier of the best fashion. The houses, built of concrete or adobe, sometimes plastered and tinted, are of one story. There are some small portals for out-of-door merchants, a *pulqueria*, and thread-and-needle shop or two, and the *meson*, or inn, of the Divine Providence, where enormous-wheeled wagons are corralled in line; and the muleteers sleep upon their packs, as in *Don Quixote*. This is Cuatitlan, and this is the Mexican village, which can easily be dreary enough to one who does not look at it with the fresh interest of a new-comer. One can not take comfort, as it were, in the lower people, on account of their habits. There is no denying that in the neighborhood of Mexico they are very dirty. They do not clean up even for their festivals. I saw them dancing at the public ball at

the Theatre Hildago, which, among other amusements, the municipality had granted them free, on the national festival of the 5th of May, charcoal dealers and such persons, with their women, and they had not taken the pains to remove one smudge of the grime of their working-day condition.

At San Angel, Tlalpam, and other points in the vicinity of the capital was formerly an extensive villa life. It has decayed curiously, even while the security of living in such a way has increased. There are no fierce heats, in fact, to drive

small plazas are filled with games of chance.

The Viga Canal, as far as Santa Anita, is a livelier and more unique promenade. Santa Anita is the St. Cloud and Bougival, as it were, of Mexico. Thither go the lively people who wish to disport themselves on the water and pass a day of the picnic order, taking their lunch with them, or depending on such cheap viands as the place offers. The wide yellow canal is more Venetian than French at first. A mouldering villa or two on its banks, with its private water-gate, might be up the



SUNDAY AT SANTA ANITA.

people to the country. It is always comfortable in town. Neither watering-places nor summer resorts of any kind exist. Those who go to their haciendas visit them more as a matter of looking after their business interests than through necessity or love of country life. The neglected populations endeavor to atone for the bill in the grated window of the long, low, one-story villa, and the decaying fruit in the orange and myrtle garden within, by feasts of flowers, and little fairs, which last a week at a time. On these occasions the existing ordinance against gambling is set aside, and the

Brenta. Afterward succeed lines of willows and poplars reflected in the water, and then it is French again. We meet flat-boats coming on, piled up with bales of hay and wood, echoing each other peaceably from distance to distance; and swift, small *chalupas* (dug-outs), which the Indian master paddles along in poses fit for a sculptor, while his wife—or it is quite as often an Indian woman alone—is ensconced among the flowers and vegetables with which it overflows. This is the region of the *chinampas*, the gardens from which the markets of Mexico are liberally supplied. The system is the di-



CREW OF THE "NINFA ENCANTADORA."

vision of what was once a marsh, by narrow branch canals, into small oblong patches. The patches are so small that the owner, passing around the borders in his canoe, can keep all portions moist with water which he throws out upon them with a calabash. With this, and the rich character of the redeemed soil, perennial crops are produced.

The houses of the village are generally of bamboo, without windows, sufficient light penetrating through the interstices. The first business of the participants in a Sunday's festivities here is to provide themselves with large thick wreaths of lovely poppies and blue and white cornflowers, sold by the venders for the merest trifle, which they wear upon their heads, in their caperings about, with quite a classical effect. There is a sound of frizzling of eatables, of which peppers form a large ingredient, at little charcoal furnaces without and primitive fire-places within. "Come in!" the venders cry, "señors, señoras, and señoritas, and be seated. *Aquí los niños!* Here is a place where the children are appreciated!"

"*Tamales calientitos!* dear little tamales, very nice and hot," they cry, in their caressing way; just as a coachman in want of a job will call you *patroncito*, "dear little patron," though you may be of the size of a grenadier.

"But it appears that there are no real *chinampas*, no gardens that float, such as we have heard of," I said to a friend, of the country; "all that was a myth."

"Not at all," he said. "This soil is anchored down now and solidified, but in its time it has floated, and no doubt in that condition borne crops. In the lakes [Chalco and Xochimilco, of which this canal is the outlet] you will see the *cintas* [ribbons] and *bandoleros* [literally bandits] of land roving about, and whole expanses there that seem terra firma, only kept in place by stakes, and having four and five feet of clear water under them, though strong enough to sustain cattle."

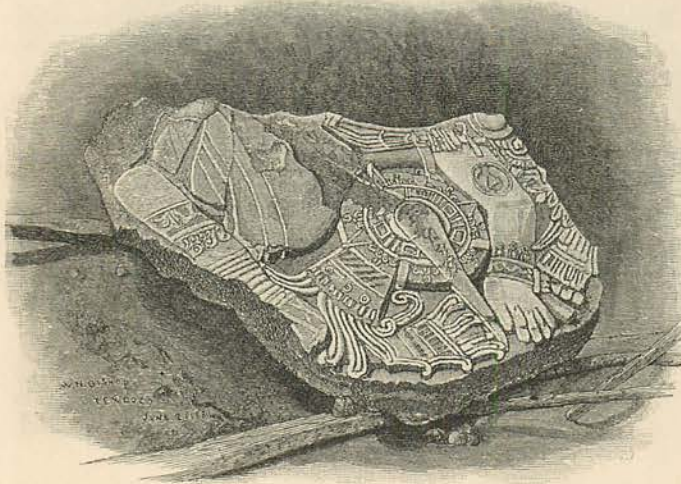
An excursion was talked of, and some time after we set out, in the large row-boat of the director of the drainage and irrigation of the valley, for two days' wandering in these lakes, in which I found that this, with many other marvels, was the truth. We stopped at a village where a neat little bridge had recently been thrown across the canal. There had been a banquet, and the *jefe politico* (the official who might correspond to a mayor, but with more authority) had enthused greatly, speaking of the progress of the age, and declaring himself proud to be a citizen of a community which was capable of such a work. We climbed on horseback the Hill of the Star, at Ixtapalapa,

where used to be transacted, by the accounts of Prescott, the most momentous episode in all Aztec history—the slaughter of the beautiful captive, and the rekindling of the sacred fires, at the ending of

ourselves there was now little interruption. The island church, the column bases of which are sunken three feet below the present surface of the land, is very Venetian. We might have been at a Torcello,

on which some population of New-Zealanders had landed and established their thatched huts.

All of the lakes had a charm for me, though there are many respects in which they do not deserve it. Another time I crossed Tezco in one of the clumsy flat-boats—she called herself the *Enchanting Nymph*—which make the journey by poling, in seven or eight hours, to the small city of Tezco, on the other side. Flat as we were, there



“THE FIND.”

the cycles of fifty years in which it was thought the world would be destroyed. Nothing appears at the top but some traces of heavy walls, showing that there were once constructions there. It is at the junction of the canal with the lakes, but no wide expanses of water were to be seen, as there were not from the extinct volcano of Xico which we mounted the next day—a small island cup of solid granite containing a green maize field in its bosom.

The greater part of the surface of both lakes is actually covered with a singular growth of entwined roots and débris, which make a verdant meadow. Passage through it is only by canals and natural channels, which change from time to time with the shifting of the mass in the wind. Our oarsmen got out and walked upon it, and it undulated under them in places like “benders” in thin ice. We came the first night, in pitch-darkness, and with rain in torrents, to the little island of Tlahuac, at the ancient causeway separating Xochimilco from Chalco, and slept on the chancel carpets, as it appeared, on the floor at the curate’s house—the only one of size to accommodate strangers. But the beautiful bright morning was a compensation. The lagoon is full of flowers, and reflected the vast snow peaks, between which and

were places where the crew had to get out and push in the mud for half an hour at a time. In compensation they had a bold and striking motion in the boat, going up, four on each side, an inclined plane at the bow, with their poles horizontally in the air, and returning with them against their shoulders. They shouted three times, in startling chorus, at a cross in the middle of the lake marking half the journey: “*Alabo! al gran poder de Dios! Ave Maria purisima!*” We saw the alkali-gatherers and their donkeys; a phenomenal fly which lives in myriads on the water, and whose eggs are sold in market for food; and the snow volcanoes were mirrored as perfectly in the few inches of water all the way as though it had been of a depth corresponding to their elevation. Tezco now is a place of six thousand people, with a manufactory of salt and soda from the crude product of the lake, glass-works, and a shabby oblong plaza. The people in the villages about are potters, each house on its own account, making the excellent pots we had everywhere seen in Mexico.

There are remains of plentiful pyramids here, as is natural at a place which, under the cultivated Nezhualecoyotl, was the seat of the Augustinian age of the Aztecs.

There exist quaint poems of this monarch, translated by some Spanish admirers. His general theme is the vanity of all things human. "Where," he asks, "are Chalchintmet, the Chicameca, Mitl, venerator of the gods, Tolpiltzin, the last Toltec, and the beautiful Xinlitzal—where are they?" It is not easy, in fact, to determine the whereabouts of these, no doubt, once famous persons, and there may be some who, on etymological grounds, will not be sorry for their absence. But he continues, more pleasingly: "Our lives are like the brooks

In the Cerro of Mexicalcingo, back of the town, there are vestiges of architectural magnificence which show that the descriptions of historians are not all fanciful. Ascending a hill of two thousand feet, overgrown now with nopal and hardy magueys, you come to bathing tanks, cisterns, and extensive flights of steps cut in the solid rocks, aqueducts, sculptured caverns, and vestiges of temples. Here the pensive monarch, in retirement, hung in the air above the wide prospect of the valley, his capital, and his rival of Mexico



SUPERINTENDENT'S HOUSE, SILVER WORKS AT REGLA.

and rivers that do but run on to dig their own graves the more surely. Very brief is the duration of flowers, and brief is human life. Let us look, then, to immortality. The stars that now so puzzle us are but lamps in the palaces of the heavens." I had the pleasure to assist at the finding, in one of the pyramids, of the principal section of an immense broken bass-relief, representing as likely as not this monarch himself. I do not myself profess archæology, except from the point of view of its picturesque features, but there is a genuine pleasure in being the first to salute and tenderly brush the mould from such a bit of hoary antiquity.

beyond the lake. And here, if anywhere in the lonely mountain, with a guide who falls asleep and leaves one to do his own exploring, his ghost might be expected to be met with, wandering in the still sunshine.

Returning, we paused at the Molino del Flores, a place not only charming in itself, but as showing the very different sentiment with which it is customary to surround a manufactory in this country from that prevailing with us. It is a large mill, or collection of them, for grinding grain and making paper. There is united with it a country residence of the wealthy Cervantes family of Mexico, the owners. House, chapel, and mills



SATURDAY PAY CARAVAN ON THE MEXICAN NATIONAL RAILWAY.

form a single establishment, terraced up into the steep hill-side from a little entrance court. The place is in a gorge. The strong water-power coming down it is utilized for a hundred fantastic jets and surprises in the gardens. There is an out-of-door bath, with a disrobing seat in a little cave, and a shower falling, on touching a ring, from a precipitous bank forty feet above. Sonnambula might walk on such a rustic bridge as that thrown across to another rock-cut chapel in the cliff, where the last titled ancestor of the house, the Marques de Flores, captain of Iturbide's guards, general of brigade, signer of the Declaration of Independence, governor, *regidor*, and more, is buried.

It is perhaps owing to their rarity that establishments of this useful order are thus caressingly treated. The same thing is everywhere observed to be the case. The cotton factory at Orizaba has a fine architectural gateway, and a statue of Manuel Escandon, the founder, in the court. At the "beneficiating" hacienda of Regla, the principal ore-reducing works in the Pachuca district, the old Spanish

count of the name located the extremely practical works of this nature in a lovely scene, by a cataract, and basaltic columns, which are of the wonders of the world, and gave them all the archways, buttresses, and castellated walls possible. In the sugar haciendas, which with their tall chimneys all have the look of factories—this union of the domestic and refined with the practical is universal.

I climbed Popocatepetl, a three days' journey of hardships, mingled with decided pleasures, however; journeyed out and back with the picturesque railway pay caravans conveying their mule loads of silver; went down to Cuautla, the capital of the State of Morelos, on the opening day of the new line of the Mexican company, which a week after was signalized by probably the most horrible railroad accident on record; visited the coffee-raising region of Cordoba, and the country of Amatlan, celebrated for its pineapples, and as the richest Indian village in Mexico. The Indians generally do not run greatly to wealth, having a reputation for improvidence; but here are

certain ones worth their hundred thousand, who still dress in cotton, adhere to all the common customs, and insist that their sons shall do the same, even if they send them to the university. If the tale be true, they bury their money in the ground. What burdens they carry, these Indians! what patient, swift journeys they

do not speak now of those discovered in Oaxaca and Yucatan—present but a tame, lumpish aspect. There is almost nowhere a sculptured stone. San Juan Teotihuacan, where there are two pyramids of regular shape, and a really vast space on the plain covered with relics of some such appearance as the cellars of ruined houses,



COURT-YARD OF JAIL, CHOLULA.

make, always bare-legged and on foot! Truly it is the case, as Buffon tells us, that in a state of civilization man is ignorant of half his forces.

The great Aztec places of the country, as we learned to delight in them in Prescott, are disappointing. Whether it is that they are so completely destroyed, or that they have never actually existed to the supposed extent, and the writer has only used his beautiful imagination upon them, it is certain that these remains—I

where they occur here and there in New England, is the most impressive. The hill called of the Treasury, at Tula, has a few more similar basements remains. This point, in a pretty valley to the northward, now reached by the Central Railroad, is noted as the ancient capital of the Toltecs, a race preceding the Aztecs, and the real inventors of their civilization. A tradition is that in immensely earlier times, when they were denizens of the far Northwest, Huitziton and Teepultzin, two lead-



OLD CONVENT, NOW USED AS BARRACKS.

ing persons, heard a small bird singing in the branches *ti-hui! ti-hui!* Let us go! Upon which they took counsel together, and started their nation upon its migrations, finally pausing at this place. One would like a picture by some competent humorist of these two simple worthies listening to their sprightly monitor.

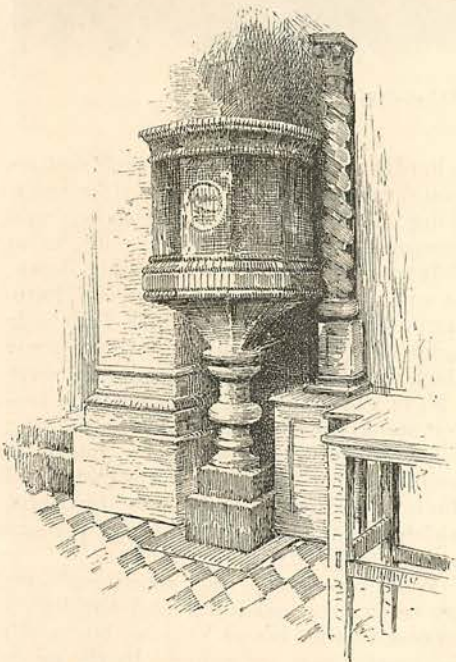
The great pyramid of Cholula has lost its distinctive shape, and is no more now than a large green hill, the adobe construction of which is seen here and there in rifts. It is a charming green hill all the same, a place to lie and dream, looking down over the twenty-two hamlets and innumerable churches in the smiling prospect, and off to the fine clean city of Puebla of the Angels, as it is called. A tramroad connects these two localities. Oh! changes of time! Had he waited but till now, Cortez could have gone into Cholula in a horse-car. Coming down from the pyramid, I entered, among other curious sights, to see the prisoners weaving sashes in the court-yard of the jail, attracted by some faces pressed against the wooden bars, as there always are, looking out upon the grassy plaza.

I wonder who that has not seen it has the proper idea of Tlascala? For my part

I had no doubt that it was venerable and gloomy in its dark valley, a place to inspire fear. It is, on the contrary, a modern and fresh little place for Mexico; everything nicely lime-washed; its valley treeless and not in the least gloomy. It has one of the prettiest plazas, with the usual stone benches and music stand, I have seen, and very few antiquities.

I came to it from Santa Anna, on the branch railroad from Puebla connecting with that of Vera Cruz, in a conveyance which had once been a hack, drawn by three horses leading and two mules. We passed on the way the conveyance of the Governor of the State, which had once been a coupé; it had been amended by a boot attachment, and was drawn now by four mules. He was a small, fat, Indian-looking man, with a conspicuous scar, as I met him afterward with some of his legislators. There are eleven of these in all. They sit at one end of a long room in a kind of chancel, raised above and railed off from the rest—which is reserved for spectators—and smoke there, and speak from a small tribune, as the general system is in all the State legislatures, the Congress of the nation, and the municipal bodies as well.

The Tlascalan allies seized upon my baggage as I dismounted, to the number of one for each inconsiderable parcel, and one to spare. As I had been able to hear of no hotel in advance, and there was none in obvious view, we set out upon a tour of investigation for such as there were. The Posada of Genius seemed much too shabby, as has been the way of Genius with her votaries before now. The next was full. At the third and least objectionable the price of rooms was at the exceedingly reasonable figure of two reals a night. "But would you want a bed, and wash-stand?" added the landlord. "Ah! then it will be four reals" (fifty cents). The silken banner of Cortez, once crimson, now turned coffee-color, is to be seen. At the chapel of the dilapidated old convent barracks of San Francisco—in the large entrance archway of which the town appears as in a frame—are the first pulpit from which the faith was preached in the New World, and the font in which the first chiefs were baptized.



THE FIRST CHRISTIAN PULPIT IN AMERICA.

The Mexican of intelligence will concede to you that his country, as understood abroad, is both overrated and underrated. And this is the case. Its riches, both mineral and agricultural, and its

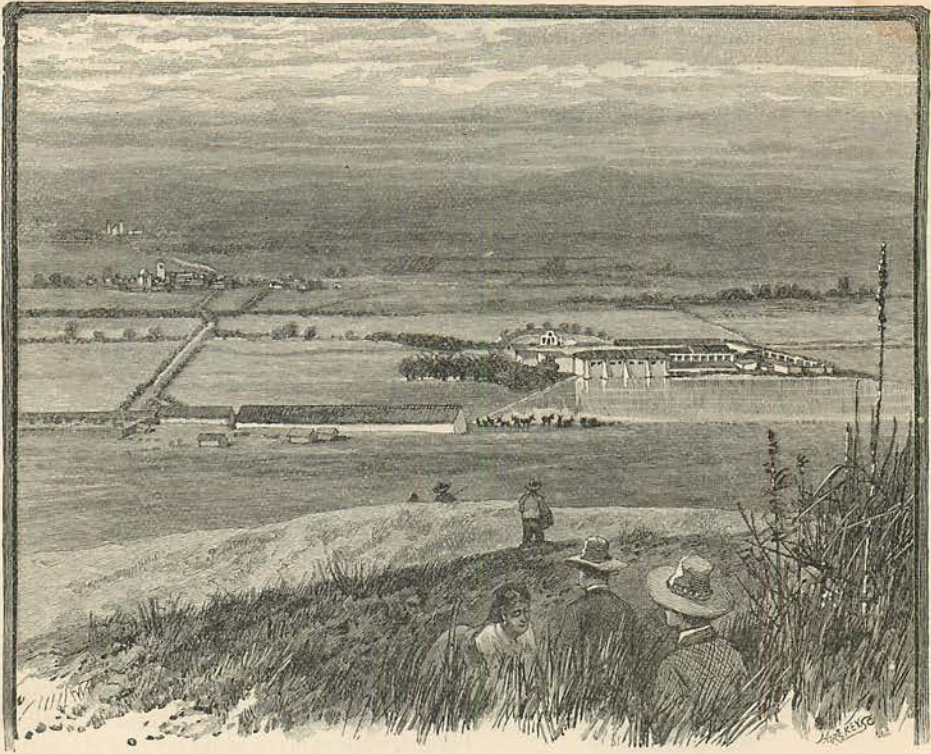
beauties of scenery and climate, are exaggerated, just as its dangers certainly are. It is invariably spoken of in superlatives,



FONT IN OLD CHURCH OF SAN FRANCISCO.

when comparatives are to a large extent able to do it justice. I imagine that the American, with no speculation in view, and without an eye for the picturesque, would take very little interest in it. A large part of the soil in the boasted tablelands is thin, with a stratum of *tepetate* (marl) below, hard as a floor, and incapable of being improved beyond a certain point. Maize is the chief crop of the country. One often sees it of great height, but slender and weak, and without the generous ears we are accustomed to on our own. In the little-populated northern States of Sonora and Chihuahua there are tracts of many days' journey in extent desert for want of water. In the south, where the population chiefly clusters, the mountain chains occupy great spaces, leaving often, as in Guerrero, only little pockets between. It is doubtful if there will be really any large extent of land available for immigration. It will rest, at any rate, rather with the wealthy owners of the haciendas than with the government, which has begun by giving to one colonizer a grant from which he must first dispossess the savage Yaqui Indians.

As to mines, there are the same adverse chances, and the same offering of "wild-cat" property to intending investors, as with us. In particular is it a mistake to believe too much in the abundance of old Spanish mines abandoned at the time of the Independence, and only waiting intelligent treatment to produce again fabulous treasures. It is sixty years since the Independence, and there have been a great many people in the country with a shrewd eye for gain in the mean time. As to



HACIENDA OF TEPENACASCO.

their processes of working, there are many things which appear primitive which are in reality well adapted to the situation they have to meet. It is in new mines much more than in the re-opening of old that advantage offers. The mining laws of Mexico are very fair—a model to our own, in fact—and, so far as that is concerned, give everybody an excellent chance. The government reserves to itself a certain share in every mine that is denounced, and is thus interested in their peaceable and efficient working.

The mining district of Pachuca, capital of the State of Hidalgo, take it all in all, historically, as scenery, and for the returns it is producing, is the most interesting in Mexico, only rivalled by that of Guanajuato. There are probably ten thousand men at work, of whom five hundred are Cornishmen, retaining their accent and a rude independence of character. Pachuca may have ten thousand people. It is hilly, on the slopes of a deep gorge, cold, windy, and dusty of afternoons even in midsummer. A Mexican silver mine, even of the richest character,

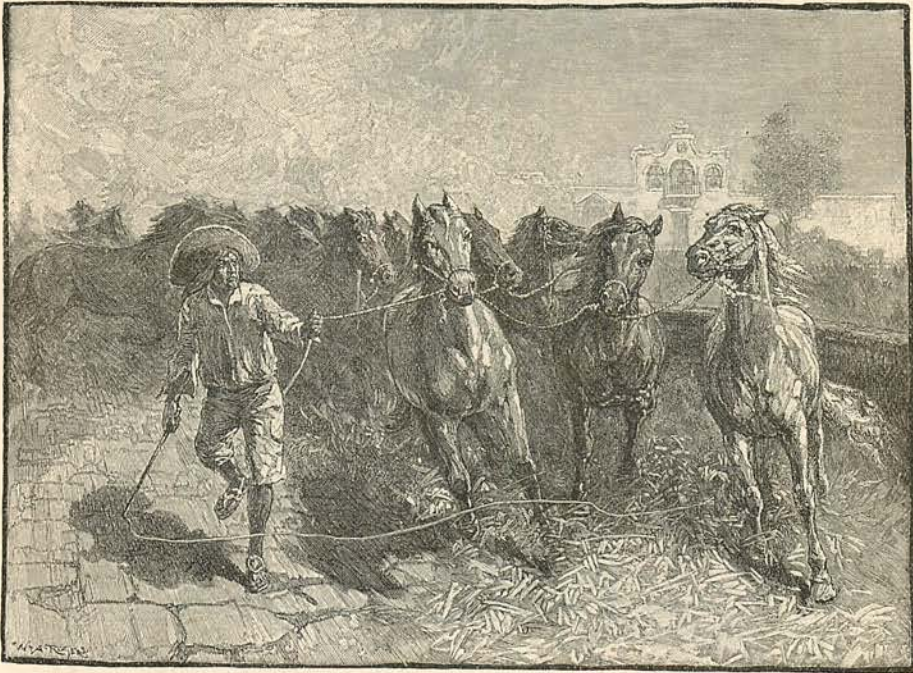
is hardly what the novice in such matters would expect. If he has looked for something Aladdin-like, for forks, spoons, and presentation plate all ready made, as at Tiffany's, only waiting to be shaken down, he will not find it in these narrow Plutonian drifts, in which the guides flash their lights with pride now and then upon some black and gray discolorations, with never a bit of glitter, and in these heaps of broken stones which seem good for nothing but to mend the roads. One might as well be down in a coal mine instead of the famous Rosario and Santa Gertrudis, which are turning out millions per annum.

What are known as "rebellious" ores are treated by calcining and the barrel process further on, at Velasco, but much the greater part are reduced by the *patio* system, in the interesting process known as "making the tortas." The ore, first powdered as fine as flour by the *arrastra*, the stamp mill, or the Chilean mill—all three are in use—is made into great mud pies, with water, on the wooden floor of a wide court or open yard. In these, troops

of horses are driven round and round every day for from fourteen to twenty-one days, thoroughly stirring in a mixture of quicksilver and salt, which attacks the metal, and leaves it in such a condition that in the washing tanks, where unfortunate men and boys puddle around all day long bare-legged, it falls to the bottom, and leaves the residuum to run off.

At Pachuca I took horse, and passing through most attractive landscapes, by Real del Monte, Velasco, Regla, and

taining in the centre a very large stone threshing-floor of the kind in which it is customary to thresh out grain, just as in the *patios*, by troops of running horses. It is of rubble stone, plastered and neatly whitewashed; a single liberal story in height, the part devoted to the residence having large windows covered with gratings, and a belfry on top. To this are added, on the flanks, such a collection of granaries and corrals that a façade is made of probably six hundred feet in



A THRESHING-FLOOR.

the plains of Mata, came down to the vicinity of Tulancingo to see something of country life. A week's visit at the hacienda of Tepenasco proved one of the most agreeable experiences of my whole tour. The house was approached from the main road by a long lane through fields of the purple-flowering alfalfa, a larger and hardier clover; past a dark-walled corral, or cattle-yard; a very long steep-roofed barracks for laborers' quarters; and by a pond embowered in willows. From a distance, with its numerous out-buildings, it had the appearance of a ducal residence. It is plainer when reached, the space immediately in front having a farm-yard appearance, and con-

length. Some fonts project from the wall beside a door opening to the family chapel. Over the main entrance-door is an inscription: "*En aqueste destierro y soledad disfruto del tesoro de la paz.*" (In this retirement and solitude I enjoy the treasure of peace.) Each principal granary or barn (called *troje*) is inscribed also with its title. They are built to keep the contents cool and of an even temperature, with walls of great thickness. Buttressed without, and with columns or piers of a yard square, running down the centre of the long dim interiors, they are more like basilicas of the early Christians than one's preconceived idea of a barn.

The buildings in the central clump, not



THE TLACHIQUERO.

counting those detached, cover alone between four and five acres of ground. The estate of which they are the focal point is eighteen miles in one dimension by six in the other, and contains not less than forty thousand acres. There are seventeen hundred head of neat cattle, and other things in proportion. On the pay-roll, in the week in which I was privileged to wit-

ness the operations, were laborers to the extent of eighteen hundred and fifty, men and boys. I confess to a fondness for country life, and with such a novel domain to explore, one must be difficult indeed not to be pleased. One day we mounted on horseback to go to visit the corrals, where portions of the animals are kept at night according to their changes

of pasture; another, to the Ojo de Agua, a lovely spring, made mention of by Humboldt; again, to examine the different crops; again, to various white hamlets that, like the city of Tulancingo, farther in the distance, dot the plain. At Acatlan is a most charming dark old ruined convent, with the green bronze bells yet hanging in the steeple. One day the household ensconced itself in a large wagon covered with willow boughs, and we drove to Zupitlan, a ruined hacienda, church, and hamlet on the estate itself, and held a picnic.

A high grassy hill, the Cerro, behind the house, affords wide views. We are in the midst of a level valley, with gently sloping mountains on all the boundaries. The leading crops are maize, barley, and maguey. The *tlachiquero* goes around every day, with his donkey carrying wine-skins, collecting the sweet sap from the maguey to make the *pulque*. He pours it into vats of skin in his department to ferment, treats it in his practiced way for a fortnight or more, and then it is ready for sale. We see sometimes forty ploughmen come in and unyoke their teams of an evening. The agricultural implements of the larger sort in use are American, but ploughs, spades, picks, and the like are manufactured at Apulco, near by, more cheaply. There are interesting homemade wooden forks and shovels yet remaining. Among the rest, the veritable Egyptian plough, of wood with but an iron point, is much more in use than the modern sort. And for its purpose of turning shallow furrows and ploughing between the rows of maize it appears, to tell the truth, not ill adapted. The ground is treated by irrigation, no less than eleven large dams, one of them creating a lake two miles long, being formed for this purpose. The portions of land used for cultivation are taken irregularly in various parts of the

estate, according to their proximity to these. Each has its name, as Las Animas, San Antonio the Larger, San Antonio the Less.

But it is a grazing country, and the chief industries are the raising of animals and the making of butter and cheese. The greater part of the cattle are hornless, which is effected by a simple process of searing the tender horn when sprouting, after which it does not increase. The idea is worth attention by American farmers



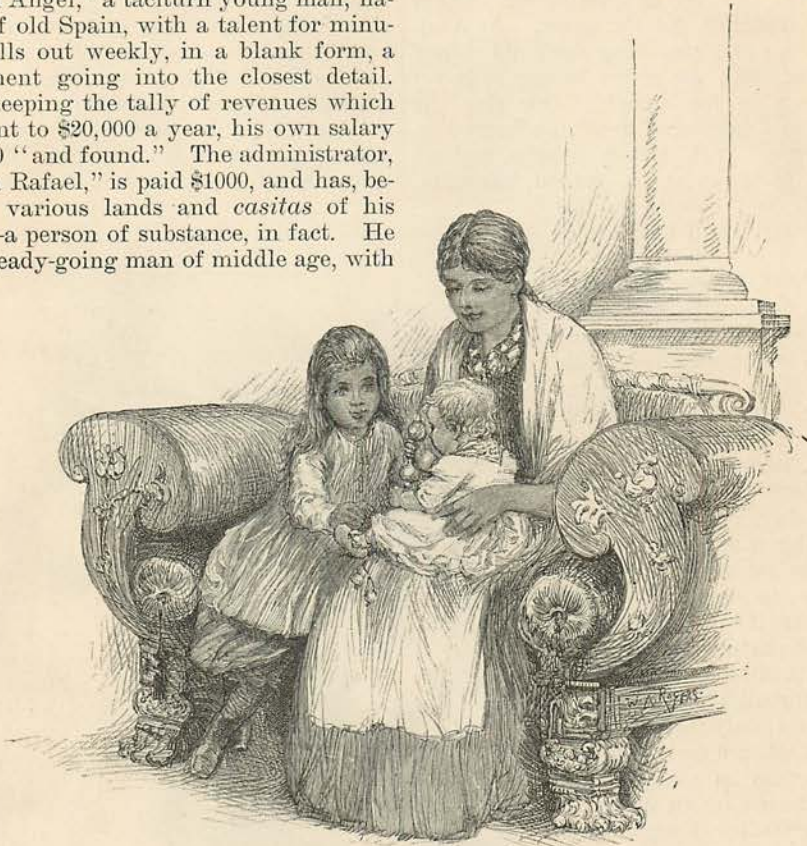
PLOUGHMAN AT HOME.

and those who have to do with the transportation of cattle. The calf here remains with its mother under all circumstances. It is a quaint sight at milking-time to see it lassoed fast to its mother, whose hind-legs are also lassoed, waiting, by no means patiently, the conclusion of

the ceremony. Each of the departments is under the command of its own chief, and an accurate supervision and record is made of the whole. The book-keeper, "Don Angel," a taciturn young man, native of old Spain, with a talent for minutiae, fills out weekly, in a blank form, a statement going into the closest detail. For keeping the tally of revenues which amount to \$20,000 a year, his own salary is \$400 "and found." The administrator, "Don Rafael," is paid \$1000, and has, besides, various lands and *casitas* of his own—a person of substance, in fact. He is a steady-going man of middle age, with

"Amarillo si, amarillo no,
Amarilla y verde me lo pinto,"

may be heard from his room long after the sedate and the fatigued have gone to



INDIAN NURSE AND CHILDREN IN THE HACIENDA.

a prominent scar on his forehead. I imagined some interesting story. No, he said, it was got in breaking a vicious horse. A sensible man lets fighting alone; there are enough at that already. The Americans have excellent ideas. They all work; all wish to improve and make money. Without money a person might as well take himself off to the cemetery at once.

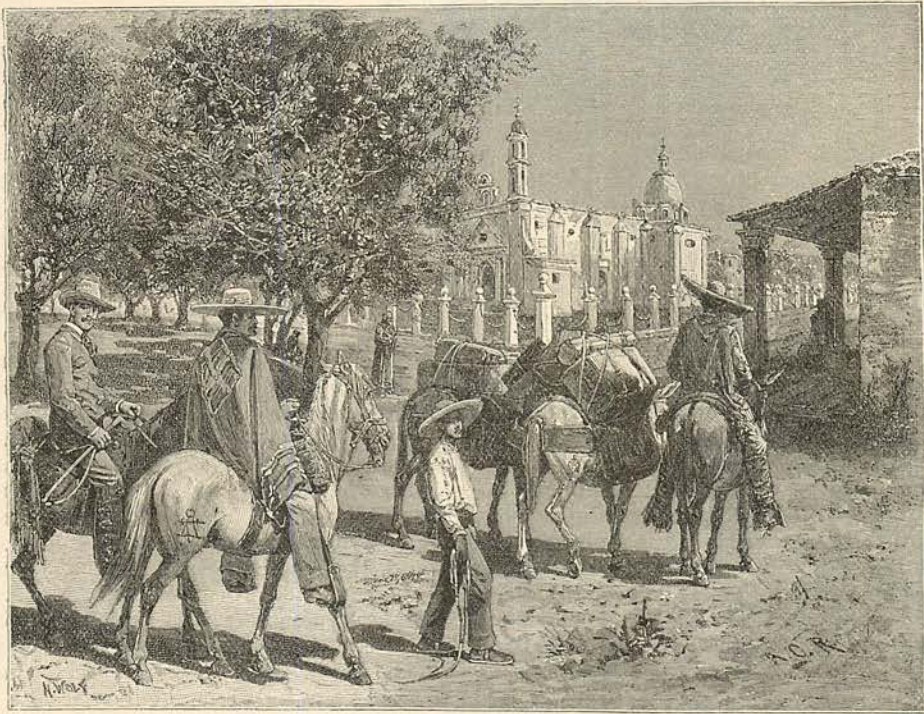
The butter and cheese making is under control of "Don Daniel." He is a large, handsome young man with rosy cheeks, coal-black hair and beard, and excellent teeth—a picture of health. He is of a lively turn withal, assembles around him congenial spirits, and the strumming of a guitar, and such choruses as,

bed. Another inmate of the household is a youth of eighteen, a very voluble young person, Salvador, who proffers himself often as a guide. He is a cadet learning the business of conducting a hacienda; or, as some think, a young scapegrace of good connections put here to be kept out of mischief. Outside the household are the *mayordomo* and the *sobresaliente*, chief aids of Don Rafael; the *pastero*, who looks after the pastures; the *caporal*, who has principal charge of the stock. These are officials of a humble order, dark, blanketed men, bandit-looking enough on horseback, but in reality as gentle as need be wished for. The *peons*, or day-laborers, live in about as poor a condition as the Irish peasants—except for having the advantage in

climate—receive from six to thirty-seven cents a day for their labor, and seem without either chance or ambition to better themselves. There is a prison-room at the mansion, where one is occasionally locked up for a couple of days. Not that this is permitted by law, but “they are not civilized,” as the proprietor explains, in English which still leaves something to be desired; “nobody makes any disturbance about it, and otherwise they would not work.”

The family spends a small portion of the year here, in an informal style of living. Servants and all call the young mistress

been designed for greater state in its time. The old furniture, of the style of the First Empire, would command a premium from bric-à-brac dealers. The rooms are large and finely proportioned. There are an octagon chamber, with beds in columned niches, and another having the bed raised upon a platform, of highly palatial effect. The first proprietor is said to have been a man, finally ruined by his extravagances, who had half Tulancingo at his table; and if he were inspired by a sudden notion to go to the capital, one hundred and thirty miles, say, distant, he rode his horses till they dropped dead under him.



ON THE MARCH TO ACAPULCO.

Cholita, a diminutive of her name, Soledad. There is no expectation of receiving or paying visits in the neighborhood. Social life, owing to the distances and the scarcity of neighbors, does not exist. It must have been lonely indeed for the young American girl who had been employed as governess of small children in the adjoining hacienda shortly before. The dogs swarm in and out over everything. The place is kept as a big, generous farm-house, and not as a villa. It has

I have a feeling of being engaged in about the same sort of thing, metaphorically, in having to hurry so swiftly through so many interesting scenes. It was not long after this that I was equipped again for my last Mexican journey, to the Pacific coast at Acapulco. I rolled for the last time through those principal streets, past the central plaza, the cathedral, the garitas, from which in five months I had made so many exits, and to which I had so often returned. How

different the feeling now, understanding the motley figures, the interiors of the buildings, the expressions to use, and the prices to pay, the flavor of the strange beverages and fruits—the ordinary course of a life which has its humdrum rou-

cente, as amiable and bright-faced a boy of fifteen as ever embarked in the profession of *arriero* at two dollars and a half a week. The road is spoken of as a *camino de pajaros*—a good road for birds. Much of it is the beds of torrents, both dry and wet, and there are ladder-like places which would be to the novice utterly impassable. The nights are passed under the thatched pavilions of the natives, there being no hotels. At Iguala and Chilpancingo are to be seen houses historically connected with the Independence. Three wide, swollen rivers are crossed, the last, the Papagallo, in a dug-out, swimming the horses. The road is entirely safe; arms are not in demand. There is no reason why, with a cheap *mozo* to carry the knapsack, it could not be made an enjoyable pedestrian trip. The heat is not severe, except in the middle of the day, and this is escaped by the usual siesta.

There was no small pleasure, nevertheless, in discovering again from a height the

tine here as elsewhere—from those first times, in which all appeared so formidable! I had for my travelling companion a colonel in the Mexican army, going to take command on the troubled frontier of Sonora. We went down by diligence one day to Guernavaca. It is a place which Cortez paid the compliment of selecting for his residence (still the property of his latest heir, an Italian duke), when the incredible deeds of the conquest were over. Such a panorama as there is of this favored city of 12,000 people, in its tropical valley, from the dizzy height above at which it is first visible! And such a garden, the Jardin Borda, with stone fishponds like Versailles, and hundreds of bushels of delicious mangoes going to waste along its terrace walks, as I saw there!

We packed our baggage upon mules. I mounted a horse, and the colonel a mule, as more sure-footed, and we set out upon a toilsome march of thirty miles a day for ten days down the long incline to the coast, corresponding to that ascended from Vera Cruz. Our conductors were Marcos, a very unreliable person, and Vin-

sea, like another Balboa, boarding at last the fine steamer of the Pacific Mail Company, the *City of Grenada*, which had come in on her long jaunt from Panama northward, and re-establishing connection with the outer world. With this, too, began a new experience, in the examination of the Pacific ports of Mexico. One of the semi-monthly steamers, if rightly chosen, each month puts into them all. An idea of the country can thus be got which would not be possible otherwise without great fatigue and expense.

Neither of the three lower ports is of great size. Acapulco has the most complete and charming harbor, and an old fort dismantled by the French, of the order of Morro Castle. Manzanillo is a small strip of a place on the beach, built of wood, with quite an American look. The volcano of Colima appears inland, with a light cloud of smoke above it. San Blas, larger, but still hardly more than an extensive thatched village, has, on a bluff beside it, the ruins of a once more substantial San Blas. Old bronze bells brought down from it have been mounted in rude frames a few feet high



BELLS OF SAN BLAS.

to serve the purpose of the present poor church, which is without a belfry, and this is called in irony "the Tower of San Blas." But at Mazatlan we are in a bustling harbor, and in a well and handsomely built little city, with improvements, and especially shops of the better sort, which other countries than Mexico might be proud of. It is surprising, until the large demand from the country tributary is understood, how a city of but fourteen thousand people can be justified in having stocks of goods so elaborate.

We steam across the ancient Sea of

Cortez, and up the coast of that long peninsula which seems on the map one of the remotest points of the globe. The days are calm and blue; the bold outlines of the shores offer constant novelty. It is like sailing in the waters of Mount Desert. An arbitrary line is passed. We have lost Mexico, but we have gained California, which was once her province. It is singular to remember that on the accession of the Emperor Iturbide, before the American conquests, Mexico could boast of being, with the exception of Russia and China, the largest empire in the world.

AN AMERICAN KING.

A SMALL pamphlet, printed within thirty years on the republican soil of the United States, and still to be found in the new settlements along the shores of the great lakes, bears this title-page:

THE BOOK OF THE LAW OF THE LORD,

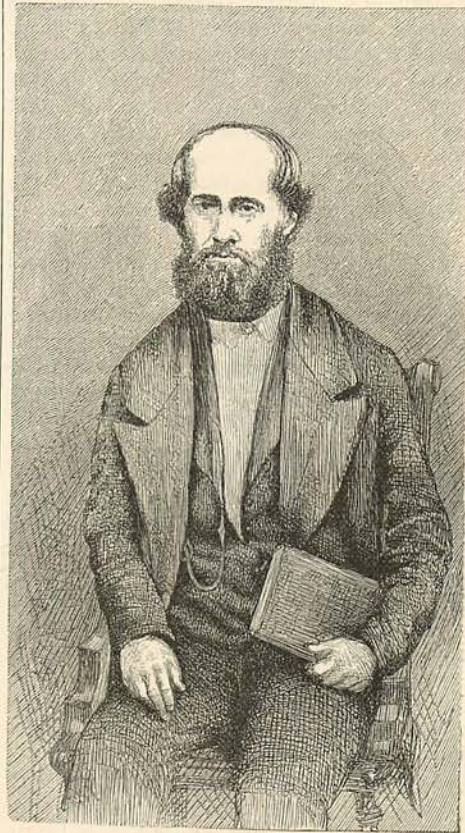
CONSISTING OF AN INSPIRED TRANSLATION OF SOME OF THE MOST IMPORTANT PARTS OF THE LAW GIVEN TO MOSES, AND A VERY FEW ADDITIONAL COMMANDMENTS, WITH BRIEF NOTES AND REFERENCES.

Printed by command of the King, at the Royal Press, St. James, A. R. I.

"The Law of the Lord," thus at once claiming Divine origin and kingly sanction, consists of a series of precepts relating to things spiritual and temporal, written in a verbose imitation of the style and imagery of the Bible. Within the lifetime of a generation it was implicitly received by an entire community as a celestial revelation miraculously transmitted through a divinely anointed monarch to his favored subjects. It is now chiefly prized for its connection with a curious chapter of frontier history.

The northwestern shoulder of the lower peninsula of Michigan is skirted by an archipelago divided into the three groups of the Beaver, the Fox, and the Manitou Islands. Their inhabitants comprise a little band of the semi-civilized survivors of the Ottawa and Chippewa tribes, and a white population of traders, fishermen, and farmers, not greatly exceeding one thousand in number. The Indians are the peaceable occupants of comfortable homesteads bestowed upon them by the general government. A small colony of

Germans and Swedes successfully follow agricultural pursuits upon the Manitous. The other pale-faces have, as a rule, strongly marked Hibernian features, and form an insular community as distinct in its habits from the surrounding world,



JAMES JESSE STRANG.